

THE ROLE OF THE PUJAKESUMA ASSOCIATION IN WINNING SIMALUNGUN REGENCY LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES IN THE 2024 ELECTION

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses how the role given by the Pujakesuma group, especially in winning legislative candidates in Simalungun Regency, which is a minority area of the Javanese tribe, in the 2024 election. The writing of this journal uses a qualitative method, with data collection techniques in the form of in-depth interviews with figures from the Pujakesuma community, which is accompanied by documentation and literature studies. The analysis technique used is a qualitative descriptive analysis, through references from journals, and books that are then re-analyzed by the author. The findings obtained from this study are that the largest votes obtained from ethnic Javanese were obtained in Bandar Masalam district, which is an area with a majority of ethnic Javanese ethnicity. The Pujakesuma Association played a major role in winning legislative candidates in Simalungun Regency in the 2024 election. This shows that associations that are synonymous with cultural organizations can take an important role in politics. A well-managed cultural realm will create good results in the surrounding environment, including in the political environment.

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INTRODUCTIONS

According to the census results of the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the Javanese are the largest ethnic group in North Sumatra, with a total of 4,309,719 people, or about 32.62 percent of the total population, making them the second largest group after the Batak ethnic group (BPS North Sumatra Province, 2024). Naturally, the formation of ethnic-based organizations, commonly referred to as associations, is influenced by ethnic gatherings in a particular location or region. Each ethnic community has unique customs, bonds, and family networks, including those related to politics (Barlan, 2014). According to , a community is an informal organization whose members are united by pure

inner interactions that are natural, eternal, and bound by the soul, as well as respect solidarity, tolerance, and the principle of subsidiarity in utilizing all differences to achieve goals (Arinta, 2022). (Sharastuti et al., 2018) Stuart et al. (2024).

A community is a relationship when the main goal is someone else. Regardless of the individual's gain or loss, the glue in the relationship encompasses a wide range of emotions, including love, longing, sympathy, respect, readiness to help, and solidarity. There are many types of associations in North Sumatra, including ethnic, cultural, regional, and other groups. The Pujakesuma Big Family Association is one of the groups that the researcher wants to discuss in this study. There is research that states that religion, economy, competence, and keeping promises are the basis of Javanese ethnic communication in politics (Junaidi, 2020). Likewise, those who will grow in the Pujakesuma community. Pujakesuma was established to be a forum for Javanese individuals to engage in their cultural traditions. In order to provide a unique identity for the Javanese that distinguishes them from other ethnic groups, a special forum was established for them. (Vira et al., 2024) (Prasetya et al., 2016)

Often we joke and make fun of the Javanese ethnicity, but in reality, the large number of ethnic Javanese masses in Sumatra can actually be a force to move the community. If we observe the concept of kinship in the Javanese tribe, especially the Pujakesuma community. For Pujakesuma family can mean living together characterized by love and affection, and not tolerated oppression in it (Hasyim et al., 2022). As usual, humans always interact with each other in social groups, including organizations. In other words, members of groups such as the Pujakesuma Association also have to deal with politics as a social reality, even though Pujakesuma is basically a culture-based organization. (Mardatila et al., 2023)

The phenomenon of H. Girun's victory in the 2024 Legislative General Election (Pileg) contest for the seat of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) of Simalungun Regency is not unusual. The victory of H. Girun, supported by the internal and mobilization strategy of Pujakesuma, became a real representation of the collective power of the minority that managed to penetrate the dominance of the majority. This is a fascinating case study of how group identities can be politically articulated to gain access to power. This victory not only provides legitimacy for the aspirations of Javanese ethnic groups in the Simalungun DPRD, but also serves as an inspiring precedent for other minority groups to pursue more substantive political participation.

This research aims to examine the role of the Pujakesuma community in the 2024 election, especially in the increasingly discussed issue of identity politics. It is impossible to separate the issue of identity politics from the analysis of the 2024 Simalungun Regency general election yesterday. Voters are generally more likely to support candidates who have the same identity as them, and even this phenomenon occurs in the general election to be held in 2024. This research is expected to be one of the references to see the potential that exists in the community as one of the means or even political strategies that can be taken by political figures in building their electability in the wider community.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative method. Qualitative research is a search for in-depth information or data about a phenomenon, fact or reality in the form of a narrative. The qualitative method is widely used in political science research because it is able to produce data descriptively both orally and in writing. Various methods of data collection, including document analysis, interviews, targeted conversations, and observations documented in field notes (transcripts), can produce qualitative data. The type of research used is in the form of field research or field research. This research is a research conducted by collecting data and information directly through interviews. Interviews are conducted when the researcher wants to know more about the respondents' opinions, beliefs, actions, or experiences with social phenomena. The primary data source was obtained through direct interviews with the chairman of Pujakesuma Simalungun Regency, the head of the religious and social service section of Pujakesuma, and members of Pujakesuma. The secondary data source came from interviews with the people of Simalungun

Regency. That way, the author will gather his sources directly to gain a deep understanding of the situation or phenomenon related to the role of the Pujakesuma community in politics in the 2024 election. (Daruhadi & Sopiati, 2024) (Ruslan et al., 2023)

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Brief Acquaintance of the Pujakesuma Association of Simalungun Regency

The Pujakesuma Big Family Association (PKB) was established on the initiative of the late H. Mas Sukardi on July 10, 1980. Pujakesuma is often acronymized with "Sumatra-born Javanese Prince" but in its history Pujakesuma jusru was taken from the name of the Wijaya Kesuma flower which symbolizes victory, luck, and prosperity. However, the acronym "Sumatra-born Javanese prince" is also not a problem because it is in line with the pronunciation, and does not damage the good name of Pujakesuma itself. Nowadays Pujakesuma is an open organization, ethnic and descendant assimilation that continues to be intertwined in life requires Pujakesuma to make improvements and adjustments to the times. Inter-ethnic marriage is a natural thing, and the descendants after it become multi-ethnic, this is what makes Pujakesuma an organization that is open and not rigid towards the Javanese ethnicity only. (Arinta et al., 2022) (Barlan & M. Kolopaking, 2015)

Pujakesuma has an organizational structure up to the district/city level, including in Simalungun Regency, which is called DPD Pujakesuma Simalungun Regency. The existence of this organization is very important considering the large Javanese ethnic population in Simalungun. Currently, the Simalungun Regency Pujakesuma is led by Mr. H. Girun for the 2023-2028 term. Pujakesuma Simalungun Regency has a fairly complex structure, consisting of:

1. Head
2. Vice Chair of the Program Section
3. Vice Chairman of the Economic Section
4. Vice Chairman of Legal Aid Section
5. Vice Chairman of Infokom Section
6. Vice Chairman of the Cultural Arts Section
7. Vice Chairman of the Budget Section
8. Vice Chair of Women's Role Section
9. Vice Chairman Srikandi
10. Secretary (and his deputy)
11. Treasurer (and his deputy)

As well as complementary parts such as: political, legal, organizational, cadre and consolidation sections, public relations sections, economics and entrepreneurship sections, religion and social service sections, agricultural development sections, sports and health sections, technology and information sections, inter-institutional sections. Where each section has its own chairman and members.

Behind its complex structure, Pujakesuma serves as a forum to improve the dignity and standard of living of the community, encourage solidarity and togetherness, and strive to realize justice and prosperity for the Pujakesuma Family in particular and Indonesian society in general. In general, the Pujakesuma community continues to preserve its traditions and traditional ceremonies from generation to generation. No matter where they are, they never stop appreciating their ancestral culture and strive not to be influenced by local influences. More broadly, Javanese culture means not only pure Javanese culture, but also Javanese culture that is mixed is not problematic, as long as there are still Javanese cultural values in it. (Muhajir & Wulandari, 2023) (Darajat et al., 2025)

Family values are the most important value in Pujakesuma, the kinship in question is something bigger than just blood ties. Kinship is a bond that presents a sense of determination, common ideals, and struggle. Not only that, love in family ties keeps people away from oppression. Broadly speaking, Pujakesuma aims to preserve Javanese

culture for ethnic Javanese living in Sumatra so that the culture is maintained and not just lost. Evidence of the preservation of Javanese culture that we can witness until now is in the form of folk arts such as: wayang kulit, kuda lumping, and ketoprak. Until now, the Javanese art is still often displayed in weddings, circumcisions, and sometimes in 17-san celebrations. (Sholeh et al., 2025)

However, behind its purpose as a forum for the preservation of Javanese culture, PKB Pujakesuma still has other goals, as follows:

1. Increasing the devotion of Pujakesuma residents to God Almighty according to their respective religions and beliefs.
2. Improving the quality and social and economic life of Pujakesuma residents.
3. Digging, fostering, developing culture and sports, and collaborating with other socio-cultural organizations to foster the unity and unity of the Indonesian Nation. (Irwandi et al., 2023)

In addition, the Javanese people have social values that are often used in social life in addition to their cultural values. The following are some examples of the social values of the Javanese people:

1. The value of harmony, Javanese people usually live in harmony.
2. The principle of respect, everyone in speaking and presenting themselves must always show respect for others.
3. Ethics of wisdom, a wise person grasps that what is best for him is to live in accordance with moral rules.
4. The Middle Way, for Javanese culture, everything becomes relative and absolute.
5. Marriage, in Javanese society, marriage is an event that must occur in a person's life. (Zamzami & Ayu, 2024)

The Relationship of Associations with Politics

The way of living together and continuing to evolve from a group of people, passed down from one generation to the next, is called culture. The product of culture is culture, and culture is everything produced by humans based on their intellect. Culture is often defined as something that is learned, inherited, maintained, is in society, constantly develops and changes, and is integrated. Culture is part of people's lives, therefore culture cannot be separated from many other life factors. (Wingarta et al., 2021)

Identity is always inherent in every individual and community. Identity is a characteristic that distinguishes one person from another so that the person can be distinguished from others. Identity is the differentiator between a community and another (Harahap et al., 2024). Just like identity is always attached, so is culture. Individuals are born and raised in a certain cultural environment, and that culture becomes an integral part of themselves. Even when a person interacts with other cultures or migrates, elements of their native culture often remain attached and influence their identity. Communities, at their core, are often defined by the shared culture they adhere to. Thus, culture is not just an additional aspect of identity, but rather its forming core. Culture provides a framework within which individual and communal identities are formed, expressed, and distinguished from the rest. (Sudiantara, 2021) (Muthohirin, 2019)

Culture has a fundamental role in the formation of associations. Values, norms, traditions, and habits that are jointly embraced by a community group are the main basis for the formation of a community. Close personal relationships and social ties among its members are one of the aspects of the association. These relationships are often based on common interests, family, and trust. Often, members of the community feel a moral obligation to help and support each other in daily life. (Pohan, 2023)

The influence of associations in local politics in Indonesia cannot be underestimated. The association is a form of social organization that has a significant role in shaping political dynamics at the local level. Likewise with the Pujakesuma association, Pujakesuma has a great influence on the surrounding environment, especially on its fellow members, arousing the spirit to fight in the world of politics, and arousing the political awareness of each member.

Starting from a small neighborhood that is aware of politics, this will affect the surrounding environment as well. (Scott, 2015)

Community groups play an important role in the process of forming opinions and political decision-making in local Indonesian politics. This is due to a number of important reasons. First, the collaboration and solidarity of members of community organizations contributes significantly to winning local political contests. Second, the social and cultural values of local communities that are often mobilized to support political candidates are maintained and strengthened through community groups. Third, community organizations often have access to resources such as organizational infrastructure, social networks, and financial capital that they can leverage to support candidates who are perceived to align with their values. Last but not least, they also occasionally provide political legitimacy and representation to the concerns of local communities, ensuring that their opinions are heard and considered in political decision-making. (Khasanah, 2022)

Behind that, not all associations frankly show their attachment and support to politics. Nowadays, certain identities are often used for political needs, especially ahead of elections and regional elections to win the hearts and sympathy of voters on the basis of common identity, this phenomenon continues to be rampant and we know the term "identity politics". In Indonesia, identity politics is more related to issues of ethnicity, religion, ideology, and local interests. Groups that have been underrepresented or marginalized in the political realm are often given votes through identity politics. This ensures that their concerns and needs are recognized and championed in politics. Identity politics can create a strong sense of unity and solidarity among group members who share a common identity. (Saleh & Munif, 2015)

While identity politics can be a positive force for giving voice to marginalized groups, it also has great potential to be abused and undermine social order and democracy. The excessive use of identity politics often shifts the focus away from work programs, leadership capacity, or other substantive issues. This can make the public choose based on emotions or sentiments of identity, rather than based on reason and rational considerations. For this reason, supervision of identity politics is very important in maintaining the integrity of the nation and ensuring that democracy runs healthy, fair, and inclusive.

Pujakesuma's Role in Winning Legislative Candidates in the 2024 Election

Role, as defined by the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (KBBI), is a behavioral device that is expected to be possessed by people who are domiciled in society. Another way to think of a role is as a person's responsibility or function. Pujakesuma as a cultural organization turned out to play a role in the 2024 election, starting from the emergence of awareness and fighting spirit in the world of politics. Determination and mutual agreement from Pujakesuma against H. Girun's decision as the chairman of Pujakesuma to run for the Simalungun Regency DPRD in the 2024 election. The trust of Pujakesuma members in H. Girun is not something that can be underestimated, in the author's interview, H. Girun said "I served as the Chairman of Pujakesuma in Simalungun for approximately 15 years. The first was me as the chairman of the sub-district for 5 years, then as the chairman of Simalungun Regency for 15 years", indicates a very long and consistent experience in his leadership. The total term of office (5 years at the sub-district level and 15 years at the district level) shows that H. Girun has been actively involved for at least 20 years in Pujakesuma. (Mintzberg, 1985)

The steps taken by H. Girun have influenced the membership of Pujakesuma itself, Mr. Chairul Anwar who serves as the chairman of the Religion and Social Service section of Pujakesuma, as well as the success team of H. Girun said "the steps taken by H. Girun present political literacy, especially to the members of Pujakesuma itself". In general, political awareness is the type of mindset and awareness that everyone has about state politics. Knowing how much political activity is happening in the territory is the most fundamental aspect of political consciousness. Awareness from within everyone is the first step to be able to influence the people around them. This is also what happened within Pujakesuma. Pujakesuma members have a strong collective awareness of their group's identity and

values. This awareness became an important basis for Pujakesuma's ability to mobilize its members and even influence the social or political environment around them. (June, 2020)

The phenomenon of the involvement of H. Girun, the chairman of Pujakesuma, in mobilizing members of his organization to support his candidacy in the 2024 election indicates the strong role of social capital and primordial ties in electoral politics in Indonesia. Mr. Chairul's statement, "of course Pujakesuma supports H. Girun as the only Pujakesuma administrator who is running for office, and we will definitely try our best to help him," explicitly emphasized the existence of a coordinated and transparent support mobilization strategy within the scope of Pujakesuma. A strong social network, built on the basis of familial ties or shared backgrounds (in this case, Pujakesuma as an organization of Sumatran-born Javanese sons and daughters), can serve as effective social capital for political purposes. Trust and reciprocal norms between members allow for efficient vote mobilization. (Tanuja & Winduwati, 2024)

The most important role given by Pujakesuma in H. Girun's efforts to win was through mass mobilization. Mass mobilization is a planned and systematic effort to gather and mobilize large numbers of people for a specific purpose. This was also conveyed directly by H. Girun "Because we as the chairman of the board of course we have an agreement and invite all our members to form a team from Pujakesuma, and there are also teams from outside Pujakesuma" but behind the mobilization strategy, Pujakesuma is not a group that can only be dictated by its chairman, the presence of H. Girun as the same leader for a long period of time creates stability and continuity in the organization. Members tend to feel secure and have clear directions, this creates a reciprocity between the relationship between the two.

Mrs. Sri Rahmatika, who has joined Pujakesuma since 2019, added, "Our strategy (Pujakesuma) is to support Mr. Girun through activities to socialize programs from Mr. Girun to the community, especially in the programs and promises carried out by Mr. Girun, and we also socialize it door-to-door, to socialize more quickly. For example, the first is holding a social gathering once a month to convey to the community that the chairman of Pujakesuma will nominate a member of the DPRD", this statement shows that there is an effort to complement Pujakesuma loyalty with the attraction of concrete programs. Pujakesuma does not only provide passive support, but actively becomes a mouthpiece of information for supported candidates. This is a form of direct political campaign. Socialization is focused on the political substance, namely the vision, mission, and promises of the candidates. This indicates an effort to convince voters rationally based on the candidate's platform.

This strategy is very effective and yields sweet results in the form of H. Girun's victory in the fight for the Simalungun Regency DPRD seat, Field Data shows the value of H. Girun's victory in constituency 3 of Simalungun Regency consisting of Bandar Huluan District, Bandar Masalam District, Gunung Malela District, Pematang Bandar District (Amisha, 2024):

1. H. Girun (Golkar) : 7,087 votes
2. Aripin Panjaitan (PDIP) : 3,043 votes
3. Jaminta Purba (Golkar): 5,983 votes
4. Sekar Sari Damanik (Gerindra) : 2,350 votes
5. Joel Sinaga (Perindo) : 2,298 votes
6. Eko Satria Yogi Simanjuntak (PPP): 2,655 votes
7. Tenno Sihombing (NasDem) : 2,168 votes

Of the four sub-districts, H. Girun's vote gain was in Bandar Masilam District with around $\geq 5,000$ votes. H. Girun's significant vote gain, exceeding 5,000 votes in Bandar Masilam District, indicates a strong electoral support base in the region. This phenomenon can be analyzed through several interrelated sociological and demographic factors. First, the dominance of ethnic Javanese in Bandar Masilam District is a crucial variable in explaining the high number of votes obtained by H. Girun. Second, the concentration of members of the Javanese Big Family Association (Pujakesuma) in Bandar Masilam District also contributed substantially to the accumulation of H. Girun's votes.

Pujakesuma, as a community organization that gathers ethnic Javanese individuals, has the capacity to mobilize political support among its members.

Meanwhile, the least votes came from Gunung Malela District, the reason why the gain was small was, that there was no management and movement of Pujakesuma in the area. This makes Pujakesuma as a successful team reluctant to campaign for its supporting legislative candidates in Gunung Malela District. However, H. Girun's landslide victory in Bandar Masilam District managed to bring him to victory. Several people of Bandar Masilam District interviewed by the author even said that the campaign method carried out by Pujakesuma was very effective in influencing the decision of the people of Bandar Masilam District. Although the community still feels the existence of identity politics in the campaign carried out by Pujakesuma, the campaign system carried out by Pujakesuma is very peaceful and seems sincere, generally the campaign is carried out through wirit, recitation, socialization and social service among the community. This helps build trust and reduce negative perceptions that may arise from identity politics. The Chairman of Pujakesuma also provides ambulances for village needs and often echoes his programs, especially regarding road repairs, which are urgent problems in the community. (Fautanu & Gunawan, 2020)

In the end, even though the public initially felt the existence of identity politics, the way Pujakesuma campaigned succeeded in shifting this perception into acceptance of the vision and mission of the legislative candidates they supported. With a service-oriented campaign approach, real action, and solutions to pressing problems, Pujakesuma has proven that concrete actions and commitment to the common good can outperform identity-based narratives. The community saw the immediate benefits of the programs offered, so their views shifted from identity concerns to hopes for real improvement.

H. Girun's victory in the election of members of the Simalungun Regency DPRD was greatly influenced by the strength of family and the sense of unity (solidarity) that existed in the Pujakesuma Association. Although Pujakesuma members have various political backgrounds, they may be from different parties or have different political views, this sense of kinship and commitment to togetherness is what has succeeded in uniting them under the banner of the association. In fact, the involvement of all parts of Pujakesuma is clear evidence of how strong the family values they hold. Solidarity is the main key in rallying effective political support for H. Girun.

CONCLUSION

Based on the article, it can be concluded that the Pujakesuma Association played a very significant role in winning legislative candidates in Simalungun Regency in the 2024 election. Although it is basically a cultural organization, Pujakesuma is able to show an important role in the political realm. The influence of the association in local politics cannot be ignored, and Pujakesuma in particular has had a major impact on its members by arousing political enthusiasm and awareness. The victory of H. Girun as a legislative candidate for the Simalungun Regency DPRD in the 2024 election, who is also the chairman of Pujakesuma, clearly shows the strong role of social capital and primordial ties in electoral politics in Indonesia. Pujakesuma explicitly provided support to H. Girun and mobilized coordinated support. Pujakesuma's main role in H. Girun's victory included mass mobilization, socialization of H. Girun's programs and promises, and door-to-door campaigns. The strength of family and solidarity that are closely intertwined in Pujakesuma is the main key in mobilizing effective political support.

Pujakesuma's involvement in this election is very relevant to the concept of identity politics. Identity politics describes political phenomena that prioritize group identity, such as ethnicity, in shaping political interests, behaviors, and social struggles. In this context, Pujakesuma, as an organization that gathers ethnic Javanese individuals, managed to use this bond of ethnic similarity to achieve its political goal, which is to win the candidate it supports. The dominance of ethnic Javanese in Bandar Masilam District and the concentration of Pujakesuma members in the area are crucial factors in the high vote acquisition of H. Girun. This phenomenon shows how a strong collective awareness

of group identity and values among Pujakesuma members becomes an important basis for their ability to mobilize political support.

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