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The Power Of Political Networks In Victory Andra Soni–Achmad Dimyati In The 2024 Banten Gubernatorial Election

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Abstract

The 2024 Banten gubernatorial election ended two decades of dominance by the political dynasty of Ratu Atut Chosiyah's family. The Andra Soni-Achmad Dimyati pair, supported by nine parties in the Banten Maju Coalition, which controlled 72 of the 100 seats in the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD), defeated Airin Rachmi Diany-Ade Sumardi by a margin of 11.76 percent. However, classical coalition literature (Riker, 1962) and contemporary studies (Golder, 2006; Karvonen, 2014) emphasize that coalition size does not automatically correlate with electoral victory; the case of the 2024 Jakarta gubernatorial election, when Ridwan Kamil-Suswono, also supported by KIM Plus, lost to Pramono Anung-Rano Karno, who were solely supported by PDIP, confirms this. This article answers two questions: why Andra Soni-Dimyati were able to win against Airin-Ade Sumardi, and how the power of political networks worked to ensure the pair's victory. The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study strategy. Primary data were obtained from in-depth interviews with nine key informants, including the governor-elect and members of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) from the supporting parties, while secondary data were collected from official documents from the General Elections Commission (KPU), media, and academic publications. The analysis used a combination of political capital frameworks (Bourdieu, 1986), campaign strategies (Norris, 2000), and political network analysis (Knoke, 1990). The findings suggest that the victory was explained by a combination of internal factors: Dimyati's election with a strong base in Pandeglang, Andra Soni's political capital, and an anti-dynasty and anti-corruption narrative. The power

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of political networks operated through three integrated layers: a formal coalition, grassroots mobilization of DPRD candidates, and an organic, silaturahmi-based volunteer network, bound by the operational principle of "diorangkan." This study contributes to the literature on the end of subnational political dynasties and the conditions under which grand coalitions can operate effectively.

Keywords:Political Network; Election Coalition; 2024 Banten Regional Election; Political Dynasty; Political Capital

INTRODUCTION

For nearly two decades, the political landscape of Banten Province has been shaped by the consolidation of power by a single extended family rooted in Ratu Atut Chosiyah. Atut served as Governor of Banten for two terms (2007–2017) and, through a network of relatives, expanded her influence to various strategic positions: her children, siblings, in-laws, and sons-in-law held positions as members of the House of Representatives (DPR), mayor, deputy regent, and even the top management of the provincial Golkar Party (Hidayat *et al*., 2020; Sutisna, 2017). This form of consolidation has been referred to by some scholars as an “octopussy dynasty” because its branches extend to various levels of government and political parties (Hidayat *et al*., 2020). Although Ratu Atut was convicted in a corruption case in 2014, her dynasty survived and won several regional elections after the case.

The 2024 Banten gubernatorial election ended that resilience. The Andra Soni-Achmad Dimyati ticket won 3,102,501 votes, or 55.88 percent, defeating Airin Rachmi Diany-Ade Sumardi, who won 2,449,183 votes, or 44.12 percent (Banten Provincial General Elections Commission, 2024). Andra Soni-Dimyati won in six of the eight regions, while Airin remained ahead in Cilegon City and South Tangerang City (CNN Indonesia, 2024). This victory was interesting for two interrelated reasons. First, several pre-election surveys placed Airin as the favorite; a June 2024 Kompas Litbang survey, for example, recorded her electability at 38.3 percent (Kompas.id, 2024). Second, Andra Soni–Dimyati were supported by nine parties—Gerindra, Golkar, PKS, PKB, NasDem, Demokrat, PAN, PPP, and PSI—plus the Garuda Party in the Banten Maju Coalition (KBM) which controlled 72 of the 100 seats in the Banten Provincial DPRD, while Airin–Ade were only supported by PDIP and Golkar with Golkar's solidity being questioned from the start (Tempo, 2024; Kompas.id, 2024).

Explanations that point to coalition size as a single variable are challenged by

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contemporary literature and empirical evidence. Riker (1962) stated that rational political actors tend to form minimal winning coalitions because overly large coalitions are considered inefficient. Contemporary studies (Golder, 2006; Karvonen, 2014) emphasize that internal solidarity, a shared voter base, and integrated campaign practices are often more decisive. Aspinall and Berenschot (2019) warn that large coalitions in Indonesia are often fragile because parties operate as "separate machines." The 2024 Jakarta gubernatorial election confirmed this: the Ridwan Kamil-Suswono ticket, nominated by KIM Plus with the open support of President Prabowo and former President Joko Widodo, lost in one round to Pramono Anung-Rano Karno, nominated solely by PDIP, by a margin of approximately 10 percent (Katadata, 2024).

This issue opens the argument for this article. The victory of Andra Soni–Dimyati cannot be explained simply by pointing to the size of the coalition. What distinguishes the Banten 2024 case from the Jakarta 2024 case is the coalition's ability to operate as an active political network, reaching down to the grassroots, rather than simply a series of party logos on billboards. The main argument put forward is that the strength of the political network—consisting of the coalition of supporting parties, the provincial DPRD candidate network, the organic volunteer network, and the candidates' personal political capital—was the primary explanatory factor for Andra Soni–Dimyati's victory. This network operated through simultaneous consolidation at all levels and was supported by the candidates' political capital.

Based on these arguments, this article answers two research questions. First, why were Andra Soni–Dimyati able to win against Airin–Ade Sumardi? Second, how did the power of political networks work to ensure their victory? The article is organized into five sections following the introduction: a literature review and theoretical framework, research methods, analysis of winning factors, the operational mechanisms of political networks, and conclusions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A Study of Political Dynasties and Election Coalitions

Banten is a key reference point in discussions of Indonesian political dynasties. Sutisna (2017) examines the proliferation of dynasties during the era of Ratu Atut, while Hidayat *et al*. (2020) introduced the term "octopussy dynasty" to describe a dynasty with widespread branches. In the broader literature, several studies indicate that post-reform dynasties have flourished alongside decentralization and high electoral costs (Aspinall & Berenschot, 2019; Mietzner, 2013), as well as the reconfiguration of local elites post-New Order (Buehler, 2007). Studies on the end of political dynasties through competitive electoral mechanisms are still relatively rare, so the case

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of Banten 2024 provides an important analytical moment.

A second relevant branch of literature is the study of pre-election coalitions. Riker (1962) proposed the size principle: rational political actors form coalitions that are the size they need to win, not larger. Golder (2006) extended this analysis to the pre-election context by examining the strategic rationale for alliance formation. However, Karvonen (2014) emphasized that coalition size does not automatically correlate with victory; internal solidity, a shared platform, and the capacity to integrate campaign work on the ground are more important determinants. In the Indonesian context, the phenomenon of "big coalitions that lose" is not new—the 2024 Jakarta gubernatorial election is a recent reminder. This study's position fills three gaps in the literature: (a) presenting a case study of the end of a provincial political dynasty, (b) mapping the conditions under which large coalitions can operate effectively, and (c) examining local campaign practices that rely on symbolic capital built through consistent practices.

Theoretical Framework: Political Capital, Campaign Strategy, and Political Networks

This research uses three complementary theoretical frameworks. Bourdieu (1986) identified four forms of capital that social actors can possess, accumulate, and convert: economic capital (financial resources for campaigns), social capital (networks of trust and cooperation, including party and coalition machinery), cultural capital (institutional track records, capacities, and experiences that shape voter perceptions), and symbolic capital (collective recognition of values—integrity, modesty, political narratives—that shape legitimacy) (Bourdieu, 1991; Putnam, 2000; Winters, 2011). A key component of this framework is the concept of intermodal conversion: capital in one form can be transferred into another.

Norris (2000) distinguishes three models of campaign strategy: pre-modern, which relies on direct interaction through party networks; modern, which relies on mass media and the professionalization of consultants; and post-modern, which combines digital media, voter segmentation, and maintains grassroots networks. Plasser and Plasser (2002) add that effective campaigns in local contexts in developing countries often rely on a combination of pre-modern and post-modern methods: face-to-face remains dominant, but is strengthened by structured coordination between parties and the use of digital channels.

The political network approach complements the two frameworks above. Knoke (1990) defines a political network as a pattern of regular relationships between political actors who exchange resources, information, and support to achieve political goals; Diani and McAdam (2003) emphasize the relational dimension that connects formal structures (parties, official

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organizations) with informal structures (support groups, communities, volunteers). In this article, a political network is understood as a relational structure that connects candidates with their supporting parties, cadres, volunteers, community leaders, and voters through nodes of trust and coordination. Networks operate at two levels—structural (party coalitions, legislative seats) and operational (campaign activities to voters)—and their strength is measured by their ability to integrate these two levels.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was designed as a qualitative case study (Yin, 2018). A qualitative approach was chosen because the research questions concern meaning, mechanisms, and processes—aspects that are more appropriately examined through in-depth exploration rather than statistical measurement (Creswell, 2018). Primary data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with key informants selected using purposive sampling based on three criteria: direct involvement in the election winning or monitoring process, institutional position that allows access to internal information, and capacity to provide different perspectives on the same case.

Based on these criteria, researchers interviewed nine key informants from various positions. From the winning side, researchers spoke directly with Andra Soni, the elected Governor of Banten; with Riyan Hidayat, a member of the Banten Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) from the PAN faction; with Rifky Hermansyah, a member of the DPRD from the Gerindra faction; and with Budi Prayogo from the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). PAN, Gerindra, and PKS are all supporting parties, and these informants helped drive the winning machine on the ground. Interviews were also conducted with Gerindra Party officials in Banten, political observers, and election organizers at the provincial level. This composition was deliberately diverse so that the perpetrators' claims could be cross-checked with observers' readings and organizers' notes, so that the narrative of victory did not rest solely on a single voice.

Secondary data was collected from official documents from the Banten Provincial Election Commission (KPU), published party documents and coalition decisions, national and local media coverage, and scientific publications discussing the dynamics of Banten politics, political dynasties, and election coalitions in Indonesia. Secondary data served as triangulation material and also to reconstruct factual data requiring authority, such as vote results per district/city and coalition chronology.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) using a deductive-inductive approach. Main themes were derived deductively from the theoretical

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framework, while subthemes and contextual nuances were extracted inductively from interview narratives. Validity was maintained through four strategies: triangulation of data sources, thick description, member checking to confirm sensitive quotations, and peer review. This study upholds ethical principles of social research, including informed consent and protection of informant identities upon request.

RESULT

This section answers the first research question by examining the internal factors that shaped the victory of the Andra Soni–Dimyati camp, namely the strategy for selecting a running mate and the candidates' political capital. These factors do not stand alone; in practice, they interact throughout the campaign and only become fully operational when activated through the political networks discussed in the next section.

Internal Factors: Candidate's Strategy and Political Capital

The first internal factor was the selection of Achmad Dimyati Natakusumah as the deputy gubernatorial candidate. Dimyati, the former Regent of Pandeglang for two terms (2000–2010), comes from a political family (the Natakusumah clan) that has long played a role in southern Banten. Pandeglang and Lebak are two regencies with significant voter bases that have historically been strongholds for candidates closely connected to religious scholars and Islamic boarding schools (pesantren). Dimyati's selection addressed the issue of Gerindra's vote base in the south and signaled to PKS, PKB, and PPP that this pair was worthy of support from a religious representation perspective. The vote results confirmed this strategic strength: Andra Soni–Dimyati won in Lebak (344,199 vs. 325,662 votes) and by a wider margin in Pandeglang (Banten Provincial Election Commission, 2024).

The second internal factor is Andra Soni's personal political capital. Cultural capital is evident in his track record as a member of the Banten Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) for two terms (2014–2024), including serving as Speaker of the Provincial DPRD in his final term. Social capital stems from his position as Speaker of the Gerindra Party's Banten Provincial DPD, which grants him access to a network of cadres in eight regencies/cities. Symbolic capital is built around the identity of an "ordinary person who is not part of a dynasty," supported by his biographical background as a migrant from West Sumatra who worked his way up from the bottom. Encop Sopia describes this position:

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"Mr. Andra Soni is indeed a low-profile figure, not from a powerful family in Banten. His background isn't that of an oligarchy or a dynasty; he's just an ordinary citizen."(Encop Sopia, interview, 2026)

In the context of Banten, long under the shadow of the Atut dynasty, the "non-dynastic" identity is a rare and valuable symbolic asset, reinforced by campaign practices that place candidates within the community rather than solely on the official stage. A third internal factor is the anti-corruption narrative. Banten is known for its poor record on government integrity indicators: Ratu Atut herself was convicted in 2014, and her younger brother, Tubagus Chaeri Wardhana, was also implicated in several corruption cases. Informants from the Banten Provincial Elections Commission (KPU) noted that Andra Soni's anti-corruption narrative was widely welcomed, especially among urban and young voters; this narrative is connected to the anti-dynastic identity because political dynasties and integrity issues are perceived as intertwined.

The final vote distribution clarified the anatomy of this victory. Andra Soni–Dimyati's victory did not wipe out Airin's base. Airin remained ahead in Cilegon (122,852 vs. 107,495) and South Tangerang (385,250 vs. 190,312), two areas characterized by a more secular urban electorate. However, in Tangerang Regency, Andra Soni–Dimyati held a clear lead (907,129 vs. 589,429 votes), as in most other areas (CNN Indonesia, 2024). The weight of victory in the populous Tangerang Regency was a key factor in the final outcome—and, as will be seen in the following section, this aligns with the campaign's focus on strength in Greater Tangerang. The question then becomes: how did this political capital and strategy translate into votes on the ground? The answer lies in how the political network operates.

THE POWER OF POLITICAL NETWORKS AND COALITIONS

This section answers the second research question by examining how the power of political networks operates operationally. The argument is that Andra Soni's political network operates on three integrated layers—the formal coalition layer, the DPRD candidate mobilization layer, and the organic volunteer network layer—which are coordinated through the operational principle of "personification."

First Layer: Banten Maju Coalition and Coalition Binder

The Banten Maju (KBM) Coalition became the first formal infrastructure to support Andra Soni–Dimyati. The distribution of seats in the Banten Provincial DPRD for the 2024–2029 term is

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presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Supporting Party Seats in the Banten Provincial DPRD 2024–2029

Supporting Party	Chair	Percent
Gerindra Party	14	14%
Golkar Party	14	14%
Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)	13	13%
Democratic Party	11	11%
National Awakening Party (PKB)	10	10%
NasDem Party	10	10%
National Mandate Party (PAN)	7	7%
United Development Party (PPP)	4	4%
Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI)	3	3%
Total Banten Forward Coalition	**86**	**86%**

Source: Compiled from Kompas.id (2024) and a report from the Banten Provincial Election Commission (KPU). The total number of seats in the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) is 100. In campaign practice, the effective number of seats is approximately 72 from the core group of supporters.

Coalition strength does not come automatically from the number of parties and seats. The most relevant empirical comparison is the 2024 Jakarta gubernatorial election, when Ridwan Kamil-Suswono, also supported by KIM Plus, lost. Analysis by Katadata (2024) and SMRC noted that RIDO's defeat was due, among other things, to the coalition's internal campaign machinery being unstable, the split in Anies Baswedan's supporters, who were previously affiliated with PKS and NasDem, and resistance to controversial statements by one of the candidates. What distinguishes the Banten case from the Jakarta case is the presence of three cohesive elements that ensure the coalition's integrated operation. The first cohesive element is the directive from the top of the central government coalition to consolidate the regional elections as a continuation of Prabowo-Gibran's victory in the 2024 presidential election. This cohesive element—a vertical

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link from the central government to the regions—is less pronounced in Jakarta due to residual PKS and NasDem support for Anies Baswedan.

The second connecting factor is the historical relationship between Banten voters and Prabowo. Prof. Lili Romli explained that Banten has historically voted heavily for Prabowo in the last three presidential elections, with loyalty partly attributed to his background in pencak silat and cultural affinity. The Gerindra party in Banten is built on an emotional base consolidated over several presidential elections. The third connecting factor is the presence of Achmad Dimyati in the vice-candidate slot, which signals to Islamic-based parties that this pair is worthy of support from a religious perspective. This signal unites the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), the National Awakening Party (PKB), and the United Development Party (PPP) in the same coalition.

The coalition's working methods are evident in the confessions of its participants. Riyan Hidayat, a member of the Banten Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) from the PAN faction—one of the supporting parties—emphasized that Andra Soni's network's strength rests on the party, but not just within its structure. Instead, it maximizes the surrounding layers: the networks of prominent figures, youth, and activists.

"Andra Soni's political network is based on party networks, especially those of his supporters. We're maximizing our network—not just structural, but also networks of figures, youth, and activists. We're consolidating everything."(Riyan Hidayat, interview, 2026)

This recognition distinguishes a viable coalition from one that exists on paper. Party structures provide a framework, but what makes that framework work is the consolidation of figures and groups outside the formal structure. This is not the case in Jakarta, where party logos line billboards but the machinery runs independently.

The main party machine, Gerindra, provides the most concrete illustration of how the structure is pulled all the way down. Rifky Hermansyah, a member of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) from the Gerindra faction, explained that Andra Soni's position as Gerindra Banten Province chairman means the party's network is multi-layered—from the village to the province—and elected council members in the districts and cities are also involved. For Gerindra, winning the chairmanship is not just a task, but an honor.

"Because Mr. Andra Soni is the Chairman of the Gerindra Party in Banten Province, the party's network is naturally being utilized from the village, sub-district, regency, city, and provincial

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levels. The network of elected council members in the regency/city DPRDs throughout Banten Province is also fully operational. A campaign team has been formed down to the polling station (TPS) level, and our goal is to win him over, as every party naturally wants its chairman to be the winner."(Rifky Hermansyah, interview, 2026)

Andra Soni himself views this coalition's support as something to be maintained, not simply accepted. When asked about the support of the supporting parties, he emphasized that it was tangible, even in the practical aspects of winning, and that's precisely why he felt the need to continue building communication and proving himself through program implementation.

"Yes, because almost all political parties in Banten Province have given me support—not just through recommendations, but also through practical support for winning. So I continue to build good communication. But good communication isn't enough if the programs we promise aren't implemented—therefore, we immediately implement the programs we promise."(Andra Soni, interview, 2026)

This statement demonstrates that Andra Soni treats the coalition as a reciprocal relationship, not a series of recommendations that are finalized once the letter of support is signed. Continuous communication is a way to maintain solidarity, while fulfilled program promises guarantee credibility, ensuring the party feels it has not misplaced its support. This is where the difference lies with a fragile coalition: the bonds are maintained by an active candidate, not allowed to loosen after the official nomination.

These three testimonies complement the first layer. The Banten Maju Coalition is not simply a sum of seats, but rather a structured mechanism drawn down through the core party, expanded through networks of figures from other supporting parties, and nurtured by active communication from the candidates. Rifky's description of the campaign team down to the polling station level also serves as a bridge to the second layer: how this structure truly reaches voters on the ground.

Second Layer: Mobilizing DPRD Candidates to the Grassroots

The second layer is the network of legislative candidates for the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD)—both provincial and district/city—which is systematically deployed to support the winning candidates. The 2024 legislative elections take place eight

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months before the regional elections, so the newly elected candidates still have teams and an active voter base. Ms. Encop Sopia explained that the winning strategy is to mobilize all legislative candidates from the top down to the grassroots. Each candidate in each electoral district is responsible for mobilizing voters in their area, so the Andra Soni-Dimyati campaign is, in practice, layered with the campaigns of the existing candidates. This practice has two advantages: mobilization costs are more efficient because it utilizes existing infrastructure, and the established relationship between the candidates and voters provides a shorter path to trust.

In some parties, this mobilization is integrated into a larger mission. Encop Sopia explained that Gerindra cadres in Banten are shouldering three simultaneous missions in 2024: winning Prabowo in the presidential election, Andra Soni in the gubernatorial election, and Gerindra's mayoral/regental candidates. All three missions are positioned to support each other.

"Victory must be achieved through both. Politics cannot be based on personal networks, party networks, supporting parties, friends, or even Mr. Andra's own network. Therefore, all networks must be controlled. There is no single network that can win politically."(Encop Sopia, interview, 2026)

This statement illustrates the operational logic of networks: no single network is sufficient, and victory requires the simultaneous activation of all networks. In Knoke's (1990) terminology, this is an illustration of the multiplexity of political networks—the condition where actors are connected through multiple types of relationships simultaneously (party structures, personal ties, networks of friends) and flow resources through these channels simultaneously.

This logic of multiplexity isn't unique to Gerindra. PKS, as one of the supporting parties with a tradition of well-organized cadre development, runs its own machinery down to the smallest unit. Budi Prayogo of PKS explained that his party has a grassroots structure called a member development unit, where cadres are trained and motivated to contribute to the victory of the nominated candidates—including through donations collected from their own members.

"At the grassroots level, we have a small structure called a member development unit. We actually train our members and motivate them to help our candidates win. We also collect donations to support the candidates we nominate—although not much, at least it's a token of support."(Budi Prayogo, interview, 2026)

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This explanation adds another dimension to the second layer. While Gerindra mobilizes its cadres through prominent and personal ties, PKS mobilizes them through an institutionalized cadre structure extending to member development units. Donations collected from members—no matter how small—demonstrate the same pattern as volunteers: funding comes from below, from cadres who feel committed to the party's cause, rather than simply being disbursed from above. Because PKS is nominating candidates in nearly every region, the work of cadres in their respective cities automatically contributes to Andra Soni's winning agenda at the provincial level, and that support strengthens in the final stages, including financially. Within the framework of political networks, this is an example of how a single party machine serves multiple layers of contestation simultaneously.

The question is, how can this network of legislative candidates and volunteers be directed so that it's not just busy, but also targeted? Andra Soni explained that his fieldwork was guided by data down to the polling station level. He personally went there, along with volunteers, with maps showing where votes were strong, where they were weak, and where they needed to be strengthened due to the large number of voters.

"I went out campaigning, both myself and as a volunteer. We conducted a lot of massive polling station-based activities, because we also used polling station-based data—where we were strong, where we were weak, and where we needed to focus because of the large number of voters. One of the areas we focused on was the Greater Tangerang area."(Andra Soni, interview, 2025)

This explanation adds a dimension that was previously only vaguely apparent in the numbers. Face-to-face meetings and candidate networks are pre-modern methods, as Norris (2000) calls them, while reading polling station maps and determining regional focus are post-modern: voter segmentation and data-driven resource allocation. This combination of the two is precisely what Plasser and Plasser (2002) predicted for local campaigns in developing countries: face-to-face meetings remain dominant but are enhanced by structured coordination and data utilization. The mention of Greater Tangerang as the focus also explains the results discussed in the previous section: the landslide victory in the heavily populated Tangerang Regency was no coincidence, but rather a goal pursued from the outset. Rifky's statement that the campaign team was formed down to the polling stations confirms that the map had officers at every point.

Third Layer: Volunteer Network and the Principle of “Individualization”

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The third layer, and the most difficult to measure, is the organic volunteer network and the practice of direct contact. Encop Sopia describes a volunteer model that goes beyond transactional relationships:

"Mr. Andra's networks are like your own. I consider Mr. Andra my own body. So, whatever network you have, if Mr. Andra is physically present in your community, that would be very pleasant. Otherwise, you have to be his mouthpiece."(Encop Sopia, interview, 2025)

This statement illustrates the level of identification that Putnam (2000) conceptualizes as bonding social capital. Andra Soni's practice of socializing became an operational symbol of this network: attending small communities directly, eating at simple food stalls, and sitting with residents. This practice was converted into symbolic capital through repetition and consistency. Andra Soni also habitually contacted cadres one by one before formal party agendas, conveying personal requests for support—"Before speaking at party meetings, Mr. Andra also spoke personally, for example, 'Ma'am, what do you think if I run for office?'" This personal touch fostered a sense of involvement among cadres that was converted into loyalty and work enthusiasm—assets that are difficult to capture with survey instruments.

In the Banten context, two categories of local actors play a central role: jawara (traditional martial arts figures) and religious figures (kiai, ulama, and Islamic boarding school leaders). Encop Sopia confirmed that the approach to both differs from conventional approaches. Unilateral claims of jawara support are common in Banten's local politics, but an effective strategy is to appear in person and directly request assistance:

"Come to them, ask them for help. That's what Pak Andra does, so that people feel like they are being singled out."(Encop Sopia, interview, 2025)

The principle of “individualization”—making people feel valued and taken into account—is at the heart of Andra Soni's symbolic capital approach. This approach exchanges the vertical-formal relationships that candidates usually carry out into horizontal-personal relationships. In Bourdieu's (1986) terminology, this practice is an effective mechanism for the production of symbolic capital because recognition is given through actions, not declarations. This is a typical conversion pathway: the candidate's personal symbolic capital is converted into network social capital, which in turn is converted into vote mobilization.

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This personal approach wasn't left to chance. Riyan Hidayat mentioned a programmed strategy they dubbed "Safari Tokoh," which involved bringing Andra Soni to meetings with prominent figures from various backgrounds throughout Banten. Interestingly, the targets weren't limited to religious scholars or Islamic boarding school leaders—the categories typically contested in Banten—but also included figures from the general public.

"We used to have a strategy called 'Safari Tokoh': we brought Andra Soni's name to figures from across Banten Province—not just religious scholars or Islamic boarding school leaders, but also community leaders. So, our way of winning Andra Soni was through the party and its networks, not just the party structure."(Riyan Hidayat, interview, 2025)

"Safari Tokoh" is essentially a structured version of the "personification" principle. While Encop Sopia describes it as an attitude—approaching people and asking for help—Riyan Hidayat describes it as a program implemented deliberately and repeatedly by the supporting party. Both converge on a common ground: recognition is granted through direct visits, not through on-stage claims of support. The reach of figures beyond the religious community is also important, as it expands Andra Soni's social capital to segments previously untouched by purely religious approaches.

The findings regarding economic capital clarify this conversion pattern. Campaign attributes and logistical funds are necessary, but not sufficient on their own—"campaign attributes are one, but not the only," said Encop Sopia. Economic capital operates through indirect channels: funding volunteer mobilization, community visit logistics, and social gatherings that build social and symbolic capital. The conversion that occurs is not a direct rupiah-to-vote, but rather economic → social → symbolic → vote. Confirmation from the Banten Provincial Elections Commission (KPU) and Elections Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) that no significant fraud was found in the 2024 Banten Regional Election strengthens the interpretation that this victory was not the product of foul play, but rather the work of a legitimate network.

This pattern becomes even clearer from Rifky Hermansyah's statement about volunteers. According to him, Andra Soni's volunteer network grew naturally: many volunteers actually spent their own money and capital for the campaign, rather than receiving funding from above. Their movement was systemic and massive, spanning villages, hamlets, sub-districts, and even regencies and cities, and they regularly coordinated in campaign meetings.

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"The volunteer network is natural—they provided their own funding and capital for Mr. Andra Soni's victory. The movement is systemic and massive across many villages, hamlets, sub-districts, regencies, and cities; they consistently coordinate and hold campaign meetings with us."(Rifky Hermansyah, interview, 2025)

The fact that volunteers fund themselves confirms the direction of capital conversion described above. If money flows from supporters to candidates—rather than the other way around—then logically, it's not economic capital that buys votes, but rather the symbolic and social capital that has been built up first, leading people to be willing to make sacrifices. Volunteers, who feel "humanized," convert that commitment into labor and costs. This is the purest form of the economic→social→symbolic→vote chain, and it's also the reason why the power of this network is difficult to detect in surveys that only measure preferences at a single point in time.

CONCLUSION

This paper argues that the victory of the Andra Soni-Achmad Dimyati ticket in the 2024 Banten Gubernatorial Election is explained through the concept of political network power—a relational structure connecting the formal coalition of supporting parties, the mobilization of DPRD candidates at the grassroots level, and an organic volunteer network based on friendship, integrated through the operational principle of "diorangkan". This argument is built through two channels. First, the victory resulted from internal factors: the election of Dimyati with a strong base in Pandeglang, Andra Soni's personal political capital, and a resonant anti-dynasty and anti-corruption narrative. Second, the power of political networks operates at three integrated levels: a formal coalition of nine parties with 72 DPRD seats supported by three ties (the direction of the central government coalition, the historical relationship of Banten voters with Prabowo, and Dimyati's presence in the vice-candidate slot); the mobilization of DPRD candidates throughout the province that utilized the infrastructure of the newly established legislative election team and was guided by polling station-based data so that resources were focused on high-value areas such as Greater Tangerang; as well as an organic volunteer network built through consistent relationships, strengthened by the cross-cultural “Safari Tokoh” program and characterized by volunteers who even fund themselves.

A comparison with the 2024 Jakarta gubernatorial election further sharpens the findings. The Ridwan Kamil-Suswono ticket, also supported by KIM Plus, lost to a ticket supported by only

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one party. This comparison emphasizes that coalition size is a necessary but not sufficient condition. What distinguishes the Banten case is the presence of the binding elements that ensure the coalition's integrated operation, coupled with the coalition's ability to activate its network of legislative candidates and volunteers at the grassroots level.

This study makes three theoretical contributions. First, in the discussion of political dynasties in Indonesia, the Banten 2024 case presents an example of the collapse of a dynasty that had lasted two decades, adding weight to the literature that has largely focused on the mechanisms of dynasty reproduction. Second, in the discussion of pre-election coalitions, this study complements the theses of Riker (1962), Golder (2006), and Karvonen (2014) by presenting the conditions that enable grand coalitions to function effectively. Third, in the discussion of local campaign strategies, this study highlights the role of symbolic capital built through consistent practices—not instant imagery—as a factor that is difficult to capture in surveys but determines outcomes. The concept of “diorangkan” that emerges from the data can be considered an interface concept connecting Bourdieu's framework of symbolic capital with local Indonesian campaign practices.

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