Digital Media Technology as an Instrument for Promotion and Political Marketing in the Era of Industrial Revolution 4.0

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ABSTRACT

The development of digital media technology is a historical necessity. All dimensions of human life require digital technology interventions. Economic, educational, cultural, social, and political dimensions. Especially in the political aspect, the election of Regional Heads such as governors, regents, and mayors also requires a touch of digital technology. Candidates for the Regional Head promote and market themselves also through digital media, especially social media. The focus of this study is to elaborate on the use of advances in social media technology in the selection of regional head elections in East Java Province, Indonesia. This research employed a qualitative approach with case study research method. Informants of the research were from the core executive board of the PDI-Perjuangan from the national level (Central Board) going down to branch levels (Branch Board) as well as mayor candidates having been nominated by the PDI-Perjuangan. The findings of this study are that the use of social media to promote and market regional head candidates is essential. Social media platforms are used, such as whatapps, facebook, instagram, line, and website. But in practice, they also still use collaboration with face-to-face media.

CCS Concepts

• **Information systems**➝ **Information system applications**➝ **Mobile information processing systems**

Keywords

Information technology; Digital media; Social media platform; Promotion; E-marketing

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the research was to see how social media-based information technology is used in promoting and marketing regional head candidates in local head elections. In particular cases that occur within the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle The decision making within the political party was at least accommodated on the three levels of executive boards of the party,

i.e., DPC (Dewan Pimpinan Cabang; Branch Executive Board), DPD (Dewan Pimpinan Daerah; Regional Executive Board), and DPP (Dewan Pimpinan Pusat; Central Executive Board).

The pattern of communication in decision-making was of interest to study on account of various considerations that must be negotiated and coordinated prior to the political party's issuance of support to the pair of candidates who would run in the election of regional head.

In the case of the election of Mayor of Kediri, the *PDI-Perjuangan* nominated the pair of Ashar-Juniadi to run for mayor and deputy mayor. Samsul Ashar used to be a former Mayor of Kediri in the period of 2009-2014. However, in the election of 2014, Samsul Ashar was defeated by Abu Bakar, a former deputy who also run for the mayor. In the elections of 2018 Regional/Provincial Head in East Java, the *PDI-Perjuangan* supported Saifullah Yusuf (Gus Ipul) as a candidate for governor and Puti Guntur Soekarno as a candidate for deputy governor.

The issuance of these names for candidacy was worth of interest on account of various alternatives and considerations circulating within the internal political party.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social media

Social media according to Shirky (2008) is social software to increase the ability of users to share (to share), to cooperate between users and to take collective action which is all outside the institutional and organizational framework [1,2]. According to Mieke and Young (2012) interpret the word social media as a convergence between personal communication in the sense of sharing one-to-one and public media to share with anyone without any individual specificity [3,4].

Not much different from the two meanings above, according to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, in (Utomo, 2013)) states that social media is "A group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow for creation and exchange of User Generated Content [5]. "Furthermore, Kaplan and Haenlein also provide social media typologies that they share in six types, namely (1) Collaborative Projects such as Wikipedia, (2) Blogs, (3) Content Communities such as Youtube, (4) Social Networking Sites such as Facebook and Twitter, (5) Virtual Social Worlds like Second Life, and (6) Virtual Game Worlds like Warcraft. Limitation and typology are undoubtedly useful to distinguish them from the common understanding of social media, which is characterized by interpersonal communication and physical contact between people.

Meanwhile, according to Gershon (2016) there are seven social media goals namely (1) providing a low-cost platform for enhancing brand awareness, (2) providing a platform for periodic news and information updates, (3) providing an opportunity to meet new friends, colleagues, or clients, (4) provides opportunities for crowdsourcing as well as customer reaction testing or product ideas, (6) can perform important gatekeeping roles by highlighting select news, video for general distribution, (7) mobilizes people to action by providing information about events, times and location [6].

2.2 Decision-making within the organization

Decision-making is a social action and communication need. Organizational decision making is a strategic action and oriented to successful problem-solving [7]. Communication facilitates coordinated social action. As revealed by Leeper and Priyowidodo , communication is necessary in decision making and as an organizational process [8]. This ultimately leads to an understanding between public organizations. According Jönhill (2003; Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail ,1994).), the existence and form of organization is based on decisions. Organizations cannot stop making decisions; otherwise, they will cease to exist as an organization [9]. From Luhman's point of view, decisions are the medium of communication and the organization requires communication that results in decisions [10].

Luhmann views the organization not only as the social system but also the communication system. Communicative systems operate closed systems, but they are cognitively open and structurally joined to one another. Communication systems are autopoietic, meaning that they have a permanent structure and they have the ability to reproduce structures and elements. The organizations in this study are defined as systems formed by decisions and decision making and that communicating decision is needed to maintain their autopoiesis nature .

Luhmann (2003, Culnan & Marcus, 1987) argues that organization is a reproduction through a decision-making process, in which new decisions and reproduction are required. Each decision opens the possibilities and options for a new one, and the decision is not a replication of the previous decision. Organizations as closed systems also make decisions as a consideration, meaning that organizations learn from their own actions.

2.3 PDI-Perjuangan as a Political Organization

Following the 'fall' of President Soeharto on May 21, 1998, consequently a new government had to be set up right away. The only constitutional mechanism for government change is by holding General Election. So, in order to get around the law so that Megawati's Indonesian Democratic Party can join the General Election in 1999, it changed its name to *PDI-Perjuangan* (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan*; Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle), precisely on February 14, 1999 at Istora Senayan, Jakarta.

To date, the *PDI Perjuangan* has held Congress four times, the First congress (Bali, 2000), the Second Congress (Semarang, 2005), the Third Congress (Sanur Bali, 2010) and the fourth Congress (Sanur Bali, 2015). But, ironically having held four congresses, the *PDI-Perjuangan* has never regenerated its top command. The chairperson of one Congress to another was still held by Megawati Sukarnoputri. Although it was ranked first in the 1999 election (33.74%), the trend continued to decline in the next two elections in 2004 (18.53%) and in 2009 only obtained less than 15%

(14.03%). However, in the 2014 election, it gained addition to become 109 seats (18.95%) and 128 seats (19,33) in 2019.

The *PDI-Perjuangan* has five levels of structure, i.e. DPP (*Dewan Pimpinan Pusat*; Central Executive Board), DPD (*Dewan Pimpinan Daerah*; Regional Executive Board) and DPC (*Dewan Pimpinan Cabang*; Branch Executive Board). The last level is still further divided into PAC (*Pengurus Anak Cabang*, the Sub-Branch Board at sub-district level) and the PR (*Pengurus Ranting*; Twig Board at village / *kelurahan* level). East Java DPD is one of the 34 DPDs under the *PDI-Perjuangan* .

East Java DPD itself has at least 38 DPC, of which each DPC has some total number of PACs and PRs that varies depending on the number of sub-districts and villages in the region. Especially for East Java DPD, the *PDI Perjuangan* has 34 DPC (Branch Board) and 665 PAC (Branch Subsidiary Board). As a case in point, in the DPC of Kediri, the *PDI-Perjuangan* has 3 subsidiaries, namely PAC of Kediri city, PAC of Mojoroto and PAC of Pesantren.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

The research method is a case study. According to Yin (2014), case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates phenomena in the real-life context, whereby the boundaries between phenomena and the contexts are not discriminately evident, and whereby multiple sources of evidence are used. Case studies are appropriate when the subject of an inquiry deals with how or why, if the researcher has little chance of controlling the event to be investigated and if the focus of his research rests on the contemporary phenomena in the real-life context [11].

4. RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The use of social media as a platform in pre-decision making

The development of technology and communication has been adopted by many organizations, including political organizations. In carrying out their command and coordination, *PDI-P* officials have taken advantage of social media, including to disseminate information. Social media is used by the boards from DPC, DPD and DPP levels even ad hoc committees or field managements also create Whatapps (WA) themselves. The role of social media in disseminating and managing information within *PDI-P* becomes significant for exploring the ideas or considerations of party members. As revealed by Kusnadi, Chairman of DPD PDI-P East Java as well as Vice Chairman of East Java DPRD,

If only technical issues, certainly we use the existing communication tools. Telephone, WA, also including SMS, precisely all the communication media. But those are only for technical matters.

As such was also delivered by Yordan Batara Goa, deputy secretary of the DPD PDIP East Java program,

So there is WA. So the DPP has a WA group, such as Secretary General. It has a WA group with all Indonesian secretaries. That the communication through WA is very intense, yes. We also have a lot of diplomacy group WAs, both formal and informal. In the informal WA, the participants could be freely talking from A to Z. Even with the informal WA group, I find it interesting, although an informal WA, in fact it is very powerful one.

In determining candidates for the election of regional head, party officials have used social media as a platform that can spread information, ideas and alternative considerations. Social media

allows party officials to communicate directly with officials across different levels without being restricted by space and time. Social media becomes a space for dialogue and discussion on fundamental topics before formulating policies in formal meetings or plenary sessions. Such utilization is at the same time an evidence that political organization has also digitized internal party communications.

Bottom up or upward communication is a flow of communication, whereby messages flow from subordinates to superiors. In other words, the flow of information goes from the lower to the higher levels. Within this flow, messages generally contain reports, completed tasks, questions that are not or less clear about the methods and work procedures, employee's responsibilities to the leadership. Upward communication is a feedback from downward communication so as to enable the lower levels of the organization provide suggestions and raise questions to a higher level.

Decision making in determining candidates in the election of regional head has been regulated in the political party's regulation. However, in its implementation, the party officials provide an opportunity to the party members at the *DPC* level to recruit prospective candidates to be proposed for the nomination. Based on the interviews with the informants, the researchers see that the initiation of candidate selection process begins with the *DPD* first. As such was explained by Jordan Batara Goa,

"So we wrote to the 38 DPC districts of East Java asking them to propose names through the mechanism, as I recall through the DPC meeting. Why is that way, because that's the mechanism as set out in the party's regulation"

Communication mechanism begins with instructions from the level of organization board in the *DPD* to the organization board at the level of *DPC* to recruit and propose prospective pairs of candidates for regional leaders in the election of regional heads. This top-down communication flow is accommodated and regulated in the party's regulation. This means that the party provides access and guarantee to members to participate in the decision-making process associated with the elections. This was also confirmed by Kusnadi as follows,

So there is a DPP regulation, which, what do you call it, governs how we are supposed to recruit candidates for regional heads as well as vice regional heads who will be nominated by PDI-Perjuangan. There it is. Well, principally the regulation set out the process of recruitment and screening.

Political parties like other organizations must have management supported by the party's structural ranks [12]. The strength of structural functions will provide a conducive climate so that coordination and negotiation can be implemented properly. The party's structural roles should have a good understanding of the duties and functions of the political party in carrying out the party's vision and mission as a political force [13].

As a political organization, a proposal or a recruitment from the lower to the upper level is a manifestation of the implementation of democratization within the party's internal environment [14]. Upward flow of communication is considered effective in order to recruit the best cadres of the party to join the competition in the election. This value is then becomes a characteristic of building up the internal party communication network resulting in the formation of the patterns of the party's communication. In this case, the patterns of communication adopted by the political party identify their roles as a representation of democratization [15].

4.2 Communication media in the decision-making process

Organizational communication media is needed as a channel to deliver formal information within the organization [16]. Within the organization, formal and informal information flow. Formal communication is a communication agreed upon by members of the organization to achieve the interests of the organization. In formal communication, it generally contains organizational mechanisms, productivity, and various work oriented to organizational goals [17]. In the decision-making processes related to the selection of candidate pairs of regional heads, the communication media used by the *PDI-P* officials is a written or traditional communication media as well as face-to-face communication. The following is an explanation given by Yordan Batara Goa:

But in principle we open the registration, at the same time, we write to the DPCs asking them to propose names .... Well, then the Central Executive Board conducted a fit and proper test as well as a psychological test held by HIPSI, Indonesian Psychological Association. In that case, they become the authority of the Party's Central Executive Board. As for the provision, it is certainly based on the track record, achievement, the results of the fit and proper test, and psychological test.

Jordan asserted that the traditional communication media that is written becomes a communication medium used in the initial process of the pre-elections of regional heads. In the next stage, the face-to-face media is used in the selection process of the candidate. This shows that traditional communication media is still the mainstream media adopted by the *PDI-P* in the process of nominating regional heads. As such was further affirmed by Kusnadi:

Well, as for the public, the so-called benchmark of openness, we have to make an ad. We have to advertise. In the mass media of the community, or generally in various media, to inform that PDI-Perjuangan is doing the process of recruiting candidates for regional head.

Based on Kusnadi's explanation, it can be concluded that in the electoral decision-making process, *PDI-P* uses various communication media in accordance with the progress and needs. Advertisement is a form of mass communication that is non-personal, persuasive and disseminating information. The advertisement was deliberately designed to convey a message to the internal and external public of *PDI-P* regarding the activities being undertaken by the *PDI-P* in the process of the election of regional head.

Not less important is that *PDI-P* also uses the results of independent agency surveys, so that the decision to nominate a candidate for the regional head could not be wrong. Minimally, the survey results are used as a guideline of the electability of candidates in the election of regional head. Bambang DH, one of the officials of the Central Executive Board said in more details:

"I usually check survey agencies when presenting research data. First, I check the survey data, whether there is a difference, and I compare, betweeen the sampling and the population, to see whether the differences are in the margin error, in alpha. They could have some differences if the samplings were justified. Then I read and read some other stuff. So, honestly speaking, I cannot be cheated."

The fact further underscored that *PDI-P* as a political party, when making a decision, must be rational and not merely dependant on its political instincts. Bambang adds his explanation as follows:

"I also teach mathematical statistics. So I can learn whether a survey is right or wrong. So it works like this, knowledge usually, knowledge for sure, before becoming scientific, it examines natural phenomena. Philosophically, science seeks to predict nature. If we can identify the behavior of nature, macro or micro, then we can see its patterns, and especially if it could be up to the formula, that's really amazing"

In essence, a combination of communication media platforms and survey results can be used as a benchmark for a political decision-making. The mechanism is not just following the trend, but the real needs in the field.

The above-mentioned becomes the reason why the decision of determining and nominating candidates for regional leaders by *PDI- Perjuangan* is not easy. In the 2018 gubernatorial election level, for example, several names were identified to be prospective candidates for governor and vice governor such as Kusnadi, Said Abdullah, Edy Rumpoko, Sri Oetari, Syaifullah Yusuf or Gus Ipul. Budi Sulistyono (Regent Head of Ngawi), Suhandoyo (*DPC of Lamongan*), Azwar Anas (Regent Head of Banyuwangi). But only six people who took the form, and, finally, just four returned and payed the administration fee of 100 million IDR. The *DPD* then sent the names of the prospective candidates to the *DPP*. The names who got a letter of recommendation from the *DPP*, then became the pair of prospective candidates who was entitled to register to the Provincial *KPU* (Provincial Commision of General Election).

This finding further clarifies that communication medium is an instrument decisive in the decision-making process. The study conducted by Al-Omari (2007) stated that formal and informal structures have a strong influence on how decision-making is carried out [18]. Peláeza, Martínezb, and Vargas (2019) confirm the same thing. Social media has strong relationship in the decision making process in the organization [19]. There is a tendency that the use of data obtained from social media in decision-making is growing because people are increasingly using these means to inform themselves, express opinions or make valuations of brands, services, etc.

This analysis is also reinforced by the results of the study of Endiraras (2013) and Hamad, (2008) which states that political marketing strategies cannot be separated from how the political party selects its member and what kind of media are relevant to be used in political promotion after decision making was done [20,21]. Even in the context of non-political organizations, communication medium still have a central role in the decision-making process in achieving organizational goals [22].

5. CONCLUSION
Based on the above analysis, the most important social media platforms used are Facebook, WhatsApp, and Line for promotion candidates. The final decision as who will run for the Election of Regional Heads remains in the hands of the Central Executive Board.

The mechanism for the selection of candidates for Regional Heads has absorbed the aspirations from the bottom. Each level of the Executive Board of the political party is given the opportunity to propose prospective names for regional head candidates.

Throughout the stages of selection, stating from the selection process up to the issuance of recommendations from the *DPP*, there is absolutely no political costs, If there is information related to the handover of some money to the *DPD*, it is solely for the administration of the selection processes up to the final decision.

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