

The Role of Spin Doctor in Political Communications to Win the Most Votes

<http://dx.doi.org/10.25008/jkiski.v8i1.832>

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Submitted: March 02, 2023, **Revised:** May 19, 2023, **Accepted:** June 19, 2023

Accredited by Kemristekdikti No. 28/E/KPT/2019

Abstract

Winning the most votes in the legislative elections is not easy, especially in areas previously controlled by the incumbents. The election-winning team, especially spin doctors, bears an effort to conduct proper political communication. The team developed also requires support including qualified political experience of its members to build a positive public image and opinion about the candidate. This study aims to investigate the role of spin doctor political communication by legislative candidates in winning the most votes in the Administrative District of Seribu Islands Regency in the 2019 election by using the theory of persuasion communication and Political Communication proposed by Dan Nimmo. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. The results showed that to understand the characteristics of voters, the spin doctor mapped voters in all parts of the Administrative District of Seribu Islands Regency and conveyed political messages that were easily accepted by the public. This political message was delivered persuasively by the spin doctor team to build a positive image of one of the legislative candidates, H. Muhammad Idris, among the people of the Administrative District of Seribu Islands Regency. Positive public opinion is built through persuasive communication to constituents face-to-face with a family approach. The effort to build positive public opinion is also supported by the personality of the candidate, who is known as a generous person and likes to meet his constituents directly. This behavior makes people perceive the candidate positively and believe that the candidate has had a positive image for a long time, not only at the time of the election. The research results also indicate that building an image properly without public lies is more manageable for constituents to accept and remember.

Keywords: Political communication, Spin doctor, Persuasive communication, Public opinion, Image

Introduction

The Seribu Islands Regency is one of the administrative districts in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta, where some people still underestimate—mainly related to the involvement of its citizens in political contestation. Moreover, heretofore, there have been no local representatives from the Administrative District of Seribu Island Regency who have become members of the

legislative council in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta Province, so that the aspirations of the people of the Administrative District of Seribu Island Regency have not been accommodated and recognized as expected.

Most people of Seribu Islands earn their livelihoods as fishermen with the same characteristics and needs. It is an excellent opportunity for legislative candidates to participate in political communication. Mainly

by carrying out a persuasive communication approach, legislative candidates can make an inventory of what the people of the Seribu Islands require and expect so that it can later be used as an object or source for political campaigns. Political communication of legislative candidates can be done using the local community's cultural, religious, and local wisdom approach (Siahaan et al., 2020).

The similarity of characters, especially the language spoken by the people of the Seribu Islands Regency, also becomes an excellent opportunity that the legislative candidate can benefit from. Through the use of the same and straightforward language, the message that the spin doctor will deliver can be easily understood by the people of the Seribu Islands Regency. This message is part of political communication. In the context of communication, political communication is accessibility for candidates to conduct effective political communication with the electorate. Political accessibility will result in a level of political electability, which in the end, a high level of political accessibility can generate support (Rani, 2019).

In the 2009 and 2014 legislative elections, several native sons of the Seribu Islands who participated in the legislative election contestation did not secure seats in the Legislative Council of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta Province. As a newcomer, H. Muhammad Idris who is a cadre of the Nasdem Party, and a regional representative of the Seribu Islands participated in the 2019 election. In the 2019 legislative election, he secured a seat in the Legislative Council of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta Province with the highest number of votes.

The success of Muhammad Idris to become a member of the Legislative Council of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta Province in the 2019 Election cannot be separated from his spin doctor team's role. Gaining support and developing a positive public image is difficult for any political candidate. Political communication supports the image, so it requires a special team to help the candidate gain votes. The team is called the Spin Doctor (Hartini & Jumaidin, 2022). A spin doctor is different from a success team. This difference can be noticed in their respective job descriptions. The success team is responsible for organizing technical issues, such as mass

mobilization, campaign sites, maintaining voice solidity thoroughly, etc. The spin doctor is responsible for building the image of politicians through their performance in public, print, and electronic media so that positive opinions can lead politicians to win elections (Handayani, 2013).

A spin doctor is anybody who can design campaign strategies through the media to win candidates in general elections, including the election of legislative members (Handayani, 2013). In this case, the media not only serves as a platform to send messages but also represents a particular aim behind the message. In the election process, building a positive image of the candidate becomes the main aim of conveying messages through the media (Siahaan et al., 2020). The candidates must build their image to gain support and public sympathy (Saputra et al., 2018). Regarding this, the spin doctor needs to use positive and constructive ways through the media to build a positive public image and opinion about H. Muhammad Idris.

A total of 16 political parties contested the 2019 legislative elections in the Seribu Islands, 20 candidates vied for seats in the Regional Representative Council (DPD), and 6 candidates competed for seats in the Regional Legislative Council (DPRD). During the voting and vote counting phases as well as the vote recapitulation phase as outlined in the DB 1 form (calculation data sent at the district/city level), the voter turnout in the Seribu Islands Regency is 82.35% calculated from the number of the Definitive Voter List (*Daftar Pemilih Tetap/DPT*) who exercised their voting rights. If the number of voters in the Definitive Voter List, Additional Voter List (*Daftar Pemilih Tambahan/DPTb*) and Special Voter List (*Daftar Pemilih Khusus/DPK*) is combined, the number of voters in the Seribu Islands will be higher (reaching 91%) compared to the previous election. This is the best achievement in the history of general elections in the Seribu Islands, where Muhammad Idris won the most votes.

Following are the top 6 (Table 1) votes acquired by candidates for the Regency Legislative Council members in the Seribu Islands and the list of elected candidates for the Provincial Legislative Council members in the 2019 general election.

Table 1. The top 6 votes for the provincial Regional People's Representative Assembly legislative candidates in the Seribu Islands

| No. | Candidates for Provincial Legislative Council Members | Votes | Political Parties | Results |
|-----|---|-------|-------------------|---------|
| 1 | H. Muhammad Idris | 3.272 | Partai Nasdem | 688 |
| 2 | Tubagus Hikmat Syah | 1.752 | PDIP | 461 |
| 3 | Wahyu Hidayat | 1.566 | Partai Golkar | 320 |
| 4 | Noval Abuzar | 1.042 | PKS | 249 |
| 5 | H. Bahruzin | 635 | PKS | 249 |
| 6 | Muhammad Atip | 589 | Partai Hanura | 97 |

Source, The General Elections Commission of Seribu Islands

The data in table 1 shows that Muhammad Idris won the most votes even though it was the first time for him to participate in the election of legislative members in the Seribu Islands. H. Muhammad Idris's vote gain is far above the other legislative candidates. The vote gain is related to the role of political communication played and the effort made by the spin doctor team that supports it. Personalized campaign styles are of increasing importance in contemporary election campaigns at all levels of politics (Zittel & Nyhuis, 2021)

Theoretical Framework

Political communication is communication characterized by politics that occurs in a political system. Political communication can be represented in the delivery of messages that have a political impact from the political authorities to the people or the delivery of support or demands by the people for political rulers. According to Heryanto (2018), in the political communication process, the actors' position in communicating is always connected to the context, message, and meaning (meaning). It is also emphasized by Bungin (2018), who states that political communication allows political elites to provide public space to communicate and explore opportunities that allow them to meet and discuss important issues that are currently being faced.

Political communication is a communication process that has implications or consequences on political activity. This factor distinguishes political communication from other communication disciplines, such as educational communication, business communication, intercultural communication, and the like. The difference lies in the content of the 'message.' It means that political communication has messages that are

politically assessed, while educational communication has messages that contain education. Related to this, distinguishing between one discipline to another in the study of communication science is seen based on its nature or message.

Political messages in elections are products marketed to consumers, in this case, constituents. Political products are presented as intangible products, or products that are not real and are closely related to the value system, to which promises and hopes for the future are attached (Tosepu, 2018, p. 149). Political discussions are messages in various forms, such as news, information, advertisements, pictures, etc. Political messages are the content of political events that connect politicians and audiences (Wahid, 2018). It can be done through various media or communication channels.

Political communication channels are essential because the political process requires a political setting with a political audience, while politics is a process and, like political communication, involves conversation. It is not a conversation in the narrow sense of the word spoken but a more inclusive conversation, which means all the manners people exchange symbols, written and spoken words, pictures, movements, gestures, temperaments, and clothes (Wahid, 2018).

Image

According to Peteraf and Shanley (1997), image is not just about perception or identification but also requires an individual's attachment to a group. This attachment can be done rationally or emotionally. According to Herrop (1990), a political image can reflect a certain level of trust and competence of a political party. Here, political image is defined as the construction of representation and public perception of a political party or

individual regarding all issues related to political activity. Politicians, as political communicators, must be able to assemble effective political communication with the groups in order to build images (image building), recover images (image recovery), and maintain images (maintenance of image) (Saputra et al., 2018). Political imagery conducted by politicians has configurations, various forms, or shapes. The image of a politician can be presented as a self-image, which includes competence, morality, credibility, or character reflected in the "track record" (Aryadillah & Fitriansyah, 2022).

Political advertising also helps construct the image of the candidate. As part of political marketing, advertising is a series of activities to support a political image in the public's minds and convince them about it. As seen in advertising products, political images do not always reflect objective realities. A political image can also reflect things that are not authentic or fictitious which can occasionally be different from physical reality. Political images can be created, built, and strengthened. Political image can be weakened, faded, and lost in the cognitive system of society. Political image has the power to motivate actors or individuals to do something. In addition, the political image can influence public opinion and communicate specific meanings.

Public Opinion

Public opinion is the result or effect of communication messages conveyed by communicators using political channels and media to the audience to achieve the goals of the concerned communicator. A deep understanding of the communicator regarding the social matrix is required in constructing public opinion. Every political event and process has reasons and social conditions, including the audience's condition for political messages.

Rakhmat (in Atmodjo, 2015) states that the biggest mistake made by mass and political communicators is ignoring the social matrix of an event. It means that political communicators must be prudent to the existing social networks and conditions in the society. It can be understood because every event occurs in a particular social system. The construction of public opinion has several stages of individual development, namely: time process, scope

(public breadth), experience, and character (actors).

Public opinion always has continued and will continue to occur as long as issues can be commented on or become public material. Public opinion is like one side of a coin, and the other side is events. Public opinion also occurs in all cases/events, including political activity. According to Nimmo (in Handayani, 2013), public opinion has the following characteristics; First, public opinion's content, direction, and intensity. Second, the controversy marks the existence of public opinion, which means something that is disagreed upon by the people. Third, public opinion is based on the controversy touching all who feel the direct and indirect consequences even though they were not partakers of the initial confrontation.

The right communication strategy is also needed to create a good understanding of public opinion or as designed for a policy. According to Irish and Prothro in Muhtadi (Hartini & Jumaidin, 2022), public opinion is "the expression of attitudes on social issues." Based on this definition, public opinion includes three elements: expressions, attitudes, and social issues. It means that public opinion is not something that is easily obtained and formed following the goals of an organization but requires an appropriate and suitable communication strategy. It is because the communicators and the audience or policy targets are involved in the message-planning process. In this case, the audience or community also has experience, aims, and various goals. There is no political event that is not concerned with public opinion. Public opinion is one of the determinants of the success of the political activity.

It is not the numerical majority that counts in determining public opinion but the effective majority. The subject of public opinion is a controversial new issue in which the elements of public opinion are: a controversial statement, a contradictory point, and a first reaction/new idea.

Understanding someone's opinion, especially public opinion, is not easy. It must be done by understanding the opinion circulating in the public segment. The opinion itself has a close relationship with the establishment (attitude). Furthermore, opinion has elements such as an opinion molecule, belief (belief

about something), attitude (what someone feels), and perception.

According to Wahid (2018), efforts to influence public opinion, change attitudes and behavior can be made in the following ways: (1) *Coercive* (force); an act of coercion that terror can be conducted, extortion, boycott, the implementation of power, and other manners that can suppress the mind and be nerve-racking to cause fear among the public. (2) *Persuasive*; is an act of subtly managing the psychological aspects to raise individual awareness through informative communication. Persuasive communication requires careful preparation, whether it is done orally (speech, lecture, propaganda, etc.) or in writing using pictures, signs, and so on.

Persuasive Communication in Political Campaigns

According to Perloff (in Surachmanto et al., 2019), persuasive communication is a symbolic process in which communicators attempt to convince others to change their attitudes or behavior regarding specific issues through message transmission in an atmosphere where the party being persuaded has free choice. Persuasive communication in campaigns is formal persuasion and requires thorough planning. Serious and targeted planning determines the campaign's effectiveness (Wahid, 2018).

Rogers and Storey (in Wahid, 2018) define a campaign as a series of planned communication actions to create a specific effect on a large number of audiences. Political communication in the campaign is needed to convey the vision and mission of each legislative candidate participating in the election. Good communication will impact the electability of each legislative candidate in order to gain votes (Nur, 2019). All actions in campaign activities are based on persuasion, urging and encouraging the public to accept or do something recommended voluntarily (Wahid, 2018).

Constituents who receive persuasion messages voluntarily accept, reject, or do not commit anything. In persuasion, both thought and emotion have an essential role, although, at first glance, the two are almost incompatible components (Svetlik, 2016). Political marketing communication significantly contributes to election participation, especially in the implementation of campaigns, because

each candidate attempts his best to fetch voters to side with him. The primary purpose of the candidate's political campaign message is to mobilize the community so that the message and political packaging are easily understood according to the targeted community segment (Sri et al., 2020).

Political Communication Media

The power of mass media as a channel to influence audiences has contributed a lot to the formation of public opinion. The ability to multiply political messages in the mass media has an impact on changing voter behavior. Therefore, the political elite who want to fight for the commanding position will attempt to use the mass media for publication and image building. Media is a candidate's communication channel to an audience considered adequate and efficient in today's modern campaigning era. The new media technology revolution has changed the pattern of political communication.

The mass media currently has a crucial position for all parties because its position can provide information to people who need it (Ayu, 2017). With the advancement of technology development in the media field, political marketing has discovered a new tool to enhance persuasive communication. Mass media, including new media, are now an instrument for delivering political messages. The use of mass media to support the political process becomes more potent in reaching audiences and target areas of political campaigns. Campaigns using the new media Facebook as a top-down promotional tool focus more on the candidate's personality and as a strategic tool to guide followers to action, not as a bottom-up empowerment tool or hybridization co-production (Gerodimos & Justinussen, 2014).

Spin Doctor

To promote themselves, politicians and political parties must continuously produce various efforts to convince the public. Therefore, a team is needed to support the politicians and political parties to become successful in general elections to realize these efforts. The team that supports the success of politicians and political parties in the general election is known in the community as a success team. In a success team, there is a role called a spin doctor, whose task is more specific than that of a success team.

According to Grabel (in Cangara, 2016), a Spin doctor is an individual who can control the public, mobilize the masses and control the media, and a political conceptor who aims to influence. The skills or 'tools' that spin doctors have, (1) Spin doctors must be media experts or know which media can attract audiences, (2) Researching political opponents is the most important political dimension, where they must collect as much information as possible about their opponent, (3) Spin doctor must be able to anticipate something that goes beyond the plan (Handayani, 2013).

In Indonesia, spin doctors are more commonly known as campaign managers who determine the direction of public opinion in imaging candidates. A spin doctor uses all communication channels to build the image of the politicians s/he maintains by building and directing public opinion to win elections, as well as influencing the public so that their expected goals can be achieved. By using communication media in public opinion, spin doctors create ways of coercion in campaigns to be persuasion (Cangara, 2016)

The spin doctor has two primary responsibilities: being a policy spokesperson and maintaining the reputation of a personality figure. The responsibility of a spin doctor is to be a liaison between politicians who will be promoted and journalists who will promote the politicians; therefore, the profession of a spin doctor is an expertise in the field of communication because the principles used by someone who works as a spin doctor use the principles of public relations, advertising, and marketing, all of which are studies in the field of communication, especially political communication and business communication.

Legislative Election

The general election is a means of democracy which is an arena for the people's sovereignty. In a democratic country, elections reflect the people's voices, the determinants for a country's sustainability to determine the nation's fate and goals. These voices will be accommodated by political parties participating in the election to become people's representatives in the House of Representatives.

The 2019 legislative general election was participated in by 16 political parties that passed the General Election Commission verification selection, plus 4 local political

parties in Aceh. The number of political parties participating in the 2019 elections is a consequence of the multi-party system implemented in Indonesia. The number of political parties also impacts the tough competition between political parties in gaining voters' to win seats in parliament. The success of political parties in gaining votes proves how much support and trust the people have for these political parties.

According to Kristiono (2015), the Regional Legislative Council obtained a more concrete constitutional arrangement in the 1945 Constitution after the amendment, especially the second amendment, which explicitly stated the existence of a Regional Legislative Council institution. Article 18 paragraph (3) of the second amendment to the 1945 Constitution stipulates that "Provincial, district and city governments shall have a Regional Legislative Council whose members are elected through general elections."

During the 2019 general election, Law No. 7 of 2017, which accommodates the overall implementation of elections in 2019, has undergone several changes, such as changes in the number of members of the House of Representatives (DPR) of the Republic of Indonesia which rose to 575, the number of seats in the Provincial and Regency/City Legislative Councils which also increased based on their population, and the number of General Election Commission members in the Province and Regency/Municipality of the Regional Legislative Council. In addition, the status of Election Supervisory Board in the Regency/City becomes permanent.

Article 420 mentions the rules for determining the number of seats that each political party acquired, while this system uses the "Sainte Lague" method. The Sainte Lague model is a seat-counting method that no longer uses the Voter Dividing Number but uses a ranking system by dividing the valid votes by odd numbers 1, 3, 5, 7, and so on. The difference between Law No. 27 of 1948 up to Law No. 8 of 2012 rests with the phrase/designation only.

Material and Methodology

This research uses a case study method, which describes the study's results and tries to find a comprehensive picture of a situation. According to Yin (2019), the case study is one of the social science research methods that is

more suitable when the central question of research relates to how or why.

The data collection technique used is the primary data and supporting data. The primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with 3 main informants and 2 additional informants. The three primary informants are spin doctor teams from legislative candidates who are members of the MIC (Muhammad Idris Centre). As for additional informants, the researcher also interviewed 1 community leader and 1 resident. At the same time, the supporting data was obtained through document records. This note can present in many forms. According to Moleong (2018), the notes are in the form of necessary scribbles, which are significantly shortened, containing keywords, phrases, and main points of conversation or observations, allowing pictures, sketches, sociograms, diagrams, and others.

Result and Discussion

In political communication, the role of the communicator is crucial as an integral and considered decisive element in the effort to gain constituent support. As a political communicator, the Spin doctor should take strategic steps to obtain the most votes for the candidate s/he supports. This was also done by the spin doctor team of H. Muhammad Idris as a legislative candidate from the Seribu Islands in winning the most votes. The strategic step taken by the spin doctor team was to build public opinion by building a positive image of H. Muhammad Idris as a legislative candidate.

Building Political Image through Media

One of the political communications done by the spin doctor is to build a good political image of legislative candidates. Political image is built and formed based on information received directly or through political media. Spin doctors are very interested in forming the political image of legislative candidates because with a positive political image, it is hoped that they will be able to obtain a lot of vote support from their constituents.

Building a political image is a planned, gradual, and continuous effort to make other parties interested, changing their views, attitudes, behavior, support, and actions according to the goals or targets set by the parties that form the political image. This was done by the spin doctor team H. Muhammad

Idris as stated by Lukman Hadi, who is one of the members of the Spin Doctor MIC team (Muhammad Idris Center).

“To build a positive image of Muhammad Idris, the spin doctor team conducted an intensive dialogue with the constituent communities. The spin doctor declared that a native of the island was running as a candidate for the Provincial Legislative Council (DPRD) of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta. This candidate has the capacity and capability to become a representative of the people of the Seribu islands, and if elected afterward, he can be a superintendent of the aspirations of the island community in the legislature later” (March 30, 2022)

Based on how and what is attractive for constituents to vote is related to the candidates' characters, events, issues, or ideas. In this study, researchers found integrative personal humanity in legislative candidates who became the object of research. Before getting involved in politics and being elected to the legislature, H. Muhammad Idris was a businessman whose business primarily operated in the Seribu Islands region. In addition, he is also active in social activities in the Seribu Islands, such as charity activities for orphans and activities on religious holidays, as stated by Damanhuri, a community leader in the Seribu Islands;

“Before he joined a political party, H. Muhammad Idris had shown his concern for his island, as we previously knew he was a businessman whose parts of his business income was allocated for social activities on the island” (April 2, 2022).

The same thing was also conveyed by Munaroh, one of the female leaders in the Seribu Islands. Munaroh stated that she had known H. Muhammad Idris as a good person who cared about the people of the Seribu Islands long before the spin doctor team presented the personality of H. Muhammad Idris;

"The personality of H. Muhammad Idris itself, although I already understand who H. Muhammad Idris is, and have felt kindness from him" (April 2, 2022).

Meanwhile, the media has a significant role in campaigning for political issues for the

people of the Seribu Islands. The selection of communication media must be based on the content of the message to be conveyed and the selection of media owned by the audience. Message content means message packaging for a particular community (Cangara, 2016). The spin doctor team H. Muhammad Idris realized this, so they made efforts to build a positive image of the candidate through several media that were considered effective. The selection and use of media carried out by the spin doctor as a campaign tool are also related to how is the media used extensively by the people of the Seribu Islands As it is known that the scope of the Seribu Islands region is not too broad and mass media users are limited, the spin doctor only uses three social media platforms to convey messages and political issues, namely Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter. Solihin also conveyed it as one of the spin doctor team of H. Muhammad Idris.

"To build the political image of legislative candidates, political communication is only done through social media, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter." (30/03/2022),

Meanwhile, H. Damanhuri, one of the community leaders in the Seribu Islands, said something was engaging about the use of media in building the political image of H. Muhammad Idris.

"As far as I know, the H. Muhammad Idris team uses Facebook too, but in my opinion, it is less effective because this island has a small area, and people have known him for a long time" (April 2, 2022).

The same thing was also expressed by Munaroh, a community leader in the Seribu Islands, who stated that she did not understand the media used by Muhammad Idris in campaigning his canddacy, but she had known Muhammad Idris for a long time as a person with a good personality;

"I do not know exactly and do not understand what media is used because even without using the media, people already know a lot about the actions of H. Muhammad Idris long before he ran for council" (April 2, 2022).

From the statements of the two sources, it was revealed that the people of the Seribu Islands are remarkable because they are not too

influenced by messages in the media. Given the condition of the Seribu Islands, which is not too wide, and the limited media used, namely only Facebook and WhatsApp, information conveyed by word of mouth is received more quickly than through the media. It also makes the presence of H. Muhammad Idris, who has been carrying out social and religious activities in the Seribu Islands for a long time, more recognized by the public than the political messages conveyed through the media by other candidates. The positive perception of the people of the Seribu Islands towards H. Muhammad Idris has formed a positive image of H. Muhammad Idris in the community. It increases public opinion of H. Muhammad Idris as a candidate for legislative member.

Persuasive Communication in Campaigns and Building Public Opinions

Before conducting persuasive communication to persuade constituents, the spin doctor must know the audience that is the target of persuasive communication. The spin doctor team of H. Muhammad Idris carried out the process of identifying the constituents based on the segments in each island. It is the first step taken to create effective persuasion communication. This is reflected by the statement of Royani, one of the members of the spin doctor team of H. Muhammad Idris, as follows.

"The steps taken by Spin Doctor are: Collecting voter data at each polling station, mapping voters based on segments on each island, and forming teams based on voter segments. The mapping carried out by the spin doctor has indeed been designed in advance, and our network is from the district level to the sub-district level. So everything is mapped on each voter segment, including spread across all islands, approximately who will choose, how many legislative candidates and where we can already map them before the voting is carried out" (March 31, 2022)

In addition, Royani also said that voter mapping/public mapping is also helpful in analyzing constituents' hopes and desires, finding opportunities to gain votes, and determining effective and efficient persuasion communication strategies.

"The steps taken are, of course, by observing the various problems of the Seribu Islands

community that have not been resolved so far, then they can be used as material for campaigning, then the MIC team also spreads widely by touching various groups" (March 31, 2022).

After mapping the constituents and observing the community's needs, the next step is to carry out a political campaign. The task and role of the spin doctor in this regard is to plan and manage the campaign. One of the conditions that must be met in order to create an effective political campaign is to choose the proper political issues which are able to persuade the constituents to elect H. Muhammad Idris as a legislative member from the Seribu Islands. In general, the political issues voiced by the spin doctor are convincing voters to unite to support the sons of the islands to become members of the council, as stated by Lukman Hadi, one of the members of the Spin Doctor team from H. Muhammad Idris:

"It is time for the native of the islands to make his dream come true as a member of the Regional Legislative Council and the island community unite to fight for the sons of the islands" (March 30, 2022).

Political issues voiced by the spin doctor team continue to be rolled out so that they become public opinion. As emphasized by Halloran (in Wahid, 2018), political communicators create public opinion. This was also done by the spin doctor team related to the issue of employment and the needs of the Seribu Islands community, which so far have not been realized, as stated by Royani:

"Political issues that are usually communicated to constituents are about employment opportunities, realizing community needs, and supporting every aspiration and desire of the community" (March 31, 2022).

Meanwhile, in a different place, Damanhuri also stated that the public opinion raised during the campaign was an issue related to employment opportunities that the people of the Seribu Islands needed:

"Political issues that are communicated are mainly about employment, and especially since almost all of us earn our livelihood as fishermen, of course, the needs are not much

different; this is also understood by H. Muhammad Idris" (April 2, 2022).

As stated by the informants, the political issues presented by the spin doctor are the proper issues to be rolled out and used as public opinion. This is reinforced by Munawaroh, one of the female leaders in the Seribu Islands:

"Convince us again and convey the promises of H. Muhammad Idris if he is elected, such as opening up job opportunities and helping to realize our hopes. Opening job opportunities, building roads and docks and other needs." (April 2, 2022).

The spin doctor dialogue process declared that there were native islanders who became legislative candidates and had the capacity and capability to become people's representatives from the Seribu islands. If elected afterward, they could later be guardians of the island people's aspirations in the legislature.

"Things that are our needs and desires that have not been achieved so far, include land acquisition for burials, the opening of job opportunities. Moreover, almost all of us earn our livelihood as fishermen; of course, the needs are not much different, which H. Muhammad Idris also understands.

The role of political communication played by the spin doctor in gaining the most votes for H. Muhammad Idris to run for the legislature is not easy to do. There needs to be a solid work team and cautious planning before and after the election. Handayani (2013) also found the same thing in her research. The results of this study indicate that the spin doctor team, in formulating a communication strategy to build the image of the candidate for Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Kendari, generally first conducts a SWOT analysis and polls on the candidate's popularity level in order to form an image.

Political communication carried out by the spin doctor also requires stages by considering several important factors. First, identify segments or voter mapping based on segments on each island in the Seribu Islands. It is the first step for communicators to create effective communication. Second, packaging the message in determining the issue or theme is the main requirement to influence messages

to audience to arouse their attention as voters. This is in line with the results of research conducted by Amirudin (2015). In its implementation, communication is divided into 7 stages: political mapping, making voice targets, designing and building a sound engine, upgrading the voice engine, running the program, and monitoring evaluation.

Meanwhile, the use of media as a means of emulating political messages has also been carried out by the spin doctor team. However, the existence of the media as a means of delivering political messages does not play a significant role in shaping the image of H. Muhammad Idris. The study found that the community's positive perception of H. Muhammad Idris had been formed long before he ran for the legislature. This is because H. Muhammad Idris has been known as being close to the community and always diligent in holding social activities as a form of concern for his area of origin. The same was also found in the research conducted by Djuyandi et al. (2015).

Djuyandi's research shows that the influence of political communication carried out by political parties through the mass media does not always influence people's attitudes or perceptions because it needs to be seen from the other side, namely the community's perceptions and needs. Political communication carried out by political parties through various media is not always dominant any longer because the audience is active and independent, both textual and nonverbal.

The use of media as a political message delivery but not as the primary means of shaping the candidate's image is also found in the research conducted by Gerodimos & Justinussen (2014). The Obama campaign uses Facebook as a top-down promotional tool, focusing on Obama's personality and as a way to strategically guide his followers to action, not as a means of bottom-up empowerment. Followers engage selectively with campaign messages and often interact more with policy-oriented than with promotional posts.

The exciting thing that was also found in this study was the role of political communication played by spin doctors to attract the sympathy of constituents to support and elect H. Muhammad Idris as a legislative member who is coincidentally a native of the Seribu Islands. The Spin doctor carries out political campaigns in a family manner and

face-to-face, meeting with constituent audiences, religious leaders, and community leaders. This was done because of the similarities in character and culture between the candidates and their constituents. In addition, to facilitate constituent understanding of the political messages conveyed by the spin doctor, it uses simple language that people from all walks of life in the Seribu Islands can understand. The same was found in Nur's (2019) study. The study found that the communication strategy conducted by legislative candidates and their success teams during political campaigns to run for seats in the Makassar City Legislative Council was a communication strategy that could be accepted by all groups, and a comprehensive step with a local wisdom approach.

Political communication conducted directly (face to face) is considered more effective because the spin doctor team can be wiser in implementing persuasion strategies and obtain more accurate information related to the hopes and desires of the constituent audience for H. Muhammad Idris as a candidate for legislative members. This is in line with the results of research conducted by Saputra et al. (2018).

Saputra's research shows that most political communication strategies for legislative candidates have leverage in persuading or influencing the public in campaigns presented as strategies (using billboards, holding political meetings with the community, and helping distribute infrastructure according to community needs). The trigger in influencing people's behavior towards the field of political campaigns is the persuasion and seduction that is brought into the knowledge of the general public due to a lack of public knowledge and challenges of political ethics in understanding language or opinions published in the media, both printed and electronic media.

Meanwhile, this study also discovered that spin doctors always convey political messages that can draw public attention to the campaign products offered. The spin doctor, through the emphasis on campaign products, also explains the advantages and disadvantages of H. Muhammad Idris as a candidate for legislative member to the public as a candidate for voters. The spin doctor can convey messages to the public by setting concrete

examples of what H. Muhammad Idris has done as a legislative candidate.

Conclusion

To obtain the most votes, the spin doctor of H. Muhammad Idris carried out voter mapping across all islands in the Seribu Islands to ensure that the political message was appropriately achieved on target and followed the necessities and expectations of the constituents. Most people of Seribu Islands are fishermen, so the political message is related to constructing roads and docks. In addition, the opening of job opportunities for the young generation of the Seribu Islands is also a political message conveyed by the spin doctor to persuade the islanders to vote for H. Muhammad Idris in the legislative elections in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta.

This political message was delivered persuasively by the spin doctor team to build a positive image of H. Muhammad Idris among the people of the Seribu Islands. This persuasive communication is carried out through direct communication (face-to-face) in kinship and media. What is impressive found in this study is that most people have positive perception of Muhammad Idris not from the media but from the good personality of H. Muhammad Idris known as being close to the people of the Seribu Islands since a long time ago. The people of the Seribu Islands had known Muhammad Idris long before he ran for a legislative member through various socio-religious activities he carried out. It has built a positive image of H. Muhammad Idris as a good person long before running for a legislative candidate.

The positive image of Muhammad Idris as a legislative candidate from the Seribu Islands is undoubtedly a supporting and reinforcing factor for the spin doctor in building public opinion among the people of the Seribu Islands. The spin doctor deliberately formed this public opinion to strengthen the positive image of H. Muhammad Idris among the people of the Seribu Islands. Public opinion is built by raising contemporary issues in the Seribu Islands community. The positive image of Muhammad Idris has significantly contributed to building positive public opinion about him. This positive public opinion is based on the actual conditions that exist in the Seribu Islands community and is not a manipulative public opinion.

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