



# The Logic of Clientelism

## Phenomenon Brokers Political in Indonesian Electoral Commission

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**Abstract.** The increasingly competitive election has triggered a strong enough competition to gain support and victory in the election. This condition causes the candidates participating in the election to take various forms of strategies to achieve victory, including utilizing election organizers, in which the election organizers are involved and act as the main actors in driving other election organizers to assist the electoral interests of one of the election participants (brokers). This study will explain fraud by election organizers also analyze the role and motivation of election organizers as political brokers using brokerage theory. This study uses a qualitative research method with a descriptive-analytical approach. This study indicates that election organizers who act as political brokers have a role in looking for other election organizers to cooperate because the process of changing data or manipulating election results will be more straightforward if several election organizers do it. This role turns out to be mainly carried out by local election organizers, considering they have strategically trusted authority.

**Keywords:** Political brokers · The logic of clientelism · Electoral commission

## 1 Introduction

Elections can be considered as one of the nomination mechanisms to fill state organs which later represent the interests of the people who are considered the most democratic [1]. However, elections are not the only measure that a country has carried out a democratic change of government process, while in the process and implementation of the election itself, there are still many actions that can damage the quality of the election itself. This is because the general election process is a vital instrument to improve the quality of democracy towards a leadership transition involving political party actors [2].

This act can be done intentionally or unintentionally, causing the implementation of elections in a country to be damaged, or Norris often calls it through his ideas about “flawed” or “Jailed” elections [3]. Examples of actions that can damage the quality of elections in a country are elections in Egypt; authoritarian regimes take advantage of elections (parliamentary elections) to exchange benefits with business elites who want to increase economic wealth or capitalist interests [4]. Parliamentary elections in Ukraine In 2012, the regime manipulated elections by manipulating election management server data, changing the electoral system model, and falsifying official documents [5].

In several countries led by authoritarian regimes, elections are used to legitimize the power of their rulers. Even though elections have been held, their implementation is still filled with electoral fraud practices and violations of the values of democratic elections.

Meanwhile, the benchmark determines that the implementation of elections in a country has failed or does not only refer to international standards and global norms governing the proper conduct of elections. However, it is also determined by the structure, capacity, and ethics of the Election Management Body (EMB) [5]. Even ideally, so that the implementation of elections can meet global norms, the election organizers must provide good services. Meanwhile, the post-new order general election is not only marked by the strengthening of money politics between candidates and voters. Indonesia's massive practice of money politics has led to the nickname democracy for sale [6].

Election problems in Indonesia also raise the issue of the integrity of the election organizers. So the trend of transactional political practice is also colored by vote trading [7]. Vote trading is increasing, especially since the 2014 legislative election period, and continues in the 2019 legislative election period [8, 9]. This shows that the problem of electoral integrity in a country is also determined by the behavior of the election management agency [10]. His behavior also shows the problem of the integrity of the election organizers as the leading actor (broker), whose task is to move his followers (several other election organizers) to commit crimes that can destroy the integrity of the election, namely by siding with and accepting bribes from one of the candidates participating in the election.

The involvement of election organizers as an intermediary network is also a new phenomenon among Indonesia's many types of brokers. Even the role is different from most brokers in general. Because of this, this study will analyze the development of the phenomenon of the intermediary network in Indonesia; the cause of involving election administrators through the modus operandi of electoral fraud cases during legislative elections; and analyze the role of election administrators as brokers through brokerage theory.

## 2 Research Methods

This study uses qualitative research methods because it focuses on understanding the reality to interpret the meaning of human thought [11]. These empirical (specific) things conclude that they become a general thing for the researcher and the one being studied because they explore the reality under study [12]. The social reality of this research is the role of election organizers as political brokers. The data collection method used in this research is library research by studying various literature, examining scientific studies from books and journals; as well as documentation studies, including the results of the study by election supervisors on election administrators in Indonesia as well as decisions on violations of the electoral code of ethics and criminal election decisions.

After carrying out the data collection process, the researcher carried out a data analysis process, namely systematically arranging the results of interview transcripts, field notes, and other materials that the researchers had obtained to then interpret the data obtained [12]. After studying and analyzing the data, the researcher reduces the data, presents the data, and concludes/verifies.

### 3 Results and Discussion

Transactional politics also involved the electoral process, thus giving rise to electoral fraud involving election administrators. The increasingly competitive election has triggered a strong enough competition to gain support and victory in the election causes the candidates participating in the legislative elections to take various forms of strategies to achieve victory, including utilizing the election organizers, where this time the election organizers are involved and play a role as the leading actor driving other election organizers to help the electoral interests of one of the eligible participants.

#### 3.1 The Phenomenon of Political Brokers Created in Indonesia

The beginning of the emergence of brokers as a form of response to reciprocal constraints that should be accepted candidates should acceptance of these materials does not necessarily provide reciprocal benefits for candidates who want to gain political support from their constituents [13], this is because most voters will feel that they are not bound by the obligation of the gift [14]. As was the case in the 2009 elections in Kenya, where transactional politics were often sought after by voters; however, the material they received did not necessarily respond to them in support for the candidate. They assume that the gifts they receive are not bound by any obligations [15]. So that this condition makes the birth of the existence of political brokers in Indonesia. Politicians feel the need to establish or pay for a network of intermediaries to help deal with the uncertainty of their provision.

The phenomenon of brokers in Indonesia is increasingly varied, along with the increasingly competitive competition between candidates participating in the election to win a contest. So that this condition has created relatively intense competition, especially for candidates participating in the election who come from the same political party to get a narrow margin of victory; this is further exacerbated when the political party that carries it is rarely present in the electoral interests of each candidate [16]. This is because the change in the electoral system also makes political parties focus more on their electoral interests, especially pursuing the parliamentary threshold [17].

The phenomenon of the intermediary network has existed since the implementation of the New Order election and then has developed since the election of the reform era [18]. During the New Order election period, the brokering phenomenon was usually carried out by local elites (such as sub-district or village officials) who had direct contact with voters. Usually, in carrying out their duties, the sub-district, municipal, and provincial levels, and civilian bureaucrats at all levels and led by the armed forces. Their main task is to mobilize government employees or officials for Golkar's victory, reward voters loyal to Golkar and establish clientelistic relationships with their patrons to get rewards in the form of access to state resources [19].

Then in the 1999 election period, the role of broker was carried out by the political party machine or political party structure. So that those who come from the organizational structure of the party will take advantage of primordial ties to attract political support, strengthen their network at the grassroots level based on their being under the supervision of primordial ties to the Ministry of Home Affairs officials, and provide small projects for loyal supporters of their party [6]. However, since 2014 to 2019 legislative election

**Table 1.** Decisions on election criminal cases in the 2019 legislative election

Case	Number of Cases
Acts that cause a voter's vote to be of no value or cause sure election participants to get additional votes or to be reduced	26
Negligence that results in the loss or alteration of the official report on the recapitulation of vote counting results or certificate of recapitulation of vote counting results	6
Election organizers (members of KPU, Provincial KPU, Regency/Municipal KPU, PPK, or PPS) who intentionally cause the loss or change of the official report on the recapitulation of the results of the counting of votes or certificate of the recapitulation of the results of the counting of votes	2

Source: processed data by Bawaslu 2019

period, various brokerage phenomena have emerged in Indonesia, including success teams, social network engines, and political parties [20–22].

The increasing importance and variety of the phenomenon of political brokerage in Indonesia can be caused by two: among other things, the mobilization power of parties is generally weak because political parties tend to prioritize their electoral interests as well as due to changes in the electoral system that began in the 2004 election period, causing elections to be more candidate-centered, thus providing a strong enough incentive for candidates to pursue their votes. However, some of the phenomena of intermediary networks in Indonesia mentioned in previous studies have not described the entire phenomenon of intermediary networks in Indonesia [22]. While in its development, there is the emergence of the phenomenon of election management brokers. Utilizing election management services as an intermediary network is the most practical and easy way to obtain the voice needs of the targeted candidates.

To determine the importance of involving the role of election organizers, it can be seen through court decisions on election crimes determined by election organizers in the 2019 Legislative Election as described in Table 1.

Table 1 indicates the importance of involving the role of election organizers based on the types of cases often carried out by election administrators. The modus operandi that mainly was carried out was related to the modus operandi of vote manipulation; as many as 26 (twenty-six) cases were found in Garut Regency, West Southeast Maluku Regency, Central Maluku Regency, Aru Islands Regency, Tanjung Balai Karimun Regency; Kupang City, Ende Regency, Puncak Regency, Tabanan Regency, North Halmahera Regency, Sula Islands Regency, Ternate City, East Halmahera Regency, Indragiri Hulu Regency, Pelalawan Regency, Sigi Regency, Central Lombok Regency, Nias Regency, Serdang Bedagai Regency.

The importance of the involvement of election organizers is believed to have a strategic role, especially in committing electoral fraud (manipulating election results). This is also supported by the opinion of other research [6], which states that the involvement of election organizers also occurs in many cases of money politics in Indonesia, especially in cases of vote-trading and vote-buying and selling. Even Aspinall defines the term vote trading, namely the phenomenon of vote theft and vote inflating for specific candidates and/or political parties involving election organizers at all levels, without voter involvement. Aspinall's opinion can be interpreted that changes in the certificate of the election

result in buying and selling votes, and vote trading will never occur without involving the role of election organizers.

### 3.2 The Role of Election Organizers as Political Brokers

To expedite the process of electoral manipulation, it is not uncommon for election organizers to act as political brokers. His job as a broker is to connect candidates with other election organizers. This is because the process of changing data or manipulating the election (for example, adding votes or stealing the votes of other participants) will be more straightforward if several election organizers do it. They will later get their respective tasks. For example, based on the Makassar District Court Decision Number 955/Pid.Sus/2019/PN Mks, 2 (two) PPK members and 2 (two) PPS members were found guilty of making Form DAA1 and Form DA1 in several Kelurahan in Panakkukang Sub-district, namely Panaikang Village, Karampuang Village, Karuwisi Village, Tamamaung Village and Tello Baru Village, and the most significant changes occurred in Panaikang Village and Karampuang Village.

This change was made to the votes acquired by the Golkar Party and the number of votes for the Candidates for Members of the Provincial DPRD for the Golkar Party for the South Sulawesi 2 Makassar B in the District of Panakkukang, namely: No. Sequence 1 on behalf of Imran Tenri Tata Amin, No. Sequence 2 on behalf of Nasruddin Upel, No. Sort 3 on behalf of Dra. Shanty Djelani, No. Sort 4 on behalf of H. Lukman B. Kadi and No. Sequence 6 in the name of Hadijah Hafid, whose number of votes decreased, while No. In sequence five, the number of votes increased on behalf of Rahman Pina. This change was made by dividing the tasks between the four election organizers, in which Ismail (a member of Panakkukang District PPK) took the DAA1 form file from Fitriani (Panaikang Village PPS). The vote changes were made by reducing the number of votes acquired by the Golkar Party and several candidates for the Golkar Party Provincial DPRD then adding to the votes for the Golkar Party Provincial DPRD member candidate No. Sort 5 on behalf of Rahman Pina. After making the changes, Ismail printed the DAA-1 form to be signed and determined by the Sub-district PPK, then Fitria adjusted the number of votes contained in the Plano DAA1 form according to the number of votes contained in the DAA1 form, which was changed by Ismail to be determined by the District PPK.

From the case examples above, it appears that election fraud would be difficult to carry out alone and would be easier if carried out by several other election organizers. For that, we need someone who can urge the obedience of several other people (followers). To urge the compliance of several other election organizers, a person with a background as an election organizer is needed, where usually the election organizers are respected, respected, and trusted by their followers. Even in the eyes of his followers, they are a leader to be followed.

To explain the role of election administrators as brokers, one example of election management brokers in the Karawang Regency can be revealed. A member of the Karawang Regency KPU (Asep Saepudin Muksin) was proven to have abused his position and authority to influence his subordinates (the twelve PPK members in Karawang Regency) to take sides and accept bribes from one of the candidates for the DPR RI Perindo Dapil 7 West Java named H. EK. Saputra (vide DKPP RI Decision No. 220-PKE-DKPP/VIII/2019 and 221-PKE-DKPP/VIII/2019), even based on the confession of one KDP member on behalf of Telukjambe Timur) that he and his friends were willing

to meet the candidate because Ade Suardi (Chairman of the PPK followed the direction of his leader (Asep Saepudin Muksin). The commissioner himself is Asep Saepudin Muksin [23].

A similar case also occurred in 2014 in Pasuruan Regency, based on the decision of the DKPP RI Number 32/DKPP-PKE-III/2014, which imposed sanctions in the form of permanent dismissal to 13 (thirteen) members of the PPK (Subdistrict Election Committee), Pasuruan Regency because it was proven received a sum of money from one of the candidates for legislative members of the Regional Legislative Council of East Java Province II Gerindra Party Number Urut 8. This candidate is a newcomer legislative candidate and was previously active in organizations and served as Chair of the Greater Indonesia Women (Pira), an organization under the Gerindra Party in Pasuruan City [24].

This case began with the introduction of a legislative candidate named Agustina and Akhmad Khumaidi (a member of the Gempol PPK), Anshori Huzaemi (a member of the PPK Kraton), Endang Sutriani (a member of the Winongan PPK) at the Pring Kuning restaurant in Purwosari. The four people are election organizers in Pasuruan Regency. Based on Agustina's confession, Moch Tauhid (a member of PPK Prigen) offered to help or support him in securing votes, guarding votes for himself, and if he lacks votes, additional votes will be added by taking into account the cumulative votes in Probolinggo and Pasuruan.

In addition, Moch Tauhid also offered and promised himself to introduce other PPK friends to expand the KDP network who could guard and secure votes for him in the 2014 legislative elections. Moreover, Member of PPK Lekok) that he had been introduced to the figure of the candidate for a legislative member by Moch Tauhid. Meanwhile, according to the confessions of Edy Riyanto, Mochammad Sholeh, Imam Taufik, Suhudi Rokhmad, Eko Widiyanto, Mustin JS, they were contacted and introduced to the candidate by Akhmad Khumaidi.

At the meeting, Moch Tauhid introduced legislative candidates to his friends and invited them to support Agustina Amprawati by securing, guarding votes, adding votes, and if the votes were lacking, additional votes would be added. At the next meeting, March 5, 2014, Moch Tauhid invited his friends to meet Agustina to ask for funds to guard her voice and make sure she did not have to worry because they would support her and allow her to sit in the Provincial DPRD seat. In fact, according to the candidate's admission, he was also invited to enter into an agreement signed by both parties. The contents of the agreement letter of the two parties obtained by the author from online news are as follows:

"The undersigned, we accept the 13 District Election Committees throughout Pasuruan Regency, at this moment state that we can win the East Java Provincial Legislative Candidate a/n Agustina Amprawati, ST, and we have received RP 77,500,000. We did this in a conscious state without any coercion from any party. If we deny this statement, we are ready to be punished and return the funds ten times, plus a campaign costing four billion rupiah, borne by the names that match the signs. Mentioned above." [25].

In addition to meeting and promising him victory, based on his election criminal case, they were also proven to have received money with details of Rp. Seventy million and a motorbike worth Rp. 11.5 million was given to Moch Tauhid; Rp. 25 million was given to Endang Sutriana to pay for the team that did not run in Nguling, Grati, and Rejoso; Rp. 77.5 million, which was distributed to PPK.

Some of these cases can also be referred to as the figure of an broker. This is because he can gather some of his followers, his subordinates, willing to meet one of the eligible participants. In other words, this category of political brokers is different from some previous studies. Aspinall and Mada Sukmajati, who focus on researching the phenomenon of money politics in Indonesia, said there are 3 (three) types of brokers in Indonesia, namely successful teams, social networks, and political parties [6]. Meanwhile, the case of Asep Saepudin Muksin shows that there is another phenomenon of political brokers, namely election organizers. The figure of an election organizer broker in Karawang Regency is a person who is respected, respected, and trusted by his followers. Even in the eyes of his followers, they are a leader to be followed.

This broker category is explained by Susan Stokes, who states that the existence of a broker can be a tool to support the electoral interests of candidates [26]. This is because the broker also has a local network or local followers who will later be used to gain profits through the influence he has or support the electoral interests of his clients.

### 3.3 Analysis of the Role of Election Organizing Brokers

Brokers are party loyalists or local intermediaries who can distribute materials to voters, know information about voters' preferences and behavior, and provide benefits to followers [26]. However, it is different if the role of this broker is carried out by the election organizer, which is in charge of connecting the candidate with other election organizers. Based on several cases of violations of the code of ethics above, his role as a broker is believed to help candidates increase their voice, which is usually done by manipulative means.

This is because vote change will not occur without involving several election administrators. This is different from previous research, which mentions the role of brokers in identifying which voters can provide reciprocal norms [27]. So that with the phenomenon of election organizer brokers, the role of brokers is not only as a party that can overcome common problems but also connects election organizers.

Other studies mention the role of brokers as parties who launch clientelistic relationships [27]. This requires that in the case of a clientelistic exchange of voice trading, it will never occur without the involvement of a broker [28]. Brokers are often nicknamed "the Peronist problem-solving network" because of their role as gatekeepers, as well as liaisons for the flow of goods and services from the executive (Mayor) and channeling support and votes from voters [29].

The opinion above seems to narrow the fundamental role of brokers, considering that in other cases of money politics, brokers can fail to succeed in clientelistic exchanges. For example, although politicians have paid local intermediaries in India (village heads) to pay and mobilize voters, these efforts have failed to win over their clients [30]. Local election brokers in Ghana, for example, are unable to identify voter preferences or fail to identify a quarter of voters at their polling stations [31]. The same thing also happened in the case of the election management broker above, where they failed to win their candidate to get their victory in the election.

Several cases of the phenomenon of this election organizer broker failed to win their clients in the 2019 legislative election yesterday. For example, the case of the involvement of election organizers in the Karawang Regency shows that it turns out that using political brokers does not always guarantee victory for candidates participating in

the election. This, at the same time, refutes the opinion of Susan C. Stokes that a broker is a local intermediary not only able to solve problems for his followers but also can provide benefits for his clients to be able to win elections by urging the obedience of his followers to participate in political activities [32].

This is evident in the case of the involvement of the election organizers in Karawang Regency as an election organizer broker solely motivated by material rewards. They forget their duty to raise H. EK Saputra's vote or win him in the 2019 legislative election. The broker's motivation in the case in Karawang Regency is also supported by another study Aspinall states, in the case in Indonesia, brokers often betray or defect, cheat, threaten to defect to their candidates [20]. Many candidates often complain about the loyalty of their workers (middlemen). This is because brokers often have different interests from their clients. Through this condition, Aspinall categorizes them as opportunist brokers, namely a broker solely looking for material gain and is not motivated to seek profit in the long term. From this loyalty problem, H. EK Saputra can experience an election defeat even though he has used the services of an intermediary.

### 3.4 Reasons for Involving Election Organizers as Brokers

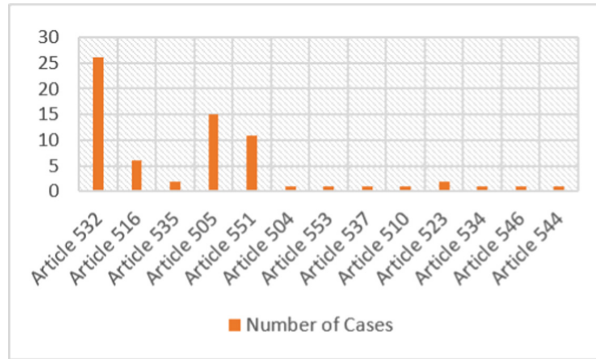
Based on the 2019 legislative election criminal cases, there were a total of 582 (five hundred and eighty-two) cases of election criminal offense categories 20, while as many as 66 (sixty-six) election criminal cases turned out to be the perpetrators of election organizers. This data shows the importance of involving an election administrator. Meanwhile, why this can be considered necessary can be answered through several types of *modus operandi*, which have been proven to be carried out by election organizers in the 2019 legislative election criminal case in Fig. 1.

Figure 1 shows the various types of criminal violations of the 2019 legislative elections, which election organizers carried out. Whereas from the many election criminal cases, there are 9 (nine) *modus* types most often used by defendants who are election organizers. Meanwhile, of the many *modus operandi*, the articles that are most frequently violated are related to:

1. Acts that cause a voter's vote to be of no value or cause sure election participants to receive additional votes or decrease their votes (26 cases);
2. Election organizers (Members of KPU, Provincial KPU, Regency/Municipal KPU, PPK, or PPS) due to their negligence resulted in the loss or alteration of the official report on the recapitulation of the results of the counting of votes or the certificate of the recapitulation of the results of the counting of votes (15 cases);
3. Election organizers (members of KPU, Provincial KPU, Regency/Municipal KPU, PPK, or PPS) which intentionally result in the loss or change of the official report on the recapitulation of the results of the counting of votes or the certificate of the recapitulation of the results of the counting of votes (11 cases).

Through the above case, it can be interpreted that it is essential to involve the election organizers to be believed to carry out vote manipulation. Usually, this is done by stealing or taking the votes of other eligible participants. To increase the vote acquisition of election participants and reduce the vote acquisition of other eligible participants. The





**Fig. 1.** Number of cases and people in district court decisions on election crimes by violation category.

vote change process is not infrequently using vote trading, namely election organizers trading services to help change votes/add votes to eligible participants. This argument is also supported by the findings of Aspinall and Mada Sukmajati, which state that there are 5 (five) modes of fraud in elections, namely, firstly stealing the votes of other candidates from fellow political parties; secondly stealing the votes of other candidates from other political parties; the third buys the votes of other candidates from the same party; the fourth buy the votes of other candidates from other political parties; Fifth, buy votes to PPS, PPK, and Regency/City KPU [6].

## 4 Conclusion

The increasingly competitive elections and the common reasons for material from candidates make the presence of a network of brokers necessary. Since the election period, the reform era has given rise to various broker phenomena. The treasures of new knowledge are obtained through the presence of election management brokers. They consider that no one has ever discussed election management brokers in previous research. The role of election administrators as brokers is different from previous research. Usually, brokers are in charge of connecting candidates with voters and can provide benefits for their clients to win the election. However, it is different from the role of an election management broker, which is in charge of connecting candidates with other election organizers and failing to win their clients in the election. The involvement of this election management broker is not only due to the advantages or abilities he has because he managed to regulate the compliance of his followers. However, more than that, by basing on several cases of criminal election decisions involving election administrators as defendants, they show the same modus operandi. Their involvement is essential in voice change. The same thing also happened to the phenomenon of the Karawang election organizer broker, where he was used by candidates to help introduce himself to other election organizers to help him get the desired vote target.

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