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DIGITAL PERSONAL BRANDING OF SUNDANESE POLITICIANS IN INDONESIA (CASE STUDY ON DEDI MULYADI DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC)

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ABSTRACT

This research is intended to find out the Digital Personal Branding of Sundanese politicians; especially Dedi Mulyadi who is known as an eccentric politician and is widely studied by academics in Indonesia. Qualitative in-depth study through a case study approach with 13 elements of digital personal branding on Sundanese politicians; Dedi Mulyadi who shows that he is a humanist, creative, and spontaneous Sundanese person and Politicians who are adaptive to social media. Dedi Mulyadi broke the view of the Sundanese people who gave up easily by showing their ability to compete in the national political arena through culturally-based creative ideas in overcoming social problems. This is a model of political strategy that newcomer politicians can emulate. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, the public was treated to Dedi Mulyadi's social activities in social media galleries; Facebook and YouTube. Dedi Mulyadi uses social media as a virtual political vehicle, which can later have an impact on future votes.

INTRODUCTION

Purwakarta Regency is a small district in Indonesia with an area of only 971.72 KM² in the last 10 years it has experienced significant development, in contrast to the development of other cities in West Java Province (BPS, 2018). In general, Purwakarta is strategically located between two big cities, Jakarta (Indonesia Capital City) and Bandung (Capital City of West Java Province). In 2008 – 2018, it was led by Dedi Mulyadi who transformed him from retirement into a bustling

industrial city during his reign. Purwakarta is a retirement city because it is the only transit point for toll road users between Jakarta-Bandung or vice versa (BPS, 2018).

Today, Purwakarta hosts many tourists, and their number increasing significantly. During Dedi Mulyadi's reign, the tourist visits increased significantly. This was facilitated by the largest fountain in Southeast Asia, Sri Baduga (Travel, 2017). Although Purwakarta Regency is a small regency, it quickly metamorphosed into a miniature Sundanese society that was independent of other regions in Indonesia (Jalaludin, 2015). The Sundanese nuance is felt in this district, especially in the concept of leadership and building (infrastructure), considering the ancestral message from the Sundanese tradition shows that humans must live in symbiosis. In Indonesia, the Javanese ethnicity is the number one largest, and the number two is the Sundanese ethnicity (BPS, 2010). This study focuses on the original Sundanese figures and values that are applied in carrying out political and leadership activities. This study considers 13 research results about Dedi Mulyadi which are shown in 'Table 1' Research Results with the topic of Dedi Mulyadi <enter>. Table 1 shows that Dedi Mulyadi was among the most studied politician in Indonesia. This is because of his dressing appearance, city planning, speaking and leadership styles, political communication strategy, and local leadership model. The traditional style of dressing during his reign was unusual and violated the protocols.

Dedi Mulyadi used the pangsi dress and Sundanese headband. In this regard, they have millennial ornaments that capture residents' attention, who then follow as new fashion models. Dedi Mulyadi pioneered Sundanese headband and Sampurasun greetings in West Java, thus becoming his brand identity (Nurhayati et al., 2019). Furthermore, he was the first Sundanese regional young leader to be a speaker at the international youth leaders' meeting forum at the United Nations, New York, in 2015. Moreover, in 2018, Dedi Mulyadi had more than 10 million followers on his Facebook account, which is a fantastic number for a regional leader at that time (Hasibuan, 2018). Dedi Mulyadi is a regional head who violates protocol rules in dressing when entering the Presidential Palace of the Republic of Indonesia. During the ten years Dedi Mulyadi reigned in Purwakarta Regency, he made many puppet statues and heroes on the highway. The act of making wayang statues caused a wave of rejection reactions from community organizations for violating religious norms. But on the other hand, Purwakarta Regency has received many awards from the Indonesian government for its success in realizing Purwakarta Regency with character (Nugraha, 2018).

After two terms of his leadership as Regent of Purwakarta Regency which ended in 2018, Dedi Mulyadi as Candidate for Deputy Governor of West Java with Dedi Mizwar in the 2019 West Java Governor Election, despite losing to his political opponent HM. Ridwan Kamil. As the former regent of Purwakarta, Dedi Mulyadi's profession started from the Golkar Party to the arena of selecting the central legislative candidate in the Indonesian People's Representative Council (DPR RI) for the 2019-2024 period, and he was democratically elected with the most votes

of more than 206,000 (Perdana, 2019). Dedi Mulyadi always identified himself as a Sundanese who came from the village but dared to compete in the national political arena. This study aimed to determine the Digital Personal Branding of Sundanese politicians, specifically Dedi Mulyadi, during the Covid-19 pandemic. Dedi Mulyadi is the paradigm of a regional head, whose political strategy in Indonesia continues to be discussed. In general, he has self-branding, high self-confidence, is aware of his potential as the main condition for positioning himself in the minds of his constituents (positioning).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital

Digital is a storage activity expressed in signals or data, further, it is expressed in number series, 0 and 1, representing a quantity value (Cambridge, 2021). In general, words are represented by digital, images, and graphic designs, that describe their numerical form through computer devices (Webster, 2021). Digital is an activity through binary code, which describes the dominance of technology results for the effectiveness and efficiency of organizational processes. The use of digital can provide a positive side that eases human work, giving many choices of communication media for both individuals and organizations.

Digitization is not only carried out on hardware but the coloring element is cohesiveness through technological developments, to produce attractive, superior, and multi-beneficial products. Furthermore, it converges the product and application process information, performing various audiovisual and computational functions (Wuryanta, 2013). Digital marketing is about the communication of people. This Technology is convenient and strategic by providing a high governance framework (Ryan & Jones, 2010).

The development of digital-based communication technology gave birth to various types of communication media that humans can use when standing, lying down, and can be done anywhere without knowing the position, location, space, and time used in everyday life, both for business and in social life. The Internet network systems can only be done via a computer (PC) and laptop devices such as e-mail, Yahoo Messenger, Facebook, and the like. The device is not only expensive but also impractical because it can't any brought. The big impact of cellphones emerged after the discovery of a way to combine internet technology with smartphones where everyone was connected in a giant net so that it didn't feel like there was a time difference anymore. Along with that technology, digital has enabled this smartphone to swap anything from countless letters to form words to a series of moving pictures. This exchange very much happens in social life, so that comes the term "social media", a new tool in connecting people in the digital age. Developments in this digital era also present various new communication media through the display of applications such as those found on the Google Play Store. If previously the only talking device was mouth and hearing devices are ears, with the existence of smartphones, people 'talk' reveal word through thumb

pressing letters and hear; messages in the form of written words on the screen through the eyes and then everything changed (Anwar & Rusmana, 2017).

Personal Branding

Personal branding is an exceptionally strong self-brand, consisting of values that complement each other, thus forming true originality (Rampersad, 2008). Personal branding attached to individuals is more important than corporate branding. Effective and unique personal brand identity is the best winner and a strong character. Personal branding is the art of packaging and marketing ourselves in different ways and styles by establishing the perceptions and reputations in people's minds. Alternatively, it is defined as a person's self-image relating to personality, abilities, and achievements built within you. However, most people assume that only certain individuals have personal branding and are synonymous with fame, but the case is different. Everyone should have a personal brand, but it depends on each person's knowledge of its establishment.

According to McNally and Speak, three basic things characterize and must be considered in designing a strong personal brand, namely; 1). Authenticity. A strong personal brand describes something very specific that is a reflection of your ideas and values that set you apart from others. This distinctiveness can be presented in the form of personal qualities, physical appearance, or expertise, 2). Relevant. Is a personal brand related to the character of the person who explains something that is considered important or needed by the community? When there is no relevance (attachment) it will be difficult to strengthen the public's mind. 3). Consistent. That is the effort to run a personal brand continuously (consistently) so that other people can identify the personal brand easily and, to form high brand equity, so that audiences will believe in their abilities, competencies, or performance quality (visible products/invisible products) (McNally & Speak, 2002).

Montoya (2002) provided eight rules to build good personal branding; 1). Specialization. A good distinguishing label or logo consists of caution in a specialty that focuses on resistance, proficiency, or profit. Various ways can be done on the specialization element: ability, expertise, competence, mission, product, profession, and service. 2). Leadership. A leader who has resistance, power, and comprehensive integrity will have a strong personal brand. 3). Personality. Strong personal branding comes from a personality figure who is what it is present as it is, and comes with all its imperfections. No human is perfect, but having a good personality will create charm. 4). Difference. Creating a personal branding that is different from competitors is very important to win the competition and get a place in the hearts of the public. 5). Visible. Self-promoting is a condition, namely that it must look harmonious between daily habits and self-appearance, both words and actions in an integrated manner as a form of a series of personal branding. 6). Unity. Ethical values or norms of life must be in line with the personal brand so that they are integrated as a whole, not separated because they are interconnected. 7). Persistence. Every step in the process of forming

personal branding must be managed in a firm, disciplined manner so that it does not change easily. 8). Goodwill. Ideas and creativity that are beneficial to the audience and carried out consistently will strengthen the concept of personal branding.

Personal branding is one of the strategies used to build a stronger self-image. It is not a logo or a patented brand, but daily activities or routines, both words and actions in a typical overall activity through consistently good values to form positive perceptions from others so that it becomes the first point that will always be a reference. Personal branding is the first point that will be remembered by others, so if it is managed properly, it will be useful for the future. Indirectly, personal branding is one way to market quality and self-image (Montoya, 2002).

Sundanese

The Sundanese occupies the second-largest tribe in Indonesia after the Javanese showed that the population of Sundanese was 36.7 million people (15.5 percent) instead of their history relating to other groups. For instance, Javanese was a group of people with a clear identity, while Sundanese was not. In Indonesian history, very few Sundanese have played an important role in national political affairs. There are influential events that occurred in West Java, though they did not have Sundanese characteristics (Dixon, 2000) showed that countable Sundanese were leaders either in conception or implementation of national activities.

The term Sundanese has six different meanings, including 1). Sund, which means luminous, bright, 2). Lord Vishnu (preserver of nature), 3). Daitya (a powerful warrior in the story of Ni Sunda and Upa Sunda), 4). Skilled warrior Wanara (in the Ramayana story), 5). Cuddha which means pure white, and 6). Mountain (in the north of the city of Bandung-the capital of West Java Province). Sundanese is farmers and shows the characteristics of human cultivators, including proactive, high work ethic, taking advantage of time, believing in their abilities, and being egalitarian. In general, (Suryalaga, 2010) stated that Sundanese is confident, not lazy, apathetic, or hoping for the mercy of others.

Politician

Aristotle stated that people are animals who can organize and make strategies framed through the media to attract attention and create a false image. The thought of Aristotle's work is one of the starting points of political thought in the history of its development, where it can be seen that "politics" is a term used as a concept of regulating society the group learns everything related to government issues, good political society or state organization. Thus, politics is a way and politicians are people doing political things (Rackham, 1959), sincerity and falsehood in politics are slightly different (Perloff, 2014).

Indonesia Dictionary (KBBI) defined politicians to be people engaged in politics, including political experts (KBBI, 2008). Politicians as actors in politics, who can

manage, make strategies and tricks. Political affairs cannot be separated from a person's interest, the strategy, and when to achieve them. Political matters always attract the public. They are not based on who supports the pros and cons groups and the strategies used to win votes (Laswell, 1951).

Politicians are political actors, whose personalities can be studied. Political actors can represent themselves, their institutions, or their organizations. Everyone can be a political actor in conveying the message of his institution or organization, in their way in playing their role to realize the vision and mission or shape and even lead public opinion (Greenstein, 2015). Then 2 words; Politics and politicians are a series of words that cannot be separated because they correlate with meaning.

Covid-19

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) is SARS-CoV-2, now known as the coronavirus, started in Wuhan, the People's Republic of China on December 31, 2019, where the case rapidly developed into an epidemic with a global impact (WHO, 2020). In general, Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) attacks the respiratory system into an acute syndrome and has a rapid impact on its spread.

SARS-CoV-2 is a new type of coronavirus now known as Covid-19. Previously two types of coronaviruses caused severe indications, namely; SARS or severe acute respiratory syndrome and MERS or Middle East Respiratory Syndrome. The incubation period of this virus attack through normal indications occurs 5-6 days to 14 days, starting from fever, sore throat, acute respiratory syndrome, shortness of breath, respiratory failure, kidney to critical conditions that cannot be helped (death) (KemenkesRI, 2020).

RESEARCH METHOD

There have been many studies on public figures, Dedi Mulyadi, a phenomenal and controversial politician in Indonesia. Sundanese politician, Dedi Mulyadi has been carrying out humanitarian activities since serving as Regent of Purwakarta Regency 2 (two) periods 2008-2018 until the Covid-19 pandemic which can be seen on his Facebook and YouTube social media channels. Meanwhile, this study aims to analyze the data using qualitative methods. To collect observation data, in-depth interviews, and documentation can use a case study, which is a suitable strategy when the research question is about how or why (Yin, 2004). Researchers in investigating events or cases have little opportunity to control, because humans are dynamic creatures, especially when focusing on contemporary phenomena in the context of real-life carried out by the object of research.

As an actor in the research case, Dedi Mulyadi was asked questions, so that researchers obtained the results of interviews as a primary data source, and secondary data obtained from various literature, books, journals, online news, and social media. Furthermore, for the validation and validity of the data, the author conducted a triangulation test, especially in-depth interviews in 2021 to cross-check with competent parties in the government sector, especially those who knew

the background of Dedi Mulyadi's leadership before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. They include Purwanto (Head of Purwakarta Regency Education Office), M. Rafe'i (former Asda 1 Government Sector, Purwakarta Regency), and H. Anwar (Head of the Youth and Sports Office of Purwakarta Regency) so that it will be known how the digital personal branding of Sundanese politician Dedi Mulyadi will be.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Dedi Mulyadi's decade-long administration as Regent has brought many changes for the better for Purwakarta Regency. Although not all parties agree on the policies decided. In his interview, Dedi Mulyadi stated that everything he did during his leadership was due to his intuition. In addition, life experiences that are bitter and difficult financially become useful life teachers during leadership. According to him, he is used to helping his parents such as raising goats, picking wood for cooking, walking to school, and selling toys. Dedi Mulyadi's childhood was surrounded by many friends and learning, including religious studies, history, and literature. Since the age of twelve, he used to fast every Monday and Thursday. According to him, fasting regularly has a positive impact on the body, especially by preventing disease infections and sharpening thoughts and feelings. In general, some of the books he reads elevate his thinking skills, empathy, sympathy, and ideas. Education from parents who instilled the habit of giving to the poor fosters a very valuable attitude of tolerance and humanity. Apart from being educated by parents who apply the teachings of Sundanese values; Compassion, succession, fostering, forming an optimistic attitude, and high self-confidence, which have an impact on leadership values, one of which is the sharpness of intuition. Dedi Mulyadi stated that his intuition comes from 4 (four) natural forces, including water, earth, air, and sun, which always inspire him (Mulyadi, 2020). This became the basis of his leadership and independence in childhood which led to ease in digesting problems to find solutions so that the policies made when he led Purwakarta influenced changes in the pattern of infrastructure and non-infrastructure development with strong characteristics of local culture.

In connection with these basic matters, through his policies, Dedi Mulyadi transformed Purwakarta Regency into a city that has identity and character. Since under the leadership of Dedi Mulyadi, the small town of Purwakarta has emerged with a Sundanese cultural feel, through the construction of modern Kasundaan traditional style infrastructure in the design of office buildings, commercial buildings, health buildings, houses of worship, school buildings, office fences, all border buildings between sub-districts, between villages, between sub-districts, as well as border buildings with other districts or cities, with their Julang Ngapak architecture, as a manifestation of high kasundaan values. Dedi Mulyadi gave an example that development must be oriented to the identity of the local area so that people will feel the Sundanese atmosphere which is always polite, friendly, and polite among the people so that everyone who enters the Purwakarta area will feel at home. Dedi Mulyadi wanted; although the leadership area is small, it has great potential in the tourist area.

Purwakarta Regency does not have large natural resources, therefore Dedi Mulyadi made a development program with the term “9 Stairs of Love in Purwakarta Istimewa” to run his government (Sunarya, 2016). According to Dedi Mulyadi; “9 Stairs of Love in Purwakarta Istimewa” was purely his idea (Mulyadi, 2020). In addition, this statement was also emphasized by Rafe'i (2021) because the program plan became the flagship program that was conveyed by Dedi Mulyadi during the 2007 regional head election campaign, for victory as Regent for the first period in 2008 – 2013. The development program includes economy, health, education, agriculture, plantation, fisheries, animal husbandry, mining, public works (infrastructure construction), integrated services 1 (one) roof, investment through E-government, a tourism district, and strengthening people's economic activities in traditional market development. Dedi Mulyadi owns strange and phenomenal policies, including the prohibition of pouring out their hearts on social media for teachers, cattle herding lessons, students are prohibited from bringing motorbikes to school, routine dental check-ups for students to determine the nicotine level of students' teeth, prohibition of school teachers from giving jobs home, but when they come home from school; all students have to help parents with homework.

Dedi Mulyadi (2021) always said that his concern for the community from children to parents, especially grandparents who were poor and living alone was a manifestation of his promise to his mother; will take care of the poor, and because it is an implementation of the concept of Sundanese teachings; *Silih Asih*, *Silih Asah*, and *Silih Asuh* (Mutual love, Education, and Take care of each other), the concept of developing a leader must pay attention to all elements of local culture and be based on the concept of Sundanese teachings. Because the city's physical development with modern Sundanese nuances and mental health invited people to show their deeds and attitudes.

Silih Asih is behavior that shows genuine affection aiming to realize happiness between them. Love demands honesty, dedication, discipline, ability, compassion, an expression of self, and a sense of beauty. Furthermore, *Silih Asih* is a religious, social relationship that focuses on God's love and responds through loving others. Based on the *Silih Asih* concept, Dedi Mulyadi executed humanitarian activities for the poor, prioritized treatment for the sick, and gave school allowances for the dropouts. According to Rafe'i (2021); this activity was performed by Dedi Mulyadi since he became deputy regional head (deputy regent) in 2003. He paid more attention to pro-people policies after becoming a regent, although there was no YouTube, Facebook, or other social media.

The concept of *Silih Asah* is that every Sundanese must be willing to participate in developing science and technology. As a result, a work ethic and scientific will were created to become a religious society by developing independence and discipline to not depend on others. In the *Silih Asah* community, the mastery of science and technology is guided by natural norms. According to Dedi Mulyadi (2021); humans depend on nature, not the other way around, so the balance of nature must be maintained. With the rapid development of technology, nature

should be more awake, not destroying the ecosystem and the symbiotic mutualism of living things is always maintained.

The third concept; *Silih Asuh*, Sundanese individual and collective interests must be considered through mutual control, greetings, and advice. This culture has strengthened the emotional bonds that developed in the *Silih Asih* and *Silih Asah* traditions in Sundanese society. This is to fight conflict and chaos in society, but when other groups disturb their peace, they will fight back. According to Purwanto (2021); Dedi Mulyadi understood the importance of preserving ancestors and culture during his reign. Dedi Mulyadi can create tolerance for state and religious life, in solving social problems with a Sundanese cultural approach, with the concept; *beunang laukna, herang caina*, which means figuratively; get the fish and the water stays clear. Stated that when solving issues, there was no need of being noisy, but rather using a sure way which guaranteed a solution that could be applied.

The concepts of *Silih Asih*, *Silih Asah*, and *Silih Asuh* are the foundation of a harmonious life, an awareness of interdependence without forgetting their identity and habitat. It is a man who creates a harmonious life with his fellow-creatures of God (Suryalaga, 2010). Therefore, as Dedi Mulyadi held, being a Sundanese would implement and prove the three concept forms in political and humanitarian activities.

Dedi Mulyadi was an icon of Purwakarta since his absence would be compared to a city devoid of news. During his leadership, Purwakarta received awards from the Indonesian government, especially the Supreme Audit Agency of the Republic of Indonesia (BPK RI), for 3 (three) consecutive years. These included Unqualified (WTP), according to the Head of West Java BPKP Division, Deni Suardini said that this positive value was given because the regions managed their finances well (Admin, 2017). As a Sundanese, Dedi Mulyadi has a myriad of ideas in dealing with various social problems through a Sundanese cultural approach. The following are some expressions of community leaders in Indonesia regarding the Sundanese politician Dedi Mulyadi which are shown in 'Table 2' Expressions of national figures towards Dedi Mulyadi <Enter>.

DISCUSSION

Dedi Mulyadi currently serves as Deputy Chairman of Commission IV Environment of the House of Representatives (DPR) of the Republic of Indonesia (2019-2024 period). Furthermore, Dedi Mulyadi still performs a series of humanitarian activities every day since the society needs help from the leaders. In general, he executed these activities since the beginning of his reign as a regent. Dedi Mulyadi, an eccentric Sundanese politician, never liked to work in a walled room and spend hours using the air conditioner. He also does not like the protocol rules and complicated bureaucracy in working rules. For him, work must be done with a sincere heart, so that community service can benefit the life of the nation and state. Thus he works directly in the field, experiencing social realities in society. Dedi Mulyadi is a Sundanese politician who doesn't like working indoors

or being confined by walls and air conditioners. For him, 80% of his time is spent working outdoors. According to him, by going to the field, a leader will know firsthand the social problems that are happening in the community.

Especially during the pandemic, Dedi Mulyadi's humanitarian activities are very visible on social media and are viral, because many are shared by netizens. People think that Dedi Mulyadi's humanitarian activities are an image. However, Dedi Mulyadi (2021) does not mind this assumption; Politics must have an image, namely a positive image because it has a social responsibility as people's representatives. However, imaging should not only be done before the campaign but must be done every day while serving and being elected as people's representatives, which means it's been done for years.

Purwanto (2021) stated he has been carrying out his humanitarian activities since he was deputy regent (2003), until today and in the future, because the concept of Sundanese teachings is to be practiced every day and in any activity, and because of the Sundanese spirit is I Can Too, and when he was young in the organization, Dedi Mulyadi always cared about the lives of his friends. As a result, if Dedi Mulyadi likes to carry out humanitarian activities, it is not something strange, let alone called imaging.

Based on primary and secondary data obtained and analyzed through the concept of digital personal branding, here are 13 (thirteen) explanations for each element, namely:

1). Specialization. During the pandemic, Dedi Mulyadi provided breakthroughs and input from educational programs that relied on virtual learning, considered ineffective. However, in rural areas far from telecommunication infrastructure, students struggled in accessing signals to attend online lessons. Furthermore, Dedi Mulyadi claimed that nature does not need humans but vice versa. Based on this principle, he pioneered education that utilized nature during a pandemic by introducing agriculture, plantations, animal husbandry, and fisheries and Dedi Mulyadi shows his ability to manage nature.

2). Leadership. The beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 in Indonesia threatened the lives of the world's population in all areas of life, and as a Sundanese politician who is accustomed to being close to the people; Dedi Mulyadi moved quickly to carry out his humanitarian activities by spraying disinfectants at village offices, as the smallest government institution in an area, which can be watched on social media Facebook and YouTube. In this case, he posted 2 to 3 times a day on different topics, including humanitarian activities and social issues. Humanitarian affairs were the main thing he practiced since his youth. At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, Dedi Mulyadi helped local governments by pioneering and providing ideas to replace Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) with Communal Quarantine. Furthermore, Dedi Mulyadi (2020) stated that Communal Quarantine is more effective than PSBB. This is because the village is at an environmental level that is more independent in

regulating the structure of community life. If there are foreigners who come, the Covid-19 protocol can be tightened. Based on these facts, the implementation of the PSBB turned out to be less effective because the central government stopped transportation. And it turns out that on February 9, 2021, the Indonesian government began to instruct the implementation of Macro and Micro Quarantine (Menteri Dalam Negeri RI, 2021), with the term Enforcement of Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM), this was Dedi Mulyadi's initial idea through Communal Quarantine.

3). Personality. The personality of Dedi Mulyadi, a politician, cultural observer, and a former regent, had swift, nimble, proactive, and skilled actions to mitigate the pandemic. He achieved this by cooperating with the community, health workers, and other stakeholders differently from other public figures. Being People's Representative, he moved earlier to help local governments through socialization activities to anticipate the spread of the Covid-19 virus. These activities included spraying disinfectants in settlements and roads, distributing masks, making household disinfectants, and encouraging people to keep their distance.

4) Distinctiveness. If in all humanitarian activities posted through his social media accounts it is accused of being an image, Dedi Mulyadi considers that taking care of humanity is more important than politics, so he often ignores negative comments. Dedi Mulyadi uses principles, and it is better to be busy with useful activities and lighten the burden of others than listen to useless chatter. On Kang Dedi Mulyadi's social media accounts, we can see various daily humanitarian activities, especially Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Dedi Mulyadi has always said that the spectacle of humanitarian activities that are broadcast every day on his social media is a natural storyline of life without setting narratives, and intentional content, all recordings of his activities. Table 3 shows that Dedi Mulyadi had the most followers on Facebook's social media platform, exceeding 10 Million, thus defeating other countries' leaders in Indonesia in 2018 (Hasibuan, 2018), which are shown in 'Table 3' Dedi Mulyadi's Social Media Account <enter>.

He uses a digital branding strategy through social media, especially Facebook, to show his activities, apart from YouTube and Instagram. Coverage of his humanitarian activities is shown on YouTube and Facebook channels, which is a subtle strategy in guiding voters when holding a campaign party. Humanitarian activities that are broadcast regularly every day will have a positive psychological impact on netizens so that they can lead people to engage in practical politics that are profitable in future campaigns. Moreover, Indonesian people have a high interest in social media.

5). Visibility. Several surveys crown Indonesia as a country with the highest level of social media adoption (Santoso, Rinjany and Bafadhal, 2020), which are shown in 'Table 4' Comparison of the number of followers of 5 politicians in Indonesia <enter>. In case there is alignment, 'Kang Dedi Mulyadi' would own the highest

follower account compared to other politicians. To compare the number of followers for the world community we can use social media (H. Tankovska, 2021). Dedi Mulyadi pointed out that politics is of secondary importance because humanity is the most important. He described that politics is an art, and he wrote all his leadership experiences into a book entitled *Peddling the Country with Love* (2014), containing an explanation of the collaboration between leadership politics and humanity which all must be done based on love for nature and humans. This is confirmed in the background of his Facebook account, which contains the words; politics is essential, but humanity is much more important. As a politician, Dedi Mulyadi's activity posts are more visible on social media since he carried out humanitarian activities during the pandemic.

6). Unity. Dedi Mulyadi performed these activities directly with the people, he met. In this regard, he is obsessed with the principles, including *Silih Asih*, *Silih Asah*, and *Silih Asuh*, and that politics is important, but humanity is much more important. His passion for helping others, especially during pandemics, proves this fact.

7). Persistence. Long before the Covid-19 pandemic occurred, especially when this epidemic hit the world, humanitarian actions were more often carried out such as helping the poor, elderly widows, and orphans. Generally, caring and humanitarian activities started by seeing the situation and conditions and listening to the communities' complaints, hopes, and desires. It culminated in guiding, giving, and addressing the community's daily needs and business capital challenges to enable them to survive the pandemic. Furthermore, he gave out 2-3 sheep, two females, and one male, to be used as livestock, and he donated his salary to help the needy. From the humanitarian assistance activities that Dedi Mulyadi personally and routinely carry out to the lower classes of society, as a representative of the people who are in the capital, Dedi Mulyadi also asked the Indonesian government to change the aid and development program in the form of cash. This is done so that the economy of the people in the targeted areas of aid and development programs will also be boosted (Perdana, 2020).

8). Goodwill. Humanitarian activities during this pandemic have a positive impact because they are felt directly by the lower middle class regardless of ethnicity, race, religion, and belief. Dedi Mulyadi carried out the statement of mother, that the best of humans is those who can benefit others. And this is the real manifestation of the concept of Sundanese teachings: *Silih Asih*, *Silih Asah*, and *Silih Asuh*, whether we realize it or not, can form a natural personal branding. Dedi Mulyadi's concern for the poor proved his promise and oath to his late mother. With his creative thinking, he overcame the limitations of a political official, immersed himself in the puddle of social problems, sought solutions with the noble (best), Sundanese values. Based on the results obtained from educational background, activities in the organization, *Kasundaan* principles, and social media support Dedi Mulyadi's branding.

9). Photo/Video. Taking photos or videos shown in Dedi Mulyadi's posts in carrying out all of his actions, is done by a professional / a photography expert, but

Dedi Mulyadi himself manages the technique and position of taking pictures because photography has been Dedi Mulyadi's hobby since he was a teenager. In every photo or video, Dedi Mulyadi is seen always wearing white clothes, as well as his white Sundanese headband, and this is his trademark. Like casual clothes, t-shirts, or formal shirts often use white, this is according to him that all basic colors are black and white. And white can absorb heat energy during activities and implies that life is as it is, like flowing water, and doesn't have to be made up. Dedi Mulyadi's photos and videos in posts on social media typically display simplicity that is full of meaning. Photos or pictures and videos that are displayed thoroughly and are broadcast regularly show the consistency of a lively storyline with the accompaniment of color, sound, shooting position, and rhythm, adding to the integrity of the human story (Thamer & Khalaf, 2021).

10). Name. Dedi Mulyadi on all his social media accounts, both Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter, displays his full name with the suffix 'Kang' at the beginning of his name. The term Kang in Sundanese (the length is Akang) is also addressed to the oldest or older brother. Kang's nickname, nowadays, is mostly aimed at Sundanese men, regardless of their hierarchical status in the order of children in the family (the eldest, second or third child), but becomes a common nickname. The nickname "Kang" for Sundanese people gives the impression of kinship, intimacy, and politeness, and is more salable for Sundanese people if it is a prefix on social media accounts.

The same account name on all social media 'Kang Dedi Mulyadi' has become a personal brand that is easy to recognize and pronounce, especially for the people of West Java. However, with a routine that is classified as actively posting humanitarian activities every day on social media, and becoming viral, finally, the 'Kang Dedi Mulyadi' brand has become a populist pronunciation, common and has its position in the minds of its followers and Indonesian society, considering the Sundanese race. Is the second-largest race in Indonesia after the Javanese race. But the number of people living in West Java is the largest, number 1 with almost 50 million people, according to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) census (Indonesia, 2020). This is certainly an opportunity for Dedi Mulyadi to market himself to become a leader in Indonesia.

11). Headline. The title of each post of Dedi Mulyadi is widely shared by the audience, also replayed by Dedi Mulyadi's fan groups on Facebook and YouTube because Dedi Mulyadi presents interesting shows about caring, sensitivity, empathy, sympathy, helping, and sharing which is currently very much needed by the community, the lower classes, especially in a pandemic situation, where people yearn for a leader who cares and is willing to take to the field to see the reality. A living witness, Rafe'i (2021) said that; Dedi Mulyadi's concern and sensitivity are not new, because it has become his trademark since 2003 when he served as deputy regent before social media arrived in Indonesia, but he wrote it in a book containing speeches, poems, magazines, and online newspapers that we can read up to and including today about his career in politics.

12). Design. Dedi Mulyadi's activities on social media, such as photos and videos posted, cannot be separated from the design concept of balance, rhythm, proportion, and unity because he is an artist as well as a humanist who understands photography techniques as his hobby since high school. When taking photos or videos, the cameraman does not direct like a director, but naturally and as is, so that it blends with the story of human life. Dedi Mulyadi's way of dressing reflects Sundanese culture with a white headband, and his way of speaking always uses language that is easily understood by all levels of society with firm and loud articulations. Every show has expressions and jokes that make people laugh so that the audience doesn't get bored waiting for the next broadcast or post. So that the posting of everyday stories in humanitarian action becomes a complete and continuous reality that the followers have been waiting for. He was such an eccentric figure, it wouldn't be strange to refute that statement; the need for design The down-to-earth expression and the richness of thought from a variety of well-archived knowledge will present futuristic art (Ali et al., 2020). Dedi Mulyadi (2021) has a principle that in each of his documentation nothing is arranged, designed, or planned, everything just flows, so that every moment becomes historic or a lesson for those who see or watch.

13). Technology. The presence of social media as a space for humans to express their hearts, hopes, achievements, thoughts, activities, and information sharing space. Through regular postings by Dedi Mulyadi, he shows activities that seem endless in the concept of sharing and helping from a leader to his people. Dedi Mulyadi is considered capable of using technological devices even though he is with a team that helps him, but the content ideas in all posts about everyday life in humanity are purely his ideas which are full of information and knowledge and also include many educational messages so that they do not only entertain the audience. As a politician, Dedi Mulyadi is flexible in following the development of social media which is used as a place to show himself that can be seen by millions of eyes. The humanitarian activities carried out by Dedi Mulyadi are in line with the message of the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo which states; The increasing series of information technology is increasingly rapid, so its use must be smart because social media is like a knife. If used properly, it will produce good output. And if social media is used improperly, the results will not be good. Social media should be used to increase self-integrity to become a person of character and vision (Diandra, 2017). With many academics in Indonesia researching Dedi Mulyadi's ideas and actions, and with the existence of social media, Dedi Mulyadi's gait is increasingly popular as a millennial figure of a popular Sundanese politician today. His humanitarian activities during the pandemic which were uploaded on social media showed that Dedi Mulyadi has used social media wisely, has used social media as a medium for self-presentation, and is on target. The act of filling social media with humanitarian content amid a pandemic touched people's hearts. As a result, there was an emotional response from netizens, in the form of comments, sharing posts, giving like, and super symbols.

Dedi Mulyadi's track record as a politician or government official cannot be doubted, during his work in the government sector, Dedi Mulyadi has won several awards from various domestic and foreign institutions. He has won countless awards, namely the initiator and organizer of cultural festivals and parades with the most participants from MURI (Indonesian Record Museum) from 2011-2017 and innovative regional head in Education from the 2014 MNC Group in 2015. Sunan Gunung Djati University students in Bandung confirmed him to be an Inspirational Figure from West Java, while the Purwakarta Student Association confirmed him as the Father of Arts and Education in Purwakarta. Furthermore, in 2016 Dedi again received awards, namely a figure who contributed greatly to the scouting movement from President Joko Widodo and a figure who succeeded in raising the economy and education from the Malaysian People's Trusteeship Council. Then in 2017 again won a series of achievements such as honoris causa from the West Java Police, a leader who can create information and technology-based health services from INews. And an inspirational figure for culture-based development from the Regent of Garut. At the end of 2021 Dedi Mulyadi received the Satyalancana Budaya award (successfully in implementing local wisdom-based development) from the President of the Republic of Indonesia-Joko Widodo, among others; construction of the Sri Baduga Maharaja Fountain Park, 2 (two) museums: Bale Panyawangan Diorama Nusantara and Bale Indung Rahayu, (Masjid) Tajug Gede Cilodong, Situ Kahuripan Wanayasa, Lembur Pakuan, and Pajajaran Kahuripan School. In addition, the former regent of Purwakarta also produced several works, such as 72 songs with the theme of Sunda and the archipelago, as well as seven books. According to President Joko Widodo; it forms the character of a society that has a Sundanese cultural identity (Ichsan, 2021).

Dedi Mulyadi succeeded in bringing a political narrative framed by humanitarian action, regardless of image or not. But politics does need it. What distinguishes it is; The imaging carried out by Dedi Mulyadi lasted for 13 (thirteen) years, while the pseudo-imaging was carried out 1 year before the campaign period. Digital Personal Branding of the Sundanese politician, Dedi Mulyadi in this study, is shown in the following figure 1; <[enter](#)>

Based on these findings, Dedi Mulyadi as a politician and Sundanese human figure, has a high level of communication context which is generally known as friendly, polite, and courteous individuals, and if they don't like one thing, they will make small talk; not conveyed directly for fear that other people will not accept the Sundanese expression, but this became a problem because it had an impact on the formation of an attitude of giving in and becoming less competitive. In the end, in the future religion, ethnicity, or local sentiment will not be sold in the Regional Head Election (Pilkada). Because the constituents will only vote for; who will prosper his life? Who cares more? And who gives more/often? (Siahaan et al., 2020) in politics, engagement with voice owners is a must.

CONCLUSION

As a politician, Dedi Mulyadi has established personal branding early in his career. His political strategy is through humanitarian activities that are shown through

social media Facebook and YouTube which are managed regularly. This has an impact on the increasing popularity of Dedi Mulyadi as a Sundanese politician who is adaptive to social media. Expertise in using social media as a virtual political vehicle is a new strategy in marketing themselves to lovers of the political world. This is because marketing and imagery are natural needs in the political field because of their needs and their interdependence. It is also a construction of local politicians in reaching constituent markets both nationally and globally. Now politicians can win sympathy and empathy from the wider community through social media and digital facilities are used to increasing electability and popularity. Dedi Mulyadi dismissed the notion about the incompetence of the Sundanese in politics. He utilized the sophistication of social media to the fullest, thus forming a digital personal branding of 13 (thirteen) elements as a humanist millennial Sundanese politician. Thus, this method is ideal for political investment, especially local politicians who want votes in the upcoming elections.

The novelty of this research is that there is no authentic research on the digital personal branding of Sundanese politicians that can be used as a reference for local politicians towards the global political arena. The recommendation for further research is the phenomenon of Sundanese politicians in Indonesia which is studied through ethnographic studies. Marketing personal brands in the political field are now easier because technological advances through various creative designs and interesting content provide unlimited space.

The author's limitation in this study is the frequency of meetings with Dedi Mulyadi which was scheduled for 4 (four times) only reached 3 (three times) because his activities are very dense beyond the ability of the author.

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