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## Regional head leadership relations model in the perspective of power in Deli Serdang Regency, Indonesia

Musa Rajekshah<sup>1</sup>, Subhilhar<sup>1</sup>, Heri Kusmanto<sup>1\*</sup>, Hatta Ridho<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Doctoral Program of Development Studies, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia

\* Corresponding author: [herikusmanto@usu.ac.id](mailto:herikusmanto@usu.ac.id)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1370-7876>

#### Abstract

This study aims to explain the Regional Head Leadership Model from the perspective of power in Deli Serdang Regency. The leadership style greatly influences the structure under it, both in terms of political party institutions and internal bureaucratic institutions. The leadership in Deli Serdang Regency comes from the same family but has different character; this also gives the uniqueness of the leadership relationship model that is carried out. This study used a phenomenological descriptive-analytical method with a qualitative approach. The results show that leadership and background factors strongly influence the relationship model. The characteristics of leader such as Ashari Tambunan who come from civil society are considered more populist considering the conditions in Deli Serdang Regency where the people are very diverse. So, the civilians are more flexible because they come from civil society, while the leadership model of the late Amri Tambunan, who came from bureaucrats, is synonymous with firmness and calmness in making decisions. The application of a combination of leadership types maintains its power in Deli Serdang Regency. The power that is exercised in Deli Serdang Regency has approaches of kinship, humanism and mutual cooperation in developing Deli Serdang Regency.

**Keywords:** leadership, power, relational model



### Public Interest Statement

Ever wondered how leadership styles within a local government can impact an entire region? Look no further than Deli Serdang Regency, where leadership is not just a role but a legacy. Our research delves into the fascinating world of leadership in Deli Serdang. We've uncovered a unique leadership model driven by family ties but colored by distinct characters. In this diverse region, leadership isn't one-size-fits-all. Our research reveals that this dynamic leadership blend maintains its power in Deli Serdang. Our study also shows how leadership isn't a static concept—it's a living, breathing force that shapes a region's destiny.

### Introduction

Democracy in Indonesia has given birth to a decentralised government which gives authority to local governments to play the functions of government in the regions. Local governments have broader control in formulating programs and implementing policies (Grecia, 2002). However, in carrying out government functions, there are many obstacles and problems. One of them is the relationship between government institutions. According to the law, in carrying out government functions, the executive does not stand alone but is side by side with the legislature and the judiciary. The regional Government is the head of the region and an element of the organiser of the Regional Government who leads the implementation of government affairs which are the authority of the autonomous region according to the law (Abdurrahman, 2015). The Regional People's Representative Council, abbreviated as DPRD (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah*), is a regional people's representative institution domiciled as an element of regional government administration (Wasistiono, 2003). These two institutions must go hand in hand in harmony in realising the community's interests, especially in the regions, even though there are many regions that miscommunicate in aligning programs or policies of regional heads (J, 2003).

The two institutions build a working relationship that is mutually supportive, not an opponent or competitor to each other. But the fact is, there are often conflicts between the executive and the legislature in various matters, such as the making of regional regulations, tug-of-war reports on the accountability of regional heads, and regional head policies that cause disharmony and even lead to conflict. There was a tug-of-war of interest in the process of discussion and determination, which made it slow to set a policy. Multiparty systems have created a strong fragmentation phenomenon (Hanan, 2014). So that the adoption of a multiparty system is not necessarily followed by a process of institutionalizing a strong and humanist leadership system, because what happens is a pattern of unstable competition that occurs between the executive and legislature in the regions, the relationship between people's representatives and regional heads does not take root, and the existence of party oligarchy (Budiatri, 2015). So it is not uncommon for interests to lead to disharmony in the relationship between the executive and the legislature, as in determining the Regional Regulation (*Peraturan Daerah/Perda*) in Palopo, South Sulawesi Province. The Regional Regulation No. 6 of 2012 concerning Regional Companies received sharp criticism not only from the Legislative element but also from community groups, the estuary of which was the political turmoil that occurred within two years so that the stability of the development journey in Palopo has been neglected (Adithia, 2013).

Likewise Madura, dynamics also occur in the Madura area of East Java Province between the Executive and the Legislature regarding the ineffective communication of the Madura regional head to the legislature which tends to be closed which leads to conflict. Then the dialectic of the Regent of Jember

and The Regional People's Representative Council in East Java also shows that there is a fundamental problem, apart from the abuse of authority accused of the Regent of Jember, the determination of the COVID-19 pandemic budget which was decided unilaterally by the regional head, causing institutional disharmony which led to the plan of Regent's impeachment (KumparanNews, 2020). Based on data released by the Ministry of Home Affairs, from 862 pairs of Regional Heads and Deputy Regional Heads from the Regional Head Election (*Pemilukada*), only 52 pairs got along (6%). This means that there are 810 pairs and almost 94% of regional heads and deputy regional have split or experience disharmony, this indicates that the post-conflict local election results have yet to produce more solid and quality leaders. This can disrupt the running of government in the regions and one of the factors driving the improvement and effectiveness of leadership is a harmonious relationship (Kemendagri, 2021).

Power is believed to be the way to actualize the acceleration of progress, so that stability in the interaction of power in a democratic system of governance in an area is determined not only from the optimization of the functions of various political institutions but also the presence of leadership that can harmonize all the interests of each existing element (Blackmore, 1989). Leadership is the key in regional development, because the effectiveness of power relations that are carried out will depend on leadership that can manage power relations in a democratic system. One of the important relations to be carried out, especially in a democratic regime, is the relationship between the legislative and executive bodies. Barrington (2013) states, the legislative and executive bodies are key components of a country's political structure, and one of the essential characteristics of the political system is the division of power between the legislature and the executive.

From the perspective of power relations, Foucault explains that power relations are power and power that are widespread in relations between humans and institutions. These forces are found in various aspects of interrelated human relations. In a relationship between one or two people, there is a relationship where one party dominates the other. Things that are still related to power if a leader appears then there is a stabilization of the leadership structure. This process is the development of shared norms and values that provide legitimacy to the leadership structure in establishing power relations.

Firman Manan in his research identifies the internal problems of the executive-legislative institutions, where there is an imbalance of authority possessed by the chambers within the legislative body. This study offers two alternative repositioning: first, the adoption of a robust bicameral system or a symmetrical system, and second, repositioning the role of representatives as the highest deliberation forum to formulate policies oriented to the interests of the community (Firman, 2017). In the context of the relationship pattern, Badri explained the facts from the research findings about how the relationship pattern between the executive and legislative institutions in the implementation of special autonomy in the regions, how the relationship between the executive and legislative institutions can be maintained in the form and pattern of partnership as well as how the concept of building synergies between the executive and the legislative in the context of implementing special autonomy in the regions. He sees that the relationship between the executive and legislative institutions in the implementation of special autonomy is a work partner to equalize perceptions, so the policy direction (Legal Policy) is based on mutual understanding. However, the relationship between the executive and legislative institutions cannot always be maintained in a standard pattern, there will be frictions certainly, this is a result of the needs and changes in the environment so that both of them have to adapt, both from the legislature and the executive side (Hasan, 2020).

Furthermore, in the context of leadership power, Soeren J Henn from Harvard University conducted in early 2018, explained that the power, legitimacy, and effectiveness of synergistic success between institutions are determined by the presence of authentic leadership who understands the local internals of the community. He uses a discontinuity regression design to compare local leadership in Europe that is close to district boundaries and between institutions, so Soeren J Henn finds that the effect of the nation-state on the context of local leadership is highly depend on whether the leadership node or not, called the progressive leader, formally integrates interests into the state institutional structure at the regional level (J Henn, 2018). The dynamics of Indonesian politics increasingly show that the strengthening of political dynasties has occurred in almost all regions in Indonesia, the presence of Ratu Atut in Banten Province, South Sulawesi Province is dominated by Jusuf Kalla and Limpo families, and the presence of children and assisting President Jokowi in Solo and Medan. This does not necessarily become a negative thing as long as leaders resulting from the democratic process through the power of political dynasties can provide evidence of work in regional development. This condition was also used by the Tambunan Family in North Sumatra, with the power to become the regional head for 20 years in Deli Serdang Regency. This opened up an opportunity for the Tambunan Family to expand its political dynasty network beyond Deli Serdang Regency, the son of the Regent of Deli Serdang Regency; Adlin Tambunan won the 2020 general election (*Pemilihan Umum/Pemilu*) competition in Serdang Bedagai Regency and was elected as Deputy Regent of Serdang Bedagai Regency which is located next to Deli Serdang Regency.

Deli Serdang Regency in its four periods gives a description about the harmonization of inter-agency relations, namely the Executive and the Legislative, which are running very well. This is evidenced by the various superior regional head programs that ran well, because they received support not only from the legislature but also from other elements (Bathoro, 2011). For example, the program of Desa Satu (*Deli Serdang Sekolah Bermutu/Deli Serdang Quality Schools*), the Cerdas program (*Percepatan Rehabilitasi dan Apresiasi Terhadap Sekolah/Accelerated Rehabilitation and Appreciation of Schools*), the Opung Sari Basah Bang concept (*Operasi Pungut Sampah Setiap Hari/Daily Garbage Pick-up Operations*), Synergized Villages and others, which started during the leadership of Amri Tambunan (2004-2014) until the leadership of Ashari Tambunan (2014-2024).

The leadership for the 2004-2014 period became a model of regional leadership that was synergistic and contributive in Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra Province. In addition, this leadership has a strong, humanist character, the authority contained in regional autonomy to manage the expedited development of democratic power relations with a multi-party system has been successfully implemented. In the context of development, referring to the National Mid-Term Development Plan (*Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional/RPJMN*) 2015-2019 which is measured on five aspects, namely: Education, Human Development Index, Open Unemployment Rate, Indonesian Democracy Index, Economic Growth and Infrastructure, the average national achievement is only 55.1% and only increased ranging from 5.5% to 6% per year. Meanwhile, the development achievement of North Sumatra Province is only slightly above the national development achievement of 57% of the 5 aspects of the assessment in development, and Deli Serdang Regency is at 71.94%, which is successfully above the national and provincial development targets of North Sumatra. For example, Deli Serdang Regency won the Best 1 Regional Development Award (*Penghargaan Pembangunan Daerah/PPD*) in 2021 for the Regency Category, North Sumatra Province Level (Bappenas RI, 2021).

In carrying out its power relations, the Tambunan Family has an understanding that the people

and the components of policy-making are a family of one house, one roof, one sharing. Therefore, a primordial kinship approach emerged in embracing all the forces in Deli Serdang Regency. The foundation of this primordial kinship was built by the late Amri Tambunan who served for 10 years, then continued by his younger brother Ashari Tambunan as a political tradition in becoming a power relation in Deli Serdang Regency, which ends in minimizing political conduciveness in the region.

The excellent programs such as the Cerdas Program, the Mesrah Bertuah Program, the Desa Satu Program, the Opung Sari Basa Bang Program which is part of Deli Serdang Building Movement (*Gerakan Deli Serdang Membangunan/GDSM*) and the presence of Kuala Namu International Airport in Deli Serdang Regency as the description of sustainable political investment for synergized and collaborative leadership. Sustained leadership in Deli Serdang Regency was during the reign of Ashari Tambunan which was formed during the first period of Amri Tambunan's reign in 2004 and even when Ashari Tambunan; the younger brother of Amri Tambunan led Deli Serdang Regency for the second period, it went very well, because there is minimal competitors in the regional elections of Deli Serdang Regency. Ashari Tambunan had to fight empty boxes in the remaining positions in the second term in 2018, winning the competition with 538,238 votes or 82.25% of the total voters in Deli Serdang Regency (KPUD Deli Serdang, 2018). This condition explains that in the leadership era, Amri Tambunan and Ashari Tambunan succeeded in establishing synergy with all elements in Deli Serdang Regency, especially with the legislative institution. Certainly, they have almost never experienced a prolonged conflict in deciding a regional policy, political stability and harmonization have been successfully carried out with a typical model of power relations.

The power relations carried out by leaders in the 2004-2024 period have proven effective, especially in terms of communicating and synergizing in terms of policy decisions. This is because the leadership carried out by Amri Tambunan and Ashari Tambunan essentially provides a good solution. The practice of administering the government of Deli Serdang Regency has progressed as promised. Amri Tambunan and Ashari Tambunan are two leaders with different leadership characteristics but lead to harmonization, both have their own background and type. The style that is loud, relaxed, angry, and rhetorical is the second feature of the leadership in Deli Serdang Regency. Although, in fact many regional heads in Indonesia have this leadership style, Amri Tambunan and Ashari Tambunan are unique apart from having different experiences, they are always covered by the media as politicians or figures who are role model for other regions in North Sumatra Province (KPUD Deli Serdang, 2018).

### **Literature Review**

Politics and power are something that exists and is experienced in life of every organization, but it is rather difficult to measure, but it is important to study in organizational behavior, because its existence can affect the behavior of people in the organization. Politics and power do not only occur in the government system, but it also occurs in formal organizations, business entities, religious organizations, groups, and even in family units. Politics is a network of interactions between people in which power is acquired, transferred, and used. Politics is exercised to balance the individual interests of employees and the interests of managers, as well as the organization's interests. When this balance is achieved, individual interests will drive the achievement of organizational interests. Power is the ability of a person or group to influence the behavior of other people or groups following with the wishes of the perpetrator (Budiarjo, 2009). The study of power and influence, especially how organizations carry out their activities is very significant to understand. It is possible to involve power in every interaction and social relationship in the organization. People tend to influence other individuals and organizations in every action or behavior by doing social influence and action (Greenberg & Baron, 2000). Power is the

capacity that a person has to influence the way other people think and behave in the way they want. This power can be obtained from various sources which are divided into formal and personal power. Power is usually synonymous with politics. Politics itself is defined as an effort to participate in managing and controlling public affairs.

Foucault admits that there are so many powers and powers that are widespread in human relations. These forces are found in various aspects of human relations, for example, the relationship between humans and other humans and also the relationship between humans and their environment and situations, and others (Bertens, 1998). (Foucault, 1997) explains that power is not owned and practiced in a scope where many positions are strategically interrelated. Because power spreads without being able to be localized and permeates the entire fabric of social relations, including relations with state institutions such as the executive-legislative (Haryatmoko, 2002).

Peter M. Blau defines power as the ability of a person or group to impose their will on other parties, despite resistance, through some resistance either in the form of withholding rewards or punishments, even though both forms are actually negative sanctions. We can see that the power described by Blau cannot be separated from the word social exchange. In a relationship between one or two people, there is a relationship where one party dominates the other. Things that are still related to power, if a leader appears then there is a stabilization of the leadership structure. This process is actually the development of shared norms and values that give legitimacy to the leadership structure. As a result, leaders are not seen as fighting for power, but tend to have the right to govern. The ideology socialized by the leader will not directly describe how the reward should be given.

Thomas Charly describes an interpersonal leadership that can influence and be carried out in certain circumstances based on its type. Leadership typology is used as a forum for aggregating the leadership style and behavior of candidates and competing winning teams. “Great Man Theory” is one of the indicators in determining strategies in political competition, such as democratic leadership (populist), charismatic leadership (bureaucratic) and patronilistic. Furthermore, theoretically Sadu Wasistiono explained that Leadership was born from three basics; First, leadership emerges genetically and from birth has brought the talent to become a leader. Second, leadership arises because the community prepares it with certain situations (Leader is born not made). Third, a leader arises because it is prepared eclectically through talents and opportunities by the community and develops sociologically

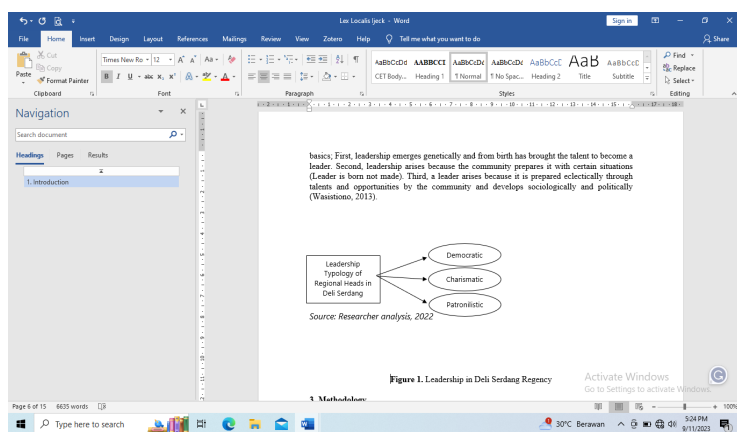


Figure 1. Leadership in Deli Serdang Regency

## Methods

The method used in this study is a qualitative method by looking at the times series of leadership continuity in power relations built by the Tambunan Family in Deli Serdang Regency which has

been running for four leadership periods. The qualitative method is a method in research that allows researchers to examine individuals, explore processes, activities, and events, or study the behaviors of certain individuals or groups. The informants in this study were the family of the late Amri Tambunan, Ashari Tambunan, Chairman of the Legislative Assembly (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat/DPR*) of Deli Serdang Regency, Members of the Regional People's Representative Council (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah/DPRD*) of Deli Serdang Regency (Wagirin Arman and Irawan), Deli Serdang Regency Bureaucrat (Faisal Arif Nasution), and Deli Serdang Regency Community Leader (Komariah, 2011).

## Discussion

The election is a procedural and substantial democratic process in choosing a leader and victory is determined by the majority of votes. In the post-conflict local election process as an arena for political contestation by choosing people and competition between candidates, the candidate who is likely to win the post-conflict local election has the modality built (Callewaert, 2006). The main capital that must be owned by the candidates who want to take part in the contestation in the direct post-conflict local election, namely political capital, social capital, and economic capital. As one of the indicators in running the governance system, the modality factor will certainly objectively affect the power relations that are carried out (Curtis, 2002).

### 1. Modality of Tambunan

As regional head, social capital for the Tambunan Family is one of the modalities that can be seen as an investment to gain harmonious relationships and trust from the community in building their power relations. Therefore, the author considers social capital as one of the main components to mobilize mass mobility in winning political competitions and leadership journeys in Deli Serdang Regency. The social interaction of the Tambunan Family is to build reciprocal relationships between themselves and other individuals or communities. This social interaction certainly allows the community to recognize their leaders (Amri Tambunan and Ashari Tambunan) so that they can build a pattern of interaction relationships. This can be seen from his activities as Regent of the previous period, who did not hesitate to attend every event held by the community, such as weddings, social activities or visiting people who were hit by a disaster. As conveyed by Irawan as a member of the Regional People's Representative Council in the Deli Serdang Regency, that:

“Sir, Mr. Amri and Mr. Ashari are not only Regents or leaders but the fathers of Deli Serdang, why? Because every time there is a problem and activity, it is almost certain that he is always present in our midst. For example, once there was a flood that overflowed the river, he immediately came swiftly. It is not only that, when there are friends whose children get married, it's not uncommon for him to also attend. So, we really consider this social capital in seeing what kind of relationship he is running, so that Mr. Amri and Mr. Ashari always win in elections and are responsible for running the government of Deli Serdang Regency....” (Monday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022).

The Tambunan family is a leader who is very simple in his life and is also quite close to the community, especially to the lower middle class, even though they are in the social class of society. The social background they have can be observed, such as educational qualifications, work experience or

organizational experience (Deacon, 2002). This is really used both to build a relationship and also trust from the community, this indicates that power is also obtained because of the trust from the community. Furthermore, Amri Tambunan and Ashari Tambunan are very charismatic leaders in their lives and are also classified as people whose level of socialization is quite close because he is known as Amri Tambunan, a bureaucrat who has a strong relationship with the technical implementers of the Deli Serdang Regency bureaucracy, while Ashari Tambunan whose background is private sector has an emotional connection in the relationship of the ruler. This is what must then be used both to build strong relations, not only with the community but also with the government administration team in Deli Serdang Regency.

**Table 1.** Summary of Tambunan Modalities

No	Modality of Tambunan	
1.	Social Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Social interactions</li> <li>b. Community trust</li> <li>c. Relationship network</li> </ul>
2.	Political Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Educational background</li> <li>b. Political experience</li> <li>c. Political party support</li> <li>d. Elite support</li> <li>e. Bureaucratic support</li> <li>f. Community support</li> </ul>

*Source: Data processed by the Researcher, 2022*

## 2. Tambunan Leadership Personality Character

The leadership character forms the personal branding of Amri Tambunan and Ashari Tambunan as the image of a personal leader to become an individual populist politician because Amri Tambunan and Ashari Tambunan have democratic, embracing leadership and strong popularity among the public when compared to other political figures. Tambunan’s leadership, which has been able to solidify the bureaucratic team of the Deli Serdang Regency Government, has a very strong character who embraces Amri Tambunan and Ashari Tambunan. Meanwhile, related to the achievement of regional organizational goals, (O’Donnell, 1955) views leadership as an activity to persuade people to work together in achieving common goals. Leadership is a process of influencing in determining organizational goals, motivating follower behavior to achieve goals, influencing to improve the group and its culture. In addition, the leader also influences the interpretation of the events of his followers, organizing and activities to achieve goals, maintaining support and cooperation from people outside the group or organization (Rivai, 2007).

Faisal Arif Nasution, Former Assistant I Regional Secretariat of Deli Serdang Regency who is also a State Civil Apparatus who has interacted with the two periods of Tambunan leadership, said that:



“.....I agree that the Tambunan Family is the leader who has a very democratic spirit, that’s why we fully support him, because he is humble, populist, and very embracing. When there was a problem in the internal bureaucracy of the Deli Serdang Regency Government, he usually always asked for coffee morning. He is a kind person, easy to get along with, and flexible. I saw the Tambunan Family with their simple style, with the concept of become people’s leaders that populist, especially if we look at the condition of the people in Deli Serdang, the people really miss a leader like Mr.Tambunan” (Tuesday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022).

Not much different from what was conveyed from the State Civil Apparatus side who had been actively interacting with the Tambunan leadership, from the Legislative Institution side, Mr. Irawan, a member of the Regional People’s Representative Council in Deli Serdang Regency who was also the Chairman of the Regional Representative Council of the PAN Party in Deli Serdang Regency, said that:

“...Mr.Amri and Mr.Ashari are already known in Deli Serdang Regency as friendly, embracing and listening people, we believe that social modalities strengthen the two to remain elected in politics. The second character, although different, is very human in principle. Understandably, Mr.Amri and Mr.Ashari have different backgrounds, one from the bureaucrats and the other from the private sector” (Monday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022).

Leadership in Deli Serdang Regency belongs to the character of transformative and charismatic leadership. Transformative and charismatic leadership according to Burns (2009), is sometimes contradicted by the transactional leadership model. Transactional leadership essentially emphasizes that a leader has a role in determining what his subordinates need to do to achieve organizational goals (Djati, 2013).

### 3. Tambunan Leadership Style

Tambunan’s leadership style is the main attraction. These two figures as leaders of regional heads have a democratic type of leadership because the positions they hold are the result of people’s choices. Democratic leaders view their role as coordinator, cooperative, welfare-oriented, and tend to be collective (Blackmore, 1989);(Hall, 1996). Tambunan is a regional head who leads democratically and has empathy for his people, similar to the 1999 Schermerhorn research; Eagly and Johnson 1990 in (Saguni, 2014). Tambunan’s empathy can be seen from the two characteristics attached to them, namely Humble, Honest, Caring and Populist. As stated by Mr.Irawan as a member of the Regional People’s Representative Council in Deli Serdang Regency:

“...The regent is always attached to the community in Deli Serdang Regency which sometimes as members of the Regional Representative Council, we are lose, if there is a wedding party, circumcision or something related to the community, I always meet him and he does not put up barriers with the community...” (Monday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022).

a. Humble and Honest

The attitude of humble and honest has started to grow since the first nomination of Amri Tambunan as Regent of the Deli Serdang Regency which was then passed on to Ashri Tambunan (younger brother). His humble attitude has grown since childhood until now as the Regional Head in Deli Serdang Regency. This was felt during observations at a people’s party at the City Hall of the Deli Serang Regent’s Office in Lubuk Pakam. The enthusiastic people with full of joy faces welcome Tambunan with handshakes, hugs and other expressions of pride. Not only the simplicity that is displayed but the honesty and the humility of Ashari Tambunan. The honesty was shown when providing information on his wealth in the 2009, 2014 and 2019 elections, which were indeed very little (Romli, 2018).

b. Caring and Populist

The things that Tambunan did in Deli Serdang Regency became a magnet for the community as well as the mass media. Tambunan forms an image through mass media (Kendall & Paine, 1995). What is seen and what is done will be processed by the constituents (Davis & Owen, 1998; Neuman, 1986) being the subject of discussion both individually and in groups, Tambunan succeeded in building Deli Serdang Regency through the Deli Serdang Build Movement program, such as Education, Infrastructure, Health and Social. A caring leader like Amri and Ashari Tambunan bring the region to be able to collaborate with the people of Deli Serdang Regency which leads to achievement.

4. Primordial Kinship of Tambunan Political Tradition

The phenomenon of Deli Serdang Regency is one of the facts that the implementation of the Governmentality theory, where the power relations that are carried out can last for 20 years, bringing success to the administration of government in the Deli Serdang Regency. The regulatory elements run by the Tambunan Family make the bureaucracy as part of the family, can run the government system in Deli Serdang Regency, the Tambunan Family takes a familial approach in neutralizing political opponents with a humanism approach, cultural ties and hegemonic ways (Firmansyah, 2011).

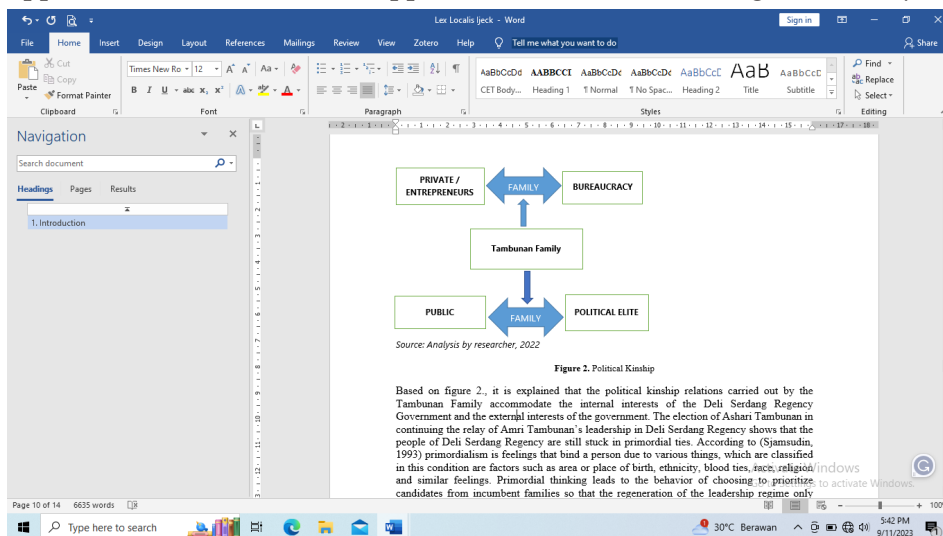


Figure 2. Political Kinship

Based on figure 2., it is explained that the political kinship relations carried out by the Tambunan Family accommodate the internal interests of the Deli Serdang Regency Government and the external interests

of the government. The election of Ashari Tambunan in continuing the relay of Amri Tambunan's leadership in Deli Serdang Regency shows that the people of Deli Serdang Regency are still stuck in primordial ties. According to (Sjamsudin, 1993) primordialism is feelings that bind a person due to various things, which are classified in this condition are factors such as area or place of birth, ethnicity, blood ties, race, religion and similar feelings. Primordial thinking leads to the behavior of choosing to prioritize candidates from incumbent families so that the regeneration of the leadership regime only revolves around one particular family sphere (Gramsci, 2006). The choice of regeneration of the kinship model is a reflection that the people of Klaten Regency still practice a democratic model that only believes in the abilities of candidates who are in line with the descendants of the previous regional head. The practice of family politics or political dynasties cannot be seen as bad, because indeed every citizen of any country has the same right to vote or be elected in politics, to do or not to carry out a political dynasty (Hicken, 2011).

Kinship politics in Deli Serdang Regency is strengthened by the emergence of support from elements of political power in Deli Serdang Regency, although it cannot be denied that political dynamics in Deli Serdang Regency have ups and downs, as conveyed by Mr. Irawan as a member of the Regional People's Representative Council in the Deli Serdang Regency, that:

“...Sometimes I never thought that the way the Tambunan Family was leading was extraordinary, for example, in 2012 Mr. Amri had a very heated conflict with the Chairman of the Regional People's Legislative Assembly of the Deli Serdang Regency, Mr. Wagirin Arman in the plan for regional expansion and regional regulations, the dynamics were extraordinary, but just when Mrs. Wagirin Arman's wife was sick at the hospital, the Regent came and immediately the atmosphere was full of kinship, extraordinary and finally the dynamics in the government at that time dimmed...” (Monday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022).

Kinship politics is the main weapon to win and maintain the power of the Tambunan Family in Deli Serdang Regency, everyone is embraced and considered as a family that must love each other. The existence of kinship politics has a large enough impact on vote acquisition in the post-conflict local election. This is because the closeness or family ties between the Tambunan Family and political actors indirectly foster seeds of support for anyone who nominates from the Tambunan Family who advances as a candidate for Regent. Family ties in power relations are the main reason where people have the view that the Tambunan Family can be trusted to continue the leadership of Amri Tambunan to Ashari Tambunan who has led for two periods.

Kinship politics in Deli Serdang Regency has a unique pattern in the practice of democracy in this modern era. The formation of a new pattern which is not a politics of dividing up positions in the government structure, but the politics of continuing the chain of power in the highest office through the post-conflict local election process (Haryatmoko, 2003). Through the post-conflict local election, two people from the family tend to maintain family members or relatives in the power network where there is one figure who is very influential in maintaining his power. Amri Tambunan became a very influential figure where his background of leadership for two periods in leading Deli Serdang Regency became a strong foundation for Ashari Tambunan's power to massively strengthen community support for his family and close relatives of the Tambunan Family.

Kinship politics is then identified with the description of a political empire filled by colleagues

from the authorities, because power will be passed down from generation to generation and revolves in a family circle so that power will remain in the family circle (Keefer, 2005). Likewise, in Deli Serdang Regency where there is a political kinship flow that was initiated by the election of the late. Amri Tambunan as Regent of Deli Serdang Regency to Ashari Tambunan. The development of kinship politics cannot be separated from the dynamics of political culture in Indonesia. One of the political cultures that underlies the politics of kinship is the political culture of patrimonialism, which in winning the election contest the Tambunan Family uses a method that is adopted from that culture.

The kinship system that was built explained that the abilities and experience they had made the Tambunan Family have a good image among community leaders, because they were able to build communication, maximized to gain great trust from the community through the social capital of both of them. The network of power relations from both of them in the concept of kinship is needed as a system of social movements to increase participation and quality of support in the administration of Deli Serdang Regency government. Involving all groups and community leaders as synergized pioneers in development in Deli Serdang Regency through the Deli Serdang Building Movement (*Gerakan Deli Serdang Membangun/GDSM*).

### Conclusion

Building power relations is the ability of one's leadership to convince others to work together towards a common goal. The leadership of Deli Serdang Regency has the foundation of effective leadership because it has succeeded in winning and running the wheels of government for almost 20 years after the reform. Political relations in Deli Serdang Regency were built not solely because of personal interests but rather to the interests of sustainable development in the region. It is certainly in building power relation, it cannot be separated from the social conditions of the people in Deli Serdang Regency who want a populist and charismatic leader in leadership character.

The relationship model based on kinship built by the Tambunan Family is a very strong form of relationship and has implications for broad 'community' obedience to the leadership that both of them carry out. So that the Tambunan Family in Deli Serdang Regency has become an entity like a small kingdom that uses some kind of informal power. The community's emotional relationship with the Tambunan Family is very strong which of course has implications for political interests. This culture of subordination not only marks the relationship between the Tambunan Family and the community, but also extends to the relationship between the community and the Deli Serdang Regency Government, which is led by the Tambunan Family.

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