



Analysis of Social Modality of the Elected Candidates in Political Contests in
Village Head Elections
(A Case Study of the Village Head Election in Purbamas Village, 2022)

Anteng Nirwanto; Ismi Dwi Astuti Nurhaeni; Didik Gunawan

Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia

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Abstract

This research aims to determine the social modality possessed by the candidates who were successfully elected in the village head election in Purbamas Village in 2022. The research methodology used in this study is descriptive qualitative. The research location is situated in Purbamas Village. The research subjects, serving as research informants, consist of 17 individuals, including the elected candidates, local non-elite political figures, and Purbamas Village community members who had the right to vote in the village head election. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted following the interactive analysis model, which includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The research findings indicate that the elected candidates possess strong social modality to participate in the village head election, such as having relevant educational backgrounds and coming from families with extensive political experience, which has gained them full trust from the community of Purbamas Village. These factors contribute to the perceived suitability of the elected candidates to serve as village heads.

Keywords: *Elected Candidate; Modality; Causes of Success*

Introduction

Politics is always present in human life, even in every action carried out by humans on a daily basis, there are elements of politics. In society, it is evident that political elements are part of the social process, where humans are social beings who need each other. Politics according to the general public is often limited to government policies, parliamentary elections, and other bureaucratic matters. In reality, politics encompasses all aspects related to considerations of interests between one or more individuals towards others. It involves the process of interaction between individuals, resulting in the output of participation among them. In the art of politics, participation is the outcome of politicization by an individual or a group towards other individuals or groups.

The village head election is a crucial political process in the context of village governance. This election provides an opportunity for village residents to choose their leaders who will manage village affairs and represent the interests of the local community. The success of candidates in the village head

election is crucial as it can have an impact on the development of the village and the welfare of the community.

At the village level, the implementation of democratic political practices is most easily carried out. Village politics has evolved in response to social and geographical opportunities and challenges. The village head elections serve as a direct link between civil society and the government, making them highly favored by the community (Bulqiyah et al., 2019). Additionally, the village head elections select leaders who can effectively utilize decentralization, leverage the village's advantages, and formulate policies that align with the needs of the rural population (Sobari, 2019). Currently, village head elections are considered relatively easy and less complicated compared to other general elections. This is because the electoral jurisdiction for village head elections is relatively small, making it easier to coordinate winning strategies.

The modality referred to in this research is the social modality possessed by the candidates. The more accumulated modality invested by the candidates, the greater their chances of gaining support (Pantouw, 2012). The focus of this paper is the social modality of the elected village head candidates in Purbamas Village, Lahat Regency. In the current era of developing democracy, researchers are more interested in political studies, especially those related to the power of possessing modality in village head elections. To advance in the contestation of village head elections, social modality is the appropriate way to obtain full support. This is because their behavioral orientation contributes to public interests, both at the public and political levels (Zúñiga, 2012).

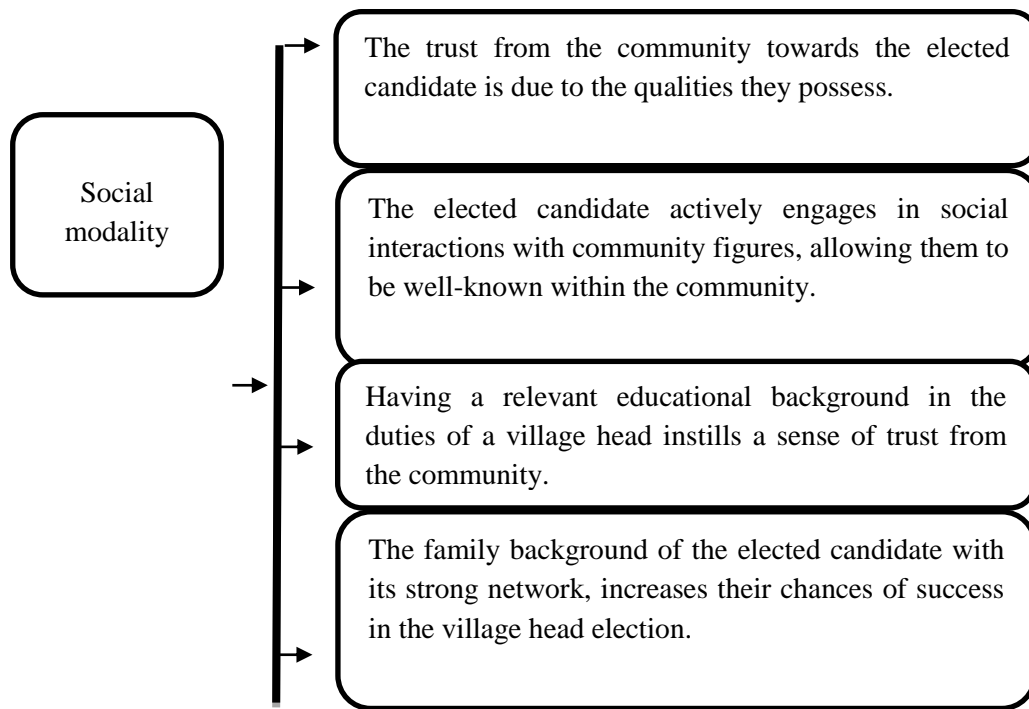
In Lahat Regency, South Sumatra Province, simultaneous village head elections took place in 2022. In Lahat Regency, 234 villages participated in the simultaneous village head elections, including Purbamas Village. The Village Head Election is a form of community participation in Purbamas Village, where the community chooses their village leader who is expected to lead and develop the village for the better. The village plays a significant role as it is always directly connected to the community, and in the village head election in Purbamas Village, two candidates competed to be elected as the village head. In this village head election, the competition to gain community support is crucial, as the votes from each community member determine the election of the village head candidates who will lead the village. Over time, various methods have been employed to capture the attention of the candidates. Numerous approaches, such as political campaigns, political debates, and direct engagement with each region, are carried out to win the hearts of the residents.

Research Methodology

The research methodology used in this study is qualitative descriptive. The research is conducted in Purbamas Village. The research subjects consist of 17 individuals, including the elected candidates, local non-elite political figures, and members of the Purbamas Village community who have the right to vote in the village head election. Data collection is done through interviews, observations, and documentation. Data analysis follows an interactive analysis model, which includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

Results

Social Modality of the Elected Candidate



Source: Researcher Analysis, 2023

a. The Community's Trust in the Elected Candidate

One of the most crucial components in a cooperative relationship is trust. Trust involves two or more parties who have a reciprocal relationship. The level of trust increases when the expectations of each party are fulfilled.

The advancement of the elected candidate in the village head election gains full trust from the community of Purbamas Village. The emergence of trust from the community towards the elected candidate in the political contest of the village head election is due to the persistence of a patriarchal cultural system in the community, which favors male candidates who have a greater chance of being elected as the village head. The village head election in Purbamas Village was contested by two candidates, comprising a male candidate and a female candidate. Patriarchal culture is a social system that places men as the central figure of authority in social organization. Men hold a higher position than women in all aspects of social, cultural, and economic life (Pinem, 2009:42). Similarly, Sherly (2017:28) states that patriarchal culture is a set of rules and social structures that place men as the most powerful figures.

Apart from the strong patriarchal culture that still prevails in the community of Purbamas Village, it turns out that the qualities possessed by the elected candidates also contribute to their success in the village head election. The community of Purbamas Village perceives that the elected candidates have good qualities to be chosen as the village head. According to the community, the elected candidates have leadership qualities and knowledge of carrying out village governance tasks, which makes the people of Purbamas Village prefer candidates who are more competent and experienced in becoming a village head.

Additionally, the presence of leadership qualities, competence, and knowledge in the elected candidates enables them to build strong networks with influential figures in the community of Purbamas Village, such as religious leaders, traditional leaders, and youth leaders. In village head elections, the desired leader by the people is someone who is responsible and proficient in carrying out their duties. Therefore, in the election process, a candidate must embody the qualities of a leader who can effectively lead, so that the community can place their trust in them to ensure their well-being. Hence, a candidate running for election must be able to evoke empathy and sympathy from the people of Purbamas Village, demonstrating that they possess the qualities desired by the community.

b.Relevant Education of the Candidate

Ramadhany (2020), candidates can "market" their relevant educational degrees to attract the attention of voters. This can enhance the personal assessment of the candidates. The high education level with a bachelor's degree held by the elected candidate, according to the community of Purbamas Village, contributes to their success in the political contest of the village head election. The bachelor's degree held by the elected candidate is considered to be relevant to the duties and responsibilities of a village head. Furthermore, the relevance of education to the tasks and authority of a village head results in the elected candidate having good knowledge and understanding, which can support their effective management and leadership of the village. Thus, voters perceive that the educational level held by the elected candidate significantly contributes to the village head election in Purbamas Village in 2022.

c.Social Interactions of the Elected Candidate

In village head elections, the elected candidate possesses strong social interaction skills, especially within the community of Purbamas Village. One's success in becoming a village head depends, in part, on social interaction factors within the community. Success is contingent upon the candidate's ability to engage effectively in social interactions within the community and is supported by their capabilities. To gain support and succeed in the village head election, the elected candidate must be able to manage village governance, understand the community's needs, plan and implement effective policies, and have a good understanding of the issues present in the village. These are crucial prerequisites for anyone aspiring to be elected as a village head.

d.Family Background of Experience

Active participation of the community in the village head elections is part of the political process. In this regard, the family background of the candidates has an impact on the voters' decisions. This is consistent with the opinion of Goraph (2018) that the family base is a political force in influencing the community. For the community of Purbamas Village, the reputation of the candidate's family plays a crucial role in influencing voter trust. A respected and well-known family in the community can provide additional trust and support to the candidate. However, conversely, if the candidate's family has a poor reputation, especially in politics, it can shift the voters' perception of the candidate and reduce the candidate's chances of success in the election. This is reflected in the village head elections in Purbamas Village, where the elected candidate comes from a respected and well-known family in the community

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