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SHAPING THE FUTURE OF POLITICS: TRANSFORMING LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATE CAMPAIGNS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

One of the changes in political communication strategies is caused by technological changes. Social media is one of the political communication channels for women legislative candidates in conducting their political campaigns in the 2024 legislative elections. This research aims to reveal how the use of social media in the campaign strategy of female legislative candidates in the digital era? What are the benefits obtained by legislative candidates who effectively use social media in their political campaigns. The approach used in this research is descriptive qualitative while the natural informants of this research are female legislative candidates from local SIRA Party, Democratic Party and PDI-P Party who are in electoral district 1 (Dapil 1) for Aceh Besar, Banda Aceh and Sabang. The results of the study found that the use of social media in campaign strategies for female legislative candidates in the digital era, that social media is a medium for developing the image and branding of female candidates, the presence of social media makes it easy for candidates to communicate directly with voters, become a channel for discussing matters related to gender issues and become a means to gain women's support. The advantages felt by female legislative candidates in using social media for their political campaigns are; social media's ability to reach a wide audience, the ability to interact with the public, and the ability to communicate with the public.

Keywords: Women Legislator Candidates, Campaigns, Social Media, Political Communication.

ABSTRAK

Pergeseran strategi komunikasi politik salah satunya diakibatkan oleh perubahan teknologi. Media social menjadi salah satu saluran komunikasi politik bagi calon legislator perempuan dalam melaksanakan kampanye politik mereka pada pemilihan legislative 2024. Penelitian ini ingin mengungkapkan mengenai Bagaimana penggunaan media sosial dalam strategi kampanye calon legislatif perempuan dalam era digital? Apa saja keuntungan yang diperoleh oleh calon legislatif yang efektif memanfaatkan media sosial dalam kampanye politik mereka. Pendekatan yang diguanakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kualitatif deskriptif, adapun informan alam penelitian ini adalah calon anggota legislatif perempuan dari Partai lokal SIRA, Partai democrat dan Partai PDI-P yang berada di daerah pemilihan 1 (Dapil 1) untuk wilayah Aceh Besar, Kota Banda Aceh dan Kotamadya Sabang. Adapun hasil penelitian di dapati bahwa penggunaan Media Sosial dalam Strategi Kampanye bagi Calon Legislatif Perempuan Era Digital bahwa media social menjadi media pengembangan Citra dan Branding caleg perempuan, kehadran media social memberikan kemudahan bagi caleg untuk berkomunikasi langsung dengan pemilih, menjasi saluran untuk mebahas hal-hal yang berkaitan dengan isu-isu Gender dan menjadi sarana untuk mendapatkan dukungan perempuan. Keuntungan yang dirasakan oleh calon legislatif perempuan dalam memanfaatkan media sosial untuk kampanye politik mereka adalah; media social mampu mencapai Audiens yang Luas, kemampuan untuk berinteraksi Langsung dengan pemilih, penggunaan biaya yang murah, Membangun personal Branding dan peningkatan partisipasi pemilih.

Kata kunci: Calon Legislator Perempuan, Kampanye, Media Sosial, Komunikasi Politik

INTRODUCTION

Pada Social media has become a revolutionary force in politics in the digital age. This phenomenon has not only influenced the way politics is understood but has also created new opportunities and challenges for legislative candidates' campaigns in different parts of the world. Social media has enabled legislative candidates to interact directly with voters, communicate their campaign messages, and build a strong political image. Meanwhile, voters also have faster and easier access to political information, allowing them to become more engaged in the political process.

A campaign is an effort managed by a group (change agent) aimed at persuading the target to accept, modify or support certain ideas, attitudes and behaviors (Cangara, 2009). In political communication, campaigns aim to garner backing for a cause or candidate. Utilizing significant symbols, campaigns image and reconstruct the candidate's self-concept and political policies to communicate with the public.

The revolution of legislative candidate campaigns through social media is no longer simply a trend, but rather a critical necessity. Legislative candidates who effectively employ social media can reach a broader audience, establish stronger connections with voters, and more effectively sway public opinion. Social media is also essential in developing and strengthening the political brand of a legislative candidate (Sudirman, 2023).

However, the significant potential of social media in politics is accompanied by several serious challenges. These challenges include concerns over privacy, the dissemination of fake news, political polarization, and ethical issues regarding the use of social media. These issues are increasingly creating confusion in the political sphere. Therefore, it is crucial to comprehend the significant transformations that have occurred in the campaigning of legislative candidates through social media and its influence on the democratization process and electoral quality. Avoiding subjective evaluations, the text emphasizes the importance of a clear and logical structure with causal connections between statements and consistent technical terminology. Employing objective, value-neutral, and high-level language, the formal register is maintained, and precise word choice is prioritized while avoiding biased, emotional, figurative, or ornamental language. Adhering to style guides, consistent citation and footnote style, and formatting features, the text is free from filler words and grammatical errors.

This paper will explore How is the use of social media in the campaign strategy of women legislative candidates in the digital era? What are the benefits gained by legislative candidates who

effectively utilize social media in their political campaigns? The purpose of this paper is to provide a deeper understanding of the crucial role of social media in contemporary politics and how it is shaping the future of our politics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Political Communication

This paper aims to examine the role of social media in the campaign strategies of women legislative candidates in the digital era, and to identify the advantages gained by effectively utilizing social media in political campaigns. The goal is to provide insight into the importance of social media in modern politics and its impact on the future of political engagement.

Political communication is understood as the message activity of people who carry out political activities with the aim of influencing / stimulating others to carry out political activities, both at the level of relations between superstructure and infrastructure. Political communication is the process of conveying opinions, attitudes, and behaviors of people, institutions, or political forces in order to influence political decisions (Putri, 2015). Furthermore, Effendy said that political communication is an activity of exchanging messages carried out by a person, group or institution in an effort to gain authority to defend the people, both in the function as an executor of government and as a member of a social structure of society, and can influence a power system or government policy in various components (Slamet, 2011). Graber defines political communication as "the construction, sending, receiving, and processing of messages that have the potential to have a significant direct or indirect impact on policy (Hasan, 2009). Political communication functions to promote equality of perception and unity of view through communication symbols as a product of mutual interpretation (Mukarom zainal, 2016).

Nimmo said that political communication is an action that takes place in the political sphere with all its consequences (regulation, conflict, etc.). Nimmo borrowed Laswell's communication concept of "who says what in what channel to whom with what effect" as the right way to describe communication actions, noting that he modified the formula from linear to circular (to whom to with whom) (Hasan, 2009).

The essence of political communication is in political activity, then the messages conveyed by politically charged political actors. Political communication strategy is about how the communication process occurs in winning a political battle by a political party or directly by a legislative candidate who wants power and influence as much as possible in the midst of his constituent community.

Social Media

Social media is a new information network and information technology that uses a form of communication through interactive and user-generated content to create and maintain interpersonal relationships (Berliani Ardha, 2014). The role of social media in politics has become a subject of deep and relevant debate in recent years. With the development of digital technology, social media has become an important channel for politicians, legislative candidates, and political parties to interact with voters and deliver their campaign messages. Norris (2001) notes that social media have reduced digital divisions by providing access to political information to a wider public, enabling active participation in politics, and stimulating public discussion (Norris, 2001).

The power of social media to influence people is based solely on its social aspect: the interaction and participation that can be achieved through campaigns. The media is used by political actors to convey messages to their intended audiences. Apart from being a channel of political communication for political actors and the public, the media also has its own interests in interpreting the phenomenon of political communication around it. Social media as one of the new media is really used by the community as much as possible. The definition of social media is as follows: "... social networking sites as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share connections, (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those of others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site (Alfiyani, 2018). Three roles of the media in the realization of democracy in a country, namely as a watchdog (watchdog role), as a channel of communication (information and debate role), and as the voice of the people (voice of the people role) (Budiyono, 2015).

In the context of politics, social media has had a significant impact on the political process and public participation in various ways. The use of social media in political campaigns has a significant impact on political behavior, political participation, and public perception(Salman Farid, 2023). Social media has a role to play in the political communication process, such as absorbing public aspirations, two-way communication, and increasing transparency and accountability (Alam, 2021).

Legislative Candidates

Legislature is one of the designations reflected in one of the bodies in the House of Representatives which is to legislate or make laws. Legislature is also called Assembly, which means an assembly to discuss public matters. Another name is parliament. Another name

emphasizes the representation of its members and is called the people's Representative Council (Guntur et al., 2019). Members of parliament as representatives and their constituents as represented (Ichwanuddin, 2014).

Legislators are elected people who win council seats in the legislative election contest, those who are able to compete with other legislative candidates and thus provide them with parliamentary seats. According to Bintan R Saragih's framework, there are three roles played by legislative members; first, legislative members act as trustees, legislative members act as delegates, legislative members act as politicians (Haboddin, 2016). As members of the legislature, women legislators must perform the functions and duties related to them. These functions and duties are: representation function, deliberation function, legislation function, budgeting function, supervision function, government formation function, elite recruitment and socialization function (Ichwanuddin, 2014).

METHODS

This research uses qualitative method with descriptive approach. The informants in this research are female legislative candidates from SIRA Party, Demokrat Party, PDIP Party who are running for the provincial legislative election for Dapil 1 (Aceh Besar, Banda Aceh and Sabang) in 2024. Data collection, this research uses data collection techniques namely through observation, interviews and documentation. Data analysis is carried out by means of; data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions or data verification.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Use of Social Media in the Election Campaign Strategies of Women Candidates for Legislative Positions.

Legislative candidates are personalities who have the desire to advance and be present in the political campaign of the legislative elections. As a candidate in this electoral contest, they will certainly use a communication strategy that they consider appropriate and effective. The development of technology is more and more advanced, making the communication media more and more sophisticated, now people can communicate without having to be present in the same place, but the information is spread and arrives at the destination. And one of these sophistication is; social media. Social media is currently at the center of communication, including political communication. In the context of political campaigns, the use of social media as a communication

tool by legislative candidates. Communication strategies through social media allow legislative candidates to reach voters in a more direct and personalized way, and build a strong political image.

The use of social media in the campaign strategies of women legislative candidates in the digital age has become a key element in their efforts to reach voters, build their image, and influence public opinion. Women legislative candidates use social media to build their image as competent and dedicated leaders. They post content that highlights their accomplishments, vision, and political values, helping to build a positive image in the eyes of their constituents. Image can also be formulated as the construction of a person's representation and perception of individuals, groups, or institutions related to their work in society (Arifin, 2014; Nazaruddin et al., 2021).

Informants of this woman legislative candidate said that the use of social media. Whatsup, Instagram, and Facebook, allow women legislative candidates to interact directly with their constituents from Dapil 1. They can respond to questions, listen to feedback, and create deeper relationships with their constituents. Women legislative candidates often use social media to promote policies and initiatives that focus on issues that are their priorities, such as issues related to women's empowerment, the environment, and others, and their commitment to the struggle for gender equality.

From the results of interviews with informants, it can be illustrated that the use of social media (Whatsup, Instagram and Facebook) is a particular strategy to gain women's support, they use social media to reach out to women voters, share experiences and educate on issues relevant to women. In addition, women legislative candidates used social media as a platform to address negative comments, gender stereotypes, and political attacks on them. Women legislative candidates use this media to provide positive responses and educate voters about the importance of women's representation in politics. The use of social media is currently the most important alternative for them, in addition to other political communication strategies to persuade their constituents, such as face-to-face meetings, both individually and in groups in their constituencies.

Social media is being used as a new medium to express political participation, while for politicians themselves, social media is a new means of establishing communication, building interaction, and disseminating political information to the public, interaction, and disseminating political information to the public (Munzir, 2019).

In the digital age, social media has opened up significant opportunities for women legislative candidates to promote themselves and the issues they stand for. Therefore, the use of social media in the campaign of women legislative candidates requires smart and ethical strategies to achieve success.

Advantages Of Women Legislative Candidates in Utilizing Social Media in Political Campaigns.

Many previous studies have highlighted the benefits of social media in social life, culture, economy, and so on. This advantage is also felt in politics, where women legislative candidates use social media as a tool for their political campaigns in their constituencies. There are several findings from the field that this article will try to analyze and describe.

Based on the field findings, women legislative candidates can achieve significant benefits by using social media in their political campaigns. Women legislators find social media useful for their political campaigns in this digital world. They said that social media has allowed them to reach out to a wide constituency, mass media has provided them with an opportunity to reach out to many constituents, so the communication space is very open for them to communicate with voters from their constituencies.

Another advantage that they feel is that the presence of social media makes it easy for them to interact with many people, expand their social circle, distance and time are no longer a problem, it is easier to express themselves, the dissemination of information can take place quickly and the costs are cheaper (Anang Sugeng Cahyono, 2020).

The informant then added that social media allows women candidates to interact directly with voters because of the ability to interact directly. Women legislative candidates also said that social media is much more affordable than traditional political advertising, such as outdoor or print advertising. This allows them, as legislative candidates with limited budgets, to still have a strong presence in politics. Moekahar (2022) said that using these media can significantly reduce campaign costs compared to traditional media.(Moekahar et al., 2022)

The results of the field research then revealed that social media allows women legislative candidates to appear in a more human format. This means that they can share personal stories, life experiences, and personal moments that create closeness with voters. This helps build a deeper and more personal relationship between candidates and voters. Irawatiningrum said the use of social media as a medium for political communication is one of the steps in the formation of a candidate's personal branding, with the aim of building associations and expectations of oneself. (Irawatiningrum, 2020). Using social media to brand political figures (Anshari, 2013).

Another finding is that social media allows women legislative candidates to communicate the values and missions they stand for. They can explain why they are in politics, what is at stake, and how they plan to effect positive change; social media allows them to stay close to the voters in their districts. Then, the field results also found that social media can also increase voter turnout,

women candidates are using social media to invite voters to actively engage in the political process and at the same time become a medium to invite others to vote for them.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of field findings on the use of social media in campaign strategies for female legislative candidates in the digital era, it was found that social media became a means of developing the image and branding of female legislative candidates, communicating directly with their constituents, used as a special approach to gender issues and at the same time used as a special strategy to gain women's support. The advantages of women legislative candidates in using social media in their political campaigns are social media is able to reach a wide audience, women candidates have the ability to interact directly from the available facilities, the use of low cost, building images and political brands (personal branding) of women candidates and increasing voter participation.

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