

Jokowi's Sneakers Politics: Personal Branding, Politics of Imaging and Millennial Votes The 2019 Presidential Election

Bayu Aji Suseno¹ dan Putri Prabu Utami²

^{1,2} Department of Art and Design, Institut Seni Budaya Indonesia Tanah Papua, Indonesia

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Abstract:

This study aims to determine the use of sneakers as an artifactual communication medium that affects public perception (potential voters), to form millennial political identities to increase the popularity and electability of the incumbent presidential candidate Jokowi in the 2019 Indonesian presidential election campaign. The theoretical basis for personal branding is to determine the politics of imaging as a millennial leader against Jokowi's hypebeast style with sneakers. This study uses a qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach. The research subject focuses on the phenomenon of Jokowi's hypebeast style with sneakers as a personal branding strategy to win votes from millennials. In contrast, the research object is the sneaker product used by Jokowi during the presidential election campaign from 23 September 2018 to 13 April 2019. The results of this study explain that Jokowi's branding strategy of wearing sneakers is redesigning for self-image in introducing a new identity as a millennial leader. Jokowi is hypebeast style considered to break the new presidential dress order by following the fashion trends that are developing in the country. Joko Widodo (Jokowi) is trying to restore public trust by wearing sneaker brands from local and foreign manufacturers, thus placing Jokowi as an old-class politician who appears contemporary (hype) by adapting the style of millennials.

Keywords:

Jokowi sneaker; personal branding; politics of imaging; millennial votes; presidential elections

Introduction

Sneakers, like other types of footwear, are more than an object that covers one's feet; they can be identified as a subculture, a status symbol, a fashion item, and a modern and a postmodern social or cultural object that binds a community and people together among others (Kawamura, 2016: 2). The use of sneaker shoes

Correspondence:

Departement of Art and Design, Institut Seni Budaya Indonesia Tanah Papua, Jl. Raya Sentani Km. 17,8 Expo Waena, Kota Jayapura, Papua 99225.
Email: bayu@isbi-tanahpapua.ac.id

among the millennial generation has become a hypebeast culture obsessed (beast) with everything contemporary (hype) to fulfill a lifestyle or lifestyle that is influenced by social media. Hypebeast is associated with the style of dress (fashion) that wears famous and original brands and streetwear brands favored by teenagers (young people). Sneaker shoes started from an effort to meet the fashion needs of young people as a complement to clothing (milliners), then evolved into a meaningful commodity that functions as a political communication tool for the rulers to increase popularity and electability. In the 2019 Indonesian presidential election, incumbent presidential candidate Joko Widodo (Jokowi) often appears in casual clothes, using rolled-up shirts or shirts, jeans, and sneakers. Casual means relaxed and straightforward; then, it can also be categorized as populist (egalitarian) by referring to a minimalist lifestyle in everyday life. Jokowi hypebeast style is a political marketing strategy to identify potential voters, especially among young people (millennials). In every presidential election campaign activity to support his mobility, Jokowi often makes communication by wearing local and foreign-made shoe brands. As it is known that the formal attire of a state leader, which is identical to a combination of a black coat, material pants, black cap, and loafers, suggests a combination for presidential fashion, so Jokowi's hypebeast style has rarely been shown by previous Indonesian presidents to the public at large. Politicians often use the power of dress in politics to gain sympathy or at least build an image as part of the community in their constituency. Fashion becomes an artifactual communication medium to convey the public's voice regarding social and political conditions and shape the politician's vision by diverting voters' attention (society) through developing fashion trends. Sneakers are not only a fashion item that can affect the lifestyle of young people but also the mindset and how leaders can guarantee the needs of that generation.

The millennial generation, called generation Y, is a generation that openly sees political views and is more reactive in responding to a phenomenon. Leadership is defined as an activity to influence people toward the achievement of organizational goals (Mulyasa, 2004: 107). Millennial leadership is translated as present-day leadership that adapts to the style of the new generation born in the 1980s so that the millennial leadership pattern is not the same as the old leadership pattern of the previous generation. The political campaign strategy shifted from mass mobilization to business activities that prioritized a personal approach. The practice of personal branding is also used in a political context as a strategy for winning a general election. In *The Personal Branding Phenomenon* (2008), Martin Montoya & Tim Vandehey states that personal branding is a process that will bring a person's unique skills, personality, and characteristics and wrap them into an identity with more power than competitors. In essence, the purpose of personal branding is to build an image of what someone wants to display to be able to attract and build the trust of others. Personal branding is a programmed approach taken by a person or company to sell products, services, or individuals (Iryani, 2013: 3). Personal branding is a personal identity that

can create an emotional response to other people regarding the qualities and values of that person. From the description above, it can be concluded that personal branding can be interpreted as forming public perceptions and images of the urgency of a person's aspects, such as personality, competence, uniqueness, style or style of dress, behavior, or communication. David McNally & Karl D. Speak in *Be Your Own Brand: A Breakthrough Formula for Standing Out from the Crowd* (2011) mentions three main components to designing a solid personal brand to be embedded and nurtured in the minds of others so that the public has a positive view and continues to trust and loyalty, namely a) Distinctiveness, which describes something very specific or distinctive so that it distinguishes it from others which can be presented in the form of personal qualities, physical appearance, or expertise. b) Relevance relates to the person's character who explains something considered essential or needed by the community. If the relevance (attachment) does not exist, it will not be easy to strengthen the community's mind. c) Consistent, namely activities that are carried out continuously so that other people can identify the personal brand quickly and clearly to form what is called brand equity (brand advantage).

Previous research is used as a benchmark for researchers to write and analyze a study. Based on the results of research conducted by Agus Fauzi & Refti Listyani in *Jokowi's Political Branding for the Victory of the President* (2016). In this study, it is explained that the personal branding of a politician is closely related to the branding of political party supporters, which consists of four elements, namely brand personality, performance (attributes), policies (value), and promises (benefits). Joko Widodo's victory in the presidential election is a product of political marketing by using clothes (white shirts and red plaid shirts) as a political expression, then also influenced by the historical background of Joko Widodo's victory in the 2012 DKI elections. In *If the Suit Fits: The Impact of Clothing on Electoral Success* (2018), Lincoln Lu researched the role of clothing and fashion that can affect the attractiveness of politicians' voters as measured by the preference for candidates and voting. The relationship between fashion and politics has also been studied by Joshua I. Miller in *Fashion and Democratic Relationships* (2005) which explains the implications of fashion on the relationship between politicians and society. Clothing can be used to show respect for others and loyalty to a country and provoke dialogue on democratic social and political issues. Based on the background that has been stated, the problem of this research is how the personal branding strategy of Jokowi is hypebeast style with sneakers on the image that is displayed as a millennial leader. This study aims to determine the use of sneakers as an artifactual communication medium that affects public perception (potential voters), to form millennial political identities to increase the popularity and electability of the incumbent presidential candidate Jokowi in the 2019 Indonesian presidential election campaign. Identity politics is an effort to achieve a specific power in the political stage, and the recognition of individuals from groups becomes an essential part of the political struggle carried out for the interests of their ethnic groups (Farida & Yoedtadi, 2019: 360).

This study uses a qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach. Qualitative research positions researchers as a critical instrument by using data collection techniques that are carried out in combination, and data analysis are deductive (Sugiono, 2018: 9). Phenomenology is the study of knowledge that comes from awareness or the way we interpret objects and events that become a person's conscious experience (Littlejohn, 2000: 38). The qualitative approach is an emic perspective which means that data is not obtained as it should be, but what the researcher thinks (ethical perspective) based on what is happening in the field, experienced felt, and thought by the data participants. The research subject focuses on the phenomenon of Jokowi hypebeast style with sneakers as a personal branding strategy to win votes from millennials in the 2019 presidential election, while the object of this research is the sneakers product used by Jokowi during the presidential election campaign from 23 September 2018 to 13 April 2019. Data collection techniques used in this study include interviews, observation, documentation (photos and videos), and written literature, both printed and electronic. Researchers use interviews and observations to obtain information related to the study of the research object. In this case, the researcher uses unstructured interviews, while non-participant observations are not actively involved in the lives of the informants but only become independent observers. Documentation studies are used to strengthen the results of research that researchers have carried out. Literature or literature to collect information relevant to the topic or problem becomes the object of research. This information can be obtained from books, scientific works, theses, dissertations, encyclopedias, the internet, and other sources.

Sneaker as an Artifactual Communication Media in the Formation of Millennial Political Identity

President and incumbent presidential candidate number 01, Joko Widodo (Jokowi) made a working visit by reviewing the Village Cash Intensive Work Program organized by the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration in Citarik Village, Sukabumi, West Java on 8 April 2018, President Jokowi Widodo went on a tour to Citarik Village by riding a Royal Enfield Bullet 350 cc motorcycle with chopperland style and yellow gold made by local builders, namely Elders Garage and Kick-Ass Chopper. Jokowi held a tour with several motorcycle communities, along with the Minister of Transportation, Budi Karya Sumadi, and the Minister of Public Works and Public Housing, Basuki Hadimuljono. During the touring activity, President Jokowi wore a jacket made by local children from the local brand Nevertoolavish with a solid Indonesian feel. The jacket worn by Jokowi is made of jeans with a red and white map of Indonesia, which is located on the chest. At the same time, on the sleeves and back, it says Indonesia, with each letter describing the form of culture and various arts in the country, such as the Saman Dance, Sasirangan

Fabric (Banjarmasin), Barong Dance (Bali), Wayang Kulit, Stone Jumping Traditions (Nias), Borobudur Temple, Benowo Batik, as well as tribal characters from the Papua region. At first glance, Jokowi's appearance looks similar to the fashion style of the character Dilan played by Iqbaal Ramadhan in the teen film *Dilan 1990* (2018), which is adapted from a novel by Pidi Baiq, even the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo or Jokowi, has also been seen watching the film together with Kahiyang Ayu (child) at the XXI Senayan City cinema, Jakarta, on 25 February 2018. The political science study conducted by Jokowi is part of identifying political communication strategies to build emotional and psychological closeness between politicians as potential leaders and the broader community as constituents. or potential voters. Contextually, the actions taken by Jokowi as the head of state (President) by conducting these working visits have become an effective communication and attracted attention to introduce a new identity as a current leader (hype).

Figure 1. Sneaker as President Jokowi Safety Riding Touring to West Java



Source: okezone.com

President Jokowi Widodo's safety riding equipment to protect his feet while driving a wheeled vehicle is a black high-top sneaker produced by Vans. The Vans x Metallica Sk8-Hi shoe collection is limited to 50 editions made of black leather with a white Metallica logo on the upper. The white midsole is also given an embossed finishing technique from the logo of a famous heavy metal band singing *Nothing Else Matters*. As quoted from the Vans page, the sneaker's retail price is IDR 2,499,000. The Vans x Metallica SK8-Hi collaboration was officially sold through the vans.com and metallica.com sites on 16 February 2018. The foreign-made sneaker brand has also been launched exclusively in Indonesia during the 2018 Jakarta Sneaker Day (JSD), one of the important elements in human life that not only serve to protect the feet but also plays a very important role in supporting the appearance of a fashion style to make it

more attractive and increase the wearer's self-confidence when interacting in a social group. In the history of the development of the fashion industry in Indonesia, the sneaker has been influenced by the popularity of the skateboard community, which began in the 90s, then also penetrated through the genre or flow of hip-hop and R&B music that developed in Indonesia from 2015 to 2016. Long before the sneaker transformed into one of the most popular fashion items and was widely used by young people. Historically, sneakers have been an essential part of the history of the game of basketball during the first half of the 20th century. In the United States, the Converse Rubber Shoe Company began producing shoes for athletic sports, initiated by Dr. James Naismith. The sneaker is named Non-Skid based on the outsole's shape (sol), which has a diamond-like pattern. Three years later, the Converse Rubber Shoe Company promoted the All-Star model, which immediately exploded in the basketball sports market. Even the All-Star was set as the standard shoe used by players in the highest caste in the American professional basketball league (American Basketball League) in the mid-1920s. Tracking the footsteps of sneakers has become the identity of the youth or youth subculture in urban America by following the fashion trends used by actor James Dean in the famous film *Rebel Without a Cause* in the 1950s.

Figure 2. Sneaker Vans x Metallica Sk8-Hi (2018)



Source: vans.com

A unique (typical) appearance by wearing sneakers is Jokowi's political communication strategy to lead public opinion (society) in the 2019 Indonesian presidential election campaign. Communication is the process or act of conveying a message from the sender to the receiver via a medium (channel) that is usually disturbed (noise). The term communication in English, communication which has a root word from the Latin *communis* which means the same (Mulyana, 2007: 46). Communication is information conveyed from one place to another by transferring information, ideas, emotions, skills, and others by using symbols such as words, figures, and graphics and giving, convincing speech and writing (Mufid, 2005: 1-2). In the realm of non-verbal communication, clothing is seen as having a communicative function called *artifactual communication*. Fashion is a type of non-verbal communication because it does not use spoken or written words which is called *artifactual communication*. The definition of *artifactual communication* is communication that takes place through fashion, and the arrangement of various artifacts, for example, clothing, style, make-up, jewelry, buttons, or furniture at home and their arrangement, or room decoration (Barnard, 2011: vii). Clothing can be interpreted as non-verbal communication because it does not use spoken or written words (Davis, 1992: 7). Non-verbal communication is more related to right brain function because it is effective and emotional which can be expressed through clothing and other categories of objects (the object language). Dick Hebdige in *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (1979) says "I speak through my clothes" which means I speak through my clothes, while Umberto Eco says "speaks through his clothes" which means using clothes to do what is done with words and spoken in another context. (Eco, 1973: 59).

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Fashion can be said to function as a language that is used as a medium for communication, including in politics. In this case, fashion does not have to speak directly to the other party as a communicator to convey its meaning, but the message conveyed by fashion as a communicator will be conveyed to the recipient of the message (receiver) only through visual stimuli, namely the sense of sight. These sneakers can be a political product used by Jokowi winning campaign team to form a brave to be different character such as personal branding through what is worn and what is shown to the public, especially the millennial generation. Personal branding is a process that is formed from consumer (society) perceptions of a person's crucial aspects, such as personality, competence, uniqueness (typical), style or style of dress, behavior, or communication. Every form and clothing worn will convey social signals about the wearer (Sobur, 2004: 170). Millennials in Indonesia, aged between 17 and 35, represent a third of the 193 million voters, so the votes of these young people significantly influence the electability of the two candidates (Jokowi and Prabowo) in the 2019 presidential election. *Statistik Gender Tematik: Profil Generasi Milenial Indonesia* (2018), published by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, explains that the millennial generation are those born between 1980 and 2000. The characteristics of the millennial generation are that their communication patterns are very open compared to the previous generation, who are fanatical users of social media and whose lives are greatly affected by technological developments. They are more open to political and economic views, so that they will look very reactive to environmental changes around them (Putra, 2018: 126).

The leadership style constructed in the modern era needs adaptation to the mindset and lifestyle of the millennial generation. Lifestyle is a description of behavior, patterns, and ways of life that are shown how a person's activities, interests, and interests and what they think (Kotler, 2016: 210). Lifestyle is closely related to the times and technology. Lifestyle is an attempt to make oneself exist in a certain way and different from other groups. Leadership in the millennial era has a distinctive approach because it adapts to the demands and developments of the times and has a visionary spirit and thoughts (visionary leadership). Jokowi is trying to change the representation of identity attached to him as an ordinary citizen or village boy who does not come from the political elite or the military after winning the 2014 presidential election. Identity is a phenomenon that arises from the dialectic between individuals and society (Berger & Luckmann, 1979: 248-249). The complexity of the political dynamics in the country to the perspective that dichotomizes young and old leaders, so Joko Widodo (Jokowi) tries to restore public trust by placing fashion attributes such as sneakers into his political identity. Prospective national leaders to approach

millennials must look that reflect the spirit of youth, as well as offer a vision and mission in building the character of the Indonesian nation through digital-based media (online) or social media. The millennial generation is more practical and pragmatic in considering their political choices, where the chosen national leader is to meet the needs of his heart, according to millennial tastes and current attitudes (Subagyo, 2017: 78). In political communication, personal branding is a process that will bring the unique characteristics (typical), personality, and skills of a candidate, then wrap it into an identity that has strength and is more prominent than other competitors so that it can be accepted by the target voters (millennial generation). Agile leaders can be described as intelligent leaders who see opportunities, quickly adapt to the environment, and have the skills to facilitate changes that occur in society.

Figure 3. Sneaker Shoes Complement Jokowi and His Supporting Coalition



Source: tribunews.com

In the formation of personal branding, especially to create the effect of characterization or the figure of a leader, there are two attributes attached to a person related to professionalism, vision, and goals, namely rational attributes and emotional attributes. The rational attribute is the ability in leadership, organization, and even educational background that supports his professional career, while the emotional attribute is something that is attached to a person related to personality or emotional aspects such as the clothes used. Clothing shows a person's values and personality that can make an impression on others. The impression of a person's clothing can be associated with emotions such as modesty, optimism, and self-confidence. Everyone carries out activities to form self-brand connections individually, although not systematically. The practice of personal branding is also used in a political context as a strategy for winning. The strengthening of figure-based politics that is presented

through a democratic system with direct general elections (from the people, by the people, and for the people), is also influenced by the political constellation in the electoral year that comes from the popular vote or the votes of the people directly in various regions in Indonesia. The cause of the urgency of research related to personal branding in the political realm in Indonesia, namely the low public trust in political parties that have a major influence on political culture, especially after the reforms in the 1999 and 2009 general elections. In the 2018 presidential election, Jokowi, who is an incumbent presidential candidate, chooses casual clothing with a rolled-up long-sleeved white shirt, jeans made of trousers, and local product sneakers which are a collection from NAH Project with the Yoga FlexKnit v2.0 Carbon Black series. These relaxed politics was seen when Jokowi invited the general secretaries of his supporting coalition parties to use a dress code in the form of collared shirts and jackets bearing the logos of political parties combined with sneakers on July 31, 2018 at the State Palace, Jakarta. Jokowi and the secretary-general of the supporting coalition parties have an agenda to formulate a strategic plan by outlining the Nawacita Volume II program that will be offered to the public during the presidential election campaign. The event was attended by all the secretary generals of the supporting parties, namely Hasto Kristiyanto (Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle), Lodewijk Freidrich Paulus (Golkar Party), Abdul Kadir Karding (National Awakening Party), Arsul Sani (United Development Party), Johnny G. Plate (Democratic National Party), Herry Lontung Siregar (People's Conscience Party), Ahmad Rofiq (Indonesian Unity Party), Raja Juli Antoni (Indonesian Solidarity Party), and Verry Surya Hendrawan (Indonesian Justice and Unity Party).

Continuity of Jokowi *Hypebeast* Style with Sneaker Shoes in the Presidential Election Campaign

It started with the Youth Pledge celebration at the Bogor Palace, West Java, in 2017, then continued throughout 2018, which entered the presidential election campaign. Jokowi consistently uses products made by local MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) to become president-elect for two terms by launching the Proudly Made in Indonesia National Movement (BBI) on 14 May 2020. The need for sneakers complements clothing (milliners) not only functions for footwear but is also influenced by rapid economic development. The use of branded sneakers is considered to be able to help consumers to communicate socioeconomic status to the community. The way of appearance is one of the representations of a lifestyle-related to efforts to make a person's appearance more attractive. Hypebeast has an increasingly rapid role in the development of the fashion industry, especially streetwear styles. The fashion style of young people in Indonesia, especially in big cities, refers to the streetwear style of the hypebeast. In contrast, streetwear itself is a fashion term intended for street people to look at every day. The hypebeast trend began with a sneaker lover or shoe with a flexible rubber sole model named Kevin Ma.

He is a sneaker collector based in America who still has Asian ancestry. Hypebeast started as a blog containing the latest information on sneakers that are limited in stock or made specifically. Hypebeast is a mass consumerism behavior of limited, rare, or popular clothing purchased to please others by imitating celebrities or obtaining certain benefits (Putri, 2018: 5).

Figure 4. Hypebeast Style of President Jokowi and First Lady (Iriana Jokowi) with Sneaker Shoes



Source: detik.com

President Joko Widodo's appearance carrying the hypebeast style stole the public's attention during a working visit (blusukan) to Pasar Anyar, Tangerang, on 4 November 2018. Jokowi wore a red rider bomber style outwear decorated with custom embroidery patches, gloves, and a brown retro helmet, wearing black sneaker shoes made by a local manufacturer with the NAH Project brand. The NAH Project Yoga Flex Knit V2.0 sneaker was released in black and gray on 2 August 2018 and sold 1,000 pairs within an hour for IDR 415,000. The shoes were used for the first time by Joko Widodo at the We The Fest 2018 music festival, which was held at the Jakarta International Expo Kemayoran. During the event, Jokowi looked relaxed by wearing the NAH Project Yoga Flex Knit V2.0 sneaker, combined with a long-sleeved white shirt and blue jeans. Jokowi often uses black sneakers on various occasions, such as making a working visit to Lampung Province to review the Bakauheni - Terbanggi Besar Toll Road on 23 November 2018. At the event, First Lady Iriana Jokowi accompanied President Joko Widodo, wearing a white shirt and jeans and foreign-made sneakers with the red Gucci brand from the laces to the midsole, and the upper

is decorated with two red stripes accents. Jokowi also used the NAH Project Yoga Flex Knit V2.0 sneaker in attending the Visi Indonesia (2019) event at the Sentul International Convention Center (SICC), West Java.

The continuity of the number one person in Indonesia is hypebeast style by wearing sneaker brands of local and foreign manufacturers, as seen during a working visit in March 2018 to New Zealand and meeting with the Minister of Industry Airlangga Hartanto at the Bogor Botanical Gardens on 24 March 2018. In both agendas, Jokowi wore the Yeezy 350 V2 Beluga 2.0 sneaker, which resulted from the Adidas brand collaboration and musician rapper Kanye West. Jokowi has also been seen several times wearing shoes made in Germany which were founded by two brothers, Rudolf Dassler and Adi Dassler, in the 1920s at Herzogenaurach, located in the city of Nuremberg, such as the Adidas NMD R2 worn by Jokowi during a dialogue with influencer content creators to welcome the XYZ Day event. (2018) at Bogor Palace, West Java. Adidas shoes with the NMD series are sneaker models produced from a combination of BOOST models and designs with Primeknit. The Adidas NMD R2 has a lightweight that is designed according to the upper made of high-quality mesh material to ensure air circulation in the shoe runs smoothly. At the same time, the outsole uses a responsive rubber material to ensure the user of the shoe does not slip. In addition to the Adidas shoe brand, Jokowi has also worn the Nike shoe brand from America with the red Roshe One series combined with the casual long-sleeved red shirt and black trousers when inaugurating the Soekarno-Hatta Airport train service operation at Tangerang on 2 January 2018. It can be said that President Jokowi became the first leader in the country to carry out blusukan using footwear (shoes) that are identical to the youth. Joko Widodo, brought back by the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) in the presidential election of the Republic of Indonesia, had previously worn the Nike Lunarepic Low Flyknit V2 in gray during a working visit to the Tasikmalaya area in June 2017. Models and shoe designs were also seen to be worn by Jokowi when welcoming Indonesian sprinter Lalu Muhammad Zohri, who won the world 100-meter competition under the age of 20 at the Bogor Presidential Palace, West Java, on 18 July 2018. At the 2018 Presidential Cup, Jokowi again wore Nike. Roshe One combined with blue jeans and the Indonesian national football team jersey. In addition to wearing foreign sneaker brands, Jokowi, on various occasions, also wore shoes made by local manufacturers, such as the Coatbridge Dark Green series from local brand Bandung Saint Barkley which was purchased by the seventh president of Indonesia at the 2018 Jakarta Sneakers Day (JSD) and the Indonesia International Motor Show (IIMS) 2018 located at JIExpo Kemayoran, Jakarta. Jokowi is a journey with local shoe brands that have been seen since the 2014 presidential election campaign. Low-top style boots with an upper made of nubuck leather with the inside of the shoe, while the bottom of the shoe has a rubber or raw rubber, which provides extra comfort, especially when Jokowi is active outside the room (blusukan). Jokowi bought a local shoe brand Grutty with type GR 33 145 black color in August 2014 at Cibaduyut Street, Bandung.

Jokowi fashion style with sneakers is an attraction - intelligent politics, as well as an imaging political stance to face competition with Prabowo presidential candidate in gaining support from the community. In the presidential and vice-presidential candidate elections for the 2019-2024 period, Jokowi took Ma'ruf Amin as vice president, while his competitor Prabowo Subianto chose to pair up with Sandiaga Uno, who at that time served as deputy governor of DKI Jakarta. Image politics is directly proportional to the phenomenon of some people who are pragmatic at the level of substance presented by political figures through symbolism. Symbols and politics are two entities that cannot be separated. The symbol comes from the root verb *symbollein* in Greek, meaning to match. A symbol can be an image, shape, or object that represents an idea obtained from a mutual agreement in interpreting something. Frederick William Dillistone, in *The Power of Symbols in Religion and Culture* (1986), explains that an effective symbol is a symbol that gives light; its power is emotive and stimulates people to act. When viewed from a contextual perspective, the reason why Jokowi and his winning team raised the value of proximity to millennials into personal branding in the context of building political marketing. The strong bond between young people and the influence of fashion trends on consumer culture and social media then places Jokowi as a politician who appears contemporary (hype) by adjusting the style of millennials. In *Fashion as Communication* (2002), Malcolm Barnard states that people who wish to increase their social scale will wear fashion as a symbol of change and progress. Clothing shows the value and personality of a person who can give an impression to others so that the image of the clothes used to show the social identity of the wearer who has a lifestyle changes according to the times. Personal branding is a process to communicate and ensure that others can accept and believe in the values and qualities possessed by individuals (Haroen, 2014: 13). Jokowi winning campaign team realized this by taking advantage to gain voter votes (millennials) which led to the birth of identity politics. Exploiting identity politics through fashion against the millennial generation has become a political campaign strategy in shaping public opinion on Jokowi fashion to gain the public's trust, especially the millennial generation.

Data obtained from interviews with millennials aged 17-35 randomly based on age, gender, education, and work categories stated that Jokowi's fashion style (sneakers) was a political communication strategy to win millennial votes in the 2019 presidential election. Respondents I and II said that Jokowi dared to appear with sneakers to follow the fashion trends that are loved by young people today, so Jokowi's fashion style seems simple and tends to be relaxed, as well as being a politician who has a hard-working, simple, honest personality, and populist. Respondent III agreed that Jokowi did with sneaker politics could boost millennial votes because it displays the image of jaman now politicians who have a young soul, is full of adventure, and enjoy challenges. This is the same as the view expressed by respondent V that Jokowi uses a different way compared to other presidential candidates by mixing politics and entertainment as part of a positioning strategy and political marketing to the public. A new type of political communication that exploits political topics into various

entertainment formats by highlighting interesting personalities, prestigious figures, or political scandals through entertaining content is called politainment (Niemand, 2008: 1). Respondent IV gave a different view on the power of sneakers in Jokowi's fashion style to strengthen the association that the incumbent candidate is close to millennial voters. However, young people need more leadership figures who can ensure that millennials can find jobs or open businesses and not only use fashion attributes (sneakers) as agents of change to attract public attention. The sneaker has become a symbol of young people constructed by Jokowi to show that leaders from the older group still have creativity, energy, pro leadership spirit towards young people, and a non-conservative attitude towards the times. The image of sneaker shoes has a strong connection with street culture to become a symbol of young people who are free-spirited, creative, and modern lifestyle, so Jokowi also plays a role as an apparatus that spreads new hegemony by instilling certain meanings in these fashion products.

There is a political agenda behind the negotiations on the hegemony of the fashion code carried out by Jokowi and the National Campaign Team to attract prospective voters, in this case, the millennial generation. Jokowi is trying to break away from the old hegemony that binds a state leader (president) in the scope of protocols related to dress codes at the state and official events. People know the term fashion to refer to the dress code, style, or habit common in dressing. Like other cultural products, clothing is also an arena for fighting, contesting to win, maintaining dominance, and seeking resistance and negotiation (Dwiwardani & Setyaningsih, 2021: 105). Jokowi may be the first Indonesian president to like a different style of dress in every state agenda or official event and attend non-formal activities. Jokowi is a way of dressing that breaks the new presidential dress code by following the fashion trends that are developing in the country. From the beginning of running as a candidate for the Governor of DKI Jakarta 2012, Joko Widodo, together with Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok), has used clothing with plaid and colorful motifs as a political communication strategy to gain public sympathy in the regional head election, while the white shirt has become a trademark. Jokowi in the 2014 Indonesian presidential election campaign. The essence of the white color, which symbolizes cleanliness of conscience, is then narrated into political interests as a new leader who puts forward a simple image and is synonymous with cleanliness and tidiness. In the 2018 presidential election, the Jokowi fashion statement attracted the attention of the public, especially the participation of novice voters (millennials), by carrying bright casual-style outfits such as combining cloth trousers or jeans with tops in the form of plain t-shirts or printed screen printing motifs, jeans denim, bomber parka, or varsity jacket, and complemented by sneakers made by local and foreign manufacturers. Jokowi is love for the shoe model (footwear) favored by young people has also been expressed through a video blog with a duration of 1 minute 45 seconds with the title Sneakers Story and the hashtag #JKWVLOG which was created on August 26, 2018. In a video uploaded on the Youtube platform, President Joko Widodo explained the reason for choosing sneakers to complement clothing (milliners) to support his outdoor activities, being more comfortable and lighter, and eliminating his barriers to society. In the

#JKWVLOG vlog entitled Sneakers Story, Jokowi is considered capable of conveying information objectively and not exaggerating, and Jokowi is also considered to have been polite and ethical when conveying messages so that NAH Project consumers can trust them and influence brand purchasing decisions (Chairunnissa & Zulfebriges, 2019: 835).

Conclusion

Jokowi is hypebeast style with sneakers that show social value or identity as a millennial leader who appears contemporary (hype) by following fashion trends that young people love. Jokowi builds attachment with millennial voters through political communication to become a politician who appears and does what his voters generally do and wear (fashion). Sneaker shoes are an absolute fashion complement that not only functions as foot protection but also becomes a symbol of self-expression, economic status, political affiliation, and a particular community. The politics of symbols need to be built by politicians as the capital of power that can create and drive change in society, both in the form of changes in behavior and public perceptions of the political elite who play it. With the direct democratic system, political figures can form their self-image through their physical appearance (fashion) to gain the sympathy of voters (millennials) so that they can affect the electability and popularity of a candidate for leader. Jokowi's strategy of approaching millennial voters by using the fashion trend (sneakers) of young people is not just a gimmick for electoral interests in the Indonesian political constellation, but what needs to be understood is that approaching millennials must not forget the basic needs and rights to get a job and a life better in the future.

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