



## ***POLITICAL BRANDING : CONTENT ANALYSIS OF DEBATE OF CANDIDATES FOR VICE GOVERNOR OF EAST JAVA SESSION I IN POVERTY REDUCTION***

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### **Abstract**

*This study aims to understand how the Political branding strategy developed by the Candidates for Governor and Vice governor with regard to poverty alleviation in the East Java region. This "political battle" becomes interesting because each pair of Khofifah and Emil or Saifullah Yusuf and Puti Guntur Soekarno are not new figures in the East Java political arena. The background and political capital of each partner seems to be at stake because of the long and deep history and closeness to East Java. In the context of the issue of poverty, it becomes important how they conduct public debates in order to do maneuver to overcome this classic problem and all parties agree that poverty must be fought. This study uses content analysis from the first session of the open debate on the Candidates for Governor and Vice governor of East Java. In the end, this study shows the superiority of the Khofifah and Emil Dardak in discussing the issue of poverty, but the Saifullah Yusuf and Puti Guntur Soekarno also have their own characteristics in discussing the issue of poverty. Each has its own political branding focus and strategy in conveying their ideas.*

**Keywords:** *political branding; poverty; public debates,*

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini ditujukan untuk memahami bagaimana strategi *Political branding* yang dibangun oleh para Calon Gubernur dan wakil Gubernur berkenaan dengan pengentasan kemiskinan di wilayah Jawa Timur. "Pertarungan politik" ini menjadi menarik karena masing-masing pasangan Khofifah dan Emil atau pun Saifullah Yusuf dan Puti Guntur Soekarno bukan merupakan figur baru dalam arena politik Jawa Timur. Latar belakang dan modal politik yang dimiliki masing-masing pasangan seolah menjadi pertarungan karena sejarah dan kedekatan dengan Jawa Timur yang cukup panjang dan mendalam. Dalam konteks isu kemiskinan menjadi penting tentang bagaimana mereka melakukan perdebatan publik guna melakukan manuver untuk mengatasi masalah klasik tersebut dan semua pihak sepakat bahwa kemiskinan harus diperangi. Penelitian ini menggunakan analisis isi dari debat terbuka Calon Gubernur dan Wakil Gubernur Jawa Timur sesi pertama. Pada akhirnya penelitian ini menunjukkan keunggulan pasangan Khofifah dan Emil Dardak dalam membahas isu kemiskinan, akan tetapi pasangan Saifullah Yusuf dan Puti Guntur Soekarno juga memiliki karakteristik tersendiri dalam membahas isu kemiskinan. Masing-masing memiliki fokus dan strategi *Political branding* tersendiri dalam menyampaikan ide-ide mereka.

**Kata kunci:** debat publik, kemiskinan, political branding.

## INTRODUCTION

Poverty and people's welfare are two sides of a coin <sup>1</sup>. Discussions on welfare always go hand in hand with efforts to alleviate community poverty. No wonder they have become an eternal agenda in development. Starting from *the millennium development goals* which have now become *sustainable development goals* to the constitution, has put welfare and poverty alleviation as the main agenda <sup>2</sup>. This positions poverty alleviation and welfare not just a slogan but as a state goal <sup>3</sup>.

On the other hand, it is not only a development agenda, but also has a political dimension <sup>4</sup>. This issue will easily appear as a campaign promise during the general election. The pairs of candidates for regional or national heads promise prosperity if they are elected later. Of course this is unavoidable. The joint commitment implemented in the state social contract is aimed at building mutual prosperity <sup>5</sup>. The political process that took place in the elections made poverty alleviation and welfare development a central issue. Each candidate pair tries to offer a program that can encourage public interest to vote for it <sup>6</sup>. 2018 is a political year because 171 regions hold Regional Head Elections. The General Elections Commission of the Republic of Indonesia states that there will be 17 provinces, 39 cities and 115 districts that will hold elections in 2018. Referring to the data released by the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia regarding the end of the term of office of regional heads in East Java on February 12, 2019, then East Java entered the campaign period for the Governor Candidate and Deputy Governor Candidate from February 15 to June 23 2018.

The pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor are individuals who have been widely known by the people of East Java. Saifullah Yusuf and Khofifah themselves are not "newcomers" among the people of East Java. Both Saifullah Yusuf and Khofifah are currently paired with young people. Khofifah is paired with Emil Elestianto Dardak or better known as Emil Dardak who is the Regent of Trenggalek for the 2016-2021 period. The position as Regent of Trenggalek was Emil Dardak's first political career. Saifullah Yusuf is paired with Puti Guntur Soekarno who is a member of the Indonesian Parliament since 2014.

Obviously, it is not an easy thing for the two couples to grab the hearts of the people of East Java even though they are already popular in the people of East Java. It is possible

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<sup>1</sup> Chriswardani Suryawati, "Understanding Multidimensional Poverty," *Jmpk* 08, no. 03 (2005).

<sup>2</sup> Hans Giovanni Adesya Patulak, "Optimizing the Role of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia in Supporting Sustainable Development Goals Number 16 (Target 16.6)," *Institute for Solutive and Innovative Student Ideas* 3, no. 2 (2020).

<sup>3</sup> Yohanes Suhardin, "ROLE OF THE STATE AND LAW IN ERADICING POVERTY BY ACHIEVE GENERAL WELFARE," *Journal of Law & Development* 42, no. 3 (2012), <https://doi.org/10.21143/jhp.vol42.no3.274>.

<sup>4</sup> Suryawati, "Understanding Poverty Multidimensionally."

<sup>5</sup> Daya Negri Wijaya, "Jean-Jaques Rousseau in Democracy," *Indonesian Politics: Indonesian Political Science Review* 1, no. 1 (2016), <https://doi.org/10.15294/jpi.v1i1.9075>.

<sup>6</sup> Bambang Pudjianto and Mochamad Syawie, "POVERTY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT," *Sosio Informa* 1, no. 3 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.33007/inf.v1i3.167>.

that there are some community groups who still question the credibility of each partner. This assessment was obtained from an effort to reflect on the researcher's closest environment in 2018. The researcher asked questions to the researcher's closest colleagues. The first question relates to "Do you know the two pairs of Candidates for Governor and Vice governor of East Java 2018 who are currently campaigning?" Eight informants answered that they knew the two couples, while two of the informants said that they knew Saifullah Yusuf but did not know his partner.

The next question is "Are you sure about the leadership of the couple who will later become the elected Governor and Vice governor?" Six informants answered that they still had doubts. They mentioned that for Saifullah Yusuf, even though he had been a Vice governor, he had no experience as a Governor of East Java, which might mean that the problems faced by the Vice and the Governor were different. Meanwhile, the pair Khofifah and Emil are still in doubt. Three informants said that they had no doubts that one of the couples would be elected as the governor and Vice governor, while the other informant was more neutral.

At this point, both couples are also necessary to focus on image formation and at the same time managing issues that have occurred or will occur in the future. Using the Branding approach is one solution to be able to build an image and manage issues well. Although the concept of branding has so far been closely related to the product or service of a brand, it is possible that in the world of politics also uses the term branding to "sell" candidates from certain political parties. Brand concept is a powerful tool for understanding political images.<sup>7</sup> Branding has the understanding that implanting an irreplaceable impression or hunch in the minds of consumers on a brand. Implanting messages that are not replaced or deleted in the minds of consumers will make it easy for a brand to make consumers loyal to a particular person.<sup>8</sup> This concept can also be applied in the political world by using a Political branding approach. Political branding is a strategy taken to identify, differentiate and influence political and functional offerings and choices to increase attractiveness and encourage voter interest in elections or the political process<sup>9</sup>. It can be seen that doing political branding is not an easy thing. Many criteria must be met so that voters will remain loyal supporters. One of the criteria for developing personal branding is the delivery of a clear and communicative message<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Margaret Scammell, "Politics and Image: The Conceptual Value of Branding" *Journal of Political Marketing*, (2015) <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2014.990829>

<sup>8</sup> Akhmad Farhan and Azhar Ahmad, "A Review of Political Branding Research," *Global Journal of Business and Social Science Review* 2015 <https://doi.org/10.35609/gjbssr.2020.8>.

<sup>9</sup> Catherine Needham and Gareth Smith, "Introduction: Political Branding," *Journal of Political Marketing* 14 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2014.990828>.

<sup>10</sup> Gareth Smith, "Conceptualizing and Testing Brand Personality in British Politics," *Journal of Political Marketing* 8, no. 3 (2009), <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377850903044858>.

Therefore, researchers want to know the Political branding built by Saifullah Yusuf – Puti Guntur Soekarno and Khofifah – Emil when describing their mission to the way of the two couples answered questions in the open debate session. Therefore, this study aims to identify and analyze the Political branding that was built by the two couples of Candidates for Governor and Vice governor of East Java through the First Session of the East Java Cawagub Candidate Debate.

## METHOD

The research method used is descriptive quantitative content analysis. This research only describes the tendency of the content of a message<sup>11</sup>. Kelinger through Wimmer and Dominick (2011) argues that content analysis is a method for observing and analyzing information systematically, objectively, and quantitatively with the aim of measuring variables.<sup>12</sup>

The use of quantitative content analysis in research provides an overview of the content of a message by calculating important/key categories and measuring or calculating other variables.<sup>13</sup>. If applied in this research, the researcher reveals the tendency in the content of messages through electronic archives that describe *Political branding: Measuring the Ability of East Java Governor Candidates in Alleviating Poverty*. The debate between the two pairs of candidates for governor took place on April 10, 2018. Researchers downloaded a video on the CNN Indonesia Youtube Channel debate with a duration of 3 hours 16 minutes 39 seconds. Not all video durations were examined, but only on the answers to questions given by each candidate pair. This is because the total duration contains an introduction to the debate, advertisements, and things that have no relevance to research needs. Based on the data reduction, the researchers did a transcript of the content of the candidate debate video in the first session with a duration of 2 hours 11 minutes.

Objects that have been documented then go through the coding process using coding worksheets and *codebook guides* for code<sup>14</sup>. *Codebook* in the coding process is the most important part in maintaining the flow of research to be carried out<sup>15</sup>. *The codebook* contains the unit of analysis and categories that have been determined by the researcher to classify and clarify the data collected by the researcher. Neuendorf states that all

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<sup>11</sup> and Dessanti Putri Sekti Ari. Pratama, Bayu Indra, Azizun Kurnia Divine, Choiria Anggraini, Muhammad Rizki Pratama, *Content Analysis Methods*. (Malang: Unisma Press, 2021).

<sup>12</sup> and Joseph R Dominick Wimmer, Roger D, *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*. 9 Ed. (Wadsworth: Cengage Learning, 2011).

<sup>13</sup> Kimberly A. Neuendorf, *The Content Analysis Guidebook*, *The Content Analysis Guidebook*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071802878>.

<sup>14</sup> Wimmer, Roger D, *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*. 9 Ed.

<sup>15</sup> Mireille Lalanancette and Vincent Raynauld, "The Power of Political Image: Justin Trudeau, Instagram, and Celebrity Politics," *American Behavioral Scientist* 63, no. 7 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764217744838>.

decisions on variables, measurements and coding rules must be made before conducting research. This aims to maintain the framework that has been defined <sup>16</sup>.

## DISCUSSION

Based on the research conducted, the presentation of this research will be presented with an explanation of obtaining data from each of the specified categories. There are 9 categories which are studied in this study consisting of brand awareness, brand knowledge, brand preference, innovation, brand association, program renewal function, paradoxical concept, Touch consumer/community experience, Key Message Development (KMD).

The presentation of the data will be described based on the percentage tendency of the message content of each candidate pair of governors examined according to the concept that has been determined in each category. The research findings are described as follows,

### Brand Awareness

Table 1. *Brand Awareness* of Candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor of East Java

Category	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 1	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 2
Brand Awareness	26%	13%

Pair number 1, namely Khofifah Emil is dominant in the brand awareness category with a percentage of 26%. This shows that the couple understands the importance of referring to themselves as a brand or brand. In this case, Emil is dominant in mentioning the brand about himself. Emil repeatedly mentioned that he was the Regent of Trenggalek by mentioning what had been done in Trenggalek, as well as Trenggalek's achievements.

Some examples are when Khofifah said "...if the people of East Java give me and Mas Emil a mandate, I want to negotiate with the central government..." Khofifah mentioned the name of her partner, Emil at minute 1'02'30. Then at 1.37. 29 Khofifah also mentioned her partner's name, namely, "It was a coincidence that we, Mas Emil and I just met the JPPA ( Women and Children's Assistance Network) how come the recommendation was exactly tonight's question. Their question is what is the real commitment of the provincial government if Khofifah-Emil is elected to the protection of women and children."

In addition, at 1.41.54 minutes , Khofifah also mentioned her partner again, namely in the form of a name, "That is part of our commitment, Mr. Emil and I also hope that there is a regional regulation related to the protection of women and children." Not only that, this brand awareness was also supported when Emil also mentioned his identity as a regent at 1.05.12 minute, "I am a regent, I myself have experienced allocating a budget for madin in Trenggalek Regency." Emil also repeatedly mentioned his performance during his tenure as Regent of Trenggalek as at 1.39.10 minutes, namely, "we in Trenggalek made an organizational change by implementing the social service we combined with P3A." This

<sup>16</sup> Neuendorf, *Content Anal. Guideb.*

seems to emphasize and remind the audience that he (Emil) is the Regent of Trenggalek, as well as remind him of the things he has done so far.

### Brand Knowledge

Table 2. Brand Knowledge of Candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor of East Java

Category	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 1	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 2
Brand Knowledge	21%	38%

After brand awareness, the couple Khofifah Emil (the pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 1 ) has a large percentage of brand knowledge with a value of 21%. This can be seen in the mention of their dominant program. This partner program is the Millennial job center and East Java Satya (Prosperous and Empowered). Millennial job centers are more dominantly mentioned by this candidate pair.

The millennial job center was mentioned by Khofifah at 1.30.50 minutes, namely "So, if today the digital literacy story is finished, I think it's finished in East Java, then we enter the millennial job center". In addition, Emil also mentioned, "So we have several programs at the East Java work service, one of which is the millennial job center to pick up the digital era." and on "Through the millennial job center, we will build professions in the millennial era in this digital era with the concept of building flight hours..." at 1.27.11 minutes. Another work program is East Java Satya which Khofifah mentioned, "we want to prepare a new format, East Java Satya." and "if given the mandate of the people of East Java, we want to continue with East Java satya. Prosperous and Powerful East Java. That is part of our commitment, Pak Emil and I also hope that there will be a regional regulation related to the protection of women and children. I would like to convey that the governor's regulation will be issued soon if we are elected." at 1"02'30 and "with East Java satya. Prosperous and Powerful East Java. That's part of our commitment." Emil also said, "We will review this again thoroughly so that the East Java Satya program can overcome the problem." Meanwhile, the pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 2, namely Saifullah Yusuf and Puti, had the highest percentage in the brand knowledge category with a percentage of 38%. The program offered was the most mentioned thing in the first debate. An example is when Puti says, "We have superstar facilities and programs," at 1.15.36 minutes. and Saifullah Yusuf at minute 1.32.10, "we have a THOUSAND DEWI program". Puti again mentioned Superstars at 1.15.30 minutes, namely " We have facilities and superstar programs for empowering MSMEs and start-ups and at 1.28.45 minutes, "Superstars and empowering through MSMEs, start-ups and other business centers." Another program mentioned is Mas Metal, which is at 1.29.00 "Mas metal is a digitally literate society.

In addition, this couple also mentioned their vision and mission or what they would do, namely at 1.31.31 minute Saifullah Yusuf said, "it is important that we make an agenda

to build infrastructure that reaches villages ...", and Saifullah Yusuf affirmed "then Therefore, our first agenda is to overcome the problem of poverty and inequality," at 1.12.10 minutes.

### Brand Preference

Table 3. Brand Preferences of Candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor of East Java

Category	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 1	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 2
Brand Preference	8.5%	4%

In this category, the Khofifah Emil pair has a higher percentage than the opposing pair in terms of positioning themselves as the right character to be chosen. This can be seen from Khofifah's statement at 1.31.00 minutes , "It's not just about SMK, everything is great A, Saifullah Yusuf, it's not like that. So we want certain SMKs to have the potential to be directly absorbed as extraordinary workers, especially the tourism sector, IT sector and the hotel sector. We want that we will give priority and scholarships to those hospitality and tourism vocational schools."

Not only that, Khofifah at 1.02.00 minutes also said the same meaning, "I want to convey to all, if the people of East Java give a mandate to me and Mas Emil, I want to negotiate with the central government, that BOS should also apply to madrasas. early". At minute 1.41.10, Khofifah again stated, "That is part of our commitment, Pak Emil and I also hope that there will be a regional regulation related to the protection of women and children. I would like to convey that the governor's regulation will be issued soon if we are elected." Meanwhile for the couple Saifullah Yusuf and Puti, at 2.21.00 minutes, Saifullah Yusuf said, "For me, the most important thing is the education of the teacher, then the students. We must support the teacher to get the opportunity to become a professional and prosperous teacher, then we must support the students. If we look at the East Java GER or NER from junior high school to high school graduates now only 68%, then there is no other choice in the success of the 12 year compulsory education, we must give them full support to get free education at the high school and vocational level. This is for the students. As for the institution, of course it must be supported by adequate or adequate facilities and infrastructure."

### Innovation

Table 4 Innovations for Candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor of East Java

Category	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 1	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 2
Innovation	9%	7%

In this category, the two pairs of candidates are not too dominant, such as the pair Khofifah and Emil who only have a percentage of 9%. This is stated in a quote from

Khofifah's debate at minute 1.06.59 "they can get a lifeskill program on Saturday or Sunday, so that after they finish from ulya, they can get certain skills." At 1.12.15 minutes Emil also added, "With the concept of communal branding, which is an effort to see how this new entrepreneur has no difficulty if he wants to sell his goods through modern retail channels or more mass retail channels, then this can increase interest for entrepreneurs." Meanwhile, in pair number 2, Saifullah Yusuf at minute 1.11.45 said "They could have gone through formal education or also through education and training. Especially for migrant workers, for example, we must be able to ensure that those who want to go abroad must have skills with sufficient requirements and with international standard certificates." Puti also added at 1.13.30, "So especially immigrant workers, especially women after returning from abroad, they get facilities to develop their creativity."

### Brand Association

Table 5 Brand Association of Candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor of East Java

Category	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 1	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 2
Brand Association	8%	3%

In the brand association category, the pair Khofifah and Emil are slightly superior. An example is in Khofifah's statement at 1.30.00 minutes , "I went around the villages, maybe Puti Guntur Soekarno had to come down again, because they had 4G. So, if today the digital literacy story, I think it's finished in East Java, then we enter the millennial job center" and at minute 1.41.10, "That's part of our commitment, Mr. Emil and I also hope that there will be a regional regulation related to protection. women and children. I would like to convey that the governor's regulation will be issued soon if we are elected."

### Program Function Update

Table 6 Program Function Updates for Candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor of East Java

Category	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 1	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 2
Program Function Update	8%	12%

The percentage of Khofifah Emil's pair in this category is slightly below that of Saifullah Yusuf Puti, which is only 8%. At 1.15.11 minutes, Khofiah mentioned about Jatim Satya which was a renewal of the previous government program, "East Java satya. Prosperous and Empowered East Java". Emil also said "we will review this again thoroughly so that the East Java Satya program can overcome the problem". While the pair number 2 mentioned about the renewal program from the previous program, namely Madi Plus. Puti said "we



have a madin plus program. Saifullah Yusuf was in the government of East Java for two periods, and his support for the madrasa diniah has been proven. How then bossdan for madin has been given by the provincial government in which is Saifullah Yusuf. Then the expansion of the addition of the amount given by the madin bossa will be given, that is our commitment." Saifullah Yusuf added at 1.00.57 minutes, "In the future, of course, this must be continued because the impact is very good, where now the early madrasah is growing and backing up the education of our children who go to formal schools. Indeed, the facilities are not very adequate, in mosques and prayer rooms, but if this can be maximized, revitalized, and then done a little extra, God willing, it will result in an education that has good teachers, students also get bossda, and the facilities are good." I think the relationship is quite successful as a continuation of the relationship, another path to prosperity was then moved to another path to independence whose main program is for single parents who are women.

### Paradoxical Concept

Table 7 Paradoxical Concepts of Candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor of East Java

Governor of East Java		
Category	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 1	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 2
Paradoxical Concept	8.5%	3%

Pair number 1 has a slightly higher percentage in this category compared to its opponent. As Emil said in forming his paradoxical concept, "I hope that Puti Guntur Soekarno is a member of commission ten, in fact the revised education law can be fought for when you are in commission 10, to pay attention to Islamic boarding schools" at minute 1.05.55. Emil also added at 1.14.30 minutes, "Well this is one way to unite the seven counters, starting from BNP2 TKI, immigration, regional police and so on and also providing skills so that the target for the provincial government is that the 30% go to formal positions can be achieved because many do not match the job requirements that are there. "Meanwhile, Saifullah Yusuf, pair number 2, criticized government programs that have been implemented by providing a solution, "For SMA, with a different path, a mini SMK was formed," at 1.27 minutes. 55.

### Touch Consumer/Society Experience

Table 8 Touching the Experience of Consumers/Communities for Candidates for Governor and Deputy Governor of East Java

Category	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 1	Pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor 2
Touch the Consumer/society experience	11%	20%

Khofifah Emil in the consumer or community experience touch category, received a percentage of 11%, dominated by mention of their experience in touching the community. An example is Khofifah mentioning her experience when she entered the community in the cities of Nganjuk, Ngawi, and Jombang. For example, at 2.16.19 minutes, Khofifah said, "When we went to Jombang, the farmer said, Mrs. Khofifah, I need ZA fertilizer, there is a fonska..." then at 1.08.52, "I went to Nganjuk, there is a shuttle kock industry center that was established in 1963.", and at 1.9.04 minutes, "I came to Ngawi, there is a wood carving art center, it turns out that they are also short of manpower." This shows that in this pair, Khofifah as a candidate for governor is more dominant in this category, because she gives more stories about her experiences in meeting people in the East Java region than her partner.

Discussions about branding in political studies cannot be separated from how a candidate communicates themselves and their programs to voters. Branding cannot be separated from part of information marketing. This is the background behind Political branding activities as self-brand communication activities through a series of messages that are persuasive in nature. The goal is none other than to build loyalty to the candidate. This is well understood by every political candidate. As explained earlier, this research focuses on how Political branding was built by the candidates for Governor and Vice governor of East Java in the first session of the East Java Regional Head Candidate Debate. The theme of this debate is People's Welfare, in which the two couples of candidates (gubernatorial and Vice governor candidates), Khofifah Indar Parawansa - Emil Elestianto Dardak and Saifullah Yusuf - Puti Guntur Soekarno, will be given the opportunity to present their vision, mission and programs in this topic. . In Political branding, there are 5 stages that need to be implemented to achieve the ideal. The five things are brand awareness, brand knowledge, brand preference, brand liking, and brand loyalty. Silih Agung Wasesa in his book Political branding and Public Relations, describes five other steps in creating brand politics, namely innovation, brand associations, program function renewal, paradoxical concepts, and a touch on the consumer experience.

Referring to the stages described above, this study formulates the limits of understanding related to categorization and class in collecting quantitative data. The categories set are eight points, namely brand awareness, brand knowledge, brand preference, innovation, brand associations, program function renewal, paradoxes, and belief in community experience. In addition, this study also adds another detail, namely a tool to structure a political message called Key Message Development (KMD). KMD is a scoring guide that contains a description of the messages prepared by the candidate on an ongoing basis between programs. Generally, KMD is divided into two discussions, namely Grand KMD which contains the elaboration of political program messages and Key Message House which is a space or vehicle that can be accessed by the public which contains an explanation of the message of each program offer if elected.

This research prioritizes quantitative content analysis which refers to tabulations. coding through predefined categories. The results show that of the eight categories that have been determined, the candidate for governor and Vice governor number 1 Khofifah -

Emil outperformed the candidate for governor and Vice governor number 2, Ipul - Puti in five categories, namely brand awareness, brand preference, innovation, associations, brand, and paradoxical. Meanwhile, the other 3 categories, namely brand knowledge, program function renewal, and a touch of experience, belong to this candidates for governor and Vice governor number 2. In the brand awareness category, the candidate for governor and Vice governor Khofifah - Emil excels with a percentage reaching 26 percent, double the percentage achieved by Ipul - Puti which only reached 13 percent. This is because Khofifah and Emil have introduced themselves several times.

The candidates for governor and Vice governor number 1 tried to introduce themselves by focusing on developing narratives related to their previous performance (Khofifah as Minister of Social Affairs, Emil as Regent of Trenggalek). Khofifah has tried several times to position herself as the person who best understands social problems, especially women and children. Khofifah's female figure and her previous position as Minister of Social Affairs made her indirectly associated with the issue of women's protection. Emil did something else.

Realizing that he is a new person in the Indonesian bureaucracy, especially East Java, he is indirectly required to present a unique brand that only belongs to him. His personality, which is closely associated with young leaders, coupled with his leadership in the city of Trenggalek, which is not widely known in Indonesia, has forced him to show and remind the public that he is the Regent of Trenggalek. He also wants to give the impression that although he is a newcomer in East Java, he has presented a series of programs that so far he claims are part of the bureaucratic innovation that he started in Trenggalek.

As for the candidate for governor and vice governor number 2, although they are not dominant in this category, they are trying to build their own brand through experience and programs. During the campaign period, Ipul stood as the incumbent and Puti, whose appearance was associated with the 'grandson of Bung Karno', chose not to be busy at the point of introducing himself. Based on the analysis that has been done, the candidate for governor and Vice governor number 2, does not emphasize much about who they are, what they have done before, and how committed they are to developing East Java. The candidates for governor and vice governor 2 tried to focus on presenting their vision, mission, and programs to win the sympathy of voters.

The conclusion obtained from this category is the success of the governor and vice governor candidate couple 1 outperforming the governor and vice governor candidate couple 2. The essence of the success of the governor and vice governor candidate couple 1 is the identity reconstruction carried out by Khofifah by cooperating with Emil who is attached to a young leader figure innovative as a partner. Emil is also one of the superior figures compared to the other three candidates in creating this brand awareness. Meanwhile, Puti, who should have done the same thing as Emil, was stuck with Ipul's incumbent status, so he did not have more opportunities to introduce himself in front of voters.

Then the second category is brand knowledge. In this category, the couple Saifullah Yusuf – Puti outperformed the other candidates for governor and vice governor with a

percentage of 38 percent. The couple of candidates for governor and vice governor several times emphasized on the programs they had planned when they were elected. Among them are Mas Metal (*Masyarakat Melek Digital*), Seribu Dewi, and Superstar. Not only that, the Saifullah Yusuf – Puti couple also reaffirmed their vision and mission several times or what they would do if they were elected regarding poverty and infrastructure development in the villages.

The candidate Khofifah - Emil (presentation 21 percent) mentioned their flagship programs such as the Millennial Job Center and East Java Satya freely as part of their commitment when elected, although not as much and as often as the candidate couple for governor and Vice governor Saifullah Yusuf - Puti. As previously stated, the candidate pair for governor and deputy governor number 2, is more focused on introducing their superior program and placing it as a top priority in this campaign. Realizing that he already has a very good brand among the people of East Java, Ipul prioritizes offering work programs that are able to alleviate social problems in East Java. Instead of introducing themselves personally, the candidate couple for governor and vice governor number 2, introduced themselves through the programs that they would carry when they were elected. As many as 38 percent of all speaking opportunities they get are used to mention programs whose names are adapted to the combination of modern elements and East Javanese identity. One example is the introduction of the Mas Metal program.

The use of the word 'mas' itself is identical to the East Javanese greeting to refer to men of the same age. And the choice of the word 'metal' is one of the music genres favored by the majority of youth. This program creates a unique and memorable impression, namely an effort to create a digitally literate society based on the development of community resources in the modern era. Not only that, this pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor also re-introduced a program with a unique phrase and made an impression on voters' memories called 'Superstar'. This program refers to the centrality of the role of MSMEs and start-ups in the development of a people-based economy. The choice of the name 'Superstar' as the name of their program also creates the impression that they want to reach young voters. Not only mentioning the program, the pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor number 2, also mentioned important agendas that they want to implement to overcome social inequality and poverty. One of them is as stated by Saifullah Yusuf, namely about the infrastructure development agenda that reaches villages in East Java. Indirectly, Ipul tries to associate itself with the policies of the central government in infrastructure development. This effort is also one way to reach the support base of President Joko Widodo in East Java by creating a kind of program synchronization that is in line between the central and regional governments.

While the candidate for governor and vice governor number 1 lost dominantly in this category. But what should be noted is that their efforts to introduce the program have the same measure as introducing themselves as a brand. Based on the analysis that has been carried out, Khofifah - Emil recorded a percentage of 21 percent in the brand knowledge category, which value is the same as that obtained in the brand awareness category. In contrast to the candidate for governor and vice governor number 2, who benefited from

incumbent status making it easier for them to focus on work programs, the candidate for governor and Vice governor number 1 had their own task to introduce themselves and balance their brand with the work program. which they want to carry.

However, the candidates for governor and vice governor 1 once again demonstrated their success in introducing themselves which then led to voters' perceptions of their brand knowledge. The identities they have built introduce two main programs related to social welfare, namely the Millennial Job Center and Jatim Satya. The Millennial Job Center is a program consistently mentioned by the candidate pair for governor and deputy governor number 1. Through this program, the candidate pair for governor and deputy governor 1 tries to convince voters that the digital literacy problem is over so that what is more suitable for the people of East Java is to build a profession in the digital era.

Another program introduced by the candidate pair for governor and deputy governor number 1 is Jatim Satya. This program is considered as the right solution needed by East Java regarding people's welfare. The pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor are also using their own brand to reaffirm their commitment to protecting women and children. Jatim Satya is a grand program launched by the candidate pair for governor and deputy governor number 1 which is comprehensive in nature covering various issues. Broadly speaking, the pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor Saifullah Yusuf – Puti showed their superiority in this category. They are also far superior in the assessment of the research that has been done (38 – 21). The program orientation that they consistently mention makes the voters' perception focus on the assessment that the Saifullah Yusuf - Puti pair is a program and work oriented voter pair. The associative efforts that they do by linking their program with the central government's main program in infrastructure deserve to be appreciated by the public. But once again, what should be noted is that the efforts made by the candidate pair for governor and deputy governor Khofifah – Emil are no less important. Even though they lost presentationally, the pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor managed to carry out their two main tasks in a balanced and concurrent way, namely brand awareness and brand knowledge.

In the brand preference category, the couple of candidates for governor and vice governor Khofifah - Emil again excelled with a percentage of 8.5 percent. This point measures how each candidate's ability when showing to the public that he is worthy of being elected by comparing himself with the opposing candidate.

In general, brand preference is carried out as a candidate's effort to show his superiority over other candidates. The existence of Khofifah as one of the 'central people' and Emil as a 'regional person' became a kind of opportunity to crush incumbents from above and below. This opportunity was well utilized by the candidate couple for governor and vice governor number 1 to make comparisons. One of them is how Khofifah 'shoots' Saifullah Yusuf who stated that all SMK are trying to get Grade A. This is denied by Khofifah who sees it as a 'just basic' program. Then he offered a solution program in the form of the importance of vocational graduates to be directly absorbed by the world of work, especially in the tourism, IT and hospitality sectors. In addition, Khofifah also briefly touched on the issue of women's protection and efforts to issue a governor's regulation (Pergub) if elected

later. Not only that, Khofifah once again 'won a lot' when comparing her Millennial Job Center program with Ipul – Puti's Mas Metal.

One of them was done by Khofifah to Saifullah Yusuf when the discussion reached the vocational school. Khofifah straightforwardly clarified Saifullah Yusuf's statement about Vocational High Schools that must have Grade A. He compared it to the long-term possibility, namely how the workforce of SMK graduates could be absorbed by the world of work. The same thing was also done when discussing the development of madrasah diniyah and the protection of women and children. Saifullah Yusuf and Puti occasionally 'play' in this category through educational programs that are also concerned with the existence of the institution.

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At that time, Khofifah wanted to show voters that the program she wanted to offer was more solutive in the digital field than digital literacy programs, which according to her was no longer an urgent thing to do, considering that the digital literacy rate in East Java was quite high. Meanwhile, Saifullah Yusuf – Puti emphasizes the role of quality education rather than being absorbed in the world of work. Ipul emphasizes on improving the quality of schools, starting from teachers, facilities, facilities and infrastructure, school institutional functions, as well as pro-education policies such as the declaration of 12-year compulsory education in which so far the number of junior high school to high school graduates in East Java has only reached 68 percent. This is for him why the quality of the school should be improved.

If reviewed carefully, the candidate pair for governor and deputy governor number 1 is trying to catch up in the brand knowledge category by questioning the programs offered by the candidate pair for governor and deputy governor number 2. As discussed earlier, that pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor Khofifah – Emil in this debate has more tasks than Saifullah Yusuf – Puti in terms of building a brand image. Therefore, choosing a comparison strategy for Ipul – Puti programs is one of Khofifah – Emil's weapons

in order to increase their electability in the eyes of voters. By making direct comparisons, it also provides a variety of reference selectors to make their choice. For the innovation category, the two candidates are not too dominant in introducing the innovations that they will do. However, Khofifah - Emil narrowly excelled with a percentage of 9 percent through the life skills program for school students and the concept of communal branding for entrepreneurs. Saifullah Yusuf – Puti also did not make many striking innovations with a percentage of only 7 percent. This Palson only focuses on the issue of skills provision for workers.

One of the advantages that the candidate for governor and vice governor number 1 has is the presence of youth in Emil. Emil is expected to be able to contribute fresh program ideas as he builds the persona of young leaders. This then became the main focus of the candidate couple for governor and vice governor number 1, namely introducing programs with fresh ideas to be used as solutions to social problems in East Java. One of the ideas developed by Emil was his effort to initiate the concept of communal branding in East Java. Emil put forward this concept to accommodate entrepreneurs who often find it difficult to sell their products in modern retail corridors or retail routes; more mass.

With easy access, the concept encourages public interest who wants to try the world of entrepreneurship. Another thing was conveyed by Khofifah conveying the importance of life skills education from an early age. The life skills program they launched is one of the examples that see the importance of soft skills and hard skills in life and that is what the community really needs, not an educational concept that focuses on values alone.

As for Saifullah Yusuf - Puti in this category did not convey much innovation from his programs. Saifullah Yusuf's burden as an incumbent made him focus on renewing old programs rather than new programs to replace programs that were deemed not optimal. One of the innovations offered by the candidate pair for governor and deputy governor number 2 is skills training for migrant workers before they are sent abroad, at least they have international certificates that contain skills as a selling point. On one occasion, Puti also conveyed about the empowerment of migrant workers after returning from abroad. This category bounced back the dominance of Khofifah – Emil in the first public debate. The existence of Emil as a young leader is indirectly associated with fresh innovations that support the innovative power of this number 1 candidate for governor and deputy governor. This is what Saifullah Yusuf – Puti does not do too much so that this pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor does not leave an innovative impression on voters' perceptions.

In the brand association category, the couple of Khofifah and Emil are slightly ahead (8 percent). This candidate emphasized the importance of the millennial job center and digital society. They also introduced themselves as a solution to the problem of protecting women and children through the planning of the Governor's Regulation on it. The impact of Khofifah – Emil's success in building brand awareness was felt when entering the brand association category. The candidates for governor and vice governor number 1 succeeded in giving voters a fresher political choice. As previously stated, the combination of Khofifah and Emil succeeded in creating the impression of a couple of female leaders – youths who

are attached to fresh ideas. Indirectly outperforming Puti- by prioritizing women and children protection programs which are planned to be realized through the Governor's Regulation if elected later.

As for the existence of Ipul - Puti, indirectly, the view that leads to him is the identity of the incumbent. Coupled with the lack of program innovation offered by this candidates for governor and vice governor, the incumbent brand is increasingly attached to them. Puti herself, who was relied on to gain votes from women, failed to present herself as an alternative figure who fought for women's rights. That role sank that night because Khofifah was very dominant in voicing the protection of women, which was firmly pursued directly through the Governor's Regulation. The religious brand that should be displayed well by Ipul is also not too obvious. Regarding brands, Khofifah – Emil increasingly emphasizes their existence as a solution leader who offers fresh ideas and innovative programs to support the welfare of the people of East Java. Palson number 1 has succeeded in creating coherence and consistency between the brand that has been built and the programs they want to carry out. This is what the Ipul-Puti governor and Vice governor candidates do not have the ability to maximize their brand potential properly. Even Puti did not give a meaningful reaction when Khofifah freely presented herself in a women's brand. As for the renewal of program functions, Saifullah Yusuf – Puti looks very good (percentage 12 percent) introducing new programs that are updated from existing programs. The commitment of the candidates for governor and vice governor is shown through the Madin Plus program, BOSDA Madin, establishing dimensions and establishing community. Moreover, this couple also emphasizes the independence program for single parent women. In fact, the couple of candidates for governor and Vice governor Khofifah – Emil (percentage 8 percent) conveyed a different matter, who only introduced Jatim Satya as their program to renew their previous programs. Saifullah Yusuf's advantage as the incumbent makes him familiar with the programs they have launched in the last ten years. This then made it easier for the candidate for governor and Vice governor of Ipul – Puti to identify the previous program and then update it into a more effective program in accordance with the existing problems.

One example of program renewal is Madin Plus. The development of Madrasah Diniyah in the Karwo-Ipul era was previously considered very developed so that reforms were needed on several sides. These good developments later became the basis for continuing the Madin Plus program on a wider scale, such as revitalizing infrastructure, expanding the provision of Madin Bosda, and optimizing the Madin system as a formal school back-up. Another program renewal launched by Ipul - Puti is Jalin Matra, which is considered successful as a successor to the Jalin Kesra program.

This point became the point where Ipul – Puti succeeded in demonstrating its capacity as an incumbent by launching targeted reform programs. This is different from Khofifah – Emil who then chose to introduce a grand program which was later claimed to be a reformer program from previous government programs.

Entering the paradoxical stage, when a candidate boldly shows himself to be different and dares to take a stand to criticize other candidates. In this category, the candidates for



governor and vice governor Khofifah - Emil excels with a percentage of 8.5 percent. This has been repeatedly shown by Emil, who has criticized other candidates several times. One of them is what he did to Puti regarding pesantren education because Puti was previously a member of Commission X which discussed education.

At this point, Emil tries to show his character as a youth. This is shown by how Emil creates a paradox by repeatedly criticizing the incumbent. Emil managed to outperform Puti through Puti's previous status as a member of the Indonesian House of Representatives' Education Commission during a discussion on the issue of pesantren. Not only once, Emil once again did it beautifully by criticizing the incumbent because of the mismatch between job requirements for formal positions whose percentage did not reach 30 percent. In this issue, he suggested the unification of seven employment counters and skills training so that the 30 percent target can be met properly.

Meanwhile, the candidates for governor and vice governor Ipul – Puti rarely seem to form a paradox, except in one moment when he criticized the previous government program related to SMA and SMK. The success of the candidate for governor and vice governor Khofifah – Emil to outperform Ipul – Puti in this category cannot be separated from the paradox concept formed by Emil when dealing with the incumbent. As part of a government with lower institutions, Emil presents the impression of himself as part of a government line that is dissatisfied with the policies of a higher government than him. Meanwhile, the candidates for governor and Vice governor, Saifullah Yusuf – Puti, seemed less successful in developing the paradox.

In the last category, the candidate for governor and vice governor number 2, Saifullah Yusuf – Puti (20 percent) outperformed the candidate for governor and vice governor Khofifah – Emil who only collected a percentage of 11 percent. This category emphasizes the candidate's experience when meeting with the public. Saifullah Yusuf's superiority as an incumbent made him well acquainted with the development of the people of East Java so that he could recognize the problems he encountered well. Although Khofifah also presented stories based on experience in her presentation, what she did was not matched by her partner who talked more about the program.

Saifullah Yusuf shows the advantages of being an incumbent by showing how he has studied the development of the East Java community in the last 10 years in the East Java Provincial Government. Added with the two of them during the campaign period in various regions in East Java, Ipul – Puti has a more advantages in touching the experiences of the community by mentioning and telling what they witnessed from the areas visited, and telling the problems they found there. Ipul is also supported by Puti in terms of conveying experiences so that no one dominates over the other in this point.

If identified carefully, the pair of candidates for governor and deputy governor Khofifah – Emil also have achievements that are not much different in terms of touching the experiences of the community. However, the problem is Khofifah's dominance over Emil in telling the story of his experience when it came to the community. Unlike Puti, who backed up Saifullah Yusuf regarding his experience, Emil was less flexible than Khofifah in this regard. Once again, the incumbent's advantage is one of the advantages of the candidate

pair for governor and deputy governor Ipul - Puti over Khofifah - Emil. Ipul – Puti try to present their image as leaders who go directly to the community through stories of experiences they have encountered in the field. That's how they managed to create closeness with the community.

## CONCLUSION

Political branding is one thing that political candidates cannot but do in an electoral activity. To gain votes, it is important to carry out strategies to achieve the desired goals. In the first session of the East Java Regional Head Candidate Debate, the candidate for governor and Vice governor number 2, Khofifah Indar Parawansa - Emil Elestianto Dardak managed to outperform the candidate for governor and Vice governor number 2, Saifullah Yusuf - Puti Guntur Soekarno in terms of political branding. Candidate number 1 managed to excel in 5 of the 8 categories that have been set as research limits. The two couples of candidates for governor and Vice governor have different focuses in implementing Political branding activities. The candidate for governor and Vice governor number 1 tend to introduce themselves through the brand that is attached to them along with program innovation and the ability to play a role in front of the public. As for the candidate for governor and vice governor number 2, they tend to emphasize the importance of introducing the program they will be carrying on the basis of their previous work experience.

In carrying out political branding, each couple of candidates for governor and vice governor has its own strategy in leaving an impression on the minds of the public. The candidates for governor and vice governor number 1 Khofifah – Emil emphasizes their identity as female leaders – innovative young leaders and fresh programs. Meanwhile, the Ipul-Puti couple emphasizes the concept of a leader who blends in with the community. This candidate for governor and Vice governor number 2 made good use of their status as incumbents in East Java by telling their experiences and problems they encountered when interacting with the community.

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HALAMAN INI SENGAJA DIKOSONGKAN