

Sigit Raditya's Political Marketing in the 2024 Legislative Election Campaign in West VI Electoral District

Mohamad Zanuvar Rafildy Zazuli¹, Ratnia Solihah², Yusa Djuyandi³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Padjadjaran, Bandung, Indonesia

Email: mohamad19016@unpad.ac.id

Abstract

In the 2024 legislative campaign, Sigit Raditya competed as a legislative candidate in one of the highly competitive electoral districts, the West Java VI Electoral District. Sigit Raditya lost in competing in the electoral district. This study uses a qualitative design with primary data through interviews with Sigit Raditya and the campaign team in Bekasi and Depok. The analysis was carried out using Nursal's political marketing framework which divides the focus of political marketing into three strategies, namely push, pull, and pass marketing. This study shows findings that in the political marketing that has been implemented by the Sigit Raditya campaign team, all three approaches have been contextually applied in the campaign in Bekasi and Depok. As a newcomer, formation and strengthening through an emotional approach with face-to-face practices are carried out in the push marketing strategy. However, this strategy is not optimal due to inadequate volunteer capacity and Sigit Raditya's absence from several face-to-face visit schedules which reduce his exposure to the grassroots. Then exposure to attract voters through visual media in a combination of digital (social media) and conventional (billboards, brochures) has also been implemented, but there are some inconsistencies in the visuals and aesthetics offered on social media and the distribution of props is uneven. While marketing using the pass marketing approach has attracted several public figures to strengthen support at the grassroots level, this strategy can still require encouragement from the involvement of public figures or influencers who work actively to market Sigit Raditya so that the reach of messages and exposure can increase and expand

Keywords: *Political Marketing, Political Campaign, Legislative Campaign, Indonesia.*

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A. INTRODUCTION

In February 2024, Indonesia held the general election and legislative election to elect the President and Vice President, the People's Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia, the Regional Representative Council, the Provincial Regional People's Representative Council, and the Regency/City Regional People's Representative Council. Various campaigns were carried out since the end of 2023 by political parties and their candidates to attract the people's votes in the 2024 legislative election. Candidates for the People's Representative Council, Regional Representative Council, Provincial/Regency/City Regional People's Representative Council are referred to as legislative candidates who run in the electoral district where the legislative candidate comes from. The 2024 legislative election had 84 electoral districts and 580 seats (Kusnandar, 2024). The provinces with the most electoral districts were West Java and East Java with each having 11 (eleven) electoral districts.

Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Sigit Raditya, MIS, MA is a legislative candidate for the People's Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia from the

Democratic Party who competed in the West Java VI Electoral District in the 2024 Legislative Election, which included Depok City and Bekasi City. Sigit Raditya had no prior campaign record and was a new face from the Democratic Party with a background as an officer in the Indonesian National Army. As a retired military officer, in his political campaign Sigit Raditya emphasized the values of integrity and discipline to bring better public services. Through his background combining military, international education, and a more inclusive communication style, Sigit Raditya appeared as a new figure with a unique background. However, Sigit Raditya did not secure a seat in the People's Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia in the 2024 legislative election for the West Java VI Electoral District. In the 2024 legislative election, the personal votes he managed to obtain according to data from Lezen ID (2024) were 44,342. These personal votes were the highest among Democratic Party legislative candidates in the West Java VI Electoral District.

The distribution of seats in the People's Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia based on the use of the Sainte-Laguë system showed the result of 6 (six) seats for the West Java VI Electoral District, namely PKB, Gerindra, PDI Perjuangan, Golkar, and PKS (2 seats). From the results of the 2024 legislative election, there was an imbalance between Sigit's individual performance and the strength of the Democratic Party in the West Java VI Electoral District. Even though he received the highest number of votes among other Democratic Party legislative candidates, the party's vote performance was insufficient to secure a seat in the People's Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia.

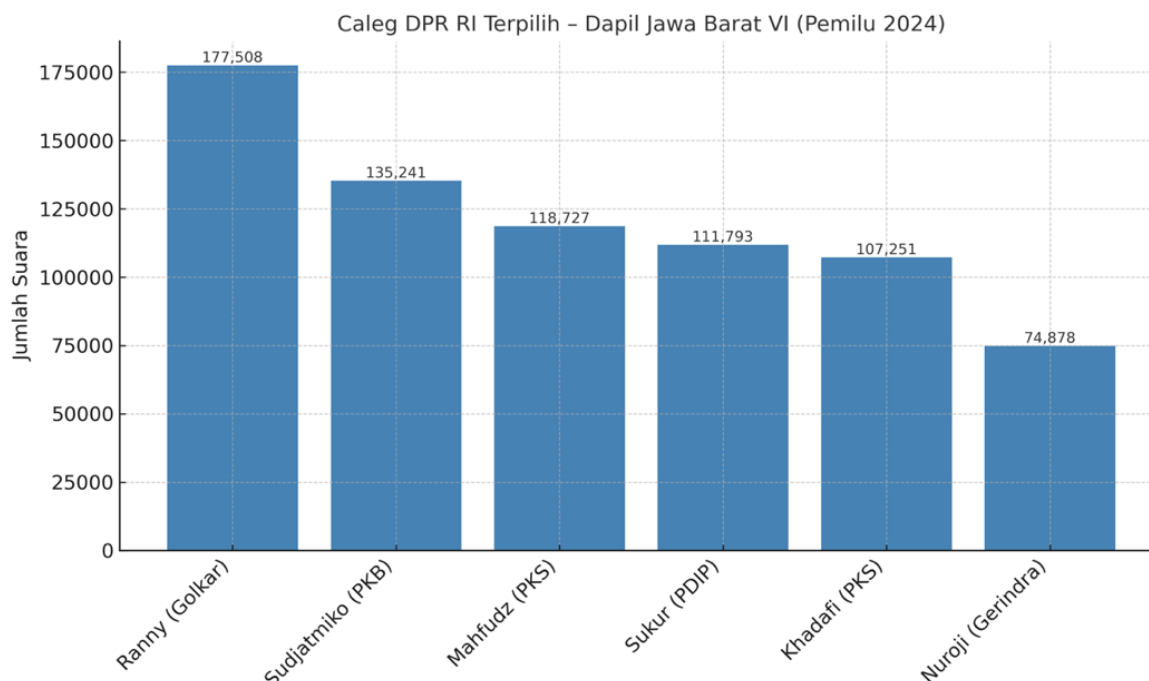


Figure 1. Chart of Vote Acquisition for Legislative Candidates Winning Seats in the Indonesian House of Representatives in the West Java VI electoral District

Sumber: Processed by Researcher (2025)

When comparing with the six elected legislative candidates of the West Java VI Electoral District, the difference in votes between the highest and lowest personal vote candidates was quite large. Figure 1 shows Ranny Fahd Arfan from the Golkar Party with 177,508 votes, while Ir. H. Nuroji from the Gerindra Party held the lowest elected votes with 74,878 (Goodkind, 2024). However, these personal votes were still much higher compared to Sigit Raditya, who held 44,342 votes. Therefore, the 2024 legislative election not only resulted in Sigit Raditya's loss in personal votes, but based on the overall party votes, the Democratic Party also did not win a seat for the People's Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia.

The defeat of Sigit Raditya, similar to the Democratic Party's defeat in several recent legislative elections in competing for seats in the People's Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia in the West Java VI Electoral District, shows the interesting side of the West Java VI Electoral District. Bekasi City and Depok City are part of this electoral district. Each political party has its electoral district stronghold based on the vote acquisition data in each legislative election. Based on data broadcast by CNBC Indonesia (Taufani, 2023), in the 2019 legislative election, the West Java VI Electoral District was controlled by the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). The votes obtained by PKS in the 2019 legislative election with a percentage of 100% came from a total of 476,165 votes in the West Java VI Electoral District for Depok City and Bekasi City.

This made PKS the political party that won 2 seats in the People's Representative Council from the West Java VI Electoral District for the 2024–2029 period, followed by other seats filled by PDI-P, PAN, Gerindra, and Golkar (People's Representative Council of Indonesia, 2019). PKS's strength in Bekasi City and Depok City, which are part of the West Java VI Electoral District, is also deeply rooted even in the Regional Head Election. According to data described by CNN Indonesia (Muhammad & Ramadhan, 2023), one example of PKS dominance occurred in Depok City, where the mayoral candidate promoted by PKS succeeded in becoming mayor from 2005 to 2020 across 4 consecutive regional head elections.

Several journal literatures provide analyses of several legislative candidates and parties that managed to win in the West Java VI Electoral District and reveal several political marketing elements used in their campaigns. The first element is personalized political marketing and direct voter engagement. This first element is examined in Setiyani's (2023) study related to the political campaign strategies of Lilis Nurlia and Eka Widayani in the 2019 general election. The political campaign strategies used by both candidates are related to traditional and modern political marketing techniques, including door-to-door visits, social media, and events involving the community. Direct interaction, which provides opportunities for candidates to interact directly in an effort to build personal relationships with voters, can help candidates adjust their messages to what voters are concerned about.

Community engagement carried out by PKS in the 2019 legislative election in Bekasi City and Depok Electoral District refers to the second element, which is the use of culture in strategically conveying messages. Kamal et al. (2021) in their study

explained how PKS and candidates Lilis Nurlia and Eka Widayani both utilized strategies that could make their messages more targeted with community involvement so that voters' values and concerns could be aligned with the message they wanted to convey.

The results of this study are also related to the study of Trianggorowati and Al-Hamdi (2020), which shows the third element in political campaign strategies in the West Java VI Electoral District: Grassroots mobilization. The connection between the study of Kamal et al. (2021) and Trianggorowati and Al-Hamdi (2020) lies in how strategic message delivery can effectively influence grassroots mobilization results. In the 2019 legislative election, PKS complemented their volunteer network message dissemination with strategic message delivery tactics. In the 2014 legislative election, grassroots mobilization and community engagement elements were also used by Hendrik Tangke Allo in Tuzzahra's (2019) study. Research on political marketing in the Bekasi City and Depok City electoral districts also shows unique findings, such as the fourth element, namely the presence of media and the influence of celebrities, involving Indonesian artist Lucky Hakim in the 2014 legislative election studied by Fadhli (2014). This element links the power of influence from candidates who already have popularity and media presence in the success of Lucky Hakim's campaign.

By integrating the results of all previous literature reviews with the research background, novelty can be found in this study. First, the researcher sees that there has been no research explaining the defeat of a legislative candidate from a major party widely known to the public such as the Democratic Party in the West Java VI Electoral District. Second, the interesting side to explore from Sigit Raditya's political marketing is based on the background mentioned, that Depok and Bekasi are dominated by certain parties which influence the level of campaign success there. Therefore, this research aims to identify and analyze the political marketing carried out by Sigit Raditya, which ended in defeat in the West Java VI Electoral District when competing in the 2024 legislative election as a legislative candidate from a major party that had long not won legislative seats.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Lees-Marshment (2011) explains how the condition of modern political marketing makes the public's assessment not only focused on the policies made by political actors, but also from their emotional reactions when seeing politicians deliver marketing that will become public consumption. In another study by Turcotte (2020), political marketing is considered as a targeted strategy in a campaign to influence voter behavior. Political marketing becomes an important strategy to be able to reach an election environment that has dynamic voters by relying on marketing tactics based on data (data-driven) to make the campaign successful. Political marketing in the era of technology and digital media is also described by Williams & Newman (2014) who highlight the importance of conducting message segmentation, issue framing, and reaching target voters using digital power.

Countries in Asia, according to the study conducted by Schafferer (2017), do not have political marketing methods that are completely different from most campaigns based on the perception of Western countries. The process of political marketing such as branding and media management is part of political marketing adapted from the United States campaign and carried out in several countries in Asia. Thus, several opinions about political marketing theory described in this research by Lees-Marshment (2011), Williams and Newman (2014), and Turcotte (2020) are also proven to be adapted and carried out by Asian countries in their campaigns to obtain and influence public votes.

In Indonesia, political marketing carried out in candidate election campaigns is explained in detail by Nursal (2004). There are three political marketing processes that need to be considered and carried out by a politician or party when campaigning for a general election or legislative election, namely; (1) push marketing, (2) pull marketing, and (3) pass marketing. First, push marketing is oriented to push the political message owned by the election candidate to prospective voters directly and in a targeted manner in two forms of contact, namely direct or personal (customized). In addition to pushing, political marketing must also attract prospective voters (pull marketing) through the image it has by utilizing paid and free media as a place to disseminate messages. The third process is to continue political marketing (pass marketing) using the influence of passive and active influencers to people who have influence to move votes from more targeted prospective voters.

Nursal's (2004) political marketing is indeed relevant to political marketing in campaigns carried out in Indonesia, this study sees that these three political marketing processes occurred and were carried out by the research subject, Sigit Raditya, when he became a legislative candidate in the 2024 legislative election. If compared with the political marketing theories of Lees-Marshment (2011), Williams and Newman (2014), Schafferer (2017), Conley and Lees-Marshment (2019), and Turcotte (2020), Nursal's (2004) marketing theory is chosen because it is more precise and relevant. Therefore, this marketing theory is used to analyze Sigit Raditya's political marketing in the general election of the West Java VI Electoral District.

Table 1. Political Marketing Process Push, Pull, Pass Marketing

Politic Marketing Process	Goal	Strategy
Push Marketing	Push political products to the community	1. Direct contact (<i>experiential</i>) 2. Personal contact (<i>customized</i>)
Pull Marketing	Attract votes from the public	1. Free media 2. Paid media
Pass Marketing	Penetration of political product messages through other actors	1. Active influencer 2. Passive influencer

Source: Nursal (2004)

C. METHOD

This research was conducted using a qualitative method with a descriptive case study approach in understanding the research objective related to political marketing in the 2024 legislative election carried out by the legislative candidate Sigit Raditya. The primary data source of this research came from field observations during the legislative election and interviews. Meanwhile, the secondary data sources came from literature from books and journals, the internet, and news media related to the general election in the West Java IV electoral district.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Face-to-Face and Local Community Approach through Push Marketing

In pushing political messages directly to voters, the direct approach through interactions such as field activities, face-to-face, and the involvement of the legislative candidate and the team personally is part of push marketing practices. According to Nursal (2004), this practice can make voters be directly exposed to the candidate and his vision and mission through methods that involve active approaches such as door-to-door campaigns, visits to neighborhoods organizations, gathering aspirations, and participating in activities carried out by the community. Because it has many activities that directly interact with voters, push marketing also becomes a tool to build relationships with voters emotionally and gain social recognition from residents in addition to being a tool to distribute information. Push marketing, which has two approaches, direct (experiential) and personal (customized), is very dependent on Sigit Raditya's relational capacity and the campaign team's ability to analyze the social dynamics in the designated area so that the approach becomes more authentic. However, research findings show that the construction of push marketing theoretically does not always have a linear relationship with the results of practices carried out in the West Java VI Electoral District.

Based on the basic assumption of Nursal's (2004) push marketing, the intensity of direct and personal contact can replace the absence of Democratic Party power in the West Java VI Electoral District. Whereas if seen in the study of Fadhli (2014) regarding Lucky Hakim's campaign, the approach in push marketing practices was effective because of the prestige and legitimacy obtained through his position as someone who had that prestige, so that even though he came from the PAN party he still managed to gain votes and was elected as a member of the People's Representative Council for the 2014 to 2019 period. In Sigit Raditya's campaign, which had already carried out direct and personal approaches massively, it did not gain social legitimacy in a linear way in the midst of competing in an area that had structural affiliations that tended to already be tied to other parties. The party attachment in the West Java VI Electoral District, such as PKS, according to the research of Trianggorowati & Al-Hamdi (2020), has already been rooted in informal structures in the community such as religious gatherings, communities, and RT/RW forums. Thus, the results of that study also confirm that the social space in the West

Java VI Electoral District was difficult for Sigit Raditya to enter because of the existing loyalty and control in the area.

Another weakness besides structurally political factors is related to the weak narrative construction when conducting push marketing practices in the West Java VI Electoral District. Tuzzahra (2019) noted in her findings that the candidate's ability to align narratives, symbolic language, and socio-cultural context among voters is very important to determine the success of political communication. In several personal contact activities, especially community activities, it was found that the campaign team had tried to adapt narratively when approaching voter segments such as with the Betawi and Madurese communities. However, the approach did not fully build resonance with the voter community because it had not deeply adapted to the local culture of these communities. Even though operationally in the field, Sigit Raditya's campaign had been carried out according to Nursal's (2004) basic framework, obstacles in the socio-political context and limitations in adapting, especially in making personal contact, caused the campaign results not to meet theoretical expectations.

Furthermore, in terms of direct contact, Sigit Raditya's team had already provided space between the candidate and voters through direct social platforms. In the direct contact process, the main goal of the team was to build initial recognition and form a positive perception of Sigit Raditya through systematic planning such as door-to-door activities, visits to each neighborhood organizations in the West Java VI Electoral District, presence at residents' informal events, and gathering aspirations. The implementation of push marketing practices involved Sigit Raditya directly so that there was physical and emotional closeness with voters. Door-to-door activities were carried out intensively, for example in the Mustikajaya (Bekasi) and Tapos (Depok) areas, volunteers were divided into several administrative zones so that voter reach on a more personal level could be more evenly distributed before or after Sigit Raditya conducted direct door-to-door contact.

The function of the volunteers' arrival was to distribute campaign media such as brochures directly and to be an extension for continuous relations with residents, such as through brief dialogues or accommodating the aspirations of local residents. In the perspective of political marketing, mobilizing these volunteers is an actualization part of the platform for delivering and building mutual trust (Cwalina et al., 2015). In conducting direct contact activities, Sigit Raditya's presence tended to be authentic, such as showing physical involvement in residents' daily lives, for example in Posyandu activities and residents' informal events such as tahlilan. Physical presence, according to Lees-Marshment (2014), can strengthen trust, social connectedness, and emotional closeness between Sigit and voters in the West Java VI Electoral District.

However, in the context of Sigit Raditya's 2024 campaign, this approach did not have automatic success because responses varied based on the social and political profiles of the area. In several neighborhoods in Bekasi such as Mustikajaya and Jatiasih, Sigit's door-to-door activities were welcomed positively because they were

supported by the work of volunteers who were part of the local residents and already known by the surrounding residents. Social relations between volunteers and residents helped Sigit's presence be more accepted. The use of relations that had internal legitimacy could help convey information messages to the community more effectively (Burton et al., 2015). On the other hand, the advantage of these volunteer relations was not as effective in areas that had more organized local political structures because of passive resistance from the community. Rejection from several neighborhood organizational leaders occurred in some points in the area, using reasons of neutrality or already being committed to other legislative candidates' parties.

In general, regarding the direct contact approach practiced by Sigit Raditya, the weakness of the implementation was in the limitations of access and capacity to adapt to the complex socio-political environment of the West Java VI Electoral District compared to the intensity of the campaign team's agenda. According to Ghifary (2020), the door-to-door canvassing approach model will only succeed and have a positive effect if practiced in a socially supportive environment followed by high interpersonal credibility from the candidate. However, in practice, Sigit's door-to-door canvassing was not optimal because the residents' environment was not entirely cooperative. For direct contact approaches that were successful, the initial communication space between residents and Sigit Raditya was opened better even though it did not directly show the potential for conversion into electoral support.

After direct contact, several personal contacts have also been carried out by Sigit Raditya in the form of several community agendas such as sports tournaments, morning exercise, religious gatherings, and forums with socio-cultural nuances. Through personal contact, the interactions pursued are more informal and cultural in nature, which can reach certain voter segments through things that are of interest to residents compared to more formal political agendas. According to Nursal (2004), a candidate encourages his presence into public awareness through tangible interactions so that this approach is part of push marketing. However, this approach is slightly different from direct contact; in personal contact activities, the important point highlighted is the integration of Sigit Raditya to carry out non-political activities into the social activities of residents.

Based on the empirical data of the research, several structured voter segments have been approached such as groups of housewives and religious gatherings, youth forums, or laborers. In events such as morning exercise together and sports competitions, the campaign team created an interaction space that was more intimate and without hierarchy so that it could trigger direct dialogue and approach between Sigit and his voters. Thus, in the space of personal contact activities, Sigit encouraged his presence in the midst of voters not only as a politician but also showing that he is part of the community and equal to the residents present.

In terms of strategy, the Sigit Raditya campaign team has reflected the use of social segmentation and arranged voter segmentation so that the personal approach could be more effective (Lees-Marshment, 2019; Nursal, 2004). Several approaches

have been chosen with a clear analysis of voter segmentation such as female voters (small forums of housewives and religious gatherings), youth (holding sports tournaments or joint discussions), and laborers. However, limitations emerged in Sigit's campaign when the selection of these segments was not fully integrated into the campaign narrative. For example, when with the segment of housewives, the discussion about education costs was raised as an adaptation of the topic, but narratives such as fighting for women's rights, especially mothers, were not widely discussed. In addition, the challenges in the practice of personal approach are also the same as the direct approach, namely the dominance of local politics which makes some voter segments more difficult to reach. Because when voters already have structural loyalty, it will be difficult to make personal interaction successful in producing a transfer of support (Fadhli, 2014).

In Sigit Raditya's push marketing practice, the systemic structure that became a limitation of Sigit's space in conducting political communication was also a challenge besides the individual or community response of voters. In terms of social space in several areas of Depok City and Bekasi City, it has been dominated by political parties that have a more mature and dominant track record there such as PKS, Golkar, and Gerindra. This is not only reflected in the electoral results of previous legislative elections but also in the dominance in social networks that are important to be penetrated by newcomer legislative candidates such as Sigit Raditya, such as religious study communities, neighborhood organizations, and resident activities that are communal and collective in nature. Trianggorowati and Al-Hamdi (2020) mention that in Indonesia's local political system, social space is an important long-term political control strategy. However, in the practice that occurred, the social space already owned by other political forces hampered Sigit Raditya from entering and being able to mobilize participation from voters in West Java VI Electoral District so that there were territorial boundaries that had to be faced in the field. In several cases in the findings in areas such as East Beji, there were forms of passive rejection such as joint activities with residents not being responded to actively by local neighborhood organization leaders themselves. Thus, the resistance that emerged tended to be subtle and passive because it made Sigit's presence ignored.

When viewed from operational practice, Sigit Raditya's campaign showed an initial understanding of the characteristics of voters in West Java VI Electoral District such as understanding voter segmentation and understanding strategies to make basic adaptations in adjusting Sigit's relevance to voters. However, social legitimacy in West Java VI Electoral District is still difficult to improve. In terms of substance and message structure, the strategy to differentiate the narrative between voter segments has not been fully implemented. When Sigit Raditya attended the segment of housewives during morning exercise and housewives' religious gatherings, the content of the narrative message was relatively uniform and only slightly transformed, for example, narratives still revolved around experience as a former military officer, the desire to bring change, and a sense of concern for the people. The opportunity to convey messages with a range of ideas that are more specific and

meaningful for these segments has not been maximally carried out. The campaign team also confirmed that time management in conducting push marketing was not optimal and times that should have been used to visit residents were not used well. According to the findings of Fadhli (2014), all the obstacles faced by Sigit Raditya when running push marketing were quite layered in West Java VI Electoral District, such as the layer of territorial limitations due to local political structures, social relations that were difficult to penetrate, and negative perceptions due to Sigit's inconsistent presence throughout the campaign period. These obstacles are also not in line with the assumption that direct and physical presence will automatically build relationships with voters without considering that there are electoral districts that have political domination structures and require high social legitimacy (Nursal, 2004).

2. Utilization of Media and Image Building Through Pull Marketing Practice

In creating voter interest through political marketing, pull marketing practice is used to be able to deliver the image, message, and information of Sigit Raditya in persuasive and attractive ways. Slightly different from push marketing which is direct in nature, pull marketing is about building appeal through mediums such as communication media. According to Nursal (2004), one thing to pay attention to in pull marketing is consistency in the elements of the political product conveyed so that it remains in accordance with the positioning that has been set for the candidate's image. Throughout the campaign period, the Sigit Raditya campaign team created materials and messages based on several themes such as documentation of push marketing, current issues, narratives about Sigit's profile, and several documentation of Sigit's activities with the Democratic Party, which were repeatedly carried out on social media.

The combination implemented in Sigit Raditya's pull marketing included combinations of free media (podcasts, social media content) and paid media (flyers, brochures, billboards, business cards, etc.) as a visualization to introduce Sigit as a newcomer legislative candidate. Through this media combination, it was aimed to expand Sigit Raditya's exposure beyond meetings conducted during push marketing practice. In addition, it was also intended to create a public narrative that could be spread organically through both types of media. Based on the research findings, the Sigit Raditya campaign team created content with visual appeal and narrative based on the team's capacity to produce content rather than attempting to adjust to existing trends and aesthetics. Even so, efforts to build Sigit Raditya's image were still directed to be modern, inclusive, and non-confrontational using visual styles closely tied to the party's identity. For example, consistent use of Democratic blue color inserted into each post or thumbnail formats showing Sigit Raditya's face.

Nursal (2004) views that a candidate is no longer the sole initiator in political marketing, but in pull marketing, there will be an information ecosystem that makes voters have curiosity, interest, or a symbolic sense of closeness voluntarily. Nursal's (2004) view was reflected in several forms, one of which was the format that has been quite a trend in recent years, namely podcasts. Sigit Raditya appeared in the Ngopi

(Morning Chat) podcast on one of Bekasi City's YouTube channels. Communication conducted through podcasts like Ngopi allowed Sigit Raditya to deliver messages in a narrative form, in a conversational style that is familiar, with quite a long duration. Nursal (2004) also explains that in free media, a candidate must be able to gain as much opportunity as possible to be covered by mass media. Whereas in Sigit Raditya's practice, this opportunity was utilized in a modern sense where coverage was not only based on news media but also coverage through channels such as YouTube.

Other free media used extensively was the official social media active throughout the campaign period under the name kawansigitraditya on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter/X. The campaign team formed visual strategies such as Sigit Raditya's appearance and field documentation when he conducted push marketing activities, political message quotes by Sigit, and messages linked with the Democratic Party's symbolism using graphic designs that already had a predetermined format. This predetermined format was intended to build symbolic design for Sigit Raditya.



Figure 2. Social-Media Visual Format Design for Instagram @kawansigitraditya

In Figure 2 it can be seen that Instagram @kawansigitraditya had a format for each post. In several posts nearing the end of the campaign period, posts about political message quotes relevant to current societal issues had greater frequency, along with posts inviting people to vote. Lees-Marshment (2011) argues that in political communication practice, there is a practice focusing on adjusting political image to the expectations of target voters, which is reflected in Figure 2. In that figure, the post model planned to focus more on Sigit's vision and mission as a legislative candidate became clearer toward the end of the campaign period, adjusting to voters' expectations who would be more interested in the candidate's vision and mission to finalize their decision, especially among voters that are active on social media.

The success of pull marketing strategy, especially using free media and digital media, does not only emerge based on the quality of the content created by the social media team but also based on the social distribution of the content. Findings in studies by Kamal et al. (2021) and Trianggorowati and Al-Hamdi (2020) regarding message dissemination during campaigns show that at the local level it depends on grassroots social networks such as WhatsApp groups, neighborhood organizations, or assistance from informal figures. Any documentation posts of activities such as morning exercise with housewives, religious gatherings, or sports tournaments that were then voluntarily shared by residents attending the event could expand the reach of the content beyond the controlled reach. For example, on Instagram, posts had their location settings controlled to reach Bekasi and Depok areas. But through reposts from residents, the reach could be broader from person to person without intervention using formal actors.

However, structurally, free media such as social media or media through podcast channels can be limited because not all segments, especially grassroots, are actively connected to social media platforms or applications such as YouTube. Some voter segments, such as elderly people or voters who prefer conventional media like billboards, banners, or brochures, exist. Then, inconsistency of message content is also a challenge that can weaken a candidate's political identity because the representation shown is not always uniform (Blodgett et al., 2008). This was reflected in some observations of modern free media in the form of the Sigit team's social media, namely inconsistencies in the quality of visual design and the narrative delivery of the message.

In content components, especially through the Instagram account @kawansigitraditya, inconsistencies in topics raised could be seen, for example, there were many posts showing political message quotes or information about parts of life experience, then interspersed with videos filled with photos of Sigit Raditya with captions such as "Handsome, charming, and brave, legislative candidate for DPR RI West Java VI Electoral District Depok City and Bekasi City" aimed at building identity image. However, posts with narratives to create that identity were only uploaded occasionally and not consistently, then other posts would be mixed with other narratives such as vision-mission narratives, about Sigit Raditya's profile, or

narratives inviting people to vote during the legislative election, thus creating non-uniformity in the overall posts on Instagram.

The use of paid media through billboards, banners, flyers/brochures also became an instrument to be able to shape public perception in a conventional way. The use of campaign props in paid media also became a medium for information dissemination because it had repeated exposure, such as being seen repeatedly in alley corners, streets, or intersections. This exposure was also supported by visual elements that were more consistent compared to posts on social media, such as color and party logo elements, serial number, more consistent slogans, and photos of Sigit Raditya with posture/expression to provide Sigit Raditya's image and identity.

Printed materials in larger sizes, such as flyers, brochures, and business cards, also had the same consistency of visual elements with the addition of information such as vision, mission, and the narrative of life journey. Although conventional in nature, the paid media model was also combined with a modern approach, such as including various official campaign social media accounts of Sigit Raditya so that there was further exploration by readers of those conventional media. Blodgett et al. (2008) assess that outdoor media can create memory for voters and not just be limited to printed material because from that memory can arise political recognition embedded in voters' minds. This view was implemented through the strategy of including social media information into conventional paid media.

The biggest challenge in utilizing paid media during the campaign was the competition for space to install campaign props, especially those of large sizes such as billboards and banners. Locations such as main roads and traffic hubs became the areas with the most strategic points, but many of these points were already occupied by other candidates, especially candidates from parties dominant in those areas such as PKS and Golkar. Thus, when Sigit Raditya lost in competing for space to install large-sized media such as billboards, the visual materials used in those points shifted to smaller sizes. Because of this different size, political recognition based on visuals became less optimal because it did not gain enough space for information dissemination.

Other visual elements important in building political image through pull marketing were the projection of Sigit Raditya's figure. This projection was not only through statements from Sigit Raditya that had been documented in each @kawansigitraditya post but also from visual elements such as poses and expressions. The projection that the campaign team aimed to direct was the image of a young legislative candidate who was humble, firm, and active. However, this image was a fairly common identity used. Meanwhile, Lees-Marshment (2011) argues that to build voter loyalty and affinity, a candidate must have distinctive political branding in the media. Even so, Sigit Raditya's campaign showed efforts to be consistent in directing his image across different channels.



Figure 4. Consistency of Message Elements Across Conventional and Digital Media

In all media channels used by Sigit's team, the message and visual elements were consistent. First, messages about matters to be fought for were consistent, such as regarding the Job Creation Law, the Mineral and Coal Law, and several lists of missions to be carried out if elected, such as establishing a hotline. Second, from the visual elements such as photos and poses were also consistent with formal poses combined with friendly expressions, and the clothing used was also consistent, namely a simple white shirt. A slight inconsistency found was the use of post formats that did not always use Democratic blue color, such as in printed media like flyers, brochures, and business cards. However, this was still in line with Nursal's (2004) argument which states that in political marketing, it is important for a campaign team to be able to package a message in a new model even if the content is the same, to create a new perspective for voters so that there is variation in each presentation of pull marketing products.

Kamal et al. (2021) mention in their study that successful message distribution is not only seen from the dissemination of the message itself but also from how the community, residents, and volunteers can revive that message to create a massive effect on the candidate's narrative. However, when viewed from the pull marketing practice by Sigit Raditya, the circulation of information was still not strong even though re-sharing of information had occurred, for example reposting on Instagram accounts or distribution through WhatsApp groups. This indicated a lack of appeal from the free and paid media that had been used and created by the Sigit Raditya Team.

3. The Role of Social Figures and Resident Networks in Disseminating Political Messages through Pass Marketing

Pass marketing is a strategy that relies on marketing that is passive, symbolic, and social in nature (Nursal, 2004). Different from push marketing which emphasizes direct involvement and pull marketing which utilizes appeal through media exposure, pass marketing utilizes the presence of third parties who can be in the form of individuals or communities to conduct exposure for Sigit Raditya as a candidate. In pass marketing, there is no involvement at the structural level or declarative in nature, but the focus is on dissemination either directly or indirectly through other parties. These other parties, according to Nursal (2004), can refer to local elites, figures within the community, or informal networks considered to have social influence.

However, in pass marketing these parties do not campaign for Sigit Raditya formally or provide explicit endorsement. Because it uses other parties that are relatively symbolic and already widely recognized or accepted, resistance does not arise through pass marketing as it does when carrying out push marketing. In push marketing, volunteers are used as “extensions” of Sigit Raditya to be able to reach the grassroots before or after direct contact. Whereas in pass marketing, the extensions used are social figures who act as third parties to convey Sigit Raditya’s political messages indirectly.

The high level of electoral competition in West Java VI Electoral District makes the pass marketing strategy highly relevant because there is resistance at certain levels to other legislative candidates, especially newcomer candidates, due to several locations already having structural attachment to other parties. Communication channels in West Java VI Electoral District that are relatively difficult to penetrate optimally through push and pull marketing make social space limited, so pass marketing becomes a strategic practice for Sigit Raditya. In Sigit Raditya’s campaign, the use of pass marketing was aimed at creating resonance with the public symbolically through figures, one of which was a national figure, Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono (AHY). Utilization such as AHY, who was presented as a passive influencer by always appearing alongside Sigit in social spaces, was a way used to make this strategy work. The campaign team aimed for the public to see that Sigit Raditya had closeness and implicit support from figures like AHY.

The elements of important figures utilized in Sigit Raditya’s pass marketing were several figures from the Democratic Party, including AHY, Annisa Pohan, and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY). In terms of physical presence, the figures who appeared and were actively used were AHY and Annisa Pohan. Figures from the Democratic Party only appeared visually or physically at certain events and implicitly provided symbolic support to Sigit. This is in line with Nursal’s (2004) view that pass marketing can create implicit legitimacy. For example, in several events for certain segments such as women’s religious gatherings, AHY and Annisa Pohan attended together with Sigit Raditya, even though they did not provide explicit and official support.

The same was explained by Blodgett et al. (2008), who noted that the presence of figures who are already popular can increase perception and trust toward candidates who do not yet have legitimacy. Through more credible figures like AHY, voters will also be able to assess Sigit even if they do not yet know him. AHY, as the current chairman of the Democratic Party, and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), whose face was also included in several materials, are symbolic political identities important for enhancing the marketing of Sigit Raditya's profile. First, both are part of the party elite, while Annisa Pohan is a local-level figure who also plays a role as a bridge to certain voter segments, such as female voters and housewives.

However, these symbolic figures did not entirely provide conversion effects for Sigit Raditya because not all areas have a sense of attachment and affinity to SBY, AHY, Annisa Pohan, or the Democratic Party. The appeal of using political figures or symbolic figures will be strongly influenced by historical closeness in the regions. In Sigit Raditya's case, the Democratic Party had lost its seat in the DPR RI since 2014 (Prasetyo, 2024). This indicates that the strength of the Democratic Party in Depok City and Bekasi City was not strong enough, so the presence of these figures did not provide strong social meaning in locations already associated with other parties. Given the limitations of these symbolic figures in generating resonance and implicit support for Sigit as a newcomer, the presence of other social actors at the local level became important, especially because they could be closer to residents both emotionally and culturally.

Social actors at a closer level to residents in Sigit Raditya's campaign were such as religious gathering leaders and church leaders, neighborhood organization heads, or figures in certain communities who were close to residents. The actions carried out by these social actors in Sigit Raditya's campaign were not in the form of explicit support but indirect involvement that built trust in Sigit. Nursal (2004) notes that third parties not formally included in the campaign structure are part of the pass marketing framework because they can influence the social space of the community. This influence can be seen, for example, when religious gathering organizers allowed Sigit's campaign activities to take place during their schedule or event, then permitted the distribution of brochures, or agreed to be present. These things could expand Sigit Raditya's legitimacy network.

Another example is when information about events such as morning exercise and sports tournaments in Tapos, Depok, was disseminated by community administrators to residents. Even though no explicit support was given, such actions helped disseminate information about Sigit Raditya's campaign activities through social gestures. Other information dissemination carried out by residents, even if not by social figures in the community with informal authority, also became part of pass marketing actions that served as connectors for Sigit's legitimacy in Depok City and Bekasi City.

However, good social mapping is needed to support pass marketing through social figures close to residents because informal relationship-building is needed even before the campaign period begins. Pass marketing also has challenges related to time

management, as stated by Pak Koko (2025) and Pak Yudi (2025) as campaign team members working in the field, because many invitations from the community could not be attended by Sigit. This absence usually occurred due to scheduling conflicts with unavoidable party activities.

Based on field observations at several invitation events that Sigit Raditya was able to attend, some residents present appeared to document the activities and then share them through social media, which could be identified through features such as mentions on Instagram. In addition, some of these residents also talked about their experiences to other residents, resulting in the spread of information. The posts and experiences shared were not always in the form of explicit support; sometimes residents only uploaded photos or videos of the activities without any captions. Even so, this action was carried out without any request from the campaign team. According to Farhan (2025), such actions could strengthen Sigit Raditya's existence in the residents' environment, for example by arousing curiosity about Sigit Raditya.

This aligns with Nursal's (2004) argument that pass marketing can open opportunities for message dissemination through social routines, impressions, or emotional connections. In the context of Sigit's campaign, invitations from social actors created opportunities for Sigit Raditya to enter the social routines of residents, while the act of uploading to social media or word-of-mouth communication carried out by residents created impressions that could increase Sigit Raditya's presence in the more personal social sphere that could not be reached optimally when carrying out push marketing. The volunteer team mentioned that the reason residents engaged in these actions was not because of Sigit himself, but simply because they wanted to document the social activities taking place. Even in this context, Sigit Raditya benefited because his presence was disseminated through residents' attendance or through the influence of social figures in the residents' environment. However, same with other marketing models, not all of this participation converted into electoral preference among residents of Depok City and Bekasi City.

One aspect that also became a note in Sigit Raditya's pass marketing during the 2024 legislative election was the absence of an active influencer figure who had popularity such as a celebrity or social media influencer. Sigit Raditya's campaign relied more on the effect of passive influencers such as AHY rather than active influencers who also had popularity and presence like public figures in active influencer categories. This was also noted by Sigit's campaign team as an area where the use of marketing through active influencers had not been maximized.

E. CONCLUSION

In the 2024 legislative campaign, Sigit Raditya, as a legislative candidate from the Democratic Party, experienced defeat when campaigning for the West Java VI Electoral District. In understanding the defeat of Sigit Raditya's campaign, particularly related to the political marketing that had been carried out, this research analyzed the political marketing strategies implemented through three lenses: (1) Push marketing, (2) Pull marketing, and (3) Pass marketing. These three political

marketing strategies were adaptively used to understand the campaign conducted in Bekasi City and Depok City, which had socio-political dynamics that posed their own challenges for Sigit Raditya's campaign team.

The political marketing that had been carried out demonstrated efforts to build Sigit Raditya's image, disseminate his messages and reach, and create emotional connections with prospective voters from various demographics. The political marketing strategies implemented by Sigit Raditya generally showed serious efforts in building a directed and strong political image. However, several gaps in the strategy meant that these political marketing efforts still needed improvement to be more optimal. More structured planning and strengthening of the database are needed to be able to campaign more effectively in the highly competitive West Java VI Electoral District.

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