

## The Network of Actors in Yasir Machmud's Victory in the 2024 Legislative Elections in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi

Mujiburrahman B<sup>1</sup>, Muhammad<sup>2</sup>, Gustiana A. Kambo<sup>3</sup>

### Abstract

This study examines electoral success through the lens of Actor-Network Theory (ANT), emphasizing that power in elections is produced not solely by individual candidates or party structures, but through dynamic networks of human and non-human actors. By situating elections within relational configurations involving social ties, technology, institutions, and local values, the study contributes to political network analysis in the context of Indonesia's open proportional representation system. Using a qualitative case study approach, the research was conducted in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis, guided by the ANT principle of "following the actants." Informants were selected purposively based on their strategic roles within the campaign network. Data analysis involved reduction, display, and verification to ensure analytical rigor and contextual validity. The findings reveal that Yasir Machmud's electoral victory was shaped by a multi-stage network formation process, including issue mobilization, organizational structuring, integration of social media and technology, adaptive coordination, and final consolidation. Trust-based social relations, cultural values, and digital technologies functioned as interconnected actors that mediated power, mobilization, and voter engagement. Social media, algorithms, and campaign tools operated not merely as instruments, but as active agents influencing political perception and participation. The study concludes that electoral success is the outcome of a complex, adaptive actor network in which human and non-human elements interact structurally, affectively, and symbolically. This research underscores the relevance of ANT for understanding contemporary local electoral politics in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** *Actor-Network Theory, Political Networks, Legislative Elections, Voter Mobilization, Technology and Social Media.*

### Introduction

The study of networks is inextricably linked to the context of power. Actors construct power relations through the efforts of all political forces, both at the elite/actor level and the mass level (Mujiburrahman & Kambo, 2025). Power networks, in this context, are understood as the qualities, capacities, or capital necessary for achieving power for the actors involved. The understanding of actor network studies developed rapidly from sociological studies in the early 1980s by Michel Callon, Bruno Latour, and John Law. The study of actor networks emerged as an antithesis to Pierre Bourdieu's theory that actors are human individuals. Sociologists view actor networks differently, defining an actor as a source of action, regardless of their status as human or non-human (Mützel, 2009; Justesen, 2020). This is considered a radical idea in the context of the notion that inanimate objects (such as technology) also possess agency.

Actor network studies initially aimed to explore explicit or implicit power dynamics (e.g., Callon and Latour, 1981; Callon and Law, 1982; Latour, 1987; Law, 1986; see also Czarniawska and Hernes, 2005), although they are often described as politically neutral (see Amsterdamska, 1990; Haraway, 2013; Star, 1991). Therefore, in this sense, actor network studies can be said to be about power. Initially developed in science and technology studies (STS) by scholars such as Bruno Latour, Michel Callon,

---

<sup>1</sup> Malaysian Prison Department, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia, Email: rozaina@uum.edu.my, (Corresponding Author)

<sup>2</sup> Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia.

<sup>3</sup> Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia

and John Law, actor network studies have gradually gained traction in political science as a framework for analyzing complex socio-political phenomena.

Over time, actor network studies have challenged traditional approaches by emphasizing the relational and networked nature of actors, both human and non-human, in shaping political outcomes. In political science, this has opened new avenues for understanding how power, institutions, and policies are co-constructed through interactions between various actors, including technologies, documents, and organizations. For example, actor network studies have been used to examine the role of voting machines, algorithms, and bureaucratic procedures in shaping democratic processes, highlighting how material and non-human actors influence political dynamics (Latour, 2005; Callon, 1984).

Actor network studies in political science have also provided a critical lens for examining the decentralization of power and the fluidity of agency within governance networks. Traditional political theories often focus on hierarchical structures and human-centered agency, but actor network studies shift the focus to the distributed nature of power, where agency emerges from interactions within networks (Law & Hassard, 1999; Barry, 2013).

The integration of actor network studies into election studies offers a different lens for understanding the complex interactions between human and non-human actors in shaping election processes and outcomes. Elections are not simply contests between political parties or candidates, but are also embedded within broader networks encompassing technology, regulatory frameworks, and institutional bodies such as the General Elections Commission (KPU). For example, the adoption of e-recapitulation systems and open proportional representation systems can be seen as non-human actors mediating power dynamics, influencing voter behavior, and shaping the legitimacy of election results. Exploring these networks reveals how elections are co-constructed through interactions between various actors, highlighting the relational and material dimensions of democratic practices. This perspective enriches the analysis of electoral reform, emphasizing how human agency and material infrastructure contribute to the evolving landscape of political participation and accountability in Indonesia.

Election administration, on the other hand, is inseparable from the system implemented. The open proportional representation system provides freedom for the public to determine legislative candidates. The proportional representation system, which has been implemented since the 2004 elections, is considered suitable for Indonesia's conditions, as a country with a pluralistic society, thus producing representative institutions that can represent the interests of voters more broadly. The proportional system translates how to obtain the greatest number of votes to become the winner in the election contest.

The intense competition in legislative elections with a proportional voting system requires and influences candidates in three ways: (1) they are forced to compete with rivals within their party for personal votes; (2) due to internal competition, they inevitably rely on personal networks rather than party structures; and (3) because this system requires the candidate with the most votes to win a seat, they only need to garner a small number of votes to defeat their internal rivals. Political strategy (election strategy) must be implemented in campaign strategies to gain support. This applies to candidates competing in legislative elections, whether at the DPR, DPD, Provincial DPRD, or Regency/City DPRD levels. Candidates will employ various methods to gain public sympathy and votes.

One key to success in general elections is utilizing networks. The implementation of the proportional voting system makes competition between candidates within a party increasingly intense. This encourages candidates to maximize party machinery or, if they do not have full party support, seek breakthroughs outside the party structure to secure and increase their vote share. For legislative candidates who gain access to party machinery, this does not necessarily guarantee victory. They still need to find other ways, for example, by building or utilizing networks outside the party. These networks are any social elements that can help guide voter choices, such as kinship, brotherhood, friendship, work colleagues, and other forms of social relations (Tawakkal, 2009).

Individual capabilities related to their ability to build and utilize extensive political networks are a key factor in a candidate's victory. Political networks function as social infrastructure that connects candidates with various strategic actors, such as political parties, communities, organizations, and constituent groups that have a significant influence on electability. Political networks as a collection of interconnected nodes within a larger social system. These nodes can be individuals, groups, organizations, or even material and digital resources that are valuable in a political context. The nodes

formed then play a role in driving candidates' political strategies, changing public perceptions, and facilitating collective action to increase electability in general elections.

Networks in the context of elections also function as mobilization mechanisms, enabling candidates to secure electoral support more effectively and at minimal cost. Candidates with strong ties to social organizations, interest groups, or religious and cultural communities tend to build public trust more easily. Akey (2015) emphasize that the existence of a solid political network allows candidates to optimize their social capital during political moments, such as legislative elections or regional head elections.

Political networks serve not only as mobilization tools but also as structures that enable the expansion of social movements and the formation of collective action. Candidates who are able to utilize these networks effectively can create broader political resonance, even beyond their traditional support base. One manifestation of this phenomenon is the presence of volunteer groups and non-party actors actively involved in political campaigns. Furthermore, a candidate's structural position within a political network also significantly determines their access to and control over the resources necessary to win an election. Candidates who have strategic positions in political networks tend to have greater access to financial resources, information, and institutional support than those in marginal positions.

## **Methods**

The research methodology is a crucial part of this study, systematically explaining the methods or procedures that will be applied in collecting and analyzing data to answer the research questions. The methodology includes an explanation of the approach, type of research, data collection techniques, and data analysis that will be used in the study. This study uses a qualitative approach, a procedure that focuses on collecting descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words and observable behavior. a fundamental characteristic of qualitative research is interpreting phenomena from the perspective of the research subjects. In line with this opinion, Levitt et al. (2021) emphasize that qualitative research prioritizes in-depth understanding, which is obtained through an interactive and iterative process of data collection and analysis. The researcher acts as the primary instrument (human instrument) directly involved in data collection, for example through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document review. This intense involvement allows the researcher to capture the meaning behind the symptoms that appear on the surface. In other words, the data criteria in qualitative research are not merely what is seen or spoken, but also include the hidden meaning behind those appearances. This means that researchers not only record what is seen or heard, but also attempt to interpret the meaning behind each informant's expression or action. This focus is crucial for uncovering the often latent political processes and voter dynamics, particularly in the context of actor networks operating simultaneously, both overtly and behind the scenes. Through this qualitative, case study-based approach, researchers can gain a holistic, detailed, and in-depth understanding of Yasir Machmud's election and its relevance to the development of local political practices in Indonesia. This research was conducted in South Sulawesi, specifically in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi Province. Determining the research subjects is crucial in determining the direction and quality of the research, particularly regarding the analysis of the complex network of political actors in the context of the South Sulawesi Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) legislative elections. The research subjects were selected based on the relevance of their respective roles and strategic positions within the socio-political network that contributed to Yasir Machmud's election. The purposeful selection of subjects was based on theoretical and empirical considerations to obtain representative and in-depth data. The following section describes the data sources in more detail, explaining the types of data and the collection methods used to support a comprehensive analysis.

## **Data Sources**

### **Primary Data**

The author's primary data sources were obtained directly from the informants who were the subjects of this research. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with these informants to obtain information relevant to the research. This method aimed to provide the researcher with a wealth of valid and accurate information to provide an in-depth description of the research results. Information was selected using purposive sampling, where the researcher selected informants based on the purpose of obtaining the information they desired to use as data for the research.

## **Secondary Data**

The researcher obtained data through several studies of literature related to the research object, including books, written documents, news reports, operational regulations, and other sources related to the research. This secondary data was also obtained from previous research, either online using existing facilities or in person.

## **Data Collection Techniques**

The data for this research are qualitative and consist of primary and secondary data. The majority of the primary data was collected through in-depth interviews. A small portion was collected through informal discussions with informants on various occasions. In all cases, Latour's motto is: "Follow the actants" (Latour, 1999). Therefore, ANT uses several methods to follow actors through interviews and observations. Although this research will be a descriptive narrative, the researcher strives to make the methodological process clear to justify the selection of data collection and informants for interview.

## **In-Depth Interviews**

The initial data collection process involved interviews. The data collection technique used in this study was in-depth interviews with organizers and participants. Interviews were conducted using a prepared interview guide. The interview guide was based on the research questions. Because the purpose of in-depth interviews was to gather information, depth and completeness were prioritized. The structure of the questions used was developed as an interview guide, but it was not rigid, allowing questions to develop as needed. The interviews were conducted flexibly and designed to allow informants to speak freely. Interviews were conducted using a recording device, transcribed, and edited as needed. After the transcripts were completed and edited, the original audio recordings were destroyed. During the sessions to gather information from the research informants, the researcher positioned herself as the interviewer. In this case, her identity as the researcher and the purpose of the interview were openly communicated to all informants. Almost all interview sessions were conducted in a planned manner and were adjusted to a schedule and location determined in advance by the informants.

## **Observation**

Observation techniques are useful for explaining and detailing the phenomena that occur and are intended to collect selective data according to the researcher's perspective. Furthermore, there is data that cannot be obtained from informants; some of it requires direct observation by the researcher. Some items that require observation include the socio-political situation, objects, equipment, and supplies, including their location and use, found at the research location; the actors, including their status, gender, age, and so on; the ongoing activities, actions, and the time of the events.

## **Data Documentation**

The data collection process was carried out by collecting scattered texts in both written and electronic data. Electronic data was collected manually, either from online news reports or social media. The collected data was selected based on its contribution to both general and specific questions. Primary data from in-depth interviews and secondary data from literature searches are equally important. Both types of data can be used to complement each other. Primary data can be used to confirm secondary data, or conversely, secondary data can be used to verify the validity of research sources' claims, specifically the actors involved and other informants knowledgeable about voter dynamics and Yasir Machmud's election as a member of the South Sulawesi Provincial DPRD. The data collection process was carried out by collecting scattered texts in written and electronic data. For electronic data, data collection was done manually, either from online news reports or social media.

## **Data Analysis**

Several data analysis techniques were employed in this research, including data reduction (data filtering/sorting), data display (data presentation), and data verification (data validity/correctness testing). Data reduction is the process of selecting, focusing on simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw or raw data by cutting (summarizing) the data so that only the essential elements are captured. Data display is the presentation of a collection of information that allows for drawing conclusions and taking action, viewing the overall picture or specific parts of the research results by creating matrices or tables. The verification stage involves identifying relationships and similarities in the data obtained before, during, and after data collection to reach conclusions.

## Results and Discussion

### Stages and Dynamics of Network Formation

#### **Issue Mobilization Stage**

The initial stage of establishing a network of actors began with the mobilization of previously established issues and relationships. The primary focus of this stage was to build resonance between community needs, Yasir Machmud's figure, and sensitive local issues such as agricultural inequality and limited access to fertilizer. Yasir Machmud leveraged his social capital as a fertilizer entrepreneur to directly address farmers' concerns, which then became a starting point for building electoral relationships. During this stage, Yasir Machmud actively conducted political outreach in villages, attended religious and traditional events, and reactivated long-established social networks through social activities such as fertilizer donations and YM Community Foundation programs. According to a member of the central campaign team,

*"This campaign team was formed because of a pre-existing emotional closeness, established friendships, and recommendations from family members loyal to Mr. Yasir."*

Issue mobilization was carried out through political outreach, attendance at traditional and religious events, and through the social networks he had cultivated prior to his candidacy. The campaign team targeted traditional leaders, community leaders, and close family members to serve as initial liaisons. a member of the city campaign team, explained,

*"Our campaign approach prioritizes pangadereng, a Bugis cultural value that honors social relationships and politeness. We start with friendship, not with political promises."*

Furthermore, Yasir Machmud reactivated the social assistance network through the YM Community foundation, which had been active since before his candidacy. This assistance was not transactional, but framed within a narrative of service. The sub-district coordinator for Tanete Riattang Barat, said,

*"Mr. Yasir is known for his consistent assistance to farmers even before he was a candidate. so when we went out into the field to establish a network, the community already had trust."*

This trust-based approach strengthened the campaign's reach from the outset. During this stage, social mapping of potential voter base areas and influential figures was also conducted. an influencer, added that the mapping also identified hotspots prone to hoaxes and disinformation, particularly related to fertilizer distribution.

*"We anticipated negative attacks with a fact-based counter-narrative, as Mr. Yasir has been known to be active in the field, and we documented this on social media."*

Thus, the issue mobilization stage is not just about forming a team, but also about creating resonance between the leader and the people, which is reinforced through social and symbolic interactions in public and digital spaces. This laid the initial foundation for the formation of Yasir Machmud's electoral network, which was then developed more systematically in subsequent stages.

#### **Formation of Structure and Distribution of Roles**

Following the initial issue mobilization and social network mapping phase, Yasir Machmud's campaign team entered the internal institutional strengthening phase by establishing a systematic and tiered campaign structure. This strategy was based on the principle of operational decentralization, where each team layer has autonomy in technical implementation, yet remains vertically consolidated under a single central coordination. This structure comprised the central team, city/district teams, sub-district teams, and village/sub-district coordinators and polling station (TPS) coordinators.

a member of the Tanete Riattang Barat sub-district campaign team, explained in depth how this structure was structured and functioned:

*"When the campaign team was first formed, I was summoned by the district coordinator (Mawardi) and recruited. We established a structure based on specific work areas. The most important role was the TPS coordinator or the lowest-level network, as they were the ones who had direct contact with the community. They were the ones who conducted door-to-door campaigns, reaching out to voters one by one, and ensuring accurate voter registration."*

The formation of the structure went beyond appointing individuals based on personal connections, but also on their social track record and operational capacity.

*"We can't just recruit anyone. For example, a polling station coordinator must be domiciled at the polling station in question. We never recruit people from outside the area, as they lack strong social connections. This approach is important because it facilitates communication with residents they already know. So, when there's a program from the central government, it's distributed more quickly and received more strongly because it's delivered by someone they know and trust."*

Yasir Machmud's campaign structure isn't rigid, but rather adapts to local dynamics. For example, in areas with dispersed voters and difficult geographic access, the number of team members is increased. In practice, the formation has been changed from one coordinator per sub-district to two or three to expedite data distribution and collection. The usual five-member polling station has been expanded to ten to maximize regional penetration and communication reach.

the city team coordinator, added:

*"Before forming the team, I developed a strategic plan based on the winning proposal. It included a clear mapping of the team structure and division of roles. We had an IT team, a data team, a media team, and a network team. Each team had a job description and measurable targets. The network team, which worked at the grassroots level, had primary responsibility for engaging voters. They managed the dynamics at the grassroots level, while the IT team only provided technical support."*

Internal communication between these structures was maintained through a daily reporting system and regular coordination meetings. When dynamics emerged in the field, the team from higher levels immediately intervened. from the central campaign team, explained:

*"We from the central team often went down to the sub-districts and even villages, especially if there were dynamics or obstacles. For example, if there were complaints about logistics distribution or unfair competition from other teams, we immediately coordinated with local community leaders and resolved them on the ground. Our structure was flexible but controlled."*

The distribution of information and strategic instructions was two-way. In addition to the central team providing direction, the field team also supplied real-time data and situational reports. This allowed the central team to adjust its strategy, including modifying its campaign message based on voter aspirations. Communication is done through WhatsApp groups, Google Drive-based spreadsheets, and a structured reporting system.

From this description, it is clear that the formation of a structure is not merely a campaign strategy, but rather a complex socio-political mechanism, where the values of trust, communication efficiency, and relational flexibility are key to building and managing a network of electoral actors effectively. Integration of Social Media and Technology

As an innovation in the campaign, Yasir Machmud established a professional media team to manage digital content. According to a member of the media team,

*"We present daily content that embodies simplicity, addresses the lower classes, and presents concrete solutions. This content is distributed through Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, using a paid algorithm so that the audience can reach up to one million viewers."*

This strategy was complemented by the involvement of local influencers with strong social media followings. one of the influencers involved, stated:

*"We created short videos on TikTok and WhatsApp to target young people. Many ultimately felt connected to him and were drawn to vote for Mr. Yasir because his content was touching and relatable."*

### **Integration of Social Media and Technology**

As an innovation in his campaign, Yasir Machmud built a professional media team consisting of content creators, videographers, scriptwriters, and a content distribution team to manage effective and targeted digital communications. a member of the media team, explained:

*"We present daily content that embodies simplicity, addresses the lower classes, and presents concrete solutions. The content is not stuffy, but full of empathy. We use Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube Shorts, all of which utilize paid algorithmic boosting. Our daily target is to reach one million views, especially in the final weeks leading up to the election."*

The content produced is categorized into three types: (1) personalized content showcasing the human side of Yasir Machmud in his daily life; (2) educational content offering solutions to local issues such as fertilizer, scholarships, or public health; and (3) responsive content addressing emerging issues such as political attacks or hoaxes. All content is designed to portray Yasir as relatable, solution-oriented, and representative.

This team works based on algorithmic data. They monitored optimal broadcast times, audience demographics, and the types of content that generated the most engagement. By utilizing Facebook Ads Manager and Instagram Insights, the team was able to identify which content to increase and which to reduce.

This strategy was complemented by the involvement of local influencers with strong social media followings. one of the digital influencers involved in the campaign, explained:

*"We created short videos on TikTok and WhatsApp to target young people. The themes were light but engaging, such as the importance of choosing a candidate who has helped their community. Many people felt connected and were drawn to Mr. Yasir because the content was touching and relatable. It wasn't a stiff campaign, but felt like a casual conversation."*

Content was also customized based on audience segments. For farmers, video content was presented in Bugis and featured Yasir Machmud working directly in the rice fields and distributing fertilizer. For women, interactive discussion content was created about MSMEs and access to capital. Meanwhile, for young people, challenge and storytime content styles were used. Furthermore, the media team synchronized online activities with offline ones. Whenever Yasir Machmud attends a social event, documentation volunteers immediately upload the content within two hours of the event, ensuring it remains relevant and fresh. This creates the illusion of constant presence in people's digital lives.

*"We're not only active on official accounts, but also share content through neighborhood association (RT) WhatsApp groups, farmer communities, alumni communities, and women's religious study groups. All with personal narratives. So this digital content isn't just a self-expression, but part of people's daily conversations."*

This approach reflects what Licoppe (2004) calls managed interactivity, where digital communication is used not only to convey messages but to create a sense of engagement and closeness. In the context of Yasir Machmud's campaign, social media is not simply a tool but an actor in the electoral network, symbolically and emotionally mediating the relationship between candidate and voters.

Thus, the integration of social media and technology in Yasir Machmud's campaign is a strategic element that expands reach, deepens closeness, and strengthens the differentiation of political identities amidst intense competition. This strategy also demonstrates how non-human actors, from an ANT perspective, are not merely intermediaries but have agency in influencing political outcomes.

### **Coordination, Adaptation, and Conflict Resolution**

Yasir Machmud's network coordination was carried out systematically with a layered and rhythmic communication pattern. Each team, from the central office down to the polling station coordinators, held daily meetings, provided progress evaluations, and updated strategies based on field feedback. This mechanism enabled tactical adaptation to changing political situations and emerging issues in the community.

a member of the media team who also oversaw field coordination, explained:

*"Mr. Yasir was incredibly present. Throughout the campaign, he only missed two village visits due to party meetings in Jakarta. The rest of the time, he went around almost every night, not just handing out stickers but also sitting with residents, asking about their needs, and taking immediate action. This built team spirit and made residents feel cared for."*

Yasir Machmud's direct participation strengthened the effectiveness of coordination. With his symbolic and tangible presence among the community, Yasir not only monitored the team's performance but also served as a direct link between political strategy and social reality. His participation in informal forums such as religious study groups, night markets, and traditional gatherings provided a down-to-earth and transformative form of political communication.

In addition to in-person meetings, coordination is also conducted digitally. Each sub-district coordinator has a dedicated WhatsApp group with the central team. Communication occurs almost hourly, especially leading up to election day. the city team coordinator, explained:

*"We formed different coordination groups: for logistics distribution, campaign documentation, and voter turnout evaluation. We update our reports at least once every night. Even minor incidents, such as torn billboards or hoaxes, are immediately addressed with clarification and the involvement of local community leaders."*

Mawardi explained in situations of internal conflict, the approach used is more affective and participatory. Rather than directly reprimanding or replacing team members, dialogue and reconciliation are prioritized. This aligns with local values such as sipakatau (humanizing each other) and resopa temmangingi (hard work with honor).

*"Conflicts are inevitable. With so many people, there are bound to be differing views. But the solution is communication. We assure you that much of the information from outside is provocative and must be filtered. Usually, when tensions arise, we gather in the evening at the command post, drink tea, chat casually, and find a compromise. Because we all work on the basis of trust and emotional connections, not just political matters."*

One example of a conflict that was successfully resolved occurred when there were differences in strategy between the media team and the field network team regarding digital content distribution. The field team felt the content was too formal and didn't address local issues. The solution was for the media team to invite network representatives to participate in drafting content based on community narratives.

According to a member of the Social Media team:

*"Initially, our content was a bit stiff, with lots of infographics and party jargon. But the field team gave us feedback. They said residents preferred short videos, real-life stories, and Bugis language. Since then, we completely revised the content concept. As a result, engagement increased, and the public response was extraordinary. This proves that coordination must be two-way and based on mutual trust."*

In many ways, this flexible, adaptive, and participatory coordination served as the foundation for the stability of the actor network within Yasir Machmud's campaign. This strategy treated every conflict not as an obstacle, but as an opportunity to strengthen team cohesion and deepen the socio-political roots of the winning network.

### **Consolidation and Expansion**

As election day approaches, Yasir Machmud's campaign strategy has entered a consolidation and expansion phase. This phase involves intensifying the network work that had been previously established, while simultaneously expanding reach and strengthening operational stability. Three main aspects are emphasized in this phase: increasing field personnel, extensive use of information technology, and sharpening political content.

The addition of volunteers is carried out in a structured manner based on polling station mapping data and voter turnout. coordinator of West Tanete Riattang, explained:

*"We are increasing the number of volunteers at polling stations deemed crucial or less stable. For example, if a polling station usually requires five people, we are increasing it to seven or eight, depending on the number of voters. We are also recruiting new volunteers based on their ID cards. Simply enter the data into our application, and information about the polling station location, domicile, and potential network in the village will immediately appear. This way, recruitment is efficient and targeted."*

In addition to the technological aspects, the campaign intensified by sharpening political messaging. The media team and influencer network were directed to produce content with a narrative that more explicitly supported Yasir Machmud. This content was created based on an evaluation of public response in the previous weeks.

a local social media influencer, said:

*"In the last week, we've been posting more video testimonials from community leaders, mothers, and even young people. They directly shared the benefits they've experienced from Mr. Yasir. This*



*content is powerful because residents trust the voices of fellow citizens more than the promises of candidates."*

Digital barcodes were also distributed for direct access to campaign materials. Volunteers distributed these barcodes to residents so they could access Yasir's work programs, campaign videos, and even the location of the nearest post. The use of these digital tools was a response to the limited physical distribution of flyers in rural areas.

Political literature refers to this strategy as a form of "electoral micromobilization" where campaigns target voter segments with a highly focused, data-driven approach. In the context of ANT (Latour, 2005), all of these tools apps, barcodes, and testimonial content are not simply tools, but non-human actors that actively strengthen network connectivity and influence.

Consolidation also involved intensive evaluation of network loyalty and performance, explained:

*"In the final week, we opened reports from all sub-districts. We checked who had achieved their targets, who was weak, and who needed assistance. We sent flying teams to back up unstable areas. Everything was done quickly and based on factual reports."*

Flexibility and the ability to respond quickly to field dynamics were key to success in this stage. Yasir Machmud also remained active in the field, attending community thanksgiving events, sympathizing campaigns, and congregational prayers at village mosques. This personal presence created a sense of authentic closeness and strengthened the perception that Yasir was not just a candidate, but part of the community.

Thus, the consolidation and expansion phase demonstrated how a previously static network became more dynamic, responsive, and inclusive. Digital technology not only expanded reach but also enabled the simultaneous circulation of information and authority. Meanwhile, social relations and local values remained an irreplaceable foundation of legitimacy.

Yasir Machmud's campaign during this phase reflected the characteristics of a modern electoral campaign based on hybrid mobilization a combination of traditional, digital, and structural approaches. The results of this consolidation were evident in the high vote share and equitable distribution of support. Victory was not simply the result of individual strength, but the effect of a network of actors who mutually supported, mediated, and reinforced one another.

The process of forming a network of actors in Yasir Machmud's campaign is a concrete example of the systemic interaction between people, technology, and local values. From the initial mobilization stage to the final consolidation, this network was not only structural but also affective and symbolic. The integration of traditional social relations and digital campaign technology made Yasir Machmud's winning strategy relevant in the complex local political context of Bone. Using the ANT approach, we understand that victory is not the result of a single dominant actor, but rather the collective work of an interconnected and reinforcing network.

The above description demonstrates how the strength of Yasir Machmud's campaign network is inseparable from the strategic use of technology and social media. Interview findings from Akang Syarip and Erwin show that touching narratives presented in simple language successfully build emotional connection between candidates and voters. This aligns with the concept of managed interactivity proposed by Howard (2006), which states that political communication strategies in the digital era must be able to create managed interactions that feel personal to the audience.

Other literature, such as Jost et al. (2018), also supports this finding, stating that social media in politics is not merely a distribution tool but also part of the configuration of power due to its ability to mediate symbolic relationships and shape political perceptions. In the context of Yasir Machmud, this approach was realized by combining the symbolic power of local identity (such as Bugis-language content and village community visuals) with digital technology (such as social media algorithms and campaign barcodes).

From the perspective of Actor-Network Theory (Latour, 2005), we see that Yasir Machmud's success was not solely due to his personal capabilities or party support, but rather to his ability to build a network that integrated human and non-human actors. Applications, content, visual tools, and even a network of volunteers all functioned as nodes in a mutually reinforcing campaign network. In conclusion, Yasir Machmud's campaign is a model of political success based on the hybridity of technology, social relations, and collaborative communication management.

The process of forming actor networks in Yasir Machmud's campaign is a concrete example of the systemic interaction between humans, technology, and local values. From the initial mobilization stage to the final consolidation, these networks were not only structural but also affective and symbolic. The integration of traditional social relations and digital campaign technology makes Yasir Machmud's winning strategy relevant in the complex local political context of Bone. Using the ANT approach, we understand that victory is not the result of a single dominant actor, but rather the collective work of an interconnected and reinforcing network.

## Conclusion

The conclusion of this study shows that the success of Yasir Machmud's campaign cannot be understood as the result of individual work alone, but rather as the product of the formation and management of a complex, adaptive, and mutually reinforcing network of actors. From the issue mobilization stage to the final consolidation, the campaign was built through resonance between the candidate figure, community needs, local values, and the use of digital technology, by integrating human actors (candidates, campaign teams, community leaders, volunteers) and non-human actors (social media, algorithms, applications, digital content). A trust-based approach, long-established social relationships, a flexible organizational structure, and two-way coordination enabled this network to adapt constructively to field dynamics and internal conflicts. From the perspective of Actor-Network Theory, Yasir Machmud's victory reflects the collective work of a structural, affective, and symbolic network, where technology and local values play an active role in strengthening political legitimacy, expanding reach, and building emotional closeness with voters in the local political context of Bone.

## References

- [1] Akey, P. (2015). Valuing changes in political networks: Evidence from campaign contributions to close congressional elections. *The Review of Financial Studies*, 28(11), 3188-3223. <https://doi.org/10.1093/rfs/hhv035>
- [2] Amsterdamska, O. (1990). Book Review: Surely You Are Joking, Monsieur Latour! Science in Action, by Bruno Latour. Milton Keynes: Open University Press: 1987, 274 pp. 25.00. Also available in paper from Harvard University Press, 12.95. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 15(4), 495-504. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016224399001500407>
- [3] Barry, A. (2013). *Material politics: Disputes along the pipeline*. John Wiley & Sons.
- [4] Callon, M. (1984). Some elements of a sociology of translation: domestication of the scallops and the fishermen of St Brieuc Bay. *The sociological review*, 32(1\_suppl), 196-233. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.1984.tb00113.x>
- [5] Haraway, D. (2013). *Simians, cyborgs, and women: The reinvention of nature*. New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203873106>
- [6] Jost, J. T., Barberá, P., Bonneau, R., Langer, M., Metzger, M., Nagler, J., ... & Tucker, J. A. (2018). How social media facilitates political protest: Information, motivation, and social networks. *Political psychology*, 39, 85-118. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12478>
- [7] Justesen, L. (2020). Actor-network theory as analytical approach. *Qualitative analysis: Eight approaches for the social sciences*, 327, 329-343.
- [8] Latour, B. (1999). *Pandora's hope: Essays on the reality of science studies*. London: Harvard University Press.
- [9] Latour, B. (2005). *Reassembling the social: An introduction to actor-network theory*. Oxford University Press.
- [10] Law, J., & Hassard, J. (1999). *Actor network theory and after*.
- [11] Levitt, H. M., Morrill, Z., Collins, K. M., & Rizo, J. L. (2021). The methodological integrity of critical qualitative research: Principles to support design and research review. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 68(3), 357. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/cou0000523>
- [12] Licoppe, C. (2004). 'Connected' presence: The emergence of a new repertoire for managing social relationships in a changing communication technoscape. *Environment and planning D: Society and space*, 22(1), 135-156. <https://doi.org/10.1068/d323t>
- [13] Mujiburrahman, B., & Kambo, G. A. (2025). Actor Network (Study on the Network Basis of Yasir Mahmud's Electability as a Member of the South Sulawesi Provincial DPRD for the 2024-2029 Period). *KnE Social Sciences*, 10(18), 1563-1582. <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v10i18.19584>
- [14] Mützel, S. (2009). Networks as culturally constituted processes: a comparison of relational sociology and actor-network theory. *Current sociology*, 57(6), 871-887. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392109342223>
- [15] Star, S. (1991). L. (1991) Power, Technology, and the Phenomenology of Conventions: On Being Allergic to Onions. *A Sociology of Monsters: Essays on Power, Technology and Domination*, 26-55.
- [16] Tawakkal, G. T. I. (2009). *Peran Partai Politik Dalam Mobilisasi Pemilih Studi Kegagalan Parpol Pada Pemilu Legislatif di Kabupaten Demak 2009* (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Diponegoro).

