

## Branding Strategy of PDI Perjuangan in Regional Election 2024: A Qualitative Approach

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### ABSTRACT

Political branding strategy is key to attracting voters and building a strong positive image. Honest and intelligent messages, as well as the use of positive symbolism, are considered effective in building voter trust and support. Although social media offers opportunities, challenges in its use remain significant, including how candidates convey messages that are consistent and relevant to voter expectations, as well as the risk of misinformation and fake news that can damage the candidate's image. The study also highlights the importance of a deep understanding of voter values and expectations in forming an effective branding strategy that is in line with party ideology. This research design uses qualitative with a case study approach in the NTB Provincial gubernatorial election by the PDI Perjuangan. This approach can explore in depth the branding strategies of candidate candidates, party ideology and social media management as a means of promotion and communication. The method applied was in-depth interviews conducted with the NTB Pilkada victory team of five informants from the PDI Perjuangan which was conducted in May-June 2024 and visualized using NVIVO software. The results of the interviews showed that the PDI Perjuangan was able to successfully form a personal branding that was relevant to the expectations of the community by implementing a focused and integrated strategy. Through an in-depth approach to party values and candidate visions, PDI Perjuangan can build a strong and trusted candidate image in the eyes of voters. The importance of consistency in delivering relevant and authentic messages through various communication platforms, such as social media, direct campaigns, and community events, is key to strengthening effective personal branding. The social media management strategy by PDI

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Perjuangan candidate candidates is an important key in influencing public opinion and strengthening the support base.



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The 2024 Regional Head Elections (Pilkada) in Indonesia will be an important moment for local democracy and are expected to be very competitive with many candidates competing (Kompas, 2023). With the simultaneous implementation of regional elections in various regions, political branding strategies are becoming increasingly crucial in candidates' efforts to attract voters' attention and build a strong positive image. Political branding is not only about the introduction of the candidate's name, but also includes the formation of an authentic candidate identity that is relevant to the values and expectations of the community (Hitman, 2024)

Data shows that voter engagement through social media is one of the main focuses of campaign strategies. For example, direct interactions on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter can create closeness between candidates and voters (Siegel, 2021). Honest and intelligent messages, as well as the use of positive symbolism, are considered effective in building trust and support from voters. Although social media offers a variety of opportunities, the challenges in using it for political branding strategies remain significant (Sinyonde, 2024). One of the main issues is how candidates can deliver messages that are consistent, honest, and relevant to voters' expectations. Candidates also need to understand local dynamics and values that apply to the people in their constituencies (Septianingsih & Jiharani, 2023). In addition, there is the risk of misinformation and fake news that can damage the candidate's image. The tight competition between candidates also demands clear differentiation and innovative strategies to

attract voters' attention and win their hearts (Baehaki, 2021).

In recent years, political branding has undergone a significant transformation. Candidates who are able to build a strong and consistent self-image tend to be more successful in attracting voter attention and support. The 2016 campaign of US President Donald Trump showed how disciplined and effective branding can beat more experienced candidates. In Indonesia, a similar phenomenon was seen in the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election, where candidate branding played a major role in determining the election results. However, building effective branding is not without challenges. One of the main issues is how candidates can highlight their uniqueness and personality amidst information saturation and tight competition between candidates (Prayogo, 2015). This requires a holistic and integrated approach, starting from communication strategies, use of social media, to direct engagement with voters through various campaign activities (Harrison et al., 2023).

Based on the latest data, the use of digital media in political campaigns in Indonesia continues to increase. Studies show that more than 70% of voters in Indonesia use social media as one of the main sources of political information (Hasanudin et al., 2023). This emphasizes the importance of a branding strategy that does not only rely on conventional media but also utilizes the potential of digital media to the fullest.

A study revealed that political orientation, life satisfaction, and social values greatly influence voter preferences for candidate personality as a bran98i(Magin et al., 2024). This study

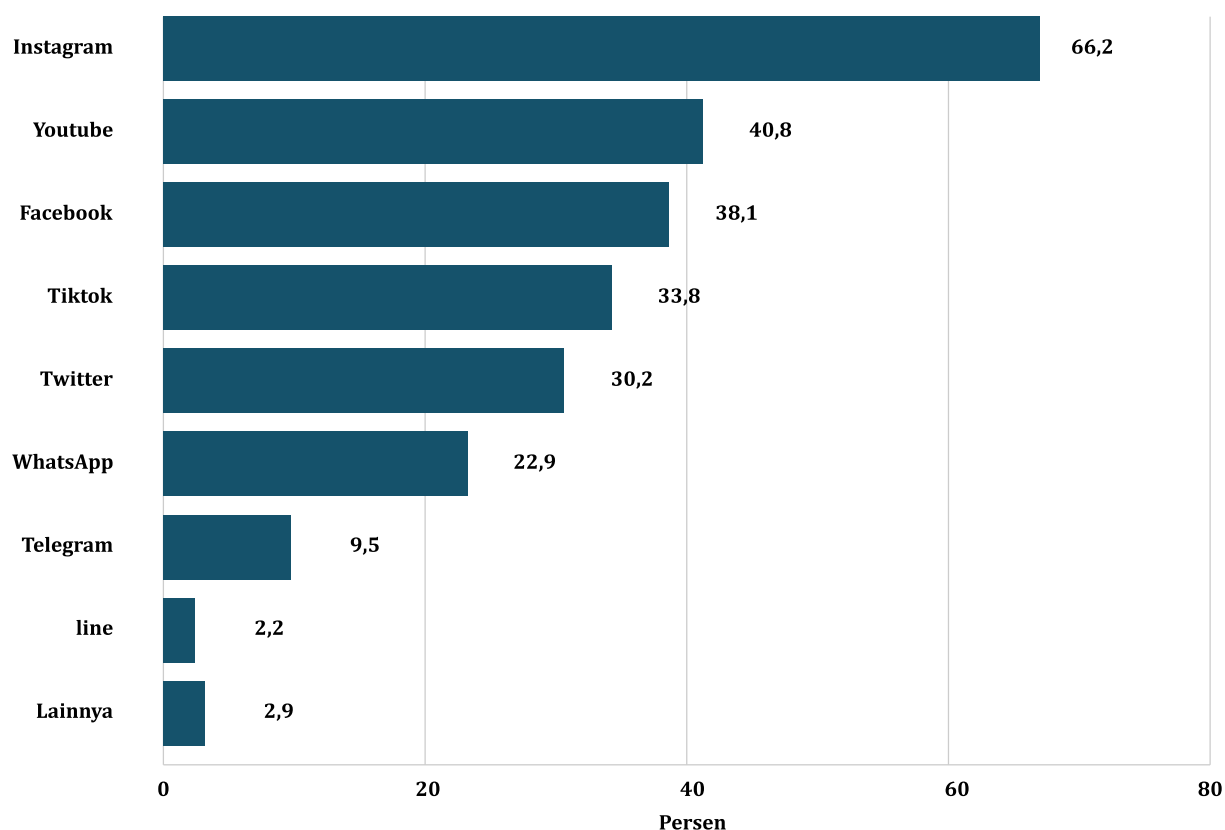


Figure 1. Platforms used to search for political information

emphasizes that a deep understanding of voters' values and expectations is critical in forming an effective branding strategy.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

Branding strategy has become an increasingly discussed topic in political and communication studies.(Simon, 2024). Along with the development of technology and media, the approach to building candidate branding has undergone significant evolution. The role of social media in political campaigns has undergone a drastic change, from being just an additional communication tool to being the main platform for building and managing candidate images (Bankov, 2023). Research shows that the use of social media such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook allows candidates to reach voters more effectively and personall (DM Johnson, 2024). Leveraging data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms to understand voter behavior and target campaign messages more precisely. This helps in designing more efficient

and data-driven strategies (Oancea, 2024).

This study offers some novelties in the approach and implementation of candidate branding strategies in regional head elections, especially in the context of the 2024 Pilkada in Indonesia which has not been widely discussed. This study can also close the gap in the background by conducting in-depth qualitative methods to gain richer and contextual insights into how candidate branding strategies work.

This Literature Review is the basis for discussing research results that are associated with consistency in current research. The following are some previous research results in developing and determining this research: Research conducted by (Bankov, 2023) discusses Targets and Resources. Political parties in Central and Eastern Europe are increasingly relying on online tools to mobilize electoral support, a trend that appears to have been further fueled by the COVID-19 pandemic. This study seeks to

understand what factors determine the approach parties take to their online campaigns. By looking at the online approaches taken by eight parliamentary political parties in Bulgaria from three parliamentary elections in 2021, the analysis shows that the type of online campaign a party undertakes depends largely on how the party uses its resources, as well as its target audience. The basis for these conclusions is a qualitative analysis of media coverage of the three election campaigns. The findings suggest the need for a closer examination of the relationship between party organization, use of online tools, and campaign appeal.

Research conducted by (Sinyonde, 2024) discusses South African Politics and Online Electioneering Discourses in Selected Social Media Sites in Phuthaditjhaba. This study analyzes election discourses on selected social media sites in Phuthaditjhaba in South Africa. It focuses on political messages and images posted by political parties on specific Facebook Pages and X accounts in Phuthaditjhaba. Using critical discourse analysis as a method and netnography as an instrument to collect data from selected sites, I analyze the packaging and language of political communication and highlight the socio-economic issues used by political parties to persuade voters and undermine their competitors' messages. The theoretical foundation of this study is drawn from Kubin and von Sikorski's (2021) ideas on ideological and affective polarization, as well as Entman's (1995) ideas on the construction of poverty on social media. Their ideas guide my analysis of how political opponents leverage socio-economic issues present in Phuthaditjhaba to mobilize sentiment among disaffected citizens. Data were collected from ten social media sites namely, four Facebook group pages, four X group handles, and two individual X handles. Ten images and accompanying texts were sampled from the selected sites. Thematic analysis was used to categorize the data. The findings of this study indicate that while politicians use social media for campaign purposes, Phuthaditjhaba residents use it to contest and challenge political party

messages.

Research conducted by (Hitman, 2024) discusses *Stretching the Boundaries of Political Violence: Lessons from Hungary and Israel*. Based on case studies in Hungary and Israel, this article proposes to expand the term 'political violence' to include the phenomenon of the use of harsh words followed by punitive measures, which are not necessarily physical. This aims to gain additional power, intimidate opponents, and narrow the public and political capabilities of social and political forces with different ideologies. One of the major consequences is the transition from democratic to non-democratic regimes. The paper concludes that political violence today is only verbal in Israel, but in Hungary, it also has a practical dimension that harms political opponents of the government. This policy has direct implications for the national identity of the countries, which in both cases is more national-religious.

Research conducted by (Wang et al., 2023) discusses *Analyzing image-based political propaganda in referendum campaigns: from elements to strategies*. With the rise of social networking services, political communication has undergone a paradigm shift. To communicate with internet users, politicians, candidates, and political organizations create fan pages. Initially, they provided text-only materials on their pages; later, to increase engagement, they included photos, images, and videos. This paper investigates image-based political propaganda in Taiwan for the first time during a national referendum. Unlike an election, a referendum is a policy-based vote. We evaluated over 2000 Facebook images shared by the two most prominent political parties to understand the image aspects and tactics of political organizations. In addition, we examined the textual content, objects, and colors of the collected data. We found that the characteristics of propaganda materials differed across political groups. However, the color strategies used by both parties were similar, with each party using its own representative color for consolidation

and the opponent's color for attack.

Research conducted by (Magin et al., 2024) discuss What makes the difference? Social media platforms and party characteristics. Social media have contributed to the spread of populist political communication, but we still lack systematic knowledge about the contextual factors that influence its use. In this study, we investigate how and to what extent platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) and party characteristics (populist vs. non-populist parties; political ideology) influenced Norwegian political parties' use of populist communication on social media during the 2021 national election campaign. Based on a tripartite conceptualization of populist communication consisting of societal centrism, anti-elitism, and exclusion of out-groups, we conducted a standardized content analysis of the official social media accounts of nine parties and their leaders. Populist communication was generally infrequent, most prevalent on Facebook, and least prevalent on Twitter. Which parties used populist communication the most depended on their platform, and the populist Progress Party did not necessarily communicate in the most populist manner. Parties on the fringes of the political party spectrum used populist communication more. Anti-elitism is more widespread among left-wing parties, and the right-wing Progress Party almost exclusively excludes out-groups.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research is an exploratory research of perception and experience. Research with qualitative methods allows researchers to explore perceptions, experiences, and in-depth views of the branding strategy implemented by the PDI Perjuangan party in preparing for the 2024 NTB gubernatorial election. This includes understanding how they see the advantages, compatibility, complexity, and trial and error of the strategy. The qualitative approach allows the development of solutions based on the specific needs and contexts required by the proposing candidates. Through direct interaction with

participants, researchers can formulate more relevant and applicable recommendations (Creswell, 2018).

Population is basically an area that will be subject to generalization from a research result. Population is the totality of a certain characteristic determined by the researcher to be studied and drawn conclusions (Sugiyono, 2021). Therefore, a researcher needs to understand the characteristics of the research population. An important thing to note is the condition of homogeneity or heterogeneity of a population. The population of this researcher includes members of the PDI Perjuangan party who are active in the 2024 Pilkada winning team in NTB Province. The time of data collection was carried out from May 2024 to June 2024. The expected achievement indicators are collecting comprehensive data, data quality and depth in analysis and providing both practical and academic impacts from the research results. This study uses a purposive sampling technique, namely selecting informants based on certain criteria that are relevant to the research objectives, such as members of the PDI Perjuangan party in NTB Province who have joined for more than 5 years. In determining informants, this study also considers variations in the selection of informants to obtain diverse perspectives (Oktaviani, 2024). such as choosing informants from various backgrounds, ages, and experiences with a total of 5 people. With this informant selection strategy, the study can obtain rich and varied data, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the PDI Perjuangan party's branding strategy in the 2024 Pilkada in NTB.

This research framework combines innovation diffusion theory, branding theory, and communication theory to develop a political party branding strategy in nominating its candidates. The innovation diffusion theory, pioneered by Everett M. Rogers (1962), explains how new ideas or products are introduced and adopted in a population. In a political context, this theory helps identify voter segments based on adoption categories and target each segment with

appropriate strategies. Furthermore, branding theory developed by David A. Aaker (1996) and Kevin Lane Keller (1998) emphasizes the importance of building a strong and consistent brand identity for candidates, as well as developing positive perceptions and voter loyalty. Communication theories such as agenda-setting by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972), and framing by Erving Goffman (1974), provide a framework for understanding how media can be used to organize issues and frame messages that influence public perception. By using opinion leaders in the two-step flow of communication model and understanding voter motivation through the uses and gratifications theory, political parties can craft effective and relevant messages. Through a combination of these theories, the study aims to assess the effectiveness of political branding strategies in increasing candidate adoption and building strong support among voters.

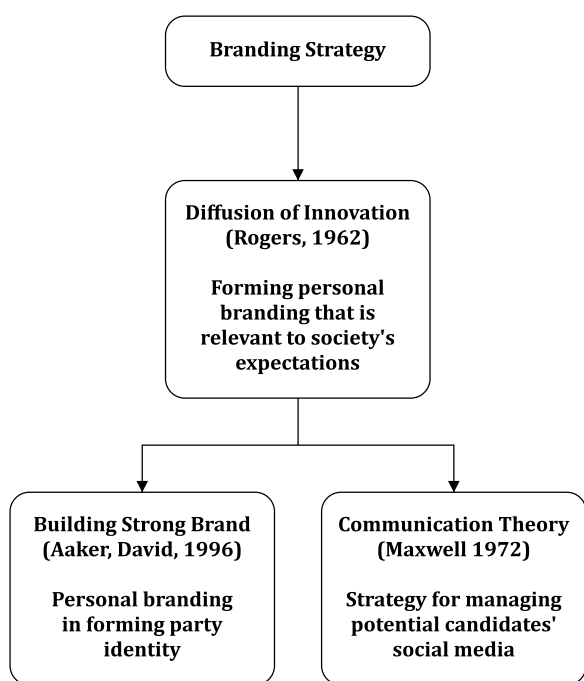


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework  
Source: Niazi, 2024

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following is a general overview of the results of interviews conducted with five informants that have been adjusted to the research objectives.

### Personal Branding Strategy

Personal branding is the process of actively developing and promoting a unique and consistent self-image to the public or target audience (Dinnie, 2022). It involves understanding and communicating the values, skills, personality, and experiences that distinguish an individual from others. The goal of personal branding is to build a positive reputation, develop trust, and achieve personal or professional goals. In theory, personal branding is based on concepts from social psychology and marketing, where individuals must create and project an identity that is authentic, consistent, and valuable to their audience. It involves a thorough analysis of oneself, including strengths, weaknesses, values, and goals, as well as an understanding of the target audience and their expectations (J. Johnson, 2021). Personal branding practices involve tangible actions such as building a strong online presence through social media, blogs, and personal websites, and actively participating in relevant communities. Consistency in messaging and authenticity in every interaction are key to building trust and resonance with the audience.

The strategy for forming personal branding from political parties to regional head candidates that is relevant to the community's expectations involves a comprehensive theoretical and practical approach (Puspitasari & Indrawati, 2021). In theory, political personal branding includes elements of political communication, marketing, and social psychology (Arifuddin, 2023). Political parties must understand the hopes and needs of the community and position regional head candidates as leaders who are able to fulfill these hopes. This includes identifying the candidate's core values, vision, and mission that are in line with the aspirations of the community. In practice, political parties must develop a strong and consistent narrative about the candidate, using mass media and social media to convey authentic and relevant messages (Oktaviani et al., 2023). This strategy involves using appropriate framing, setting an agenda of important issues, and utilizing local opinion leaders to amplify the message. For example, if the community wants a leader who

cares about the environment, the party can emphasize the candidate's commitment to green policies through media campaigns, community events, and testimonials from respected community figures. Through this approach, political parties can form a personal branding that is not only attractive, but also trusted and expected by the community.

The following are the results of an interview with Mr. Yadiansyah as the Head of the Bima City DPC, regarding the right strategy in forming personal branding that is relevant to the public's expectations of the NTB gubernatorial candidate and his deputy.

"...branding yourself actually takes a long time, but there is an instant way to brand yourself, namely by providing assistance to activities or people who are currently receiving public attention or in social media terms who are currently viral, of course this is a positive activity, how the candidate can be present and provide good solutions."

The following are the results of an interview with Mr. Rafiq as the Head of the Sumbawa Regency PDI Perjuangan DPC, regarding the right strategy in forming personal branding that is relevant to the public's expectations of the NTB gubernatorial candidate and his deputy.

"There will definitely be swelling and financial expenditure during the campaign process, but if the candidate has and forms his/her personal branding and positioning well, then this problem will be slightly resolved. Personal branding influences the willingness to choose a leader. Thus, the intelligence of a leader and prospective leader is really tested when they have to determine a strategy. Personal branding is an alternative in choosing a strategy in the election of regional heads or regional leaders. The right strategy in forming personal branding that is relevant to the expectations of the community for the NTB gubernatorial candidate and his/her deputy can get closer directly to the general public with the principle of no day without a campaign, with

the spirit of mutual cooperation to move the party machine massively and in a structured manner to campaign for the candidate pair. building digital personal branding".

The following are the results of an interview with Mr. Ruba'i as a member of the PDI Perjuangan, regarding the right strategy in forming personal branding that is relevant to the public's expectations of the NTB gubernatorial candidate and his deputy.

"I am of the view that the strategy to form a personal branding that is relevant to the expectations of the community for the NTB gubernatorial candidate and his deputy must consider several things, the first is in-depth knowledge, each candidate must have a deep understanding of the main issues that are relevant to the NTB community, such as the local economy, infrastructure, tourism, education, and culture. Being able to communicate clearly, namely being able to communicate their vision, mission, and programs clearly and persuasively to the community. These messages must be easy to understand and relevant to the needs and expectations of the NTB community. Having effective concern and involvement requires the impression that the candidate really cares and is involved in the lives of the local community. This can be done through active participation in social activities, visits to various regions, and listening to the aspirations of the community directly. In addition, credibility and integrity are also important for candidates to build a strong reputation for their credibility and integrity. This includes transparency in all aspects, including the management of campaign funds and a commitment to be fair and honest in running the government. Innovation and Solutions can also demonstrate the ability to innovate in facing challenges and offering concrete and practical solutions to problems faced by the NTB community will increase the attractiveness of the candidate's personal branding. Finally, continuity and consistency in strong personal branding require ongoing

and consistent efforts from the candidate and his/her team to ensure that the image built can be maintained and strengthened throughout the campaign and term of office.”

The following are the results of an interview with Mr. Suhaimi as Head of the Central Lombok DPC, regarding the right strategy in forming personal branding that is relevant to the public's expectations of the NTB gubernatorial candidate and his deputy.

“The stages start from a survey on public expectations. Then it is mixed between public expectations and potential candidates to present effective personal branding. Massive and massive to instill the image and branding, what methods and media are mass and massive, must be seen in the data”.

**Personal Branding Forms Party Identity**

Personal branding can shape the identity of a political party through the application of the principles of the theory of "Building Strong Brands" by David A. Aaker (1996). (Jeffrey D. Broxmeyer, 2010). Aaker defines a strong brand as one that has high brand awareness, strong customer loyalty, perceived quality, positive brand associations, and other brand assets. In political parties, the personal branding of figures or candidates increases the visibility of the party, builds a loyal base of supporters, and strengthens the public's perception of the party's quality. For example, candidates who are active in social

media and public activities increase awareness of the party, while candidates with high integrity and good achievements increase loyalty and perceptions of the party's quality. (Maarek, 2014). Positive associations created by candidates, such as commitment to environmental issues, also create positive associations for the party. Thus, effective personal branding of candidates not only benefits the individual but also strengthens the position and image of the party.

In theory, the personal branding of a candidate or figure in a party can create a strong image and perception which is then associated with the party (Pierskalla & Sacks, 2020). A strong personal identity of a party figure reflects the party's values, vision, and mission, thereby strengthening public trust and loyalty to the party. In practice, this involves creating a consistent and authentic narrative about the candidate, utilizing various media channels to convey the message, and actively engaging with voters through campaign activities and public events. (Ustaahmetoølu, 2014). For example, political parties can use social media platforms to showcase candidates who are inspiring, transparent, and committed to issues relevant to society, such as education or health. In this way, the candidate's personal branding not only forms a strong personal identity but also strengthens and shapes the collective identity of the political party in the eyes of the public.

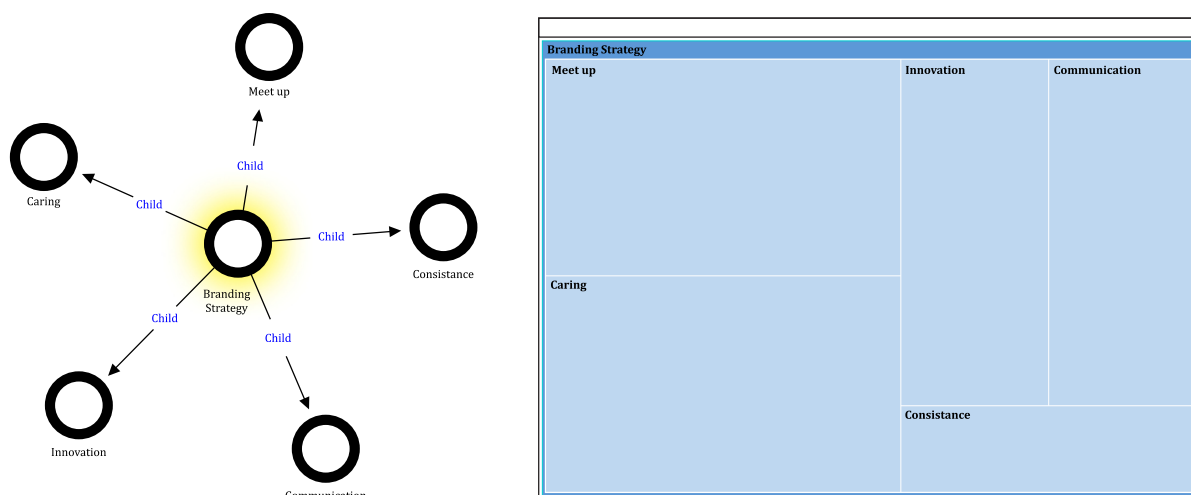


Figure 3. Branding Strategy Visualization



The following are the results of an interview with Mr. Imam as the Chairperson of PAC Sekarbela, regarding the party's ideology and branding strategy for the NTB gubernatorial candidate that can shape the party's identity.

"The ideology of PDI Perjuangan is Pancasila, Democracy and Nationalism which culminate in the togetherness of the people to work together. The candidate's strategy according to the party's identity is still considered very lacking, so far the candidates are still running alone according to their respective concepts, the candidates should be able to move the party organs from the sub-branches level upwards including the party wings which if done will be able to increase the candidate's electoral in the community".

The following are the results of an interview with Mr. Rafiq as the Head of the Sumbawa Regency PDI Perjuangan DPC, regarding the party's ideology and branding strategy for the NTB gubernatorial candidate that can shape the party's identity.

"PDI Perjuangan is clearly stated in its articles of association/bylaws (ad/art) as an ideological party based on Pancasila as stated in the preamble to the 1945 Constitution with the soul and spirit of its birth on June 1 1945. Meanwhile, the party's identity is national, popular, and social justice. The party's ideology is defense of the little people and must be put into practice in every development policy for people's sovereignty. The personal branding strategy for NTB governor candidates and their deputies in forming party identities is that the PDI struggle is a unit that cannot be separated by all the ups and downs of the struggle. therefore the rhythm of struggle and strengthening the tradition of mutual cooperation for joint work; toil together; sweat it out together; struggle to help together; charity for the benefit of all. that is the secret of our strength. one for all, all for one, one for all, all for one."

The following are the results of an interview with

Mr. Ruba'i as a member of the PDI Perjuangan, regarding the party's ideology and branding strategy for the NTB gubernatorial candidate that can shape the party's identity.

"PDI Perjuangan is a political party in Indonesia that has a basic ideology based on Pancasila, democracy based on the will of the people, and people's economy. PDI Perjuangan also carries the spirit of nationalism, social justice, and community empowerment. This party emphasizes the importance of people's sovereignty in national development and strengthening democracy and human rights. In addition, PDI Perjuangan is also active in encouraging political participation and advocacy for the welfare of the Indonesian people. My response is that the branding strategy of the NTB gubernatorial candidate to form a party identity, such as PDI Perjuangan, needs to consider several strategic steps, namely Emphasizing Party Values is important for the NTB gubernatorial candidate supported by PDI Perjuangan to highlight party values such as Pancasila, democracy, social justice, and community empowerment. This can be done through clear and consistent communication about the commitment to these values in its vision and programs. Party Involvement for Candidates needs to actively involve the party in its political campaigns and activities. This includes support from the party structure, participation in party events, and an emphasis on collaboration between candidates and parties in formulating campaign policies and strategies. Gubernatorial candidates need to ensure that their campaign platforms and agendas are in line with the main programs promoted by PDI Perjuangan. This includes issues such as people's economy, infrastructure development, education, health, and environmental protection. Effective use of Party Symbols and Icons in the campaign, such as party symbols or party colors, can help strengthen the party's identity in the overall branding of the NTB gubernatorial candidate. In addition,

commitment to party integrity and leadership needs to be demonstrated in accordance with PDI Perjuangan values".

The following are the results of an interview with Mr. Suhaimi as The Head of the Central Lombok DPC, regarding the party ideology and branding strategy of the NTB gubernatorial candidate which can form the party's identity.

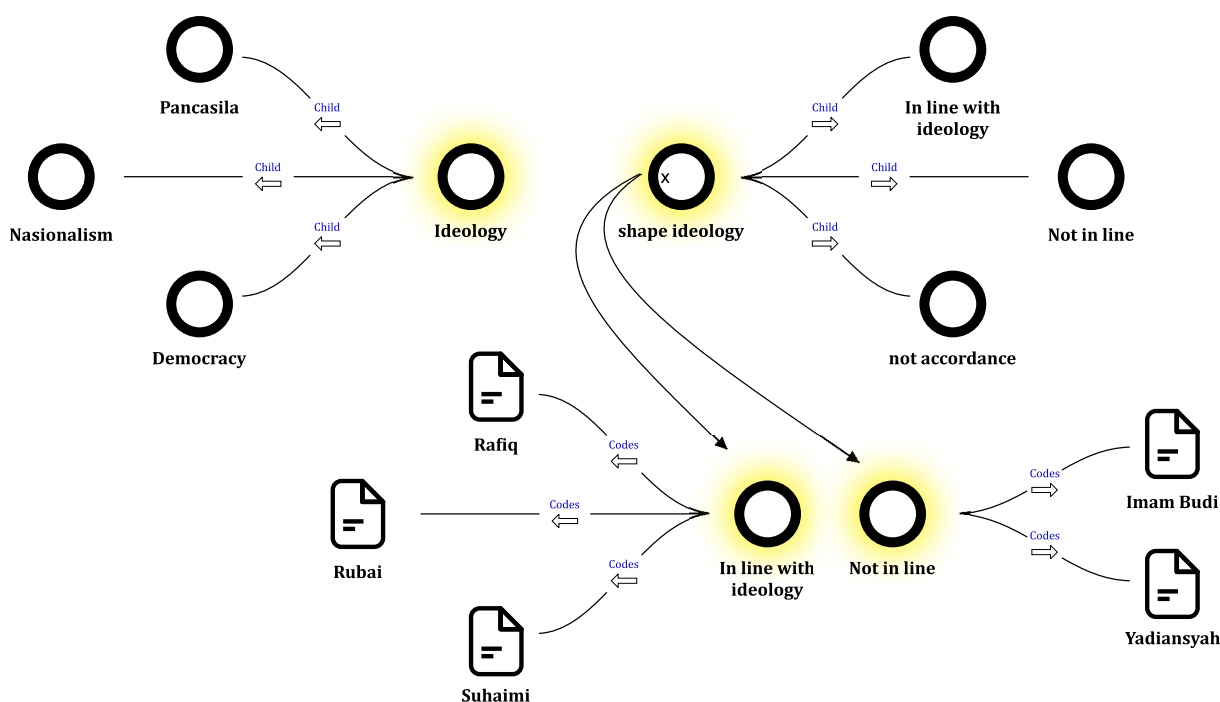
"A clean, populist and cooperative party and candidate understands the people's thoughts and feelings. Implemented in daily life in a way that is easy for the people to understand. A clean, populist, cooperative candidate who understands the people's thoughts and feelings. That the candidate is a product of the party, so that there is a linearity between the party's ideology and program and the candidate's ideology and program."

**Social media management strategies**

Communication theory in politics studies how political messages are conveyed and received by the public, and how media and communication influence political perceptions and actions (Enli & Skogerbø, 2013). This theory includes concepts such as agenda setting, which shows how the

media determines which issues are important to the public; framing, which describes the way issues are presented to influence interpretation; and the spiral of silence, which explains how majority opinion can silence minority opinion. The two-step flow of communication theory states that opinion leaders play a critical role in disseminating political information and influencing public attitudes (Gillespie, 2010; López-Meri et al., 2017). In addition, uses and gratifications theory studies the motivations of individuals in choosing certain media to meet their political information needs. Political communication theory helps understand the dynamics of power, media influence, and the interaction between political actors and voters in the democratic process (Amoncar, 2020).

Strategies for managing social media in politics involve using communication theory to maximize the impact of messages and build relationships with the public (Newman, 2014). Political parties or candidates can use social media to highlight issues they want to prioritize on the public agenda. Managing social media effectively for political party candidates involves several key strategies to build and strengthen relationships with voters and strengthen the candidate's image.



First, it is important to have a strong and consistent profile on relevant platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (Saeed, Abdullah; Ilkhanizadeh, 2021). The profile should clearly reflect the candidate's values and vision, including up-to-date information about the political platform and campaign goals. Second, the content shared should be relevant, diverse, and well-scheduled to ensure consistent engagement from followers. This includes not only posts about campaign activities, but also educational, entertaining, or motivational content that can resonate with potential voters. Third, active engagement with followers is essential; candidates should respond promptly and thoughtfully to comments, questions, and input from their followers. This not only strengthens personal connections with voters, but also demonstrates the transparency and engagement necessary for effective leadership (Mensah, 2007; Sinyonde, 2024). With an integrated and ongoing approach to social media, candidates can maximize the impact of their campaigns, build a strong base of support, and achieve electoral victory.

The following are the results of an interview with Mr. Imam as the Chair of PAC Sekarbela, regarding the images presented to the public and the candidate's social media management strategies.

"People-oriented, close to the people, honest, clean and aware of the problems faced by the Region and at the same time can provide the right solution, of course by using a communication concept that is easy to understand and comprehend by the community. While the management of social media is still very lacking, the use of social media as one of the media that can be used by CAKADA is still not optimally used, a Social Media Team should be formed that can publish the figure and activities carried out by the Cakada accompanied by building a positive narrative related to the figure of the Cakada, so that if managed properly the Cakada branding can be consistently released on social media which is expected to be able

to introduce the Cakada maximally to the community".

The following are the results of an interview with Mr. Rafiq as the Head of the Sumbawa Regency PDI Perjuangan DPC, regarding the images presented to the public and the candidate's social media management strategies.

"The image that is displayed or conveyed to the public to create personal branding of the gubernatorial and vice-gubernatorial candidates is by displaying positive things from the candidate pair, both achievements and vision-mission of future programs that support the people of NTB. Either through direct involvement, social media/cyber team of the candidate pair. Related to the strategy of managing the social media of the gubernatorial and vice-gubernatorial candidates as a medium of communication and promotion, namely maximum visibility with strong digital personal branding, the candidate pair can appear on various online platforms, from social media to their own websites. This allows them the public. Building trust through relevant and authentic content, the candidate pair can build trust with voters. Transparent and consistent information helps in forming a positive image. Active interaction on social media and other online platforms allows direct interaction between the candidate pair and voters. This creates an opportunity to listen to aspirations, answer questions, and discuss important issues. Influence in the general election strong digital personal branding can help the candidate pair positively influence voter opinion, by sharing their views on public policy and solutions to community problems, they can shape voters' thinking. Forming a spokesperson who focuses on speaking on behalf of the candidate pair, formulating campaign messages, media communication, conducting research and analysis, responding to attacks and criticism, and creating a release. In an effort to optimize digital personal branding, candidate pairs can utilize professional

services that specialize in this field. Personal branding services provide specific guidance and strategies that are in accordance with the character and goals of the candidate. By relying on personal branding experts, candidate pairs can develop an image that reflects the personality of political values and goals. The official website or official social media of the candidate pair is an important window that opens up opportunities to interact with voters. In this case, it can be a wise step to offer comprehensive information about personal branding services provided specifically for candidate pairs who will compete. By having a strong image and being present digitally, candidate pairs have a better chance of gaining support and winning.

The following are the results of an interview with Mr. Ruba'i as a member of the PDI Perjuangan, regarding the images presented to the public and the candidate's social media management strategies.

"To create a strong personal branding for the NTB Governor candidate and his deputy, several images that can be displayed to the public as experienced and qualified leaders are highlighting the experience and leadership qualities of the candidate in various capacities, both in the public and private sectors, to show that they have the ability and credibility to lead NTB. Closeness to the People by showing that the gubernatorial candidate and his deputy are leaders who are close to the people, care about the needs and aspirations of the NTB community. This can be reflected in active participation in community activities, listening directly to input from various regions, and showing empathy for the problems faced by the people. In addition, innovative and solution-oriented can show that candidates have innovative ideas and concrete solutions to overcome the challenges faced by NTB, such as infrastructure development, local economic development, increasing the tourism sector,

or solutions to environmental problems. The social media management strategy for the NTB Governor candidate and his deputy is crucial in today's digital era. The response to this strategy is that it must be able to reach a wide audience with social media allowing candidates to reach a wide audience, including the younger generation who actively use the platform. This provides an opportunity to convey campaign messages directly and interactively to potential voters. Transparency and Openness also require the use of social media to increase transparency and openness in communication with the public. Candidates can convey information about the vision, mission, programs, and campaign activities directly, minimizing misunderstandings or manipulation of information. Monitoring and rapid response through social media, the campaign team can monitor public conversations about candidates and related issues, so that they can respond quickly to developing issues or respond to political attacks in a timely manner. Creativity in content, and managing online reputation".

The following are the results of an interview with Mr. Suhaimi as The Head of the Central Lombok DPC, regarding what images are presented to the public and the social media management strategies of candidate candidates.

"The image that the candidate is a leader born from the people thanks to the guidance and direction of the party. That the candidate is a leader presented by the party as an answer to the problems faced by the people. Leave it to young people who understand the language and character of young people, who were previously educated to understand the ideology and program of the party."

The following are the results of an interview with Mr. Yadiansyah as the Head of the Bima City DPC, regarding the images presented to the public and the candidate's social media management strategies.

"The image that is displayed to the public,

we make is a leader who can listen to the people by frequently interacting and communicating smoothly with the people. As much as possible we become part of those who present solutions to every problem of the people, or are sensitive to the problems of the people. Showing someone who is hardworking and displays good leadership. In my opinion, management on

social media must be further improved by increasing the number of containers/ machines that produce interesting templates and content, recruiting special content creators, to form a special team that suits their respective genres in each district and city, of course it must be accompanied by the party as a mentor and cross-coordinator ".

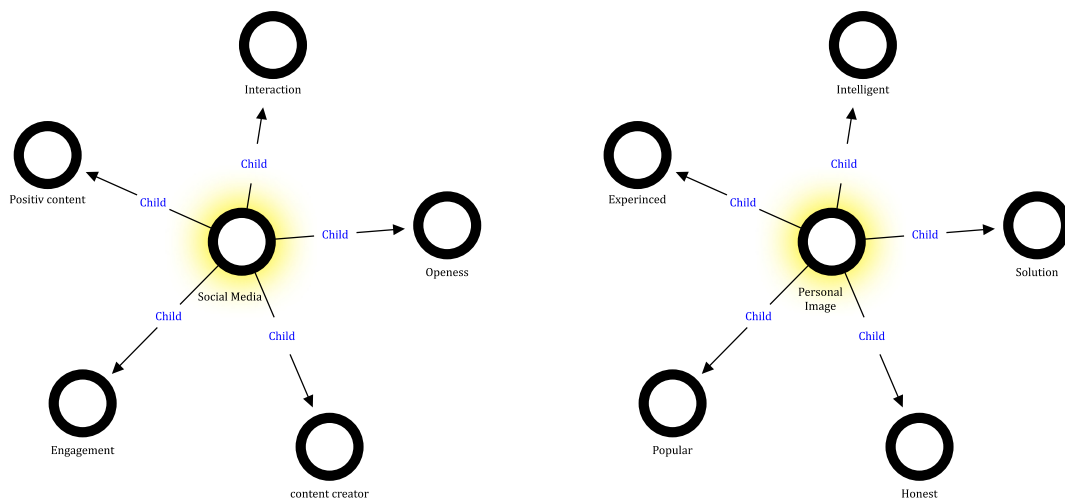


Figure 5. Visualization of Personal Image and Social Media Management

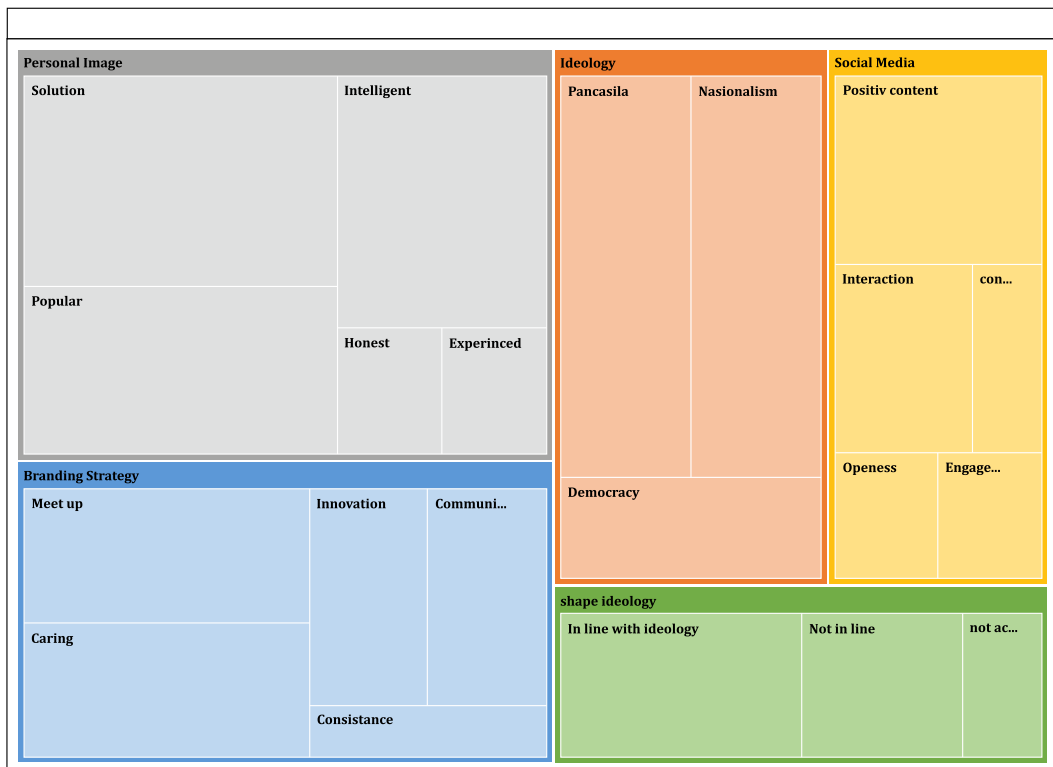


Figure 6. Personal Branding Hierarchy

## **Finding**

Based on the research results, it can be seen that PDI Perjuangan can successfully form a personal branding that is relevant to the expectations of the community by implementing a focused and integrated strategy. Through an in-depth approach to party values and candidate visions, PDI Perjuangan can build a strong and trusted candidate image in the eyes of voters. This research is in line with what was conveyed by (Das, 2023; Siegel, 2021) regarding the importance of consistency in delivering relevant and authentic messages through various communication platforms, such as social media, direct campaigns, and community events, is key to strengthening effective personal branding.(Battista, 2024). By understanding the aspirations and needs of the NTB community and adjusting branding strategies according to local political dynamics, PDI Perjuangan can win the trust and support of voters, and build a solid foundation to achieve victory in the Pilkada.

The personal branding strategy implemented by PDI Perjuangan has great potential to form a strong and well-known party identity in the eyes of voters. Through a deep focus on party values and candidate platforms, PDI Perjuangan can build a consistent and convincing image in the eyes of the NTB community. This is supported by research(Battista, 2024; Harrison et al., 2023) The importance of consistency in delivering messages that reflect integrity, commitment, and solutions to issues important to the local community is the main key to strengthening effective personal branding. By utilizing various communication channels, such as social media, direct meetings, and campaign activities, PDI Perjuangan can expand the reach of its political messages and win broad support from voters. Thus, a well-planned personal branding strategy not only helps build a positive identity for the party, but also increases the chances of success in the 2024 NTB Pilkada.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the personal branding strategy implemented

by PDI Perjuangan in NTB has succeeded in building a strong candidate image that is relevant to the expectations of the community. By utilizing various communication platforms, such as social media, direct campaigns, and community events, the party is able to convey consistent and authentic messages that reflect the party's values and the candidate's vision. Consistency in communication and a deep understanding of local political dynamics are the keys to PDI Perjuangan's success in winning the trust and support of voters. Although this study has limitations in the number of informants and potential bias, the implementation of an integrated personal branding strategy strengthens the party's position in the 2024 NTB Pilkada.

The limitations of this study include several aspects, namely, First, the limited number of informants may not reflect the diversity of views and experiences sufficient to obtain a comprehensive picture of the branding strategies used by the party. Second, the potential for bias in data collection can arise because informants come from one political party, which can influence the results of the study with pre-existing views of the candidates. Third, the constraints in obtaining accurate and open information from informants can be a challenge, especially if there is distrust or concern regarding the disclosure of sensitive political strategies. Fourth, in a qualitative context, the generalization of research results is limited because the focus is on a particular case study with specific informants. Finally, limited time and resources may limit the depth of data analysis and interpretation that can be done, especially in terms of exploring contextual factors that influence branding strategies as a whole. Considering these limitations, qualitative research needs to be carefully directed to maximize its relevance and usefulness in understanding the political branding strategies being observed.

For further research, there are several suggestions that can be considered. First, it is important to expand the number of informants to cover various

backgrounds within the party, such as from the local to national level, as well as from various hierarchical levels within the party structure. This will help in gaining a more comprehensive view of how branding strategies are implemented and understood by various party members. Second, research can consider conducting in-depth interviews with additional informants outside the PDIP party, such as political analysts, mass media, or community leaders who have diverse views on candidates and their branding strategies. This will provide an important external perspective in evaluating the effectiveness of the branding strategies implemented. In addition, the use of observation techniques or social media content analysis can also be an additional value to dig deeper into the interactions between candidates, parties, and

voters on digital platforms. This can provide a deeper understanding of how branding strategies are believed and understood by a wider audience.

The practical implications of this study are aimed at the PDIP party, it is important to conduct continuous evaluation of the branding strategies used and the responses from voters and the general public. Using the findings of this study to adjust and improve campaign strategies can help the party strengthen the image of candidates and increase their appeal to voters in the upcoming Pilkada. Thus, this qualitative study not only provides in-depth insights, but also provides a basis for more effective decision-making in political and campaign strategies.

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