



## Analysis of Political Marketing Strategy on Constituent Behavior in Selecting Candidates for Regional Head in East Lombok District

Zainal Abidin<sup>1</sup>; Lalu Hamdani Husnan<sup>2</sup>; Handry Sudiarta Athar<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Magister of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Mataram, Mataram, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Mataram, Mataram, Indonesia

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### **Abstract**

This study describes and analyzes political marketing strategies for constituent decisions in regional elections in East Lombok. Political marketing strategies have an important role in helping the selection of candidates for regional heads and Muslim backgrounds. This research uses qualitative research methods (exploratory) with data collection techniques through interviews, documentation studies, and literature studies. In this study, the authors used a 3P approach model (push marketing, pass marketing and pull marketing) as well as the concept of STP (segmentation, targeting and positioning). The findings of the study show that the political marketing strategy that must be carried out by regional head candidates should be structured and directed according to the target. Some of the political marketing strategies that can be used by regional head candidates include: first, blusukan or campaign directly down to the community as Push Marketing. Second, the use of community groups and political parties as marketing passes. Third, the use of social media as a pull marketing. Fourth, the reading of market segmentation and target voters in accordance with the typology of a Muslim-majority society. Fifth, the regional head candidate must be able to put himself (positioning) as a symbol of the representative candidate of all circles in the candidacy for the East Lombok Regency Regional Election.

**Keywords:** *Strategy; Political Marketing; Elections*

### **Introduction**

The world organization (profit or non-profit) has realized the importance of strategic strategy and management (Athar, 2020). Typically, each strategic process has three different stages –analysis, plan formulation, and implementation. Each strategy is heavily influenced by changes in the environment. Political, economic, social and technological factors drive change and impact on organizations. This results in a turbulent and highly competitive market. Therefore, organizations need to ensure that they fully embrace the opportunities that change brings and guard themselves from self-satisfaction and strategic lapses, including in the political sphere.

The concept of political marketing must be implemented continuously by political parties or contestants to build trust and political image. Lock and Harris (1996) state that there are several

fundamental characteristics to distinguish political marketing and business marketing. Niffenegger (1989) modeled the political process to show how the political marketing mix is directed at a particular segment and refers to the classic marketing concept of 4P (product, price, place, promotion). Although some say 4P is not enough to respond to the development of the 21st century, the search for a new paradigm that is dominant for decisions that can be applied in various new environments including the political environment is still a matter of debate. It will take a long way to find a new and widely accepted standard as a standard that can replace 4P (Dominici, 2009). The marketing mix is another approach in this study because there are more political studies from different scientific perspectives, namely sociological, psychological and socio-cultural, but have not found in-depth research in marketing management.

Parties and candidates are a unified campaign organizer who has the same obligation to convince and win the most votes in elections. Anung (2013) stated that candidates who succeed in convincing the public are determined by the strength of the party to build a communication strategy especially in the electoral phase. In principle, the selection and purchase decisions made by consumers and voters in the world of politics are not much different. Differences are the dominant factor of candidates, as Bergman and Wickert (1999) stated in Nursal (2004), "The man is message" or "the leading candidate is platform". Elfriza (2012) says that the decision to exchange votes for a particular preference is the same party as the consumer's behavior to exchange money to buy certain goods/services. One approach is the theory of reasoned action. This theory is able to measure the factors influencing the desire to choose a political party.

According to this theory of reasoned actions, the desire to choose a political party is significantly influenced by attitudes towards political parties and interpersonal subjective norms. The influence of attitudes towards political parties is important because people identify with the party, not its leader. The influence of attitudes towards political parties is directly higher than that of indirect influences. This shows that voters do not pay much attention to party attributes such as vision, mission, programs and issues. Voters place more emphasis on feeling sympathy, delight and pride towards a political party. Subjective norms have a significant effect on interpersonal because society emphasizes harmony and closeness between members of society. Reasoned action theory is also used by Alie (2010) to measure voter behavior in decision-making to vote for political parties. However, this theory continues to be developed in accordance with Fishbein and Ajzen (1991) on the theory of planned behavior by adding perceived behavioral control variables. The main factor that indicates the behavior of this theory is the concept of individual intention.

## ***Literature Review***

### **Marketing Strategy**

In a strategic role, marketing is aimed at transforming the company's goals and business strategy into a competitive market position. Marketing strategy involves achieving a superior competitive position in the specified market. Marketing strategy can be characterized by: (a) analyzing the business environment and defining the specific needs of customers, (b) matching products/products with customer segments and (c) implementing programs that achieve a competitive position, superior to competitors. Therefore, the marketing strategy addresses three elements – customers, competitors, and internal company issues.

### **The Concept of Marketing Mix and Political Marketing**

Marshment (2009) states that political marketing is the result of a marriage between "politics" and "marketing". Harris (2001) defines political marketing as a general desire equated with a technique for attracting voters in campaigns to promote politicians and policies. The application of the political marketing mix in politics is something that cannot be abandoned (Agustina et al., 2017). Political parties

must be biased towards recognizing constituents, sympathizers and constantly observing what competitors are doing. The political marketing mix makes political parties and candidates will be able to formulate the desired target market and focus on the desired target. Niffenegger (1989) classifies the concept of a political marketing mix into 4Ps namely: product (party platform, past notes, personal characteristics), price (paid advertising, publicity of staged events, debates), places (economic costs, psychological costs, national image) and promotion (personal appearance, volunteer programs).

Hughes (2006) states that "In politics, the application of marketing centers to needs analysis is centered on voters and citizens; the product becomes a multifaceted combination of the politician himself, the image of the politician, and the platform that the politician supports, which is then promoted and conveyed to the appropriate audience. It can be concluded that political marketing along with general marketing is centered on the needs of the electorate.

### **Constituent Decision Behavior**

Voting behavior is a person's decision to choose a particular candidate in both legislative and executive elections (Gaffar, 1992). To analyze voter behavior, then there are two approaches, the sociological approach (also known as the Colombian school) and the psychological approach (Michigan school) (Athar, 2020). The sociological approach states that political preferences, including meeting preferential votes in municipal elections, are products of socioeconomic characteristics such as professions, social classes, religions, and others. In other words, the background of a person or group such as gender, social class, race, ethnicity, religion, ideology and origin are variables that influence the decision to choose.

Meanwhile, the psychological approach reveals that the decision to choose a political party or candidate is based on psychological responses, such as the personal qualities of the candidate, the performance of the current government in power, the issues developed by the candidate, and loyalty to the party (Gaffar, 1992). Contestants in a multi-party electoral system are faced with the fact that the competition must be able to win, satisfy and convince voters is getting tougher. The ultimate goal in the competition between parties and contestants is to take voters to polling stations to conduct elections in a party or contestant.

Firmanzah (2004) found that competitors in Indonesian elections can use the concepts, methods and techniques contained in marketing science in building relationships with contestant voters, namely during the period before, during and after the election. This statement is also corroborated by Butler & Collins (2001) and Bohnet (2001) that political marketing should not only be carried out during the campaign period, but should be carried out on an ongoing basis, in order to build public trust over a long period of time. In the election process, the contestants competed against each other for voters. According to O'Cass (2001), competitors inevitably make the electorate a subject and not an object. This is because the victory of the contestants is very dependent on voters. To that end, the contestants raced against each other in the political promises encapsulated in the work program. A work program is a good work program capable of solving real problems faced by people packaged within the framework of a particular ideology (O'Cass, 1996).

Thus, the voter can determine the decision of the party or its candidate. The decision to choose a political party in the upcoming elections requires contestants to understand the characteristics and behavior of voters. Such understanding is useful to know how to communicate effectively with the public (Smith & Hirst, 2001). In addition, it increases the effectiveness of the delivery of political messages to the public (Elebash, 1984), and the party's strategy in positioning itself compared to its competitors (Butler & Collins, 1996).

Meanwhile, Political placement according to Niffenegger (1989) is the presence or distribution means a political institution and its ability to communicate with potential voters. Political placements

include personal appearances and voluntary programs. Meanwhile, political campaigning is an activity that is carried out continuously to communicate the program of a candidate or party. Assael (1992), an expert on consumer behavior stated that consumer's decision making (consumer's decision making) choosing a product or service is influenced by three factors, namely: (1) individual factors, meaning that the choice to buy products with a certain brand (party names and politicians) is influenced by things that exist in consumers (voters) goals such as, perceptions of brand characteristics (party names) behavior, and individual personality characteristics; (2) environmental factors that affect consumers, meaning that the choice of consumers to become parties or legislators is also influenced by the environment and social interactions; and (3) Marketing stimuli such as advertisements (campaigns) and the like.

In addition, Mowen (1995) in Firmanzah (2007) posits that the level of involvement of consumers (people) in purchases (select politicians and parties) is influenced by perceived personal interests generated by various stimuli. In addition, the voter in making a choice is not much different from his choice which is not much different from the decision of consumers to buy a product. Consumers in determining the choice of a product based on rational and irrational or emotional factors. The consumer is a consumer who is consciously rationally understanding the product he is going to buy. Whereas consumers who are irrational or emotional they buy a product are more influenced by psychological factors.

### Method

The research method used in this study is a case study research with a qualitative approach (Exploratory). Case studies are a more suitable research strategy if the research questions relate to how or why questions, researchers have little chance of controlling the events to be investigated, and where the focus of their research lies on contemporary phenomena (present) in real-life contexts (Yin, 2015).

Research begins with data collection which is a process carried out by researchers to uncover phenomena, information, and conditions in the field in accordance with the research focus. Data collection in qualitative research is interpreted as the activity of researchers to collect data in the field to answer research questions. The data collection techniques used are interviews, observations, and documentation. In this study, the collection of information through informants involved the presence of the researcher as the main instrument. As a research instrument, researchers here act as planners, implementers of data collection, analysts, data interpreters and ultimately become whistleblowers of research results (Moleong, 2005). The next step in this study is to classify and analyze according to the data according to the data analysis method as described below.

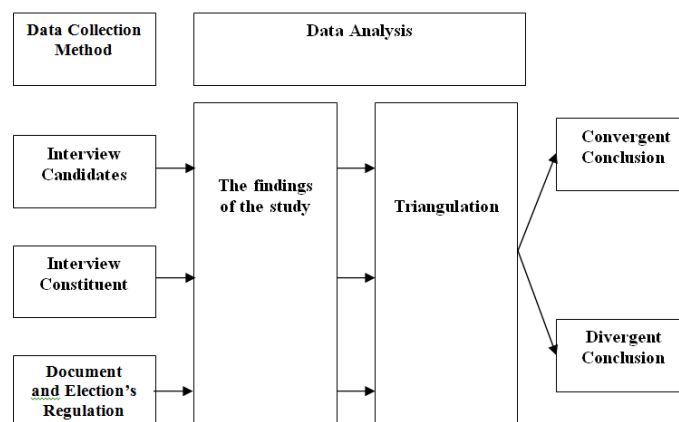


Figure 1: Flowchart of case analysis procedures (Husnan, 2006)

## ***Results and Discussion***

### **Result**

In the results of this study, findings related to the research theme were discussed, namely the analysis of political marketing strategies on the behavior of constituents in choosing candidates for regional heads in east Lombok district. SUKMA's victory in the 2018 Lotim Regency Regional Election was influenced by a slick political marketing strategy and attracted the attention of the people of Lotim Regency. The political marketing strategies of regional head candidates described include: 3P (push marketing, pull marketing, pass marketing), as well as the concept of STP marketing strategy (segmentation, targeting, positioning).

#### *Push Marketing*

Push marketing is an effort by prospective candidates to attend directly and face to face with the community to convey direct stimulation so that the public is able to get to know more about the candidate's spouse (Nursal, 2004). Because it is a mandatory item for prospective candidates to do blouse in order to gain voter sympathy. In some election phenomena in NTB Province, puss marketing has a significant impact on the vote. When it comes directly to the community, SUKMA has a structured way that is directly organized by a team of SUKMA volunteers who are tasked with attracting SUKMA sympathizers and supporters at various levels of society.

In a direct campaign to the community, SUKMA consistently carried a political message that his presence in the candidacy of the regent and deputy regent of East Lombok Regency was the right solution. Being consistent in delivering its superior programs makes the community believe because the work program is delivered directly with explanations that can be understood by the residents of East Lombok. Consistent with the white clothes made by the SUKMA Volunteer team, they looked familiar with the residents of East Lombok and were greeted with a festive smile. The push marketing strategy above is very effective because the direct decline of SUKMA to the community not only aims to sell programs and solve problems, but also succeeds in bringing up a view that SUKMA is a potential new leader desired by the people of East Lombok.

The structured method initiated by the SUKMA volunteer team also makes push marketing something different and feels more effective and measurable. This is what finally succeeded in creating a sense of belonging and adding to the closeness of the people of East Lombok Regency to SUKMA. This has also succeeded in adding to sukma's popularity as the new leader of East Lombok Regency.

#### *Pass Marketing*

This pass marketing strategy seeks to use individuals or groups to influence the opinions of voters in East Lombok. With the selection of the right influencer figures, it will be able to have a great effect on influencing public opinions, beliefs, and thoughts. Delivery of political products to influencer groups or parties who have influence in the community of East Lombok Regency in particular. Various parties that have influence in society have strategic value for candidates, because with the power of influence, these figures can forward the political messages conveyed by the candidate to the community or their community. SUKMA also focuses its political marketing activities by visiting figures and organizations that will influence mass opinion directly or indirectly.

#### *Pull Marketing*

In addition to carrying out various kinds of pass marketing and push marketing approaches, there is also the concept of pull marketing which is a strategy for forming images and delivering political messages by utilizing the media. The media is believed to be the best means of conveying the message of a political product. The use of media through creative campaigns must be used to form a positive political

image so as to arouse voter sentiment towards political candidates/parties. And SUKMA has successfully used the media as an effective campaign tool to convey its political ideas. According to She Burton quoted by Nursal (2004: 244) there are several things that need to be considered in conveying political products, including: consistency in the discipline of messages and the use of media both print and electronic. All of these political submissions have been carried out in good standing by the SUKMA couple, until they were finally elected in the 2018 regional elections and led the current East Lombok District.

#### *Segmentation and Community Targeting in Winning SUKMA in the 2018 East Lombok Regional Election*

Segmentation is a strategy to map selectors based on certain characteristics. This strategy is useful so that SUKMA can communicate appropriate political messages by paying attention to the typology of the heterogeneous east Lombok community. A precise and accurate reading of market orientation and voters is required. East Lombok with its heterogeneous society allows each pair of candidates to be able to represent all segmentations so that they can be chosen by all levels of society.

Data collection from the community segmentation of East Lombok Regency is the first step that must be taken before determining the target votes targeted by SUKMA in the contestation of the 2018 East Lombok Regional Election. The segmentation of East Lombok society is divided into several segments, namely: religion, tribalism, economic class, and other things that are divided into various demographics of society. The division of community segmentation is also a strategy carried out by SUKMA to be able to communicate political messages that are in accordance with paying attention to the typology of the heterogeneous people of East Lombok Regency.

The data and approaches presented through the segmentation process require SUKMA to determine which segments of society will be given special attention. Looking at the segmentation data of the East Lombok community, there are several segments of the majority of society that must be used as the main targets, namely: the Javanese and Betawi communities and Muslims in East Lombok. The majority segment of society is the target targeted by all candidates although this is not in the sense of desecrating other segments of society. They do target all segments of society to choose SUKMA, but specifically they focus on how Javanese and Betawi people and followers of Islam because they are the very majority number of voters in East Lombok.

#### *Political Positioning of SUKMA in the 2018 East Lombok Regional Election*

Positioning is a communication strategy to give voters a view of the candidate's superiority in an associative form. Positioning should be carried out by analyzing the external and internal factors described in the product mix including the offer of work programs, candidate profiles, the substance of political products. Positioning relates to the political image that the khalyalak wants to show. The political image that is raised must also be different and adapted to the community. Which is the political image built with branding and personality as a brand quality. SUKMA realizes that the people of East Lombok will easily identify and distinguish SUKMA from other prospective couples. SUKMA presents something different so that the people of East Lombok Regency are able to differentiate the products offered by SUKMA in their minds. Determining political positioning is the last process of a series of political marketing strategies while playing an important role in an effort to win the hearts and win the sympathy of the people of East Lombok Regency. In the 2018 East Lombok Regency Regional Election, SUKMA was consistent in forming an image and positioning that was different from other candidates.

## Discussion

### *Important Marketing Strategies for Regional Head Candidates in East Lombok Regency*

Through the results of an interview with Sukiman, strengthens the author's analysis that SUKMA focuses on going directly to the community as the most effective way to convey messages and ideas to the people of East Lombok Regency. According to the author's observations, the delivery of direct products carried out by the SUKMA couple succeeded in making its popularity in the community soar. The strategy of going directly (locally called *blusukan*) into the community is considered the most effective way to express the intentions and objectives between the candidate and the constituents. The delivery of ideas will also be more able to arrive because they are expressed directly, besides that this is a way for candidates to see the real situation experienced by the people of East Lombok. Because campaigning is not just about politics capturing the hearts of constituents, more than that meeting the public is a spiritual journey that will bring you closer to the reality of oppression.

### *3P and STP Marketing Strategies*

The electability of a candidate cannot be separated from a strategy to establish himself as a regional head. Based on the results of an interview analysis with the Regent of East Lombok Regency and confirmed with the existing marketing strategy theory, it was produced that regent H. Sukiman applied the STP and 3P in winning the 2018 local elections. This shows that political marketing strategies are important for regional head candidates in East Lombok Regency to use it to make one of the candidate's strengths personally and externally such as the formation of a team of community elements who are able to exert influence in the environment. The political marketing strategy of regional head candidates described in this sub-chapter is a discussion of the concept of segmentation, targeting, positioning (STP) strategy and includes, push marketing, pull marketing, pass marketing (3P) (Nursal, 2004).

These three political marketing strategies should be used by the candidates according to the interview results of the nine respondents, in terms of segmentation, the candidates must understand that the majority of people in East Lombok district is Muslim, therefore this should be the main concern. Because of that particular reason, the religious factor of the candidate will be an important factor in offering himself as a candidate for regional head.

For targets and positions, that there is a change in population where there are now more novice voters (millennials), the targets and positions should be directed to the issue. In this regard, the candidates should better understand the 3P that has been implemented by the elected regent. In addition, it is necessary to take a deeper look at the advantages and disadvantages of the 3P that have been implemented so that when selected, they will be able to implement this STP better.

## Conclusion

SUKMA has succeeded in making political marketing a means of exchanging ideas and programs between contestants and constituents and as a strategy to capitalize on opponents' weaknesses. For this reason, in this study, it can be concluded that in winning the East Lombok Regency Regional Election in 2018, the political marketing strategy used by SUKMA is as follows:

1. *Push marketing*, which is a candidate's strategy to provide direct stimulation to society in associative ways. SUKMA is the most superior candidate in the affairs of *blusukan* and meets directly the people of East Lombok. Known as a friendly and communicable leader, push marketing strategies run very effectively. In the matter of *blusukan* to the community as an implementation of push marketing, SUKMA is assisted by a team of SUKMAi volunteers who

organize blouse activities into a structured and neat manner. What makes it different, in the activity of going directly to the community SUKMA always emphasizes on two-way discussions and making the community not only an object but a subject rather than the development itself.

2. *Pass marketing* is a strategy that seeks to make individuals or groups as influencers who influence voter opinions in East Lombok Regency.
3. *Pull marketing* is a strategy of conveying political messages and products by utilizing the media. SUKMA conveys political messages consistently and repeatedly so that it is easy to be remembered by the people of East Lombok Regency.
4. SUKMA's market approach strategy is to use the concept of STP (segmentation, targeting, positioning). This strategy was used as a tool by the SUKMA winning team to segment the characteristics of the people of East Lombok Regency and group them in several targeting of majority votes and was refined by determining sukma's positioning during the regional elections. In the study, it can be concluded that the most dominant aspect of SUKMA's political marketing is the selection of the right positioning. The winning team positioned SUKMA as a Plus Candidate which means that everything good in the other candidates is in SUKMA too but all the bad things that other candidates have are non-existence in SUKMA.

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