



Village women's politics: *Maloe mamat* and *ume hana* as village heads' victory strategy

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ABSTRACT

This research expands the study of women's political strategies in local democracy which is the focus of research in Letneo Village, TTU Regency. This research uses Peter Schoder's theory of political strategy as a knife in analyzing the social facts that occur. The method used is descriptive qualitative with the technique for determining informants being purposive sampling and data collection techniques in the form of documentation, interviews and observation and data triangulation. The results found in achieving victory Mariana Tahu used the *maloe mamat* and *ume hana* strategies as defensive and offensive strategies. This research also expands studies on political strategy theory that strategies using local culture are still relevant in Indonesia amidst the rise of strategies using social media and money politics, especially in villages that still adhere to local culture. A strategy that is quite relevant to apply in areas where patriarchal culture is very strong is to use local culture which is adopted with a very subtle approach so as to get support from men. Based on this research, there are suggestions for women to instill a courageous and ethical mentality to fight in the election space so that they can become a channel for aspirations that represent women's interests.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This research begins with the fact that the female candidate won in Letneo Village, which in fact is a patriarchal cultural environment and this female candidate has the status of daughter-in-law in Letneo Village. The author examines this fact by focusing on the political strategies used by female candidates in the Letneo Village head election. The aim of this research is to expand the study of women's political strategies in local democracy. This research uses Peter Schoder's theory of political strategy as a knife to examine the social facts that occur.

Strategy is a planning process to achieve goals (Abd.Rahman Rahim dan Enny Radjab, 2016). Strategy is used in various scientific fields, including political science studies, which places strategy as a way to gain power. In the past, the term political strategy was very classic, as proposed by Clausewitz as a tactic to achieve victory in battle (Strachan, 2022). Classic western political strategies such as violence, coercion and war to gain power underwent a transformation in contemporary politics (after World War II) and the term strategy was developed by Richard Betts, Lawrence Freedman, Colin Gray, Edward Luttwak, and Hew Strachan. The strategy for gaining power in contemporary politics is in a more humane, harmonious, dignified way, through consensus (Dimitriu, 2020) in the form of policies, one of which is adopting the ideology of

democracy because it is considered that this understanding prioritizes the voice (choice) of the majority as a result of consensus (Doeser & Frantzen, 2022).

The development of political strategy after the emergence of democracy is a way to achieve victory in general elections (Abd. Rasyid & Qodir, 2021), as stated by Peter Schoder that political strategy is a strategy used to realize political ideals (Schoder, 2010). The development of studies on political strategy in the international context of Canada, the United States, Iceland, India by reflecting environmental issues into political branding as a strategy in winning elections (Holloway & Hendrie, 2023). Apart from that, in America they are starting to use science issues as a political brand (Newman, 2020), and social media as a political strategy (Suuronen et al., 2022) and in India they are also implementing political strategies using social media as a form of political communication and have large influence in determining choices (Varughese & Semetko, 2022) not only in India but also proven in research by Jihene that marketing concepts are also successful in Africa (Lazreg et al., 2023). Based on research on the development of world political strategy, there has been development by carrying out campaigns using science and technology in the form of social media in political marketing (Semetko, 2022).

The development of studies on political strategy also occurred in Indonesia. Radical political strategies using violence, coercion, torture were also applied in Indonesia during the colonial period, even after independence and the introduction of democracy, radical political strategies still occurred in Eastern Indonesia (Klinken, 2016), Ambon, Maluku (Klinken, 2008), and the collapse of the Soeharto regime. rejuvenating the understanding of democracy in a firm manner which has resulted in the transformation of political strategies into a more humanistic one which is described in the following research.

Nyarwi Ahmad's research shows that political strategies in elections in Indonesia adopt business and commercial marketing concepts and techniques called "political marketing" as the contestants' philosophy to help them achieve their goals, using communication and campaign methods as well as social media as marketing tools. politics of conveying vision and mission thereby constructing patterns of political consumerism and political activism in Indonesian politics (Ahmad, 2021). Paul Waley's research shows that coalition strategies are used by local communities in areas affected by transmigration such as Lampung to win elections (Warganegara & Waley, 2022). Darwin's research shows that female candidates in Indonesia tend to be more creative, namely combining political marketing with social media campaigns through the use of Islamic personalization (Darwin & Haryanto, 2021), as well as money to facilitate political campaigns (Djumadin & Farid, 2023) and prove the increase in women's political participation local democracy.

Apart from using strategy 4.0 through social media, a quite popular strategy is "dawn attacks" or transactional politics which means vote buying (Harahap et al., 2023), patronage and clientalism (Winters, 2016). As a result, the election stages in Indonesia present a dilemma for candidates, especially women (Ambardi, 2023). Starting from the previous research described above, this research expands the study of women's political strategies in the local realm that political strategies using social media, money politics and patronage are not obstacles in achieving victory in Indonesia, but using local culture as a political strategy can also achieve victory. This is proven by Setiajid's research that by using local Javanese culture "*blusukan*" and "*familism*" the Gibran-Teguh pair succeeded in winning the 2020 Surakarta Mayor Election (Demokrasi & Studi, 2020). Payong's research also shows that the victory of Robertus Rebon Kereta (RRK) in the legislative elections in East Flores can be achieved by implementing the local cultural political strategy of "*gemohing*" (Payong, 2021). Haryanto's research also proves Otto Ihalauw's victory in the Sorong Regency regional head election by using the local cultural political strategy "*eastern cloth*" (Haryanto, 2015). Thus, based on previous research, it shows a gap that amidst mainstream strategies that use social media, dawn attacks, patronage strategies that use local culture are also still relevant in developing countries like Indonesia.

This research strengthens the argument that political strategies using local culture are also able to achieve victory in general elections, but this research is different from previous research. This research examines the facts about the victory of female village head candidates who used local culture (everyday life of village women) as a strategy to achieve victory in the general election for Letneo village head, TTU Regency, NTT Province. The local culture referred to in this research

is the rich eastern culture of the Dawan tribe of TTU Regency which covers various aspects of community life, such as customs, art, language, traditional clothing, typical food, and various traditions passed down from generation to generation (Geograf, 2023) . This research uses Peter Schoder's theory of political strategy as a knife in examining the research focus. Peter Schoder defines political strategy into 2 parts, namely offensive strategy and defensive strategy (Schoder, 2010). An offensive strategy is a strategy to attack political opponents in general elections (Yuliani & Ardianto, 2020) while a defensive strategy is a strategy to defend votes in elections, usually this strategy is carried out by incumbents in protecting the vote base of political opponents (Putriwani, 2021).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses descriptive qualitative research methods (John w. Creswell, 2014) to describe the winning strategies of female candidates in Letneo Village. The technique for determining informants used was a purposive sampling technique, namely chosen deliberately based on considerations of being able to provide comprehensive data (Campbell S, Greenwood M, Prior S, 2020) so the informant was the selected village head candidate Mariana Tahu, a traditional figure in Letneo Village. , the people of Letneo Village, the success team for the elected village head candidate. Data collection techniques using in-depth interviews, documentation, observation about the winning strategy used by Mariana Tahu (Omolola A. Adeoye-Olatunde Pharm.D., M.S., 2021).(Omolola A. Adeoye-Olatunde Pharm.D., M.S., 2021). The research data was processed in several stages, namely reduction, display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Jafa, 2022).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Women's courage in the local political arena in the current patriarchal culture

Letneo Village is located in West Insana District, TTU Regency, this village is occupied by the Dawan tribe, which in fact has a patriarchal culture. The patriarchal culture of this tribe has been inherited from birth, namely that power and legitimacy have been given to men to become leaders who are responsible for their families, so the generation directly follows the father's lineage. The power and legitimacy given to men is not limited to lineage but extends to control of family and tribal assets and property. Furthermore, the power and legitimacy given to men dominates in everyday life which creates a distance between men and women as evidenced by every traditional ritual. Men's authority is to lead and make decisions and it is the woman's job to prepare all consumption needs. Thus, patriarchal culture can hinder women's political progress (Chattier, 2015).

The patriarchal culture in Letneo Village is very strong, shown by the domination of men in all aspects, including the right to education which is prioritized for boys, this was explained by Anton as secretary of Leteno Village. "Getting an education is more encouraged for boys because they are given the responsibility to support their families."

Access to education prioritizes men because it is assumed that men will have the responsibility to support their families. In all aspects of life, women's position is always given second place, so it is not surprising that women's representation in the areas of education, village government, and access to work is very small and on average they work as housewives, as evidenced by the results of an interview with Silvi as a Letneo village official: "The average educational background of women in Letneo Village is Middle school equivalent and livelihood is as a farmer, housewife household, the representation of women working in the village office is only 1 (one) person as a village official with the position of planning head."

The patriarchal culture in Letneo Village has been constructed for hundreds of years and research results show that the patriarchal culture in Letneo Village has an impact on (1) the minimal role of women in village development and this finding supports the research arguments of Wula and Anggraini (Wula & Anggraini, 2022) which is proven by the results In interviews, on average, very few women were involved in village activities due to low levels of self-confidence. (2) The high rate of domestic violence (Farhan et al., 2019) (SONLAI, 2021), (3) the village government's low level of concern for women's issues (Bayo & Tanaya, 2020) as evidenced by the budget for Posyandu cadres in Letneo village of approximately Rp. 12,000,000 and the budget for women's empowerment is approximately IDR 10,000,000 which has an impact on the high stunting

rate in Letneo Village of 60 people in 2021 which results in widespread low quality of health in a weak economy. All the impacts that occurred in Letneo Village forced women to come out of adversity by adopting a brave attitude. A brave attitude means being brave enough to act and take risks in sad conditions (Hajar et al., 2022), this was explained by Merry as a resident of Letneo Village.

Apart from the impact of patriarchal culture, there are other factors that open the flow of thought for women in Letneo Village to have the courage to act, namely, (1) The role of the Yabiku NGO in socializing the importance of women's representation in the political space. (2) Case of misappropriation of funds committed by the former Head of Letneo Village (Woso, 2024). This case caused a loss of trust among some people, especially women, in the performance of the Letneo Village government. This case also influenced some people in Letneo Village to give legitimacy to women to compete in local politics in the village head election. The findings from this research support Ruwani Renuka's research argument (Renuka & Srimulyani, 2015) that women will dare to act if they are in a situation that requires women to act. In this way, Letneo Village women's sense of self-confidence becomes greater to fight in the local political arena in the current of patriarchal culture.

Maloe mamat and ume hana as a winning strategy

Politics is something dynamic and can influence all aspects including decisions and this can be done if you have power, so it is not surprising that many people fight for power using various strategies, both humanist and radical (Christensen et al., 2023). Peter Schoder groups political strategies into two parts, namely strategies for attacking (offensive) and strategies for defending in a fight (defensive). Offensive strategies in general election politics are illustrated by the methods used by candidates to attack political opponents by influencing the public to choose the candidate. Meanwhile, the defensive strategy is illustrated by defending the mass/base so that it is not influenced by political opponents (Joko Setyoko & Hendro Waluyo, 2021). In local democracy, the 2023 Letneo village head election was won by a female candidate named Mariana Tahu, S.Pd with 245 votes. Reflecting on the strategy theory put forward by Peter Schoder, Mariana Tahu used offensive and defensive strategies.

Letneo Village is located in West Insana District, TTU Regency and is implementing local democratic village head elections simultaneously on May 17 2023. The stages and schedule for village head elections in Letneo Village are running according to TTU Regent's Decree No: 576/KEP/HK/XII/2022. The community actively participated in the village head election as evidenced by the presence of 7 candidates who registered as potential candidates consisting of 2 people representing women and 5 people representing men, 7 people who ran as follows: (1) Kanisius Funan, (2) Ferdinandus Naitefa, (3) Paskalia, (4) David Neno Naisali, (5) Philippus Bala, (6) Fenansius Leu, S.P, (7) Mariana Tahu, S.Pd. Based on the data, it has proven the courage of women to fight for local democracy amidst the strong patriarchal culture in Letneo Village.

At the stage of nominating prospective candidates, political dynamics occur in terms of the requirements to become a candidate for village head. In accordance with the Decree of the Regent of TTU No: 576/KEP/HK/XII/2022, if there are more than 5 prospective candidates who meet the requirements, an additional selection will be carried out which includes the criteria (1) Education proven by a Bachelor's degree certificate gets an additional 5 points, second strata gets an additional 10 points. (2) Work experience as proven by SK, (3) Age. In accordance with these criteria, on March 21 2023, there were 6 people who registered themselves as potential candidates, consisting of 5 men and 1 woman in the name of Paskalia, however, considering additional selection, it was predicted that the female candidate in the name of Paskalia would fail because of the diploma qualifications. and work experience, so Mariana Tahu intends to nominate with consideration of fulfilling these 3 additional requirements. Based on the results of the additional selection, 5 people were determined as candidates for village head (data attached in table 1) and Mariana Tahu received the highest points due to educational criteria with a Bachelor's degree and work experience as a teacher. Thus, based on data, it has proven the courage of women to fight in local democracy.

Table 1. Votes obtained for the election of letneo village head

Candidate	Serial Number	Name of Candidate	Votes Obtained
	1	Mariana Tahu,S.Pd	245
	2	Ferdinandus Naitefa	15
	3	Kanisius Funan	203
	4	Philipus Bala	42
	5	Fenansius Leu	189

Source: Report on the results of the 2023-2029 Leteneo Village Head election

In achieving victory, Mariana Tahu carried out offensive and defensive strategies. The initial strategy implemented was defensive which included: applying the traditions of *maloe mamat* and *ume hane* as a medium to gain confidence in achieving victory. The offensive strategy implemented is: (1) Strategic Vision and Mission, (2) Local culture as a decay amidst the flow of patriarchal culture.

Defensive Strategy

Mariana Tahu is a person who comes from the matrilinear culture of Malacca Regency and is married to a man from Letneo Village who adheres to patrilinear culture, her status in Letneo Village is as a son-in-law. Mariana Tahu works as a junior high school teacher and carries out her activities as a woman should in the midst of a patriarchal culture. He is active in social life in Letneo Village and is actively involved in all traditional rituals, both mourning events (people die) and joyful events (weddings, etc.). Mariana Tahu received support starting from the community's assessment of her activeness in social activities for sorrow and joy, which she carried out through the habits of *maloe mamat* and *ume hana*. This habit has become entrenched in the Dawan tribe, *maloe mamat* which means chewing betel nut and lime. This habit is carried out every day and is even used as a treat when welcoming guests, a traditional ritual, and even an introduction to meetings, both formal and informal. *Ume Hana* is a term for cooking activities in the Dawan tribe, cooking both at home and during traditional rituals and even social activities. Ume Hana is carried out by women who are entrusted with consumption management. Traditional rituals and social activities are usually carried out together or in terms of working together in cooking.

Reflecting on Mariana Tahu's active participation in all series of activities in Letneo Village, it has indirectly, without realizing it, increased the trust of the people of Letneo Village in her, especially women, both mothers and millennials. Through the *maloe mamat* and *ume hana* culture, Mariana Tahu socializes herself, provides empowerment to women and promises better change. Based on the theory of defensive strategy, the method used by Mariana Tahu is a strategy to secure the initial supporting vote base obtained with the *maloe mamat* and *ume hana* routine. Thus, the strategies used for political socialization can be collaborated with local culture.

Offensive strategy

Strategic Vision and Mission

In getting community support from Letneo Village, Mariana Tahu took the first step, namely mapping all the problems that occurred in Letneo Village, namely stunting, low levels of education, land tax which was a burden on the community, the need for clean water, difficulty in affording fertilizer and quality seeds and low participation of women. All these problems are packaged and will be resolved with a vision and mission. Mariana Tahu explained this when asked the question, "What was the initial strategy used to gain support from the people of Letneo Village?"

"The initial strategy is to address the problems of stunting, low levels of education, land tax which is a burden on the community, the need for clean water, difficulty in affording fertilizer and quality seeds, low participation of women and will be resolved through my Vision and Mission. If I am elected I will build Letneo Village into a better place. Good"

Table 2. Mariana Tahu vision and mission

Visi	Misi
Making Letneo Village better and more peaceful	Completed the construction of the Chapel Provide clean water Environmental management and building infrastructure for village roads and farm roads

Visi	Misi
	Community economic empowerment in the fields of agriculture and animal husbandry.
	Making Letneo a tourist village for Ikat Weaving.

Local culture as a decay amidst the flow of patriarchal culture

After attacking using vision and mission. Mariana Tahu has a motto, namely "*nekaf mese, ansaof mese he ta'fena pah letneo*" which means one heart, one determination to build Letneo Village (Mamun, 2023). This motto is taken from the customs and philosophy of life of the Dawan tribe. With this motto, Mariana Tahu stole the attention of the people of Letneo Village and received support from the people of Letneo Village, even though she was a daughter-in-law, she had the intention and determination in the form of unity to build Letneo Village. This was expressed by Philipus Bala as a resident of Letneo Village. The answer to the question "Amidst the strong current of patriarchal culture in Letneo Village, what makes you support Mariana Tahu?"

"I provide support because even though she is a woman and has the status of a daughter-in-law in this village, she has a good attitude, is humble, caring and is actively involved in traditional activities, both mourning and events and activities in this village and has a strong motto, namely "*nekaf mese, ansaof mese he ta'fena pah letneo.*"

After getting support from men, to get full support and blessing from the ancestors, the custom of "*tot ninik*" was carried out. This was explained by Mariana Tahu to the question "What is the most effective strategy to get men's sympathizers in the midst of a patriarchal culture?"

"The most effective strategy to get support from men, the first step is to approach with traditional luck, then ask for blessings from the ancestors, because in Letneo Village they still adhere to customs in daily life, so the "*tot ninik*" custom is carried out. Even though I have the status of a son-in-law, I am not a foreigner but have been accepted by the large Naisali tribe and have given birth to children and have become part of this tribe. I asked for blessings by performing the "*tot ninik*" custom in 8 tribal houses, namely: Naisali, Naitefa Taone, Tethuh Oebnaman, Bilout, Nekleu, Naibobe, Mautua. When carrying out the traditional ritual, I received a sign of requesting blessing, namely the shadow of an eagle on the wall of the tribal house, which according to the traditional ritual meant that I would be given blessing. Thus at that time I received support from both the initial base of women and men and was approved by my ancestors".

Tot ninik is a traditional ritual in the Dawan tribe which aims to ask for blessings from nature and the ancestors in everyday life. Usually this traditional ritual is carried out before planting with the aim of asking for blessings from nature so that it gets good results. Apart from farming rites, this ritual is also carried out to obtain blessings from ancestors with good intentions. The *tot ninik* ritual involves burning candles and providing sacrificial animals to see the signs of the animal's organs (Nahak, 2022). In the series of strategies "*tot ninik*" includes the traditions of *maloe mamat* and *ume hana*, namely the tradition of eating betel nut together and cooking together after that there is a traditional language to ask for blessings which is carried out by the tribal leader. In this tradition, the transfer of political understanding or the socialization of vision and mission and superior programs to the community is also carried out. Through this traditional ritual activity, Mariana Tahu indirectly carried out an offensive strategy against her opponents by stealing sympathizers from the people of Letneo Village, which in fact has a patriarchal culture.

4. CONCLUSION

In achieving victory in the general election, a strategy is needed to achieve victory. A popular strategy in the 4.0 era is through social media and the most effective is money politics, however, at the level of democracy at the village head election level in Indonesia, this strategy is less effective in gaining support, especially in villages that uphold local culture, such as Letneo Village, which adheres to traditional culture. patriarchy. A very dominant patriarchal culture will have an impact on the minimal representation of women in the political realm and the impact will be very complex and widespread at the level of economic inequality. The step to increase women's representation is to place them in a very urgent situation which will automatically give birth to the courage to fight. The most effective strategy to use amidst the strong current of patriarchal culture is a cultural approach, but in a more subtle way so that it can be accepted. Based on this research, it opens a gap for

further research related to the comparison of women's and men's leadership, the comparison of voting behavior of generation x and generation z. The impact of this research on decision making can increase women's participation in local politics and be actively involved in every decision making in village development

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