POLITICAL IMAGERY OF PARTAI AMANAT NASIONAL THROUGH OUTDOOR MEDIA IN OBTAINING THE PUBLIC SYMPATHY AT GENERAL ELECTION IN NORTH SUMATRA, 2005-2015

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ABSTRACT: *Political imagery through the media is a very powerful strategy in instilling the public opinion about a party. Therefore, through the imagery, it is expected to occur a shift of opinion to a better direction. With a positive public opinion, the decision to vote becomes a necessity to the party that is fighting in the political arena. Public opinion itself is a method of persuasion with a wider communication system. Political imagery which is conducted by Partai Amanat Nasional/National Mandate Party (PAN) to attract the sympathy of the people of North Sumatra in 2005-2015 used varied political communication strategies. The purpose of the imagery is to achieve the community sympathy, so that the electability acquisition of PAN votes can increase. DPW PAN of North Sumatra performs political imaging through the use of mass communication channels, interpersonal communication, outdoor communication, and group communication.*

KEYWORDS: Outdoor Media, Political Imagery, Pan, Public Sympathy, General Election

INTRODUCTION

In the context of developing politics in the information age, political imagery of a politician and a party can be built through various media, printed media, electronic media or traditional media. Regardless of the skills, leadership, and political achievements it has, the political stance of society is shaped and even manipulated through imagery. Therefore, a party cannot leave the mass media, especially in the conduct of political imagery. Imagery is conducted through mass media to persuade the public. With a very heterogeneous target and spread everywhere, the same message is expected to be received simultaneously by the public.

Political imagery through the media is a very powerful strategy in instilling the public opinion about a party. Therefore, through the imagery, it is expected to occur a shift of opinion to a better direction. With a positive public opinion, the decision to vote becomes a necessity to the party that is fighting in the political arena. Public opinion itself is a method of persuasion with a wider communication system. As explained by Firmanzah that image or imagery is needed as a positioning strategy to distinguish one political party with another. Imagery is a construction of representation and public perception of a political party or individual about all matters related to political activity. He also asserts that although the political image is not real, but it can be created, built, and strengthened.

In relation to the Firmanzah's explanation, Agung Wasesa also mentions that, in the political context, people usually choose one political party as an identity, according to the values within themselves. With the existence of imaging, the behavior of voter when choosing a candidate or a particular party is no longer through taking a long process. The community will have in accordance with the perceptions that already embedded in his mind and change directly to a particular choice according to his existing value. The change occurs because of the public

opinion that occurs briefly. The process of public opinion itself, in the freedom era of information occurs very quickly. Public opinion takes place in the cognitive space of society. This becomes the next stage in which people make decisions about political choices. Therefore, a good political image will have a positive effect on voters to vote in the election. Imaging strategies are built through good political communication to the public.

Since 1999, PAN became one of the contestants in the General Election held in Indonesia. Noticeably, the PAN vote in every election is relatively volatile. In the 1999 election, PAN was on the sixth rank in the national vote. It obtained 7,528,956 votes (7.12%) and placed 34 representatives in the DPR (People's Representative). PAN's image in campaigning has the intellectuals' support, it positioned itself as a middle-class party and educated. In addition, PAN imaging through the reinforcement of the reform spirit in the political, economic, social and cultural order as voiced by the wider community. In the 2004 elections, it was on the fifth rank in the acquisition of seats as many as 53 seats (6.44%). In 2009 PAN won 46 seats (8.2%), while in 2014 it won 52 seats (9.45%).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Imagery and Imaging

Based on the dynamics of politics in Indonesia, imaging becomes a familiar term in the ears of every Indonesian society. The term is getting stronger, as academics and practitioners make it as academic studies and scientific discussions on various occasions. Today, almost all stakeholders with public opinion recognize the importance of managing the image. If it is viewed from a historical perspective, imaging as Rendro Dhani described has already done by people along with the development of civilization. Primitive tribal leaders, for example, have an interest in maintaining their reputation by performing a control over their followers through the use of symbols, powers, magical, taboo or supernatural matters.

In the Ancient Egypt era, to preserve the public's impression of the king's majesty, pyramid and sphinx buildings were built and positioned the king as a god. At the time of the development of Greek and Roman civilization, the awareness of the importance of public opinion and imaging was also very strong. Works of art and literature in those days were much directed to corroborate the king's reputation. The palace nobles were generally masters of persuasion and rhetoric. Cicero's speech, historic writing of Julius Caesar, these buildings and rituals were widely used as a medium for the formation of public opinion and imagery. Imagery that was initially synonymous with public relations activities in the business world shifted to political activity, so the dynamics of politics closely with the term imaging.

One of the goals of political communication is to establish a good image of the audience. Images are formed based on the information received, either directly or indirectly, for example from the media. Imagery comes from the word of 'image' which is defined by experts differently and essentially the same meaning. The meaning of image is abstract, because image cannot be measured systematically although its form can be felt both positive and negative. Receipts and responses, both positive and negative, come from the public or the audience. The image is formed as an accumulation of individual actions and behaviors which then undergo a process for the establishment of broad public opinion.

Basically the image is rooted in the values of trust that are manifestly given individually and is a view or a perception. A public figure can bear a good or bad image. Both of these are sourced from the prevailing images and formed from the things that the character did either positive or negative. Imagery in a public figure, for example, is formed by self-image which is deliberately deliberated in such a way. The hope from the imagery is to get a positive image in the eyes of the wider community. But the imagery does not always produce in public opinion that matches what the imagery is expecting. It is due to the background, social status, economy, differences of experience, and other aspects can influence the meaning of the built imagery.

Outdoor Media

The increasing use of internet and social media as a medium of communication as Subiakto and Ida say causes the media into a public space is relatively phenomenal. Social media is used actively in politics, given that the media can be used by anyone. There is a freedom in it and also a wider and interconnected participation and reach. Social media into an interactive medium to communicate has proven its effectiveness in social communication and political communication. The accuracy of messages delivered via cell phones (short messaging service), twitter, facebook, newspapers, radio and television are very urgent.

The strategic role of social media and mass media in political communications has proven a success and ability to mobilize the strength, to support for movement to build a positive image. Through the mass media a person will get information about objects, people, images and places that are not experienced directly. The existence of media deliberately is presented to convey various messages about the social and political environment. All messages containing political content can shape and maintain the political image and public opinion of a party. In the current information era, a candidate or party that does not use mass media means will almost certainly fail to gain a public support. This argument affirms that the existence of media has an important role to the effectiveness of the political message delivery and establishes a positive image and public opinion for political parties or candidates.

In the midst of the diversity of the media today, people get the ease of access to the variety of information. Unlike in the previous era, the New Order era, political communication did not develop openly as it is today. The phenomenon of the development of political communication in Indonesia today, shows significantly impact on the ways of campaigning for political figures ahead of political contestation, such as the election of Legislative Candidates, Election of Regional Head and Presidential Election. As the example that occurred in the run up to the 2014 Presidential Election. It is clearly visible, the media presentation that shows, almost all political figures who proclaim themselves as president and vice president. It is supported through in the political advertisements and the media coverage as a good personal figure and on the side of people.

Through a variety of visual symbols, slogans in the form of phrases, the candidates build imagery. For example, Prabowo Subianto as a candidate for presidential candidate from Gerindra Party built the imagery through a slogan of "Devotion to the Nation and Country (*Pengabdian Bagi bangsa dan Negara*) ". Wiranto - Hary Tanoe's candidate and vice president of the People's Conscience Party (Hanura) also built an image through the slogan of "Win Clean HT, Care, Strict (*Win HT Bersih, Peduli, Tegas*)", accompanied by images that show a concern for the poor. Hatta Rajasa although has not yet explicitly proclaimed himself as 2014 presidential candidate, but through the political ads of the National Mandate Party (PAN), built an image with the slogan "PAN for People (*PAN Merakyat*)". The political advertisement

appears to have hidden Hatta Rajasa as the right candidate as the candidate for presidential candidate from PAN, while Aburizal Bakrie with Golkar Party built the image by appointing the slogan "Golkar's Voice is People's Voice (*Suara Golkar, Suara Rakyat*)".

METHODOLOGY

This research is designed as a qualitative research, because the focus of the research is on the observation and natural atmosphere (naturalistic setting). This kind of Research is also called as naturalistic inquiry, because this research seeks to understand the object being studied as it is, not manipulated but understood through natural analysis. According to Creswell as quoted by Basuki, qualitative research is a process of research to understand human or social problems by creating comprehensive and complex images presented in words, reporting detailed views obtained from the sources of information, and done in the natural setting.

The approach used is phenomenological approach, because imaging is included in the concentration of political communication study. Imaging is a form of nonverbal communication by a person or institution, to influence the behavior, thoughts, views, and opinions of others on what is imaged. This study has become more interesting in Indonesia since the 2004 general election. Therefore, phenomenology is chosen as an approach in this research, because the aim is to illustrate the current reality without explaining the relationship between the variables. For that reason, this study aims to create a systematic, factual and accurate description about the facts of the object being studied. It means, in this study political imaging activities which DPW PAN of North Sumatra conducted in attracting the people's sympathy are recorded, painted, described and reported in accordance with the facts. This research was conducted in secretariat of DPW PAN of North Sumatera.

In accordance with the design of this study that is qualitative research, then the data are analyzed by descriptive technique. Data analysis in this study was conducted since and before entering the data, during the field and after completion of the field. In this case, data analysis has been started since it is formulated and explained the problem, before plunging into the field, and lasted continuously until the research ended. Thus, the data analysis technique is used to examine the DPW PAN imaging politics of North Sumatra is the analysis of qualitative data, following the concepts as described by Miles and Huberman. Miles and Huberman explained that the activity in qualitative data analysis is conducted interactively and continuously to completed, so the data is saturated. There are three activities conducted by the researcher in conducting the data analysis, namely data reduction, display data, and conclusion drawing/verification. The cycles described by Miles and Huberman can be seen in the image as below.

Figure.1

Data Analysis Flow According to Miles and Huberman
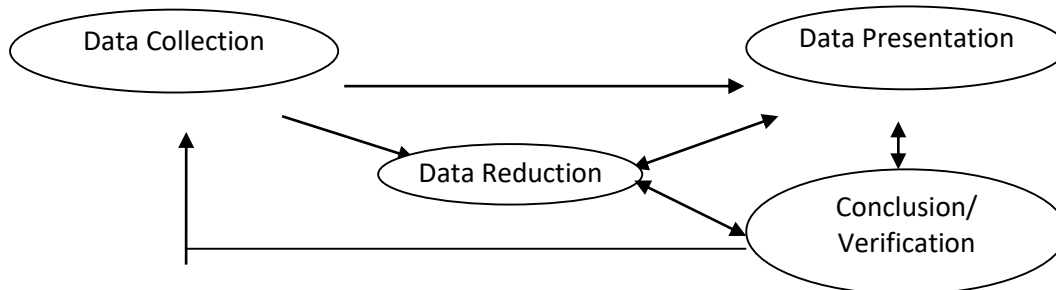
The chart above shows that the analysis continues continuously, mutual follow-up to the conclusion.

DISCUSSION

Besides mass printed and electronic mass media, DPW PAN of North Sumatra also builds images via banners, brochures, pamphlets, billboards, small cards, tree advertisements and other attributes. This media is called *cangara* with the term outdoor media, because it is placed in the open and strategic places that allow others to see it. Although the nature of its reach is very limited, because it can only be seen by passersby where the media is displayed, or people who glance at their views on media displays, many parties use the media as a communication channel for political imagery.

Along the years 2005-2015, the DPW PAN of North Sumatra built the party's imagery through the outdoor media. The outdoor media here is by spreading the attribution of the party to all election regions in North Sumatra as Yahdi Khoir Harahap explains.

To build the imagery of political party, one of what DPW PAN of North Sumatra does is imaging through the party attribution which is distributed to the society. The party's attributes are from PAN. Some are donated by DPP PAN and there is also assistance from each candidate. At the time of the general chairman of Hatta Rajasa for example, PAN's attributes are printed for 100 million flags of PAN and distributed to all DPW PAN in Indonesia. The DPW PAN of North Sumatra alone obtained 300 thousand flag attributes which were then distributed to all 33 DPD PAN in North Sumatra. Meanwhile the T-shirts, pins and other party attributions are propagated and donated by candidates who are in each election regions.

From the author's search, the political imagery through outdoor media is not only conducted by DPW PAN of North Sumatera at the time of the election or campaign, but it is conducted in various occasions and important events. For example, when welcoming the festival days of Muslims such as fasting and Idul Fitri, PAN and its cadres always make the words *"DPW PAN Sumatera Utara mengucapkan selamat menunaikan ibadah puasa Ramadhan", "DPW PAN Sumatera Utara mengucapkan selamat hari raya Idul Fitri 1 Syawal 1436 H, mohon maaf lahir dan batin"*. The same remarks are also personally delivered by the cadres, both PAN cadres who have become the DPRD members of North Sumatra and ordinary management. The

banners of many speeches are seen tied up in strategic places which are passed by the crowd, for example at crossroads, in the streets of protocol and others. Even a number of PAN cadres who sit in DPRD of North Sumatra, not only deliver the message in the form of banners, but also in billboards.

From some documentations obtained by the author, Kamaluddin Harahap who is the Chairman of DPW PAN of North Sumatra 2005-2010, and also at the same time running for governor of North Sumatra looks to build a massive imaging politics. The imaging messages conveyed touched the interests of the general public. For example the banner with the saying *"Bersama bang Kamal kita ciptakan lapangan pekerjaan di Sumatera Utara" (*Together with Kamal we create jobs in North Sumatra). On another banner also included a greeting message to Kamaluddin Harahap in order to recess and meet friendly with the Tuntungan community on October 10, 2012. On the banner is written, *"Selamat datang Bapak Kamaluddin Harahap, M.Si bersama warga program keluarga harapan (PKH)* (Welcome Mr. Kamaluddin Harahap, M. Si with residents family hopes program (PKH)). In these activities, Kamaluddin looks very familiar with the community, and almost can see no distance between the communities with Kamaluddin Harahap. Such an approach can certainly strengthen PAN's imagery and politics in the eyes of the public.

From some banners, the author sees that each PAN politician shows their own distinctive style. There are photos in smile, there is a very patriotic look with clenching hands, there are made happy full of friendship. All of its goals are to introduce themselves, show their quality and build imagery, so that the public is hypnotized to choose the politicians. The banners are scattered in various places, some even attached to tricycles, public transport and so forth. What the party and politicians of PAN do is generally done by other parties as well as Adman Nursal describes that such a thing is part of political marketing, where its products are marketed symbolically through banners and billboards. Among the symbols are like emotional aura, the feelings emanating from politicians such as ambitious, courageous, patriotic, passionate, joyful, optimistic, loving, steadfast, and so on. There is also a social aura that represents a particular social group. For example, a certain politician is a representation of youth, *wong cilik* (poor people), religious leaders, academics, intellectuals, and so forth.

Based on the above description, it can be concluded during 2005-2010 the use of outdoor media is very much used by PAN cadres, especially for those who run for legislative members to build political image. In the photo banners the legislative candidates are made varied. There is a background photo looks very friendly for indulgent smile while putting his hand on the chest, as if he apologized to the public. It certainly looks very friendly, and Islamic. There are also photos made with a wave of hands and so forth. In addition, the messages conveyed are varied in order to persuade the people who read them. Besides the billboards and the banners, there is also the use of tree ads, where photographs of legislative candidates are affixed to trees along the roadside of the protocol. The aim is to build a political imagery while introducing the concerned to the community.

In politics, imagery is often identified as showcasing, self and party highlighting by putting forward ideology, mission vision, party programs, and various changes until certain symbols are enabled to change the people's opinions on one party. Political imagery as described above is a visual and narrative representation that puts forward an image or image using a certain medium which is common with several processes involving symbols and social and political entities with the aim of power. Broadly to be understood, political imagery is basically a symbiosis between political strategy with imaging techniques in which there is a packing of an

object of political actors both individuals and political parties. The goal is to influence the perceptions, feelings, awareness, and public opinion so that the public can be led to a particular political preferences, choices and decisions. Following this logic, political imagery serves as a tool of political communication to inform and conduct transformations in convincing audiences so that their attitudes are stronger to an object and entity that is still doubtful them.

Concretely, political imagery is essentially used to create continuity between reality and political image. Political imagery can also be used for the opposite, where in the case of discounts between political imagery and political reality, imagery can be used to create a second reality in which there is a manipulated truth. With the efforts, the reality which is depicted through imagery seems to be the true reality. In this connection, Wasesa asserts that although the authority of politicians is very strong to govern a country, it does not mean that they can determine their image. Political image is entirely determined by public perception. The public perception is awakened because of the process of information processing on the limbic system in the public brain. Political power is impossible to touch the limbic system of society. Limbic system is part of the brain that works objectively by processing the information they receive from the senses, then processed to be channeled into perceptions about the collection of such information.

CONCLUSION

Political imagery which is conducted by Partai Amanat Nasional/National Mandate Party (PAN) to attract the sympathy of the people of North Sumatra in 2005-2015 used varied political communication strategies. The purpose of the imagery is to achieve the community sympathy, so that the electability acquisition of PAN votes can increase. DPW PAN of North Sumatra performs political imaging through the use of mass communication channels, interpersonal communication, outdoor communication, and group communication. PAN political imagery is also conducted by using political advertisements in newspapers. PAN's political imagery by using mass media is more likely to the urban community because of their easier access to the mass media. Meanwhile, imaging which is conducted to the village community tends to use the interpersonal communication channel and group communication.

From several models of political imagery conducted by DPW PAN of North Sumatera, ranging from mass communication, interpersonal communication, group communication, outdoor communication, flagship program, advertisement and political campaign, then the political imagery that most influence the public sympathy is through interpersonal communication channel, party groups and programs. In the context of North Sumatra, communication with religious approaches, such as Islamic communication also affects the community, because the majority of the people of North Sumatra are Muslims.

To conduct interpersonal communication and group communication, PAN administrators go down to the election regions to socialize and pick up the voice of the community. Through the interpersonal communication, both with people and leaders, PAN can get closer to the community, and they are felt to be paid attention. Interpersonal communication and group communication are conducted as well as a material evaluation for PAN to fix the weakness of the party. The implementation of the party program that is concluded in the 5-Si program is also one of the imaging models that can attract the community sympathetic. With PAN's

various programs, people can get benefit directly from the program, so the community thinks PAN is a party that can be used as a channel for their aspirations.

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