

WINNING STRATEGY IN THE 2023 VILLAGE HEAD ELECTION IN PARTIHAMAN SAROHA VILLAGE PADANGSIDIMPUAN CITY

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Abstract

The village head election is a form of people's sovereignty in selecting a village leader for the next eight years. In the 2023 village head election (Pilkades) in Partihaman Saroha Village, community participation was remarkably high, including the candidacy of the youngest village head candidate, Amran Dalimunte. This study aims to analyze Amran Dalimunte's winning strategy as well as the supporting and inhibiting factors. The research employs a qualitative descriptive method with observation, interviews, and documentation techniques. The informants consist of the elected village head, the success team, hamlet heads, and the community. The findings reveal that Amran Dalimunte's winning strategy involved community engagement, socialization, and direct dialogue campaigns. The inhibiting factor was financial constraints, while the supporting factors were his young age and the community's preference for younger candidates due to their innovative thinking and quality leadership.

Keywords: Village Head Election, Strategy, Democracy.

Abstrak

Pemilihan kepala desa merupakan bentuk kedaulatan rakyat dalam memilih pemimpin desa untuk delapan tahun ke depan. Pada Pilkades 2023 di Desa Partihaman Saroha, partisipasi masyarakat sangat tinggi, termasuk dalam pencalonan kepala desa termuda, Amran Dalimunte. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis strategi kemenangan Amran Dalimunte serta faktor pendukung dan penghambatnya. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Informan terdiri dari kepala desa terpilih, tim sukses, kepala dusun, dan Masyarakat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi kemenangan Amran Dalimunte meliputi pendekatan masyarakat, sosialisasi, dan kampanye dialog langsung. Faktor penghambatnya adalah keterbatasan finansial, sedangkan faktor pendukungnya adalah usia muda dan kualitas pemikiran yang lebih diterima masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: Pemilihan Kepala Desa, Strategi, Demokrasi.

INTRODUCTION

General elections (Pemilu) are a process in which voters elect individuals to hold specific positions. These political positions range from the national level, such as the President, to the lowest level, namely the Village Head. In Indonesia, the electoral system is based on the principles of being direct, general, free, confidential, honest, and fair, aiming to establish a democratic government based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (Tengku, Erwin et al., 2016).

One of the manifestations of democracy at the grassroots level is the direct election of village heads by the local community. Etymologically, the term "desa" originates from Sanskrit, meaning homeland, ancestral land, or birthplace (Mashcab Mashuri, 2013).

The election of a Village Head serves as a form of democracy, providing citizens the opportunity to express their aspirations and exercise their rights as Indonesian citizens. The Village Head acts as the executive leader of the village government and is assisted by the Village Consultative Body (BPD), an institution that ensures the realization of the interests of the village community.

To uphold democracy at the village level, it is essential to maintain consistency in organizing village head elections to enhance welfare and advance the village. Therefore, candidates must secure public support through strategic approaches. These strategies may involve communication and community engagement to win the election.

The election committee plays a crucial role in organizing the democratic process, starting from voter registration, candidate screening, vote casting, vote counting, and reporting the election results. The committee is also responsible for overseeing the actions of each candidate to ensure a fair election process.

In the 2023 Village Head Election in Partihaman Saroha Village, three candidates with different backgrounds contested: a civil servant, a contract worker, and a member of the general public. The intense competition among them led to the adoption of various campaign strategies, including community engagement, intensive communication, and participation in social activities.

Amran Dalimunte, the youngest candidate and the son of a respected community figure, won the election with 270 votes. His victory strategy included gathering support, personal engagement, and a vision-driven campaign. His success demonstrates that factors such as age, social involvement, and effective communication play a significant role in village head elections.

METHOD

The research method used in this study is qualitative research, specifically qualitative descriptive research. Qualitative research with a descriptive-analytical approach aims to gain an in-depth understanding of social phenomena by utilizing data in the form of words and actions. The descriptive-analytical approach is employed to systematically describe the studied conditions and analyze facts based on the research findings (Puansah et al., 2022; Puansah et al., 2023; Puansah & Ritonga, 2020). The informants in this study include the elected Village Head, Amran Dalimunte's success team, the hamlet head, and community members.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Strategy

The term *strategy* originates from the Greek word *strategos*, which means *General*. Thus, in a literal sense, strategy refers to the "Art of the General." This term is closely related to the primary concerns of top-level organizational management. Specifically, strategy involves defining the company's mission, setting organizational goals by aligning external and internal strengths, formulating policies and specific strategies to achieve these goals, and ensuring their proper implementation so that the organization's main objectives are successfully attained (Ticoalu & Agusdharma, 2006). Strategy is also defined as a "process of determining plans by top-level leaders that focus on the organization's long-term objectives, accompanied by the formulation of methods or efforts to ensure these objectives are achieved" (Marrus, Stephanie K., 2008).

Political Strategy

Political strategy refers to the efforts made to achieve political objectives. In its implementation, the formulation of a strategy must take into account the strategies employed by opponents. The chosen strategy should consider the candidate's profile, programs, performance, and capabilities. In the political arena, strategies are developed to gain power, requiring approaches that can influence the process of attaining authority.

In the context of local elections (*Pilkada*), political strategies must be tailored to the social conditions of the community to persuade voters to exercise their voting rights. The role of an individual or regional head candidate in strategy formulation is crucial, particularly in organization. The public evaluates candidates based on three key factors: popularity, image, and internal support (Schroder, P., 2010).

Political marketing is the application of marketing principles in political campaigns involving various individuals, organizations, and procedures. It includes the analysis, development, execution, and management of campaign strategies by candidates, political parties, governments, lobbyists, and specific interest groups to shape public opinion toward their ideology (Hafied Cangara, 2012).

Village Head Election

The Village Head Election (*Pilkades*) is a celebration of democracy in which the community selects a leader to protect their interests. According to Law No. 3 of 2024, "The Village Head is elected directly by the village residents, and the election process must be direct, general, free, confidential, honest, and fair" (Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages). The *Pilkades* in Partihaman Saroha was held on August 24, 2023, with 961 registered voters. Three candidates contested the election: Amran Dalimunte, Emmi Sari Nasution, and Dorlan Rasoki Harahap.

The election process began with the formation of a neutral election committee by the Village Consultative Body (*BPD*), followed by public outreach, candidate registration, campaigning, and the final vote count. Campaign strategies included direct community engagement, promotion of candidates' vision and mission, and the presentation of development programs for the village.

Amran Dalimunte, the youngest candidate, emerged victorious with 270 votes, defeating his two opponents. His leadership has been recognized as effective, particularly in implementing programs such as the development of village infrastructure, improvements in healthcare services, and encouraging community participation in local development. A village head's success depends not only on personal leadership but also on the active involvement of the community. Good leadership fosters self-reliance and collective progress for the village. The Village Head Election is a crucial moment in village democracy, where the community exercises its right to choose a leader who will safeguard their interests. On August 24, 2023,

the election was conducted at polling stations in Partihaman Saroha Village, with 961 eligible voters. The three candidates competing were Amran Dalimunte, Emmi Sari Nasution, and Dorlan Rasoki Harahap.

The election process was initiated by forming a neutral committee under the supervision of the *BPD*, followed by public outreach, candidate registration, campaigns, and the final vote tally. Campaigning provided candidates with a platform to present their vision, mission, and plans for village development.

Amran Dalimunte, the youngest candidate, stood out due to his modern approach, social engagement, and effective campaign strategy. He secured victory with 270 votes, surpassing Emmi Sari Nasution, who received 151 votes, and Dorlan Rasoki Harahap, who received 170 votes.

As village head, Amran is recognized for his strong performance, having successfully implemented various initiatives, including the construction of public facilities, improvement of healthcare services, and the revitalization of social programs such as *PKK* (Family Welfare Program) and *Naposo Nauli Bulung* (Youth Organization). He has also actively encouraged community participation in village development. His success demonstrates that strong leadership can drive positive change and enhance community welfare.

CONCLUSION

Based on observations and interviews, this study concludes that:

1. Amran Dalimunte's winning strategy in the 2023 *Pilkades* in Partihaman Saroha Village was built on social capital. He gained the trust of the community through public outreach, personal engagement, direct interaction, and by listening to residents' aspirations. This approach aligns with Political Marketing strategies.
2. The main obstacles faced were financial limitations and inadequate infrastructure, which required Amran to be more creative in overcoming these challenges. Supporting factors included his status as a native resident of the village, his youth, which was perceived as a sign of progressiveness, and strong family ties that reinforced public support.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions above, the author suggests:

1. The elected village head is expected to fulfill the community's trust by effectively implementing the stated vision and mission for the progress and welfare of the village.
2. The community should choose leaders based on their capabilities and vision rather than solely on family ties.

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