

Strategic Steps of the National Mandate Party in Increasing Vote Acquisition in the 2024 Election in Medan City

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ABSTRACT

The position of community organizations in the run-up to the implementation of the Regional Head Elections does have extraordinary allure. This is because mass organizations have resources in the form of influential figures, and the breadth of bases owned by mass organizations has the potential to gain vote support for candidate pairs in regional head elections. So many mass organizations have participated in the democratic party, especially the Karya Youth Association, in the Karo regional head election. From the results of the author's analysis, the Karya Youth Association community organization is a community organization that has political power in the Karo regional head election and is quite significant in winning the Cory Sebayang and Theophilus Ginting pair in the 2020 Karo regional head election. The method used in this research uses qualitative research methods in a descriptive-qualitative way. The descriptive-qualitative method is a type of research that aims to describe and answer the problems to be studied by studying individual groups of events in more detail. From the researcher's analysis, it is concluded that the Karya Youth Association had a significant influence in the election of Cory Sebayang-Theophilus Ginting for the role of the Karya Youth Association, namely, organizational role, campaign role, strategic role, social role, mobilization role, winning role, and post-election role. The factors behind the Karya Youth Association's support for the Cory Sebayang and Theophilus Ginting pair include emotional closeness, incumbency, and economic factors.

INTRODUCTION

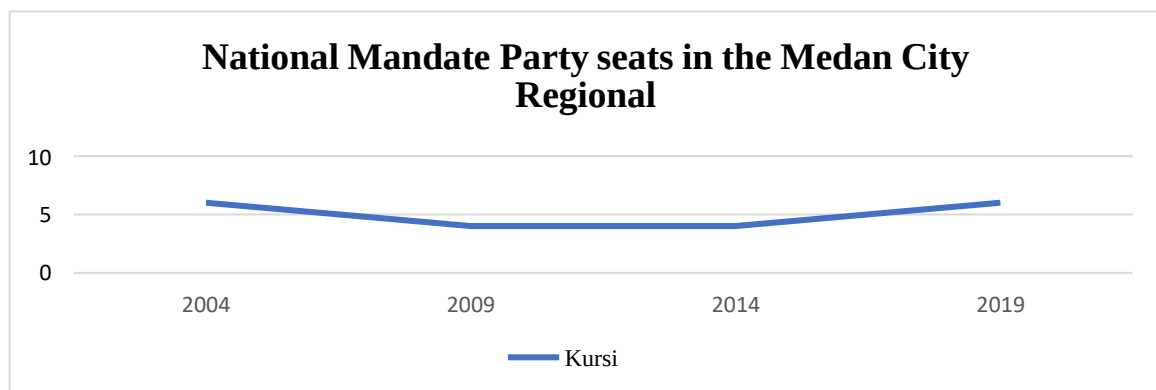
Law Number 7/2017 on General Elections Article 1 Point 1 explains that General Elections, from now on referred to as Elections, are a means of popular sovereignty to elect members of the People's Representative Council, members of the Regional Representative Council, President and Vice President, and to elect members of the Regional People's Representative Council, which are carried out directly, umm, free, secret, honest and fair in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (Anshori, 2019; Malik, 2022).

One topic of public concern is the role of political parties in election campaigns (Astari, 2021). Diamond and Gunter define the role of political parties in a democratic democracy. First, parties mobilise voters to support candidates and promote election operations. Second, parties carry out problem structuring to manage challenges from the perspective of diverse social groups. Third, they represent various social groupings symbolically and in terms of pursuing specific interests. Fourth, interest aggregation is carried out for long-term policy stability. Fifth, the party's social integration function helps citizens participate in the political process (Diamond & Gunter, 2001).

In addition, political parties play a more critical role in direct elections by building legitimacy for nominated candidates (Nasution et al., 2023). However, Hanafi's findings suggest that the goals of party elites heavily influence electoral nomination activities. Due to this situation, legislative candidates need more competence. As a result, political parties are used more as political vehicles, and people's critical voices on corruption issues in the regions are silenced (Hanafi, 2014). Parties not conducting democratic political recruitment cause sporadic corruption in Medan City (Nasution et al., 2020). The lack of a regulated, accessible, democratic, and accountable political recruitment system leads to poor quality political recruitment. Some political parties rely on family and political connections for political recruitment. As a result, political recruitment processes are often closed, exclusive, and nepotistic. Although parties have official protocols for the recruitment process, party leaders still need to fully implement these procedures (KPK & LIPI, 2016).

In addition, the participation of Medan City residents in the three editions of the General Election has fluctuated. The lowest participation rate was 47.44% in 2009, followed by 73.67% in the 2019 General Election, while the most significant participation rate was 78.21% in the 2004 General Election. This shows that, when compared to the Pilkada method, voter participation increased in the General Election (Nasution et al., 2020). Furthermore, the KPU of Medan City has determined the final voter list (DPT) for the 2020 Medan Mayor and Deputy Mayor Elections, a decrease from the 2019 Election DPT. Thus, the success of the National Mandate Party (PAN) in the democratic party in Medan City has increasingly complex challenges in conducting political recruitment, political education, and vote-raising in the face of voter turnout exceeding 70%.

High public interest in elections will help increase party votes in the future (Mangngasing et al., 2023). Moreover, PAN is a national party with a track record of sending its best cadres to compete in elections in Medan City. As a result, the number of seats in the Medan City DPRD increased from four in the 2014 elections to six in the 2019 elections. To welcome the 2024 elections, which are full of competition and diverse voter personalities, strategic efforts are needed to map more segmented voters, especially novice voters and youth (Prasetyo, 2019).



Graphic 1. National Aamanat Party's seat gain at the Medan City Regional People's Representative Council level from the 2004-2019 General Elections.

The high level of participation in the General Election in Medan City makes the potential for the PAN Party to target novice voters and young people very promising. To provide opportunities for young people to participate in the democratic process actively, parties must implement youth-specific initiatives. The increasing number of undecided voters in the 2019 General Election motivates the PAN Party, which has a sizeable support base in Medan City, to intensify its efforts in garnering votes from undecided voters. With the cooperation and hard work of the cadres in Medan City, the optimism to realize PAN's vision as the leading political party in realizing a just and prosperous civil society, a good and clean government in a democratic and sovereign Indonesian state, and a blessed by Allah SWT, the Almighty God, is very open (Pan.or.id, 2023).

There is a significant disparity in the characteristics of Medan's pluralistic society in each sub-district. Medan Deli sub-district, for example, which had the largest DPT in the 2019 General Election, followed by Medan Helvetia and Medan Marelan, has a different electoral character, and therefore requires different strategies in mobilizing support. This reality requires appropriate efforts to gain sympathy. In addition, the influence of community, religious, and traditional leaders is strongly felt in every sub-district in Medan City. This indicates that the joint emphasis is focused on technical measures such as campaigning, socialization, and cadre/partisan development at the sub-district level (KPU RI, 2019). This article aims to find out the strategic actions taken by the National Mandate Party in Increasing Vote Acquisition in the 2024 General Election in Medan City.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method with a literature study approach. Qualitative research collects and analyses non-numerical data to understand individual social realities, including attitudes, beliefs, and motivations (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This research aims to determine the strategic actions taken by the National Mandate Party in increasing vote acquisition in the 2024 elections in Medan City. The results of the qualitative method are more descriptive, and the conclusions can be drawn easily from the data obtained. Data collection techniques are obtained from observation and document studies by collecting literature—data analysis techniques through data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing (Elliott, 2018).

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

a. Characteristics of Electoral Districts

Medan City has five electoral districts (Dapil) with sub-districts with different seats for Medan City DPRD members. The General Election Commission (KPU) of Medan City has determined that Electoral District (Dapil) 1 consists of the sub-districts of West Medan, Medan Baru, Medan Helvetia, and Medan Petisah, with eight seats. Dapil 2 consists of Medan Belawan, Medan Deli, Medan Labuhan, and Medan Marelan, with 12 seats. Dapil 3 has eight seats: Medan Perjuangan, Medan Tembung, and Medan Timur. Dapil 4 consists of ten seats of Medan Amplas, Medan Area, Medan Denai, and Medan Kota. Dapil 5 consists of Medan Johor, Medan Maimun, Medan Polonia, Medan Selayang, Medan Sunggal, and Medan Tuntungan, with 12 seats (KPU RI, 2019).

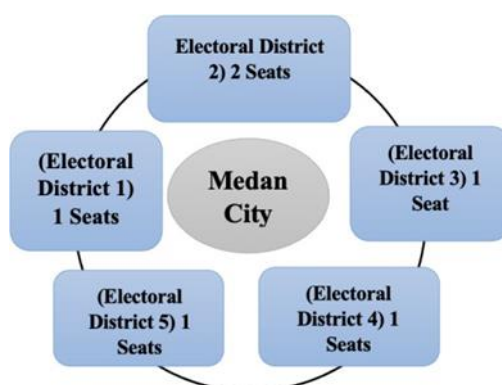


Figure 1. The number of seats in the Medan City Regional People's Representative Council in the 2019 Election

Looking at the PAN Party's seats in the 2019 elections, each Dapil has different characteristics in each election. These results provide a basis for conducting political mapping as the primary step in taking action. Political mapping based on the results of the 2019 elections can identify the characteristics of the community, voter behavior, and community groups that can be used to develop

winning strategies through mass media message approaches and field team actions. This step can be seen in Figure 1.

b. Competitor Analysis

In the 2019 elections, the Gerindra Party and PDIP-Perjuangan Party were the winners by sharing the seats with ten seats each at the Medan City DPRD level. Meanwhile, the PKS Party won seven seats, and the PAN Party won six. Golkar, Demokrat, and NasDem all won four seats. The Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI) and Hanura received two seats, and the United Development Party (PPP) received one seat. Referring to the 2014 election results, PDIP-Perjuangan won the most seats with nine seats, followed by Golkar with seven seats, Gerindra with six seats, PKS with five seats, Demokrat with five seats, PPP with five seats, PAN with four seats, NasDem, PKPI with two seats and PBB with one seat. This means that the party power map in Medan City continues to shift. For example, the Golkar Party won 7 seats in the 2014 edition and only four seats in 2019.

PAN's main competitor for the 10-seat target in the 2024 elections will have to face the PDIP-Perjuangan Party, which consistently won the most seats in the previous two editions. PAN can get the most votes by looking at the map of party strength in each Dapil. Therefore, the 2019 General Election data becomes the basis for designing strategic steps to attract voters in constituencies that do not have a solid party base, namely in constituencies 3 and 4. By placing five voters in each polling station targeting novice voters and youth, the opportunity to get a target of 10 seats is not impossible to achieve. Moreover, according to data from the Medan City KPU, in the 2020 Pilkada, the number of first-time voters reached 456,426 people. The PAN Party must focus on targeting novice voters, which are predicted to increase in the 2024 elections and have yet to make a choice (Suhartono, 2020).

c. Target

The targets or objectives to be achieved in the steps to increase votes include primary and secondary targets. Primary targets are the main targets in the plan to increase votes in the General Election. These targets include:

1. Young people residing in the Urban Village have a voting age between 17 and 30.
2. Youth activists who are consistent in fighting for their area.
3. First-time voters
4. Youth organisations in the kelurahan environment

Secondary targets include targeting voters who have experience in general elections. These targets include:

1. People with the right to vote are domiciled at the Urban Village and RT/RW levels.
2. People residing in Medan City
3. Community organisations

4. Community leaders

The mapping to attract voters' attention by involving various parties to target specific targets by emphasizing the following points:

1. Community Organisation

Each Electoral District (Dapil) has regional organizations that have a strong influence and position in influencing voters' decisions. Not a few voters make choices based on the interests of community organizations. Community organizations have various forms of movement, such as professional organizations (labor organizations), family organizations (Paguyuban), traditional organizations, and religious organizations.

2. Public Figures (Opinion Leaders)

The role of public figures is no less important in influencing voters. Respectful public figures influence their environment, such as religious leaders, traditional leaders, and people with particular positions. It is important to consider community leaders in shaping voters' opinions to support the PAN party. Targeting community leaders can increase the party's popularity and electability with community leaders' involvement.

3. Beginner and Youth Voters

The projected target of increasing seats in the 2024 elections focuses on beginner and youth voters as a vote bank that can increase the number of seats. Beginner and youth voters, as a group of relational voters, will be very enthusiastic in assessing the programs offered to improve welfare. This step will also attract participants to be actively involved in introducing PAN programs to the broader community.

4. Media Messages

Media messages influence instilling judgments and opinions in voters. Media messages to channel ideas and ideas have different characteristics in the digital era. The group of first-time voters who access social media is a strategic step to attract attention. High intensity can provide a cognitive effect for those who access it. Social media is very effective for young people. Messages through banners, billboards and advertisements in conventional media are other alternatives that need to be done, although the effect is different. The main focus is on the differences in the messages delivered, although the core messages have similarities.

5. Voters

Various literature sources mention that many groups of people choose abstention rather than making choices. The number of voters who have yet to make a choice is very high, so it is necessary to pay more attention to attracting the votes of this group. Departing from the 2019 Presidential Election, groups that have yet to choose tend to be disappointed with candidates and programmes.

It is necessary to reach out to this group.

6. Competitors/Rivals

Every party has a regional base of support that is a mainstay in increasing votes. PAN Party needs to remap the areas of support base and competitor vote barns based on the results of the 2019 Election so that the potential for losing votes can be avoided and additional votes can be increased.

Figure 1: Steps for Mapping Vote Targets

d. Strategic Planning Analysis

The steps in achieving the PAN Party's vote acquisition target in the 2024 elections require measurable strategic planning—the method of assessing with SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). The four factors can be used to see the extent of the strategic steps.

1. Strengths

This strategy planning is useful in measuring the strengths in the field. The PAN party has several strengths to get votes in the 2024 elections. First, the PAN Party has a good reputation in Medan City, which is shown by its contribution to the development of Medan City. Second, the commitment of PAN Party cadres who continue to contribute to changing Medan City society towards a positive direction. Third, the PAN Party in Medan City fulfils the target of 6 seats in the 2019 General Election in Medan City.

2. Weaknesses

The weaknesses of the PAN Party include: Firstly, in two General Elections, it has yet to be able to win seats and is still under the shadow of other parties. Second, PAN is identical to a party that leads to religious organisations, so supporters of different religions will be difficult to obtain. Third, PAN's support base in Medan City is still inferior to other major parties.

3. Opportunities

The opportunities for the PAN Party to welcome the 2024 elections are very large. Referring to the results of the 2019 elections, PAN fulfilled the desired seat target. It is not impossible that, with strategic steps, PAN can increase the number of seats. PAN has a high spirit in presenting a clean government to improve the welfare of the people of Medan City. The results of the Medan mayoral and deputy mayoral elections, which directed PAN's support to the Bobby Nasution and Aulia Rachman pair, were able to win, becoming a big capital for the 2024 elections.

4. Threats

The most pronounced threat to the PAN party is the loss of supporting votes due to internal party problems exposed by the media. These shadows can change voters' opinions in making their choices. Other party competitors, such as PDIP-Perjuangan and Gerindra, also threaten the PAN Party in increasing voter turnout in Medan City.

e. Program Steps

The party programme is one form of voter assessment of the party. For youth voter groups, party programmes are the starting point for voters to recognise the party's vision and mission to improve party welfare. The programme step begins with the emergence or introduction of young voters to programmes expected to attract voters' sympathy.

First, the initial step is to map the area as the right step to carry out socialisation activities, organise cadres in the target location and collect location information sources to serve as guidelines for further action. This step is intended to determine the priority scale that can win the 2024 Election by composing messages and accelerating programmes in the target locations to get votes. It can be done by conducting research and referring to the results of previous elections to find out the strength of supporters.

It was second, building relationships between actors. This program targets five new prospective voters in each of the 6,349 polling stations in 21 sub-districts of Medan City in the 2019 General Election. Efforts are needed to build communication and coordination networks at the sub-district level to evaluate the activities carried out. Finding five new voters at the district level and building coordinators at the sub-district level were the programme's main targets before moving on to the next stage. The process aims to build a good relationship with the parties who are the basis and can become PAN supporters for the 2024 elections (Syahputra, 2018).

It was third, improving the quality of candidates. Candidates who will be elected must have good quality and have figures to build the community. To achieve good candidate quality, it is necessary to improve cadre competency standards and candidate commitment shown by loyalty to the party's progress. The cadre training programme is one of the strategic steps to present quality candidates that can attract voters.

Table 1. Program Steps, Targets, Program Plans

Program		Target	Program Details
Mapping Electoral Districts		People who have the right to vote	- Seeking out areas where PAN sympathizers are based - Determine priority areas - Placing PAN cadres in support base locations to seek information that can be used for program purposes.
Building Relationships Between Actors		Youth, community leaders	- Find five new voters at the polling station level and appoint a coordinator at the sub-district level. - Build co-operation with youth and community leaders - Build good relationships with the media.
Improving Candidate Quality		PAN cadre	- Increase public discussion at the Urban Village level. - Improve the quality of legislative candidates. - Conduct cadre in accordance with the Articles of Association and Bylaws.

Source: Data processed by the author, 2023

f. Measurement

For the program to run smoothly with the desired targets, it needs measurement steps to evaluate and further develop to identify better strategies. Measurement can be done by conducting ongoing research. Several measurement models are offered to determine the achievements in technical vote attraction in the 2024 General Election.

1. Research Mix Methodology

Internal research is used to evaluate the achievement of targets in the field carried out by cadres to attract votes. Firstly, the technical process is carried out by conducting a survey spreading questionnaires in each sub-district to recognize public opinion towards PAN conducted by internal parties. She was second, conducting in-depth interviews with the public to identify the PAN party and program offerings. The aim is to find out whether the strategy design is effective.

2. Continuous Evaluation Meeting

This process is carried out to determine the performance of PAN cadres to attract youth votes to support the PAN Party. This step can measure defects that may arise from less-than-optimal performance by cadres. Evaluation meetings are held specifically to discuss new attraction strategies at the most basic level of the village.

3. Media Monitoring

This measurement is carried out by building public opinion through the media. Media monitoring functions to emphasise audiences through news and information conveyed by the media. Measurement is carried out by examining the extent to which the media plays a role in building opinions in the community. The condition, see the number of news recognising PAN and news of the activities of elected cadres. The higher the intensity of media reporting, the better the impact on the congestion of the audience.

4. Establishing Cooperation with Survey Institutions

This measurement step is carried out to determine the public opinion of recognising PAN and how the PAN party is in the eyes of voters. Cooperate with political survey institutions to quickly find out the steps that must be taken to attract new voters.

CONCLUSIONS

Each electoral district has different characteristics and must determine different courses of action to build a winning strategy. The characteristics of electoral districts are strongly influenced by customs, habits, and religion that determine the individuals within them. The youth voter group is a potential target to become a vote bank in elections, so it is necessary to focus on strategic steps to attract voters. Individual knowledge strongly influences actions towards objects. This means that good

knowledge instilled by the PAN Party will affect individual judgment and knowledge. By knowing the strategic plan that will be implemented, this paper has clear ideas to be implemented with measurable targets, clear implementation steps, and open programs. It is concerned with the code of ethics in the process. Indeed, the realization of the strategic plan requires the participation of all parties to support this plan. The focus of novice voters and youth is the main target of the strategic plan to be carried out, which will be achieved by targeting five voters in each polling station and forming a network of term coordination in each sub-district.

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