

## Public Response to Online Public Debate in the 2020 Regional Head Election of Ponorogo Regency

Alifa Chandra Kumara<sup>1</sup>, Dian Suluh Kusuma Dewi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo, Indonesia  
alifachandra07@gmail.com, suluh.dian@gmail.com

### Abstract

*This year, regional head elections were held in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic so that social media can be used as a means of online campaigns to reduce mass gathering. This research was conducted to see the response of the Ponorogo community in participating in online public debates and to assess people's political participation by analyzing public comments on public debate shows on YouTube and Facebook. The data is processed using the Nvivo12 plus application by using cross tabulation data analysis techniques with manual coding then the results of the data obtained are described and analyzed in accordance with the theory of response and political participation. The data obtained on Facebook and YouTube were 772 responses with details of 357 responses on Facebook and 415 responses on YouTube. The responses given are in the form of positive, negative, and neutral responses. The process of obtaining data on public response is in accordance with the S-O-R response theory (Stimulus, Organism, Response) and the stage of response formation, as well as the political participation of the Ponorogo community is high enough to see the debate shows but the level of activeness in giving responses is less active.*

### Keywords

public debate; political participation; community response



## I. Introduction

Based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution Indonesia is a democracy. In simple terms, democracy is defined as the people, by the people, and for the people or it means that the highest sovereignty is in the hands of the people (Zuhro, 2019). The manifestation of the people's sovereignty through the implementation of General Elections (Elections), which are conducted directly, publicly, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly by the people (Romadhon et al., 2020). Democratic parties in Indonesia are held every 5 years according to their term of office, democratic parties are an interesting thing to be in the public spotlight because they involve the future of the country in the next five years. Based on the decentralized form of the Indonesian government, the democratic party in Indonesia is realized through the implementation of general elections (Pemilu) at various levels, national-level elections there are presidential (Pilpres) and legislative (Pileg) elections, while regional or local elections are regional head elections (Pilkada) (Hilman, YA, Harsono, J., & Khoirurrosyidin, 2020).

2020 is a political year, in which this year the implementation of a democratic party at the regional or local level, namely the Pilkada simultaneously in several regions throughout Indonesia. There are 9 Provinces, 39 Cities, and 224 Regencies. One of them is Ponorogo Regency which is held simultaneously on December 9, 2020 (Rahayu, 2020). The direct election of regional heads is an important breakthrough in an effort to deepen democracy, this effort aims to overcome the weaknesses of substantive democratic practices, especially in responding to the demands of local communities. From the

community side, direct regional head elections are deepening to strengthen community participation in political activities at the local level. The role of the community will characterize the implementation of government programs, and the Government will get support from the community (Zuhro, 2019). The Pilkada in Ponorogo this year saw quite a fierce battle because there were only two candidates, namely candidate pair (Paslon) number 1 (Sugiri Sancoko and Lisdyarita) as a challenger and to candidate pair number 2 (Ipong-Bambang) as a defense. This election is the same as the 2019 presidential election, which only had 2 candidates, this is an exciting battle. To win votes, you must use an extra strategy to get a vote of at least 50% of the total voters in the Ponorogo Regency.

This year's Pilkada is different from the previous pilkada because in 2020 Indonesia experienced the Covid-19 pandemic. This caused the implementation of the elections to be postponed until December. The implementation of regional elections during a pandemic is something to be feared if there is a spike in covid cases, so the technical implementation of this year's pilkada is designed in such a way that its implementation is safe while adhering to health protocols (Kennedy & Suhendarto, 2020). In a pandemic like now, social media has a major role in this regional election. Maximum use of social media is needed to reduce mass gathering, social media can also be used as media for online campaigns (Arswendy, 2020). By making use of mass media for online campaign facilities, candidates can convey their vision and mission to the public without gathering the masses. The development of social media has changed the communication style of society, as well as changing the mode of communication between the government and the community, where the communication media opens the way for people to participate to create new social dynamics (Nurmandi et al., 2018). Candidates are given approximately one month to introduce themselves to the public or known as the mass campaign. A political campaign is a structured effort that influences the decision-making process by a group (Fatimah, 2018). By using social media as a campaign tool, it is important to know the public response given. Response or response which means answer, reply, or response (reaction). In the large Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) the word response means reaction, response, or answer (Rachmat et al., 2019). The response is the activity / activity of the organism (person) which is not merely a positive movement, but every activity caused by a stimulus can also be called a response (Maknolia, Yuliana; Hidayat, 2020).

SOR theory is used as a theoretical basis to show the flow or process of communication. SOR theory is a communication theory that stands for Stimulus (Message), Organism (Communicant), Response (Effect) (Monanda, R., & Nurjanah, 2017). In this theory, it states that the effect is a special reaction to a stimulus that is obtained so that a person can predict and hope for a match between a given message and the recipient's response. This theory relates to changes in the attitude of a person or recipient due to the process in a communication, the impact that occurs is a reaction to stimulus (Andrian Misbar and Dr. Amsal Amri, 2018). From each reaction, it raises an attitude from every human being, be it a bad or good attitude depending on the context.

Attitude theory put forward by Sarlito Wirawan Sarwono in the book "Introduction to General Psychology" is a view in determining people's attitudes about the response given. According to Sarwono attitude or attitude is a term that reflects someone's feelings about being happy or not happy, even mediocre or neutral to something (Sarwono, 1982).

Society will be affected automatically by the situation or issue formed by a media so that a response or response from the public appears. The response is related to what is seen and heard with various attitudes or responses. There are those who support, reject, or do not take sides (neutral) (Alkatiri, ABM, Nadiyah, Z., & Nasution, 2020). Basically, humans are social creatures, which means creatures who need each other, be it assistance or

communication from other people, so that humans can be influenced by other individuals. Every individual on average has an influence on others within a certain time, this influence can be positive, negative, or neutral. Politicians and journalists are now taking over the issue of the public agenda. This issue is an issue that makes sense to discuss without the communication's censorship (Asih & Rosit, 2018). So, the public has an opinion or opinion on issues that are developing both in society and on social media.

According to Nimmo, opinion formation or opinion is a process that involves personal, social, and political aspects. The process is divided into four stages, namely:

1. A dispute that raises the potential to become an issue.
2. Leadership in politics.
3. Personal interpretation and social considerations.
4. Availability of personal to express opinion in public (Nimmo, 2010).

This opinion can be offensive to one party or it can also benefit the other party. Opinions can lead to the thinking of other people so that people who originally had different opinions can be challenged using other opinions. Hence, opinion has an effect on the results of votes in general elections (Election).

Implementation of regional elections during this pandemic the General Election Commission (KPU) has stipulated laws and regulations on the prohibition of carrying out traditional (conventional) campaign activities. This regulation is regulated in KPU Regulation (PKPU) Number 13 of 2020 which is the Second Amendment of PKPU Number 6 of 2020 concerning the implementation of the Concurrent Pilkada, KPU prohibits candidate pairs, supporting political parties, candidate campaign teams, as well as other parties mass like normal. Mass gathering activities such as rallies, music concerts, leisurely walks, bicycle rides, and other activities aimed at gathering the masses during the campaign period. With the rules issued by the KPU, it forces candidates and the campaign team to set their campaign strategy into an online campaign (Boys, 2020).

In addition to campaigns that are carried out individually, the KPU also introduces candidates by holding official debates between pairs of candidates that are broadcast online. This public debate agenda is one of the facilities provided by election organizers to participants to campaign openly on various social media. This public debate is presented with the aim that the public knows the vision and mission of the candidates and assesses the attitudes, characters, arguments, and programs of each candidate so that the community is right in choosing the appropriate leader with expectations. (Lidiawati, L., Saman, S., & Sanulita, 2018). Even though it is carried out online, the implementation of this online public debate is expected to be able to help the public in determining their voting rights.

The General Election Commission (KPU) is an institution that organizes elections having a vision to hold elections following predetermined principles, namely direct, general, free & secret (LUBER), and Honest and fair (JURDIL) (Purwadi, 2020). The meaning of the principle is: direct, which means an election that is carried out and completed directly on that day, general for all levels of society, free to choose anyone, each individual choice is secret, honest in carrying out elections, and fair in carrying out elections. To carry out the election according to these principles, the KPU arranges in such a way that the election can be carried out, the provision of online public debate facilities aims to provide information to the public so that they can use their voting rights properly by knowing the candidate's vision and mission and assessing the attitudes, characters, and programs that will be planned so that people choose accordingly (Lidiawati, L., Saman, S., & Sanulita, 2018).

Debates are conversations, discussions, conflicting arguments, opinions, ideas, or ideas that mutually encourage and challenge the issue being discussed (Rawis, JA, Liando, D., & Pangemanan, 2019). The definition of debate according to Hendrikus is an argument

between individuals or groups that have the goal of winning an argument by one of the parties, between candidates in the debate trying to knock each other out so that they win and get the right position (Soelistyowati, 2019). Through online debates, candidate pairs can also voice their vision and mission to the wider community. In the debate, the public can also find out the quality and readiness of each pair of candidates. Debates can also generate opinions from every society, some have positive or negative opinions.

In the debate, politicians or candidates do various things to influence voters, including by doing:

1. Acclaim (Statement) in this case the candidate provides statements that can lead to positive opinions so that people see their intelligence or quality.
2. Attack (Attacking), which is a critical strategy to bring down your opponent.
3. Defense (Defense), a strategy to deflect the opponent's attacks (Iskandar, 2020).

Thus, every politician is obliged to have a strategy to regulate the game, for example by stating statements that can lead to opinion from the public. In addition, of course also by knowing when to attack the opponent of a candidate pair and when to defend. The aim of this strategy is to trick the opponent's candidate pair and attract the public to get votes for the candidate pair.

In Ponorogo Regency, there were three public debates which were held at the Sasana Praja Building by holding live streaming in various media. The first debate on November 1, 2020, had the theme "Improving Community Welfare and Advancing the Region" with live streaming on Sakti tv, all KPU Ponorogo social media, broadcast on Radio RGS FM and Duta Nusantara FM, the second debate was held on November 19, 2020, with the theme "Improving Community Services and Regional Strategies in Handling Pandemic" with live streaming on Sakti TV, all KPU Ponorogo social media, Radio Songgolangit FM and RRI. And the last debate was held on December 4, 2020, with the theme "Harmonizing the Implementation of Regional, Provincial, and National as well as strengthening the Homeland and Nationality "with live streaming on Youtube and Facebook KPU Ponorogo, JTV, and RRI. During a pandemic like today, activities are carried out with audience restrictions and enforcement of health protocols to reach the wider community the debate is broadcast live (live streaming) on the media provided. On live streaming on YouTube and Facebook, the public can respond directly to the debate through the available comments column.(KPU.Ponorogo, 2020).

In 2020, the number of voters in the Ponorogo Regency is 759,045 people (KPU Ponorogo, 2020a). Based on the most popular social media In the first debate, live streaming on Youtube Sakti TV was watched 63 thousand times and 517 comments (Sakti TV, 2020), the second debate on Sakti Tv's YouTube was watched 41 thousand times and 317 comments (Sakti TV, 2020b). And the third debate, live streaming on Facebook, KPU Ponorogo, there were 5.1 thousand views and 594 comments (KPU Ponorogo, 2020b). With this data, it can be seen that enthusiasm and how the Ponorogo community's opinion on the debate is carried out, this is a means of society in participating in the democratic party.

Every society is expected to have participation or participation in politics, especially in matters of elections because it is a right as an Indonesian citizen. Community participation (political participation), which is participation that describes the level of community activeness or involvement in a political process, whether the community is just manipulation, consultation, active, or up to the level of the decision-making process (Zuhro, 2019). Meanwhile, according to Mariam Budiardjo, according to the definition of political participation, is an activity carried out by individuals or individuals to actively participate in political activities, by selecting leaders who can directly or indirectly influence a policy. This can already be said as participation in a political context (Miriam,

2008). Meanwhile, Amrizal et al (2018) stated that political participation is the involvement of self, mental, thoughts and emotions or feelings of a person from various levels of political activity such as election activities of state leaders through elections as a form of awareness and responsibility of a person against government regulations or policies. The participation of the people in the general election is by participating in the implementation of the general election to achieve the goals of the nation and hasten in democracy.

Huntington and Nelson divide political participation into two, namely the first. Political participation is mobility, which means that participation is carried out based on suggestions or invitations suggested by others. And the second is autonomous political participation, which means participation based on one's own desire (Huntington, SP, & Nelson, 1994). Political participation in mobility is common in people's lives because humans are social creatures, creatures that need other individuals, so it is easy for mobility political participation to occur. Meanwhile, autonomous political participation rarely occurs in society, but it does not rule out the absence of autonomous political participation. Autonomous political participation usually occurs in individuals who have interests or believe in their choices.

This study was conducted to objectively assess the public's response or response to the Ponorogo Pilkada public debate in 2020 online which was held using community response theory to assess how the response or response was given when participating in online debates, this can also determine the level of political participation conducted by the community so that it can be seen whether the objectives of the debate are in accordance with the response given by the community or not. To observe this, analysis can be carried out through the comments column that has been given by the public in the debate show. The community is a figure involved in the implementation of elections, so there is a need for an analysis of public responses. Warganet can be seen as a source of genuine and authentic assessment, that is, they provide a spontaneous assessment of what figures appear in the media, therefore this study is important to understand the political phenomenon in this election by looking at people's responses. (Purwokerto, 2020).

## II. Research Methods

The data in this study are public comments in the 2020 Ponorogo regional election debate. The debate is broadcast live in various media, the data source chosen for research is the media that gets the most responses from the public. There were two selected social media, namely the first and second debate on the Youtube Sakti Tv account, and the third debate on the Facebook account belonging to the KPU Ponorogo.

This research uses qualitative research methods with a descriptive approach. Qualitative research is a study that prioritizes quality or the most important thing in one thing (Putra, MRE, Rachmawati, I., & Mulyadi, 2020). The data analysis technique uses crosstabulation analysis with manual coding using NVivo12 plus software to identify data according to predetermined indicators. The analysis process is through data collected and then captured and coded manually after which the data is run or processed by the Nvivo 12 plus application, the results of the data will be analyzed and described.

Cross Tabulation is an analysis to see the relationship between variables, this analysis can be used to analyze more than one piece of data (Andespa, 2016). While coding is the process of systematically compiling raw data with certain codes that aim to make it easier to read (Satmoko Adi, 2020). Coding is done by entering data and then grouping and coding each data according to the categories that have been determined through the Nvivo12 plus application. The Nvivo 12 plus application is a special

application for processing qualitative data which is translated into tables, charts, or images making it easier for researchers to analyze data and the data is accurate (Akbar & Al-hamdi, 2020).

### III. Results and Discussion

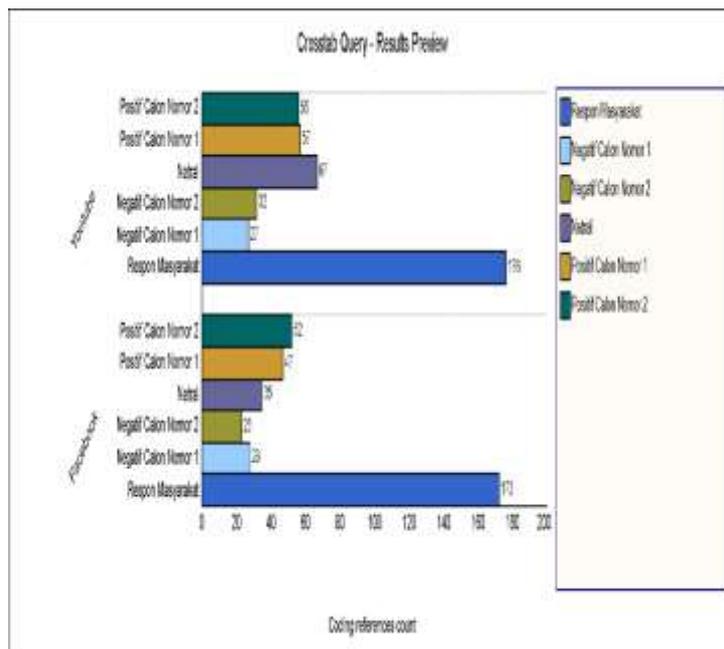
In this section, we will describe the results of observing the public's response to the 1,2,3 online pilkada debate in the comments column on the live streaming of the debate on YouTube and Facebook that have been provided. This study uses response theory to see public opinion about public debates conducted online and to show the level of community political participation. Observations of public comments are categorized as positive responses to candidate pairs (Paslon) number 1 or 2, negative responses to candidate pairs 1 or 2, and neutral or impartial responses to the two candidates. To facilitate research observations, data processing uses the Nvivo12 plus application with the following results:

**Table 1.** Analysis of public responses in the comments column on the debate broadcasts of the 2020 Ponorogo elections

	Community Response	Negative Candidate Number 1	Negative Candidate Number 2	Neutral	Positive Candidate Number 1	Positive Candidate Number 2	Total
Facebook	172	28	23	35	47	52	357
Youtubee	176	27	32	67	57	56	415
<b>Total</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>772</b>

Source: Data processed from Nvivo12 plus, 2020

From the results of the coding that has been done, there are 772 responses with details of 357 community responses from Facebook and 415 responses from YouTube, the coding is adjusted to predetermined categories. By getting the results for each indicator as follows:



**Figure 1.** Public response to public debate shows on Facebook and YouTube, data processed from Nvivo12 plus, 2020

### **a. Positive Response**

The results of data processing showed that there were 208 positive responses given by the community, candidate pair number 1 (Sugiri and Lisdyarita) received as many as 104 positive responses, with details of 57 positive responses from YouTube and 47 positive responses from Facebook, while candidate pair number 2 (Ipong and Bambang) received 108 positive responses with details of 56 positive responses from YouTube and 52 positive responses from Facebook.

Positive responses have positive meanings for each pair of candidates, examples of positive responses given such as praising, supporting, defending, etc. (Asih & Rosit, 2018). Some examples of positive comments or responses given by the community are as follows: "From the beginning, Mr. Sugiri's calm speech, my hunch was that the Regent of Ponorogo was changing", "Panggih Ipong ... 02", "The next Sugiri sancoko, Regent of Ponorogo", "Panggih Ipong, the regent of Ponorogo, is smart and smart".

### **b. Negative Response**

While the negative response from the community to the two candidates was 110 responses. Candidate pair number 1 (Sugiri-Lisdia) received 55 negative responses, with 28 negative responses from Facebook and 27 negative responses from YouTube. Likewise, candidate pair number 2 (Ipong-Bambang) received 55 negative responses from the public with details, 23 negative responses from Facebook, and 32 negative responses from YouTube.

Negative responses are responses that are given by the community, which are comments that give a bad score to the candidate, the assessment is given in the form of scorn, criticize, insult, etc. (Asih & Rosit, 2018). Examples such as: "janjine pripun pak ipong", "the first focus is paint", "ketoke ra dadi sampean pak ri"

### **c. Neutral Response**

The public's neutral response to the 2020 Ponorogo regent candidate debate shows 102 responses or comments are consisting of 35 neutral responses from Facebook and 67 neutral responses from YouTube, in providing a neutral response, it means that the community is impartial between the two parties. (Asih & Rosit, 2018). Example: "Come on, don't forget to vote according to your conscience, not because you say don't because of the contents. Come on Ponorogo, advance my regency ", " My prayers whoever becomes the regent of Ponorogo, hopefully, it can prosper and advance Ponorogo in all fields "

Of the many neutral responses given, the average community hopes that the elected Regent and Deputy Regent of Ponorogo can make Ponorogo a better 2020 and convey a message to pay attention to the debate and vote according to their conscience.

The various responses were given by the people of Ponorogo during the 2020 election debates starting from the first to the last round certainly did not appear immediately, but there are factors. If it is related to the stages of forming the public response that is expressed Nimmo (2010), can be described as follows: first, namely disputes that become issues, the emergence of news that brought down both parties which later could influence the public's view of the candidate. Like the news about the affair, this issue occurs in candidate number two (Ipong Muchlisoni) who is a stronghold, this issue is quite widespread in the ears of the public. This is evidenced by the existence of one negative comment which alludes to this problem.

The second is political leadership. These two pairs of candidates for Regent of Ponorogo both have track records in politics, candidate number one (Sugiri Sancoko) is a member of the provincial DPRD and candidate number two (Ipong Muchlisoni) is the

Regent of Ponorogo during 2015-2020 this is the reason for the community. in giving a positive response as well as a negative response to both pairs of candidates. With previous experience leading the community, it becomes easier to assess the candidate, this is evidenced by the large number of negative and positive responses given by the community to both candidates.

Third, personal interpretation and social considerations. Interpretation is an assessment or impression of someone's actions for what has been done. During the first public debate, candidate number 2 (Ipong Muchlisoni) took off his mask, this made the public comment that he did not comply with health protocols.

The last one is the availability factor of expressing opinions or responses in the public, social media provides its own space for the community so that people tend to be more daring to express their opinions, by simply typing in the comments column provided. The responses were given by the community in the debate show varied, some voiced support, blasphemies, insults, invitations, etc.

The four stages or factors are following the data obtained so that this study strengthens Nimmo's theory of the stages or factors forming the response (Nimmo, 2010). These factors are the same as stimuli or stimuli to form an opinion. This is under the SOR theory that a response is formed from a Stimulus-Organism-Response (Monanda, R., & Nurjanah, 2017).

A stimulus is a stimulus that is formed to cause an effect. The stimuli found in this study were internal and external factors. Internal factors are a stimulus or influence that comes from within during the implementation of the debate, such as what people see, hear, and feel when watching online debates, for example regarding assertiveness in delivering arguments, the behavior of debate participants, conveying the vision and mission of the debate participants, etc. External factors are stimuli that come from outside the debate. Such as experiences, influences from other people, issues, or news. For example, the experience felt when being led by camp number 2 during the previous period, the influence of invitations from organizations, being consumed by hoax news so that they disliked one party,

Organisms are communicants or message recipients, the Ponorogo community is an organism in this election debate. They receive a message from the stimulus that has been obtained, and then the organism will process the message and form a response. In this study, researchers found various kinds of responses, namely positive responses, negative responses, and neutral responses (Table 1).

In the live broadcast of the 2020 Pilkada online debate, researchers saw that the level of political participation of the Ponorogo community was quite high in participating in the online debate. In the first debate on Youtube Sakti TV, there were 63 thousand views and 517 comments (Sakti TV, 2020), the second debate on Sakti Tv's YouTube was watched 41 thousand times and 317 comments (Sakti TV, 2020b). And the third debate, live streaming on Facebook, KPU Ponorogo, there were 5.1 thousand views and 594 comments (KPU Ponorogo, 2020b). This enthusiasm is compared to the number of permanent voters in Ponorogo Regency 2020 with a total of 759,045 people (KPU Ponorogo, 2020a) then it is quite participatory but less active in responding. The number of viewers reached tens of thousands but those who gave responses were only hundreds and even those who responded were mostly their success teams or supporters whose aim was to influence other voters, by giving positive responses to the chosen party and giving negative responses to the opposing party. In addition, there are many responses that reply to comments to blaspheme each other, so that in terms of response to comments, the community is not very active in participating.

The purpose of online public debates broadcast on social media is to provide information and describe the candidate's figure through arguments, ideas, and ideas that have been issued by the candidates (Lidiawati, L., Saman, S., & Sanulita, 2018). Based on the response that has been given by the public in the comments column, it can be seen that the response of the public is that many people do not evaluate the candidates and do not pay attention to the content or message of the debate, but more people voice their support and drop opponents so that the live broadcast of the debate. used by supporters as a place to influence or provoke, not to judge the content of the debate. During the debate broadcast, the candidates carried out the acclaim, attack, defense strategy (Iskandar, 2020), By looking at the responses given by the community, the candidates succeeded in influencing the community as evidenced by the comments that responded to the strategy carried out. Such as a response about attacking an opponent so that the supporter participates by commenting on bringing down the opponent.

#### IV. Conclusion

This research can conclude that in the 2020 Ponorogo Pilkada online debate that has been broadcast live or broadcast live on YouTube and Facebook in the first, second, and third debates, there are many Ponorogo people who have joined in live broadcasts on social media, various responses or responses given by the public in the comments column when participating in debate shows.

The results of the study found that there were positive responses, negative responses, and neutral responses. Both candidates received positive and negative responses with only a slight difference in the number of positive responses and the same number of negative responses. The negative response to pair number 2 mostly leads to a lack of previous performance, because candidate number 2 is a defensive stronghold. While the negative responses were given to camp number 1 mostly lead to a response to debate strategies that carry out attacks (Attack). Meanwhile, many neutral opinions are given by the public lead to hopes for Ponorogo in the future. In the Ponorogo regional election in 2020, there was quite fierce competition between the two parties and their supporters, they argued against each other to bring down each other.

And the results of the study also found a correspondence between the response theory and the responses that have been given by the community, and in this response, it was also seen how the level of enthusiasm for community participation in participating in democracy took place through online debate, and there was a mismatch between the objectives of the debate and the responses given because of the utilization. online debate media by supporters to influence society and bring down opponents by ignoring the meaning of the two candidates' vision and mission.

The results of the Ponorogo regional election vote-counting in 2020 obtained that the Sugiri-Lisdya-rita pair were superior to the Ipong-Bambang pair, this happened because of the dynamic nature of society and of course influenced by several factors. The community has considerations and choices to determine. At least the research can describe the public's response to participating in political participation in online debates in 2020.

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