

The Effect of Billboards Contents on Female Legislative Candidates' Electability in the 2019 Legislative Election in Kendari City, Indonesia

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Abstract

Since the revision of the 2017 Election Law, the affirmation of women in electro- democracy in Indonesia has become important. The participation of women in the election of legislative candidates has increased. This article, mixed methods research, examines the use of billboards as a campaign medium for women candidates to explain how it impacts their electability. The results of the study found that female legislative candidates in Kendari City use billboards as a campaign medium to introduce themselves to a wide audience. As a campaign strategy to influence voters, the legislative candidates display interesting contents to gain voters' sympathy on their billboards. An interesting finding of this study is that content depicting ethnic identity significantly increases electability female legislative candidates. The concept of ethnic identity used in this research is the selection of clan as one of the elements/features of ethnic identity. The author also recommends that female candidates who run for office by showing clan identity have a great chance of being elected in their area.

Keywords: *Billboard Contents, Electability, Women, Elections.*

Introduction

Women in Indonesian politics have been increasingly gaining a large portion of participation. This phenomenon has been growing since the enactment of a law that requires every political party to have at least 30% female legislative candidates, both at the central, provincial, and district/city levels (Atkeson & Krebs, 2008). In the 2019 Election, the General Elections Commission recorded at least 2,563 women registered as candidates for the The House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI) and 152 for the Regional Representative Board (DPD). This number has thus far been the highest achievement in Indonesian political history, breaking the previous record of women's participation in the, which was attended by 2,467 women (Alexander & Andersen, 1993). The growing number of women's candidates in the election also affects the increase in political interaction between women candidates, including the introduction and exposure of their personas in the public sphere. The most commonly used media for political campaigns and promotion of legislative candidates are billboard advertisements, which usually contain photos of the running candidates, party names and registration numbers, slogans, visions, and missions, as well as an urge to vote for the respective candidates. These campaign billboards are usually placed along the road so that they are easily seen by passing motorists. Various studies have found that the use of campaign advertising is very important in elections (Evanty & Yunita, 2022).

Political advertising influences the impression of candidate recognition, preference, electability, and choice (Hitchon et al., 1997). Although advertising is an important medium for candidates, it does not always have a positive impact. Voters' interests in advertising are also influenced by the messages and images contained in it (Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993). The use of campaign media by female politicians is important to study, bearing in mind that political campaign coverage in the mass media is often gender biased (Kahn, 1994). With limited information about candidate profiles, voters often seek candidate information from mass media reports (Koch, 1999). This then becomes biased, because journalists often report on male and female politicians differently based on stereotypes of masculinity and feminism. Men are seen as masculine, and women have feminist characteristics, thereby influencing voters' evaluation of candidates (Lawless, 2004; Parawans, 2019; Rosenwasser & Dean, 1989). This difference in reporting patterns is detrimental to female

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candidates (Shvedova, 2005). Women's political participation often faces obstacles from the masculinity view of voters (Sides et al., 2020). The challenges that women often face is related to political, socio-economic, ideological and psychological factors (West, 1994). Widespread money politics, party support, media, organizational networks, poverty, low levels of education, family support, party systems and strong patriarchal culture are challenges women face in Indonesia (West, 1995). Recent studies suggest that another obstacle faced by female politicians in elections in Indonesia is the spread of hoaxes and disinformation (Zuada et al., 2020).

Facing these challenges, women who are involved in politics in Indonesia have developed strategies to target women voters, utilizing the political and financial resources of their (mostly male) families (Aspinall et al., 2021). Choi (2019) in his study in Southeast Asia (including Indonesia) mentions that women use three channels to reach political office. First, the elite path, which relies on rooted power by including family names and the use of feminist symbols. Second, the grassroots path, namely raising local issues by displaying the characteristics of feminism (smile, gentle, caring and clean). Third, the middle lane, namely influencing policy making, material rewards (money politics) and social prestige by means of entrepreneurship and using symbols of feminism and masculinity flexibly.

In the 2019 simultaneous elections in Kendari City, all female legislative candidates campaigned in various ways, one of which was through political advertisements using billboards. This approach was done by legislative candidates as a means of self-socialization and branding, so that later the community would be able to decide whether or not to vote for them in the legislative elections. Furthermore, this advertising was also aimed to attract women's sympathy by bringing the issues of feminism and equal rights for women. Through these billboards, legislative candidates conveyed political messages and values with a goal to shape and influence voters' opinions, attitudes, and behavior, so that the public would dedicate their voices for the legislative candidates. In addition, female legislative candidates would also highlight each other's strengths as an effort to attract the attention of voters. Various studies reveal that women and men have different communication styles in conducting campaigns (Banwart & McKinney, 2005). Women tend to be more detailed, and men tend to be abstract in conveying campaign messages (Wood, 1995). Female candidates tend to discuss issues related to taxes, gender equality, education, health, juvenile delinquency, employment and women's issues (Bystrom & Miller, 1999; Evans, 2016; Williams, 1998). Male candidates tend to discuss budget, defense, unemployment and tax issues (Robertson, 2000). Billboards are neutral campaign media that can prevent gender bias due to different media reports. Through billboards, candidates can display campaign messages based on the content they want. Both female and male candidates have the same opportunity to use billboards as campaign media, so that it is fairer. What might limit them is the financial ability of each candidate to pay for billboard design services and print them, as well as rent space where billboards are installed. However, this implication has been anticipated in Indonesian election regulations, where starting in the 2019 election, billboards will be provided by the General Election Commission as election organizers with the same number and size for each candidate, so that each candidate has equality. Under these conditions, it is possible that campaign messages will be focused on the style of communication displayed in the billboard content. This is the aim of this research; how effective billboard content affects the chances of candidate selection.

This study examines the strategies of female candidates to influence voters through billboard advertisements in legislative elections at the city level, Indonesia. This research takes the locus in Kendari City, Southeast Sulawesi considering that women's election in the last two elections held in 2014 and 2019 showed an increase in the number of representatives. This research describes two things. First, it focuses on the use of billboards as a campaign medium, observing the way women represent themselves through self-images to attract voters as well as examining the formation of personality characters through self-image. Secondly, it explains the impacts of billboards on the electability of candidates.

Literature Review

To explain the concept in this research, the theory used is political advertising from Kaid (2004) and electability from Darr & Stiles (2018). Bolland defines advertising as paid placement of organizational

messages in the media, while political advertising is the purchase and use of advertising spaces at a commercial price to convey political messages to audiences (McNair, 2017). Political advertising is part of the communication process in which a candidate buys space in the media to convey a message to the public in order to influence political attitudes, beliefs, and behavior (Kaid, 2004). He also mentions that political advertising serves to increase voter knowledge, change voter perceptions, and choice preferences. Meanwhile, McNair explains two functions of political advertising. The first one is to reach to the public. In an effort to influence the rationality of voters, legislative candidates need advertising as a means to inform citizens about who they are and what they have to offer in terms of policy. Secondly, it is meant as persuasion, that is in a competitive electoral system a candidate must display a unique and superior image compared to other candidates in order to influence voters and foster loyalty.

In Indonesia, the use of advertising as a media for political campaigns began with a change in the electoral system from a closed proportional system to an open proportional system. In the closed proportional system, the determination of the winning legislative candidate referred to the order of the top numbers. Meanwhile, in an open proportional system, the determination of the winning candidate is based on the majority of votes. Another characteristic of the open proportional system is the ballot paper, which displays the party image and the names of the legislative candidates. This change then affects the campaign procedure, where the introduction of individual legislative candidates is very important for voters to know. In the end, this electoral system indirectly demands that legislative candidate's campaign more actively from their respective political parties and directly to the public in order to get the most votes.

One of the media campaigns used as political advertising is billboards. Billboards as outdoor media have become a trend of visual communication to inform, introduce, and promote new services and products. Billboards installed in public spaces are an effective choice due to the heterogeneous nature of the audience, which consists of various groups. In addition, the time span for billboard installation is relatively longer. Billboards help candidates to reach everyone passing by, be it intentionally or not, are large in visual size, which makes them difficult to overlook, are easy to remember, and are the least expensive media, considering its length of service. Through billboards, candidates communicate messages, ideas, and programs to potential voters. Through these media, candidates also aim to create an image of themselves, glorify certain figures, or otherwise bring down opponents.

Electability is defined as a candidate's chance of winning the general election (Abramowitz, 1989; Cisneros, 2020; Darr & Stiles, 2018). There are various factors that affect the electability of candidates. Abramowitz's study in the presidential primaries in the United States proposes that the electability of candidates is related to voter evaluation of the viability of the candidate or the chances of the candidate appearing in the election. Candidates who have viability are more likely to win the election. In another finding, it is stated that electability is related to ideology. Candidates who have ideological closeness to voters are more likely to be elected than candidates who are ideologically different (Simas, 2017). Electability is also influenced by campaign strategies. According to Darr and Stiles (2018), if a candidate gets a negative campaign attack about the candidate's low electability, it is important for the candidate to respond with an explanation, so that their electability does not waive (Darr & Stiles, 2018). The point of this finding is that in order to maintain electability, it is important for candidates to answer accusations of negative campaigns aimed at them.

Gender also affects the candidate's electability factor. Sigelman et.al found that male voters tend to discriminate against female candidates. Voters also distinguish candidates based on masculinity and feminism. Feminism factors are not beneficial for female candidates, while on the other hand, masculinity has a positive impact on the electability of male candidates (Sigelman et al., 1986). In Indonesia, masculinity gets a different response in each region. In Aceh, the former commanders and combatants of the Free Aceh Movement, both men and women, were elected because they used hegemonic masculinity to fight in post-conflict local political contestation (Abdullah, 2019). However, in Java, the effect of masculinity appears to be weak, this is indicated by the election of three women, Rustiningsih, Siti Qomariyah and Ratna Ani Lestari as regional heads (Dewi, 2015). From another point of view, Welch & Studlar (1996) stated that women and men have equal opportunities to win elections when the nomination and recruitment processes are equal. This finding rebuts the notion that gender plays a great factor influencing electability. Other

findings identify a relationship between electability and media coverage. A study by Kasadha & Kantono (2021) in Uganda found that placement in newspapers significantly increased the electability of men compared to women. Another finding showed that newspaper coverage of the role of women in the agricultural sector was more prominent than the political sector. This inequality in reporting, furthermore, had implications for the low electability of female candidates. The use of media also affects the electability of candidates. Voters who are following the most updates issues rely on newspapers for information on electability, while image-oriented voters tend to seek information about electability from television. Meanwhile, issue and image-oriented voters choose both media television and newspapers as sources of information about electability (Lowden et al., 1994). Ethnic identity will make a person have expectations for the future related to their ethnicity. Research by Yudha Provincial Legislatives Council (DPRD) in communicating through symbols of ethnic identity including accent identity, clan, customs, and local language (Yudha, et al., 2022). Ethnic identity is a sense that individuals have as part of a group member, and that sense continues to develop over time and is able to create relationships between individuals and their groups (Snanfi, et al., 2028). According to Parangu's research, ethnic identity has a function as a foundation for gaining votes, establishing political movements and power, building inter-ethnic harmony (Parangu, 2018).

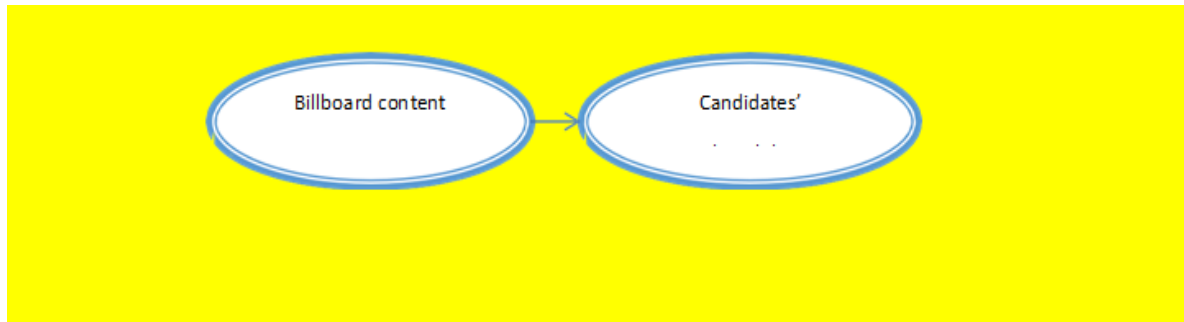
Method

This research combined qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative methods were used to describe billboard content and propaganda techniques used by legislative candidates. The evaluation of propaganda techniques referring to Nimmo and Rakhmat (1999) include name calling, glittering generalities, transfer (borrowing fame), testimonials, plain folk, card stacking, and bandwagon [37]. Data collection for this method was carried out through analysis of billboard contents and interviews with elected and non-elected legislative candidates. The list of legislative candidates and election results were retrieved from the Kendari City General Election Commission. Meanwhile, billboards were obtained through the collection of documents and photos in the field. The data collected were limited to the 2019 election. The first step was to collect a list of female legislative candidates totaling 179 people including Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), National Mandate Party (PAN), Justice and Prosperity Party (PKS), Great Indonesia Movement Party (Gerindra), Golongan Karya Party (Golkar), National Awakening Party (PKB), Indonesian Unity Party (Perindo), Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI), Democratic Party.

The second step was to billboards collecting for female legislative candidates. The third step was coding and categorizing. Coding was done based on elected, non-elected candidates, and separating candidates by type. Furthermore, categorization is done to categorize candidates who use the variables under study and those who do not, such as those who display ethnic identity and those who do not display ethnic identity on their billboards. Furthermore, quantitative methods were used to determine the impact of billboard content on candidate electability. To find out the impact of billboard content on female legislative candidates' electability in the 2019 elections in Kendari City, the study collected a list of female legislative candidates, billboards for female legislative candidates, and election results. The population in the study amounted to 464 legislative candidates spread across five electoral districts in Kendari City. There are 179 samples in this study, based on the Slovin measurement formula. It is known, $n =$ number of samples, $N =$ number of populations, $d =$ (precision set at 5.77 % with 95 % confidence level). The sampling technique uses simple random sampling.

The design of the quantitative method uses two variables, namely billboard content (X) as the independent variable and electability (Y) as the dependent variable. The dependent variable is the electability of candidates based on the results of the 2019 legislative elections in Kendari City. This study differentiates electability classifications into two categories, which are "1" for those who are selected and "2" for those who are not selected. Furthermore, the independent variable is billboard content. Billboard content is classified into two categories, "1" for displaying, "2" for non-showing. The research concept framework is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Research Concept Framework



Source: Primary Data Processing, 2023

This study proposes two hypotheses as follows:

H0: Billboard content does not affect candidates' electability.

H1: Billboard content affects candidates' electability.

In this study, the validity test in this study used the SPSS 20 for Windows programme. The validity of a question item can be seen from the Corrected item -Total Correlation value of the SPSS output. A question item is said to be valid if the r-count value which is the value of the Corrected item -Total Correlation > 0,30.

Table 1. On the Validity Test Above

Variable	Indicator	Pearson Correlation	Value Distribution r table	Description $r > r$ table
Billboard content (x)	Displaying registration number (X1)	. a	0,194	Constant/Not Valid
	Displaying candidate's image (X2)	. a	0,194	Constant/Not Valid
	Displaying ethnic identity (X ₆)	0,875	0,194	Constant/Not Valid
	Displaying education degree (X ₇)	0,272	0,194	Constant/Not Valid
				0,194
Candidate's electability (Y)	Electability (Y ₁)	0,443	0,194	Valid

Based table 1 on the validity test above, it shows that there are 4 items on the above variables that are valid, namely displaying propaganda language (X4), displaying ethnic / clan identity (X6), displaying educational degrees (X7) and electability status (Y1) because the total score is positive and the amount is 0.3 and above or $r > r$ table and positive value, meaning that the questions to be used to measure these variables are correct. While there are 4 items in the above variables that are invalid, namely displaying serial numbers (X1), displaying pictures of candidates (X2), displaying party pictures (X3), and displaying candidate names (X5), so the invalid questions are excluded. While the valid questions are displaying propaganda language, displaying ethnic/clan identity, displaying educational degrees and electoral status, followed by conducting reliability tests and influence tests. The next research instrument test is the reliability test using the Split half method. The results can be seen from the Correlation Between Forms value. If $r > r$ table, then the

instrument is said to be reliable or comparing it with the cutoff point value of 0.3, it is reliable if $r > 0.3$. Conversely, if $r > r_{table}$ then the instrument is said to be unreliable. Another method commonly used in testing reliability with Cronbach's Alpha can be seen from the Alpha value, if the Alpha value is $>$ from the r_{table} value, namely 0.194, it can be said to be reliable.

Table 2. Reliability Test Results of Research Instruments

Variable	Indicator	Rtable	Cronbach Alpha	Descriptioncronbach Alpha
Billboard content (X)	Using Propaganda Language (X4)	0,194	0,614	Reliabel
	Displaying ethnic identity (X6)	0,194		
	Displaying education degree (X7)	0,194		
	Electability (Y1)	0,194		

Table 2, the reliability test results show that the Cronbach Alpha value of billboard content on electability is 0.614, so it is said to be reliable because it is greater than 0.194. The data analysis process used the following approaches: 1) frequency description analysis to determine the trend of content billboards for female legislative candidates; 2) binary logistic regression analysis to determine the effect of billboard content (independent variable) on candidate electability (dependent variable).

Results and Discussion

Female Legislative Candidates' Billboard Content

The election of female legislative candidates in 2019 in Kendari City proved to be a tight competition between each candidate. Various approaches to the community were taken by the legislative candidates in order to gain votes and smooth their steps towards parliament. One of the campaign strategies used was to utilize billboards as a medium of information to voters. This research uses random sampling technique, which is a technique in determining the sample as a data source randomly. The three candidates who are the subject of this research are also part of the 6 informants that the author has chosen. Based on the results of observations and analysis, the utilization of billboards as a campaign medium for female legislative candidates was done by Hetty Purnamasari Saranani using three techniques as stated by Dan Nimmo (2011), namely glittering (words of wisdom), transfer (borrowing fame), and card stacking (highlighting good things) [37].

The strategy of glittering generalities was used to associate herself with a persona of candidates who "work for the people." This phrase imprinted a thought in voters' minds, especially female voters, that Mrs. Hetty Purnawati Saranani was a figure who would work and fight for the people when elected as a member of the legislature. Furthermore, the transfer strategy was carried out by including the name Saranani, a clan's name, which had a long history and influence in the political arena. This was aimed to increase the level of recognition and gain sympathy for the Saranani family group or groups who paid their respect to the Saranani clan. Hetty Purnawati Saranani has been elected as a member of the Kendari City Provincial Legislatures Council (DPRD) with the term of office 2019-2024 in the 2019 General Election results. Ameliya Sukirno (27 years), a female candidate from the National Mandate Party, also employed the same strategy. The same strategy is the strategy of installing billboards for legislative candidates (candidates) with the same billboard provision format including the candidate's picture, candidate's name, political party logo, registration number and education

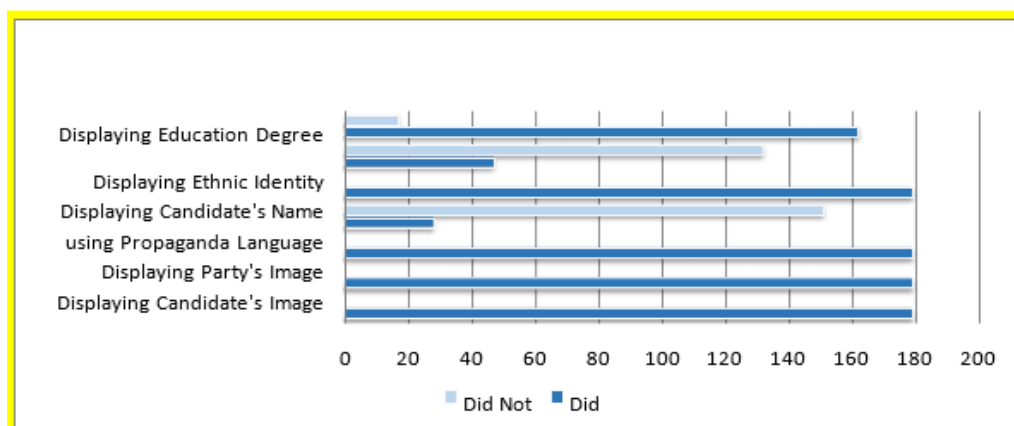
degree).

When analyzing Ameyia Sukirno's billboards, two approaches were present, namely plain folk and card stacking. Plain folk technique serves as a way to identify an idea and an individual. From the analysis, the technique was reflected in the writing of education degree attached to the name of the legislative candidate, which reads Amelyia Sukirno, S.I.Kom, M.A.P. It was directed to let voters know that the candidate had a high level of educational background. This contained the message that she was fit to be a representative of the community and to direct voters to be rational. Meanwhile, the card stacking strategy was to show good traits as a good female candidate, such as character, nature, profound slogans, and non-verbal movements. The results of the analysis show that the symmetrical placement of poses on billboards provides a symbol of politeness and professionalism as a legislative candidate. Ameliya Sukirno, S.I.Kom, M.AP was not elected as a member of the Kendari City Provincial Legislatives Council (DPRD) with the 2019-2024 term of office in the 2019 General Election results. Moving on, incumbent Hj. Rostina Tarimana, 41 years old, from the Justice and Prosperity Party also decided to go full throttle with billboards advertisement.

Based on the analysis items proposed by Nimmo (2011), Hj. Rostina Tarimana employed the technique of glittering generalities, a word of wisdom; transfer, borrowing fame; and card stacking, highlighting good things [37]. The glittering generalities technique can be seen from the choice of the wise words "Sincerely Working Hand-in-Hand with The People, We Can". This wise phrase portrays that the candidate has thoughtful intentions for the community and is sincere in carrying out the people's mandates. Furthermore, the card stacking technique can be seen in the display of the status "Hj", a salutation for women who have done a religious ceremony called hajj, on the name of the candidate and the use of a veil in the photo. This was done to make voters know her status as part of Islam, which inevitably aims to attract Muslim voters. Lastly, the transfer technique is shown through the installation of clan's name Tarimana, which is known as a family that has historical roots in the people of Kendari City. It also aims to gain votes through the recognition level of the Tarimana family. Rostina Tarimana has been elected as a member of the Kendari City Provincial Legislatives Council (DPRD) for the 2019- 2024 term in the 2019 General Election.

Referring to observations of the billboard content displays, female legislative candidates in Kendari City put candidates' images, names, registration numbers, political parties' pictures, propaganda languages, ethnic identities, and education degrees. According to the analysis of the frequency of billboard contents displayed by female legislative candidates in Kendari City, the following findings were obtained. First, all female legislative candidates in Kendari City in their billboards displayed their registration number, names, images, and party's images. Second, the majority of legislative candidates did not display propaganda language in their billboards. Only 15.64% of the candidates displayed a propaganda language, while the other 84.36% did not. Third, the majority of legislative candidates, comprising 73.75% of the total participants, did not display their ethnic identity on their billboards. Fourth, the majority of legislative candidates (90.5%) put their education degrees on their billboards.

Figure 2. Billboard Content of Female Legislative Candidates in Kendari City



Source: Primary Data Processing, 2023

The use of billboards by legislative candidates aimed to provide voters with information about themselves, build an image, and increase electability. This was confirmed by the results of an interview with one of the candidates from the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle, Hetty Purnawati, claiming "To win the contestation for the election of legislative candidates, I utilized billboards as a campaign instrument by displaying contents aimed at building solidarity with the power of female voters," (Interview, March 22, 2019). Likewise, Amelia Sukirno, one of the newcomers in the political arena, realized that billboards are one of the media that can be used to introduce herself to the voters, as she narrated in the following interview: "The use of billboards as a campaign instrument is a fundamental thing in action campaign action in addition to other strategies. The purpose of using billboards is to introduce myself, and to familiarize the public with my figure; thus, I can secure some spots in the voters' minds. Equally important is the use of billboards to form an image as women's representation as the competition for legislative candidates is very competitive. In addition to competing with other figures, we also have to stand out from other candidates of the same party, not to mention the incumbents who of course already have a mass base," (Interview, 22 March 2019). The function of billboards as a campaign medium was expressed by Rostina Tarimana, saying that, "Even though I am an incumbent, billboards are needed as a campaign medium to promote electability and recognition in the eyes of the public," (Interview, 26 February 2019). Based on the interviews above, it appears that the use of billboards as a campaign channel is intended to increase the popularity of the candidates, which in turn can increase the electability of legislative candidates.

Effects of Billboards Content on the Legislative Candidates' Electability

Billboards have become a trend of visual communication to inform, introduce, and promote female legislative candidates in increasing popularity and electability in Kendari City. The power of billboards can reach all social levels because they are installed in public spaces. In addition, the life-span of billboard installations is usually relatively longer and does not require expensive maintenance. This practical nature and usefulness of such advertising medium then encouraged female legislative candidates to use it to introduce themselves. Ahead of the election, legislative candidates are competing to find strategic plots to put up their billboards that display different content. The results of the effect test of billboard content on electability obtained a value of R Square = 0.058. This means that billboard content affects the electability of candidates by 5.8%, while 94.2% is influenced by other factors.

Table 3. Results of Stimulant Effect Test

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 6			
1	73.459a	.020	.058

These results indicate that the alternative hypothesis (H1), believing that billboard content affects the electability of candidates, is proven to be true based on the test results. Furthermore, table 2 shows the results of the logistic regression test, namely the regression coefficient (B), p value (sig) is < 0.05, and opportunity ratio (Exp (B)). The results of the logistic regression test partially show that ethnic identity is proven to have an effect on the electability of female legislative candidates with the value of sig 0.04 is < 0.05. Meanwhile, the use of propaganda language and education degrees in billboard content does not affect electability, where the value of sig is > 0.05.

Table 5. Odds Ratio of Logistics Regression

Variable	B	Sig	Exp (B)
Displaying Propaganda Language	-.695	.561	.499
Displaying Ethnic Identity	1.558	.045	4.751*

Displaying Education Degree	.368	.797	1.444
n = 179, R Square 0.058 * p < 0.05			

Table 5 based on the value of the odds ratio; it shows that each addition of 1 unit of value that displays propaganda language will add 499 points to the electability variable. The possibility is that showing ethnic identity will add 4,751 points to the electability variable. Furthermore, displaying an education degree will add 1,444 points to the electability variable. This means that candidates who display propaganda language in billboards are 499 times more likely to be elected than the ones who do not. Furthermore, candidates who display ethnic identity in billboards are more likely to be elected, 4,751 times, than those who do not. Furthermore, candidates who display an education degree are 1,444 times more likely to be selected than candidates who do not.

The research findings show that the use of billboards is one of the tools to provide information and build the image of female legislative candidates, in order to persuade voters to vote for them. This is also evident in the test results which show that there is an effect of billboard content on candidate electability, although not significant. This shows that billboard content can at least help the level of voter recognition and electability of female candidates. From the results of the vote recapitulation of the Kendari City Regional Election Commission, it was reported that the number of female legislative candidates in Kendari City who got elected was 10 out of 179 people, meaning that only 5.58% was successfully elected as members of the legislature. This number can be increased in the upcoming elections by exhibiting ethnic identity content in billboards.

Analysis

Previous research used qualitative research methods while this research uses mixed methods. There are differences in the elements of ethnic identity in previous studies, including first, research by Jabar (2009) discusses money politics and ethnic politics by utilizing the local wisdom of indigenous peoples. Second, research by Husain (2021) contains political behavior of ethnic Tolaki in the Governor election. Third, research by Muhtadi (2018) explains that religion and ethnicity are important elements for identity politics in regional head elections. In contrast to this study, which aims to explain the utilization of billboard media in winning female legislative candidates in Kendari City. The concept of ethnic identity used by this research is the selection of clans as one of the elements/features of ethnic identity. The novelty of the research explains that content describing ethnic identity significantly increases electability and uses mixed methods research. Mixed methods research is a method that combines quantitative methods with qualitative methods. Billboards as campaign media are used by female legislative candidates in Kendari City. In billboards, politicians try to attract voters' sympathy through symbolic play, as seen in the design of the campaign billboards of the female candidates studied. They do physical engineering by displaying images of themselves that look younger, more mature, and more beautiful than the actual facts. They also try to show their beauty by posting photos using a more fashionable and trendier look, such as wearing trendy/stylist hijab, wearing kebaya that displays elegance, whiter skin color, using eyebrow tattoos, and wearing lipstick that displays red lips. The physical engineering done by these female candidates attracts the attention of the public, and reaches almost all segments of female and male voters, as well as young and old who like beauty and beauty. This campaign strategy differs from that of male politicians who dominantly display their masculinity. Male politicians who use suits, caps and party clothes in their photos, give a monotonous and simple impression, so they become unattractive and do not become the talk of the town. This is very different from female politicians, who are perceived by voters as having beauty. The beauty factor is indeed an attraction for voters. Amy King and Andrew Leight's study states that there is a linear relationship between beauty and electability, politicians who have beauty (attractive appearance) are positively correlated with their chances of being elected [38]. The physical engineering on billboards to make them look attractive requires a lot of financial support to pay a professional media team and print more billboards. A female candidate at the city level said that she had to spend up to 150 million rupiah to hire a professional media team, pay for printing and honorarium for the billboard installation team. She said this amount was relatively small, because she was only running at the city level with a smaller voter population (a minimum of 2000 votes to win) and a narrower geographical area.

Another female candidate who also ran at the city level but with a wider geographical area, spent a larger budget of up to 200 million rupiah. Although they spent a large amount of money, both candidates did not find it difficult, because the first candidate set aside money from her business, while the second candidate received financial support from her family (husband) who worked as a contractor. In contrast to the previous two candidates, a female candidate running in another electoral district spent less, around 30 million IDR. This amount was smaller because she did not hire a professional media team and did not print billboards other than those provided by the general election commission, she only spent money to pay a team of billboard installers. He took this step to streamline campaign costs. As a former activist, she considers that she is already quite popular because she often appears in the mass media, so there is no need to socialize through billboards, she prefers to take advantage of the network of activists and communities that she has advocated for. The effects of the efforts of the three female candidates were very different; the first and second candidates were successfully elected, while the last one failed to be elected. It seems that the latter saw that helping people through advocacy efforts would make an impression and would be reciprocated in the form of support, but she forgot that in political struggles helping people must be known by the public, and billboards are one of the tools used to do political branding. This is an obstacle for women politicians who do not have strong financial support.

In addition, by relying solely on billboards provided by election organizers, political branding is difficult to do because those who design the content of billboards are not individual candidates, but are carried out by the General Election Commission with a uniform layout, message content, and model for all candidates. This is very unfavorable for women politicians who play a lot of roles in the domestic space as housewives who rarely appear in public. Without political branding, it is difficult to get voters' attention. The billboard contents used by the candidates have been proven to have some effect on the candidates' electability. This finding strengthens the study of the role of the media in influencing electability. Previous research found that media coverage (Kasadha & Kantono, 2021; Lowden et al., 1994) the type of media used affect candidates' electability. The thing that distinguishes it from the two previous studies is that this study examines the impact of content used in billboard political advertisements. The three contents tested in this study are the use of propaganda language, the display of ethnic identity, and the mentioning of academic degrees on billboards. The results show that only contents that display ethnic identity has effects on voters. The findings of this study provide practical implications, that in an effort to increase electability, participants need to display ethnic identity on their billboards.

Meanwhile, theoretically, the influence of ethnic identity factors strengthens previous studies on the importance of identity factors in elections. In a previous study in Kendari, ethnic identity was one of the factors that influenced voter behavior (Jabar, 209). Muhtadi's study also found that ethnicity had an effect on the electability of candidate pairs in the Maluku Pilkada (Muhtadi, 2018). In Kendari, ethnic identity is deliberately used by politicians to mobilize fellow voters from the same ethnicity, with the hope of increasing their electability rate (Husain & Zuada, 2021). Ethnic-based voter mobilization for electoral purposes is also used in several other regions in Indonesia. The similarity of ethnic identity is often a voter preference in making political choices. In Indonesia, since elections are held directly by the people, ethnicity is one of the factors that influence voter support for candidates. Ananta et al's study mentions ethnicity as one of the explanations for reading voter behavior in Indonesia (Ananta et al., 2004). As a new country, ethnic factors, primordialism, are indeed often a tool of group solidarity in Indonesia, as Clifford Geertz argues, "The people of new countries who are multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, and sometimes multi-racial tend to judge things by instantaneous, concrete, and natural groupings as the substantive content of their respective personalities" (Geertz, 1963).

In addition to new countries, political ethnicity has become a common phenomenon in developed countries that have a multi-ethnic voter demographic. In the United States, Floridians of Spanish descent make mastering Spanish a preference in making choices (Hill & Moreno, 2001). Ethnicity also influences the behavior of voters and politicians in Kenya (Oyugi 1967), and other African countries (Posner, 2005; Norris & Mattes, 2005). Ethnicity also influences the political strategy of politicians in India (Varshney, 2009). Referring to these findings, in order to increase electability, it seems that ethnic identity is one of the important factors to be highlighted by politicians in countries with multi-ethnic voter demographics. This

recommendation may have negative implications for the emergence of political racism and may hinder the selection of candidates who have the required quality and capability just because they do not come from an ethnic majority group. One of these campaign tools is expected to provide more access for voters to know the vision and mission and direction of the candidates. Candidates are also expected to promote cultural characters without creating political racism. Politicians can also apply 3 strategies to prevent the display of ethnic identity, namely Glittering Genelaties (Wise Words), Card Stacking (Showing good things), Transfer (Borrowing fame).

Conclusion

There are two conclusions obtained from this study. First, female candidates in Kendari City used billboards as a campaign medium to increase electability as billboard content is one of the propaganda tools in gaining voter sympathy. Second, the content of billboards is empirically proven to affect the electability of candidates, where contents displaying ethnic identity are proven to effectively influence the electability of candidates. This research uses mixed methods in contrast to previous research which uses qualitative research methods. Previous studies have differences with this research, including previous studies that focused on discusses money politics and ethnic politics, contains political behavior of ethnic, religion and ethnicity. Meanwhile, this study aims to determine the utilization of billboard media in winning female legislative candidates in Kendari City. Politicians can also apply 3 strategies to prevent the display of ethnic identity, namely Glittering Genelaties (Wise Words), Card Stacking (Showing good things), Transfer (Borrowing fame). The novelty of the research explains that content depicting ethnic identity significantly increases electability and uses mixed methods research. This study recommends that in order to increase the electability of candidates, it is necessary to use content that contains ethnic/clan identities on campaign billboards. Scientifically, this provides a theoretical contribution that advertising content influences candidate electability. This complements West (1995) findings that voters' interest in advertisements is also determined by the messages and images contained therein. However, this study has limitations, first, there is a time limit when conducting research. Second, this study only assessed the influence of billboard content on female candidates, so further research needs to be developed to examine the influence of other factors.

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