

## Vote Buying in Lampung Local Election

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**Abstract.** Vote buying in elections, both for general and local elections is a phenomenon in Indonesian politics. Lampung Province has implemented direct elections simultaneously in December 2015 and February 2017. This study explains that vote buying can change voter choice in three regional head elections in Lampung Province. This study was conducted with the object of research residing in Way Kanan District on July 2014, Pringsewu District in February 2016 and Bandar Lampung City in November 2015. This study used a survey approach with stratified random sampling method. The survey conducted on 662 respondents in each county or district and city of object being studied. The results show that voters believe the vote buying will happen in local elections. Voters change their choice if they were given bribes of goods, gifts, money, or provision of a project. This research study on how vote buying can change voting choice of voters.

*Keywords:* vote-buying, voting behavior, local election

### Introduction

Almost all political scientists agree vote buying or money politics is a dangerous phenomenon and bad for democracy because it can obscure the principle of honesty and fairness in the election. Vote buying occurred in various elections has given a poor assessment of the democratic process in Indonesia. Indonesia after the new order considered as a democratic country (Platzdasch, 2009: 2), even the new democratic State (Bird and Hill, 2007: 17). Lately, Indonesia is categorized as a country that is still in the zone of transition to democracy. Mietzner (in Bunted an Ufen, 2009: 124) said that Indonesia leads to democratic regimes with low quality of democracy.

Henk Schulte Nordholt (in Harris, et al., 2005: 29) stated that the decentralization of power from central government to the regions in order to have more democratic local government reassures patrimonial culture.

Another opinion said that the decentralization and democratization at the local level enrich racketeering practices

(Hadiz, 2010: 119; Harris, et al., 2005: 51). Hadiz (2010: 120) concludes that money politics in sharing its forms has become a major political game in town and villages in Indonesia today. The authors agreed that money politics has increased more since the era of direct elections and occurred at local level.

The study of the voting behavior in Indonesia have been carried out, both during the new order (among others: Mulkan, 1989, Ghaffar, 1992; Kristiadi, 1996) and the New Order era (like Taqwa, 2004; Liddle and Saiful Mujani 2007 & 2010). However, it does not seem to be focused on the discussion about vote buying relation or money politics. According to Hikmat, (in the Journal of MIMBAR, 2014: 22), voting behavior study defined by the characteristics of the region, the level of intelligence, and critical level in each region.

Generally, voting behavior study learn on how voters make a choice in general election and the factors that influence voters' choice. The model is based on three main factors that influence voters: social psychology model, rational choice model,

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and sociological model.

The sociological model is a voting behavior that puts the sociological factors such as the similarity of national origin, religion and gender in determining political choice. The social psychology model voters tend to be grounded in proximity with a particular political party, while the rational choice model prioritizes profit made by the voter and his group (Evan, 2004: 13). The three models according to the author are still relevant to be used in the context of Indonesia today.

All three voting behavior models above are basically categorized by decisive factors of voting determinants of a person or group of persons (see Niemi 2008: 13-15; Evans, 2004: 6-89; Heywood, 2007: 265- 269; Liddle and Mujani, 2007). However, in addition to categorization of the models, voting behavior can also go through concepts of: (1) compliance of voters (Schaffer, 2005: 3-4; Schaffer, 2007: 17-29); (2) loyalty of voters (Hirschman, 1970; Anderson and Srinivasan, 2003; Evans, 2004; Bratton, 2008: 15; Bartels, 2008; 14; Scaffer, 2007: 185); (3) the decision to select or choose a specific selection (see Redlawsk, 2006: 3-8; Evans, 2004: 4; Vicente 2007: 18; Woshinsky, 2008: 102-132; Zulkerman, 2005; 229)

Based on the previous reference, the author feels it is important to conduct a special study on the relationship between voting behavior and vote buying. Indications of money politics is a serious threat to the quality of democracy and clean government. There are 118 democratic countries in the world, and Indonesia is still considered as one of the group of countries that has low transparency in management of funds in the election campaign (Ward, 2003; 30).

Money politics is based on two sub-variables: political understanding of money and the experience of voters associated with politics of money (see Brusco, et al, 2004: 69; Schaffer, 2004: 84; Vicente 2007: 14; also Lingkaran Survey Indonesia, 2010: 14). It seems in accordance with the opinion of Woshinsky (2008: 132), who stated that the decision to vote in election contest is ultimately determined by the experience and understanding of the electorate.

The influence of money politics on electoral behavior remains a puzzle (Kramon, 2009: 1). For such reasons, elections are voluntary and confidential so that the money-

giver cannot actually control the electoral choices (Stokes, 2005: 315). However, other opinion stated that the influence of money in the political process differs in each community, depending on the social and cultural characteristics (Schaffer, 2005).

The study of vote buying behavior in Indonesia is still limited. As far as the research deepened, the study on relationship of money politics in election is not a particular concern to the researchers earlier. The studies include a study by Rifai (2003) which examined allegations of money politics in the gubernatorial elections in some areas through the mass media, but not detailed enough to do the digging. Another researcher, Lesmana, who examined the direct gubernatorial elections in the western part of Sumatra and Riau Island, concluded that the practice of money politics are believed to be existed but it is very difficult to prove (Hidayat, et al., 2007: 124). Similar studies submitted by Mietzner in the case of elections in North Sulawesi. It also concluded the same results regarding the strong political influence of money in elections, and did not clearly explained the relationship between money politics and voting behavior (Bunte and Ufen, 2009: 124-149). Nurdin's study (2014) explained well about the behavior of money politics in Banten Governor Election in 2011 in Pandeglang. Research conducted by the Election Commission (KPU) West Bandung regency (2014) on money politics in legislative elections in 2014. Another study was also carried out by KIP (General Election Commission) of Aceh's Bireuen (2015) regarding money politics in the 2014 election.

Barenscoot & Purba Study (2014) described the vote buying occurred in Lampung gubernatorial election in 2014. The research results have been collaborations between companies incorporated in Sugar Group Company (SGC) and the candidate for governor of Lampung, using influence and the power of money, especially the distribution of sugar in Lampung in gubernatorial election of 2014. Various previous studies provided initial hypothesis for this research which stated that vote buying can influence voters choices.

Based on the description above, researcher is trying to find answers about vote buying or money politics in the local context: the local elections (*pilkada*) in the counties and cities in the province of

Lampung.

## Research Method

This study is the result of a combination of three different studies, but specializes at some points of vote buying or money politics phenomenon. The object of this research conducted in two counties (districts) and one city, Way Kanan District on July 2014, Pringsewu District on February 2016 and Bandar Lampung City on November, 2015.

This study uses a quantitative method through a survey using stratified random sampling method. The survey conducted on 662 respondents in each district and the city that became the object of the survey. Some villages or *kelurahan* within urban areas were selected using stratified random sampling method. It was based on the number of voters from the final voters list in each region.

Samples taken from this survey based on a formula nomogram by Hery King (in Sugiyono, 2010: 98). For the population around 1.000.0000, samples should be taken from minimum of 662 respondents to obtain accurate survey with error between 1% to 5%. The object of this research was total samples taken from sub-samples in the district/regency/city. Each district will be divided into 2 to 5 villages/sub-elected region with a large pitch sequence of the final voters list (DPT) that became the object of the research.

## Scope of Vote Buying

Vote buying has different meanings and is often understood in different contexts in some countries, depending on factors such as culture and tradition of political and electoral models (Schaffer, 2007: 25). For example, in US politics, some donors donated a large sum of money to a particular political party or presidential candidate or candidates for governor to protect the business interests of the donors in campaign. In the Philippines, money politics can be defined as the use of money or compensation in vote-buying activities directly to influence voters and support candidates who donated (Forest and Teresita, 2000: 94).

One definition of vote-buying often cited by many circles is Etzioni-Halaevy's who stated that vote-buying is the exchange of

political support with personal material gain (Heidenheimer, et al., 1989; 287) or the use of money and direct benefit to influence voters (Bryan 2005: 4). Both definitions emphasize the purpose, which is to get a personalized content or go directly to voters in exchange for political support.

A similar definition is given by Fox, who explained vote buying as "political rights exchange for material benefits (Fox, 1994; 151-184). It happens in the elections and also occurs in competition from non-electoral politics. Fox (1994) was not too concerned about the purchase of vote buying, but put more attention to the exchange politics of the candidates with their political supporters. In the Indonesian context, Supriyanto (2005: 3) presented two political understandings about money. The first one refers to the practice of money politics, which he called exchange with the position or policy or political decisions.

An understanding of the practices of money politics is particularly those which concern directly to the voters, campaign transportation costs, distribution of money/goods, food distribution or cement to build places of worship, and the "dawn attack" (*serangan fajar*) which means who do first and grab the first chance, especially in campaign. The first definition refers to the events or non-electoral political competition, which does not directly involve voters. The second definition clearly refers to the general election with political actors involving a lot of money, the candidates and voters, but with more diverse forms of transactions. The author is more inclined to the second understanding with the involvement of political actors and voters in the election, but the first definition is also asked to the respondent in an effort to add material and to enrich the data.

Vote buying actors, had at least five different interests, namely voters, candidates, political parties, election administration, and funders (businessmen, donors). Bribery goods, either in cash or other materials, are to be exchanged with the position, the decision, or political decision (Supriyanto, 2005: 3).

In the context of elections, there are four circles of vote buying. First, the transaction between the economic elite (money owner) and the candidates head of the region. Second, the transaction between the prospective head region and the political party has the right to nominate. This practice

is summarized by Buehler and Tan (2007: 67) as "the parties preying money from candidates."

*Third*, the transaction between the candidate and the campaign team of election officials who has the authority to counting votes. The purpose is to add vote in unauthorized ways. *Fourth*, the transaction between candidates or voters with campaign team which shape a sensible purchase.

The candidates distribute money directly to potential voters in hopes of getting instant voice (Supriyanto, 2005: 4). The author believes that these four circles of vote buying occur more in the context of local elections.

There are at least three reasons why the vote buying should be considered illegal in a political contest in the State (Ward, et al., 2003: 2). The first reason, the purchase of the most basic votes considered to reduce the application of the principle of justice in the election. The rationality of voters in assessing the quality of candidates (individuals or political parties) can be disrupted since participants offer the lure of money or other materials. Injustice occurs because the voters have different economic ability. This argument is based on the Buchanan and Tullock studies (1990: 27-274), which illustrate the relationship between economic feasibility and political skills from the perspective of the electorate.

The second reason; Vote buying are considered to pollute the electoral process and affect the overall quality of democracy. Bargaining power can make voters ignore the evaluation of objective indicators (Ward, et al., 2003: 5).

The third reason is more practical, the use of illegal money can encourage corruption and abuse of power. Experience in a number of West African countries showed that the money used to buy voted comes from the smugglers and unauthorized activities (Vicente and Wantchekon, 2009: 17). In the countries of East and Southeast Asia, such as Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, the Philippines and Thailand, money politics is often associated with corruption and abuse of power (Austin, 2004: 55-67). Even in Latin America, practice of vote buying is conducted by the drug cartels as an effort to put some people in public office through legal elections (Hodess, 2004: 76-82). Three reasons above become important to examine the basis of local study

because the realm of local elections is more complex due to the strong national than local primordial elements.

Schaffer (2008: 198) says there are at least four types of motivation among voters of why they accept the offer of money politics. The first is the short-term economic needs of the voters to gain a personal advantage shortly. Second is a worry feeling about the possibility of retaliation from a candidate if voters reject the offer of money politic.

Third is related to a sense of personal responsibility to the broker (team for success) who has given money or goods, which usually consists of significant others, friends, or family members. Fourth is the common belief that money politics is a sign of virtue or proof of consciousness of the electorate. The third and fourth motive is explanation of why vote buying is often difficult to remove (Schaffer, 2008: 198). In the local context the authors believe that short-term economic needs are the main drivers, especially in rural areas.

## **Vote Buying in Lampung Province**

In the context of Lampung Province, since the local elections conducted in 2004 until now, the issue of vote-buying or money politics has been heard since 2014, when the election of the governor of Lampung and legislative elections was held simultaneously. Based on the research, authors try to provide another perspective through research in the counties and cities in the province of Lampung.

Lampung held local elections in December 2015 at eight regions in Lampung Province. The researchers took two elections as the object; Bandar Lampung and Way Kanan. For local simultaneous elections in February 2017, researchers took Pringsewu election. The survey was conducted at three locations before the elections, and as a separate part of the election mapping survey ever conducted by the researchers.

## **Bandar Lampung Local Election**

The results of the research conducted in the mayor election of Bandar Lampung.

Distribution of goods amounted to 6, 8% of the total respondents; distribution of money amounting to 8.6% of the total

respondents; when the two combined, there was 15.4% of the total number of respondents. Vote buying indications with money and goods was 15, 4%.

Potential changes of voter preferences in local elections in Bandar Lampung with exchange for distribution money and goods were 15, 4%. This indication was largely occurred on mayoral elections (*Pilwakot*) Bandar Lampung.

**Table 1**  
**Expectations of voters when joined the election campaign in Bandar Lampung Local Election (Pilwakot) 2015**

Information	Respondent	Percentage
Vision, mission and work program	237	35.8%
Distribution of goods	45	6.8%
Distribution of money	57	8.6%
Political Contract	63	9.5%
Entertainment (song, dangdut)	221	33.4%
Photos (selfie) with candidates	39	5.9%
Total	662	100%

Source: Survey results in Bandar Lampung City, November 2015

**Table 2**  
**Model of vote-buying which is believed by respondents will happen in Pilwakot Bandar Lampung, December 2015**

Information	Respondent	Percentage
Vote buying (directly)	193	29.1%
Gift from the candidates	61	9.2%
Services and activities from candidates	8	1.2%
Public goods projects financed by state	9	1.3%
money (pork barrel project)	17	2.6%
Electoral fraud	313	47.3%
The appearance of identity (based on religion and ethnicity)	5	0.8%

Fundraising by candidates	40	6%
All happened (points 1-8)	16	2.4%
Total	662	100%

Source: Survey results in Bandar Lampung City, November 2015

Based on the data presented on the above table, it was a surprise that election fraud was chosen by 47, 3% of respondents, followed by the vote buying of 29.1%. For the respondents, the reason they choose the answer reflected from the experience of Pilwakot in 2010 and the 2014 gubernatorial election, in which there were a very strong indication of money politic took place. The fear of election fraud occurred because Lampung prone to cheating with the case of some local election commissioner was fired, as well as experience in the legislative elections in 2014.

Respondents were not fully believed in the performance of Regional Election Commission (*KPUD*) and other organizers. It is caused by traumatic events in the past where some of the commissioners of the Election Commission in violation of laws and received sanctions from the Honorary Council General Election Organizer (DKPP) centers, ranging from administrative sanctions to the toughest sanctions of dishonorable discharge.

### Way Kanan Local Election

The results of research conducted in Way Kanan local election.

**Table 3**  
**Expectations of voters when joined the election campaign in Way Kanan Local Election, December 2015**

Information	Respondent	Percentage
Work program	88	13.3%
Distribution of goods	125	18.8%
Vission, Mission and candidate exposure	129	19.5%
Distribution of money	65	9.8%
Entertainment (dangdut songs)	248	37.4%
Others	7	1%
Total	662	100%

Source: Survey results in Way Kanan, July 2014

Voters expecting a distribution of goods were to 18, 8%, while those expecting to distribution of money were 9.8%. Total both reached 28, 6%. That amount was larger than the voters in Bandar Lampung which only reached 15, 4%. Figures of respondents showed 28.6% voters in Way Kanan still taking into account that provision or distribution of money and goods as something natural and should be done as a form of compensation for participating in the campaign. They did not work because they participate in the campaign, so they could not make money during that day. The majority of respondents were farmers and farm workers.

Compensation for not working on that day should be paid with money or goods in exchange for the loss of income. The authors analyzed that voters in Way Kanan expect the provision of goods and money higher than those in Bandar Lampung because voters in Way Kanan mostly located in rural areas with lower income than the voters in Bandar Lampung. Most of the voters in Way Kanan district work as farmers and other form of farming, in contrast to those in Bandar Lampung who work in services area and entrepreneurs with better income levels. According to Arwiyah (2012: 86) the socioeconomic status of the community affects the level of political participation. Educational status, income, and occupational differences affect the voter participation. The low socioeconomic status of the people of Way Kanan and Pringsewu regencies effect their political participation, and based on the research done, requires the compensation of money and goods to be active in election.

**Table 4**  
**Model of vote-buying which is believed by respondents will happen in Way Kanan local election (pilbup), December 2015**

Information	Respondent	Percentage
Vote buying (directly)	265	40%
Gift from candidates	77	11.6%
Services and activities from candidates	13	1.9%
Public goods	14	2.1%
Projects financed by state money (pork barrel project)	22	3.3%
Electoral fraud	180	27.2%

The appearance of identity (based on religion and ethnicity)	35	5.3%
Fundraising candidates	29	4.4%
All happened (points 1-8)	27	4%
Total	662	100%

Source: Survey results in the Way Kanan district, July 2014

Voters in Way Kanan believe that vote-buying will occur in Way Kanan local elections. The assumption caused many candidates started their immediate campaign (guerrilla) during the survey and had already given many items, ranging from rice, flour, cooking oil, sugar, *mukena*, veil and even inserted money into sealed envelopes. This made 40%, respondents believed that vote-buying will take place during the polling of head of local elections in Way Kanan district. The second position placed by respondents of 27, 2% who said that fraud in the elections will take place. Electoral fraud can happen at the time of voting in the election conducted by the committee, from TPS and KPPS up to higher level.

The elections of district heads in Way Kanan in 2015 only presented two pairs of candidates, incumbent Bustami Zainudin and his opponent Adipati Surya who was the Chairman of Way Kanan Regency (DPRD). With limited candidate pairs, the chances of getting rewards were also limited and pushed the candidates to compete and give their best to hook voters. The results of table 4 illustrate that voters in Way Kanan convinced that their votes should be paid by money or goods since the Election Day has interfered their work routines in the fields. Wasting of work time should be replaced with commensurate value similar to the results they would get if working in the fields.

### Pringsewu Local Election

The results of research conducted in Pringsewu local election.

Voters in Pringsewu district expected to get goods (14,8%) and money (11.8%) during the campaign. Vote-buying by summing the provision of goods and money reached 26,6%. This figure was

smaller than the number of vote-buying in Way Kanan which was 28,6%. Pringsewu district, which is geographically strategic and economic in Lampung province, could not avoid its constituents to be also affected by distribution of money and goods.

**Table 5**  
**Expectations of voters when joined the election campaign in Pringsewu Local Election (pilbup) in 2017**

Information	Respondent	Percentage
Work program	113	17%
Distribution of goods	98	14.8%
Vision, Mission and candidate exposure	148	22.3%
Distribution of money	78	11.8%
Entertainment (dangdut songs)	212	32%
Others	13	1.9%
Total	662	100%

Source: Survey results in Pringsewu District, February 2016

**Table 6**  
**Model of vote-buying which is believed by respondents will happen in Pringsewu local election (pilbup), February 2017**

Information	Respondent	Percentage
Vote buying (directly)	143	21.6%
Gift from candidates	89	13.4%
Services and activities from candidates	24	3.6%
Public goods	32	4.8%
Projects financed by state money (pork barrel project)	37	5.6%
Electoral Fraud	137	20.7%
The appearance of identity (based on religion and ethnicity)	134	20.2%
Fundraising candidates	30	4.5%
All happened (points 1-8)	36	5.4%
Total	662	100%

Source: Survey results in Pringsewu District, February 2016

According to voters, vote buying believed to be occurred in Pringsewu was quite high with the number of 21,6% of respondents.

The respondents also saw vote buying in the implementation of the previous Pringsewu election in 2012. The distribution of goods such as sugar, flour, and other food packages was also rife in election 2014.

Local Elections (*pilkada*) in 2012 and 2014 made respondents believe that the purchase or distribution of money will happen in Pringsewu election (*pilbup*) in 2017.

Table 6 shows that the respondents also believed the election fraud will occur (20, 7%) and appearance of identity (20.2%). The authors' analysis is strongly correlated with the results of Pringsewu District elections in 2012. At that time, a strong candidate Ririn Kuswantari had only 700 voters difference from Sujadi Saddat, who was paired with the son of the governor of Lampung Syachrudin ZP. Survey of Pringsewu society, political analysts, local democracy, and local institutions in Lampung found that Ririn Kuswantari's supposed victory was taken by Syachrudin ZP by changing the result of election using his powers and made Sujadi Saddat - Handitya Narapati (Syachrudin ZP's son) won in the Pringsewu elections.

Related to appearance of identity which reached 20,2%, it was inseparable from the religious Pringsewu society. It is a highly need for the political image of candidates to come from the religious and social organization. The existence of religious organizations such as Nahdatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah become important to give a religious image. The appearance of identity rather than religious, ethnic, or ethnic primordial identity factor is also important. The biggest ethnic in Pringsewu is Javanese ethnic, so that Javanese culture or behavior needs to be put forward. This is important in order to hook the biggest Javanese voters in Pringsewu. Regent of Pringsewu elected for the second time was the incumbent Sujadi Saddat, a Pringsewu NU figures in the district and great Kiai inTanggamus.

According to Faridl (2003: 196), *Kiai* became elite strategic and figures in Islam. *Kiai* is sources of legitimacy of the various problems facing the communities and make them play a strategic role, especially in the aspects of political and social life in Indonesia.

## Conclusions

Vote buying in the research of election of regional head is caused by: First, voters still doubts over their choices and waiting to see what will be provided by the candidates; Second, the habits of the contesting candidates who always give gifts or souvenir which is considered a form of cultural customs; Third, majority voters of farmers and farming in Way Kanan and Pringsewu felt that their work time is wasted due to the election process and it reduced their earnings, so that getting money or goods for their participating in the campaign or election is very reasonable. Voters expected something useful (money or goods) for the political support they granted.

Social and economic factors in the study sites remained low after the last vote buying. Area with a population of low income usually targeted for vote-buying in practice. In this case is district of Way Kanan and Pringsewu, where most farmers voters shifting their political selection and choose those who give a sufficiently large exchange of money or goods. This also happened in Bandar Lampung, although not as big as the other two districts with the economic status of the people working as laborers and private workers.

Trauma of the past is also influencing the votes, as happened in the Pringsewu, where traumatic political events occurred during the previous elections. Conclusion of this study taken from three different locations shows that voters can influence their choice and likely to change if they were given goods or money.

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