

Kaesang's Coat-Tail Effect: Influence and Implications for PSI'S Political Branding in the 2024 Election

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Abstract. In the Indonesian political system, the coat-tail effect phenomenon is often utilized by political parties to increase electability through popular public figures. The coat-tail effect refers to a situation where the popularity of a figure can have a positive impact on vote support for other parties or candidates affiliated with them. One example of the implementation of this strategy is the appointment of Kaesang Pangarep, President Joko Widodo's youngest son, as Chairman of the Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI) ahead of the 2024 elections. With his popularity as a young figure and his closeness to the president, Kaesang was expected to boost PSI's votes to reach the 4% parliamentary threshold. This study aims to analyze the influence and implications of Kaesang Pangarep's Coat-tail effect in increasing the votes of the Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI) in the 2024 Election using a political branding approach. The research method used is qualitative and non-participant observation. The results showed that despite Kaesang's high popularity as a public figure, his involvement did not succeed in pushing PSI over the 4% parliamentary threshold, with votes only reaching 2.8%. Some of the main factors that led to this failure include the weak institutionalization of PSI's ideology, delays in campaign strategy, and the negative sentiment towards dynastic politics attached to Kaesang's figure. The research also found that Kaesang's presence managed to increase public attention, especially among young voters. This finding confirms that the popularity of public figures must be balanced with a structured political branding strategy and strong party ideological values to create a significant electoral impact.

Keywords: Coat-tail effect, Political branding, Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI), Election 2024.

Abstrak. Dalam sistem politik Indonesia, fenomena coat-tail effect sering dimanfaatkan oleh partai-partai politik untuk meningkatkan elektabilitas melalui tokoh-tokoh publik yang populer. Coat-tail effect mengacu pada situasi di mana popularitas seorang figur dapat membawa dampak positif terhadap dukungan suara bagi partai atau kandidat lain yang berafiliasi dengannya. Salah satu contoh penerapan strategi ini adalah pengangkatan Kaesang Pangarep, putra bungsu Presiden Joko Widodo, sebagai Ketua Umum Partai Solidaritas Indonesia (PSI) menjelang Pemilu 2024. Dengan popularitasnya sebagai figur muda dan kedekatannya dengan presiden, Kaesang diharapkan dapat mendongkrak suara PSI agar mencapai ambang batas parlemen sebesar 4%. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh dan implikasi Coat-tail effect Kaesang Pangarep dalam meningkatkan suara Partai Solidaritas Indonesia (PSI) pada Pemilu 2024 dengan menggunakan pendekatan political branding. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dan observasi non-partisipan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun Kaesang memiliki popularitas tinggi sebagai figur publik, keterlibatannya tidak berhasil mendorong PSI melewati ambang batas parlemen sebesar 4%, dengan perolehan suara hanya mencapai 2,8%. Beberapa faktor utama yang menyebabkan kegagalan ini meliputi lemahnya pelembeagaan ideologi PSI, keterlambatan dalam strategi kampanye, dan sentimen negatif terhadap politik dinasti yang melekat pada sosok Kaesang. penelitian juga menemukan bahwa kehadiran Kaesang berhasil meningkatkan perhatian publik, terutama dari kalangan pemilih muda. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa popularitas figur publik harus diimbangi dengan strategi branding politik yang terstruktur dan nilai ideologis partai yang kuat untuk menciptakan dampak elektoral yang signifikan.

Kata Kunci: Coat-tail effect, Political Branding, Partai Solidaritas Indonesia (PSI), Pemilu 2024.

1. INTRODUCTION

Coat-tail effect is a political phenomenon that has long been of interest in the study of political science and voter behavior. It refers to a situation where the popularity or electability of a strong political candidate, usually at a higher level such as president or governor, is able to influence and increase support for other candidates from the same party at lower levels, such as legislative members or regional heads. The term is derived from the analogy of someone holding on to the tail of another person's coat to be lifted or carried up. In a political context, this concept describes how the charisma, popularity, or success of a political figure can "drag" or have a positive impact on the electability of other candidates affiliated with him (Arenas, 2024).

The Coat-tail effect phenomenon was first identified and seriously studied in the United States in the early 20th century. Political scientists began to observe a pattern where a president's victory tended to be followed by an increase in his party's number of seats in Congress. Since then, this concept has become an integral part of election analysis in democracies around the world. In Indonesia, this phenomenon has received special attention since the reform era, especially after the introduction of direct elections for the president and regional heads. Coat-tail effect is considered as one of the manifestations of the complexity of voter behavior and the dynamics of electoral politics. This phenomenon reflects how voters do not always make decisions based on individual assessments of each candidate, but can be influenced by external factors such as the popularity of certain figures or the overall party image. It also shows the importance of political strategy in building image and optimizing the influence of key figures in the party structure (Rich, 2018).

In the context of a multiparty system like Indonesia's, the Coat-tail effect becomes increasingly complex and interesting to study. Political parties often try to utilize the popularity of certain figures to increase their vote share at various levels of elections. This strategy can be seen from the placement of popular figures as presidential or governor candidates, with the hope that their popularity will have a positive impact on the party's vote

acquisition at the legislative level (Hamid et al., 2023).

General elections in Indonesia are the largest manifestation of democracy in Southeast Asia and one of the largest in the world. Since the 1998 reforms, Indonesia has held five legislative elections and four direct presidential elections (2004, 2009, 2014, and 2019), with the last election in 2019 recording a turnout of more than 158 million voters out of a total of 190 million registered voters, or around 81% turnout. The complexity of Indonesia's elections is reflected in the scale at which they are held. In the 2019 simultaneous elections, there were 810,329 polling stations (TPS) spread across 34 provinces and 514 districts/cities. This election involved more than 7 million election officials, including KPPS (Voting Organizer Group) members and polling station supervisors. The number of ballots printed reached more than 900 million sheets for five types of elections conducted simultaneously: president, DPR, DPD, Provincial DPRD, and Regency/City DPRD. (KPU, 2019). The electoral system in Indonesia has undergone several changes. For legislative elections, Indonesia has used an open proportional system since the 2009 elections. Under this system, voters can choose a party or directly elect legislative candidates. In the 2019 elections, the parliamentary threshold was set at 4%, up from 3.5% in the 2014 elections. This resulted in 9 political parties making it into parliament from a total of 16 parties participating in the election (Subiyanto, 2020).

For presidential elections, Indonesia applies a two-round system where candidates must win more than 50% of the national vote and at least 20% of the vote in more than half of the provinces to win in the first round. However, since its implementation in 2004, there has never been a second round as there has always been a candidate who met the winning requirement in the first round (Jovano Deivid Oleyver Palenewen & Murniyati Yanur, 2022). Another interesting phenomenon is the high cost of politics in Indonesian elections. According to a report from Indonesia's Cabinet Secretariat, the cost of organizing the 2019 elections reached around IDR 25 trillion (approximately USD 1.8 billion), not including the campaign costs incurred by political parties

and candidates (Sekretariat Kabinet Indonesia, 2019).

Elections in Indonesia are also known for the phenomenon of identity politics and popularity of figures. In the 2019 elections, for example, there was a strong polarization between supporters of the two presidential candidates, partly based on religious and ethnic sentiments. Exit poll data from various survey institutions showed clear voting patterns based on voter demographics. Other challenges in Indonesian elections are logistical and security issues (I Putu Sastra Wingarta et al., 2021). Based on research by the Democracy Index Indonesia's elections are still seen as one of the significant democratic achievements. According to the Democracy Index released by (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2023) Indonesia ranked 52nd out of 167 countries in 2023, with a score of 6.48 out of 10, placing it in the "flawed democracy" category, but still one of the highest in Southeast Asia.

One recent example of the application of the Coat-tail effect strategy was when Kaesang Pangarep, the youngest son of President Joko Widodo, joined the Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI). With a background as a young figure who is widely recognized among young people, Kaesang was expected to provide an electoral boost for PSI, which is known as a party that focuses on progressive issues and seeks to attract young voters. Support from a figure such as Kaesang is considered to increase PSI's electability, especially given the popularity of his father, Jokowi, as a two-term president who has a broad base of support. However, despite Kaesang's influence in the social and business worlds, as well as coming from a well-known presidential family, the expected Coat-tail effect did not have a significant impact on increasing PSI's votes in various surveys and elections.

Kaesang Pangarep, the youngest son of President Joko Widodo, has been a figure of interest to the Indonesian public since his father took office as president in 2014. Born on December 25, 1994, Kaesang was initially known as a young entrepreneur and social media influencer. He managed several businesses, including the popular banana nugget culinary business "Sang Pisang". However, Kaesang's journey took a new direction when he decided to venture into

politics in 2023, joining the Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI) (PSI, 2024).

In politics, the Coat-tail effect refers to a phenomenon in which the popularity or influence of a well-known political figure is able to lift the votes of other parties or candidates affiliated with that figure. This phenomenon often occurs when a figure with high charisma and electability attracts widespread support that benefits the party or figure that supports it. In the context of Indonesian politics, this Coat-tail effect has been part of the campaign strategy of several parties, especially those affiliated with popular figures in government or the public.

PSI is a relatively new political party in the Indonesian political scene. Founded on November 16, 2014, PSI positions itself as a youth party with a progressive and anti-corruption political vision. The party successfully passed the KPU verification and participated in the 2019 elections as a new party, although it has not managed to cross the parliamentary threshold. PSI is known for its campaigns targeting young urban voters, using a more modern and digital approach in its political strategy.

Kaesang's joining PSI in 2023 and then being elected Chairman of the party at the age of 29 marked a new chapter for both Kaesang and PSI. This move raises high expectations of the potential "Coat-tail effect" of Kaesang's popularity as the president's son on PSI's electability in the 2024 elections. Many political observers predict that Kaesang's presence will significantly increase PSI's vote share, especially among young voters. The analysis of PSI's vote increase is more directed at the party's efforts to reach the *parliamentary threshold*, which in Indonesia is set at 4% of the total national valid votes. For PSI, reaching this threshold is very important because only parties that obtain a minimum of 4% of the vote are entitled to seats in parliament. Therefore, increasing votes for PSI is not just about expanding the voter base, but mainly about ensuring that the number of votes obtained is sufficient to surpass the threshold. To achieve this goal, PSI implemented various campaign strategies designed to appeal more to young and progressive voters, as well as utilizing well-

known public figures such as Kaesang Pangarep.

The main thesis or objective of this research is to analyze the influence and implications of Kaesang Pangarep's Coat-tail effect in winning the Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI) in the 2024 elections from a *political branding* perspective. This research will focus on the political branding strategy implemented by Kaesang, and evaluate why it failed to influence an increase in vote support for PSI, despite initial expectations of high potential due to Kaesang's popularity. This failure resulted in PSI not reaching the parliamentary threshold that it would have achieved by having Kaesang as Party Chairman.

In the context of elections in Indonesia, the Coat-tail effect is also often seen when candidates who have great popularity or influence succeed in increasing their party's vote share. For example, in the 2014 elections, the popularity of Joko Widodo (Jokowi) as a presidential candidate from PDI-P was able to boost the party's votes in various regions. This shows how strong political branding of a central figure can bring electoral benefits not only to him, but also to the party he represents. This can be seen even though PSI made Kaesang the Chairman of PSI but did not do maximum elaboration with his Political Branding, so the Coat-tail effect brought by Kaesang did not have a significant impact on PSI to be able to win or pass the parliamentary threshold in the 2024 Election.

In Indonesia's dynamic political landscape, the Coat-tail effect phenomenon is often a strategy that political parties rely on to increase their vote share. The Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI), as a relatively new party, implemented a similar strategy by appointing Kaesang Pangarep, the youngest son of President Joko Widodo, as the party's Chairman in November 2023, ahead of the 2024 elections. Theoretically, Kaesang's presence in PSI should have a significant positive impact on the party's electability. As a young figure who is popular on social media with more than 1.8 million followers on Instagram, and has a direct connection to the incumbent President, Kaesang is expected to attract voters' sympathy,

especially from millennials and Gen Z, who are PSI's main targets.

Kaesang Pangarep deserves to be called a popular figure who has a coat-tail effect, based on various surveys that show a significant influence on the electability of the party and its image in the eyes of the public. As Chairman of the Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI), Kaesang managed to increase the party's popularity, which previously hovered around 1.1%, to 3.5% after his leadership. This shows his appeal to voters and his ability to bring support from other parties such as PDIP, Gerindra, and PPP.

Kaesang Pangarep, as a public figure with a significant following on social media, brings great impact in efforts to attract support for the Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI) in the 2024 elections. With more than 3.5 million followers on social media, Kaesang has a broad platform to spread messages and increase PSI's visibility among young voters. His social media presence includes not only business activities, but also his new role in politics, attracting widespread attention from the media and the public. According to Netray's monitoring, Kaesang's name has been widely talked about in online media since his appointment as PSI Chairperson, with millions of impressions and thousands of related interactions on YouTube alone, although netizen responses have been mixed between positive and negative.

Kaesang's presence as the president's son also raises expectations that his influence will give PSI a boost in achieving its ambitious target of passing the 4% parliamentary threshold. The impact of his strong popularity is evident through his ranking on *Fortune's* list of the 40 most influential young figures in Indonesia in 2023. This shows that her status as a well-known public figure does affect PSI's image in the eyes of the public and opens up opportunities to expand support (Usep Saepul Ahyar, 2023).

Kaesang's popularity, coupled with his indirect association with the success and policies of President Jokowi who has a public satisfaction rate of around 70% towards the end of his term, should create a positive political image and in turn tie votes to PSI through the Coat-tail effect mechanism. Initial

surveys after Kaesang's appointment showed a 15% increase in awareness of PSI among young voters (Cabui, 2022).

Urutan Perolehan Suara	No. Urut Partai	Nama Partai	Perolehan Suara	Persen (%)
1.	3.	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (PDIP)	25.387.279	16,72
2.	4.	Partai Golongan Karya (Golkar)	23.208.654	15,28
3.	2.	Partai Gerakan Indonesia Raya (Gerindra)	20.071.708	13,22
4.	1.	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB)	16.115.655	10,61
5.	5.	Partai Nasional Demokrat (NasDem)	14.660.516	9,65
6.	8.	Partai Keadilan Sosial (PKS)	12.781.353	8,42
7.	14.	Partai Demokrat	11.283.160	7,43
8.	12.	Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN)	10.984.003	7,23
9.	17.	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP)	5.878.777	3,87
10.	15.	Partai Solidaritas Indonesia (PSI)	4.260.169	2,80
11.	16.	Partai Persatuan Indonesia (Perindo)	1.955.154	1,28
12.	7.	Partai Gelombang Rakyat Indonesia (Gelora)	1.281.991	0,84
13.	10.	Partai Hati Nurani Rakyat (Hanura)	1.094.588	0,72
14.	6.	Partai Buruh	972.910	0,64
15.	24.	Partai Ummat	642.545	0,42
16.	13.	Partai Bulan Bintang (PBB)	484.486	0,31
17.	11.	Partai Garda Republik Indonesia (Garuda)	406.883	0,26
18.	9.	Partai Kebangkitan Nusantara (PKN)	326.800	0,21
Total suara sah			151.796.631	100

Sumber: detik.com, 20 Maret 2024

Sources: Detik.com in the journal of National Vote Recapitulations Result of the 2024 Election.

However, the political reality shows different results from these expectations. Based on quick count results from several leading survey institutions, PSI's vote share in the 2024 elections only reached around 2.8% of the total national vote, slightly above their 1.89% in the 2019 elections, but still far below the 4% parliamentary threshold. The failure of the Coat-tail effect is evident when compared to initial expectations that projected PSI could gain 5-7% of the national vote with Kaesang's presence (Sanur, 2024). This phenomenon shows that the popularity and influence of a political figure cannot always be transferred directly to other parties or candidates, even when there is a close family relationship. Other factors such as party platforms, campaign strategies, and public perceptions of the parties and candidates themselves still play an important role in determining voters' choices. This case may also indicate that Indonesian voters tend to vote based on their assessment of individual parties or candidates, not solely based on associations with popular political figures. This failure opens up a series of important questions that need to be investigated further. Why did this supposedly effective strategy fail to have the expected impact, considering that in previous elections, the Coat-tail effect has often proven effective in increasing party votes. For example, in the 2019

elections, Gerindra Party managed to capitalize on Prabowo Subianto's popularity to gain 12.57% of the national vote, up from 11.81% in the 2014 elections (Icha Rastika, 2024).

Furthermore, this research offers an unprecedented cross-generational analysis, given Kaesang's unique position as a young figure associated with a senior figure. This will provide a new understanding of how the Coat-tail effect works (or does not work) in the context of voters from different age groups. In addition, this study will evaluate the strategy of a new party like PSI in navigating the Indonesian political landscape, particularly in its efforts to capitalize on the popularity of figures to increase electability, an aspect that has not been explored in depth in previous studies.

Based on the background description above, the main focus of this research is to analyze how Kaesang's Coat-tail effect Failure and how it was unable to win PSI to be able to pass the parliamentary threshold. The purpose of conducting this research is to provide an overview of what possible failure factors can occur in the case of the 2024 elections that occur in the PSI political party and also Kaesang. The benefits of conducting this research are as *literature review* material for further research related to the *Coat-tail effect - effect* and to be an evaluation material for political parties in Indonesia in facing future elections. Based on the background description above, the problem can be formulated, namely how the impact of Kaesang's presence as a public figure on PSI votes during the 2024 elections and the implications of Kaesang's Coat-tail Effect on the political branding strategy implemented by PSI in the 2024 elections.

In a study by Octival Dharma Putra (2022) entitled "*Political Branding Ganjar Pranowo Through Instagram Social Media @Ganjar_Pranowo*" using qualitative methods with *Political Branding* theory shows that Ganjar Pranowo's *political branding* efforts through his Instagram account are carried out by creating certain typifications, such as presenting himself as a leader who supports MSMEs, works with the younger generation, is religious, accepts diversity, promotes Central Java tourism, and is relaxed and humorous (Armawati & Ratnasari, 2022). However, this

research only highlights branding strategies through social media as the main platform to support political contestation and does not discuss more deeply about Coat-tail as a *political branding* approach.

In a study by Kadek Dwita Apriani (2019) entitled "*The Coat Tail Effect and Political Party Identification in the 2019 Simultaneous Elections in Bali*" using quantitative methods with the theory of political party identification shows that the *Coat-tail effect* is present in communities with strong political party identification. However, the influence of the *coat-tail effect* was found to be smaller than party identification in determining the political choices of Balinese people. This research focuses on the stability of psychological ties between voters and parties that contribute significantly to political support (Apriani, 2019). However, this study only highlights the *coat-tail effect* as a supporting element in parties with a strong identification base and does not discuss the failure of the *coat-tail effect* in the context of new parties that are still weak in creating psychological ties with voters.

A thesis research by Novfirmansyah (2022) entitled "*Prabowo's Coat-tail Effect on Gerindra Party's Vote Gains in the 2019 Legislative Elections in Padang Panjang City*" shows that the success of Prabowo's *coat-tail effect* in Padang Panjang City was supported by a strong campaign strategy, such as the use of visualization of campaign props (APK) containing photos of legislative candidates with Prabowo, as well as the exploitation of relevant local issues, namely the 3T principle (Takah, Tageh, Tokoh) which is closely related to the figure of Prabowo. This strategy has proven to be able to significantly boost the Gerindra Party's votes, especially in areas that have a strong identification with Prabowo (Novfirmansyah, 2022). However, this study only discusses the success of the *coat-tail effect* in the local context with a campaign strategy based on cultural issues and campaign props. This research does not address the possibility of the failure of the *coat-tail effect*, especially in the context of a party that does not yet have a strong base nationally.

Research by Wisnujati et al. (2021) entitled "*Political Marketing of the Gerindra Party to Win the 2019 Kebumen Regency*

Legislative Election" using a qualitative case study method with a 4P political *marketing* theory approach (product, promotion, price, and place) assumed by Niffenegger found that Gerindra Party's success in maintaining the number of legislative seats in Kebumen was supported by a political *marketing* strategy that utilized the *coat-tail effect*. This is achieved through the presence of attractive presidential and vice presidential figures and programs, as well as optimizing promotional activities to maximize the party's appeal (Wisnujati et al., 2021). This research has similarities with the current research, which both highlight the role of the *coat-tail effect* in political party strategies. However, Wisnujati et al.'s research focuses on the success of the *coat-tail effect* as part of a political *marketing* strategy to win legislative contestation, especially at the local level. In contrast, this study emphasizes on analyzing the failure of Kaesang Pangarep's *coat-tail effect* in PSI's *political* branding in the 2024 elections, with a more specific focus on how the failure reflects the *political branding* challenges of new parties in building appeal and influence at the national level.

The decline in votes often experienced by political parties in Indonesia is influenced by various factors. This was explained in a study conducted by Gunawan (2024) with the title Analysis of Factors in the Decrease in the People's Conscience Party (HANURA) Votes in the Legislative Elections 2019 in Padang City. This study focuses on campaign strategies in increasing votes, but does not discuss the phenomenon of the coat-tail effect as in this study.

Further research conducted by (Cahyono, 2021) entitled "*The Effect of Popularity of Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidates on Attendance and Voting Preferences in the 2019 General Election in Magelang Utara District, Magelang City*", found that the *coat-tail effect* of the popularity of presidential and vice presidential candidate pairs has a significant influence on voter preferences. However, this study only discusses the positive influence of the *coat-tail effect* in the context of candidates who are already popular and does not explore the failure of the *coat-tail effect*, especially in new parties such as PSI that have limitations in

building popularity and emotional ties with voters in the 2024 elections.

In a study by Sardini and Erowati (2020) entitled "*The Coat-tail Effect in the Concurrent Elections in Indonesia: Study on Increasing Turnouts and Use of Voting Rights in the 2019 Election*", it was found that the increase in voter turnout in the 2019 election was due to the high competitiveness of the presidential election compared to other elections held simultaneously. This study highlights the positive influence of the *coat-tail effect* on increasing voter participation. However, it does not discuss the failure of the *coat-tail effect* in the context of an unestablished political party, such as PSI, which faces challenges in building political appeal through public figures in the 2024 elections.

Another study that also discussed the *Coat-tail effect effect* in elections was conducted in 2021 by Luky Sandra Amalia with the title *Simultaneous Elections and the Rise of Female Representation in Indonesia* by applying qualitative research methods which obtained results where simultaneous elections were able to help female candidates with easy access to voters to choose one presidential candidate. The difference between Luky Sandra, et al's research is in terms of research methods, where the research conducted by Luky uses quantitative research methods. The research objective described in the study was to analyze the impact of simultaneous elections on women's political representation in Indonesia, especially in the 2019 legislative elections. This research explores how the introduction of simultaneous presidential and legislative elections affects the success of female candidates, by examining the institutional factors and resources that influence their election results. The main similarity between the research by Amalia and the current research on Kaesang's coat-tail effect in the 2024 election is that both analyze the influence of famous figures on election results. In this study, the analysis focuses on how female candidates benefit from associating themselves with presidential candidates, while your study focuses on how Kaesang's popularity affects PSI's electoral performance. Both studies highlight the importance of political branding

and affiliation with powerful figures in shaping election outcomes.

The research on "Analysis of Kaesang's Coat-tail Effect Failure in Winning PSI Votes in the 2024 Elections: Viewed from a Political Branding Perspective" fills several important gaps in the study of political branding and political strategy in Indonesia. Although previous studies have examined the phenomenon of the Coat-tail effect, such as the studies of Kadek Dwita Apriani in Bali and Novfirmansyah in West Sumatra in the context of the 2019 elections, which stated from the results of their research that party identification is a stable psychological bond between voters and certain political parties, so that voters who have it are no longer influenced by short-term factors in determining their political choices. There is still a significant gap in the understanding of this dynamic at the national level and in the context of recent elections. Both studies focus on specific regions and established political figures, while the Kaesang Pangarep and PSI phenomena offer new perspectives that have yet to be explored.

The novelty of this research with some of the previous research above that has been explained is that this research will analyze the failure factors and also the impact of the non-optimal implementation of the *Coat-tail effect effect* carried out by PSI or the Indonesian Solidarity Party in the 2024 elections. Even though it has carried out *political marketing* and also has sufficient existence in the community through the existence of the Kaesang Pangarep socialite. The novelty of this research lies in several key aspects. Unlike previous studies that tend to look at success, this research focuses on analyzing the failure of the Coat-tail effect which will be studied through political branding theory which can open new insights into the limits and complexities of this phenomenon.

2. METHOD

The research method used is a qualitative method as a method that focuses on observing in depth, often referred to as naturalistic research. In accordance with the philosophy of post-positivism for object research and researchers as instruments. Qualitative research results will focus on generalization

(Sugiyono, 2019). This research applies a single case study approach which usually focuses or leads directly to research that leads to the context or core of the problem. It is also defined as research that is directed at one particular case or event. An appropriate strategy, to be applied in research that asks how or why and also has not enough time to conduct research in depth on the subject and the location of documents and related events (Yin, 2009).

In examining the phenomenon of Kaesang's failed coat-tail effect on PSI's vote acquisition, this study uses data collection techniques through triangulation that includes in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation studies. In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants consisting of PSI DPP officials, Kaesang's campaign team, and millennial and Gen Z voters. The selection of informants used purposive sampling technique based on the criteria of relevance to the research topic. Non-participant observation was conducted on PSI campaign activities, Kaesang's political activities, interactions on social media, digital campaign content, and mass media coverage. The documentation study included analysis of PSI campaign materials, electoral survey data, mass media coverage, social media content, and party strategy documents.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In politics, public figures have a significant role in shaping and influencing the direction of a political party. Their presence is not only as a face in the campaign but also as a symbol of the values, vision, and mission carried by the party. The contributions that can be made by public figures vary, including aspects of branding, mass mobilization, and fundraising (Nurul, 2019). Public figures often serve as ambassadors that reinforce a political party's identity. They bring with them reputation, experience and networks that can be utilized to attract support from among voters. In addition, public figures can act as influencers who can shape public opinion. With a large following on social media, statements or support for a party can become viral news and attract greater attention (Khamimiya et al., 2023).

Overall, the contribution of public figures to political parties is multidimensional. From

support in voter mobilization to resource mobilization, which plays an important role in the modern political system. However, this success is highly dependent on the synergy between the values promoted by the public figure and the political party itself, as well as the ability to maintain consistency in attitudes and actions that are in line with public expectations (Lamabelawa, 2020).

3.1 The concept of Coat-tail effect in Politics

The Coat-tail effect theory, proposed by French political scientist Maurice Duverger, explains the phenomenon whereby the popularity or electoral strength of a candidate or political party at an upper level can influence the election outcome for the same candidate or party at a lower level. Duverger argues that voters tend to cast their votes consistently for one party across different levels of elections, so success at the national level can "pull" or bring victory for candidates from the same party at the local or regional level (Abadi, 2022).

According to Duverger, this effect is particularly noticeable in electoral systems where elections for multiple offices are held simultaneously. He explains that voters who are interested in a presidential candidate, for example, may be inclined to vote for candidates from the same party for legislative seats or other offices, even if they are less familiar with these candidates.

In the context of Indonesian politics, the *coat-tail effect* can be seen in presidential elections that coincide with legislative elections, especially in simultaneous elections that began to be implemented in 2019. This theory describes how the popularity of a presidential candidate can have a positive impact on the political party that endorses him, thereby increasing the electability and chances of victory of legislative candidates from that party at various levels, ranging from the DPR RI, provincial DPRD, to district / city DPRD (Anugerah, 2023). Voters who support certain presidential candidates will often be encouraged to vote for parties or legislative candidates affiliated with these presidential candidates, so that they can provide additional votes for the political parties concerned.

For example, in the 2019 elections, this phenomenon was seen in parties that endorsed Joko Widodo as a presidential candidate, such as PDI Perjuangan. Jokowi's popularity as a presidential candidate who has been widely recognized by the public brought electoral benefits to PDI Perjuangan, which managed to win significant votes in many regions. Voters who supported Jokowi tended to vote for PDI Perjuangan in the legislative ballot due to similarities in ideology, work programs, and support for Jokowi's government (Solihah, 2018). Thus, PDI Perjuangan was able to take advantage of the *coat-tail effect* to win more seats in the DPR and DPRD, which is also one of the reasons why the party managed to become the party with the largest vote in the 2019 elections.

However, the *coat-tail effect* in Indonesia is not always strong and can be influenced by a number of factors, such as regional socio-political conditions, party machine strength, and public perceptions of the performance of the central and regional governments. In a multiparty system like Indonesia, while this effect can help increase votes, the role of legislative candidates in the regions is also very significant. Candidates often have to build their support base directly through personal approaches to constituents, especially in areas with strong social ties. In other words, the popularity of presidential candidates can be a supporting factor, but not necessarily the only determinant of victory for parties at the legislative level (Fure et al., 2020).

3.2 Political Branding Theory

Political Branding Theory is a concept that adopts branding principles commonly used in the business world and applies them to the political context. This theory sees candidates or political parties like a brand that has a certain identity, image and values that it wants to convey to voters. In political branding, a candidate is not only judged based on the programs or policies offered, but also how they build self-image, personality, and emotional closeness with voters (Safia Banurea & Maulina, 2022).

This process involves various political communication efforts to shape public perception, so that they can recognize and be

attracted to the "brand" offered by the candidate or party. Political branding includes aspects such as logos, slogans, appearance, speaking style and values. The main objective of political branding is to create attraction and loyalty among voters, so that they feel they have something in common or attached to the candidate or party in question. In this way, political branding not only helps in attracting the attention of new voters, but also in maintaining support from old voters, as well as strengthening the position of candidates or parties in fierce political competition (Newman, 1994).

Political Branding Theory has various indicators that are interconnected to form a comprehensive analytical framework. Brand Identity is a fundamental indicator that includes visual elements and political messages such as logos, symbols, and slogans that become distinguishing identities. This aspect not only includes visual design that reflects values and ideology, but also includes the use of symbolic colors and graphic elements that are easily recognizable. Slogans and key messages should be articulated in language that resonates with the target voters, while personal appearance should consistently reflect the political positioning.

Brand Personality is a crucial indicator that describes the personal characteristics of a candidate or political party. This includes leadership traits, personal values, and communication styles that are consistently displayed. The ability to build emotional connections through touching storytelling and empathy with voters is an important element. Track records that include achievements, consistency between words and actions, and the ability to solve problems also form a credible political brand personality.

In the context of Brand Positioning, differentiation is the main key where candidates or parties must have a clear value proposition and target specific voter segments. Ideology and political platforms must show clarity of stance on key issues with measurable consistency of ideological views. Competitive advantages must be able to create barriers to entry against other political competitors.

Brand Communication plays a vital role in managing political messages through various

communication channels. Selection of the right media, cross-platform message integration, and timing management are crucial. The message strategy must be tailored to the characteristics of the audience while maintaining narrative consistency. Two-way engagement with voters, community building, and presence on social media are indicators of successful political communication.

Brand Image is formed from the accumulation of public perception and reputation built over time. The association of values and attributes with political brands must be strengthened through mental connections with certain issues. Strong brand equity is reflected in the loyalty of supporters and solidly built electoral value. Political brand performance or Brand Performance is measured not only by electoral achievement, but also by the ability to implement campaign promises and maintain sustainable support. Brand trust is built through credibility, authenticity and accountability. Credibility includes trust in capability and integrity, while authenticity is reflected in the authenticity of personal branding and genuine connection with voters. Accountability is demonstrated through accountability to constituents and responsiveness to feedback.

Brand Network is an important indicator that shows the ability to build and manage political networks. This includes strategic coalition building with stakeholders, penetration to the grassroots level, and support from formal institutions. The mobilization of volunteers and cadres, as well as the ability of resource mobilization, is a measure of the strength of the political network that is built.

These indicators form an analytical framework that can be used to measure the effectiveness of political branding strategies, identify areas of improvement, and compare performance between candidates or political parties. Implementing an effective political branding strategy requires a deep understanding of each indicator and the ability to integrate them into a coherent campaign strategy. The success of political branding is not only measured by short-term electoral victories, but also by the ability to build long-term political loyalty and create meaningful social change in accordance with the values and platforms championed.

3.3 Kaesang's Impact on PSI's Vote in 2024 Election

Based on the findings of interviews with several interviewees, various perspectives emerged regarding the impact of Kaesang's presence as PSI Chairman. RK as a participant in the Jakarta regional election emphasized that he did not vote for PSI because of the party's tendency to highlight the figures of Kaesang and Joko Widodo as the main symbols. RK argues that this shows the lack of institutionalization of political parties in terms of ideology and regeneration, which makes him doubt PSI's independence. He believes that Kaesang's relationship with Joko Widodo could lead to potential conflicts of interest that risk interfering with the party's decisions.

This is inversely proportional to the expression of EMF as DPW PSI DKI Jakarta and IPP as DPD PSI Ja popularity to being able to obtain positive votes. EMF emphasized that although Kaesang was late to enter the legislative candidate structure, his presence helped attract the attention of voters, especially among young people. IPP added that Kaesang's popularity helped expand the segment of voters who supported PSI without relying on unethical political practices, such as *money politics*. Kaesang's late presence is considered to have an effect on PSI's vote share.

According to HPP and FMO, who were also participants in the Jakarta regional elections, they showed doubts about or refusal to vote for PSI. HPP expressed his distrust of PSI because the party is too new with frequent leadership changes that create the impression that the party lacks identity and sees PSI as a party that is unclear in ideological positioning and trapped in dynastic political practices, despite simultaneously claiming to be a party of young people. EMF and IPP argue that Kaesang's involvement creates a positive positioning by demonstrating reform and anti-corruption values. EMF also emphasized the importance of Kaesang's image upholding party ideals where he is expected to take PSI in a more innovative and modern direction although time and better planning are needed to maximize the potential of candidates in the regions. RK considered that PSI's boldness to put Kaesang as a political symbol reduced the desire to vote with the notion that this was against the essence of a

younger generation party. FMO criticized PSI's positioning as a party of young people that has grown up in the context of powerful dynastic politics.

Based on the interview findings, Kaesang's presence as a public figure has a significant impact on the brand personality of the Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI). EMF and IPP see Kaesang as capable of displaying leadership traits that are balanced by reform and anti-corruption values. This positive response shows hope in Kaesang's figure as an ambassador of change. On the other hand, there is skepticism from RK, HPP, and FMO who consider PSI to lack a strong and firm ideology. In their view, although Kaesang's popularity can attract public attention, PSI is still faced with the challenge of developing a more credible and consistent brand personality in order to be widely accepted by the public.

PSI's ideological position, which is considered unclear and potentially trapped in dynastic politicization, could be an indication that to compete effectively PSI must strengthen its value proposition and clearly articulate its ideology and political platform. By doing so, PSI can target specific voter segments and build the necessary *competitive advantage* in the midst of intense political competition. The aspect of brand communication is also very relevant in this research. It can be concluded that the interviewees pointed out that in order to build a good connection with voters, PSI must choose the right communication channels and manage political messages effectively. EMF and IPP emphasized the importance of Kaesang's image in attracting young voters where PSI also needs to ensure good message integration so that their narrative does not lose focus.

Effective communication media can build an image that will influence public perception of PSI. It was found that there were doubts from some voters who felt PSI did not yet have a clear identity, which posed a risk to the party's reputation. Kaesang's widespread popularity and appeal is not enough to translate that popularity into solid support. This indicates that PSI still needs to strengthen its brand image through consistency of values and clear positioning. These doubts reflect PSI's ability to demonstrate its credibility and integrity. RK and HPP expressed doubts about PSI's ability to

make independent political decisions. Building public trust among voters is indeed a challenge that requires PSI to provide tangible evidence of their ability and responsiveness to constituents' needs.

Based on the interview findings, it can be analyzed that the Coat-tail effect of Kaesang as PSI Chairman shows contradictory results to the party's political branding. PSI internals, represented by EMF and IPP, see the effect of Kaesang's popularity as a positive instrument in attracting voters' attention, especially the youth segment. This argument is based on the assumption that Kaesang's modern image and proximity to the younger generation is in line with PSI's positioning as a youth party that promotes reform and anti-corruption values. However, Kaesang's late inclusion in the legislative candidate structure is considered to affect the optimization of party votes.

On the other hand, the perspective of voters represented by RK, HPP, and FMO shows that Kaesang's coat-tail effect did not succeed in strengthening PSI's branding as a reformist youth party. They see a contradiction between PSI's narrative as a youth party and the decision to place Kaesang, who has relations with power, as the party's central figure. This condition creates the perception that PSI is trapped in dynastic political practices that are contrary to the party's claimed reformist values.

Analysis based on interview findings also reveals that Kaesang's coat-tail effect has not been able to overcome fundamental challenges in PSI's political branding. Although his presence has created political buzz and attracted public attention, this has not necessarily translated into a strengthening of the party's identity. The dominance of Kaesang's figure and his strong association with President Joko Widodo are perceived to obscure PSI's ideological positioning, which should be built on a clear policy platform and political vision. This situation raises doubts among critical voters like HPP who highlight the party's weak institutionalization and over-reliance on popular figures. Kaesang's involvement may be helpful in attracting attention and mobilizing supporters, but to achieve long-term success, PSI must focus on developing solid political networks with various stakeholders. This includes coalition building

and cadre mobilization at the grassroots level so that support for PSI can be maintained and strengthened among the public. In this regard, Kaesang's presence can be one of the supportive elements, but it must be balanced with a broader license and involvement in politics.

3.4 Kaesang Implication's for PSI Votes in the 2024 Elections

Kaesang's popularity as a public figure has mixed effects in the context of voters, creating two conflicting viewpoints. Some interviewees, such as RK and others, showed distrust of Kaesang's positive impact in increasing PSI's votes. They were concerned that PSI's reliance on a big name figure would create an image of a party that is not independent, especially due to Kaesang's connection to dynastic politics through his father, Joko Widodo. This unease highlights the fear that voters may see PSI as nothing more than an extension of the existing power, with no strong institutionalization of ideology. However, the views of EMF and IPP provide another hope. They argue that if Kaesang is involved early and strategically, especially in the campaign process and recruitment of legislative candidates, the positive impact of his popularity can be maximized. This opinion is rooted in the belief that Kaesang's appeal will attract the attention of groups of voters who have been marginalized or uninterested in other parties, especially young voters who tend to look for innovation and goodness in leadership.

Further analysis of the research findings based on the interview results found a paradox in the implementation of Kaesang's coat-tail effect on PSI's branding strategy. Although the party's internal team claims Kaesang's presence has a positive impact on the party's electability, the interview data shows the opposite phenomenon where Kaesang's personal popularity does not correlate positively with the strengthening of PSI's image in the eyes of young voters. This indicates a fundamental gap between the party's strategic assumptions and the reality of voter behavior, where the popularity factor is not strong enough to drive the electoral preferences of the millennial and Gen Z segments, which are PSI's main targets.

An in-depth analysis of young voters' response patterns reveals that they tend to be more critical in evaluating the authenticity of political branding. PSI's dependence on the figure of Kaesang is actually perceived as a form of ideological inconsistency that weakens the party's positioning as an alternative political force. This phenomenon reflects a paradigm shift in the behavior of young voters who are no longer solely influenced by the personal appeal of figures, but are more concerned with the coherence between the promised narrative of change and the political practices displayed.

This finding also underscores the strategic dilemma in PSI's efforts to build political differentiation. On the one hand, the party seeks to position itself as a representation of the aspirations of young people who carry a renewal agenda. But on the other hand, the decision to rely on Kaesang's coat-tail effect creates the perception that PSI is trapped in conventional political patronage that is contrary to the claimed spirit of renewal. This contradiction is further emphasized by the lack of elaboration of a policy platform that can justify PSI's claim to be the bearer of change in the national political landscape.

The complexity of Kaesang's coat-tail effect can also be seen in the emergence of resistance among voters who want substantial political transformation. Instead of strengthening PSI's branding as a reformist party, the strong association with the Kaesang figure has led to skepticism about the party's ability to articulate the interests of its constituents independently. This phenomenon indicates that branding strategies that rely too heavily on personalities risk blurring the ideological differentiation that should be the basis of party identity.

The challenge for PSI is how to not only emerge as a "shadow" of a big name but also to establish integrity as well as clear ideological goals. It is important for PSI to demonstrate more substantial values in its programs and policies so that it is not only dependent on Kaesang's popularity as an individual. PSI as a party has the opportunity to explore Kaesang's leadership potential to formulate ideas that are consistent with their vision, which prioritizes transparency, sustainability, and active participation from voters. Kaesang's presence

in PSI is not only about capitalizing on a wave of popularity but also about how the party builds its image. EMF and IPP emphasized the importance of PSI's qualities and values as a branding foundation that should be coordinated with Kaesang's efforts to promote open and friendly politics. The criticism coming from some voters who yearn for renewal as well as a strong ideological foundation shows that there is hope for PSI to be more than just a representation of political dynasties.

PSI needs to strengthen ideas that are more substantial and uphold the principles that are its identity such as contributions to the fight against corruption and tolerance. Delivering messages that portray the party as a new force for change, rather than merely accommodating existing forces, will be key in attracting wider support. PSI must also be more sensitive to the voices and needs of constituents and respond constructively to any criticism that arises in a way that demonstrates that they truly listen to and understand the aspirations of the people. With clear and validated strategic steps PSI can ensure that the image built is not just focused on Kaesang alone but as a reflection of the collaboration between the new energy Kaesang brings and the party's capability to transform into a relevant and influential entity in the Indonesian political scene.

The coat-tail effect concept used by PSI shows that it does not work properly. This shows that Kaesang's popularity and personality did not have an impact on the decisions of millennial and Gen Z election participants, which are the segmentation of PSI. Candidate image and identity are important to influence public perception of political branding. In this study, the reliance on Kaesang as the main symbol potentially undermines efforts to build a clear party identity and solid ideology. This reflects that poorly integrated and inconsistent branding can lead to confusion among voters and resistance to the party.

Kaesang's personal appeal must be carefully leveraged. While his popularity can help attract attention, it is important for PSI to ensure that the portrayal of Kaesang does not create a superficial impression that could distract from the deeper and more substantive issues faced by the party. PSI must face the challenge of integrating party ideology with

Kaesang's personal image. The proposed policies and programs need to reflect a strong commitment to the principles being promoted rather than simply relying on individual popularity.

4. CONCLUSION

The presence of Kaesang Pangarep as Chairman of the Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI) in the 2024 General Election was unable to have a significant impact on increasing PSI's vote share, which remains below the 4% parliamentary threshold. Although Kaesang brings popularity as a young figure with strong political connections, several key obstacles hinder the effectiveness of the expected coat-tail effect.

First, the weakness of party institutionalization, especially in building a strong and consistent ideology, makes PSI less able to optimally utilize Kaesang's potential. Second, the negative perception of dynastic politics attached to Kaesang's figure as the son of President Joko Widodo also reduced his appeal among certain voters. Third, PSI's political branding strategy was ineffective due to a lack of consistency in the campaign narrative, late involvement of Kaesang in the communication strategy, and limited exploration of Kaesang's personal branding. Nevertheless, Kaesang's presence has increased young voters' attention to PSI, demonstrating the potential appeal of young public figures in attracting certain segments of the electorate. However, this potential is not enough to build voter loyalty without the support of a mature political branding strategy and solid institutionalization of party values.

Future research is recommended to explore the relationship between political branding and personal branding strategies in maximizing the coat-tail effect, as well as conducting comparative studies with other parties that have successfully passed the parliamentary threshold. Longitudinal analysis of the impact of party institutionalization and ideological consistency on voter loyalty is also needed. In addition, it is important to examine voter perceptions of dynastic politics and its impact on the electability of public figures, as well as utilizing social media analysis to

understand voter engagement and response in digital-based campaigns.

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