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**The Influence of Popularity, Achievement, Campaign Strategy, and Support from Mass Organizations on the Electability of Celebrity Legislative Candidates (Study: East Java Region Electoral District 1)**

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**Abstract**

This study investigates the impact of popularity, achievements, campaign strategies, and support from mass organizations on the electability of artist legislative candidates in Electoral District (Dapil) 1, East Java, within the context of the 2024 elections. Employing a quantitative methodology, the research utilizes Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) and gathers data through surveys and in-depth interviews with eligible voters in the district. The results show that popularity, campaign strategy, and mass organization support have a positive and significant influence on electability, with coefficient values of 0.297; 0.251; and 0.203, respectively. Meanwhile, the achievement variable does not show a significant influence ( $\beta = 0.013$ ;  $p = 0.824$ ). The findings confirm the importance of a strategic political communication approach and social collaboration in increasing the electability of celebrities as legislative candidates. This research makes a theoretical contribution in developing a political marketing model based on personal branding and offers practical implications for political parties and candidates in developing effective campaign strategies.

**Keywords:** popularity, achievement, campaign strategy, mass organization support, electability, artist legislative candidates

**1. Introduction**

As a democratic nation, Indonesia regards elections as a fundamental pillar of democracy that embodies power originating from the people, conducted by the people, and serving the interests of the people. Elections grant citizens the right and active participation in shaping national policies and leadership. Moreover, elections function as both a mechanism for legitimizing political leaders and an evaluative tool for assessing the effectiveness of the country's democratic system (Farazian & Paskarina, 2021). In the process, elections are not only an arena for political contestation, but also a vehicle for the articulation and aggregation of community interests.

Over time, the dynamics of elections in Indonesia continue to transform. Changes in the political map, the increasing number of participants, and the development of information technology have influenced the campaign patterns and political communication strategies used by candidates (Satriawan & Purwaningsih, 2021). One of the main factors of concern in electoral contestation is *electability*, which is the extent to which a candidate has the opportunity to be elected by the public. This concept not only measures popularity, but also reflects the attractiveness, credibility and public acceptance of candidates (Rheault et al., 2020).

Factors that influence electability are very diverse, including the level of popularity, achievements, campaign strategies used, and support from community organizations (CSOs). Popularity is the main indicator in attracting voter sympathy, especially for legislative candidates from among celebrities who are well known to the public (Herdiansah, 2019; Margiansyah, 2019). However, high popularity does not necessarily guarantee victory if it is not accompanied by a positive track record, effective campaigns, and strong socio-political networks.

Achievement is a crucial element in building voter trust. Candidates with a positive track record, whether in the social, political or professional fields, tend to be more trusted to represent public interests in parliament (Hartono, 2021). In addition, campaign strategies designed with modern approaches such as the use of social media and television have proven to be able to increase voter engagement and strengthen the candidate's image (Sari, 2021). Support from *mass organizations*, whether faith-based, professional, or local communities, also plays a significant role in expanding the voter base and building a solid network of support (Jones & Baumgartner, 2005).

This research focuses on the factors that influence the electability of legislative candidates from among celebrities in the 2024 election contest in East Java Electoral District (Dapil) 1. The main objective of this study is to analyze the effect of popularity, achievements, campaign strategies, and mass organization support on the electability of celebrities running for legislative members. With the title "The Influence of Popularity, Achievements, Campaign Strategies and Mass Organization Support on Electability in Artist Legislative Candidates (Study: East Java Region Dapil 1)", this research is expected to make theoretical and practical contributions in the development of political communication strategies and strengthening the electoral democracy system in Indonesia.

## **2. Method**

### *2.1 Research Design*

This research is a quantitative study with an *explanatory* design that aims to develop knowledge about the relationship between the variables studied. *The explanatory* design is used to analyze and explain phenomena by looking at the cause-and-effect relationship between variables.

## 2.2 Research Approach

The approach used in this research is quantitative with the *Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Squares* (SEM-PLS) method or known as *Smart PLS*. *Smart PLS* was chosen because of its ability to handle complex data with relatively small sample sizes and its ability to analyze non-normal and non-parametric data.

### *Types of Data, Data Sources, and Data Collection Techniques*

The type of data used in this research consists of primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly from respondents through surveys and in-depth interviews. Surveys were conducted to measure the level of popularity, achievements, campaign strategies, and support from community organizations (CSOs) for artist legislative candidates in Electoral District (Dapil) 1 East Java, as well as to explore voters' perceptions of the influence of these factors on electability. In addition to the survey, semi-structured interviews were conducted with voters, community leaders, members of mass organizations, and campaign teams to obtain more in-depth qualitative information about the candidates' personal image, personal branding, and ideological and policy aspects that influence voters' preferences. Interviews were conducted both in person and online, and the data were analyzed thematically. Meanwhile, secondary data was collected from various relevant sources, such as previous election results from the East Java General Election Commission (KPU), survey institute reports, scientific literature and academic journals that discuss related variables, and demographic data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS). Mass media articles that review popularity, achievements, campaign strategies, and mass organization support are also used as references to support the analysis. The measurement technique in this study uses a 5-point Likert scale, as described by Sekaran & Bougie (2016), namely Strongly Disagree (STS), Disagree (TS), Neutral (N), Agree (S), and Strongly Agree (SS), which aims to capture the respondent's level of agreement with each statement in the questionnaire.

## 2.3 Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The population in this study includes members of the youth organization Whatsapp group and Facebook Group with target respondents, especially people who have the right to vote in the Dapil 1 area of East Java Province. According to guidelines based on the *rule of thumb* by (Hair et al., 2019) the recommended sample size is 100 or more. This research was conducted online using *Google Forms* which were distributed through social media such as *Facebook* groups and *Whatsapp* groups with target respondents who have the right to vote in the Dapil 1 area. Researchers chose the online method as a form of utilizing *massive* information dissemination where the spread of political information is also busy filling social media.

## 2.4 Data Analysis Method

The data analysis method in this study uses a Structural Equation Model (SEM) approach based on Partial Least Square (PLS) with SmartPLS software version 3.0. The analysis stage begins with testing the validity and reliability of the questionnaire instrument. The validity test aims to evaluate the extent to which the instrument is able to measure the intended construct, with the

criteria of convergent validity ( $AVE > 0.5$ ) and discriminant validity through cross-loading and comparison of AVE roots to correlations between constructs (Ghozali, 2017; Henseler et al., 2015). Meanwhile, the reliability test is carried out using the composite reliability value with a minimum limit of 0.70 to ensure the internal consistency of items in measuring constructs. Model analysis is carried out through two main stages: outer model that tests the relationship between indicators and latent constructs and inner model that tests the relationship between latent constructs through bootstrapping techniques to obtain t-statistic values. Hypothesis testing is done by comparing the calculated t value against the t table, with a significance level of 5% ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), where the hypothesis is accepted if  $t \text{ count} \geq t \text{ table}$ . The hypothesis testing model is visualized in the form of a path diagram that represents the causal relationship between constructs simultaneously (Hair et al., 2021).

### 3. Results

#### 3.1 Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

Table 1 *R-Square* ( $R^2$ ) Value

	<i>R-Square</i>	<i>R-Square adjusted</i>
Electability	0,460	0,448

The *R-Square* value of 0.460 indicates that 46% of the variation in Electability can be explained by the independent variables in the model, namely Popularity, Achievements, Campaign Strategy and Mass Organization Support. In other words, this model has moderate predictive ability, because the  $R^2$  value is in the moderate category (0.33 - 0.67) according to Chin's (1998) criteria. Meanwhile, the slightly lower *adjusted R-Square* value of 0.448 takes into account the number of independent variables used in the model, providing that the estimates used are relatively effective in explaining variations in the Electability variable.

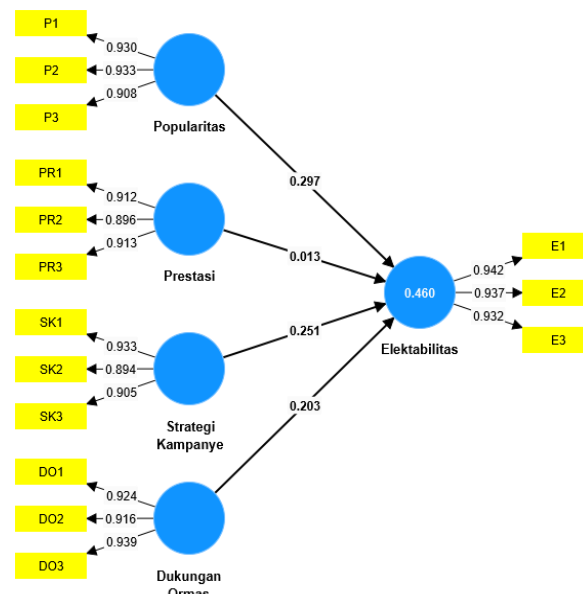


Figure 1 Structural Model of Algorithm Testing

Based on Figure 1, the model shows the structural relationship between the independent variables *Popularity*, *Achievement*, *Campaign Strategy*, and *CSO Support* on *Electability*, where *Popularity*, *Campaign Strategy*, and *CSO Support* have a positive influence with coefficients of 0.297; 0.251; and 0.203, respectively, while *Achievement* only provides a very small influence of 0.013, which shows a low contribution to increasing electability.

### 3.2 Hypothesis Testing

Table 2 Data on Hypothesis Testing Results

	Original (O)	sample T- Value	P- values	Hypothesis
Popularity -> Electability	0,297	3,473	0,001	Accepted (significant)
Achievement -> Electability	0,013	0,223	0,824	Rejected (not significant)
Campaign Strategy -> Electability	0,251	3,269	0,001	Accepted (significant)
Mass Organization Support -> Electability	0,203	2,874	0,004	Accepted (significant)

Based on the results of hypothesis testing, it was found that of the four tested relationship paths to the *Electability* variable, three of them showed a significant effect, while one path was not significant. *Popularity* has a positive and significant effect on *Electability* ( $\beta = 0.297$ ;  $t = 3.473$ ;

$p = 0.001$ ), indicating that the higher the popularity of artist candidates, the greater the chance of their electability. Similarly, *Campaign Strategy* has a significant effect ( $\beta = 0.251$ ;  $t = 3.269$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ), signaling the importance of effective political communication, especially through social media and direct interaction. *Mass Organization Support* also has a significant effect ( $\beta = 0.203$ ;  $t = 2.874$ ;  $p = 0.004$ ), strengthening the candidate's position in the public eye through social legitimacy. Meanwhile, *Achievement* does not have a significant effect on *Electability* ( $\beta = 0.013$ ;  $t = 0.223$ ;  $p = 0.824$ ), indicating that personal achievement is not a major factor in voting decisions, possibly due to the lack of exposure or relevance of the achievement to voters.

A detailed explanation of the relationship between variables in this hypothesis testing can be seen in Figure 2 below.

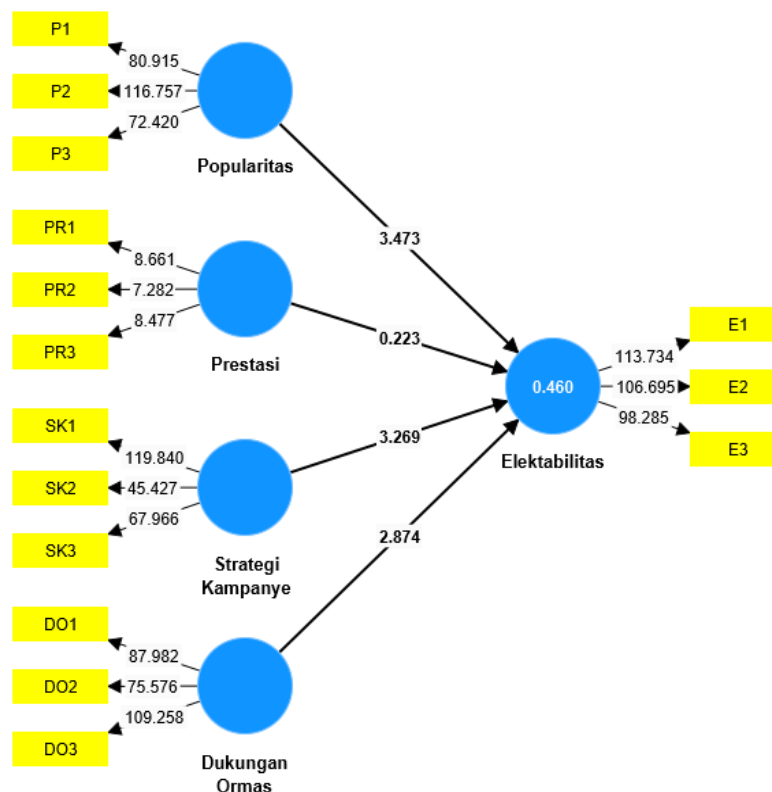


Figure 2 Structural Model Hypothesis Testing

Figure 2 shows the results of hypothesis testing illustrating the relationship between the independent variables and *electability*, with significance assessed through the T-statistic value of each path. The path from *Popularity* to *Electability* has a T-statistic of 3.473, *Campaign Strategy* of 3.269, and *Mass Organization Support* of 2.874, all of which exceed the critical threshold of 1.96 and are therefore significant. In contrast, the *Achievement* to *Electability* pathway only shows a T-statistic of 0.223, indicating that the variable has no significant effect in the context of this study.

## **4. Discussion**

### *4.1 Relationship between popularity and electability*

The results showed that popularity has a significant effect on *electability* with a t-statistic value of 3.473 ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicating that hypothesis H1 is accepted, meaning that popularity has a significant effect on electability. This finding strengthens the argument that popularity is one of the main factors in determining people's political choices, where widely known figures are easier to attract voters' sympathy and trust. Research by Syam & Rahmanillah (2020) is in line with these results, where the involvement of celebrities who have high popularity is proven to have a significant influence in political contestation in Indonesia. However, they also noted that popularity alone is not enough if it is not accompanied by integrity and a good track record. In addition, Farazian & Paskarina (2021) also showed that PSI succeeded in attracting urban voters through a strategy that increased popularity among young people through social media and direct interaction. This shows that in electoral politics, popularity, whether built naturally or through political marketing strategies, is an important asset to increase the electability of candidates or parties.

### *4.2 Relationship between Achievement and Electability*

The results show that achievement has no significant effect on electability, with a t-statistic value of 0.223 ( $p > 0.05$ ) indicating that hypothesis H1 is rejected, meaning that achievement has no significant effect on electability. This finding indicates that in certain contexts, the public does not make achievements a major factor in choosing political candidates. This may be due to a lack of media exposure to achievements or low public political awareness about candidates' track records. Research by Ade et al. (2014) illustrates that in a country like Germany, the incumbent effect (which is assumed to have certain achievements) is only significant under certain political conditions, and even varies depending on the party that holds power. In Indonesia, low trust in the political party system, as noted by Herdiansah (2019), may cause candidates' personal achievements to be less of a concern, compared to emotional factors such as personal closeness, popularity, or symbolic representation.

### *4.3 Relationship between Campaign Strategy and Electability*

The campaign strategy is proven to have a significant influence on electability, indicated by a t-statistic value of 3.269 ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicating that hypothesis H1 is accepted, meaning that the campaign strategy has a significant effect on electability. This shows that the right campaign strategy, communicative, and in accordance with the characteristics of voters is very decisive in winning votes. Creative and community needs-based approaches have proven to be more effective in attracting voters' attention and trust. This finding is consistent with research by Rahagi (2024) who examined Abraham Sridjaja's campaign strategy, where a campaign approach that focused on concrete programs and engagement with young voters significantly increased his electability. In addition, Farazian & Paskarina (2021) also noted the effectiveness of using social media and direct interaction in the context of urban voters. A campaign strategy that adapts to local political dynamics and voter demographics is the key to a successful modern political

campaign. Therefore, this research confirms that campaigns are not only a means of delivering messages, but also a means of building emotional closeness and trust with voters.

#### *4.4 Relationship between CSO Support and Electability*

Support from community organizations (CSOs) was also found to have a significant effect on electability, with a t-statistic value of 2.874 ( $p < 0.05$ ) indicating that hypothesis H1 is accepted, meaning that CSO support has a significant effect on electability. CSO support can provide social legitimacy and expand a candidate's support base, especially at the grassroots level. Public trust in mass organizations that already have a strong mass base and social influence can be transferred to the candidates they support. Research by Herdiansah (2019) also supports this finding, where partisan volunteers and community networks have an important role in bridging candidates with the community. While these volunteers and support organizations often work based on political incentives, their role in building mass mobilization remains significant. In Indonesian campaigns, CSOs often play a dual function as liaisons between candidates and voters, as well as implementing campaign strategies on the ground. Therefore, support from CSOs can be seen as a strategic asset that strengthens campaign structures and increases the reach of candidates' political messages.

#### **Conclusion**

The findings indicate that both popularity and campaign strategy significantly influence the electability of artist legislative candidates in Dapil 1 East Java, with coefficients of 0.297 ( $p = 0.001$ ) and 0.251 ( $p = 0.001$ ), respectively. This suggests that greater public recognition of the artist and more effective campaign strategies increase the likelihood of electoral success. Conversely, achievements do not have a significant impact on electability ( $\beta = 0.013$ ;  $p = 0.824$ ), implying that a candidate's track record is not necessarily a primary factor in voter decision-making. Furthermore, support from community organizations (CSOs) also shows a significant positive effect ( $\beta = 0.203$ ;  $p = 0.004$ ), highlighting that strategic partnerships with CSOs can enhance political legitimacy and improve the electability of artist candidates.

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