



2025

Public Communication and Purchasing Power: a Cause and Effect Analysis



Analyzing the Effect of Public Communications Our Purchasing Power

Executive Summary

Eid al-Fitr 2025 marks the first Eid under Indonesia's new president, President Prabowo Subianto. At the outset of his presidency, discourse around priority policies—including plans to raise Value-Added Tax (VAT) from 11 per cent to 12 per cent, inception and funding of *Danantara*, and state budget efficiency amidst the free nutritious meal (*makanan bergizi gratis*/MBG) program and other economic projects have drawn mixed public reactions. While some expressed support, majority voiced dissatisfaction and criticism.

This study analyzes how the government's public communication, particularly in response to economic and political issues, impacts the Indonesian public's purchasing power. The research focuses on trends in mainstream media and social media coverage, examining the interplay between policy narratives, public perception, and their effects on public spending behavior.

To assess purchasing power trends, the study compares media coverage (mainstream and social media) during the Eid al-Fitr period of 2023, 2024, and 2025. Additionally, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted with economists,

media experts, and association representatives to gather deeper exploratory insights on the issues.

The findings reveal significant differences in both mainstream media reporting and social media discourse across the three Eid al-Fitr periods. The 2025 Eid al-Fitr coverage, particularly within the 90 days preceding the holiday, was marked with a significant greater emphasis on political discussions compared to previous years. Furthermore, FGD participants identified shortcomings in the current administration's policy communication, noting that inconsistent messaging and lack of transparency may have contributed to public uncertainty. This communication approach appears to have influenced the public's perception on economic stability, which ultimately affects purchasing power.

Based on these findings, the study proposes three (3) primary recommendations: first, the adoption of risk-based communication strategies; second, more efficient presentation of government plans; and third, systematic mapping of key stakeholders as primary target audiences for policy communications.

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I. Background

Indonesia’s economy is primarily driven by household consumption, which remains the largest contributor to gross domestic product (GDP). According to Statistics Indonesia, household final consumption expenditure (HFCE)—the index used to measure household spending—accounted for 54.04 per cent of GDP in 2024 (Statistics Indonesia, 2025). Household consumption also recorded a 4.94 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) increase in 2024, up from 4.82 per cent growth in 2023.

Economic growth follows a non-linear trajectory marked by frequent fluctuations, even within quarterly periods. This volatility inevitably affects household consumption as the economy’s primary engine. Indonesia recorded 5.03 per cent economic growth in 2024, which shows no significant improvement since 2014. The first quarter of 2024 saw a quarter-to-quarter (q-to-q) decline before rebounding in Q2, coinciding with the Eid al-Fitr holiday period and the 2024 General Election (see Figure 1).

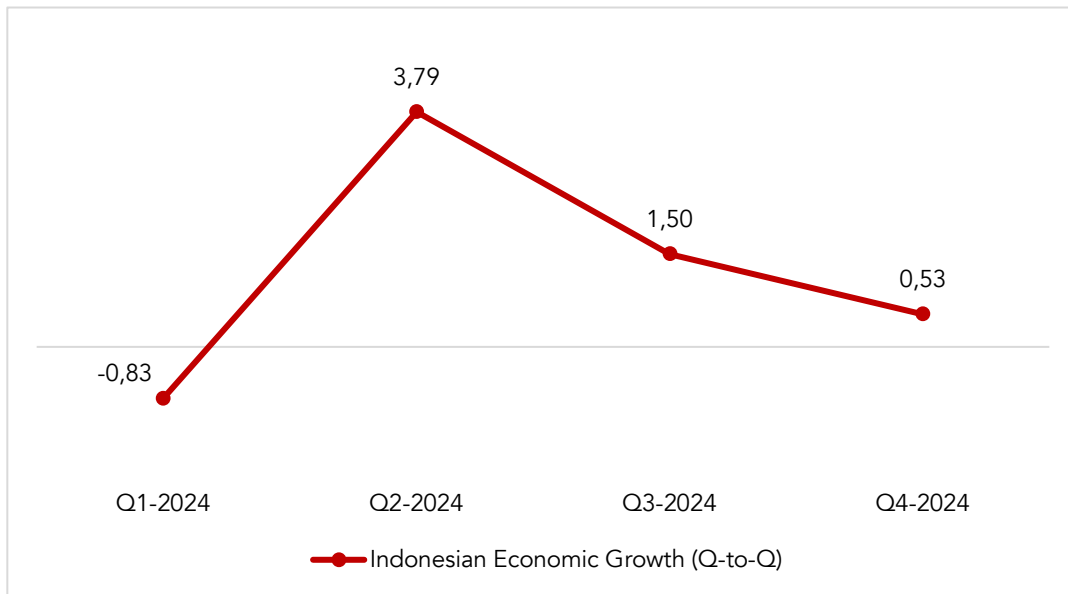


Figure 1 2024 Indonesian Economic Growth in percent (q-to-q)

Inflation and household expenditures typically experience a significant increase in the periods leading up to and during Eid al-Fitr. However, numerous reports have indicated a stagnation in public purchasing power during Eid al-Fitr 2025. Among these, studies conducted by the Institute for Economic and Social Research at the University of Indonesia's Faculty of Economics and Business (LPEM FEB UI), along with the Center of Reform on Economics (CORE) Indonesia, identified a notable trend of stagnating or declining purchasing power this year compared to previous years (LPEM FEB UI, 2025).

Eid al-Fitr 2025 represents the first Eid under Indonesia's new president, Prabowo Subianto, following a decade of leadership by President Joko Widodo. Political considerations have significantly influenced economic discussions since the beginning of the new administration, with various policy initiatives generating mixed public reactions. From the outset of his presidency, Prabowo Subianto has proposed several priority policies,

including plans to increase Value-Added Tax (VAT) from 11 per cent to 12 percent, establishment, and the funding of Danantara, and state budget efficiency amidst the free nutritious meal (*makanan bergizi gratis*/MBG) program and other economic projects. These policy directives have elicited diverse responses from both experts and the public, with some expressions of support but predominantly characterized by dissatisfaction and criticism.

Amidst these public discourse, experts and academics have expressed growing concerns regarding the government's communication approach, which has been perceived as lacking transparency and responsiveness to criticism (Maulida, 2025). This communication style has been further criticized for failing to adequately address core issues, provide clear policy direction, or offer decisive solutions. The resulting climate of uncertainty has compelled both the public and investors to exercise greater caution in their spending and consumption

patterns (Lakshmi & Mariska, 2025).

It is crucial that the government's policies are supported by effective public communication, which plays a critical role in shaping public perception, particularly regarding purchasing power. In times of economic instability, public communication becomes vital in maintaining public trust in the prevailing situation (Checkley & Piris, 2022). While some studies indicate that public communication tends to decline alongside a country's economic performance, clear and transparent information dissemination remains essential to bolster public confidence in economic conditions and encourage increased consumption (Benedictis-Kessner, 2022). In contrary, public communications that are inaccurate or ambiguous in nature can further erode public confidence,

particularly impacting the weakening of purchasing power.

Examining the correlation between public communications, economic conditions, and public purchasing power, this study aims to analyze how economic situations and government policy communications affect public purchasing power. This study examines spending behavior and purchasing power in Indonesia during the 90-day period leading up to Eid al-Fitr in 2023, 2024, and 2025, while analyzing key influencing factors categorized into economic conditions, policies and regulations, market and price perceptions, and psychological aspects. Furthermore, this study will employ Communication and Uncertainty Management Theory to help explaining how economic uncertainty, exacerbated by non-transparent public communications, affects public spending behavior.

“Indonesia's economic conditions are experiencing stagnation in people's purchasing power ahead of Eid al-Fitr 2025. This condition has raised concerns among the public, especially with the government's communication style, which does not provide clear direction and firm solutions.”

II. Methodology

2.1 Analytical Framework

The information and communication disseminated by the government play a critical role in influencing individual decision-making process as a part of broader societal consumptions and savings behavior. Socioeconomic uncertainty, compounded by limited or unclear government communication, pushes individuals to hesitate in making consumption-driven choices, often opting to preserve financial resources.

This dynamic aligns with Communication and Uncertainty Management Theory, which examines how individuals process and respond to uncertainty stemming from received information, including public policy communication. Initially developed by Dale Brashers (2001), the theory explores the mechanisms through which people navigate ambiguity in high-stakes scenarios, such as health crises, political instability, or economic volatility (Brashers, 2001).

Individual decision-making relies on certainty—a state that is only achievable when situational details are unambiguous, information is transparent, one feels confident in their understanding. (Babrow, 2006). Consequently, effective communication must prioritize uncertainty reduction and management, thereby creating actionable frameworks for individuals and communities to make informed choices.

The new government, along with emerging social, economic, and political issues coinciding with the Eid al-Fitr momentum, has left the public in a state of uncertainty. This stems from the public's habitual increase in consumption during Ramadan, now juxtaposed with dynamic social, economic, and political challenges. The uncertainty is further amplified by the lack of government's communication in addressing these issues, where rather than reassuring the public, the

government has largely disregarded widespread concerns.

According to Brashers, how individuals respond to uncertainty depends on two factors: appraisal and emotion. Appraisal refers to how one assesses the relevance of a situation to their life. Consequently, emotional responses manifest in four forms: positive, negative, neutral, or mixed. How individuals react to uncertainty in their lives depends on the framing or delivery of the information they receive. For instance, Brashers argues that a positive emotional response may arise if uncertainty is presented as an opportunity, and vice versa.

Faced with economic uncertainty and lack of government communication, individuals seek ways to manage this ambiguity, often making what they perceive as a rational decision—such as saving money—that eventually leads to reduced consumption. If this pattern persists, slowed economic circulation will ultimately impact economic growth.

The theory demonstrates that how the government communicates about a crisis critically shapes public reaction. If messages are delivered clearly, positively, and accompanied by solutions, the public is less likely to panic, and consumption activity remains stable. Conversely, poorly managed uncertainty can worsen an economic crisis due to drastic shifts in spending behavior.

2.2 Research Methodology

This study employs a descriptive approach to understand and analyze the close relationship between public communication and the Indonesian public's purchasing power leading up to Eid al-Fitr. A mixed-methods research design was

implemented, combining quantitative data from mainstream and social media analysis with qualitative data obtained through Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The sequential explanatory technique was used, where quantitative data

was collected first, then supplemented with qualitative data (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). This technique allows quantitative data to provide a broad overview of a phenomenon, while qualitative data serves as complementary, confirmatory, and supplementary to the quantitative data (Cresswell, 2003).

Big data analysis through Datamap Tools was used to collect data on public behavior, preferences, trends, and sentiment across media platforms. The study sampled 8,473 mainstream media outlets in

Indonesia and social media platforms including X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube by collecting specific keywords within the 90-day or three (3) month period leading up to Eid al-Fitr in 2023, 2024, and 2025. Keyword-based searches were used to identify the most discussed issues across four categories (see Table 1) in Bahasa Indonesia. Data collection was conducted over one (1) month from February 14 to March 14, 2025, while the cut-off date for 2025 data was set at 30 days before Eid al-Fitr.

Table 1 Categories and keywords for the study in Bahasa Indonesia

Categories	Keywords
Economic Factor (<i>biaya hidup, stabilitas pendapatan, inflasi, ketidakpastian ekonomi</i>)	<i>harga barang, harga pangan, inflasi, penghasilan, ketidakpastian ekonomi, resesi, upah, pajak, suku bunga, subsidi, PHK, pemotongan gaji, pendapatan, biaya hidup, BBM, nilai tukar rupiah, daya saing industri</i>
Psychological Factor (<i>kepercayaan konsumen, kehati-hatian finansial, ketidakpastian masa depan</i>)	<i>takut belanja, menunda pembelian, mengurangi pengeluaran, hemat uang, menabung, kepercayaan ekonomi, pesimis ekonomi, khawatir masa depan, ketidakpastian keuangan, kecemasan finansial, keputusan keuangan, enggan belanja, waspada resesi, perencanaan keuangan</i>

Categories	Keywords
Market & Price Perception (<i>menunggu diskon, persepsi harga, kepercayaan terhadap tren pasar</i>)	<i>harga mahal, harga wajar, menunggu diskon, harga barang, harga tidak stabil, promo, promosi, harga sebelum lebaran, menunggu flash sale, baju baru, tren baju lebaran, makanan berbuka, belanja make up, mudik, pulang kampung, tiket kereta, tiket pesawat, harga BBM</i>
Government Policies & Regulation (<i>subsidi, pajak, regulasi ekonomi, bantuan sosial</i>)	<i>bantuan sosial, subsidi, pajak, kebijakan ekonomi, regulasi, kebijakan fiskal, bantuan pemerintah, anggaran negara, konsumsi domestik, kebijakan moneter, ketahanan ekonomi, efisiensi anggaran, pengetatan anggaran</i>

Gathered data underwent processing including filtering, sentiment analysis, topic modeling, and trend detection. The data was then analyzed through signal identification (negative, positive, or neutral) using comparative analysis, thematic coding, correlation analysis, recovery indicator, and market sentiment determination methods. In this context, positive signals included news containing affirmative and supportive keywords regarding issues and policies, while negative signals included news containing pessimistic and unsupportive keywords about issues and policies.

Data collection focused on identifying patterns of negative signals that served as barriers to public spending, such as economic uncertainty, high prices, unstable incomes, and strict fiscal policies. The main observed factors included negative signals from economic factors, market, and price perceptions, as well as government policies and regulations. The focus on negative signals tends to be more organic, allowing analysis of sentiments and news coverage beyond that are less subject to reporting bias.

Qualitative exploration was also conducted through an FGD involving eight participants,

consisting of economic experts, media representatives, and association members, held on March 18, 2025, in Jakarta. The FGD focused on in-depth discussion of

issues and policy recommendations that relevant policymakers could implement to address the decline in public purchasing power.

III. Findings

This study gathered quantitative data covering mainstream media and social media during the 90-day period leading up to Eid al-Fitr 2023 to 2025. The research was further elaborated through an in-person FGD involving economic experts, media practitioners, and representatives from associations

based on their respective field of expertise and experiences. Government representatives were invited to fulfil the pentahelix approach to the discussion, but on the day of the FGD, the invited resource person informed that they were unable to attend.

3.1 Eid al-Fitr Trends 2023-2025

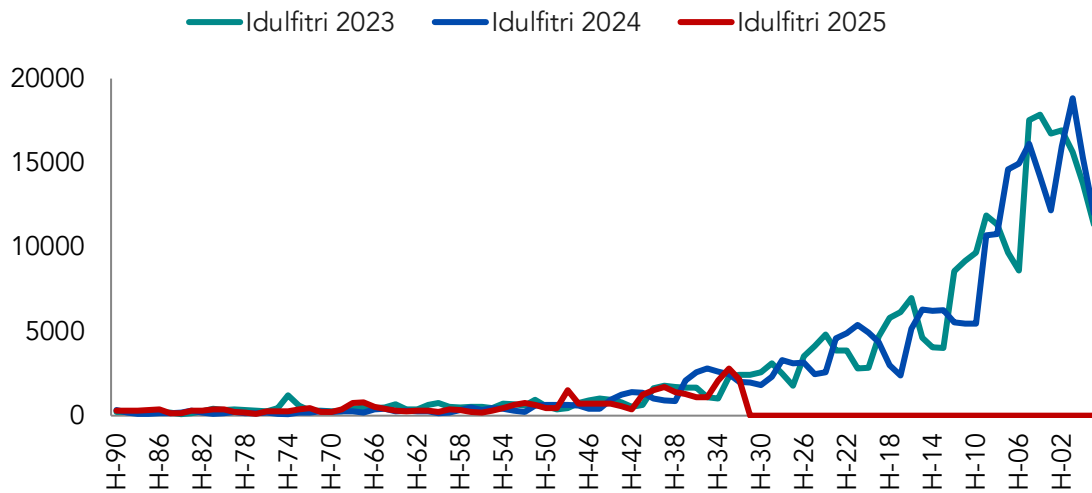


Figure 2 Eid al-Fitr media coverage trends 2023-2025

Figure 2 above shows consistent trends in media coverage volume preceding Eid al-Fitr over the last three (3) years. Coverage consistently increases approaching

the Eid al-Fitr celebration, starting from 30 days before Eid al-Fitr, with a sharp spike occurring 10-15 days prior, and peaking on the first and second days of Eid. This increase is

driven by factors such as religious discussions, shopping activities,

travel planning, and cultural-related discussions.

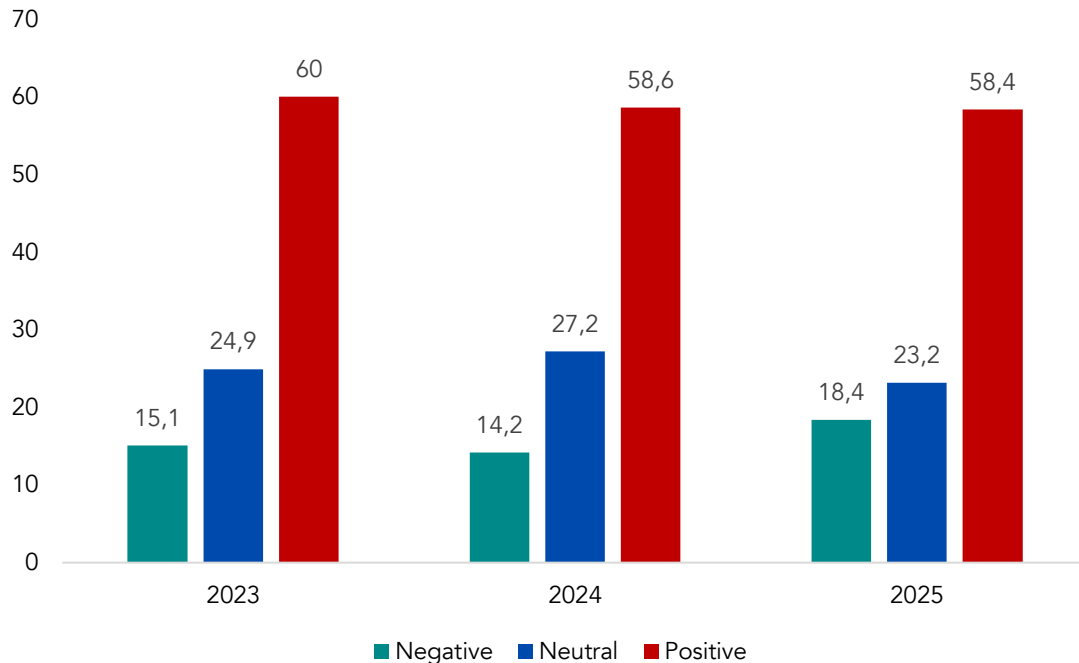


Figure 3 Eid al-Fitr news sentiment 2023–2025

When examining public sentiment, the data shows a continuous, though not significant, decline in positive sentiment signals from 2023 to 2025. Similarly, negative sentiment increased by 4.2 percent in 2025 compared to the same period in 2024.

Positive sentiment remained dominant partly because media

coverage was predominantly framed by government narratives that consistently reassured the public about stable economic conditions. This mainstream media narrative contrasted sharply with social media discussions, where new terminologies like *Indonesia gelap* emerged, criticizing government policies, and questioning economic directions.

	<i>Isu Positif</i>	<i>Isu Netral**</i>	<i>Isu Negatif</i>
2023	Diskon & Promosi Program Mudik Gratis Pemulihan Ekonomi Amal & Filantropi	Mudik Inflasi Tunjangan Hari Raya (THR) Rekomendasi Makanan & Minuman	Lalu Lintas Kecelakaan Lalu Lintas Belanja Offline
2024	Diskon & Promosi Program Mudik Gratis Tren Belanja Amal & Filantropi	Mudik Massal Inflasi Tunjangan Hari Raya (THR) Resep Makanan & Minuman Belanja Offline	Lalu Lintas Kecelakaan Lalu Lintas
2025	Diskon & Promosi Amal & Filantropi	Resep Makanan & Minuman Mudik Massal Inflasi Pembelian Ritel Tren Pembelian	Kenaikan Harga PHK Massal Tunjangan Hari Raya (THR)

Table 2 Topics of discussion throughout Eid al-Fitr 2023–2025

Rising commodity prices, mass layoffs (*Pemutusan Hubungan Kerja/PHK*), and holiday allowance (*Tunjangan Hari Raya/THR*) payments for informal workers dominated headlines, as shown in Table 2. Social media interactions further highlighted economic uncertainty, leading to restrained public spending and consumption.

Citing CORE Indonesia’s report *Awas Anomali Konsumsi Jelang Lebaran 2025*, shopping trends before Eid al-Fitr remained sluggish through the third week of Ramadan—an anomaly that reflects Indonesia’s current domestic economic strain (CORE Indonesia, 2025).

During the FGD, participants noted that signals of weakening purchasing power were also evident from the sharp decline in insurance premium purchases, while conversely, the trend of premature withdrawals from unit-linked premiums reinforced the fact that cash is considered king by the public. Participants also shared data from banking news observations indicating that customer accounts with balances below Rp100 million experienced a drastic decline. This is seen as an indicator that account holders with limited balances chose to liquidate their savings for daily needs. On the other hand, there was a surge in accounts with balances above Rp5

billion. Experts interpret this phenomenon as investors' reluctance to place funds in various investment instruments, opting instead for more liquid savings.

Furthermore, FGD participants concurred that the widespread news of mass layoffs (PHK) influenced public sentiment, leading them to restrain spending and prioritize liquid savings.

Another speaker highlighted the number of canceled special Hajj packages, allegedly due to the inability of patrons to pay the travel costs, particularly amidst the continuously weakening rupiah. Even the lack of vibrant '*takjil wars*' compared to previous Ramadans serves as strong evidence of the current low consumer purchasing interest.

Speakers agreed that the government's short of proper public communication in addressing existing issues to reassure the public drives the public to reconsider their spending. The prevalence of news about mass layoffs, such as at Sritex,

ahead of Eid al-Fitr 2025 became one of the psychological factors influencing people to be more cautious with their expenditures. Household fund allocation tends to be focused only on necessities. However, association representatives noted that there are many examples showing that purchasing power remain stable but is being eroded by declining confidence in economic conditions amidst the government's ability to navigate ongoing issues.

3.2 Identification of Weakening Purchasing Power Based on Trends

This section observes trends indicating public purchasing power during the Eid al-Fitr period from 2023 to 2025, relating to three (3)

main factors: economic factors, government policies and regulations, and market and price perceptions.

3.2.1 Public Purchasing Power and Economic Factors

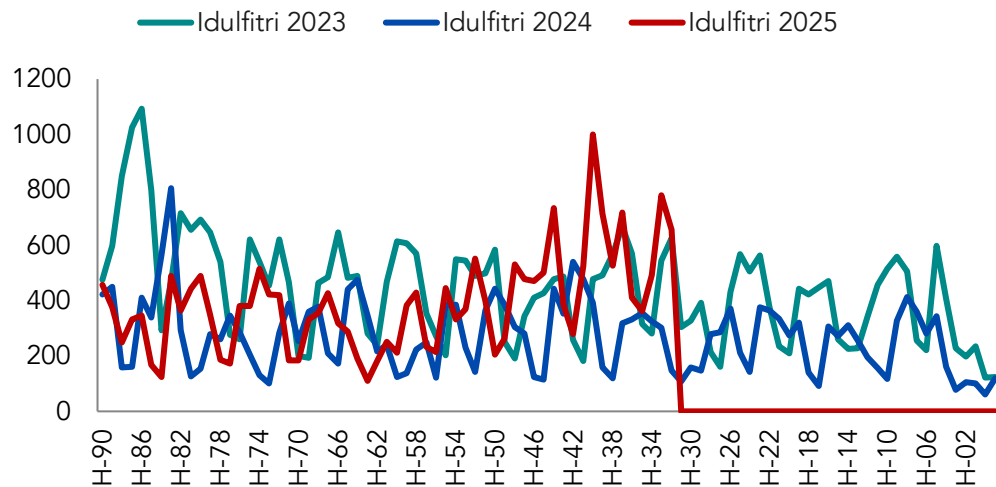


Figure 4 Negative signals on economic factors during Eid al-Fitr 2023-2025

The figure above shows two spikes in negative signals regarding economic factors that were higher than the average news coverage in 2023 and 2025. Upon further investigation, the negative signal trend in 2023 was driven by

concerns about economic uncertainty during the post-COVID-19 recovery. This was considered normal, given that throughout the COVID-19 handling period, the government provided numerous economic stimulus packages to

maintain economic stability. Consequently, when government ceases economic stimulus, the momentum was disrupted, and concerns increased. Nevertheless, these concerns were quickly alleviated throughout 2024.

Meanwhile, the spike in negative signals in February 2025 is suspected to be a ripple effect of the mass layoffs at Sritex, which impacted over 10,000 employees. Market and public sentiment became increasingly volatile after the government subsequently announced budget efficiency policies, followed by the weakening of the rupiah exchange rate.

During the FGD held on March 18, there was a moment when the discussion was halted due a breaking news from the stock market announcing a trading halt due to a 5 percent plunge in the Indonesia Stock Exchange Composite Index (IHSG). Such a decline had only occurred during the COVID-19 period, which was indeed considered an economic

crisis. In the current case, where there are no extraordinary events but rather small sparks across various issues, it suggests that an economic crisis might be present.

FGD participants highlighted that in this situation, the government's frequent denial of these issues is perceived to be harmful. For example, when President Prabowo stated that the stock market conditions do not reflect Indonesia's economic strength. Yet the public still believes there is a strong correlation between stock market performance and economic health. A narrative that appears to downplay the ongoing situation fails to convince the public that Indonesia's economy is stable.

Association representatives argued that, fundamentally, public purchasing power remains stable. However, spending behavior heavily depends on the tone of information conveyed by government spokespersons. For instance, speakers criticized the poor public communication regarding the blended fuel (*oplosan bahan bakar mesin*) issue involving a state-owned enterprise (BUMN), which led the public to choose private fuel companies despite higher prices.

The public perceived that the government failed to convincingly explain the scandal's degree of severity. Consequently, although Indonesian consumers are generally price-sensitive, in this case, they opted for available market alternatives despite the less economical choice.

"Data analysis from the media and FGDs shows that massive economic and political news, such as news of mass layoffs, is a prominent issue in the trend leading up to Eid al-Fitr 2025."

3.2.2 Public Purchasing Power and Government Policy & Regulatory Factors

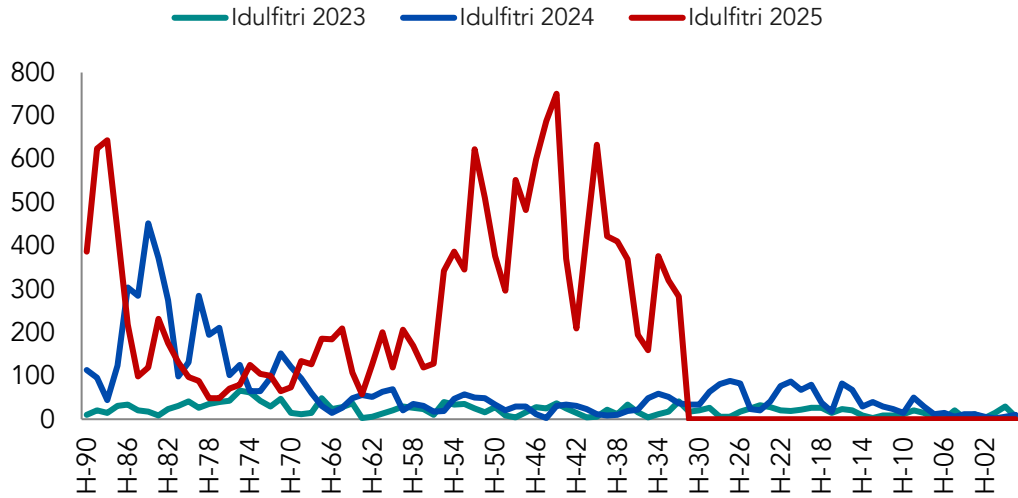


Figure 5 Negative signals of government policies and regulation during Eid al-Fitr 2023-2025

The figure above shows an anomaly in negative sentiment signals related to government policies and regulation during Eid al-Fitr 2025, when compared to the previous two (2) years which showed relatively flat trends without significant spikes.

This anomaly is driven by the increase of expectations regarding the policy direction of

the new government inaugurated in October 2024.

Meanwhile, the second spike appeared in the middle of the observation period (days 60 to 30), driven by the increase of discussions and government communications regarding the planned tax increase and budget efficiency. This was also reflected in the keywords identified by this study in both mainstream and

social media data, such as budget efficiency, budget cuts, operational costs, value-added tax increase to 12 per cent, free nutritious meal program (MBG), and *Indonesia gelap*.

These findings align with broader economic discussions on social media, including uncertainty about electricity tariff discounts and the phenomenon of long LPG queues due to LPG distribution restriction policies. Interestingly, street food purchases also became a topic of discussion on social media. Through in-depth discussions with FGD participants, the participants noted that these conversations serve as indicators of an informal recession where consumers prioritize low-expenditure consumption, similar to the lipstick effect phenomenon (MacDonald & Dildar, 2020).

Expert views during discussions highlighted how last year's policy impacts were primarily felt by educated populations or those concerned with policy issues.

However, this year, policy effects directly impacted wallets and households. For example, rising unemployment due to mass layoffs (PHK). Even for worker groups unaffected by layoffs, the prevalence of related news coverage has made them more cautious with their spending.

Participants of the FGD also emphasized the issue of 'mediocre' economic policies under turbulent times. For instance, media representatives that were present in the discussion highlighted that during the COVID-19 recovery period, the government offered policy instruments such as Income Tax (PPh) and VAT incentives that were quite successful in maintaining public purchasing power. However, current economic stimulus measures like affordable necessities, discounted tickets, and other stimulus appear to have not yet shown significant impact.

While acknowledging that incidental social assistance (*bansos*) and economic stimulus remain crucial for boosting purchasing power, FGD participants also proposed policy ideas that could potentially improve purchasing power, such as affordable food market operations sourced from local farmers, public transportation incentives during the Eid holiday period, and incentives for workers who choose not to travel home (*mudik*) to maintain productivity.

For the medium-term, participants provided several policy recommendations the government could implement, including prioritizing healthcare and education sector

development, job creation, strengthening people's economy branding, promoting local products, business installment relief, reinforcing law enforcement, eliminating uncertainty, efficiency based on zero-based budgeting, and increasing state budget allocation for public services.

Additionally, participants offered long-term suggestions such as governance and education reforms, improving communication through positive framing, economic industrialization, improving legal certainty, harmonizing upstream-to-downstream (*hulu ke hilir*) manufacturing industries, and upholding legal supremacy and enforcement.

"The government's narrative in media reports shows that the economic conditions are fine cannot convince and increase people's purchasing power."

3.2.3 Public Purchasing Power and Market and Price Perception Factors

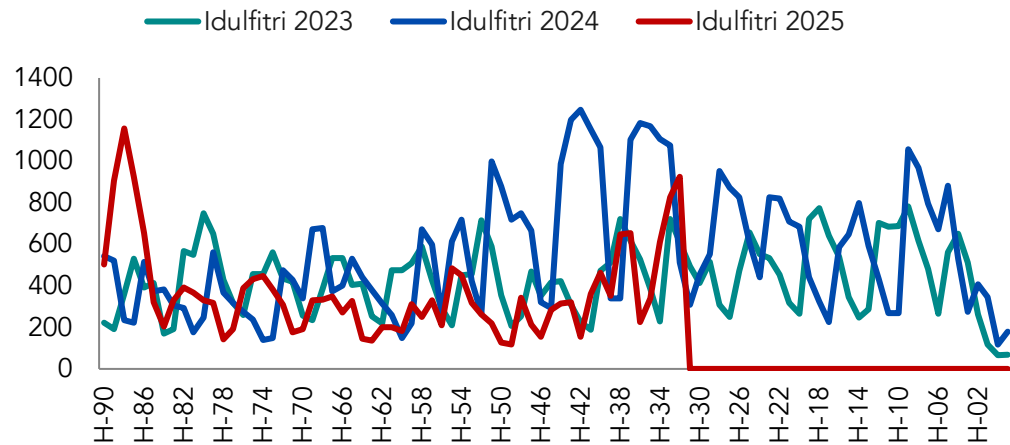


Figure 6 Negative signal on market and price perception during Eid al-Fitr 2023-2025

The negative signals regarding market and price perceptions in Figure 5 show more fluctuating news coverage volumes compared to previous years. News about market and price perceptions increased 50–30 days before Eid al-Fitr in anticipation of price hikes, then decreased closer to the holiday. This pattern was observed in 2023 but with lower exposure than in 2024, suggesting weaker enthusiasm.

During Eid al-Fitr 2024, market perceptions were influenced by policies perceived by the public to suppress purchasing power, particularly rising inflation and rice shortages and price spikes ahead of the dry season. Market perceptions during Eid al-Fitr 2025 showed a stronger-than-usual decline in signals. News trends in 2025 rarely discussed microeconomic issues, with increased focus on economic, fiscal, and monetary policy coverage.

Based on quantitative data from Eid al-Fitr 2025, topics related to market perceptions, such as discounts, were few and far between. Discussions focused more on price increases and weakening public purchasing power. Uncertainty about economic growth also became a hot topic, on par with discussions about declining volumes in packaged cooking oil measurements.

The findings from quantitative data align with the qualitative data gathered from the FGD results. Several key observations from FGD participants' responses highlight anomalies in February 2024 regarding market supply and demand that did not occur this year, including:

1. Increased sales of thrifted items (secondhand goods)
2. A discrepancy between demand and supply in the market, where businesses prepared ample stock but did not see a corresponding rise in consumer demand, forcing them to reduce inventory and

sales. This is suspected to correlate with declining public purchasing power, leading to reduced market demand.

3. A perception among sellers of products such as milk, biscuits, cheese, and packaged water that they are reluctant to maintain large inventories due to concerns about unsold goods.
4. Meat producers experienced growth in the general trade (GT) market, though not as high as the previous year (less than 50 percent).
5. Production disruptions due to strict import regulations, causing difficulties in meeting local raw material needs, especially in sugar and salt, in terms of quantity, specifications, and pricing. Some producers were forced to reduce or halt production due to difficulties in obtaining salt with the required quality.

These quantitative and qualitative findings related to economic factors, policies and regulations, and market and price perceptions align with Communication and Uncertainty Management Theory, which explains how the public manages uncertainty stemming from received information, including public policy communications

from the government. Thus far, the findings indicate that the public has responded to uncertainty with rational economic and financial logic: by slowing expenditures and increasing savings. This is evident in media discourse and coverage, which emphasizes concerns about current economic issues.

"There is an anomaly ahead of Eid al-Fitr 2025 with government policies directly affecting household consumption. Economic stimulus and government communication have not been able to influence people's purchasing power significantly."

3.3 Government Public Communication and Purchasing Power

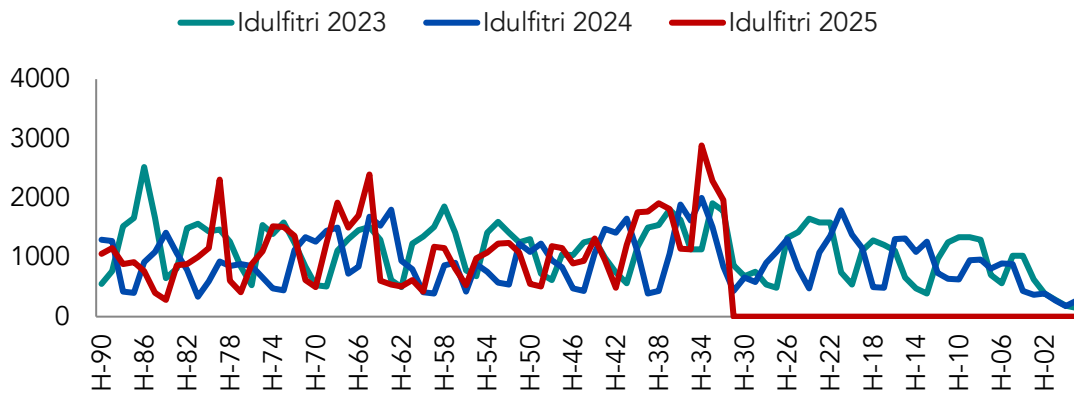


Figure 7 Economic upward trend in 2023–2025 Eid al-Fitr news coverage

The quantitative data in Figure 7 shows stable growth in media coverage, reflecting economic anticipation ahead of Eid al-Fitr to compare how government public communication influenced holiday sentiment in 2023, 2024, and 2025. Gradual increases in coverage suggested relatively stable public confidence and purchasing power before Eid al-Fitr 2023. Meanwhile, Eid al-Fitr 2024 trends exhibited more volatility with significant fluctuation.

Overall, government narratives reflected in coverage emphasized key points: stable economic

conditions, economic growth, reduced unemployment, and an expanding middle class.

Positive sentiment coverage peaked at nearly 3,000 articles on 34 days before Eid al-Fitr 2025, a 44 per cent increase from 2,000 articles in 2024. Compared to 2023's 1,132 articles, this represents 154 per cent growth between 2023-2025. While media coverage serves as an economic sentiment proxy, distinguishing between actual market activity and perception management remains crucial when analyzing 2025's pre-Eid al-Fitr purchasing power trends. The observed anomaly in holiday

narratives is deemed to have more politicized tone.

media hashtags criticizing officials' perceived empathy-lacking rhetoric.

Aligned with quantitative data, qualitative FGD findings emphasized how government communication shapes purchasing behavior. Participant's observations revealed that certain public policies generated negative impacts and public backlash, evidence by social

Conversely, Figure 8 shows rising psychological signals reflecting economic caution and shopping hesitancy. During Eid al-Fitr 2023, coverage remained relatively calm and stable without excessive financial/economic discussion volatility.

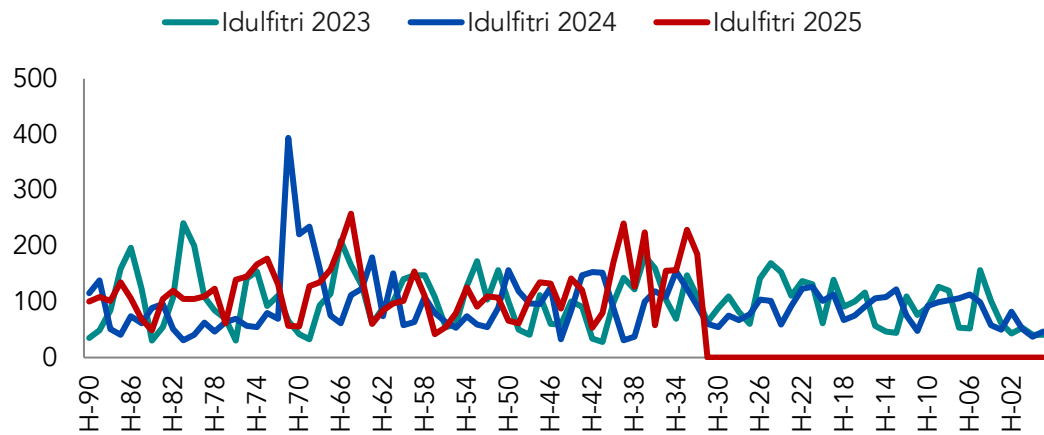


Figure 8 Psychological upward trend during Eid al-Fitr 2023-2025

In contrast, Eid al-Fitr 2024 exhibited significant fluctuations. Several sharp spikes indicated growing uncertainty about financial and economic conditions. Eid al-Fitr 2024 occurred during an election year, with the Presidential Election

taking place in February, two (2) months before the Eid al-Fitr. Media coverage peaked between 71 to 69 days before Eid al-Fitr 2024, reflecting heightened consumer concerns about economic issues amid political turbulence.

For Eid al-Fitr 2025, trends showed more pronounced declining signals. This decrease signifies strong psychological caution, suggesting either declining sentiment or growing public skepticism about economic/financial matters. The erosion of trust and increased uncertainty underscore the critical need for government or market interventions to shape public perception and economic behavior preceding Eid al-Fitr.

The quantitative psychological data correlates strongly with counterproductive government policy communication. This relates to improper use of words and narratives that exacerbated public anxiety. It is in line with the public perception of the government's policy making process which is viral-driven, exemplified by the 12 per cent tax policy that was retracted on New Year's Eve following public backlash. Furthermore, official responses to hashtags like #KaburAjaDulu that questions the public's 'patriotism' and repeated use of

pejorative/negative terms (e.g., *ndasmu/your head*) reflected inappropriate public communication.

The government's method of communicating crises fundamentally shapes public response. When messages are delivered clearly, positively, and with solutions, the public tends to remain calm and consumption activity stays stable. Conversely, poorly managed uncertainty can worsen economic crises through drastic shifts in spending behavior.

Another perspective emphasizes that particularly in current economic conditions, public communication plays a vital psychological role tied closely to public trust levels. Effective public communication requires competence, especially in empathy. Experts argue that the government must rigorously oversee and manage spokespeople to prioritize public communication theory principles: ethos (credibility), pathos (emotional connection), and logos (logical evidence). Some

government spokespeople still deliver decentralized narratives that create negative perceptions in policy communication. For example, a case involving a Presidential Office Communications spokesperson using the term "common folk" (*rakyat jelata*) to describe lower-income groups.

Therefore, the government must ensure all spokespersons emphasize empathy, employ appropriate diction, and deliver uniform, clear messaging to prevent public confusion and detrimental consequences.

"Market perceptions ahead of Eid al-Fitr 2025 include price increases and weakening of people's purchasing power, resulting in a difference between market supply and demand."

IV. Conclusion

Based on the findings presented in Chapter 3, this study draws three (3) key conclusions:

1. Media coverage and discussion of public purchasing power consistently increased, with a sharp spike in the 10-15 days leading up to Eid al-Fitr. Unlike previous years, this year's coverage trend showed negative sentiment and increased discussion of political-economic issues. The research revealed distinct characteristics of Eid al-Fitr 2025 compared to the two (2) preceding years, partly due to increasingly polarized public opinion potentially influenced by government media narratives. Rising prices, mass layoffs, and economic crises emerged as dominant issues driving negative sentiment.

Quantitative and qualitative data demonstrated that unaddressed waves of negative news can amplify public anxiety. While Eid al-Fitr typically correlates with

increased spending patterns, this year saw restrained consumption due to overwhelming information flows exacerbating economic uncertainty.

2. This study identifies economic conditions, government policies/regulations, and market/price perceptions as critical indicators affecting purchasing power. This is evidence by the correlation between economic realities and media discourse. Notably, media discussions broadly covered implemented economic policies rather than focusing on specific issues. Topics like layoffs, proposed tax increases, budget efficiency, rupiah exchange rates, economic crises, and *Indonesia gelap* dominated Eid al-Fitr 2025 conversations.

These issues collectively shaped public perceptions of markets and pricing, reflected in increased discussion of macro-

level issues (unemployment, policies, economic growth) versus micro-level factors (savings, market prices, supply-demand fluctuations) compared to previous years.

Discussion participants assessed current policy packages as generally appropriate but emphasized the need for improved communication framing to ensure public comprehension and reassurance. They recommended unified messaging through designated spokespersons employing precise diction, empathy, and effective criticism management.

3. Declining purchasing power strongly correlates with eroding public trust during Eid al-Fitr 's typical spending period, compounded by psychological factors. Quantitative data

revealed strong psychological caution signals reflecting shopping hesitancy and diminished financial confidence. These psychological factors stem from public interpretations of current conditions, making government policy communication crucial for reducing uncertainty that influences consumption behavior, particularly during Eid al-Fitr.

Consequently, FGD participants stressed the need for **public communication that embraces ethos (credibility), pathos (emotional connection), and logos (logical evidence). Beyond these principles, developing spokespersons' communication skills remains vital to mitigate psychological impacts, especially given current economic conditions.**

V. Recommendation

Based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected and analyzed, several recommendations can be considered by relevant stakeholders in formulating or refining public communication policies, particularly those impacting public purchasing power, including:

1. **Prioritizing risk-based communication.** In less ideal economic situations such as during a weakening public purchasing power, public policy communicators must ensure mitigation measures are implemented by first assessing potential risks arising from communication materials. Mapping public reactions and market responses to each statement should be conducted to better control impacts.
2. **Efficient communication of government policies.** Effective public communication means neither persistently reassuring the public by dismissing existing realities nor

exaggerating efforts made. As noted in discussions, experts argue that government policy packages should be communicated more clearly, straightforwardly, and with maintained empathy.

In situations where the public restricts spending due to economic concerns, the government must transparently explain completed and planned measures to restore public trust.

3. **Mapping stakeholders as primary target audiences.** The government should prioritize key stakeholders as main communication targets. For instance, while closed-door meetings with investors may already occur, controlling media narratives remains essential to maintain confidence levels.

The same applies to other stakeholders like Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs), including policy experts and academics

frequently sought by media for situational analyses. Ensuring these key opinion leaders absorb policy plans and

directions serves as a strategic method to manage emerging narratives.

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