

Money Politics In Local Democracy: A Case Study In The Simultaneous Election Of Village Heads Throughout Bombana Regency In 2022

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ABSTRACT

In Bombana district, Southeast Sulawesi Province on February 20, 2022 a democratic party was held through the simultaneous general election of village heads throughout Bombana district which was attended by 109 villages as stipulated in Bombana Regent Decree No. 449 of 2021 Concerning Schedules and Stages of Simultaneous Village Head Elections in 2022. In the implementation of local democracy through simultaneous village head elections, there are many practices of money politics carried out by village head candidates, success teams, and the community itself. The purpose of this research is to find out the factors causing the practice of money politics in the simultaneous village election. The method used in this study is a qualitative method by describing the facts that occur in the field to be explained more deeply through primary data sources, namely interviews, and secondary data, namely books and journals. The results of this study indicate that several factors cause money politics in simultaneous village elections in Bombana district, including the habitual factor that continues to occur at every election moment at all levels of democracy that occurs in Bombana district, and economic factors due to the Covid-19 outbreak that hit Indonesia. nationally 2 years ago, the factor of the absence of a special supervisory agency for village head elections, the factor weak laws and regulations on all hierarchies governing villages, and the absence of political education carried out by the local government and stakeholders in building village community intelligence about the dangers money politic.

Keywords: money politics; democracation; villages.

INTRODUCTION

Since its independence, Indonesia is one of the countries that has adopted democracy as a system for running its government. Therefore, as a system, the democracy that grows and develops and is practiced in Indonesia must be in line with the provisions of laws and regulations and the political values of national and state life in Indonesia. As we know, democracy is a form or procedure that exists in a country's government system that is oriented towards creating the actualization of the ideals of Pancasila as stated in the 5th precept, namely social justice for all Indonesian people. This democratic process is closely related to the general election mechanism, whether in the form of presidential/vice-presidential elections, elections to the People's Representative Council/Regional Council at both the central and regional levels, regional head elections both at the provincial and district/city levels and at the village head election level. This election mechanism is a real form of democratic practice which is the right of every citizen in determining the direction of the nation's development (Fitriani et al., 2019).

An anecdote says democracy is of the people, by the people, and for the people. This means that our society understands that democracy is a government that originates from the people, by the people, and for the people which is carried out in the form of elections by the people themselves which are carried out honestly, publicly, directly, confidentially and

fairly (Putri et al., 2020). The purpose of general elections in Indonesia is to elect someone for a certain position who is expected to lead the will of the people in achieving common goals. Of course, as a representative of democracy, every candidate who competes in the general election will win the hearts of the people in various ways that are by the values of democracy itself (Kurniawan & Hermawan, 2019). The general election process at all levels, especially the village head election, is the most important stage in the life of the nation and state because this election directly involves the people as a fundamental element in determining the direction of democracy itself.

In this context, the representative democracy that will be studied is village-level democracy, namely the village head general election process in which to ensure the quality of the democratic process itself is in line with the provisions of the legislation and the political values of national and state life or not, so that we can find out the factors that cause this to happen. As we know, the village is the smallest unit in a country which is the spearhead of the center of national and state life (Dediharsiadi & Djaoe, 2020). The election of village heads is a form of embodiment of village democracy itself to determine the quality of village leadership (Sofyan, 2021). In general elections, especially elections at the village head level, we often encounter various violations of the law and other violations that are not by the legal principles of democratic practice, thus affecting the results of the quality of democracy itself. This democratic party, even though it is carried out directly and even though it is only at the village head election level based on the people, still does not guarantee the creation of a quality democratic process (Prasetyo, 2020).

One of the practices of violations of the democratic process that we often encounter occurring at the village head election level is the practice of money politics. Money politics is the giving of money or goods or other facilities and promises to the public or citizens who have the right to vote so that someone can be elected at the democratic election level itself (Fitriyah, 2015). Money politics in elections is not something new and occurs when this alone (Fitriyah, 2015), however, is a practice that has occurred and lasted a long time since Indonesia entered the reformation era. In the midst of Indonesia's increasingly advanced democratic process, of course, there are still many big challenges in the implementation process where the challenge is the rampant practice of money politics, or what we know as money politics which takes place at all levels of general elections (Suprianto et al., 2016).

In Bombana district, Southeast Sulawesi Province on February 20, 2022 a democratic party was held through the simultaneous general election of village heads throughout Bombana district which was attended by 109 villages as stipulated in Bombana Regent Decree No. 449 of 2021 Concerning Schedules and Stages for the Election of Simultaneous Village Heads for 2022. In the village head election process, of course we will find out whether this democratic process is in line with the principles of democracy itself which is carried out honestly, fairly, transparently and cleanly or is there the practice of money politics that occurred during the simultaneous election process for village heads in Bombana district.

We cannot deny that in the village head election process in Bombana district, there were many candidates and their campaign teams who used dirty and fraudulent practices that were far from the values of the principles of democracy itself to win over them by giving them a sum of money or goods so they could vote for themselves on election day. arrive. At the village head level, elections in Bombana district are not merely to fight for power or to compete in winning the hearts of voters. But more than just that, namely risking self-esteem, social prestige, and even

the social honor that has so far been carried, so that the candidates do everything to win this election (Fauzi & Fauzi, 2021).

The phenomenon of money politics at the village head election is a crucial issue because the village is the spearhead of the nation and state system, where the results of democracy are in close contact with the life of the people themselves. So it is important to study how big the role and influence of money politics during the village head election process is in the life of the people of Bombana Regency and the factors that cause it. Because money politics is one of the most powerful weapons used in democratic practice to win the battle at village head-level elections. Because after all money is a transaction tool that can reach anyone and anything the strategy of money politics is considered the most relevant weapon in winning the political battle at village level democracy.

The occurrence of money politics must not only be resolved through a legal approach or a political approach or a power approach, but it is also necessary through a preventive approach, namely by knowing the factors that cause the practice of money politics at the democratic level of village communities so that this can be a long-term reference material for formulating a mechanism. prevent the occurrence of money politics in the future so that in the future it can produce the quality of democracy that we all aspire to, especially in Bombana Regency.

Therefore, regarding the widespread practice of money politics that occurs at all levels of general elections, especially village head elections in Bombana district, the author wants to examine whether the factors that influence political practices occur during the general election process at the village head level in Bombana district, causing the quality values to drift away democracy in local political life in Bombana district. The purpose of this research is to find out the causes of money politics during the simultaneous election of village heads in Bombana district amidst the progress of democracy today and the well-organized structure of institutions and systems for implementing democracy, both from the people themselves, the candidates, and the government.

METHOD

This research was carried out in several villages that held simultaneous village head elections in the Bombana district of Southeast Sulawesi, using a qualitative approach, this was done because it could describe the facts that occurred in the field to be explained more deeply (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018). Data collection techniques using a purposive sampling technique. This collection technique is done by collecting data according to the needs and objectives of the research. Data collection was carried out through interviews to obtain direct and in-depth information from informants/research subjects. The source of this research data comes from primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from research subjects who were interviewed and observed, while secondary data were in the form of journals, books, and media related to the research topic

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Factors of Tradition/Habits

The local democratic process through simultaneous village head elections in Bombana district which took place in February 2022 was carried out in a peaceful, peaceful, and secure manner. Even though the election process was safe and peaceful, it left a few problems, namely

the widespread practice of money politics that occurred in almost all villages that held village head elections. The occurrence of money politics in the simultaneous election of village heads was carried out by all components of the community within the village community itself starting from community leaders, several leaders of village institutions, unscrupulous organizations in the village, and unscrupulous hamlet heads. From the public perspective, the village community said that money politics would be difficult to eradicate and would continue to be a tradition when the time came for political years, be it presidential elections, members of the People's Legislative Assembly, regional head elections, or the election of the village head itself.

In the simultaneous election of village heads in Bombana district, it is undeniable that money politics has occurred which is massive and systemic, openly or surreptitiously. Money politics will be difficult to get rid of because this practice has been going on for so long, and it is also cultivated by components of society who have power relations, and levels. Higher education and also people who have an above-average economy make it difficult for people not to reject the practice of money politics like this. All village communities stated that money politics in the election of village heads had become a tradition because every time there was a general election, they also practiced things like that so that the community lost a role model in breaking the chain of money politics practices because, at every level of election, money politics was always practiced like this.

The birth of the tradition of money politics, especially in the simultaneous election of village heads in the Bombana district, is also because the community tends to be permissive with the practice of money politics in village head elections. Besides that, the village community has also considered money politics as something natural as a reward from candidates to voters (Kurniawan & Hermawan, 2019), no community can become a pioneer reporter in the practice of money politics that occurs in the simultaneous election of village heads. The fertility of the tradition of money politics in the local democratic process, especially in village head elections, cannot be separated from the community's perspective on money politics itself, the community considers something normal regardless of the legal consequences and the long-term effects of public policy. In addition, money politics occurs because of the notion that every election moment, both at the central level and the village election level, is considered as a celebration, culture, short-term interests, and a lack of awareness to build a shared area (Fitriyah, 2012).

For village head candidates participating in the village election, money politics is considered normal because the community also wants this practice. In addition, politicians, and regional head candidates, both governor and regent, who run for regional heads practice the same thing with village communities so that village head candidates do not have the moral burden of doing the same thing because there are examples set by the leaders above them. So that this is the basis and motivation for village head candidates in cultivating the practice of money politics within their village community.

Money politics has become rampant and has become a culture at every election moment. The community thinks that giving money to candidates is a normal thing because village people often experience it repeatedly now (Permata & Khasanah, 2020). The practice of money politics has indeed been massive and has continuously resulted in the erosion of democratic values themselves (Erviyanto, 2017), especially in the election of Serenak villages in Bombana district. This tradition of money politics occurs because competition in winning local political contests is so competitive, candidates are not ready to lose, thus encouraging potential candidates to do many

things to win themselves. So it is the practice of money politics that is considered the most massive in influencing voters' votes (Hawing & Hartaman, 2021).

Disappointment Factor

Money politics that occurred during the simultaneous village head election process in Bombana district was the disappointment of the village community with the leadership of the previous village head (incumbent). In this simultaneous village head election, almost all village heads who were in office or had finished their term of office were re-nominated as village heads. It was on this occasion that the community carried out money politics against the village head candidates, especially the incumbent candidates. This was done because the community felt disappointed with the performance of the previous village head who did not fulfill his former political promises. So that people assume that money politics from village candidates is an arena for revenge. As the adage of the local village community says that 'take the money, don't choose the person'.

In addition, money politics occurs as a result of a reflection of the performance of the previous village leadership which did not fulfill its political promises thus creating a generalist perspective in the village community that in the future whoever is elected will be like previous leaderships, namely leadership that does not fulfill its political promises as it is today. Although some people reason because on the grounds for change. The emergence of village community disappointment with the previous leadership contributed to the cause of money politics occurring in the simultaneous village head election process in Bombana district which was considered a necessity and inevitability. The simultaneous election process is no longer an event to build the quality of democracy but rather an event to make this local democratic process a moment of the money-making machine, both among the community itself and the village head's success team.

A high sense of disappointment with the performance and leadership of the village heads (incumbent) who took part in the simultaneous village head election was seen during the simultaneous inauguration of the village heads where 109 villages were participating in the village head election, the majority of 80% were new people or new candidates while the incumbent was elected returned as many as 30 people or approximately 30% of the number of candidates (Remi & Sultan, 2022). On the other hand, the practice of money politics occurs because of the perspective arising from the incumbent candidates themselves who say that people's votes can be bought with money, re-election as village head is enough with who is the highest and many of the dawn attacks are not on work ethic and fulfillment of political promises. achievements in social and political work during his previous tenure as village head.

Therefore, this money politics was not only caused by the community's disappointment with the performance of the previous village head, but also by the incumbent candidate's assumption that the community was easily directed with large amounts of rupiah. In the view of some village candidates, especially the incumbent, say that money is the benchmark in winning the battle in this local democracy moment. So this is also what causes the growth and development of the practice of money politics because it has been ingrained in the minds of all components of society. The more advanced the system and the spirit of democracy in Indonesia, the various negative impacts also accompany it, including the excessive ambition of the candidates to justify any means in winning themselves and the high cost of local politics, which has led to money politics that is growing and surviving today.

Economic Factor

Formally, the village is the lowest region in the hierarchy of the government system and Indonesian autonomy. The village is also a small organization that sustains the existence of a country's sustainability (Tome et al., 2021). Even though it is the lowest and smallest area, the village also implements an independent local democratic system, namely through the election of village heads as a door for democratization that is oriented towards involving the components of the village community in determining the direction of the development of their region (Basri, 2020). Amid the space for freedom and democratic independence given by the state to villages, it also creates distortions between expectations and reality regarding the welfare of rural communities. The purpose of the village election process is how to improve the welfare of the village community, what happens is that it deviates far from expectations. during the village head election process.

The problem of money politics during the simultaneous election of village heads in Bombana Regency was also caused by economic factors. This is because during the village head election process which took place at the end of February 2022 the country's economic conditions nationally had not fully recovered from the Covid-19 outbreak which caused all levels of society, both living in cities and the interior of the village, to feel the impact of limitations and difficulties. economics of the epidemic. So that through the momentum of the village head election, money politics is a moment for the community to look for additional income to meet their food and clothing needs.

The unfavorable national economic situation due to the Covid-19 pandemic has also become a momentum for candidates for village heads to carry out money politics against the community to influence people's choices amidst limited jobs, high unemployment, and difficult community economic turnover. As a result of the impact of this pandemic, the rise of money politics that occurred during the simultaneous village head election process, not only among people whose economy is below average but also among people who are categorized as well off, in this case, people who have a steady income, own vehicles four-wheeled, has a shop selling, this is due to the pandemic situation which has not recovered.

Money politics occurs because of economic factors that happened long before the Covid-19 pandemic occurred, which was carried out by components of society through general elections such as regional head elections. In addition, in the village community of Bombana Regency, the uneven distribution of social welfare, and educational strata and the inaccurate targeting of government assistance have caused many people to be economically deficient both in meeting their daily lives or other needs. So this is the reason why people make money politics a contribution to helping and supporting their lives without paying attention to the long-term legal and social impacts resulting from the practice of money politics. Sometimes the candidates and their successful team in carrying out money politics for economically disadvantaged people are usually labeled with the terms assistance, sadaqah and the like as a strategy to obscure the term money politics that is carried out so that people think that it is normal, natural and part of helping each other.

The Factor is the Absence of a Special Supervisory Agency

In addition to the implementation of village head elections which are complicated, strenuous activities and a series that takes a long time (Jayanti & Suhermanudin, 2015). The process of overseeing village head elections is a universal principle or norm considering that there

are no stages at any level that do not have political risks for all elements involved in democracy itself (Akbar et al., 2020). Another factor in the rise of money politics in the simultaneous election of village heads in Bombana Regency was due to the absence of a special institution overseeing the process of money politics violations that occurred during the local democratic process in Bombana Regency. This then opened up a large space for the practice of money politics to occur because there was no existence of a special institution assigned to oversee similar violations during the village head election process.

Unlike the case with other general elections such as the election for regional heads of regents/deputy regents at the district level, there is an institution that handles the election process in the form of the General Election Supervisory Body whose role is to oversee all components of post-conflict local election organizers, both from the organizers themselves, in this case, the KPU, regional head candidates those who nominate and the community as a successful team so that the post-conflict local election implementation process minimizes the occurrence of massive and systemized money politics. In addition, the existence of the General Election Supervisory Body as a post-conflict local election supervisory body is also supported by law no. 7 of 2017 concerning the Election Supervisory Board. In addition, the existence of an integrated law enforcement center or (Gakkumdu) which consists of 3 inter-components, namely the General Election Supervisory Board, the police, and the Attorney General's Office which has a common goal of guarding the quality of democracy in Indonesia through the regional head election process. The purpose of the establishment of the Gakkumdu center is to resolve administrative, criminal, and money politics violations in the ongoing post-conflict local election process. As with legal provisions, both in the form of administrative violations, promising something in the election process, and carrying out money politics are very fatal actions in the post-conflict local election process that can cause the death of candidates in contestation or end up in prison if proven to have committed actions that are not in line with the principles of democracy as stipulated in the election law and post-conflict local elections.

The spirit of supervising the democratic process that occurs in the post-conflict local election is inversely proportional to the spirit of supervision that occurs in the village head election, especially the simultaneous village head election that occurred in Bombana district where the local democratic process that runs in the village is that there is no special institution that oversees the democratic process, even though the process and the components involved in the village head election are the regions, the legal subjects are the same components that are also involved in post-conflict local elections and general elections. It is this weak oversight that has led candidates for village heads and the community to practice money politics in a massive and systematic manner.

Even though money politics takes place covertly or openly, the alibis of the candidates for village head candidates, the village head success team, and the people who receive them will say this is just ordinary assistance or donations whose purpose is for humanitarian needs and/or loan reasons. Thus obscuring the term money politics that is currently running. For example, holding a family or support team get-together while holding a competition whose true purpose is to cover money politics with a variety of activities.

On the other hand, even though the Bombana district village community knows that the practice of money politics in post-conflict local elections will have legal consequences in the form of administrative and criminal sanctions, the village community also knows that in village head elections there is no legal space that can ensnare the community for the reason that in post-conflict

local elections has its own rules, in this case, Law No. 6 of 2020. while the village head election also has its law as a basis for implementing its democracy so that the community says that there are no strict rules regarding supervisory institutions, the process of supervising and imposing sanctions on money politics that occur in the election of the village head.

Factors Weak Legislation

The existence of law no. 6 of 2014 concerning villages is indeed a concrete manifestation of democracy itself. This means that the existence of the village as the smallest unit in the state administration system is recognized as a whole. In addition to its existence as a subject and area, the village is also given the freedom to manage 'itself' as long as it is by the provisions of the applicable laws and regulations, which is meant to manage its democracy.

The problem that remains after the birth of the village law itself is the implementation of the democratic process through village head elections, where in the village head election process money politics or money politics occurs due to imperfect laws as a legal basis in formulating mechanisms for oversight and prevention of politics money in village head elections. The provisions of Law no. 6 of 2014 concerning villages and implementing regulations through PP no. 43 of 2014 and its amendments and domestic Ministerial Regulation No. 112 of 2014 concerning village head elections and their amendments do not formulate a concrete model for overseeing the process of selecting village heads in terms of instructions, techniques, and imposition of sanctions against money politics that occur during the local democratic process in the village.

In addition, during the implementation of simultaneous village head elections in Bombana district, the local regional government also did not formulate technical regulations regarding supervision, especially preventive and repressive measures if it was proven that they had committed money politics during the election process. The Bombana district government only issued local government regulation No. 4 of 2021 concerning the second amendment to local government regulation no 3 of 2015 regarding the procedure for selecting village heads. In the material content of the regional regulation, there is a clause on sanctions. However, it is not a sanction for violations of money politics committed by candidates, campaign teams, or the community itself.

Looking at the legal vacuum at all hierarchical levels of laws and regulations governing this village, it is difficult to avoid the simultaneous election process in Bombana district from the practice of money politics. All community components involved in village head elections say that as long as there are no firm and concrete rules regarding the prohibition of money politics in village head elections, the village community will also continue to do so.

The Factor of The Absence of Political Education

One of the objectives of the Indonesian state as stated in the 4th paragraph of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia is to educate the life of the nation. This means that all life activities within the nation and state must of course be equipped with knowledge so that in the future the country will develop and progress because its human resources are intelligent and knowledgeable. Likewise, political education for village communities about the importance of knowing the impact of long-term development and public policies on their choices for the democratic process they are currently carrying out.

The rise of money politics in the simultaneous village head election process in Bombana district was also due to the absence of political education about the urgency of the results of public policy on ongoing democracy. The role of the Regional Government of Bombana Regency in carrying out political education through outreach, seminars, or the like about the dangers of money politics is not carried out on all components of village society so it makes people assume that local democracy is only a five-year party or celebration without thinking about the long-term policy impacts that will happen. The community, especially in the village, is still a priori when talking about politics, for the political community is something dirty, evil, and apathetic (Purnawati, 2018).

The phenomenon of low political awareness, especially in village communities, is also caused by the lack of understanding, education, and political information obtained by the community (Triono, 2017). In addition, the role of youth organizations and democracy monitoring institutions in Bombana district was not involved in building village community intelligence in increasing awareness and intelligence about the importance of quality, honest, transparent democracy during the simultaneous village head election process. So that causes people not to care too much about the results and long-term policies that will occur at the end of the democratic process in the village.

The minimal role of local government and stakeholders in understanding that the quality of local democracy will also determine the quality of public policies that will be issued by the village government as a result of village head elections held during the democratic process, increasing the intelligence and political education of the community. Thus making the village community less. Of course, it is undeniable that the products of village government policies towards the community will be in harmony with the democratic process that took place before. This means that if the local democratic process takes place with the widespread practice of money politics occurring, of course, the results of public policy will not be far from that, where government policies will be born which are unequal, just, and totally touch the needs of the community. Because whatever the candidates who are elected with the results of democracy who use the practice of money politics, of course, they will seek capital to return money for the dirty practices that were carried out during the previous democratic process.

CONCLUSION

Whereas in the implementation of local democracy through simultaneous village head elections in Bombana Regency which will be held in February 2022, almost all villages in Bombana Regency carry out the practice of money politics during the election process. The causal factor is the result of a tradition that occurs continuously at every election moment and at all levels of the election, besides that, due to economic factors due to the Covid-19 pandemic that hit the Indonesian nation nationally 2 years ago, besides that there is no special supervisory agency in villages that oversee the practice of money politics during the election process and the existence of a legal vacuum in all hierarchies of laws and regulations regarding villages regarding concrete articles governing money politics sanctions in village head elections, as well as the minimal role of local government and stakeholders in increasing intelligence, awareness and education politics in all components of village society.

the lack of response from traders' complaints, for example repairing toilets and repairing roads that are passed by sellers and buyers, while when it is seen from the payment of fees, traders have

been diligent in paying, the approach taken to traders has not been evenly distributed, and there has been a service contract that has been implemented but does not work properly. good because the manager has not fulfilled all the merchant facilities in accordance with the contract and the levy rates that apply are not in accordance with the applicable Regional Regulations of Bone Regency.

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