POLITICAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY OF THE ERAMAS SUCCESS TEAM'S IN ACHING SUPPORT AT THE 2018 SIMULAR ELECTIONS IN NORTH SUMATRA

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Abstract

This research aims to find out: first the communication strategy of the ERAMAS success team in gaining support for the 2018 simultaneous regional elections in North Sumatra, the second the campaign communication strategy for the ERAMAS pair in attracting public attention, the three obstacles faced by the ERAMAS success team in the 2018 simultaneous regional elections in North Sumatra. This study uses qualitative research with a naturalistic approach, this approach intends to create a systematic and objective description of an event by collecting, evaluating, verifying, and synthesizing evidence to support facts in order to obtain a conclusion. Data collection in this study was carried out using various observation techniques (observations), interviews, and documentation. This research refers to the Scored theory which states that political communication strategy is divided into political marketing, political campaigns, media and political jargon. The results show that: first, the communication strategy of the ERAMAS success team in gaining support for the 2018 simultaneous regional elections in North Sumatra is by: a) direct

alternation, b) involving all elements of society, and c) maximizing the role of social media. Two Communication Strategies The campaign for the ERAMAS pair in attracting public attention is by: a) dialogical and open, b) campaigning culturally and structurally, and c) holding religious and social activities. The three obstacles faced by the ERAMAS success team in the 2018 simultaneous regional elections in North Sumatra are: a) remote geographical location, b) lots of slander and bad framing, and c) intervention from the central government. Meanwhile, the solutions taken to overcome these obstacles are: a) forming a solid team, b) continuing to campaign politely and obeying the rules, and c) convincing the community by providing the best vision and mission

Introduction

One of the characteristics of a democratic country is the existence of general elections that are held periodically, including the election of officials at the local level or regional heads. This situation makes each political party and individual contestant have the same opportunity to win the competition in the struggle for people's votes through elections. One of the products of the reform is the direct election of regional heads. The election of regional heads has been considered a measure of democracy because the people can participate in determining their attitude towards the government and their regions. Regional head elections are the embodiment of a democratic system, through these elections the people choose their choice to enter the government structure.

At the present, direct regional head elections (Pilkada) in the reform era indicate an increase in the quality of democracy in Indonesia. The level of democracy in a country is determined, among other things, by how big the role of the community is in choosing state officials. The more state officials, both at the national and regional levels, who are directly elected by the people, the higher the level of democracy in that country, at least at the procedural level. This is positively correlated with the concept of regional autonomy and decentralization, where the level of people's participation is getting higher, both in choosing public officials, monitoring their behavior, and in determining the direction of public policy.

There are a number of reasons that strengthen the argument that direct post-conflict local elections are appropriate, including as a critique of representative democracy which gives birth to people's representatives who ignore the interests of their voters, and efforts to re-prioritize people's participation in determining their choice as a procedure for peaceful political competition (Romli, 2005). The constitutional mandate of the 1945 Constitution, Law no. 32 of 2004 and PP No. 6 of 2005, the solution to the recruitment of regional heads carried out by the DPRD which gave birth to money politics, a means of political learning for citizens as a manifestation of the widest possible regional autonomy (Amiruddin, et.al 2006). In the implementation of the direct post-conflict local election, the preparation stage or the implementation stage is regulated by the KPUD. In the PP it is explained that pairs of candidates have the right to campaign as part of the stages of implementing the post-conflict local election with a schedule determined by the KPUD by taking into account the proposals of the pairs of candidates. Along with advances in technology and communication as well as the increasingly integrated global society and pressure to apply democratic principles, political institutions, including political parties, require alternative approaches to campaigning. It is in this context that marketing as a discipline that develops in the business world is assumed to be useful for political institutions (Firmanzah, 2010).

Political marketing is a way to win the hearts of constituents and get them to vote for the desired candidate. Competition requires candidates to think of effective ways and methods of communicating and convincing constituents that they are worthy of being selected (Cangara, 2009). One of the political marketing strategies is through campaigns. Campaign is a communication activity aimed at influencing other people so that they have insights, attitudes, and behavior in accordance with the wishes or desires of the disseminator or information provider. In the context of political communication, campaigns are intended to mobilize support for a thing or a candidate (Purwoko, 2005). Political campaigns are closely related to the formation of political images. In a political campaign there are two relationships to be built, namely internal and external. Internal relations are a process between party members and supporters to strengthen their ideological ties and identity. Meanwhile, external

relations are carried out to communicate the image that will be built to parties outside the party, including the mass media and the public (firmansyah, 2006).

Recently, North Sumatra held the 2018 simultaneous regional head elections. The following researchers will describe the journey of the North Sumatra Governor candidates who advanced in the 2018 North Sumatra Governor General Election (hereinafter referred to as the 2018 North Sumatra Pilgub or 2018 Gubernatorial Election) which was held on 27 June 2018 to determine the Governor and Deputy Governor for the period 2018-2023. The election schedule for this period follows the schedule for the third batch of simultaneous regional elections in June 2018. The official candidates in this regional election are the former Commander of Kostrad, Lieutenant General Edy Rahmayadi, and also former DKI Jakarta Governor Djarot Saiful Hidayat. One of the roles of the success team in the Pilkada is how they must intensively disseminate information about the importance of community participation in elections while they introduce the candidates for Regional Heads who will be elected in the Pilkada. The victory of the couple Edi Ramayadi and Musa Rajeksyah (ERAMAS) for the first time as Governor and Deputy Governor of North Sumatra for the 2018-2013 period could not be separated from the intervention of their success team's communication strategy in socializing them to the public.

Research Method

This study uses qualitative research with a naturalistic approach, this approach intends to create a systematic and objective description of an event by collecting, evaluating, verifying, and synthesizing evidence to support facts in order to obtain a conclusion.

Data collection in this study was carried out using various observation techniques (observations), interviews, and documentation. This research refers to the Scorder theory which states that political communication strategy is divided into political marketing, political campaigns, media and political jargon

Results and Discussion

The history of general elections

The history of general elections in Indonesia began at the beginning of the revolutionary era. The plan to hold a general election was announced on October 5, 1945, then in 1946 the general election in the residencies of Kediri and Surakarta, the scope of which was for local only while on a national scale had not yet been realized (Herbert Feith, et. al, 1995). Even since 1950, promises of national elections have often been made by various cabinets. In reality, the postponement of the general election to deal with matters more important than the general election, coupled with the general election movements launched by a number of groups, as well as the obstacles of groups of members of parliament during the implementation of the general election.

The 1955 general election was an election prepared and organized by three different cabinets. The preparations were carried out by the Wilopo cabinet, while the implementation was carried out by the Ali Sastroamidjojo cabinet and the Burhanuddin Harahap cabinet. The Wilopo Cabinet prepares a draft law and passes the general election law. Ali Sastroamidjojo's cabinet carried out general elections until the campaign stage and was replaced by Burhanuddin Harahap's cabinet which carried out the next stage, namely voting. The events that prompted and accelerated the 1955 elections were the 17 October 1952 incident, namely the demonstration in front of the State Palace and the destruction of the parliament building by demonstrators with the aim of asking for the dissolution of parliament (Suhadi, Imam, 1981).

Political Communication

In the Qur'an many verses are explained about politics, deliberation or in leadership as well as verses related to government. As in QS. Al-Maidah: 8

يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَآنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

Departemen Agama RI, *Alquran dan Terjemahannya* (Jakarta: Akbar Media, 2011),

Another verse QS. An-Nisa': 34

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيًّا كَبِيرًا

Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan. *Kamus Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Usaha Enterprise, 2000)

Politics implies a policy of how to act (in dealing with or dealing with a problem). Politics is a power and wisdom that can direct a state's goals towards what it does. Without a political attitude, a country will not be able to protect and maintain the existence of its country, because other countries need a firm attitude to be able to join in building common awareness in all fields (Kartini Kartono, 2009).

Political communication is the delivery of messages directed at achieving an influence in such a way that the problems discussed by this type of communication activity can bind all groups or citizens through a sanction that is jointly determined by political institutions. Political communication carried out can use media such as radio, billboards, banners, flags, banners, and pamphlets as well as social activities (Maswadi Rauf, et.al, 1993). Political communication sees the importance of the influence generated by political communication on the achievement of the results targeted by political parties. This means that if the party only targets the acquisition of votes during the election, then political communication will be said to be successful if the party wins or at least can gain significant votes in the general election (Ramlan Surbakti, 1992).

Political Power

Political power and political goals influence each other and depend on each other. Political power can be defined as the ability to use sources

of influence to influence the process of making and implementing politics so that decisions benefit themselves, their groups or society in general.

This approach to power with politics is heavily influenced by sociology because it is broader in scope and also covers social phenomena such as trade unions, religious organizations, student organizations and the military. It is more dynamic than the institutional approach because it pays attention to the process. Among the many forms of power, there is an important form that is important, namely political power. In this case, political power is the ability to influence public policy (government) both in its formation and its consequences in accordance with the goals of the power holders themselves.

Political power does not only include the power to obtain obedience from citizens, but also the control of others with the aim of influencing actions and activities in the administrative, legislative and judicial fields. A political power is not possible without the use of power (machtsuitoefening). That power must be used and exercised. If the use of power is effective, this can be called control. By itself, in order to use existing political power, there must be a tool/means of power so that the use of that power can run well (Ramlan Surbakti,1992).

Political Communication Ethics

Ethics is a discussion because it involves the interactions that occur between political consultants and actors of political parties, candidates or candidates in communicating political messages and their political activities. Ethics in K Bertens' book (K. Berten, 2000) is said to be the same as with many terms that involve a scientific context, the term "ethics" also comes from Ancient Greece. The Greek word Ethos in the singular has many meanings: ordinary dwellings, pastures, stables, habits, customs, morals, character, feelings, attitudes and ways of thinking. In the plural (ta etaha) is a custom. Ethics is a type of moral decision-making, and determines what is right and wrong which is influenced by the rule of law, right or wrong in society. In the new Indonesian dictionary. Ethics is divided into three meanings: First, the science of what is good and what is bad and of moral rights and obligations.

Second, a collection of principles or values relating to morality. Third, the value of right and wrong held by a group or society.

The discussion of ethical issues in human communication usually revolves around an assessment of right or wrong behavior, the potential impact of that behavior, and attitudes toward important choices made consciously. More specifically, standards such as: honesty, keeping promises, truth, justice, and humanity, are recognized as important ethical goals. In politics, many ethical issues revolve around the belief in human rationality and the ideal process of democracy. Communication should encourage the ability to think rationally, a perspective that clearly considers the goal of political communication should be to create an informed electorate. If voters are to make rational choices about leaders or policy issues, they must have access to true and accurate, unambiguous, unemotional information as a basis for making their decisions.

Political Communication Strategy

Political communication strategy is a technique that plays a very important role in winning political contestations. The success achieved through the political communication strategy has contributed greatly in using and planning the strategy of political parties to formulate, not only in dealing with political activities, but also post-political activities. Strategy and politics are two things that cannot be separated, because if a political party wants to realize its political goals, it requires strategy or tactics, because strategy or tactics are prerequisites in planning. From that planning, the questions of who, when, will do what, where, how and why can be answered. The following is an imaging public communication strategy (Peter Schroder, 2004):

a. Political Image Through Political Marketing

Several political communication strategies can be carried out, one of which is to package and promote all products and attributes related to the party, so that the public is interested in choosing the party offered. Promotional activities are not only limited to what is done during the campaign period, but from the beginning of planning the party is involved in politics. Promotion

in politics is used as a reliable strategy to build the image and popularity of parties and candidates. In the political constellation, image and popularity occupy an important position. In addition to capturing constituent votes, popularity also acts as a way to construct the image of the party or candidate (Rosyadi Ruslan, 2008). Promotional activities consist of five main elements (David W Cravens, 2000):

First. Advertising, namely all forms of presentation and promotion (message delivery) through a medium to the public. Its purpose is to provide information about the party concerned, or to promote certain programs and policies. In the context of political communication, advertising relates to all forms of presentation and promotion of candidates through a medium to the public. The aim is to provide information about the qualifications, experience, background, and personality of the candidate so that community support is expected to increase

Second. Sales Promotion (sales promotion), which is a form of market education that aims to encourage the desire to try or buy a product or service. In political activities, party members meet voters or prospective voters and give them the opportunity to join the offered party, introduce and offer the advantages of the product so that the public is interested and voluntarily provide support for the candidate from the party.

Third. Public Relations, namely the formation of public perception or what is known as imaging, by using information, persuasion, and adjustment to revive public support for the party. In political communication, Public Relations is a series of activities organized in such a way as a series of integrated campaigns or programs, taking place continuously and regularly. The aim is to ensure that the work of the organization concerned is always known by other interested parties.

Fourth. Personal Selling, where party members meet and interact directly with voters, make presentations, answer questions and receive voter messages. In the context of political communication, personal selling can persuade voters based on the candidate's physical appearance and body language. In this

section, there are four stages that must be considered, namely: 1) qualification of who will be addressed, 2) recognizing the characteristics of voters, 3) offering plans or ideas to convince the target voters of candidates, 4) relationship, maintaining relationships with voters.

Fifth. Direct Marketing (direct marketing), namely the use of letters, telephone, facsimile, email, and other non-personnel liaison tools to communicate directly with or get direct responses from certain voters and prospective voters. Models like this can be done with the support of the internet and others

b. Political Image Through Political Campaign

In society there are social groups whose responses to mass communication tend to be the same. The social classification can be based on identity, ethnicity, religion, gender, social class, etc. Various studies involving various social categories show that people's membership in a particular group has an important impact on their behavior.

In communicating, of course, there are several actors, because communication goes in two directions. It is also inseparable from the principle of communication which requires communicators or communication actors to convey messages, meanings, propaganda, to the communicant of the recipient of the message, eat and propaganda. Communicators play an important role in all communication processes. Business-trade communication to political communication. In political communication, there are several actors or communicators or it can also be called a communication play that makes this political communication work. This actor plays a vital role in carrying out political communication, whether or not political communication is going, whether or not the desired message is reached, which leads to the victory or defeat of a political party depending on these actors in carrying out their political communication to the communicant audience here we call the community. . The variety of political communication actors of a political party is very diverse, through political party functionaries, party cadres.

c. Political Image Through Mass Media

The mass media is used as an imaging medium for urban communities, because urban communities have much easier access to mass media than rural communities. Especially in accessing print media, it is easier for urban people to access it than rural communities, especially those in remote areas.

The mass communication used as mentioned in general is print media, such as newspapers, brochures, billboard advertisements and so on. The mass media is used as an imaging medium for the urban community, because the access of the urban community to the mass media is much easier than that of the rural community . Especially in accessing print media, it is easier for urban people to access it than rural communities, especially those in remote areas. This is due to the very limited access of rural communities to mass communication channels, especially print media. Political imagery can also be done by utilizing community leaders who have influence, respected people in society and become community role models. Community leaders are individuals who pay attention to information, and they are the sources of information for other village communities whose access to mass media is limited. Through personal influence, community leaders are channels that connect mass networks and interpersonal communication. In addition to the influence that community leaders exert on political decisions through interpersonal contacts, community leaders play a major role in disseminating political information, thus reaching most of the people in villages where newspapers are minimally accessible.

Community leaders can also be termed as Opinion leaders as Elvinaro termed those who are well informed. Opinion leaders are those who are close to sources of information and who are able to interpret every message they receive according to the frame of reference and field of experience (Elvinaro Ardianto, et.al,2007). Furthermore, it is the opinion leaders who convey messages that have been interpreted to other individuals interpersonally.

d. Imaging Through Political Jargon

Looking back to a few years ago, 2014 was precisely the year when the biggest democratic party in Indonesia was held. People as constituents will use their voting rights to choose certain political parties and figures who are worthy to lead this nation. Of course, this is a separate momentum for several parties and political figures who will participate in political competition in the upcoming elections to promote themselves. Various strategies were applied. One of them is by using advertisements in electronic media, which in this case is television.

The use of advertising as a promotional medium does not seem to be used only by business people. But it is also used by political parties to promote their programs.

e. Imaging Through Social Media

The development of technology with all the products it produces is a necessity that cannot be denied by humans. New media as a result of advances in information technology have also become a trend in disseminating information to the public. New media or better known as the internet over the last decade, has also developed as an arena for fighting information and political messages. The battle model for political information and political messages is, for example, through social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and blogs. Recent developments can be noted from the increasing popularity of mail lists in disseminating political information and messages. Politicians and parties are seen increasingly using the media as an imaging medium. The growing use of new media as an imaging arena is optimally utilized by politicians and parties. The new media emerged as the engineering of information communication technology experts, who succeeded in combining interpersonal communication with mass communication.

It is called mass media, because the new media can reach a global audience, and it is said to be interpersonal because the messages conveyed are directed and consumed personally. The new media is widely used by academics, bureaucrats, students, and also politicians.

Even with the emergence of new media today, politicians build an image through social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Through these social networks, politicians build an image, because social media can be used for interactive communication. When it comes to theory, internet media has a number of advantages, including: (1) being able to penetrate boundaries of territory, space and time. (2) expanding access to global information. (3) increase the ability to associate freely. (4) can threaten an established order, such as an autocratic government. (5) has a speed of development and deployment that is difficult to overcome.

Communication strategy of the ERAMAS success team in gaining support for the 2018 simultaneous regional elections in North Sumatra

In obtaining victory in the election, the role of the successful team is very decisive. It can be assumed that the success of the candidate pair in winning the election contestation is the success of the successful team. At the same time, the successful team certainly has a powerful weapon, in this case the weapon in question is a trick in communicating to prospective voters to gain support. The communication strategy of the ERAMAS success team in gaining support in the 2018 North Sumatra election is to increase popularity and electability. These two words became the main key to ERAMAS's victory in the local elections some time ago. Popularity is the extent to which a person is known in a particular community. Meanwhile, electability is how many people who know make a choice against him.

At every election event, popularity becomes the most sought after by politicians. For those who have high popularity, already have much greater capital to succeed in being elected when compared to politicians with mediocre or even low popularity, it may be very difficult to win the hearts of the public who will vote. This is in accordance with the results of research written by Rahmat Edi Irawan that the popularity of politicians is indeed the main requirement for politicians to be successful in general elections (Rahmat Edi Irawan, 2014).

Furthermore, Irawan explained that the popularity of politicians is indeed synonymous with political work. While the political work of approaching constituents continuously is a way that politicians must do to boost popularity. However, political work alone is not enough. Currently, efforts to boost popularity also need to be done by using mass media, especially television, which can introduce politicians to their voters who are also television viewers.

Increasing popularity is certainly not an easy thing. For a long time, political work, or the continuous efforts made by politicians to approach constituents directly, is believed to be a way to increase popularity. Being close to the constituents will make them more known to the voters. Moreover, if it is added with the ability of politicians to help or solve problems faced by their constituents, they will be increasing known as well. Or in other words, if these politicians are increasing known, it means that the popularity of these politicians will also increase.

The communication strategy carried out by the ERAMAS success team in winning the 2018 elections was by direct selling, namely each success team in all sub-districts gathered all branch managers to conduct direct and massive campaigns or door to door to convey the vision and mission of the couple. candidate. In this case the successful team is more on the cultural side. So, what is the technique to convince the public so that they are certain to choose ERAMAS. So, all the existing components, in the form of campaign props and brochures, are then presented to the public to convince them.

Direct selling is one of the ways that can be used as a communication strategy in campaigning. This method is simply to go directly to the field by massively and diligently campaigning to influence the community to choose a certain candidate pair. This method is usually used by PKS cadres and is used as a campaign model at every election event to win the pair they are carrying. As the results of research conducted by Perdana that the use of media such as mass media, social media, billboards and direct selling (introducing party profiles and distributing attributes) are very important in the process of campaign strategy and political socialization in elections (Yoga Ade Perdana,2014).

Communication Strategy for the ERAMAS partner campaign in attracting public attention

Apart from the success team, strategy in campaigning is also an integral part of winning candidate pairs in election contestations. Good communication will produce a good response. Vice versa, poor communication will not have any impact and will only add to the cloudiness of the atmosphere. The following will describe the communication strategy of the ERAMAS couple's campaign in attracting public attention. The description of the results of this study is based on the data of the researchers' findings from interviews, observations, and documentation.

The campaign is a strategy for doing imagery, because the campaign is an organized effort to influence the decision-making processes within a specific group. In democratic life, political campaigns are carried out at the time of the general election with the sole purpose of gaining support and gaining votes and gaining sympathy from the public (Anang Anas Azhar, 2017).

The communication strategy carried out by the ERAMAS campaign team in attracting public sympathy is first by complying with KPU regulations. The ERAMAS campaign team studied and fully understood the campaign rules and regulations prepared by the North Sumatra Provincial KPU.

Next, the communication strategy of the ERAMAS success team's campaign in attracting public sympathy is to use two approaches. The first is to use a dialogical model. Dialogic simply means open or communicative. The key to true communication is dialogue. Dialogue is a relationship between me and you, between humans and humans, which is marked by togetherness, openness of heart, honesty and spontaneity.

The second campaign strategy approach carried out by the ERAMAS success team was an open campaign approach in the field. campaign openly will be heard by the wider community. At the same time the candidate pair will be able to understand the culture of a particular area. Thus, for both the candidate pair and the prospective voter there will be strong communication and emotional ties.

Obstacles faced and solutions carried out by the ERAMAS success team in the 2018 simultaneous regional elections in North Sumatra

The obstacles faced by the ERAMAS success team in the 2018 simultaneous regional elections in North Sumatra were: first, the geographical location was far away. The geographical condition of North Sumatra, which is far from each other, makes it difficult to access these areas. At the same time, this condition also resulted in large political costs that had to be incurred by the ERAMAS campaign team. On the other hand, the campaign period provided was very short and it was impossible to visit all areas in North Sumatra. Based on the documents that the researchers found, the 2018 North Sumatra election campaign period was from February 18, 2018 to June 23, 2018 (Pilkada Sumatera Utara, 2018). The campaign period of only four months is certainly not sufficient to visit all regions to socialize the vision and mission of each candidate pair. This condition was realized by the ERAMAS pair that indeed the short campaign period with the vast area of North Sumatra became a separate obstacle but this was not a problem. Because the same conditions also apply to ERAMAS rivals. Efforts are being made to maximize the stale areas of ERAMAS supporters' voices.

Second, the amount of slander and bad framing. The obstacle faced by the ERAMAS campaign team as contained in the interview excerpt above is the large number of slander or hoaxes circulating spreading bad news to corner ERAMAS's partners. Many black campaign issues circulated during the campaign period and even occurred during the calm period until the election day (Yaya Mulya Mantri, 2018). The 2018 regional head election in North Sumatra was one of the elections where there were many black campaign issues that threatened the political resilience of a region. The ERAMAS candidate pair who received the most of black campaign attacks, ranging from issues of political leadership, and other issues. These issues are more widely circulated on social media and are easily accessible by smartphone users. In addition, various slanders are also faced through more modern methods, such as the spread of chain messages through the application of uploading hoax images to social media.

The spread of black campaigns through social media and messengers spreads faster than the spread of pamphlets, brochures, and leaflets. The spread is influenced by the widespread culture of sharing or sharing website links or chain message content on messenger. Because people nowadays like to share website links with interesting titles, but not a few people just read the title and then share it without opening and reading it. Facts on the ground found that it was not uncommon for campaigns to contain slander that brought down the opposing camp. This slander is called a black campaign or black campaign. This is different from a negative campaign that contains facts about the opponent's weaknesses/weaknesses. The black campaign contains slander or accusations that are not clear and are not supported by strong evidence aimed at killing the character of political opponents.

Apart from the rampant slander faced by ERAMAS, there is also a fairly serious problem, namely pressure from the central government. This happened because ERAMAS was not supported by the ruling party. One of the discourses that always surface before the post-conflict local election is the involvement of the central government in intervening in the conduct of an honest election. In this regard, there is still public distrust of the central government. This was conveyed by Isna, for example, in her research that weak supervision caused the central government to be able to provide support to one of the candidate pairs. Therefore, in this case it is necessary to have clear and firm rules so as not to create opportunities for objectivity of the authorities during elections (Alizar Isna, 2010).

Third, intervention from the central government. The neutrality of the rulers in every election moment cannot be separated. Throughout the history of politics in Indonesia, the intervention of the authorities has always occurred. This is because the rulers themselves come from a party that is supported by the regions, so it cannot be denied that when the regions hold elections, the role of the rulers is also needed as a means of "returning the favor". However, it is necessary to break this very strict tradition and chain to realize truly clean elections.

Ideally, the neutrality of the bureaucracy is to place the government as a public service provider that is not influenced by political forces. The neutrality of the central government is important to provide services to

the community effectively and efficiently. In the development of the concept of bureaucratic neutrality has long been a debate by experts. A clear line has separated the two groups, namely regarding the neutrality of the bureaucracy in politics and the bureaucracy in favor of the dominant power. However, until the last general election was held, there were still many findings that directly or indirectly indicated central government intervention in regional elections.

In the context of the 2018 elections in North Sumatra, it is understandable that the rival of the ERAMAS candidate pair is the candidate promoted by the ruling party. Thus, the subjectivity of the central government in supporting its party cadres cannot be avoided. At the same time, various efforts made in the form of pressure to the ERAMAS team were also felt but this was not a problem and could be handled with courtesy and counter-narratives carried out by the ERAMAS campaign team. Then the solutions to overcome these obstacles are: first to form a solid team, secondly to continue to campaign in a polite and law-abiding manner, and third to convince the community by providing the best vision and mission.

The efforts made by the ERAMAS campaign team in dealing with the obstacles to the 2018 regional elections are to remain in politics in a polite, civilized manner and follow the applicable rules. Even though it was hit by framing and bad images and slander that went on and on. campaign team of ERAMAS does not want to repay evil with bad things, but is faced with courtesy and still follows the applicable rules.

Conclusion

The communication strategy of the ERAMAS success team in gaining support for the 2018 simultaneous regional head elections in North Sumatra is by: firstly, direct selling, secondly involving all elements of society, and thirdly maximizing the role of social media.

Communication Strategy The ERAMAS couple's campaign in attracting public attention is by means of: firstly dialogue and openness, secondly cultural and structural campaigning, and thirdly holding religious and social activities.

The obstacles faced by the ERAMAS success team in the 2018 simultaneous regional elections in North Sumatra were: first, the remote geographical location, secondly the amount of slander and bad framing, and thirdly intervention from the central government. While the solutions to overcome these obstacles are: first to form a solid team, secondly to continue to campaign in a polite and law-abiding manner, and third to convince the community by providing the best vision and mission.

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