DAI'S STRATEGY TO BUILD THE POLITICAL IMAGE OF CANDIDATES IN THE 2015 MEDAN MAYOR ELECTION

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Abstract

This study aims to explain how the existence of dai in building the political image of candidates in the 2015 Medan Mayor election. Furthermore, the researcher specifically wants to reveal the involvement of dai in the 2015 Medan Mayor election, his motivation to be involved in the Mayor election, the strategy in building candidate imagery, and dai communication ethics in building candidate image in Mayor's election. This research is a political communication research using qualitative research methods. The data collection technique is done by interview, observation, and documentation. Research informants were selected through the snowball technique. The data obtained were then processed using Miles and Huberman, namely through three steps, first reducing data, presenting data, and finally drawing or verifying conclusions. The results of this study indicate that the involvement of the dai in the 2015 election for the mayor of Medan, there were dai who supported the candidate directly, who supported indirectly, the dai group who were neutral and the dai group who refused. The motivation for dai's involvement is based on the motive of power and the motive for personal and group gain. The strategy used in building a candidate's image is carried out by caring for the candidate's character by presenting candidates at religious events, accompanying candidates at religious events, appearing on the candidate's campaign stage, and explaining the candidate's vision and mission to the congregation. Furthermore, the strategy is carried out by packaging political messages in an informative and persuasive manner with an approach that is of appeal, emotional appeal, and reward appeal. The media used by dai as a candidate imaging tool is direct media (face to face) individually or in groups. Also, printed media (newspapers, brochures, bulletin) and new media are used, namely the website, WhatsApp and Facebook. In political imaging activities, Dai still seems to ignore the ethical values of communication, namely, he is still carrying out black campaigns and is inconsistent between words and deeds.

Keywords: Politics, Existence Dai

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I.   INTRODUCTION

The form of political communication that is seen and often carried out during the election campaign period. These activities are carried out through various activities containing political messages from a person or political institution to others to open insights or ways of thinking, and influencing the attitudes and behavior of people who are political targets. In a simple sense, it is stated that political imaging is communication used to win a general election. Thus, political imaging is a condition of delivering political messages from political communicators to political audiences for certain political purposes.

A political message is defined as a statement conveyed in writing or unwritten, verbally or non-verbally, hidden or openly, consciously or unconsciously, which contains political content. For example political speeches, party laws, election laws, political statements, articles or contents of books/brochures and news from newspapers, radio, television and the internet containing political and government reviews, political poetry, banners or billboards, political advertisements, propaganda, psychological warfare, the meaning of the logo, the color of the shirt or flag, body language and the like.

Political messages are carried out as an effort to build and or strengthen the political image of a candidate or political party, especially during general election moments. Building a political image through political messages is very important amid the flood of information about politics during society. This is based on the fact that political image has the power to motivate actors or individuals to do something. This political image is formed based on information received by the public, either directly or through the mass media. Political image is related to the formation of public opinion because political public opinion is built through political images. Meanwhile, political image is manifested as a cognitive consequence of political communication. Cangara Hafied, (2009: 231)

Political communication is the main activity for political parties and candidates, especially when there are general election activities, such as direct elections for the president, legislative members and regional heads. This political communication activity is carried out as an effort to attract sympathy and convince voters to choose a party or candidate that is

carried through the various programs offered, political promises and issues of change if elected later.

Political communication activities have increasingly become the public's attention after the fall of the New Order regime, a reformation order was born which was marked by wide-open democratic freedom in the midst of society. Moreover, when the elections for regional heads (governors, regents and mayors) were directly elected by the community, the first time this was held was in 2005. This new tradition in the world of politics in Indonesia has automatically encouraged various elements of society in the regions to become involved in the local political process in Indonesia. regions, so that the dynamics of political communication are increasingly complex and dynamic to realize a democratic political life order in the regions.

Various political communication activities carried out during the regional head elections (pilkada) are not only carried out by candidates and political parties supporting each candidate, but many local elites are involved and take part directly or indirectly in the party event. democracy and the five-year power struggle. Elites are understood as a small group of people in society who influence society. Fredo Pareto said that what is called an elite group is a small group of individuals who have the best qualities in society who can reach the center of socio-political power. Setiadi, (2013: 40) This elite group includes the bureaucratic elite (government), political party elites, economic elites, religious elites, and other community elites. These elites are considered to have political capital and play an important role in coloring and even determining the direction of politics and development in a region. Halim, (2014: 33).

In the context of local politics, religious elites are often a separate concern for some political parties and regional head candidates. Religious elites in the context of local politics are often used as a means of legitimacy and justification by some political elites for certain political interests and goals. This is motivated by the belief that religious elites have social and symbolic capitals in the form of congregations, religious knowledge, and charisma that make religious elites obey the people in the regions. So that often in a regional election, candidates and political parties visit various Islamic boarding schools or visit the houses of Kiai, clerics, masters

teachers, Ustaz, and dai to ask for prayers and political support. Halim, (2014: 147-148)

The existence of religious elites in politics is always interesting to study, especially in general election activities. The existence of the religious elite is not only seen by him as a community figure or religious figure, but also has many faces (multi faces) that show the complexity of his role in socio-political life during society at large. One of the roles of the religious elite is their involvement in practical political dynamics in direct regional head elections. Their involvement can be seen on the campaign stages, they are involved in carrying out dynamic political communication among the ummah and society at large for a political interest that they believe in.

Religious elites, in this case, are preachers who are actively involved in political communication and political imaging for the benefit of regional head candidates. This activity was carried out by dai as an effort to instill a positive impression of a regional head candidate during society. Imaging is intended as an effort to influence the perceptions, emotions, awareness, and behavior of a person and society so that they can be led to certain preferences, choices, and political decisions. In this case, it is the same as a marketing company that seeks to sell a particular product by carrying out a series of strategies and approaches to introduce, motivate and convince consumers to be interested and then buy the product offered.

Political imaging that is carried out well during the campaign period for the regional head will certainly have a positive effect on voters to provide an overview, motivation, and awareness of public participation in exercising their voting rights in general elections. In other words, the public must have a good impression and perception of the candidate's figure, the better the public's perceived impression of a candidate, the candidate's image will automatically encourage voters to attend the polling stations (TPS). Conversely, if the negative impression that appears during the campaign period is about the candidate's figure, it will also motivate voters not to appear at the polling stations. The dai's involvement, in this case, is to create, build, and or strengthen a positive image of a candidate in the community to motivate the level of participation of the voters.

Public political participation is highly expected in the implementation of direct regional elections, this is an important aspect in realizing a democratic political order. Political participation is the participation of citizens in political activities, either actively or passively and directly or indirectly to influence government policy. Community political participation greatly influences a community legitimacy for the running of a government. In a regional head election, if the political participation of the people is high in choosing a regional head candidate pair, then this will affect the legitimacy of the community for the candidate pair who will be elected later.

Every society has their preferences and interests to determine their choices in elections. It can be said that the future of public officials who are elected in an election depends on the preferences of the people as voters. Not only that, the political participation of the people in the General Election can be seen as a public control over a government. The control given varies depending on the level of political participation in each. Apart from being the core of democracy, political participation is also closely related to the fulfillment of citizens' political rights. Apart from that, people's political participation is a general description of how the community evaluates their future leaders and the expectations of the community in the future.

Looking at the dynamics of the direct election for the Mayor of Medan which has taken place three times, the first time being held in 2005, then in 2010 and the third in 2015. Based on data obtained in the direct election for the Mayor of Medan in 2005, the level of community political participation in direct voting is considered quite good, namely around 53.5% of people who have the right to vote present using their voting rights. Furthermore, in the election for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in 2010, the level of public political participation was around 38.09% of the voters who attended the TPS to exercise their voting rights and in the 2015 election, the level of public participation was only 26.2%, who attended the TPS using their voting rights. This percentage shows that the level of public political participation in the election for the Mayor of Medan has continued to decline from election to election, as shown in the following table:

Table 1.1. Level of Community Political Participation in Medan Mayor Election

Pilkada	Permanent Voters	Attend to the TPS	Participation Rate (%)
Tahun 2005	1.450.596	792.750	54,65 %
Tahun 2010	1.961.155	699.991	35,69 % (Putara 1)
Tahun 2015	1.998.835	507.350	26,2 %

The low level of community political participation in the 2015 election for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Medan is very worrying in terms of political democracy at the local level, Medan City should be a good barometer of political education for other regions in North Sumatra Province in particular. The case of local democracy in Medan City is an interesting study for researchers to uncover this phenomenon, especially in the political communication approach.

II. RESEARCH METHODS
Approach and Type of Research

The approach used in this research is the political communication science approach. Political communication is a new, interdisciplinary field of science that seeks to understand political reality as a communication process. Furthermore, to understand the phenomenon of political communication, a process approach is used. George Herbert Mead (1934) stated that social life can be understood as a process and every event always contains the past, present, and future.

The type of research used to obtain a comprehensive picture and data about the existence of dai in building the political image of candidates in the 2015 Medan Mayor election is by using a qualitative research approach.

Data source

The data sources in this study are: 1) Primary data; 2) Secondary data.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques, namely: in-depth interview methods, participatory observation, documentary materials, as well as new methods such as visual materials and internet search methods.

III. DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH RESULTS

Involvement of Dai in the 2015 Medan Mayor Election

The dai's involvement in the political party also contributed to political life in Medan City. Many of the dai who were involved in the candidacy as members of the Medan City DPRD, North Sumatra Provincial DPRD, and the Indonesian Parliament in each legislative election was held. Also, many dai run for regional heads or are actively involved in circles of power in the regions and so on. In the momentum of the 2015 election for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Medan, they were also actively involved in carrying out educational activities, socialization and political imaging in the community and especially Muslims to support one of the candidates who competed to become Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Medan in 2015-2020. So, during the election campaign for the Mayor of Medan in 2015, there were faces of dai adorning political stages or religious pulpits to provide political support and influence Muslims to win the candidates who were supported by each.

Dai Strategy to Build Candidate Imaging

The strategy of caring for candidate figures carried out by the preachers above is basically to build a good image and relationship between candidates and the community of potential voters. The strategy carried out by the dai in building the candidate's character can be said to be effective, but it is still able to reach a small area of the Muslim community of Medan City, namely the Meridan congregation and the recitation which is actively in contact with the dai. Researchers conclude that the political power and power of the city of Medan is still limited to the recitation area and the perdition area in the city of Medan. Meanwhile, the number of Muslims who are active in the recitation activities and the perdition activity is much smaller than the number of Muslims who have the right to vote in the Medan City elections.

The role of candidates in the 2015 election for the Mayor of Medan was also influenced by the role of dai, although his influence was limited to a small area, namely his congregation, this has proven that he is an elite group in society. From the results of the research findings above, it proves that the dai in Medan City can be said to be a religious elite as stated by Vilfredo Pareto about the Elite Theory he expressed. This elite theory justifies that dai is a religious elite (religious elite) in society, especially for his congregation. Dai still shows a high position, respected and obeyed by

his congregation, not only in matters related to religion alone, but including in political matters as well as the dai is a reference for his congregation. So that dai is called a religious elite who has a position as a non-governing elite, who is involved both actively and passively in the struggle for political power at the local level.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the studies that have been carried out regarding the existence of Dai in Building Candidate Imaging in the 2015 Medan Mayor Election, conclusions can be drawn, as follows:

First, there are two views related to the involvement of dai in the 2015 election for the Mayor of Medan City. (A). Da'wah must be in line with politics. (b). Da'wah must be separated from politics. The first group understands that da'wah and politics have an important position in Islamic teachings, both of them must go hand in hand and mutually reinforce each other for the realization of amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar in people's lives. The involvement of the dai in the 2015 election for the Mayor of Medan showed polarization in three groups, namely; (1). The dai group that supports the candidate directly, (2) the dai group that supports the candidate indirectly, and (3) the dai group that is neutral.

Second, the motivation for dai to be directly involved in the 2015 election for the Mayor of Medan was based on two things, namely; (1) the motive for power, and (2) the motive for personal or group gain. Some of the motives for power are ideal and some are individual. Ideally it shows that power is a means of preaching to uphold amar ma'ruf nahi munkar in people's lives. Furthermore, individually the motive for power is oriented towards the desire to be an "insider" in the Medan City government circle. This motif shows the character of dai as a nobleman. Meanwhile, the motive for personal and group gain shows that the dai's involvement is based on the desire to gain benefits personally or in groups or organizations. This motif shows the character of dai as a merchant.

Third, efforts to build the candidate's image are carried out with three main strategies, namely: Caring for the candidate's character, packaging messages persuasively, and selecting the media. Attempts to care for the character of the candidates carried out by each of the preachers showed the implementation of almost the same strategy, namely: (1) by presenting candidates to religious activities carried out by the dai such as in recitation

activities, tabligh Akbar, and so on, (2) accompanying candidates in various socio-religious activities, (3) appearing on the political campaign stage of the candidate, and (4) providing understanding to the public regarding the vision and mission of the candidate.

The strategy of choosing messages is carried out by compiling or packaging political messages in the 2015 Medan City elections showing two models, namely first, a model of composing or packaging informative messages, and second, a model of composing or packaging persuasive messages. Informative messages are to provide broad insights to the audience or society by providing various kinds of information related to political issues that are developing in Medan City, the potential of Medan City in each sub-district, the vision and mission that will be implemented to build Medan City, the superiority of the figure of each candidate, and the campaign slogans used. Meanwhile, persuasive political messages are carried out using the following techniques: (1) fear appeal, namely by arousing fear or negative things that occur in the community, especially the people of Medan City if their political opponent wins, (2) emotional appeal, namely By offending the ethnicity and religion of one of the candidates, the slogan "choose the same faith" was born, and (3) reward appeals, namely by giving political promises to the people of Medan City if they win.

The strategy of choosing political imaging media, namely: (1) by communicating directly both face to face and in groups, either using media such as cellphones or face-to-face. This media is generally used in clandestine campaign activities for limited circles such as family, friends, members of majelis taklim, and fellow dai. (2) by using print media, especially newspapers, Friday Friday, and (3) by using online media such as websites, WhatsApp and Facebook. The last two media are used in open campaign activities.

In general, the ethics of communicating in the process of imaging candidates during the 2015 election campaign for the mayor of Medan shows that he does not fully uphold the ethical values of communication-based on the instructions of the Al-Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. Values that are still being violated in conducting political imaging activities of candidates are: (1) Dai is still seen carrying out a black campaign, (2) Dai's attitude and behavior is inconsistent.

Finally, the researchers concluded that the existence of dai in Medan City is a religious elite group whose position and role are still recognized among their congregations and politicians, especially in the activities of the 2015 Medan City regional head election. His involvement in building the image of political candidates in the 2015 Medan Mayor election. considered doing well on the principles of a political image. However, the existence of this dai is still limited to a small territory, namely the special congregation that is fostered by the dai in Medan City. It was revealed that the dai di did not have a significant ability to influence the wider Muslim community in the City, especially in the 2015 Medan Mayor election.

V. REFERENCES

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