

ABSTRACT

This research examines the personal branding strategy of H. Romi Hariyanto in building political strength in Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency, particularly during the 2020 regional election and throughout his tenure as regent. The findings reveal that Romi applies a grassroots communication approach, maintains consistent presence among the community, and develops a network of volunteers based on kinship and local leaders. His low-profile communication style, openness to criticism, and active participation in social events and local traditions reinforce his image as a leader close to the people. Romi's political strength is rooted in social, cultural, and personal capital, which he has built through emotional closeness, respect for local values, and a consistent reputation since his time as chairman of the local parliament. However, obstacles remain, such as public expectations for more assertive and prompt responses to sensitive issues, and the potential exclusivity in volunteer recruitment based on kinship. Overall, Romi Hariyanto's personal branding is considered effective in building public trust and loyalty, although improvements in responsiveness, inclusivity, and communication innovation are needed to broaden his support base in the future.

Keywords: Personal Branding, Political Communication, Local Leadership,

INTISARI

Penelitian ini membahas strategi personal branding H. Romi Hariyanto dalam membangun kekuatan politik di Kabupaten Tanjung Jabung Timur, khususnya pada Pilkada 2020 dan masa kepemimpinannya sebagai bupati. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Romi menerapkan strategi komunikasi yang membumi, konsisten hadir di tengah masyarakat, serta membangun jaringan relawan berbasis kekerabatan dan tokoh lokal. Gaya komunikasi low profile, keterbukaan terhadap kritik, dan keterlibatan aktif dalam acara sosial serta tradisi lokal memperkuat citra Romi sebagai pemimpin dekat rakyat. Kekuatan politik Romi bersumber dari modal sosial, budaya, dan personal yang ia bangun melalui kedekatan emosional, penghormatan terhadap nilai-nilai adat, dan reputasi yang konsisten sejak menjadi Ketua DPRD. Namun, terdapat hambatan berupa ekspektasi masyarakat terhadap respons yang lebih tegas dan cepat atas isu-isu sensitif, serta potensi eksklusivitas dalam rekrutmen relawan berbasis kekerabatan. Secara umum, personal branding Romi Hariyanto dinilai efektif dalam membangun kepercayaan dan loyalitas masyarakat, meskipun perlu peningkatan responsivitas, inklusivitas, dan inovasi komunikasi agar dapat memperluas basis dukungan di masa mendatang.

Kata Kunci: Personal Branding, Komunikasi Politik, Kepemimpinan Lokal