



Youth Voters' Views on the Phenomenon of Money Politics

Maya Mustika Kartika Sari^(✉), Agus Satmoko Adi, Mi'rojul Huda, and Warsono

Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia
mayamustika@unesa.ac.id

Abstract. In postmodern society, the symptoms of political participation and the nature of democratic freedom have resulted in the phenomenon of money politics in election contestation. This can not only appear in political organizations and communities but also develops in other communities that have no political affiliation other than as citizens. Youth voters become one of the targets in the practice of money politics. Opinions and thoughts about rational choice are often used as justification. Youth is identified with people who think critically in politics. This article wants to examine how the attitude of young voters towards the phenomenon of money politics? An important question that has been a question for political and election experts in Indonesia. By using a qualitative method with a case study of the 2020 simultaneous regional elections in East Java. The implication of this research is the phenomenon of young voters who are rational and aware of their political participation, so that they are able to understand in depth the consequences of a political choice. With the nature of Generation Z, the logical consequence of the patron-client phenomenon that has been the hallmark of money politics in Indonesia will fade a little. Young voters will tend to ignore the practices of money politics, or tend to be apathetic to the existing political choices.

Keywords: Youth Voters · Money Politics · Critical · Reciprocity

1 Introduction

Elections are a form of democracy and a means for the people to express their sovereignty over the state and government. Community participation is very important in elections, because it is a form of sovereignty possessed by people who adhere to a democratic system. Sovereignty of the people can be realized in the electoral process to determine who should conduct and supervise the government of the state [1]. The transition of the election mechanism from indirect to direct elections has an impact, namely the widespread spread of money politics. Money politics is often regarded as an important element that determines the victory of candidates, both at the executive and legislative levels. One of the considerations for switching the election mechanism directly is to cut money politics, logically, candidates do not have the ability to buy a large number of people's votes. However, the facts show that even in the direct election, money politics takes place on a massive scale, even though the costs are increasingly expensive because

it involves voters in one electoral district. During the election of regional heads by legislative representatives, money politics has indeed emerged, but in direct elections it has made money politics more widespread [2].

In Indonesia, money politics has become a regular issue in every democratic contestation, both in the election contestation. Money politics not only destroys democracy but can have implications for the birth of elections that are far from honest and fair principles. According to Muhtadi, the number of voters involved in money politics in the 2019 elections was in the range of 19.4% to 33.1%. The range of money politics is very high by international standards, and even places Indonesia as the country with the third largest money politics ranking in the world [3]. In other words, money politics has become the new normal practice in Indonesian elections. In addition, data from the Election Supervisory Body of the Republic of Indonesia, cases of money politics in the 2019 general elections that were decided in court increasingly show that money politics is one of the big challenges going forward, with as many as 67 cases.

Citizen participation is the cornerstone of a democratic nation. Civic participation is “the heart of democracy” and democracy is unthinkable without the ability of citizens to participate freely in governmental processes [4]. The general consensus is that there has been a “crisis of democracy” recently. This is related to a number of factors: repressed belief in conventional politics [5], delegation of policy-making to non-political institutions [6], increasingly negative representation of politicians and official institutions in the media. [7], Personalization. Socio-political values [8, 9]. This has recently contributed to very low participation rates [10] and declining party membership [11], leaving young people deeply alienated from the traditional political mainstream in democracies [12, 13].

In today's democracy, young voters are not enough just to have political knowledge in all its aspects, but are also required to have intellectual skills that are critically practiced, such as listening skills, identifying, describing, analyzing, assessing and creating political issues that become political issues. public issues. Money politics is a political issue that is the main focus of this research. This article wants to see the perception of young voters about money politics during elections. The main arena is that young individual voters as citizens become subjects through the process of “subjectification”, namely the production of a series of actions, expressions, and expressions in the existing field of experience, but are able to reconfigure the field of experience, by offering the value of new experiences in a different political constellation. keep changing. The discourse of money politics among young voters is an illustration of the actualization of political activities of young voters in finding space for their political existence.

There are several ways to spread money politics: (1) Direct money politics can be in the form of cash payments from a certain candidate's “success team” to potential constituents, (2) donations from prospective candidates to political parties that have supported them, or (3) “mandatory contribution” required by a political party to party cadres or prospective candidates who wish to run for governor, regent, or mayor. Meanwhile, money politics indirectly can take the form of distributing prizes or door prizes, distributing basic necessities to constituents, distributing cement in certain electoral districts, and so on. Candidates cannot even calculate exactly how much they have spent on

donations, gifts, banners, and so on, apart from official fees for membership registration, paying witnesses, and other administrative needs.

2 Research Method

This study uses a qualitative method. Qualitative research was chosen because first, through qualitative research, researchers could enter into the internal experiences of youth voters in their electoral process. Second, qualitative research can be carried out to find variables not to test them, so that qualitative research allows researchers to explain the problem being studied in depth and does not have to enter the stage of theory formation. The data collection techniques used were participatory observation, Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and in-depth interviews. The data were analyzed in a research framework that refers to the themes that are the focus of the informants' knowledge, experience, and evaluative thinking.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Understanding the Roots of Money Politics

Money politics and patronage as well as clientilism are phenomena that we are quite familiar with in post-reform Indonesian politics. This is due to the belief that patronage and money politics can influence voter preferences, which in turn will benefit candidates who use this electoral strategy. The term money politics itself is still not clear. This term is still very abstract, so this term is a big phenomenon, used to describe a summary of major events ranging from political corruption, patron-client, to buying and selling votes and crime [12]. In Muhtadi's view, there are two big things discussed in money politics, namely first, money politics operates in the realm of the elite from the President, legislature to regional heads in elections through political party vehicles and spends a lot of money to get ahead. Second, money politics at the lower level where there is a practice of buying and selling votes in elections.

A study conducted by Aspinall and Sukmajati mentions the use of material in the form of patronage which can be in the form of giving cash, goods, services, and other economic benefits. Patronage Clientelism refers to material or other benefits distributed by politicians to voters or supporters. In contrast, clientelism refers to the character of the relationship between politicians and voters or supporters [1]. Aspinall said that the practice of money politics still characterizes the holding of general elections in a number of Southeast Asian countries, including Indonesia. In the implementation of elections in Southeast Asian countries, many practices of money politics are found. Research conducted in four countries (Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines) shows that there are many similar patterns in the implementation of money politics in these countries. Many terms that describe the events that occurred, for example "dawn attack" in Indonesia are also found in Thailand with the term "The night of the barking dogs". While in Papua New Guinea it is known as the "night of the devil". The description of this phenomenon shows that the practices of money politics that occur in Southeast

Asian countries have a pattern that is almost similar to the *modus operandi* which is also similar.

In Aspinal's view, patronage and clientelism are considered as the roots of the spread of money politics in developing countries, this is because patronage and clientelism are seen as socio-cultural products where certain groups and those who have the privilege of giving money or profits in return for the loyalty of their followers. Patronage describes the existence of a personified relationship based on conditional loyalty and reciprocal benefit transactions. While patronage describes more material transactional practices, clientelism refers to the pattern of relations between candidates and political elites, voters or supporters. In clientelism what is relied on are social and religious ties [14].

3.2 Critical Characteristics of Young Voters

Young voters become a very interesting conversation in an electoral context. Not only the large number of young voters who reached 35–40% of the total voters based on data from the Indonesian Scientific Research Institute (LIPI) in 2019. Or add up to around 85 million out of 185 million voters. The impact of youth participation is certainly an attraction for anyone with an interest in the election. LIPI also stated that the characteristics of the millennial generation tend to be rational and aware of their participation (*tirto.id*). In a study conducted by Rahmad [15] young voters were categorized into three groups; First, rational voters are voters who really vote with rational considerations and in-depth analysis. Second, emotionally critical voters, namely voters who are still idealistic and uncompromising. Third, novice voters are voters who have the right to vote based on age.

The strengthening of the “critical citizenship”, often seen among young, well-educated citizens [16] who support democratic values but are highly critical of the democratic system of government, has recently This is related to growing disillusionment with the performance and motivations of governments, political parties, and politicians in general [17]. In addition to a general decline in party membership [16], the party's commitment and political confidence in the established industrial democracy continues to weaken [18]. This entails the growing importance of ‘cause-oriented’ politics and ‘problem-specific’ forms of youth political participation [19]. Industrialized societies such as the UK are also adopting an increasingly ‘educated’ attitude, as democratic institutions and political groups are unable to accommodate an increasingly diverse set of opinions and individualized values, and young people are more educated than previous generations [19].

From this perspective, ‘critical citizens’ are more likely to observe the performance of political actors and are more sensitive to the dysfunctional consequences associated with the broader political system, and thus a university degree is associated with political mistrust. Related. This provides a direct correlation between political distrust and participation in non-electoral politics. Alienation from conventional politics and lack of trust in traditional political institutions have been identified as potential factors behind the rise and spread of youth protests across Europe in times of austerity and austerity measures [20]. Therefore, it can be expected that young people who do not believe in conventional politics or politicians in general are more likely to express their concerns and dissatisfaction in the form of political participation outside of elections. Indeed,

Kaase [21] found that the lower the political confidence, the more likely it was to take direct action in the European context.

3.3 Perception: Money Politics as Unavoidable Reciprocity

The meaning of money politics for voters has a variety of meanings. Those who interpret money politics in a physical aspect, always associate money politics in a form that they can see, such as food or money. Meanwhile, those who interpret money politics in social terms are those who think about the impact of money politics behavior in the future. In addition, they also interpret money politics in a psychological aspect, namely those who interpret money politics as reciprocity between voters and candidates who give money politics. Giving money politics to young voters based on social, personal, or family basis.

The informant said that the money politics was given personally by the candidate. The informant as a practical politician said that giving money politics could be done socially by conducting socialization to voters. In addition, other informants also said that the provision of money politics could be done through distribution from other family members. Therefore, it can be said that some members of the electorate interpret money politics as buying votes, where votes become a commodity to be exchanged for money, this practice is known as a reciprocal cultural practice: because legislative candidates need votes, so candidates with understanding must give rewards to the candidates. voters, such as one informant who chooses a candidate because of the money given before leaving for the polling station, interprets their vote as a commodity that can be traded. However, it is undeniable that other informants interpret money politics as a form of giving gifts to voters, or usually they think of it as a form of thanking candidates to voters for choosing them, for example other informants responded to money politics as a form of voluntary giving as a gift for supporting them.

This perception fosters the behavior of young voters to accept or reject money politics. Some informants accept that they are satisfied with themselves if they get money politics. However, informants who accept money politics feel that they are dissatisfied with candidates who offer money politics, so that they can "betray" the previous agreement. However, for informants who consider money politics as a reciprocal relationship between voters and candidates, they feel satisfied with themselves and the candidates who offer them. In fact, no gift is free. Because all forms of giving are basically always followed by something giving back in the form of rewards in various forms. Therefore, what happens is not limited to giving one person to another, but a system of exchange between two people or groups who give, in which the recipient tries to reciprocate and compensate. Therefore, the process of meaning interpreted by voters is based on the meaning of the voter's self. The meaning that is built is not by itself, but because of the reality that is happening in the current environment. In fact, it is a construction that is built either intentionally or not which is influenced by experience, knowledge, self-concept, and individual motives.

3.4 Response to Money Politics: Adapting Versus Ignoring

Understanding money politics cannot be separated from young voters interpreting themselves. There are three aspects to interpret it, namely physical, psychological, or social

aspects. In addition, interpreting can also be seen from the aspect of individual abilities and attitudes towards what is believed and felt. The form of meaning of money politics is illustrated by voters interpreting money politics from what they see and experience. The attitude of voters towards the offer of money politics is based on three factors: socio-demographic, political attitudes, and political involvement.

These three factors can occur in groups, organizations, or communities that always form a network of interactions between individuals in the system. The way they understand money politics can be seen from their political attitudes and political involvement which has an important influence in shaping the mindset of voters. Meanwhile, for those who do not have political involvement, they view money politics as something that can be forgiven and accepted in society. For example, understanding money politics for those who have involvement in responding to money politics as violating election regulations and undermining electoral governance. For those who do not have an interest in politics, they feel that money politics is something that needs to be avoided, because it does not provide benefits for themselves. Many of them do not know money politics, due to the lack of interaction between individuals in discussing money politics deviations. They think that politics is a taboo subject to discuss, so that money politics is difficult to define.

Informants who have involvement in politics as members of political parties and election success teams. Initially, he rejected money politics in the form of promises. However, interpreting money politics can be accepted in the form of political costs, such as providing transportation money for voters who attend the discussion, free meals, and other certain things. That is, the money politics literature classifies that community involvement networks allow individuals to become targets of vote buying and selling operations. Thus, this study shows the effect of community involvement on the tendency of an individual to be exposed to the process of buying and selling votes in elections.

This money politics behavior will produce a phenomenon of clientelism and patronage. Clientelism is a form of exchange that is personal in nature with the characteristics of obligations and power relations that occur unequally between them. In addition, it is characterized by patron activities that provide access for clients in the form of certain facilities. So that a pattern of mutually beneficial exchange relationships is formed [20].

According to Aspinal [20], patronage is a sharing of profits among politicians and distributing something individually to voters, workers or campaigners. The goal is to get political support from them. The practice of money politics in elections will create a corrupt public official. The basis for corruption in the government is the general election process/regional head election which is dominated by the practice of money politics. The result is high political costs. Therefore, how to prevent corruption can be started by providing political education about money politics.

4 Conclusion

The determinants of money politics cannot be seen from the education and income of voters to reject the offer of money politics. The occurrence of money politics in young voters is related to the involvement of voters in organizations. Young voters interpret politics money based on three meanings of themselves, namely as reciprocity, adaptive response, and apathy. The self-meaning expressed by young voters is based on the

subject's experience of the practice of money politics. Young voters with a personal adaptive meaning are those who have a close relationship with the candidate. For the meaning based on reciprocity are those who interpret money politics as a gift of goods, while for the meaning based on apathy are those who have social attitudes towards the surrounding environment.

Acknowledgments. The authors are grateful to faculty of social sciences and law Universitas Negeri Surabaya that have supported this research writing to be publish.

Authors' Contributions. Author 1 and 3 conceived of the presented idea. Author 1 and 4 developed the theory and verified the analytical methods Author 2 and 3. performed the collecting data and computations. Author 1 and 4 encouraged 2 and 3. to investigate final analysis and supervised the findings of this work. All authors discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript.

References

1. Aspinall, E. and Sukmajati, M. (eds) (2016) *Electoral Dynamics in Indonesia: Money Politics, Patronage and Clientelism at the Grassroots*. Singapore: NUS
2. Press.Fitriyah, "Fenomena Politik Uang Dalam Pilkada," *Politika: Jurnal Ilmu Politik*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 5–14, May. 2013. <https://doi.org/10.14710/politika.3.1.2012.5-14>.
3. B. Muhtadi, " Politik Uang dan New Normal dalam Pemilu Paska-Orde Baru" *Jurnal Antikorupsi INTEGRITAS*, 5 (1), 55–74 e-ISSN/p-ISSN: 2615-7977/2477-118X
4. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32697/integritas.v5i1.413>
5. Verba, S.; Schlozman, K.; Brady, H. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*; Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, USA, 1995.
6. Dalton, R. *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices: The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies*; Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 2004.
7. Hay, C. *Why We Hate Politics*; Polity: Cambridge, UK, 2007.
8. Stoker, G. *Why Politics Matters: Making Democracy Work*; Palgrave MacMillan: Basingstoke, UK, 2006.
9. Beck, U. *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*; SAGE: London, UK, 1992.
10. Bennett, L. *The UnCivic Culture: Communication, Identity, and the Rise of Lifestyle Politics*. *PS Political Sci. Politics* 1998, 31, 41–61. [CrossRef]
11. Fieldhouse, E.; Tranmer, M.; Russell, A. *Something about Young People or Something about Elections? Electoral Participation of Young People in Europe: Evidence with a Multilevel Analysis of the European Social Survey*. *Eur. J. Political Res.* 2007, 46, 797–822. [CrossRef]
12. Van Biezen, I.; Mair, P.; Poguntke, T. *Going, going ... gone? The Decline of Party Membership in Contemporary Europe*. *Eur. J. Political Res.* 2012, 51, 24–56. [CrossRef]
13. Norris, P. *Young People and Political Activism: From the Politics of Loyalties to the Politics of Choice? Report for the Council of Europe Symposium: Young People and Democratic Institutions: From Disillusionment to Participation*, Strasbourg, France, 27–28 November 2003. Available online: <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/Acrobat/COE%20Young%20People%20and%20Political%20Activism.pdf> (accessed on 18 April 2018).
14. Soeseno, Noeri. (2015). "Contentious Politics di Antara Dua Kota di Pantai Barat Norwegia Terkait dengan Kebijakan Pelayanan Kesehatan Bersama". *Jurnal Politik Vol 1 No 1*.

15. Basuki, Rahmad. Esther. 2016."Perilaku Pemilih Pemula dalam Pilkada Serentak di Kecamatan Ciomas Kab. Serang Tahun 2015". *Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan Widyapraja*, Vol. xlii. No 2 tahun 2016
16. Norris, P. (Ed.) *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government*; Oxford University Press: Oxford,UK, 1999.
17. Spannring, R.; Ogris, G.; Gaiser, W. (Eds.) *Youth and Political Participation in Europe: Results of the Comparative Study of Euyoupart*; Barbara Budrich: Leverkusen, Germany, 2008
18. Dalton, R.; Wattenberg, M. (Eds.) *Parties without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*; Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 2000.
19. Norris, P. *Digital Divide: Civic Engagement; Information Poverty and the Internet Worldwide*; Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 2001.
20. Aspinall, E., & Hicken, A. (2019). *Guns for Hire and Enduring Machines: Clientelism Beyond Parties in Indonesia and the Philippines*. *Journal Democratization* 27(1): 137–156.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

