From political marketing to political literacy: Beginner voter's brand new meaning for developing political party's advertising as socialization media in the election

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Abstract: Most political parties use advertising to persuade voters in the election. For that reason, the party's advertisings focus on how to make the good branding for political party's image by making political marketing approach. This research aims to develop political advertising as a socialization media as well as to educate beginner voters about political knowledge. Based on the reception analysis to the beginner voters, beginner voters make the different interpretation to the party's advertising in the election. Using participatory action research, the beginner voters involve to create new forms of party's advertising based in their interpretation. Due to their involvement on the party's advertising production, they make it by using political literacy approach for strengthening their own political knowledge. For beginner voters, political advertising could be developed as the creative instrument as campaign forms to increase the understanding of political party. Political advertising also become effective political learning tools to literate the public about politics.

Keywords: beginner voters, party's advertising, participatory action research, political literacy, socialization media

Introduction

Political advertising is the form of political communication that will give the opportunity for both political parties and their candidates to promote their vision, mission, as well as the party's work planning. Those political advertising plays an important role within campaign period of the Indonesian election in 2014. Ahead of the 2014 Elections, the number of political ads that aired on a variety of television stations contains the implied message that want delivered by political parties to the public. The number of political parties which compete in the 2014 Elections resulted in the large number of political advertising exposure to people with various political party slogans each [1]. While the polls were conducted, political advertising were used as if any commercial advertisement products that are served to the consumers. Moreover, the political advertisement on the television had been the socialization media toward the public about political parties. In addition, political parties who were affiliated with the owners of the media would reach the publicity and have greater access to broadcast their political advertising to the public.

Table 1. The relationship between media ownership and the political parties' affiliation

Group	TV Station	Owner	Political Affiliation
MNC Group	RCTI, MNC TV Global TV	Harry Tanoesodibjo	Hanura
Media Group	Metro TV	Surya Paloh	Nasdem
Visi Media Asia	TV One, ANTV	Aburizal Bakrie	Golkar
Elang Mahkota Teknologi	SCTV, Indosiar	Eddy Kusnadi Sariatmadja	Unspecified
CT Crop	Trans TV, Trans7	Chairul Tanjung	Unspecified

Source : Perludem, 2014

According to Hanta Yuda (2014), the result of data survey that summarized the facts in October 2013, 74% revealed that media has influenced the voter's preferences, while the rest 8% stated no effect, and 18% claimed did not know/no answer. The result from this survey also indicate that media plays the role as the information source to the public about political parties. Whereas, in the period of October 2013, survey data pointed that as much as 23,01% respondents said that mass media were the other information source for the public. Meanwhile, the political party's face-to-face socialization placed only on the fifth ranks (2,77%) from the respondent votes, followed by the figure of the political parties as many as 1,78% respondent votes [2]. It is clear that media has the ability to influence public opinion and political behavior of society. Information brought by the mass media could be seen and be read directly by the people who are the rights holder to vote in the election.

The Indonesian election 2014 has a new challenge in organizing this democracy. From the data released by General Election Commission (KPU), the total number of registered voters in the election 2014 was 186.612.255 residents of Indonesia. From this total number, 20-30% was the beginner voters [3]. They are a group of young voters who have the first time to vote in the election. Definitely, they need more political information than the other voter categories. In this regards, political advertising could be the one of the socialization media and information resources of all matters concerning to the election and political parties.

Most of the political parties participating in the election 2014 were still centering their political ads to the form of building the image. In general, political marketing is designed to influence people's preferences in the election. The implementation of political marketing is carried on by building a certain brand image to win voter perceptions. The function of political marketing in the election 2014 was still defined to promote a certain political figure or party elite. The results of the study in 2015 about the reception analysis of the beginner voter toward the winner of the political party advertising in the election 2014 found that *each political party ad of the winning in the election 2014 has offered preferred reading that emphasized on the political party commodities which called by 4P (Policy, Person, Party, Presentation) of political marketing activities.*

Table 2. Political party ad contents

Political party ads content	PDI-P PARTY	GOLKAR PARTY	GERINDRA PARTY	PREFERRED READING
POLICY	Food import practice issue Self sufficiency policy	Sustainable development program.	Power of change in action programs parties	Apply the function of advertising to persuade public
PERSON	Megawati Soekarnoputri Puan Maharani	Middle aged person Soeharto	Prabowo Subianto Moreno Soeprapto	Public figure endorser
POLITICAL PARTY	Party logo, Number of participation	Party logo, Number of participation	Party logo, Number of participation	Party's attribute and tagline recognized and popular
PRESENTATION	Icon white muzzle a bull's head, the Indonesian flag Dominance of red, white, and black	Icon Banyan tree and Dominance of yellow	Icon eagle's head Dominance of red and gold	Brand image political party

Source : Triwardani and Wiendijarti , 2015

The information dissemination about political parties in political advertising is still superficial. Political parties aimed only to promote their profile and recall to the party's identity. On the other hand, the beginner voters, as the audience of the political party ads at once, also actively read the ads messages. Based on the reception analysis, it was found that the beginner voter's reception position toward the ads of the political party winning in the election 2014 were different from the preferred reading offered.

There was a group of informants who receiving the advertising messages as exactly as the preferred reading. In addition, there were also groups of informants who opposing all over the ads messages delivered, while another

group of informants negotiated the ads messages compared with the previous information they had. The differences of reception position toward the content of political party ads message strongly influenced by the contextual aspects of the voters. Socio-cultural background, level of education, living environment, and other media exposure has becoming a form of reference frame regarded to the process of receiving the political parties advertising messages [3]. Therefore, this fact showed that the beginner voters have made political advertising as a source of political information. However, the political advertising was not the only socialization media for them. Beginner voters also gave a different meaning on political ads messages they're watched. Thus, political advertising should be developed as the literacy media for the beginner voters to provide knowledge and increase their political participation.

This research aims to develop political advertising as an insightful literacy of socialization media. Political advertising plays an important role in disseminating information about political parties and voters became the primary target of the contestants, either candidates or parties, who advertise themselves in the period of political campaign. Engaging the beginner voter in the process of producing political ads messages would give recommendations to the political parties regarded to the content of the political ads messages, that is any information and political issues needed by the voters as their political reference.

Method

This study focused on the development of political advertising as socialization media by using *participatory action research* and placing the beginner voters as the producer of advertising messages with insightful political literacy. *Participatory action research* is a research method that is implemented in a participatory manner among the lower-level communities with the spirit of encouraging transformative actions to do the liberation in the society from the shackles of ideology and power relations.

According to the context of this study, voters were engaged to be the part of reflective action on political party advertising of the election winner in 2014, and then developed the content of political advertising by using the point of view of the voters. The political advertising message development was created by the voter's orientation rather than the political party orientation. There are three stages in this research:

    a. Conducting the survey among beginner voters about the role of political advertising as a political socialization media and their opinion about the content of the political parties ads messages, especially toward the political parties winning in the election 2014.
    b. Conducting focus group discussion (FGD) to a number of beginner voters about issues or political information and designing political advertising messages with insightful political literacy. The participants are students who have been participated on the previous research. Numbers of participant are 10 persons divided into three groups.
    c. Conducting a design workshop of political party advertising with an insightful literacy collaborated with the Audio Visual laboratory UPNVY.
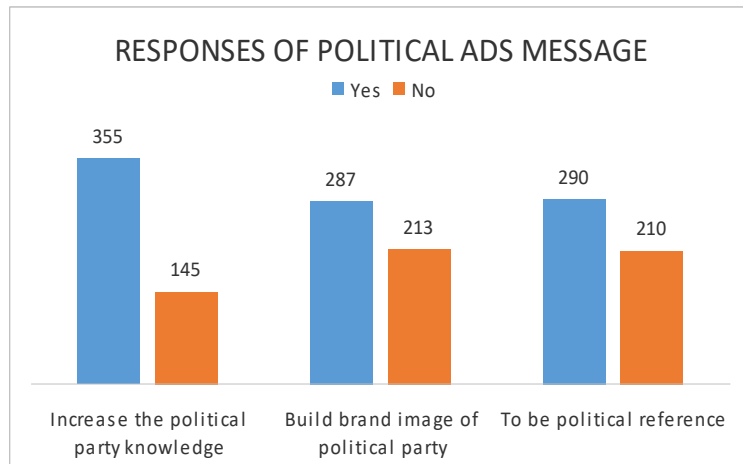
Results and discussion

In a climate of political competition, political parties should be fighting for the constituents. Political marketing strategy of the party should be able to answer the needs of community politics. Society needs all of the information and political data clearly and accurately. Information about political parties such as the work planning, ideology, expectations and future leadership figures, packaged in such a way become a political product delivered through political advertising.

The survey result, participating 500 respondents of beginner voters in Yogyakarta, stated that PDI-Perjuangan's political advertising (47%) were the most preferred political party ads, while in second and third position, respectively, were Gerindra (40%) and Golkar (13%). The ads messages delivered by PDI-Perjuangan considered having the issue of community problems, such as food security and energy independence compared to other political parties ads. The majority of beginning voters (63%) indicated that political ads could be the socialization media to the public.

The beginning voter's responses against the political party ads messages of the winner in elections 2014 were very diverse. The majority of voters by 71% revealed that political party ads have given political knowledge, and only 29% said no. The voter percentage by 58% also made the political party advertising as a political reference (58%). Based on branding function point of view, 57% of voters agreed that the political party ads messages built a specific brand image. This study showed that 55% of voters believe that the ads messages in the election 2014 needed some further development. Only 45% voters said no.

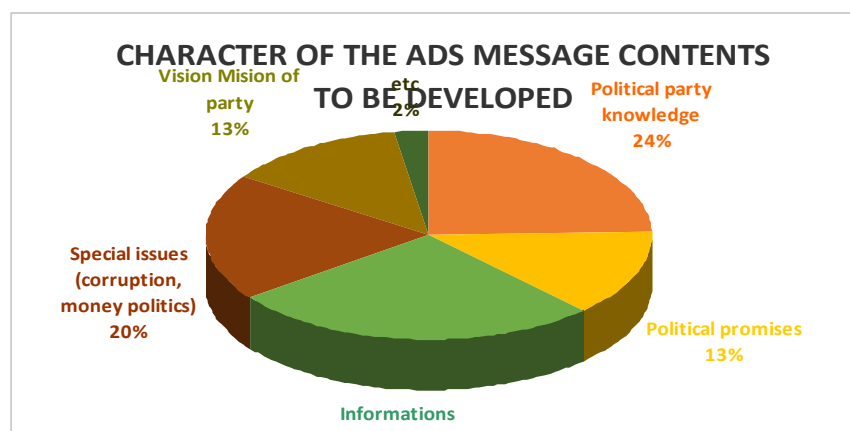**Table 3. Beginner voter responses against political advertising messages**

RESPONSES OF POLITICAL ADS MESSAGE

■ Yes ■ No

	Increase the political party knowledge	Build brand image of political party	To be political reference
Yes	355	287	290
No	145	213	210

Source: olahan data peneliti, 2016

Beginner voters gave various inputs to the political party ads messages. Advertising messages, which is originally focused only on the 4 P (Person, Policy, Political party and Presentation), is expected to be developed to literacy political messages. During the period of the election campaign, public will receive massive information. If the political message is relatively identical, then it will be difficult for the public to identify the source of those political messages.

Segmentation is very important considering the political parties are expected to address all the problems faced by the diverse groups who need answers and solutions are not the same. The differences that emerged as a result of this segmentation ultimately provides uniqueness and characterize its own candidate who does it (Firmanzah, 2008:210) [5]. Political parties often forget this is especially for novice voters. The large number of community groups with differing characteristics requiring appropriate approach with individual characteristics, so candidates have to differentiate itself from its competitors in order to understand who the candidate voters trusted can represent the interests and beliefs (Benoit, et al, 1998:1) [6].

27% of voters believed that political party advertising could be able to provide information about the election, the knowledge of the political parties (24%), and certain selected topics that raised political issues such as money politics, or abstentions (20%). Whereas, the messages that contain political promise (14%), vision and mission of the party (13%), and others (2%) should not be the dominant character of advertising.

**Table 4. Recommendations of the character contents of the advertising message**

CHARACTER OF THE ADS MESSAGE CONTENTS TO BE DEVELOPED

- Vision Mision of party 13%
- etc 2%
- Political party knowledge 24%
- Political promises 13%
- Informations ...
- Special issues (corruption, money politics) 20%

Source : processed data researcher, 2016

Political party ads were made by considering various optional strategies. Those strategies generally aim to provide information, persuade, and remind the audience. However, the most prominent insight on the political party ad-winning in election 2014 was the formation of brand image. This political image in the form of image, reputation, and credibility of the political parties were visualized by certain attributes attached to a political party. The appealing of the message was still concerning to the party leader as the dominant image in political party ads.

Figure 1. Comparative figures the party figures in advertisements

The ads message strategy that using a simple slogan language and easy to remember become the party advertising keywords. For instance, PDI-P with the slogan "Great Indonesia", Golkar with the slogan "Vote Golkar, Voice of the People", and Gerindra with the slogan "Indonesia Asian Tigers". The keywords in the ads slogan become the appealing message and the power to internalize the brand in people's mind.
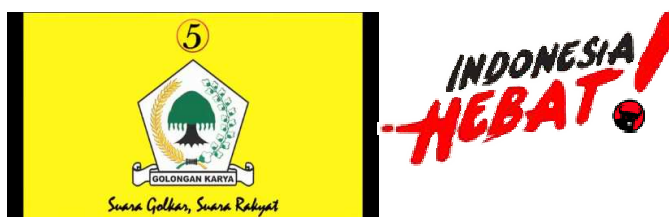
Figure 2. A comparison of the party's slogan in the advertisement

Those facts indicate that political party ads have the power as the media of political socialization that build awareness and cognition level about politics. These conditions provide opportunity to the political parties to become the media of political literacy for the community. The meaning of political literacy could be seen in three aspects, namely knowledge about politics (political knowledge), attitudes or political behavior, and the ability in politics (political skill).

This study attempts to involve beginner voters in the process to produce the messages on political advertising. FGD was held with the aim of seeing the political party ads winning in the election 2014 and discussing how the political advertising should be developed as the political literacy media among the beginner voters. In this activity, each group of FGD reconstructed the political party ads of the election 2014 winner.

Psychologically, voters have different characteristics with the budding category of adult voters. Beginner voters tend to be critical, it is not easy to believe, an independent, supporting the change and is very familiar with the media. This characteristic is quite conducive to build a community of intelligent voters in the election, namely the voters who have rational considerations in determining its options. At FGD activities, each group winner's political party advertising overhaul of elections of 2014.

In General, the participants of the FGD argues that even if the appeal of the advertising message party hasn't changed, still focused on the candidate or party of characters as endorser display ads, but advertising of political parties is already better than the previous elections of party advertising. Some input about the content of the advertising message of political parties summarized in three groups of FGD is as follows:

1. Message-oriented issues rather than brand image

Though most of the participants of FGD are quite skeptical with political parties that are willing to change the orientation of the advertising party, from political party centered to voter centered, with emphasis on the issues rather than the brand image, but still there is hope that there is a political party that is willing to take on the role of educating the electorate in particular political party that has a specific target for educated voters and the rational

2. An insightful message of political literacy

Still related to the orientation of the advertising message to the party, political parties have not yet succeeded in creating the product ads that invite how voters should vote and think intelligently towards issues or public policies. Advertising of political parties is still concentrated on the candidates personalities. Political advertising motifs also remembered strengthens the image of the candidate with positive claims are expected to confirm the perceptions of voters against the party or candidate. FGD participants said that the party's ads can be packaged with visual images of more authentic in representing the issues without having to accentuate the image character of party leaders. In the discussion it appears the creative ideas of the FGD participants to provide an alternative party advertising messages.

Figure 3. Strategy of advertising message of beginner voter version

FGD for participants, the issues become political advertising messages can be visualized with a more creative and attracted the attention of voters, especially the beginners voters. Suppose that highlights the phenomenon among novice voters golput, use positive messages attraction strategy is persuasion can build awareness and strengthen voter perceptions about the importance of using the novice voters voting rights in elections (see Figure 3).

 Political parties can develop advertising messages an insightful political literacy are useful for political learning for beginner voters. For example, raised the issue of corruption and money politics practices, advertising messages can be packaged with the use of the language is short, simple and easy to remember. The language of the advertisements gives the meaning of persuasion while simultaneously providing information to voters about a political party that supports the eradication of corruption and money politics practices rejected.

Figure 4. Creative advertising language of beginner voter version

Hence, political advertising has the power to become a media literacy for voters. Political parties can use advertising as a medium of dissemination media for promotion at the same time the voters during the election campaign. Political party advertising messages that insightful political participation will encourage literacy and increase political knowledge for beginner voters.

Conclusions

Political ads that can be easily seen ranging from posters, banners, billboards, television commercials to the internet in the media tend to accentuate the candidates and does not attempt to provide clear information so that people many feel that political advertising only is a plea that did not demonstrate the required competencies. In essence a political advertisement in Indonesia is still grappling with three things, namely the candidates and political parties prefer to exalt the image of the less important issues raised in his ads and tend to use emotional shades alone than rationality (Danial, 2009:225) [7]. Although television has an ability that is not owned by any media. But by watching television commercials do not automatically become a person can determine its decision. It's time the political parties in Indonesia to use political advertising campaign as a media literacy approach. Political advertising on television giving insightful information literacy exposure for the community so that the emergence of trust that becomes the driving force the party's choice in the upcoming elections.

Acknowledgement

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