



## The Implementation of Digital Marketing that Influence the Political Decision to Vote

Yanto Ramli<sup>1</sup>, Erna Sofriana Imaningsih<sup>2</sup>, Aldina Shiratina<sup>3</sup>, Mochamad Soelton<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1234</sup>Program Studi Manajemen, Universitas Mercu Buana

Correspondent : [yanto.ramli@mercubuana.ac.id](mailto:yanto.ramli@mercubuana.ac.id)<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT:** The intention of this research is to understand how did the winner of the election win the heart of the prospective voters and which of the variables that has the highest influence on the decision to vote for the candidate, the respective variables are: positioning and social media marketing towards the decision to vote in relating to the political marketing as the intervening variable. The data was collected from the distribution of questionnaire, the population are the voters of the election in West Java, Indonesia. This research is using Purposive Sampling as the data processing and the analysis tool is using Partial Least Square. The results indicate that both positioning and social media marketing have positive and significant effect towards political marketing, and the variable of positioning have the most significant influence towards decision to vote compare to social media marketing. The results show that the positioning of a candidate is very important to engage the decision of the voters to vote for them. Eventhough the social media marketing is also playing an important part to engage their voters.

**Keywords:** Positioning, Social Media Marketing, Political Marketing, Decision to Vote



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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country in Southeast Asia which is consisted of over seventeen thousand islands and is the world's largest island country. With more than 270 million people, Indonesia is the world's fourth-most populous country in the world. Indonesia is also known as a presidential, constitutional republic with an elected legislature with 34 provinces. Each of the province is led by a governor and vice governor. (Ramli & Soelton, 2018)

The governor is elected together with his deputy in a package of pairs directly elected by the people in each of the province for a term of 5 years, and the governor is responsible to the people. The elected governor is then inaugurated by the President, and can also be inaugurated by the Minister of Home Affairs on behalf of the President. In addition, the governor is also the representative of the central government and the governor is responsible to the president. And the governor's authority is regulated in Law No. 32 of 2004 and Government Regulation No. 19 of 2010 (Arofah & Nugrahajati, 2014).

The election of the governor is commonly referred to as local elections and carried out directly by residents in local administrative regions who have met the requirements for conducting the local elections. The regional candidacy governor is elected together with the deputy governor as a

pair. The process of selection for the candidate of the Governor and Deputy Governor will be reviewed by the General Election Commissions and approved before the candidate can proceed to the general elections process (Rumayya et al., 2020).

The intention of this research is to understand the election of the candidacy Governor from one of the provinces in West Java which was held on 27 June 2018. The intention is to find out how these candidates compete with each other to win their prospective voters to vote for them. How did they engage with the prospective voters and captivate them? There are four candidates of Governor and the Deputy to be elected in the election. They are originated from different background; some were supported by polical parties and some were supported by the people from independence (Toha et al., 2021).

After the approval from the The General Election Commissions, the candidacy pair will receive sequel number as the number to be voted, the campaign period will be set by the Commissions to engage with the prospective voters. The campaign period was set for 4 months, all candidacy pairs of were requested to prepare and introduce their vision, mission, self-image, or work program to their ballot voters. The campaign is expected to run in an according and orderly manner, so as not to injure the ethnicity, religion and race, and not blaspheming against each other which will incur commotion among the people in the province (Fuad, 2014).

The candidacy pairs are taking and making use of their times to prepare and promote to build a winning political campaign strategy. Each pair are building their own campaign strategy and also prepare their succession team to captivate the prospective voters. All pairs are working very hard to win the election by putting all their efforts in the campaign to captivate their prospective voters, this is where most succession team might impose unfair movement to win the process. That is why the election commission must play an active role to keep track of all the campaign process, they must socialize all the fair play and avoid the unfair activities or to be disqualified by the General Election Commissions. The result of the election was announced as follow:

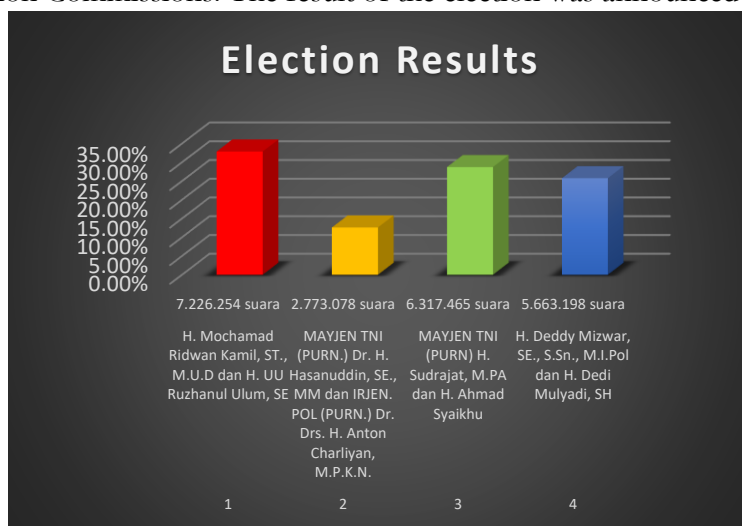


Figure 1. The Election Results  
Source: infopemilu.kpu.go.id, 2018

The results stated that the candidacy pair of Mochamad Ridwan Kamil and Uu Ruzhanul Ulum were elected as the Governor and Deputy Governor of West Java Province for the period time of 2018-2023 with a total vote of 7,226,254 or 32.88%. The closest vote was the candidacy pair of Sudrajat and Ahmad Syaikhu with the votes of 6,317,465 or 28.74%. While the other two candidacy pair fall into the third and fourth place with each of them received 12.62% and 25.77% votes.

The election was won by Mochamad Ridwan Kamil and Uu Ruzhanul Ulum and based on the preliminary survey done on 30 respondents as the voters at that time pointed out that they decide to vote for the winner because of the marketing tools that they use to promote themselves as the candidates of Governor for the coming election and how they will lead the province based on their vision and mission. Ridwan Kamil also communicates most of his activities and also his past performance during his services as a mayor in the city by using social media. The intention of this research is to find out on what basis the prospective voters decide to vote for their candidacy pair.

According to the discussions of previous research, the marketing mix can be applied and used by political organizations, they are allowed to maintain control over their political marketing activities and processes (Northey & Chan, 2020; O'Shaughnessy, 2001). Theoretically political products, placements and promotions have opportunities in political decisions related to candidate selection, while prices do not have political opportunities (Widagdo et al., 2015). Marketing in politics effectively has been demonstrated and the position of the media in it has also been demonstrated because there is no marketing without media at present (Durmaz & Direkci, 2015). The impact of political marketing on democracy will depend on the community itself in participating and responding to this kind of political communication (Sofyan, 2015). The political marketing mix has a high influence on the competitiveness of political parties by enhancing the image and reputation of political parties (Maryani et al., 2020). Voters are less affected by political marketing work that is close to the election date, while they are more influenced by previous activities and stakeholder marketing studies (Uyar, 2016). Skepticism, cynicism, frustration, and dissatisfaction have an impact on resistance to political marketing campaigns (Elhajjar, 2018). Market orientation, market research, and building and managing a strong and beneficial image have a positive influence on the success of political marketing while market segmentation and targeting and positioning of parties/candidates have no influence on the success of political marketing (Gopal et al., 2019).

Reviewing the results of studies from several previous researches concerning political marketing on the election campaign, it was observed that most of the research are analysing more on the theoretically point of view as the research gap, in this research the author will put more efforts on the empirical study based on the field observations and the methodological study based on the constructed variables of Positioning, Social Media Marketing, Political Marketing, and Decision to Vote. Generally, this research will emphasize more on the theoretical explanation where the research gap that can be found, so to conduct the research and study them empirically will have to go through a methodology of the decision of the prospective voters that vote for a certain candidacy pair of Governor.

Positioning is the act of designing a company's offer and image in order to get a special place in the mind of the target market. The aim is to place the brand in the minds of consumers to maximize the potential benefits for the company. Positioning makes the product bold and looks much different from other products through communication making the role of positioning become an organized system in an effort to find the right thing, at the right time (Dwihapsari & Murni, 2017). Positioning is to arrange for a product to occupy a clear, distinctive, and desirable place relative to competitors' products in the minds of target consumers. Marketers plan a positioning that distinguishes their products from competing brands and gives them the biggest advantage in their target market (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016). Social media marketing is any form of direct or indirect marketing that is used to build awareness, recognition, recollection, and take action on a brand, business, product, person, or other thing that is packaged using tools on the social web, such as blogging, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, and content sharing (Ratana, 2018). Online media

marketing and social media are activities and programs designed to engage customers and prospects or indirectly increase awareness, enhance image, or bring in sales of products and services ([Kotler & Armstrong, 2016](#)).

Political marketing is important especially the quick promotion and publicity concerning politics information, affairs, issues and so forth. Political marketing is marketing that are mostly implemented with political affair such as political campaign, elections and marketing promotion ([Jamil et al., 2019](#)). What is important in this definition is first, that political marketing is the application of marketing principles and procedures—not just marketing techniques and activities—and second, that the process must be "in response to the needs and desires" of the targeted person or group by producers—organizations or campaigns ([Strömbäck, 2007](#)).

The decision to buy/vote is a decision to choose between alternatives of purchasing/choosing decisions, a person can only make a purchasing/choosing decision if there are two alternative choices available ([Astini & Yustian K, 2020](#)). The decision to buy/vote is an integration process that combines knowledge to evaluate two or more alternative behaviors and choose one of them to buy/vote. After seeing the influence that can affect buyers, marketers must look at how consumers make purchasing/choosing decisions. The buyer decision process consists of five stages: introduction of needs, information seeking, alternative evaluation, purchasing decisions, and post-purchase behavior. Marketers need to focus on the entire buying decision process rather than just focusing on the buying decision ([Kotler & Armstrong, 2016](#)).

### Research Hypothesis and Framework

1. **The influence of positioning towards political marketing.** Positioning is the act of designing a company's offer and image to get a special place in the mind of the target market. The aim is to place the brand in the minds of consumers to maximize the potential benefits for the company ([Dwihapsari & Murni, 2017](#)). Political marketing is important especially the quick promotion and publicity concerning politics information, affairs, issues and so forth. Political marketing is marketing that are mostly implemented with political affair such as political campaign, elections, and marketing promotion ([Jamil et al., 2019](#)). Thus, the hypotheses that can be formulated in this study are as follows:

H<sub>1</sub>: The influence of positioning towards political marketing.

2. **The influence of social media marketing towards political marketing.** Social media marketing is any form of direct or indirect marketing that is used to build awareness, recognition, recollection, and take action on a brand, business, product, person, or other thing that is packaged using tools on the social web, such as blogging, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, and content sharing ([Ratana, 2018](#)). Political marketing is important especially the quick promotion and publicity concerning politics information, affairs, issues and so forth. Political marketing is marketing that are mostly implemented with political affair such as political campaign, elections and marketing promotion ([Jamil et al., 2019](#)). Thus, the hypotheses that can be formulated in this study are as follows:

H<sub>2</sub>: The influence of social media marketing towards political marketing.

3. **The influence of positioning towards decision to vote.** Positioning is the act of designing a company's offer and image in order to get a special place in the mind of the target market. The aim is to place the brand in the minds of consumers to maximize the potential benefits for the company ([Dwihapsari & Murni, 2017](#)). The decision to buy/vote is a decision to choose between alternatives of purchasing/choosing decisions, a person can only make a purchasing/choosing decision if there are two alternative

choices available (Astini & Yustian K, 2020). Thus, the hypotheses that can be formulated in this study are as follows:

H<sub>3</sub>: The influence of positioning towards decision to vote.

- 4. The influence of social media marketing towards decision to vote.** Social media marketing is any form of direct or indirect marketing that is used to build awareness, recognition, recollection, and take action on a brand, business, product, person, or other thing that is packaged using tools on the social web, such as blogging, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, and content sharing (Ratana, 2018). The decision to buy/vote is a decision to choose between alternatives of purchasing/choosing decisions, a person can only make a purchasing/choosing decision if there are two alternative choices available (Astini & Yustian K, 2020). Thus, the hypotheses that can be formulated in this study are as follows:

H<sub>4</sub>: The influence of social media marketing towards decision to vote.

- 5. The influence of political marketing towards decision to vote.** Political marketing is important especially the quick promotion and publicity concerning politics information, affairs, issues and so forth. Political marketing is marketing that are mostly implemented with political affair such as political campaign, elections, and marketing promotion (Jamil et al., 2019). The decision to buy/vote is a decision to choose between alternatives of purchasing/choosing decisions, a person can only make a purchasing/choosing decision if there are two alternative choices available (Astini & Yustian K, 2020). Thus, the hypotheses that can be formulated in this study are as follows:

H<sub>5</sub>: The influence of political marketing towards decision to vote.

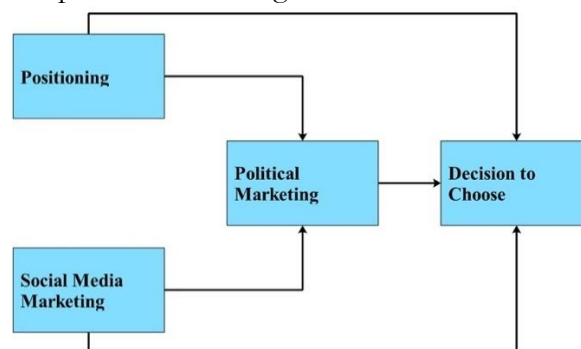


Figure 2. Research Framework

## METHOD

This study is based on strategic marketing management approach which includes the operationalization variables, data collection method and information collection, defining the population, calculating the sample size and sampling techniques. The design of analysis is conducted in the testing research hypothesis is by reviewing the prospective voters of Governor Election in West Java, Indonesia. The preliminary research is done on 30 prospective voters as the respondent and follow by formulating constructed research variables.

The formulation of this study is to describe and find out the interrelationship concerning the research variables. This research is based on the descriptive and verification method and the type of causal investigation concerning the relationship and influence between the independent and dependent variables.

The observation of this research is based on time horizon with cross section/one shot, the collective data is obtained through the research done in 2021, the unit of the analysis is the prospective voters located in West Java, Indonesia. The design of analysis done by testing the

hypothesis and to investigate the relationship regarding the research variables by using *Partial Least Square* (PLS), one of the alternative method of structural analysis from *Strutural Equation Modeling* (SEM).

The validity testing was done by using the sample of 255 respondents randomly on the voters who vote for the election in West Java. The attempt of this validity testing is to examine the eligible of the selected items including the overall data processing.

The reliability test is using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient method. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is the reliability coefficient most commonly used because of the coefficient that indicate the variance of items whether it is in the correct or incorrect format such as Likert scale format. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is being used to evaluate the internal consistency.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of descriptive analysis on the voters who vote for the Governor election in West Java revealed that the decision to vote for the candidates are based on the positioning and social media marketing being performed by the candidates and by considering political marketing that influence their decision to vote for the candidate.

The measurement model of analysis above indicated the correlation between manifest variables (indicators) and each of the latent variables showed the validity and reliability of each of the dimensions and the indicators utilized to measure the constructed variables. The analysis of the measurement model described in the value of discriminant validity was by looking at the value of square root of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with the suggestion value above 0,5, loading factor (>0.5), and constructed Composite Validity and Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha >0.70), are concluded that the dimensions and indicators are classified as reliable. These figures are showed below:

Table 1. Goodness of Fit Model (GoF)

Variable	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	R Square	Q Square
Positioning	0,706	0,944	0,930	-	0,587
Social Media Marketing	0,694	0,964	0,960	-	0,476
Political Marketing	0,783	0,973	0,967	0,717	0,572
Decision to Vote	0,669	0,953	0,945	0,527	0,351

Source: From Data Processing (2021)

The value of  $R^2$  shows that the criterion is strong, and the Q value is considered large, this figure indicated that the propose model are supported and accordance with the empirical research classified as *fit*. Similarly, the value of AVE is >0.5, which indicate that all variables in the model are estimated to meet the cirteria of discriminant validity. The value of Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha for each of the variables are >0.70, this means that all of the researched variables are classified as reliable and the outer model of this research is also classified as *fit*.

Based on the result of measurement on the data processing of model analysis, the dimensions indicates that all of the indicators which have been processed above are classified as valid, as almost all of the value from the loading factors are greater than 0.70.

The measurement model of latent variables against the dimensions explains the validity of the dimensions in order to measure the value of the research variables. The following table shown indicate the results of the measurement model analysis of each latent variable against the dimensions.

Table 2. Loading Factor Between Latent Variables and Dimensions

Latent Variables-Dimensions	Loading	Standard	T Statistics
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	<i>factor</i> <b>(λ)</b>	<i>Error</i> <b>(SE)</b>	<b>( λ /SE )</b>
Positioning → Clear	0.723	0.037	19.596
Positioning → Distinctive	0.949	0.052	22.528
Positioning → Desirable	0.947	0.041	20.784
Social Media Marketing → Awareness	0.877	0.057	18.634
Social Media Marketing → Improve Image	0.876	0.045	20.674
Social Media Marketing → Elicit Image	0.774	0.075	21.427
Political Marketing → Character of Figure	0.887	0.052	23.825
Political Marketing → Character of the Parties	0.839	0.043	21.639
Political Marketing → Market-Oriented Parties	0.772	0.078	22.549
Decision to Vote → Need Recognition	0.847	0.084	18.521
Decision to Vote → Information Search	0.839	0.036	22.741
Decision to Vote → Evaluation of Alternatives	0.758	0.065	17.276
Decision to Vote → Decision to Vote	0.836	0.067	19.286
Decision to Vote → Postusability Behavior	0.831	0.024	18.351

Source: From Data Processing (2020)

The results of the measurement model analysis of the research variables against the dimensions shows that almost all the dimensions are considered as valid with the value of t count > t table (2.01).

The estimated value of the path analysis in the structural model must be significant. This significant value can be obtained by the implementing of bootstrapping procedure. The significance of the hypothesis can be observed on the value of the parameter coefficient and the significance value of the T-statistics on the bootstrapping algorithm report. In order to find out the significant or insignificant is seen from the T-table at alpha 0.05 (5%) = 1.96. Then, T-tables are to compare with the T-counts (T-statistics), the result are explained below:

Table 3. The Result of Hypothesis Testing

	<b>Original Sample (O)</b>	<b>Sample Mean (M)</b>	<b>Standard Deviation (STDEV)</b>	<b>T Statistics ( O/STDEV )</b>	<b>P Values</b>
Positioning → Political Marketing	0,304	0,298	0,179	4,752	0,064
Social Media Marketing → Political Marketing	0,217	0,220	0,135	3,139	0,069
Positioning → Decision to Vote	0,186	0,191	0,182	2,887	0,064
Social Media Marketing → Decision to Vote	0,158	0,156	0,153	2,679	0,059
Political Marketing → Decision to Vote	0,298	0,295	0,158	6,197	0,048

Source: From Data Processing (2020)

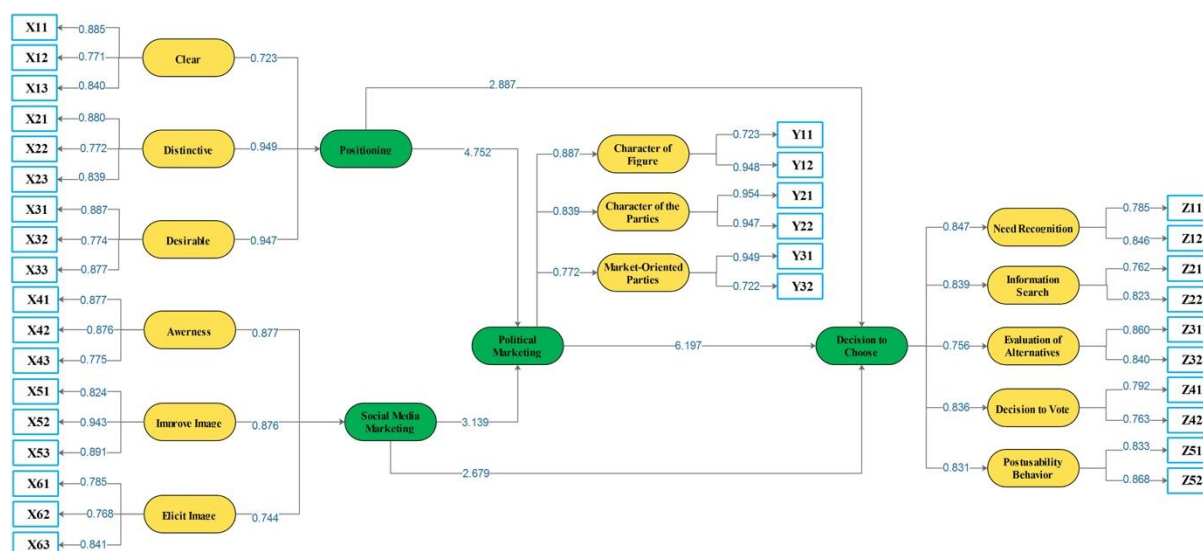


Figure 3. Hypothesis Testing  
 Source: From Data Processing (2020)

The results of hypothesis testing revealed that the variable of positioning has the highest influence on political marketing compared social media marketing. The direct effect of positioning also has the highest influence against decision to vote compare to social media marketing. Political marketing is also an important factor that influence the effect of decision to vote for a certain candidacy pair of the Governor in West Java.

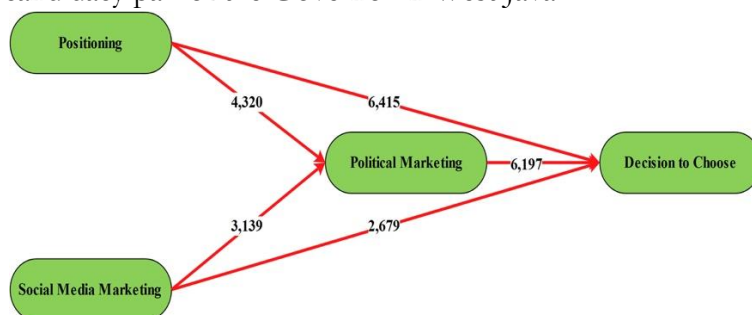


Figure 4. Testing Result  
 Source: From Data Processing (2021)

The testing results indicate that the research variables show the variable of positioning has the most significant influence towards political marketing as the intervening variable with the figure of 4,320, compare to variable of social media marketing with the figure of 3,139. The direct effect of the variable of positioning stated the figure of 6,415 and the variable of social media marketing with the figure of 2,679. Political marketing as the intervening variable also indicates a positive and significant effect on decision to vote with the figure of 6,197 which stated that the intervening variable has a significant effect on the decision to vote for a certain candidacy pair of Governor.

**The influence of positioning towards political marketing**

Based on the testing results, it shows that variable positioning has a positive and significant influence towards political marketing. The results of the analysis show that the T-statistic value is 4,320 with the original sample 0,304. The Y-statistics value is larger than the T-table 1,96 and original sample is positive which means that the variable positioning is very important as one of the tools in the political marketing for a certain candidacy pair of the Governor.



### **The influence of social media marketing towards political marketing**

Based on the testing results, it shows that the variable social media marketing has a positive and significant influence towards political marketing. The results of the analysis show that the T-statistic value is 3,139 with the original sample 0,217. The Y-statistics value is larger than the T-table 1,96 and original sample is positive which means that social media marketing is very important as one of the tools in the political marketing for a certain candidacy pair of the Governor.

### **The influence of positioning towards decision to vote**

Based on the testing results, it shows that the variable of positioning has a positive and significant influence towards decision to vote. The results of the analysis show that the T-statistic value is 2,887 with the original sample 0,186. The Y-statistics value is larger than the T-table 1,96 and original sample is positive which means that the variable of positioning is very important to influence the decision to vote of the ballot voters.

### **The influence of social media marketing towards decision to vote**

Based on the testing results, it shows that social media marketing has a positive and significant influence towards decision to vote. The results of the analysis show that the T-statistic value is 2,679 with the original sample 0,158. The Y-statistics value is larger than the T-table 1,96 and original sample is positive which means that the variable of social media marketing is very important to influence the decision to vote of the ballot voters.

### **The influence political marketing towards decision to vote**

Based on the testing results, it shows that political marketing has a positive and significant influence towards decision to vote. The results of the analysis show that the T-statistic value is 6,197 with the original sample 0,298. The Y-statistics value is larger than the T-table 1,96 and original sample is positive which means that the variable of political marketing is very important to influence the decision to vote of the ballot voters.

## **CONCLUSION**

The research hypothesis constructed from this study is based on the four research variables: positioning and social media marketing as the independent variables, decision to vote as the dependent variable and political marketing as the intervening variable. The results of the above framework can be concluded that the variable of positioning has the highest influence on political marketing compared to the variable of social media marketing. Positioning has the highest influence directly to decision to vote compared to the variable of social media marketing. The objectives of this research is to look into how the certain candidacy pair of the Governor influence their ballot voter to decide to vote for them. This research has constructed four researched variables to find out the intention to vote of the ballot voters in West Java.

Based on the hypothesis testing, it was concluded as follows:

1. The winners of the first candidacy pair Ridwan Kamil and Uu Ruzhanul Ulum focus more on the prospective voters which is the millennial voters, by positioning themselves who are closer to the millennial voters.
2. This candidacy pair also frequently post their activities in the government (Ridwan Kamil is currently the Mayor of the Bandung City) and their work program in their social media accounts to show how they work and not just based on planning as delivered by the other candidacy pairs.
3. The finding concluded from the analysis that the marketing strategy of each candidacy pair are different, but almost all of them are focusing on the political marketing to approach their prospective voters.

4. The finding also found out that the positioning of the candidacy pair to their prospective voters is very important, and which segment of the prospective voters that they are going to target is also very important as not all the prospective voters can be reached at the same time.

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