

Social Practices of Regent Lilis' Victory in the 2024 Kebumen Regency Election: Case Study of Victory

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Abstract

This study examines the phenomenon of Regent Lilis' victory in the 2024 Kebumen Regency election, which brought with it a number of challenges that could have hindered her victory. These challenges included her husband's negative background, who had been involved in a bribery case, issues of political dynasties, and stereotypes against women. The researchers used Pierre Bourdieu's Social Practice Theory and Knowledge-Power-Discourse Theory to analyze how social practices contributed to Lilis' victory in the 2024 regional election in Gombong District. The research method used in this study was qualitative with a case study approach. The results of this study show that the social practices used by Regent Lilis to win in Gombong Subdistrict were not much different from previous social practices used to win. The resources and capital owned by her husband, former Regent Yahya Fuad, continued to be maintained and strengthened by Regent Lilis. So, even though the domain was different, Regent Lilis was still able to win votes in Gombong Subdistrict just like her husband. In addition, the narrative "Biyunge Wong Kebumen" succeeded in creating a regime of truth based on domestic morality. This strategy succeeded in eliminating negative issues through an undeniable narrative of love.

Keywords: *Gombong District, Negative Challenges, Social Practices, Power Relations*

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INTRODUCTION

Regional head elections at the regency level have become an arena for power contests in Indonesia's dynamic and systematic political system (Firmansyah & Ahmad, 2025). As a local political stage, regent elections are not only a mechanism for electing leaders but also an arena for various interests, influences, and capital struggles. In practice, local politics often displays unique complexities (Cahyani, 2025). Personal backgrounds, kinship relations, and gender identities become dominant determining factors compared to pragmatic visions and missions. An interesting phenomenon occurred in the 2024 Kebumen Regency elections, where Lilis Nuryani emerged as the winner.

Hj. Lilis Nuryani was elected Regent in the 2024 Kebumen Regency election, along with her running mate, H. Zaeni Miftah. In the 2024 Kebumen Regency election, there were two candidates, namely candidate pair number one, Hj. Lilis Zaeni and H. Zaeni Miftah, and candidate pair number two, H. Arif Sugiyanto, S.H., M.H. and Hj. Ristawati Purwaningsih, S.ST., M.M. Based on data from the Kebumen Regency KPU, Lilis-Zaeni received 411,117 votes, or 56% of the total votes. Meanwhile, their opponents, Arif-Rista, received 328,958 votes, or 44% of the total votes.

Regent Lilis not only won votes in Kebumen Regency but also won the votes of the people of Gombong District, which is the domicile of Regent Lilis. Gombong District became the first district in Kebumen Regency to win votes for Regent Lilis. Based on data from the Kebumen Regency KPU in 2024, the number one candidate pair, Lilis-Zaeni, received 18,169 votes or 66% of the votes in Gombong Subdistrict. Meanwhile, the number two candidate pair, Arif-Rista, received 8,469 votes or 31% of the votes in Gombong Subdistrict.

Regent Lilis' victory in this election signifies that she has succeeded in gaining public sympathy and securing a significant number of votes amid fierce competition. However, Regent Lilis' victory cannot be viewed as a mere electoral achievement, considering the challenges she faces, which are considered a political burden. Regent Lilis' journey to victory in the 2024 Kebumen Regency election faced three structural obstacles. These three structural obstacles were her husband's negative background, the issue of political dynasties, and stereotypes about women.

The first challenge for Regent Lilis was her husband's negative track record. Mohammad Yahya Fuad, the 31st former Regent of Kebumen, was unable to complete his term in Kebumen. Yahya Fuad served from February 18, 2016, to February 17, 2021. On January 23, 2018, Regent

Fuad was named a suspect by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) on charges of bribery, namely gratification in the procurement of goods and services in the Kebumen Regency government in 2016. Regent Fuad was found guilty by the KPK and sentenced to 4 years in prison on February 19, 2018. The practice of bribery itself can reduce the level of public trust in the government (Situmorang & Yusuf, 2025). Therefore, the fact that Lilis Nuryani's husband was involved in a bribery case certainly had a significant impact on Lilis Nuryani when she ran for regent of Kebumen Regency. According to Hakim & Saputra (2025), this impact includes the image presented in public with a less than positive background. This could reduce the level of public trust in giving Lilis Nuryani their vote when she ran for regent.

The second challenge for Regent Lilis is the issue of political dynasties. Regent Lilis has a political dynasty background, given her husband's background as a former regent. Yahya Fuad was once a regent, although he did not complete his term. According to Muhtadi (2021), political dynasties have the potential to influence the election process through strong support networks, but they can also cause skepticism among voters who support change. With Lilis Nuryani's candidacy as regent, this will certainly give rise to various perceptions among the public. Her rise to the position of candidate can be interpreted as a form of support from insiders, not solely based on her own abilities. In this context, Lilis Nuryani's candidacy can be seen as an attempt to continue her husband's power. To address this situation, Lilis Nuryani needs to emphasize that she is not merely her husband's successor, but has clear goals and plans for developing Kebumen Regency.

The third challenge for Regent Lilis is the stereotype of women in politics. Lilis Nuryani's candidacy for regent in the 2024 Kebumen Regency elections faces several structural obstacles, including strong stigma in society. The presence of women in politics is often confronted with various stereotypes and gender biases that can significantly influence voter support (Siregar, 2022). According to Safitri (2024), these stereotypes include the view that women are considered less competent or less capable of leading than men. This is also often rooted in long-standing social and cultural norms. In addition, this gender bias can manifest in the form of questions that doubt women's ability to carry out leadership tasks, as well as disproportionate expectations regarding their behavior and appearance in public spaces (Baiduri et al., 2021). Therefore, women involved in politics must fight harder to prove their credibility and capabilities.

Regent Lilis is not the first female regent in Kebumen, but she still brings hope for increased representation of women in politics. In this case, Regent Lilis is expected to be a source

of inspiration for other women to be active in leadership and decision-making that has a positive impact on their surrounding environment. Lilis Nuryani's leadership is expected to encourage more women to participate in politics. When women are involved in decision-making, they tend to fight for issues related to family welfare and education, which are important aspects of regional development (Baiduri et al., 2021). Through various programs that support women's empowerment and proactive policies, Regent Lilis has the potential to change public perceptions about the role of women in politics. This is in line with findings that show that an increase in the number of women in leadership positions can reduce gender stereotypes and promote equality in various sectors (Karam & Jamali, 2019).

Despite facing three structural obstacles, such as her husband's negative background, political dynasty issues, and stereotypes about women, Regent Lilis was able to outperform her opponents. The reality of this victory raises the question of why obstacles that should have reduced voters' motivation to exercise their right to vote did not prevent Regent Lilis from winning. This indicates that there is a strategy to win the public's votes. This includes gathering support and managing resources effectively so that structural obstacles can be turned into political strength. Based on the phenomenon of Regent Lilis' victory, the author wants to see how the social practice of " (the people's choice) is produced from the social capital possessed in the 2024 Kebumen regency elections.

METHODS

Based on the research topic, the researcher uses a qualitative research method with Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical perspective. Simply put, this theory seeks to understand that social reality is a dialectical relationship between individuals (agents, subjective structures, and objective structures). Bourdieu considers social life to be a social practice. He also considers that a person's actions are always connected to social structures (Ritzer, 2012). In this case, his structurally constructive theory is often referred to as social practice theory. The main concepts in this theory are habitus, field, and capital. Thus, Bourdieu created the generative formula of Social Practice, which means $\text{Practice} = (\text{Habitus} \times \text{Capital}) + \text{Field}$ (Harker et al., 2009). In addition, this study also uses Michael Foucault's theoretical framework of Knowledge – Power and Discourse. Knowledge and power have a strong relationship, which is then divided into two concepts, namely Genealogy of Power and Archaeology of Knowledge. Genealogy of Power is described as an efficient disciplinary technique because power can be obtained by someone if they spread the correct discourse in accordance with the claim of knowledge (Suharto et al., 2020). Meanwhile, the Archaeology of Power describes how the history of knowledge is formed into a system of truth

(Suharto et al., 2020). The research subjects were selected using purposive sampling techniques with various considerations to facilitate data collection. The research subjects were divided into three categories, namely Lilis Nuryani's campaign team, community leaders in Gombong Subdistrict, and the people of Gombong Subdistrict.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are two pairs of candidates in the 2024 regional head elections, with the first pair being Hj. Lilis Nuryani and H. Zaeni Miftah. Before entering politics, Lilis Nuryani was a successful entrepreneur in Kebumen Regency. She had served as the main commissioner in several large companies, such as PT Putra Sahari Ramadhan, PT Giarto Mas Sejahtera, and PT Surya Wisata. In addition, she has served as chairperson of the Al Kamal Islamic Boarding School, the Trada Foundation Advisory Board, and treasurer of the Gombong PAC. With this entrepreneurial background, Lilis Nuryani became the richest regent in Central Java in the 2024 regional elections. Meanwhile, H. Zaeni Miftah is a politician who serves as chairman of the Kebumen Regency PKB DPC. He has a background as a santri and is also active in organizations, having served as chairman of the DKC Garda Bangsa (PKB wing organization) for the 1999-2004 period and deputy chairman of the Kebumen Regency PKB DPC for the 2009 – 2014, a member of the Kebumen Regency DPRD for the period 2014 – 2019, and as chairman of the Kebumen Regency PKB DPC for the period 2015 – present.

Then the candidate pair number two is H. Arif Sugiyanto, S.H., M.H., and Hj Ristawati Purwaningsih, S.ST., M.M. This candidate pair number two is the incumbent candidate pair who served as Regent and Deputy Regent for the period 2021-2025. Arif Sugiyanto, S.H., M.H. is a former member of the Indonesian National Police who served for 20 years from 1997 to 2017. In addition, he served as commissioner of PT Bumi Indonesia Properties for the 2017-2018 period, as well as deputy regent for the 2019-2021 period to fill the vacancy of deputy regent. Meanwhile, Hj Ristawati Purwaningsih, S.ST., M.M. is a midwife who became a civil servant at the Kebumen District Health Office. In addition, she is active in the Indonesian Midwives Association (IBI) and the Indonesian Women Entrepreneurs Association (Iwapi), and when she left the civil service, she was appointed as deputy chair of the Kebumen PDI-P DPC (2019).

The composition of candidates in the 2024 regency head election is related to the 2015 and 2020 regency head elections. In the 2015 regional election, the husband of Regent Lilis won the election, while in the 2020 regional election, Regent Lilis's opponent won the election. This

connection also occurred in Gombong District, which also showed rejection of Regent Arif. The following are the winning percentages in Gombong District in the 2015, 2020, and 2024 regional elections:

Table 1: Consistency of victory in Gombong District

	Winner	Percentage
2015 Regent Election	Yahya Fuad – Yazid Mahfudz	69 %
2020 Regional Head Election	Blank Box	55%
2024 Regional Head Election	Lilis – Zaeni	68%

Source: Kebumen KPU

The habitus in Lilis's campaign to win the regency election is similar to her husband's habitus when he ran in the 2015 regency election. One of the similarities in habitus is reflected in the campaign strategy. In her candidacy, Regent Lilis again used Yahya Fuad's tagline, "Kebumen (Return) to Faith." In this case, Regent Lilis ran in the 2024 Regent Election to continue her husband's leadership. Her husband was elected Regent but was unable to complete his term. The tagline used during Yahya Fuad's term was continued by his deputy (Yazid Mahfudz), but "Kebumen Beriman" ended when Arif Sugianto was elected as regent and changed the tagline from "Kebumen Beriman" to "Kebumen Semarak". Not only in terms of the tagline, but also in the deputy regent election, Yahya Fuad partnered with a candidate from the PKB party, just as Lilis Nuryani also partnered with a candidate from the PKB party. Since Yahya Fuad and Lilis Nuryani are both members of Muhammadiyah, by partnering with deputy regents from the PKB party, which is based on NU, they will complete their representation to obtain votes from the NU and Muhammadiyah communities.

Lilis' campaign team was formed from the campaign team that had previously supported Yahya Fuad. Most of the community and the (local) campaign team are more familiar with Yahya Fuad than Lilis Nuryani. However, with Regent Lilis's candidacy in the Kebumen Regency election, the (local) campaign team in Gombong Subdistrict is reminded of the time when former Regent Fuad was running for office. Even though they are not very familiar with Lilis Nuryani,

they still support her because they are basically supporters of former Regent Fuad. The similarity of these campaign teams will certainly form a similar pattern when they return to work to win the candidate. One of the similar strategies is door-to-door socialization carried out by the campaign team, especially at the local (village) level. This socialization method has been implemented by the campaign team of former Regent Fuad. Because the campaign team of Regent Lilis and her husband has not changed, the door-to-door strategy carried out in the campaign of former Regent Fuad is also carried out by the campaign team of Regent Lilis.

Based on Bourdieu's theoretical framework, producing a social practice also requires the use of capital. This capital can be social capital, economic capital, cultural capital, and symbolic capital. In this study, the author identifies the capital possessed by Regent Lilis and her campaign team. The identified capital is social capital, cultural capital, and economic capital. The following is an explanation of the capital possessed by Regent Lilis:

Social Capital

Social capital refers to resources obtained through networks, relationships, trust, and reciprocal relationships in society (Mutamir, 2023). In the case of Gombong Subdistrict, there are two types of capital that are closely held by Regent Lilis's campaign team, namely trust and kinship. This trust and kinship are used to form a strong social network or winning network in Gombong Subdistrict. This makes it easy for the campaign team to carry out campaign activities to win votes for Regent Lilis in Gombong Subdistrict. This was also conveyed by the head of the campaign team for Regent Lilis in Gombong Subdistrict:

“We are supporting a candidate who already has strong social capital, making it easier for us to win the regent election, especially in Gombong Subdistrict.” Said the chairman of the Kebumen Regency Democratic Party.

The successful team of Regent Lilis in Gombong Subdistrict already has strong social capital with the community. This was formed because communication between the successful team and the community has been well established. This well-established communication will form emotional bonds or a sense of kinship among the community in Gombong Subdistrict. This sense of kinship is the principle used by Regent Lilis' campaign team in Gombong Subdistrict to win the community's votes. This makes it easy for the subdistrict-level campaign team to form a network of volunteers to secure victory for Regent Lilis.

This emotional bond is not only formed between the campaign team and the community, but also between Regent Lilis and the community. Regent Lilis is a resident of Gombong Subdistrict who undeniably has a strong emotional bond with the people of Gombong. One example of the emotional closeness between Regent Lilis and the community is her request for blessings from the people of Panjangsari Village. Regent Lilis attended a Muslim women's event during Muharom in Panjangsari Village, where she asked for blessings from the people of Panjangsari. This emotional closeness also influences voters to choose a candidate for leader (Nurhidayati et al., 2025). According to Andrianto et al. (2022), the community will tend to choose candidates who are "local sons" in addition to considering their track record, vision and mission, and work programs. This statement is in line with the case of Gombong District, where the people tend to prefer candidates who are from their own region rather than candidates from outside their region.

The tendency of the people of Gombong Subdistrict to elect leaders who come from their own region is also encouraged by community leaders. Community leaders also provide insight to the community to give their votes to candidates who are still considered family (Saputra, 2021). One of the village heads in Gombong Subdistrict said that in his responsibility as a leader, he directed the community's social capital () to vote for candidates who were close to the community. This was so that his village and other villages in Gombong Subdistrict would receive more attention from the regent.

Trust is also part of the social capital that contributed to Lilis' victory in Gombong Subdistrict. Building trust among the community begins with building trust among the members of the campaign team. This means that trust is built from the micro to the macro level (Gustrinanda, 2023). Trust is very important because if there is no trust between the candidates, the campaign team, and the community, it will have negative consequences. For example, when the campaign team presents work programs (promises) to the community that do not match their implementation. If there is no realization of the work program or only false promises, the community will feel that they are being taken advantage of. Therefore, when making promises after winning, it is necessary to convey relevant matters, because if the promises are not kept or are not realized, the community will no longer trust them (Ni'am, 2021).

The campaign team utilized this capital of kinship and trust to form a network of volunteers for Lilis's campaign. The campaign team mobilized volunteers to help make the campaign more effective in reaching the community. This network of volunteers was formed by establishing campaign teams in each hamlet. The division by hamlet was intended to make door-to-door

campaigning easier and more effective. The formation of this volunteer network also included community leaders, religious leaders, women leaders, and youth leaders. The majority of influential figures in the Gombong sub-district network came from members who joined major political parties in the Gombong sub-district. For example, the network of figures in Panjangsari Village was not only affiliated with major parties such as PDI-P and Gerindra but also affiliated with Islamic organizations in the Gombong sub-district.

The volunteer network of influential figures in each village is very important as facilitators and sources of information for the campaign team (Triyadiansyah, 2023). The use of networks of figures as facilitators and sources of information refers to intermediaries or liaisons between the campaign team and the community. For example, Kemukus Village and Panjangsari Village prioritize engaging influential religious figures in accordance with the culture of the community. The culture of the communities in Kemukus Village and Panjangsari Village tends to be religious, so the campaign team needs to engage religious leaders to facilitate the campaign. These influential figures are also important as sources of information for the campaign team to understand the needs of the community. For example, the majority of the population in Kemukus Village and Panjangsari Village are farmers. Therefore, the campaign team will approach community leaders to obtain information related to agricultural needs.

The utilization of this network of figures is even stronger due to the strong patriarchal culture in Gomong Subdistrict. Villages such as Kemukus and Panjangsari prioritize collaborating with influential religious figures in the village. According to one of the religious figures in Kemukus Village, the community is still very patriarchal. Patriarchal culture means that anyone who has a central role will become a reference point for the community. When these figures give direction, the community will follow. Seeing this strong culture, the campaign team must collaborate with important figures in the community. This will ensure that the process of winning the regency election for Lilis in Gombong Subdistrict can run effectively and successfully.

Cultural Capital

In the process of winning the election for Regent Lilis in Gombong District, cultural capital is also an important asset. Cultural capital is usually formed unconsciously from childhood, either through family or the surrounding environment (Sandriani, 2025). In this case, even though Regent Lilis did not grow up in Gombong Subdistrict, she was raised in the environment of her husband, who grew up in Gombong Subdistrict. Therefore, Regent Lilis' cultural capital was

formed from her living environment. Regent Lilis' cultural capital in Gombong Subdistrict includes religious activities, paternal culture, and food distribution activities.

The people of Gombong Subdistrict have a culture that tends to be religious. The culture of a community that enjoys religious events certainly provides an opportunity to approach the community. Considering the background of Regent Lilis and Deputy Regent Zaeni, who are familiar with religious matters. One example of such an approach is attending religious lectures held by the Muhammadiyah Branch Leadership (PRM) and Aisyiyah Branch Leadership (PRA) of Gombong II and attending lectures at the Assyifa Mosque of the PKU Muhammadiyah Hospital in Gombong. Indirectly, through these religious activities, Regent Lilis and Deputy Regent Zaeni strengthened their emotional bond with the community, especially in Gombong District.

Regent Lilis' cultural capital in the religious field is important in forming a network of figures in Gombong District, especially influential religious figures. This is related to the culture that is still strong in Gombong District, namely the culture of fatherhood. The culture of fatherhood refers to anyone who has a central role becoming a reference for the community. Leaders who are role models when giving directions will be followed by the community who consider them as role models. An example is the kyai, who is a religious leader considered a reference for the Islamic community that follows him. When the people of Gombong District have a culture in the religious field or enjoy recitation events, the strategy carried out by the success team is to collaborate with religious leaders.

In addition to religious capital and paternal culture, there is a culture that continues to be practiced by Regent Lilis' family. This culture is the distribution of basic foodstuffs. This activity has been carried out since before her husband took office and continues to this day (under Regent Lilis). The distribution of basic foodstuffs is carried out every three months and at certain events in the Gombong District and surrounding areas. This activity of distributing basic food supplies has become a habit inherited by Regent Fuad from Regent Lilis. This activity continues to take place, forming a culture that is known by the community, especially in the Gombong District.

Economic Capital

Economic capital refers to the financial capabilities possessed by an individual or group that are used in the sphere of life (Umbu et al., 2024). In this case, economic capital in the political sphere was used by Regent Lilis and her campaign team to win the Kebumen Regency elections, particularly in the Gombong District. In the process of winning the election for Regent Lilis in

Gombang District, the material resources used came from Regent Lilis' personal funds. Regent Lilis' financial capabilities are indeed strong because Regent Lilis and her family are successful entrepreneurs. Yahya Fuad owns a building contractor business, housing development, organic fertilizer factory, SPBE, gas station, and travel agency under the Tradha Group. Additionally, Lilis Nuryani also owns businesses in auto parts, building materials stores, beauty salons, clothing stores, and restaurants. The Tradha Group businesses are family-owned, with former Regent Fuad as the founder and his son, Dr. Faiz Alauddien Reza Mahardika (), as the CEO.

The economic capital possessed by Regent Lilis is not only used to finance the interests of her campaign team, but also for money politics. Considering that the economic conditions of the community greatly influence their preferences, especially in Gombang Subdistrict. Economic conditions cannot be used as a standard for determining whether someone feels sufficient. People who are below the poverty line or even above it, if given "money," will consider their choices. For example, in Kemukus Village, where the general economic condition of the community is below the poverty line, many people tend to choose leaders who give more "envelopes." It cannot be denied that the community prioritizes their "stomachs" over politics. However, this cannot be generalized because not all communities have the same mindset. This can also be seen through the existing culture, such as in Gombang Subdistrict, which still has a strong paternalistic culture. With this culture, in addition to considering money politics, some communities also consider the direction of central figures.

The use of money politics by Regent Lilis in Gombang Subdistrict is not uniform. Not all villages use money politics. For example, the Panjangsari Village Success Team claims that in Panjangsari Village, Regent Lilis does not use money politics. Meanwhile, Kemukus Village still uses money politics strategies. In addition to patriarchal cultural considerations, this money politics strategy is also used in certain villages in Gombang Subdistrict to adjust to the level of emotional closeness that has been established. Money politics tends to be used in villages that do not have much closeness, while villages that already have strong emotional closeness do not use money politics. So, in this case, not all villages in Gombang Subdistrict use the money politics method.

Regent Lilis' financial capabilities are also used to maintain the culture established by her husband. This culture is the distribution of basic foodstuffs, a charitable activity that has been carried out by Pak Fuad since before he became regent and continues to this day (under Regent

Lilis). This activity is carried out in Gombong District and its surroundings every three months. The continuation of this culture signifies that Regent Lilis has strong financial capabilities.

Analysis of Regent Lilis' Victory through Bourdieu's Theoretical Framework

In her victory in the Kebumen Regency election, Regent Lilis faced three structural obstacles that could have been detrimental. These three structural obstacles included her husband's negative background, the issue of political dynasties, and stereotypes about women. However, these challenges actually became opportunities for Regent Lilis to win the votes of the people. To turn these structural obstacles into opportunities, Regent Lilis and her campaign team responded with campaign narratives. The campaign narratives used by Regent Lilis in the 2024 regional elections were "Biyunge Wong Kebumen" (People of Kebumen), "Ngopeni, Ngayomi, Ngayemi" (Caring, Nurturing, Protecting), and "Kebumen Kembali Beriman" (Kebumen Returns to Faith). Branding through these campaign narratives was not only used as a strategy to counter the incumbent candidate, but also to cover up Regent Lilis' weaknesses.

The first campaign narrative used to respond to female stereotypes is "Biyunge Wong Kebumen". The word *biyunge* emerged as a way to describe Regent Lilis. It is not only used to describe Regent Lilis personally, but also as a way to break the negative stigma about women in politics. Regent Lilis is personified as a mother, which in this case means that even though she is a woman, Regent Lilis is capable of leading like a head of household. *Biyunge* is used as a substitute for *Bapak* or man, who is usually the leader. *Wong Kebumen* means the entire community of Kebumen, and when combined with the word *Biyunge*, it shows that Kebumen can also be led by a woman.

The use of the *Biyunge Wong Kebumen* campaign narrative is a winning strategy that contains gender ambivalence. The maternal narrative (political maternalism) serves as a mobilization tool to build public trust in female power through an affective and empathetic approach. However, on the other hand, this strategy is also regressive because Regent Lilis needs to adjust to the patriarchal expectations of voters. By highlighting the symbol of "Mother," Regent Lilis indirectly confirms that women are only worthy of entering the public sphere if they continue to carry out their domestic roles. This reinforces the limitation that women's authority is always emotional and nurturing, rather than based on pure political authority (Daulay, 2025). Ultimately, this strategy preserves gender stereotypes that should be deconstructed.

Regent Lilis uses this maternal narrative to counter the gender stigma that views female

leadership as an anomaly or "exception." By positioning herself as a "mother," Regent Lilis has gained public acceptance because this role is in line with the paternalistic and religious values of the Gombong community. This maternal narrative effectively manages negative issues, including her husband's bribery case and the issue of political dynasties, by shifting the focus of rational political voters towards emotional-personal bonds based on a mother's love (ngopeni, ngayomi, ngayemi). The campaign narrative "Ngopeni, Ngayomi, Ngayemi" means "Caring, Protecting, Providing Security." This narrative is used to describe Biyunge Wong Kebumen's tagline because the figure of a mother (Regent Lilis) is described as someone who can care for, protect, and provide a sense of security to her children (the community). In addition, the slogan Ngopeni, Ngayomi, Ngayemi emerged as a form of criticism of the previous regent's leadership.

Criticism of the previous regent's leadership was conveyed through Regent Lilis' slogan, "Ngopeni, Ngayomi, Ngayemi." With the problems that occurred in Kebumen Regency, Regent Arif Sugianto was considered lacking in the realization of "Ngopeni, Ngayomi, Ngayemi" as expressed in Regent Lilis' slogan. Starting with ngopeni, during his leadership, Regent Arif focused on changing the face of Kebumen Regency by renovating the city square and also building the Kapal Mendoan icon inside it. Kapal Mendoan is used as a place for street vendors to sell their goods, but in fact, Kapal Mendoan is not effective in boosting economic development. Street vendors complain of a decline in income due to the lack of buyers. The revitalization of the city square is not a top priority for development in Kebumen Regency, considering that Kebumen Regency is still ranked first among the poorest regencies in Central Java. What should be done is ngopeni or caring for the community, for example, street vendors, who should be cared for in a traditional manner.

The next slogan is Ngayomi or protecting. Regent Arif is considered a leader who does not embrace the community, as seen from his treatment of his rival in the 2020 regent election, namely the empty box. The subdistricts that did not vote for Regent Arif should have been embraced so that they could provide support in the future, but in fact, " " (the empty box) was hostile. The subdistricts that did not vote for Regent Arif in the 2020 regency election were Gombong and Sempor. As a result, these two subdistricts were not touched by development during Regent Arif's leadership.

The next slogan is ngayemi, or providing a sense of security. Regent Arif is considered an authoritarian leader, as seen in the frequent transfers of government officials. In addition, anyone

who disagrees with Regent Arif becomes his enemy. This was also conveyed by Regent Lilis' supporters, who were previously Regent Arif's supporters. Regent Arif is considered an authoritarian leader because he does everything according to his wishes. Therefore, the ngayemi narrative emerged as a criticism of leadership that does not provide peace and security to the people.

The next narrative used to respond to the issue of political dynasties is the reuse of the tagline "Kebumen (Return) to Faith." The Kebumen Return to Faith campaign narrative seems to convey to the public that Regent Lilis wants to (return to) lead without changing anything that already existed during Yahya Fuad's leadership. Through the tagline "Kebumen Kembali Beriman," Regent Lilis wants the community, especially the people of Gombong District, to relive memories of the past associated with Pak Fuad. The use of the tagline "Kebumen (kembali) Beriman" in the 2024 regent election, especially in Gombong District, is one of the campaign strategies that Regent Lilis is using to win the votes of religious leaders. By recalling the narrative "Kebumen Returns to Faith," Yahya Fuad's supporters will once again give their support to Regent Lilis. As stated by the Gombong subdistrict head, when they learned that the tagline "Kebumen Returns to Faith" would be used again, many religious leaders, especially in Gombong Subdistrict, were enthusiastic.

The practice of formulating campaign narratives is used as a tool to overcome the structural obstacles faced by Regent Lilis. The campaign narrative itself serves as a tool to convey the candidate's message, vision, and mission. Using a campaign narrative that is relevant to the conditions of the people of Kebumen Regency, especially in Gombong District, will make a more memorable impression on the community. Therefore, the use of campaign narratives is very important in gaining the sympathy and support of the community, especially in Gombong District. The following table shows the response to structural obstacles using campaign narratives:

Table 2: Response to Srtuctural Obstacles

Response to Structural Barriers			
Practice	Political Dynasty	Dissatisfaction	Gender Stereotypes
Campaign Narratives	Kebumen (Return) Faith	Ngopeni, Ngayomi, Ngayemi	Biyunge Wong Kebumen

Source: author

The social practices that led to Lilis's victory as regent were also shaped by the habitus and capital at work in Gombong District. These social practices were evident in the habituation and activation of her husband's campaign network, or that of Regent Fuad. Lilis's campaign team was part of former Regent Fuad's campaign team. Thus, the manifestation of this habitus was reflected in the utilization of old networks. This habitus is then reinforced by the social capital possessed by Regent Lilis, one of which is kinship and strong trust between Mr. Fuad and the campaign team. So, when Regent Lilis ran in the 2024 Regency election, the campaign team that previously supported Mr. Fuad also returned to support Regent Lilis.

Social capital became the main capital in the social practice of Regent Lilis' victory in Gombong District. This capital was kinship and trust. This capital was very important in forming a winning network, especially in activating the winning network of former Regent Fuad in the process of Regent Lilis' victory in Gombong District. The utilization of this winning network will be more effective if it is strengthened by maximizing the available capital (Rahayu et al., 2025). For example, Regent Lilis and her campaign team reused Regent Fuad's tagline, Kebumen Beriman (Kebumen Believes). The strategy of recalling the tagline Kebumen (Kembali) Beriman (Kebumen Believes Again) was used to activate the old network, especially religious leaders. As stated by the Gombong subdistrict head, many religious leaders were enthusiastic about Regent Lilis reviving the tagline of former Regent Fuad. Activating the network of religious leaders was also easy because the culture of the Gombong Subdistrict community tends to be religious. This made it easy for Regent Lilis and her campaign team to activate the network of religious leaders in Gombong Subdistrict.

This capital of kinship and trust is also important for activating the network of community leaders and volunteers in Gombong Subdistrict. With the capital of kinship and trust built by

Regent Lilis and her campaign team, it is easier to activate Regent Fuad's winning network. The importance of utilizing this network of community leaders is that the people of Gombong Subdistrict still have a strong paternalistic culture, where community leaders are the reference for the community in making choices. Therefore, to obtain votes from the community, it would be more effective to collaborate with influential community leaders in Gombong Subdistrict. In addition, the volunteer network is also important to assist the campaign team in the winning process. In the case of Gombong Subdistrict, there is a tradition of distributing basic food supplies, which has become a tradition of Regent Lilis and her husband. In this case, Regent Lilis and her husband have a good image, so it is easy to form a volunteer network, especially for volunteers who are supporters of former Regent Fuad.

Table 3: Habituation and Activation of Regent Fuad's Victory Network

Practice	Social Capital	Cultural Capital
Activation of old networks	Religious Leaders	Religious Activities
	Community Leaders	Fatherhood Culture
	Volunteers	Food distribution activities

Source: author

Regent Lilis does indeed possess habitus and capital that are deeply rooted in the power network owned by Yahya Fuad. However, from a gender perspective, Regent Lilis is not seen as an heir but rather as an active actor who renegotiates and converts this capital into personal authority. Although political capital and patronage networks are inherited through the family ties of Regent Lilis and her husband (husband and wife), the process of converting this capital remains entirely dependent on Regent Lilis. Capital does not work automatically but requires a subject capable of processing it (Ananda & Valentina , 2025). In this case, Regent Lilis consciously utilizes the privileges of male relations to penetrate exclusive political barriers. Her success in maintaining her network demonstrates Regent Lilis' ability to position herself in independent politics. Regent Lilis transforms her husband's capital into personal authority through real leadership in the field.

Regent Lilis did not simply inherit her husband's glory, but built her own political authority. Regent Lilis built her authority through the personalization of her leadership style.

This can be seen in the authority built by former Regent Fuad through rigid masculine patronage. Meanwhile, Regent Lilis re-branded herself by touching on areas that had been neglected by the male political structure, such as maternal and child health issues and microeconomic empowerment. This was not merely a domestic task brought into the public sphere, but a clever strategy to secure a network of women who had previously been viewed as numbers rather than

subjects. In addition, Regent Lilis' authority was also built through the defense of an elite coalition. Regent Lilis used her husband's big name as a "key" to enter the male-dominated world of politics. However, once she was in the system, Regent Lilis used her own abilities to manage the government and secure the loyalty of her subordinates.

Based on Bourdieu's theoretical framework, the formula (Habitus x Capital) + Field will produce social practices, in this case forming campaign activities. Such as the case of Gombang Subdistrict, which formed a network of volunteers who then conducted door-to-door practices. According to one of the coordinators in Gombang Subdistrict, the formation of the volunteer network was carried out in stages. At the village level, they began by gathering people who supported Lilis-Zaeni, and then after gathering, this volunteer network was divided by hamlet to make it easier to conduct door-to-door socialization.

This door-to-door socialization practice provides personal and intensive interaction between the campaign team and volunteers with the community. This practice is driven by the habitus of the campaign team and volunteers who already understand the conditions on the ground. In the paternalistic culture of Gombang, door-to-door visits are considered effective because they represent the highest form of respect from the campaign team (representing Lilis-Zaeni). The campaign team not only talks to sell the campaign narrative and convey their vision and mission, but also listens to complaints, aspirations, and so on. The experience gained from Pak Fuad's previous campaign makes it easy for Lilis' campaign team to win the hearts of the community or "feel for the game".

Door-to-door campaigning is indeed the most fundamental campaign activity because it is carried out in a truly personal manner between the campaign team and the community. To carry out campaign activities, it is important to optimize the economic capital that Regent Lilis has. Regent Lilis, who has a background as a businessperson, has strong economic capital, and is even listed as the richest regent in Central Java. With this capital, Regent Lilis and her campaign team can carry out dialogic campaigns and mass campaigns.

In practice, door-to-door activities involve not only interacting with the community, but also engaging in money politics as a campaign strategy. However, money politics is not practiced in all villages in Gombong Subdistrict. In addition to using this dialogical campaign strategy, Regent Lilis also conducts mass campaigns in Gombong Subdistrict. These campaign activities included morning exercises at the Manunggal Square in Gombong together with the Ikatan Konco Lawas Gombong (IKLG) and the Persatuan Seduluran Gombong (PSG), attending religious lectures held by the Muhammadiyah Branch Leadership (PRM) and the Aisyiyah Branch Leadership (PRA) of Gombong II, a visit with the PERPAG (Gombong Karst Preservation Association) forum, a joint assembly with employees of the PKU Muhammadiyah Gombong Hospital, held a meeting with business owners and entrepreneurs from Gombong, attended a religious gathering at the Assyifa Mosque of the PKU Muhammadiyah Gombong Hospital, and participated in a health walk and exercise session as part of the 112th anniversary of Muhammadiyah at the University of Muhammadiyah Gombong (UNIMUGO) field.

The habitus and capital attached to Yahya Fuad in the 2015 regional head elections were revived by Regent Lilis in the 2024 regional head elections. Although the arena has changed, the winning tactics used by Regent Lilis and her husband have not changed, and their social practices remain the same. This is reflected in the consistency of victories in Gombong District with a vote percentage of 69% (Yahya Fuad) in the 2015 regional head elections, 55% (blank box) in the 2020 regional head elections, and 68% (Lilis Nuryani) in the 2024 regional head elections. Thus, despite the different domains, Regent Lilis was still able to win the Regent Election, just like her husband.

In this case, Gombong District illustrates a habitus that has continued from the Yahya Fuad Regency Election to the Lilis Nuryani Regency Election, forming an institution. The negative issues brought up by Regent Lilis, such as her husband's negative background of having been imprisoned, political dynasty, and the stigma of being a woman, did not influence the votes of the people of Gombong. The strong habitus and capital helped to overshadow the negative issues that developed within the community, particularly in the Gombong sub-district of . Thus, despite the negative issues surrounding Regent Lilis, she still won the regency election, just like her husband.

Table 4: Campaign

Practice	Activities
Mass	<p>Morning exercise at Manunggal Gombong Square with the Gombong Old Friends Association (IKLG) and the Gombong Brotherhood Association (PSG)</p> <p>Attendees of a religious gathering held by the Muhammadiyah Branch Leadership (PRM) and Aisyiyah Branch Leadership (PRA) of Gombong II</p> <p>Social gathering with the PERPAG forum (Gombong Karst Preservation Association)</p> <p>Joint assembly with employees of PKU Muhammadiyah Hospital Gombong</p> <p>Holding a meeting with business owners and entrepreneurs from Gombong</p> <p>Attending a religious gathering at the Assyifa Mosque of the PKU Muhammadiyah Hospital in Gombong</p> <p>Health walk and exercise in celebration of Muhammadiyah's 112th anniversary at the University of Muhammadiyah Gombong (UNIMUGO) field</p>
Dialogue	Money politics
(Door to door)	Distribution of basic food supplies

Source: author

Analysis of Political Communication Practices through Foucault's Theoretical Framework

An analysis of Regent Lilis' victory is insufficient if it only stops at mapping capital ownership in accordance with Bourdieu's theoretical framework. Using this theoretical framework helps to understand what assets contributed to Regent Lilis' victory, while Foucault's theoretical framework is used to dissect how these assets were operated through discourse to construct power relations in the public sphere. Regent Lilis' victory shows that symbolic capital is not static, but must be activated through discourse that is continuously produced in the public sphere. The slogan *Biyunge Wong Kebumen* serves as a discursive strategy to normalize the figure of Regent Lilis. By positioning herself as a "mother," Regent Lilis shifts the standard of public assessment from the realm of political-technocratic capacity to the realm of morality-domesticity.

The "*Biyunge Wong Kebumen*" campaign narrative became a political message used to create a regime of truth at the local political level. This created the truth that a good leader is one who cares for (*ngopeni*), protects (*ngayomi*), and provides a sense of security (*ngayemi*).

Communicatively, this narrative is effective because it is non-contestable. No voter can reject the noble values of a mother. Thus, the issues of political dynasties and the negative track record of Regent Lilis' husband can be removed from the collective memory of voters because they are considered irrelevant in the narrative of love that is massively produced through campaign activities.

Campaign activities such as the distribution of basic food supplies cannot be seen merely as a transactional economic exchange but as micro-power. According to Sani & Labolo (2025), in Foucault's view of governmentality, this practice is a technique for regulating voter behavior through the exploitation of economic vulnerability. Assistance is provided within the framework of a mother's concern. Thus, in this case, a process of subjectivation occurs where voters no longer position themselves as citizens with political rights, but as "children" or aid recipients who owe a moral debt. However, this kind of political communication is considered a problematic power relationship because it is asymmetrical (Mahardika et al., 2025). The message conveyed through this material aid contains an implicit command to obey the giver. In this case, the rationality of voters is suppressed by symbolic dependence. As a result, the local public sphere is no longer an arena for healthy debate for democracy but becomes an arena for power to be produced through the management of voters' gratitude and dependence on patron figures.

The dominance of interpersonal communication (door to door) involving religious leaders shows that power works effectively at the micro level. The involvement of religious leaders in the process of winning Lilis's regency is a strong discursive validation. Based on the structure of Kebumen society, especially in Gomboang District, religious leaders are the holders of the authority of truth. When religious leaders are involved in interpersonal campaigns, the communication that occurs is no longer dialogical but instructional. This creates a regime of truth, where supporting a particular candidate is constructed as a moral obligation and a form of spiritual obedience. The exploitation of religious symbols limits the space for criticism, where questioning the quality of a candidate is tantamount to questioning the choice of religious leaders. As a result, local democracy loses its function as an arena for contesting ideas, because the political narrative has shifted to a sacred space that is difficult for ordinary voters to challenge .

CONCLUSION

Based on the author's data analysis, this study concludes that the social practices used to secure Lilis' victory in the 2024 Kebumen Regency elections, particularly in Gombong Subdistrict, were not significantly different from previous social practices used to secure victory. These

practices were carried out through campaign narratives, namely "Kebumen Kembali Beriman" (Kebumen Returns to Faith), "Biyunge Wong Kebumen" (People of Kebumen), and the slogan "Ngopeni, Ngayomi, Ngayemi" (Care, Nurture, Protect). Of these three narratives, there is one that reinforces the evidence of the similarity between Regent Lilis' campaign practices and her husband's campaign practices, namely the narrative of return. The word "return" in the re-branded tagline "Kebumen (Return) Beriman" shows that Regent Lilis wants to return to leadership without changing anything because her husband had previously led. In addition, there are other practices carried out, such as the habituation and activation of Regent Fuad's winning network, money politics, door-to-door campaigning, and other activities through the capital owned by Regent Lilis.

Regent Lilis' capital includes social capital (family and trust), cultural capital (religion, leadership, and distribution of basic foodstuffs), and economic capital (business). Social capital in this case is the main capital in Regent Lilis' campaign, especially in Gombong Subdistrict, because family and trust are the basic capital for activating the old campaign network. In addition, this study also concludes that negative issues related to Regent Lilis, such as her husband's negative background, political dynasty issues, and female stereotypes, did not affect the votes of the people in Gombong District.

Regent Lilis' victory in the regional elections was not only the result of social, economic, and cultural capital, but also the successful operation of this capital through campaign narratives. The "Biyunge Wong Kebumen" narrative succeeded in creating a regime of truth based on domestic morality. This strategy successfully eliminated negative issues through an undeniable narrative of compassion. Furthermore, the technique of governmentality through the distribution of basic food supplies and the participation of religious leaders can control voter behavior in asymmetrical power relations. Local public spaces are transformed into transactional and sacred places, making citizens dependent subjects. Although this strategy was successful in the election, it weakened democratic rationality and hindered healthy political discourse for the community.

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