



## Study of Media Exposure, Symbolic Interaction, and Electoral Effects in Regional Head Elections

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### **Abstract**

Election for Regional Heads and Deputy Regional Heads is to elect Regional Heads and Deputy Regional Heads within the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. Prior to the enactment of Law Number 32 of 2004 concerning Regional Government, Regional Heads and Representatives Regional heads are elected by the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD). However, since June 2005 Indonesia has adopted a system of direct regional head elections. So that the obligation to elect a regional head is not only given to the people's representatives (DPRD) but all people who are domiciled in their respective regions are responsible for choosing leaders in their regions. This study uses a survey method to answer the question. Is there a negative impact of media coverage about the provision of Hand Sanitiser with a picture of the incumbent candidate who is the assistance from the central government in winning the Klaten Regent? The results showed that media exposure in the form of negative news had a negative impact on the electability of regional leader candidates. Meanwhile, the results of the study also found that the negative news actually increased his popularity as a candidate who participated in the regional head election contestation in Klaten Regency by 97%. From the findings in the field, it can be concluded that there is no negative effect on hand sanitizers distributed by Klaten Regent Sri Mulyani ahead of the regional elections in Klaten Regency. In fact, with the distribution, Sri Mulyani's electability rate was very high at 51% percent. The negative media coverage of the hand sanitizer by the Klaten Regent to the community also did not have a negative effect.

**Keywords:** *Electability; Media Exposure; Political Surveys; Popularity; Regional Head Elections*

### **Introduction**

A democratic country prioritizes the public interest rather than the private one, meaning that democracy is a form of government in which the formulation of policies, directly or not determined by the votes of the majority of citizens who have voting rights through the election platform Democracy talks about the will of the people, democracy can also be a common good, so democratic governance is to

create a common good which is determined through a political contract, talking about democracy means dealing with general elections.

In a democratic country, General Election is one of the main pillars of an accumulation of the will of the people. General Election is also a democratic procedure for selecting leaders. It is believed in most civilized societies on this earth, General Election is the safest mechanism for changing power when compared to other methods.

Political participation is not only defined as a form of someone's involvement to "vote or not" in an election. More than that, political participation is the involvement of individuals in various processes that occur in selecting leaders and influencing political policies. Some participation activities can be carried out by attending political events, working for candidates, donating money for a political candidate's campaign, using attributes to support a candidate, and trying to convince others to vote (Kenski & Stroud, 2006: 175).

Citizen political participation is an indicator of the progress of democracy in every country. The more citizens involved the better because it shows citizens follow and understand political issues. Studies (Halim, U., & Jauhari, K. D., 2019). The results show that online media, social media, and chat applications are more often used as sources of political information compared to print media, radio, and magazines and the level of online participation which is instrumental and strategic is still very low. Strategic participation can be increased if internet users are encouraged to have the ability to operate various applications and have political insight. The implementation of direct regional head elections today involves social media and online media so that the voter participation rate is greater, at least the knowledge about the implementation of the five-year agenda is more widely disseminated (Jung, N., Kim, Y. & Gil de Zúñiga, H., 2011; Kenski, K. and Stroud, NJ, 2006; Kim, Yonghwan & Chen, Hsuan-Ting., 2016; Sapitri, H., & Nurafifah, NL, 2020; Vreese., Et.al., 2006; Yang., et.al., 2016).

Mass Media is one of the factors that can influence the level of voter participation in a regional head election. This increase is greatly influenced by factors; information. (Hasanuddin, et.al., 2015). Image or image is very important for a victory to win over the sympathy of the people in elections for the region. Therefore, every candidate for regional head must be able to positive his image through his campaign strategy. The campaign team of each regional head candidate pair will try to create a positive self-image of the candidate pair in the eyes of the public because a positive self-image and the achievements of the regional head candidates have a big influence on first-time voters in determining their choice. (Prasetyo, I. J., 2016).

The survey research method is used in this research to obtain or collect information data about a large population using a relatively smaller sample. Survey research began to develop in the 20th century. The procedures and methods have been developed, especially in the fields of psychologists, sociologists, economists, political scientists, and statisticians. Etymologically, the word survey comes from Latin which consists of two syllables, namely which comes from the word super which means over or over. While the survey comes from the word view which means to see. So survey means seeing above or beyond (Leedy, 1980, in Irawan, 2000: 53). Survey research is used to solve actual large-scale issues with very large populations, so large sample size is needed (Widodo, 2008: 43). In line with the above opinion, in survey research information is collected from respondents using a questionnaire. Generally, the definition of a survey is limited to the definition of a sample survey in which information is collected from a portion of the population (sample) to represent the entire population (Singarimbun, 1982). There are 3 main characteristics of the survey method: 1) Information data is collected from large groups of people to describe various aspects and characteristics such as knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, abilities of the population, 2) Information data is obtained from asking questions (written and also verbal) from the population, 3) Information data is obtained from a sample, not from the population Asmadi Alsa (2004: 20) suggests that survey design is a procedure in which the researcher carries out a survey or provides a questionnaire or scale on one sample to describe the respondent's attitudes, opinions, behavior, or

characteristics. From the results of this survey, the researchers made claims about trends in the population. Based on the explanation of the opinions of the experts above, it can be concluded that survey research is a research method that examines a large population using a sample method that has the aim of knowing the behavior, characteristics, and making descriptions and generalizations that exist in that population.

From several studies that have been carried out on the same issue, namely regional head elections, such as research (Hermanto, J., Purwatiningsih, A., & Rifa'i, M., 2020; Qorib, F., 2020; Ulfa, DR, 2020). as well as research on electability through survey methods such as Ekawati, E., et.al., 2019; Suwondo, D., 2020; Vikalista, E., et.al., 2020) The novelty offered in this study is to include the concepts of Media Exposure, Symbolic Interaction, and Electoral Effects in Regional Head Elections in the 5-year agenda for the Regional Head Election of Klaten Regency, Central Java using the method survey in answering questions; Is there a negative impact of media coverage about the provision of Hand Sanitiser with a picture of the incumbent candidate who is assistance from the central government in winning the Klaten Regent?

### ***Theoretical Studies***

Media is a product form of mass communication in large quantities, both print media and internet-based new media. Dewenter, R., Heimeshoff, U., & Thomas, T. (2016) stated that there are three communication channels, namely; 1) mass communication which is a method of delivering messages from one person to many people, 2) interpersonal communication which is one-on-one communication, and 3) organizational communication which combines both mass and interpersonal communication. The role of mass media in politics is very influential, both in terms of candidate branding and in terms of the character assassination of a candidate for Regional Head.

Mass communication from Bittner (1980) is “message communicated through a mass medium to a large number of people (messages communicated through the mass media to a large number of people). From this definition, it can be concluded that mass communication is a process of communication in large numbers, both through print and internet-based. Such an impact, in a report in the case of the distribution of hand sanitizers from the Ministry of Social Affairs, which was attached with a photo of the Klaten Regent Sri Mulyani, caused negative sentiment because the photo of the Klaten Regent was only hitchhiking for political socialization in the hand sanitizer bottle.

Of course, this is a shock in the society which has had several impacts on society. KOMPAS, (2020) There are three impacts of distributing hand sanitizers attached to Klaten Regent Sri Mulyani, namely; 1) Cognitive Effects where at this stage the public will lead to increased knowledge of political affairs, candidates, and actual issues for the audience. 2) Emotional effects, at this stage, political communication researchers agree that mass media affects the individual emotional achievement of the political system, 3) Conative or behavioral effects that state at this stage the public can determine their choice or behavior that will be used as a reference in determining choice on 9 December 2020. From the theory above, we can reflect on whether or not there is a negative influence of media coverage that will affect people's choices when voting. The involvement of the mass media in changing political behavior can be seen from audiences who have political literacy (Brownhill and Smart 1989: 1). Political literacy begins with the role of a political communicator from his intellectual capacity, morals, and behavior in the eyes. Public. So that the good and bad of a person, depending on the exposure to information from the media received by the public. If the exposure is good, then the behavior is good. On the other hand, if the media is exposed to negative media, then that person is sure to be bad in the eyes of the community.

## **Methodology**

Subjects in quantitative research are citizens who are 17 years old or have been married who are registered in the Permanent Voters List (DPT) at the General Election Commission. In this study, researchers took a sample of 426 respondents from a population of 961,070 Klaten residents whose names are listed in the Permanent Voters List (DPT) in the Election of Candidates for Regent and Deputy Regent of Klaten which will be held on 9 December. The sample of 425 respondents, spread over 26 districts and 391 villages and 10 sub-districts.

Survey of voter behavior on regional head elections in Klaten district in the 2020 post-conflict local elections. Sri Mulyani-Yoga Hardaya (MULYO), One Krisnata-M participated in this election. Fajri (ORI), and Arif Budiyo-Harjanta (ABY-HJT). The survey was conducted to find out the voters' description of the elections which were held today and on the D-day, namely December 9, 2020. The survey was conducted with a 95% confidence level with a 5% error margin. The survey used the stratified multistage random sampling method with a total sample of 425 respondents using direct interview techniques. The survey was conducted in October 2020.

This research is a descriptive study with a survey method. According to Sugiyono (2012: 29), a descriptive method is a method used to describe or analyze a research result but is not used to make broader conclusions. Singarimbun (1982: 3) in the survey research method says that survey research is "research that takes a sample from one population and uses a questionnaire as the main data collection tool." Meanwhile, according to Prapandu Tika (1997: 9) says that "survey is a research method. which aims to collect a large amount of data in the form of variables, units, or individuals at the same time, data is collected through individuals or certain physical samples to generalize to what is being studied. The variables collected can be physical or social". B. Population and Sample According to Sugiyono (2012: 80) "population is a generalization area consisting of objects / subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics that are determined by researchers to be studied and then draw conclusions." According to Sugiyono (2012: 81) "the sample is part of the number and characteristics possessed by the population". So in conclusion, what is meant by population is all objects that will be research material. In this study, the population was all household heads from the three villages residing in the study area, totaling 2,381 people.

### **Sampling Technique**

In taking the research sample, using the table given by Krejcie and Morgan., (1970) so that the researcher did not do the calculation because the population size and sample size were available with a level of confidence adjusted to the wishes of the researcher. The higher the level of confidence, the larger the sample size. Time, energy, and cost factors, which underlie the researchers using the Krejcie and Morgan tables (Abidin YZ., 2015: 161)

According to Sugiyono (2012), a questionnaire is a data collection technique that is done by giving a set of questions or written statements to respondents to answer. According to Arikunto (2010: 268) the procedure for compiling a questionnaire is as follows: 1) Formulating objectives to be achieved in the questionnaire. 2) Identifying the variables that will be the target of the questionnaire. 3) Breaking each variable into a more specific and single sub-variable. 4) Determine the type of data to be collected, as well as to determine the analysis technique. The questionnaire provides an overview of the answers given by respondents, both anonymous and anonymous. Anonymous questionnaires are good because respondents are free to express their opinions. The survey method requires primary data using a questionnaire as a means of collecting data. The survey method is a primary data collection method that uses oral or written questions. This method requires a contact or relationship between the researcher and the respondent to obtain the necessary data.

This type of research is a descriptive form, which is to describe the data in the field for analysis so that it becomes a conclusion based on the findings of numbers in the field (Sumardi Suryabrata 1992: 15). In this case, the figures obtained from the field face to face on the population affect or not.

The research location is the place where the research will be carried out. Research location can also be interpreted as the setting or context of a study (Arifin 2016: 128). In this case, the researchers took a location in Klaten Regency which held the post-conflict local election on 9 December 2020 in 26 Districts, 391 Villages, and 10 Kelurahan. Research time from October to November 2020.

| N   | S   |     |     | N    | S   |     |     | N       | S   |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|---------|-----|-----|-----|
|     | 1%  | 5%  | 10% |      | 1%  | 5%  | 10% |         | 1%  | 5%  | 10% |
| 10  | 10  | 10  | 10  | 280  | 197 | 115 | 138 | 2800    | 537 | 310 | 247 |
| 15  | 15  | 14  | 14  | 290  | 202 | 158 | 140 | 3000    | 543 | 312 | 248 |
| 20  | 19  | 19  | 19  | 300  | 207 | 161 | 143 | 3500    | 558 | 317 | 251 |
| 25  | 24  | 23  | 23  | 320  | 216 | 167 | 147 | 4000    | 569 | 320 | 254 |
| 30  | 29  | 28  | 27  | 340  | 225 | 172 | 151 | 4500    | 578 | 323 | 255 |
| 35  | 33  | 32  | 31  | 360  | 234 | 177 | 155 | 5000    | 586 | 326 | 257 |
| 40  | 38  | 36  | 35  | 380  | 242 | 182 | 158 | 6000    | 598 | 329 | 259 |
| 45  | 42  | 40  | 39  | 400  | 250 | 186 | 162 | 7000    | 606 | 332 | 261 |
| 50  | 47  | 44  | 42  | 420  | 257 | 191 | 165 | 8000    | 613 | 334 | 263 |
| 55  | 51  | 48  | 46  | 440  | 265 | 195 | 168 | 9000    | 618 | 335 | 263 |
| 60  | 55  | 51  | 49  | 460  | 272 | 198 | 171 | 10000   | 622 | 336 | 263 |
| 65  | 59  | 55  | 53  | 480  | 279 | 202 | 173 | 15000   | 635 | 340 | 266 |
| 70  | 63  | 58  | 56  | 500  | 285 | 205 | 176 | 20000   | 642 | 342 | 267 |
| 80  | 71  | 65  | 62  | 600  | 315 | 221 | 187 | 40000   | 563 | 345 | 269 |
| 95  | 75  | 68  | 65  | 650  | 329 | 227 | 191 | 50000   | 655 | 346 | 269 |
| 90  | 79  | 72  | 68  | 700  | 341 | 233 | 195 | 75000   | 658 | 346 | 270 |
| 95  | 83  | 75  | 71  | 750  | 352 | 238 | 199 | 100000  | 659 | 347 | 270 |
| 100 | 87  | 78  | 73  | 800  | 363 | 243 | 202 | 150000  | 661 | 347 | 270 |
| 110 | 94  | 84  | 78  | 850  | 373 | 247 | 205 | 200000  | 661 | 347 | 270 |
| 120 | 102 | 89  | 83  | 900  | 382 | 251 | 208 | 250000  | 662 | 348 | 270 |
| 130 | 109 | 95  | 88  | 950  | 391 | 255 | 211 | 300000  | 662 | 348 | 270 |
| 140 | 116 | 100 | 92  | 1000 | 399 | 258 | 213 | 350000  | 662 | 348 | 270 |
| 150 | 122 | 105 | 97  | 1050 | 414 | 265 | 217 | 400000  | 662 | 348 | 270 |
| 160 | 129 | 110 | 101 | 1100 | 427 | 270 | 221 | 450000  | 663 | 348 | 270 |
| 170 | 135 | 114 | 105 | 1200 | 440 | 275 | 224 | 500000  | 663 | 348 | 270 |
| 180 | 142 | 119 | 108 | 1300 | 450 | 279 | 227 | 550000  | 663 | 348 | 270 |
| 190 | 148 | 123 | 112 | 1400 | 460 | 283 | 229 | 600000  | 663 | 348 | 270 |
| 200 | 154 | 127 | 115 | 1500 | 469 | 286 | 232 | 650000  | 663 | 348 | 270 |
| 210 | 160 | 131 | 118 | 1600 | 477 | 289 | 234 | 700000  | 663 | 348 | 270 |
| 220 | 165 | 135 | 122 | 1700 | 485 | 292 | 235 | 750000  | 663 | 348 | 271 |
| 230 | 171 | 139 | 125 | 1800 | 492 | 294 | 237 | 800000  | 663 | 348 | 271 |
| 240 | 176 | 142 | 127 | 1900 | 498 | 297 | 238 | 850000  | 663 | 348 | 271 |
| 250 | 182 | 146 | 130 | 2000 | 510 | 301 | 241 | 900000  | 663 | 348 | 271 |
| 260 | 187 | 149 | 133 | 2200 | 520 | 304 | 243 | 950000  | 663 | 348 | 271 |
| 270 | 192 | 152 | 135 | 2600 | 529 | 307 | 245 | 1000000 | 664 | 349 | 272 |

Table of Determination of the Sampling Amount of the population, in this study, uses a "proportional stratified random sampling" strategy.

Researchers took a sample of 425 samples with an error rate of 5% and 95 percent confidence. After getting the numbers obtained, in the sampling technique. Researchers used proportional stratified random sampling technique, placing the population having the same rights to be randomly sampled considering that the sample required is a very heterogeneous population in 26 districts and 391 villages and 10 sub-districts (Abidin Y.Z., 2015: 280)

### Data Analysis Techniques

In this research, data analysis is the process of organizing and sorting data into patterns, categories, and basic description units so that themes can be found and work hypotheses can be formulated as suggested by the data. The objectives of data analysis include solving research problems, showing the relationship between the phenomena contained in the study, providing answers to the hypotheses proposed in the study, and materials for making conclusions as well as implications and suggestions that are useful for further research policies. The data analysis techniques used in this research







**Popularity**

Researchers also obtained data that the photo stickers on the hand sanitizer bottle made Sri Mulyani-Yoga Hardaya's popularity superior by 97% compared to other regent candidates, each for Candidate Candidate Candidate Number Two One Krisnata-M. Fajri as much as 62%, followed by regent candidate number 3 Arif Budiyo-Harjanta 72%.



**Conclusion**

This study is not in line with several studies that have been mentioned in this study, which states that media exposure in the form of negative news harms the electability of potential regional leaders. Meanwhile, the results of the study also found that the negative news increased his popularity as a candidate who participated in the regional head election contestation in Klaten Regency by 97%. From the findings in the field, it can be concluded that there is no negative effect on hand sanitizers distributed by Klaten Regent Sri Mulyani ahead of the regional elections in Klaten Regency. In fact, with the distribution, Sri Mulyani's electability rate was very high at 51% percent. The negative media coverage of the hand sanitizer by the Klaten Regent to the community also did not have a negative effect. Precisely due to the negative news, the incumbent occupied the highest rank as a candidate for a choice of citizens who were finally re-elected as Regent of Klaten for the 2020-2025 period.



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