



WINNING STRATEGY OF THE ELECTED VILLAGE HEAD IN THE 2023 VILLAGE HEAD ELECTION IN BABAKAN LOSARI LOR VILLAGE

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Abstract. Direct village head elections are an integral part of local politics, reflecting the dynamics of democracy at the village level. This study aims to analyze the winning strategy of the elected village head in the 2023 Village Head Election in Babakan Losari Lor Village. The urgency of this research lies in providing deep insights into local political communication practices, crucial for promoting more transparent elections and fostering active political participation among villagers. A qualitative approach with a descriptive qualitative design was employed to explore the dynamics of political communication between the village head and the community. Data collection techniques included participatory observation, and in-depth interviews, with informants selected through purposive sampling. The findings identified several key strategies, including direct interaction with residents to convey the vision and mission, utilizing a successful team from village officials, and building credibility through the village head's personable character. Additionally, the relevance of campaign promises to residents' expectations and the use of non-verbal communication, including money politics, played a significant role. Through these strategies, the elected village head won the 2023 Village Head Election in Babakan Losari Lor Village.

Keywords: political communication, village head election, winning strategy, village head, village democracy

A. Introduction

Village Head Elections represent a crucial moment in local democracy, significantly impacting the lives of people at the village level. In the context of Babakan Losari Lor Village, the 2023 Village Head was not only a competition between candidates but also a showcase of key political communication strategies that were vital for the candidates' success. This study aims to analyze the winning strategies of the elected village head in this election, with a focus on the communication dynamics between the candidate and the villagers.

Based on previous literature, local political communication plays a significant role in shaping the public's perception and trust in their potential leaders (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 2018). Research by Wibowo (2020) indicates that direct interaction and active engagement between candidates and the community can enhance their chances of winning elections. Additionally, the candidate's personal character and credibility, which are influenced by reputation and social background, are key factors that affect voters' choices (Rizal, 2021). This research aims to delve deeper into how the village head candidate utilized these communication strategies within the context of the 2023 Pilkades.

The urgency of this research lies in its contribution to understanding more transparent and inclusive political communication practices at the village level, as well as its relevance to the



development of political participation among villagers (Prabowo, 2022). Through a qualitative approach involving observation, and in-depth interviews, this study seeks to present findings that can enrich the discourse on winning strategies in local politics.

Therefore, this study is expected to provide new insights into the dynamics of village head elections and effective communication strategies, while also offering recommendations for future leadership candidates.

B. Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive qualitative design. The qualitative approach focuses on subjective assessment rather than numerical or statistical values (Sugiyono, 2017). Babakan Losari Lor Village was selected as the research location due to its relevance to the objective of analyzing the dynamics of political communication between the village head and the community during the 2023 village head election. Locations with specific phenomena can provide deeper data (Yin, 2018).

The data collection techniques included participatory observation and in-depth interviews. Observations were conducted to understand the interaction between the village head and the community, In-depth interviews provided rich descriptive data by being responsive to the context that emerged during the interaction (Morgan et al., 1984). Informants were selected using purposive sampling, consisting of 10 informants: 10 community members.

The data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman (1994) model, which includes data reduction, presentation, and verification. Data from the 10 informant were summarized and focused on key points, then presented in a narrative format to facilitate drawing conclusions. The research findings will be presented in a narrative explaining the "Winning Strategy of the Elected Village Head in the 2023 Village Head Election in Babakan Losari Lor Village."

C. Results And Discussion

1. Research Findings Description

Table 1. Factors in the Elected Village Head's Winning Strategy

Factor	Description
Direct Interaction	The elected village head actively interacted with the community through regular meetings and open dialogues to convey his vision and mission. This enhanced the community's closeness and trust in him.
Utilization of Success Team	The success team consisted of village officials and community figures who supported the campaign. They played a role in disseminating information and mobilizing voters.
Credibility Through Character	The personal character of the village head, including openness and honesty, significantly contributed to his credibility in the eyes of the villagers. Research indicates that this positive image strengthened community support.
Relevance of Campaign Promises	Campaign promises relevant to the community's expectations, such as improving village infrastructure, became a major attraction for voters.
Non-Verbal Communication	The appropriate use of non-verbal communication, including symbolism and visual strategies in the campaign, had a significant impact on voter perception.
Money Politics	Money politics was identified as a factor influencing voter behavior, although it has ethical implications that should be carefully considered.



This research reveals several key strategies employed by the elected village head in the 2023 Village Head Election in Babakan Losari Lor. The analysis was based on data collected through participatory observation, and in-depth interviews involving 10 informants. The main findings of this research are presented in Table 1 above.

2. Discussion

a. Direct Interaction

The findings of this study align with political communication theory, which emphasizes the importance of interpersonal relationships in building trust (McNair, 2017). According to Ritchie and Spencer (2002), community involvement in the political process can enhance transparency and accountability, both of which are fundamental principles of democracy. This engagement also fosters a sense of ownership among residents regarding decisions made by the village head. The direct interactions conducted by the elected village head created opportunities for open dialogue, allowing residents to ask questions and receive direct explanations regarding the candidate's vision and mission. This finding is consistent with previous research, which indicates that two-way communication contributes to increased political participation (Boulianne, 2019).

b. Utilization of Success Teams

The utilization of success teams reflects a strategic approach to organizing the campaign. As discussed by Lawler (2008), these teams are a crucial element in voter mobilization. They not only serve as campaign tools but also as intermediaries between the village head candidate and the community. The involvement of community leaders in the success teams helped build legitimacy and expand the support network. Success teams not only disseminate information but also strengthen connections between the candidate and the community, thereby expanding the support base (Vinson, 2020). This success highlights the concept of social mobilization in local political contexts, where community support is vital for electoral victory.

c. Credibility Through Character

The credibility of the village head, built through personal character, is another key point. Research by Hogg and Terry (2000) shows that positive perceptions of a leader can increase loyalty and support from the community. The credibility of the elected village head, cultivated through their personal traits, is highly relevant in the context of village elections. The candidate's strong character and proactive attitude contributed to positive perceptions among the residents, emphasizing the importance of integrity in local leadership (Koch, 2018).

d. Campaign Promise Relevance

The relevance of campaign promises to community expectations underscores the importance of contextual understanding in political communication. This finding is in line with the study by Verba et al. (1995), which indicates that voters are more likely to support candidates whose vision and mission align with their needs.

e. Non-Verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication strategies played a crucial role in shaping voter perceptions during the village head election campaign. In the context of the election in Desa Babakan Losari Lor, the use of strong symbolism and visually appealing strategies helped create an emotional connection between the candidate and the community. Non-verbal communication can enhance the power of verbal messages, making them more effective and easily understood by the audience. This is consistent with research by Rahayu (2020), which found that effective non-verbal communication can enhance a candidate's appeal in the eyes of the public.



Additionally, the use of symbols that reflect local values and culture can strengthen the connection between the candidate and voters. For example, the use of flags or cultural attributes in the campaign not only attracted attention but also demonstrated the candidate's commitment to local values. Research by Kurniawan and Haris (2021) revealed that appropriate symbolism can influence public image and increase public trust in the leader.

Overall, the non-verbal communication strategies employed by the elected village head in Desa Babakan Losari Lor proved effective in building a positive image and increasing voter appeal. Therefore, it is crucial for candidates to consider non-verbal aspects in every phase of their campaign..

f. Money Politics

Finally, while money politics can increase the chances of victory, it is essential to consider its negative impact on electoral integrity and public trust (Friedman & Kosslyn, 2002). Therefore, more sustainable and ethical strategies should be reinforced in the election process to foster healthy and sustainable democracy.

Money politics usually involves giving cash, goods, or services to voters with the expectation of gaining their support. Research by Stokes et al. (2013) indicates that in the context of local elections, the influence of money politics can be more significant than issue-based campaigns, especially in areas less exposed to high-quality political information.

However, the ethical implications of this practice cannot be overlooked. According to Sutherland (2014), although money politics may increase the chances of winning, it can also undermine public trust in the electoral process and governmental institutions. Reliance on such practices can create a cycle where candidates who cannot compete fairly feel compelled to resort to unethical means, ultimately damaging local democracy.

Moreover, the shifting perception of money politics within the community should also be considered. Research by Moloeng (2020) indicates that in some regions, the public may view money politics as a natural part of the election process, making it difficult to combat without changing existing social perceptions.

Thus, while money politics may provide strategic advantages, a long-term approach that strengthens election integrity should be prioritized. Political education for the community regarding voters' rights and responsibilities, along with raising awareness about the negative impacts of money politics, is essential in creating a healthier electoral culture.

D. Conclusion

The 2023 Village Head Election in Babakan Losari Lor Village reveals several critical strategies that contributed to the success of the elected village head. Direct interaction with the community, strategic use of a successful team composed of local influencers, and the personal credibility of the candidate were identified as key factors. These interpersonal communication efforts strengthened the bond between the candidate and the villagers, fostering trust and engagement.

Additionally, relevant campaign promises addressing community needs and the effective use of non-verbal communication contributed to a more favorable perception of the candidate. However, the research also highlighted the influence of money politics, raising ethical concerns about its role in local elections. While it played a role in the election outcome, the long-term implications for trust and democratic integrity must be addressed to ensure more transparent future elections. In conclusion, the winning strategies employed in Babakan Losari Lor's 2023 election demonstrate a combination of effective communication, community engagement, and personal credibility.

The findings suggest that building trust through interaction and aligning promises with community needs are essential components of a successful local election campaign. This research contributes valuable insights into the dynamics of local political communication, and



emphasizes the importance of ethical practices to safeguard the integrity of village-level democracy.

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