

EVALUATING VIOLANTS OF THRIFTING POLICIES ON ONLINE PLATFORMS: A PUBLIC SENTIMENT ANALYSIS THOROUGH INSTAGRAM

Ami Afriyani^{1)*}, Muhammad Taufiq Hatta Wibowo²⁾

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia^{1)}*

Universitas Al-Ghifari Bandung, Indonesia²⁾

Email: amiafriyani@uinsgd.ac.id ^{1)}*

Article History

Received: 22 June 2026

Accepted: 22 July 2026

Published: 06 August 2026

Abstract

The phenomenon of "thrifting" has become both a lifestyle and an economic lifeline for segments of society particularly small business owners sparking intense public debate when the government reaffirmed restrictions on the import and online sale of used clothing. Within the framework of public policy evaluation, public opinion emerging in digital spaces serves as a form of feedback, reflecting the extent to which a policy is perceived as well-targeted, fair, and responsive to the needs of affected communities. This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining descriptive analysis in the discussion with quantitative analysis of sentiment data processed from Instagram. Netizen comments were manually collected and subjected to text pre-processing (case folding and data cleaning) before being analyzed using a lexicon-based sentiment analysis method. The results indicate that negative sentiment dominates public opinion at 59%, followed by positive sentiment at 32% and neutral sentiment at only 9%. These findings suggest that the majority of the public views the policy as falling short of criteria regarding adequacy and equity in policy evaluation, as it is perceived to potentially curtail the economic opportunities of small-scale traders and limit public access to affordable, wearable clothing. Nevertheless, a portion of the public supports the policy, viewing it as an effective and appropriate measure to protect the domestic textile industry and curb the influx of illegal products. Theoretically, this study reinforces research on the digital public sphere as an arena for participatory policy evaluation and its relevance to consumer behavior. Practically, the findings are intended to prompt government reflection on improving the effectiveness of policy communication, ensuring greater responsiveness to public aspirations during the implementation process.

Keywords: Public Policy Evaluation, Public Opinion, Sentiment Analysis, Social Media, Thrifting.

A. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the trend of online thrifting has emerged as one of the most compelling phenomena in Indonesia's fashion consumption economy. The practice of buying and selling second-hand clothing is no longer viewed as an activity associated with economic limitations;

instead, it has evolved into a modern lifestyle (Modi & Zhao, 2021). Younger generations, particularly active social media users, perceive thrifting as a way to discover unique clothing, develop personal style, and contribute to the sustainable fashion movement (Raka & Chankov, 2024). Supported by the convenience of transactions through e-commerce platforms and social media, thrifting has become a broad, dynamic, and profitable market for many small businesses. Its growing popularity has also reinforced the narrative of sustainable living. Global campaigns promoting the reduction of textile waste have positioned thrifting as a more environmentally friendly consumption practice. Nevertheless, this positive development is accompanied by several challenges. Most second-hand clothing circulating on online platforms consists of imported goods, and not all of these products enter the country through legal channels. The large-scale influx of used clothing places significant pressure on the domestic textile industry, which must compete with low-cost imported products, while also raising concerns regarding the safety, sanitation, and suitability of the goods sold to consumers (Arinal et al., 2022).

From a legal perspective, Indonesia's prohibition on second-hand clothing imports has a long-standing and multilayered legal foundation, although its implementation continues to face practical challenges. The highest legal basis is stipulated in Article 46 point 15 of the Job Creation Government Regulation in Lieu of Law (Perppu Cipta Kerja), which amended Article 47 of Law Number 7 of 2014 on Trade, requiring all importers to import only new goods. This provision is further elaborated through the Minister of Trade Regulation Number 18 of 2021 concerning Export and Import Provisions for Prohibited Goods, which was subsequently reinforced and clarified by Minister of Trade Regulation Number 40 of 2022. The latter explicitly classifies used clothing as prohibited imported goods.

These regulations have continued to evolve. Most recently, the government issued Minister of Trade Regulation Number 7 of 2024, which prohibits the importation of used clothing and replaces the previous regulation, specifically covering goods classified under Harmonized System (HS) tariff code 6309.00.00. Notably, policy enforcement is no longer limited to conventional import channels but has also expanded into the digital marketplace. This development is supported by stricter supervision of second-hand clothing trade on digital platforms, as regulated under Government Regulation Number 80 of 2019 and Minister of Trade Regulation Number 50 of 2020. These regulations provide the legal framework for electronic commerce (e-commerce), including social media platforms that are now widely used as marketplaces for buying and selling second-hand clothing (Astuti et al., 2025).

In response to these conditions, the Indonesian Ministry of Trade (Kemendag) has reaffirmed the prohibition on the importation and commercial distribution of second-hand clothing. Although this policy is not new, its enforcement has been strengthened due to the high level of non-compliance in practice. The government argues that importing used clothing harms small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the textile sector, creates unfair competition for domestic manufacturers, and poses potential risks because some imported products may not meet sanitation and safety standards. As part of its enforcement efforts, the Ministry has conducted raids on warehouses storing illegal goods, taken legal action against businesses involved in the trade, and disseminated educational information through social media.

One Instagram post regarding this policy generated a substantial public response. In the comment section, users expressed diverse opinions. Some supported the government's efforts to protect local products, while many others criticized the policy, arguing that it threatens the livelihoods of small-scale traders and limits consumers' purchasing choices (Maulidia & Saragih, 2024). The large volume of responses highlights the role of social media as both a platform for public discussion and an indicator of public acceptance of government policies.

In this context, sentiment analysis is essential for understanding how the public perceives and responds to the government's policy banning online thrifting (Wulandari & Hasan, 2024). Identifying sentiment trends can help policymakers better understand public perceptions, evaluate the effectiveness of policy communication strategies, and develop more appropriate public outreach approaches in the future. Furthermore, sentiment analysis can provide valuable evidence for designing a more effective and comprehensive policy evaluation process.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Policy Evaluation

Public policy evaluation is a systematic process conducted to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and relevance of policies that have been formulated and implemented by governments or public institutions. Its primary objective is to determine the extent to which a policy has achieved its intended goals and to examine its broader effects on society and the social environment. According to Dunn (2003), policy evaluation is a systematic assessment of the content, implementation, and outcomes of a policy, aimed at providing useful information for policy decision-making.

Similarly, Akbar (2016) defines policy evaluation as a learning process that examines the consequences of public policies, while Wholey (1970) describes evaluation as an effort to measure the extent to which a program effectively achieves its intended objectives. Therefore, public policy evaluation extends beyond assessing final outcomes; it also encompasses an analysis of the implementation process, the policy context, and the factors contributing to its success or failure. The importance of public policy evaluation lies in its function as a reflective tool that enables governments and implementing agencies to assess the impact, effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance of policies that have been carried out. Evaluation also serves as a mechanism for correcting policy implementation when deviations occur and provides a basis for determining whether a policy should be continued, modified, or discontinued (Suherman, 2020).

Policy evaluation also serves as a learning mechanism for government institutions and stakeholders. It assesses not only policy outcomes but also the implementation process and the contextual factors that influence policy success or failure (Taali et al., 2024). Consequently, evaluation provides both corrective and forward-looking insights that are highly valuable for the formulation of future policies. In practice, public policy evaluation is conducted using various approaches, ranging from formative evaluation, which is carried out during policy implementation, to summative evaluation, which is conducted after policy implementation has been completed (Akbar, 2016). Evaluation methods may be quantitative, qualitative, or employ mixed-method approaches, depending on the objectives of the evaluation and the context of

the policy being assessed. Furthermore, policy evaluation considers not only technical achievements but also the social, political, and economic dimensions of public policy (' & Madya, 2013).

Sentiment Analysis: Social Media

Social media has emerged as a new platform through which people express opinions, shape public perceptions, and participate in social and political activities. As a medium for public opinion, social networking platforms facilitate two-way communication involving interactions not only among individuals but also between citizens and governmental institutions or authorities (Vladimirova et al., 2023). The open, participatory, and interconnected nature of social media makes it a dynamic space where arguments, expectations, and criticisms can be widely shared and exchanged. In this regard, social media provides a more vibrant environment for public deliberation than traditional public forums. Users are no longer merely recipients of information but also content creators who can shape narratives, influence public agendas, and affect public opinion (Wicaksono, 2022).

The role of social media in disseminating policy-related information has become increasingly important, particularly for governments and public institutions that require communication channels capable of reaching the public quickly, efficiently, and directly. Social media serves as a tool for communicating public policies, including new regulations, government programs, and official responses to emerging issues. The rapid dissemination of information through social media enables policies to be communicated directly and interactively (Liu & Wan, 2023; Vladimirova et al., 2023). Moreover, its interactive nature allows citizens to provide feedback, criticism, or support regarding specific policies. Such interactions enhance government transparency and encourage greater public participation in the policymaking process. Nevertheless, the dissemination of policy information through social media also presents challenges, including the spread of misinformation resulting from misunderstandings and the potential for opinion polarization.

The stages of sentiment analysis are described as follows:

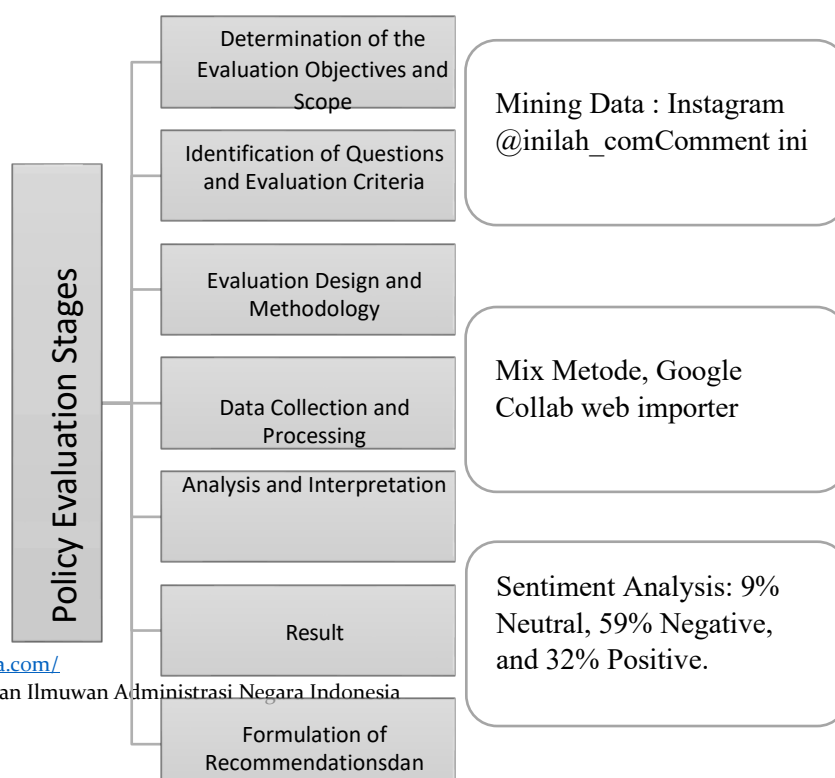


Figure 1. Stages of Public Policy Evaluation

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This article employs a mixed-methods research approach. The study analyzes internet user perceptions regarding the ban on online "thrifting" (the sale of second-hand clothing) by examining comments on an Instagram post. This method was selected for its suitability in providing an objective overview of the phenomenon through the measurement and processing of quantitative data combined with a descriptive analysis of the social phenomenon (Creswell, 2019). Data was gathered from comments made by netizens on a post by the Instagram account @inilah_com—published on November 7—which highlighted the government's policy banning online thrifting activities. The @inilah_com account was chosen because it is a news channel that actively shares information on public policy issues and frequently elicits diverse responses from social media users, making it a relevant data source. Data collection involved reviewing all comments posted since the initial publication of the content. Comments containing reactions to the regulation of imported second-hand clothing sales on online platforms served as the primary data. Conversely, comments unrelated to the topic—such as promotional material, spam, or those failing to address the policy itself—were excluded from the dataset to ensure the accuracy and focus of the sentiment analysis. Data collection for this study was conducted via manual extraction of netizen comments from the @inilah_com Instagram post regarding the online thrifting ban. A manual method was chosen due to Instagram's restrictions on automated software and third-party API access. The process involved accessing the specific post, displaying all comments using the "load more comments" function, and manually copying each comment individually. All comments relevant to the theme were recorded in a data table, supplemented by details such as the username, comment date, and the text content of the comment. Comments unrelated to the policy—such as promotional posts, spam, or those lacking substantive analysis—were removed from the dataset to enhance the accuracy of the research findings. The collected comment data was organized into a tabular format prior to storage. The data was reviewed and organized to ensure the absence of duplicates or errors. Once the data was deemed clean, the researchers saved it in two formats: CSV and Excel (Modi & Zhao, 2021).

The text preprocessing process aims to standardize character formats to ensure consistent analysis. The steps involved include:

- Converting All Uppercase Letters to Lowercase
- All letters from A–Z are converted to the a–z format. This standardization ensures that words such as “Buku,” “BUKU,” and “buku” are treated as the same entity.
- Removing Non-Alphabetic Characters
- At this stage, characters other than letters are typically removed—such as numbers (0–9), punctuation marks (e.g., periods, commas, question marks), and

specific symbols like #, @, %, and the like. These cleaning parameters can be adjusted according to research needs. Retaining Letters A–Z in ASCII Format: Once all letters are converted to lowercase, only basic alphabetic characters are kept. In some cases, accented letters or special characters are first converted to their base forms (e.g., é becomes e), depending on the applied standards.

- Removing Excess Whitespace (Optional)

Double spaces or unnecessary whitespace are removed to ensure the text remains tidy.

Lexicon-based sentiment analysis is a method that assesses the sentiment orientation of a text by utilizing a dictionary of words assigned with polarity values or sentiment scores. In this approach, the sentiment score of a word found in the dictionary is retrieved and aggregated with the scores of other words to derive the text's total sentiment value. This total value is then used to determine whether the text conveys a positive, negative, or neutral sentiment.

Lexicon-based approaches do not require model training, classifying them as unsupervised learning methods. The analysis results are heavily influenced by the quality and comprehensiveness of the sentiment word list employed. This method offers several advantages, including simplicity of implementation, the absence of a need for training datasets, and a transparent determination process, as each score can be traced directly back to the words in the sentiment dictionary. However, the technique also has limitations. Lexicon-based approaches often struggle to capture context-dependent meanings, particularly when dealing with sentences containing irony, sarcasm, or complex linguistic patterns. Furthermore, effectiveness diminishes when the text includes new vocabulary, slang, or terms not listed in the sentiment dictionary, resulting in reduced assessment accuracy (Anggara, 2015).

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

When viewed through the framework of public policy evaluation, the sentiment analysis in this study offers a deeper perspective than a mere snapshot of digital opinion. The distribution of sentiments—59% negative, 32% positive, and 9% neutral—serves essentially as raw data for a post-implementation policy evaluation, capturing the public's informal assessment of the ban on *thrifting* (the trade in secondhand imported clothing) via Instagram comment sections. In the public policy cycle, evaluation is not an isolated final stage but a feedback loop that determines whether a policy should be continued, revised, or terminated. Simultaneously, the attention netizens have focused on the policy's impact on MSMEs and small-scale traders highlights equity concerns, as the policy burden is perceived to fall disproportionately on small businesses compared to large enterprises. Meanwhile, recurring complaints regarding inconsistent enforcement in the field signal a lack of policy responsiveness to public feedback.

Conversely, the 32% positive sentiment can be interpreted as validation of the policy's appropriateness; a segment of the public believes the policy direction is correct viewing it as a valid solution—even if its implementation is deemed suboptimal. The 9% neutral sentiment reflects a deficit in information adequacy, presenting an opportunity for the government to strengthen public outreach and communication as a means of improving public acceptance. Ultimately, this study captures a form of informal policy evaluation conducted by the public itself within the digital sphere—a model of participatory policy evaluation that government

agencies have yet to systematically leverage, despite the data being openly available and generated in real-time across various social media platforms.

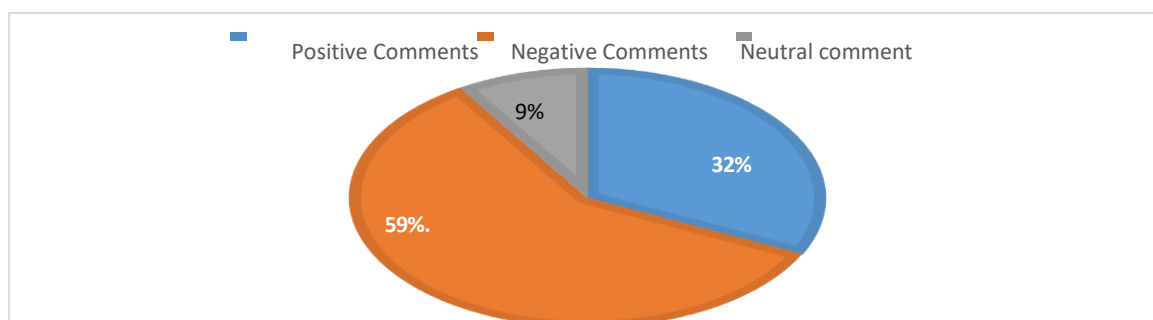


Figure 2. Sentiment analysis results.

Sentiment analysis indicates that public responses to the government's ban on thrifting are predominantly negative. Approximately 59% of the comments express negative sentiment, suggesting that the majority of the public disagrees with the policy. This high proportion of negative sentiment highlights concerns regarding the potential adverse effects of the ban on small businesses, reduced access to affordable clothing for consumers, and the perception that the policy does not adequately consider the broader economic conditions faced by society.

Nevertheless, 32% of the responses are positive. This group views the policy as an appropriate measure to protect the domestic textile industry and prevent the circulation of illegally imported second-hand clothing. However, the proportion of positive sentiment remains considerably lower than that of negative sentiment. Meanwhile, neutral sentiment accounts for only 9% of the responses, indicating that only a small number of users posted comments that were purely informative, asked questions, or refrained from expressing a clear stance toward the policy. Overall, public opinion appears to lean toward opposition to the thrifting ban. The predominance of negative sentiment suggests that the policy has generated substantial public dissatisfaction and raised concerns about its impact on people's economic well-being as well as the sustainability of micro and small enterprises.

Comments classified as neutral sentiment generally focused on seeking clarification, requesting additional information, and restating the contents of the policy to ensure an accurate understanding. Internet users utilized the comment section as a platform to obtain explanations regarding the regulations, enforcement procedures, potential consequences for business operators, and the government's rationale for implementing the policy.

Several comments raised technical questions, such as which categories of imported second-hand goods are prohibited, how enforcement and confiscation procedures are carried out, and whether the policy also affects small-scale traders. Others quoted excerpts from news reports or official government statements to compare the announced regulations with their implementation in practice. Overall, these neutral comments indicate that this group of users did not immediately express emotional judgments but instead focused on objectively understanding the regulation. They positioned themselves as information seekers who wished to ensure that the policy was clearly explained, properly implemented, and consistent with the regulations established by the government.

Public reactions reflected in Instagram comments regarding the thrifting ban provide valuable insights into how the policy has been received and understood by society. In the context of public policy, citizens' responses serve as an early indicator for evaluating policy effectiveness, particularly during the implementation stage and the process of communicating the policy to the public. Conceptually, the effectiveness of a policy depends not only on the government's ability to implement it but also on the level of public acceptance, understanding, and support. When citizens actively respond whether through support, criticism, or neutral comments it demonstrates that the policy has reached its intended audience and stimulated public discussion. From the perspective of policy communication, such responses indicate that the policy has entered public discourse and is perceived as relevant to everyday life.

The dissatisfaction expressed by many internet users suggests a mismatch between the objectives of the policy and the public's perceptions or needs. These responses may reflect the concerns of individuals who believe they have been financially affected, have lost a source of income, or feel that the policy has failed to adequately consider existing social realities. Within the framework of policy feedback theory, such negative reactions may generate resistance that could hinder successful policy implementation, particularly if the public does not fully understand the rationale and expected benefits of the policy. Conversely, positive reactions on social media reflect support from individuals who view the thrifting ban as an important measure to protect small businesses, strengthen the domestic textile industry, and maintain product quality in the marketplace. This support indicates that a portion of society recognizes the objectives of the policy and appreciates the government's efforts to safeguard the national economy. Public support of this kind can enhance the legitimacy of the policy and increase the likelihood of its successful implementation.

On the other hand, neutral sentiment also plays an important role. Individuals expressing neutral sentiment generally belong to a group that seeks to remain objective, provide additional information, or has not yet formed a definitive opinion regarding the policy. From the perspective of policy effectiveness, this group represents a strategic target because their views can still be influenced through improved policy communication, public outreach, and educational efforts. This finding suggests that there is considerable opportunity to strengthen public understanding by optimizing the government's communication strategy.

Therefore, public reactions to the thrifting ban are highly significant in evaluating the overall effectiveness of the policy. Negative responses indicate challenges in public acceptance, positive responses reflect support and policy legitimacy, while neutral responses reveal opportunities to improve public understanding through more effective communication. Together, these three types of responses provide comprehensive insights into the extent to which the policy is understood, accepted, and perceived by the public. Sentiment analysis thus serves as a valuable tool for evaluating policy effectiveness from the public's perspective and can ultimately assist the government in improving both its communication strategies and policy implementation in the future.

E. CONCLUSION

The results of the sentiment analysis of public comments on the Instagram post by @inilah_com indicate that negative sentiment predominates, accounting for 59% of all

comments, substantially exceeding positive sentiment (32%) and neutral sentiment (9%). When interpreted through the lens of policy evaluation, these findings represent more than an expression of public dissatisfaction; they signal that several key policy evaluation criteria have not been fully achieved. The predominance of negative sentiment suggests that the policy is perceived as ineffective in preventing the circulation of illegally imported goods, disproportionately burdensome to small business owners, and inadequately supported by consistent law enforcement. Conversely, positive sentiment reflects public validation of the policy's objective to protect the domestic textile industry, while neutral sentiment indicates a deficiency in the adequacy of information provided to the public, highlighting the need for more effective education and policy dissemination.

A review of the existing regulatory framework further clarifies the root of these concerns. The findings reveal that public criticism expressed in the comments is not primarily directed at the existence of the regulations themselves—which are legally well-established and comprehensive but rather at the weak enforcement of regulations that have long been in place. This suggests that the primary issue lies in the implementation of the policy rather than in its formulation.

Overall, this study demonstrates that the success of a public policy is determined not only by the strength of its legal foundation but also by the extent to which the policy is understood, accepted, and perceived as fair by the communities it affects, as well as by the government's ability to enforce it consistently. In this context, social media comment sections have proven to function as an instrument of citizen-based policy evaluation, providing an open and near real-time reflection of public perceptions. As such, they have the potential to complement the formal policy evaluation methods traditionally employed by governments.

Accordingly, the findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers, encouraging the government not only to strengthen the regulatory framework but also to improve policy evaluation strategies, ensure a more equitable distribution of policy impacts, and enhance the consistency of policy implementation. These improvements are essential to ensuring that the policy prohibiting the importation of second-hand clothing is more widely accepted by the public and implemented more effectively in the future

REFERENCES

- Akbar, M. F. (2016). Evaluasi Kebijakan Program Pemberian Dana Bantuan operasional sekolah. *Jurnal Analisis Dan Pelayanan Publik*, 2(1), 47–64.
- Anggara, S. (2015). *Metode Penelitian Administrasi* (A. S. Beni, Ed.; 1st ed., Vol. 1). CV PUSTAKA SETIA. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Arinal, V., Sarimole, F., Setiawan, K., & Ramdani, A. (2022). Implementation of Naive Bayes Algorithm and Support Vector Machine for Public Sentiment Analysis towards Imported Clothing Ban. *Journal of Engineering, Electrical and Informatics*. <https://doi.org/10.55606/jeei.v2i3.313>
- Astuti, W., Irawan, B., & Ramdhan, N. A. (2025). Analisis Sentimen Terhadap Isu Pemblokiran Thrifting Pada Platform TikTok Menggunakan Bidirectional Long Short-Term Memory. *Elkom: Jurnal Elektronika Dan Komputer*. <https://doi.org/10.51903/elkom.v18i2.3361>

- Creswell W. John. (2019). *Research Design Pendekatan Metode Kualitatif, Kuantitatif dan Campuran* (IV). SAGE.
- Dunn, W. N. (2003). *Pengantar Analisis Kebijakan Publik* (p. 710). Gadjah Mada University Press.
- Liu, Y., & Wan, Y. (2023). Consumer Satisfaction with the Online Dispute Resolution on a Second-Hand Goods-Trading Platform. *Sustainability*.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su15043182>
- E., & Madya, F. (2013). Evaluasi Perumusan, Implementasi, Dan Lingkungan Kebijakan. *Jurnal Kebijakan Publik*, 5(3), 1–8.
<https://ejournal.unri.ac.id/index.php/JKP/article/view/2217/2183>
- Maulidia, S. S., & Saragih, N. (2024). Opini Publik Terhadap Kebijakan Pemerintah Mengenai Pemusnahan Pakaian Bekas Impor: Analisis Isi Kuantitatif Kolom Komentar Instagram. *Jurnal Mahardika Adiwidia*. <https://doi.org/10.36441/mahardikaadiwidi.v3i2.1545>
- Modi, D., & Zhao, L. (2021). Social media analysis of consumer opinion on apparel supply chain transparency. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jfmm-09-2019-0220>
- Raka, N. J., & Chankov, S. (2024). Sustainability of Second-Hand Fast Fashion: Sentiment and Content Analysis on Consumer Attitudes on Social Media. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Operations Management*.
<https://doi.org/10.46254/an14.20240161>
- Suherman, D. (2020). Evaluasi Dampak Kebijakan Mesin Parkir Elektronik di Kota Bandung. *Politicon : Jurnal Ilmu Politik*, 2(Kebijakan Publik), 1–12.
<https://doi.org/10.15575/politicon.v2i1.7919>
- Vladimirova, K., Henninger, C., Alosaimi, S., Brydges, T., Choopani, H., Hanlon, M., Iran, S., McCormick, H., & Zhou, S. (2023). Exploring the influence of social media on sustainable fashion consumption: A systematic literature review and future research agenda. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 15, 181–202.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/20932685.2023.2237978>
- Wicaksono, E. P. (2022). PERSPEKTIF EKONOMI ISLAM TERHADAP JUAL BELI ONLINE PAKAIAN BEKAS IMPOR PADA AKUN INSTAGRAM @hum2ndstuff. *BALANCA : Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Bisnis Islam*.
<https://doi.org/10.35905/balanca.v3i02.2517>
- Wulandari, S., & Hasan, F. N. (2024). Analisis Sentimen Masyarakat Indonesia Terhadap Pengalaman Belanja Thrifting Pada Media Sosial Twitter Menggunakan Algoritma Naïve Bayes. *JURNAL MEDIA INFORMATIKA BUDIDARMA*.
<https://doi.org/10.30865/mib.v8i2.7520>