

Money Politics and the Obstacles on National Leadership Succession

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Abstract

This paper is a reflection on the succession of national leadership, especially at the level of regional leaders. The succession of the national leadership is currently facing various problems, including insufficient competencies, poor quality of regeneration from political parties, and the presence of many prospective leaders who suddenly enter during the election process. The problems that occur in the regeneration of national leaders are believed to occur due to many factors. One of the most influential factors in the author's view is the rise of money politics in the Pilkada. Money politics is a very serious obstacle in democratic life because it has proven successful in blocking the way for the regeneration of potential leaders. Likewise, political parties are often trapped in the choice to carry candidates with "deep pockets" to finance party operations. Finally, money politics that has become entrenched has also become the new normal by directing people to vote for candidates with the lure of material instead of the program to be carried out. This is also supported by the economic condition and education of the Indonesian people which are still relatively low. In addition, direct local elections, which have been held directly so far, have also added space for more fertile money politics. Therefore, this paper proposes a solution that can be taken to improve the current system. The suggestion from the author is the implementation of the Asymmetric Election System which can be implemented by carrying out two alternative electoral systems. The alternative electoral system will be applied by looking at the parameters of democracy that will be the measure in each region. For areas with a high parameter, local elections can be run by direct election. On the other hand, in regions with low democratic parameters, local elections must be carried out with an indirect system. The proposed indirect Pilkada system is not the same as the indirect Pilkada during the New Order, there are some changes and improvements so that community participation becomes more accommodated. It is hoped that with the proposed system, money politics can be eradicated and the Pilkada can return to its function as a succession of national leadership in the regions.

Keywords:

Money Politics; Asymmetric Election; National Leader; Deliberation; Pancasila; Democracy

INTRODUCTION

After the 1998 reform, Indonesia has continued to improve and implement the democratic system more broadly. One of the fruits of democracy is the direct election of regional heads

which has been running since several events until now. As a democracy, many assessments place Indonesia as one of the largest democracies in the world. However, many judgments are inversely proportional to these advantages and place Indonesia as a second-class democracy, or a flawed democracy. There are at least two major research institutions that confirm this, including

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The Economist Unit in its annual report that places Indonesia as a disabled democracy (EIU, 2021). One of the factors that cause this is the rise of money politics which undermines the quality of democracy itself.

Money politics has become an obstacle in implementing democracy in Indonesia. The rise of money politics has made political costs very high. Thus, the majority of eligible contestants have to spend and provide quite a lot of money to participate in the Pilkada process in Indonesia. The jumbo fees from the Pilkada also contributed to the number of corruption cases from regional heads. It is recorded that until 2021, there have been 429 regional heads who have had to serve sentences for corruption cases since 2005 (detik.com, 2021). The rise of money politics also has an impact on a new pattern in political culture in Indonesia. Muhtadi (2019) stated that money politics has become a new normal in society, where people will choose candidates with larger financial pockets, rather than paying attention to the visions and missions offered by the candidates.

The breakdown of the national leadership succession system is one of the excesses that must be accepted from the reality of widespread money politics. Nowadays, it can be very difficult to find a quality leader who can be relied on to say no to national leadership. The leader

figures are mostly filled by people who have never been prepared and educated by political parties as cadres. Political parties are always entangled in their dilemma when advancing their candidates in various regional head elections because they have to determine between popularity, quality, or candidates with great logistics. So that in many cases, political parties will always be trapped in mere electoral interests, without considering the quality of the candidates being promoted.

The cadre of national leaders, especially in local government, will be the focus of this paper. The delayed succession of national leadership will have an impact on national development. This of course will not be encouraging, because Indonesia is currently welcoming the demographic bonus in the next few years, where the leadership factor will play a very decisive role and determine the direction of Indonesia in the future. Likewise, with the Vision of Indonesia Gold, which will fall in 2045, it takes competent leadership so that Indonesia can take off and achieve the vision that has been drawn up. So that this paper is expected to provide an idea and suggestion in avoiding problems in the regeneration of national leadership due to money politics.

Genealogy of Money Politics in Pilkada

Currently, there is an impression in the community that money politics is a very common phenomenon. The practice of money politics is vulgarly shown in the process of public political participation, especially during the Pilkada. Political practices seem to have been grounded and become the new normal in every political contestation. Money politics has even begun to be carried out since the nomination process until dawn before the collection of counts is carried out. This issue must then be taken seriously by every component of the nation because justifying money politics, will certainly foster various other implications that seriously stifle substantial democracy.

Money politics is the act of giving a certain amount of money to win over candidates who are contesting in the middle of the Pilkada. This is in line with Kholiq's opinion in Gustia (2015) which states that money politics is an act of dividing money or giving other materials, both privately owned and belonging to political parties to gain influence. Money politics aims to get a lot of votes or to drop one candidate pair in an election. Jeffri (2020) classifies the practice of money politics into three categories, namely vote buying, vote brokerage, and political corruption. Vote Buying is an exchange of goods, services, or money with votes in an election, a vote

broker is a person who represents a candidate/party to buy votes. While political corruption is all forms of bribery to politicians to obtain policies that benefit certain parties.

Money politics is currently very rampant and has become a "compulsory ritual" before the election. The repeated practice in society has made money politics seem not a violation of the Pilkada process. Even Muhtadi (2020) said that money politics was present amid a wave of democratic development with the rise of clientelistic strategies by candidate pairs. Several factors cause the proliferation of money politics in society. First, economic limitations, education level, weak institutional political parties, minimal political funding, and the existence of a Client Patron culture. In other words, widespread money politics cannot be separated from the economic condition of the people. Economic limitations will always be an obstacle to realizing elections that are free from money politics. Przeworski (2005) even mentions that democracy will always be fragile to apply to poor countries. This opinion is also reinforced by the concept of democracy threshold by Gutmann (1999) which makes the economy one of the pillars of democracy. Therefore, economic conditions will always make people think rationally to get benefits or rewards from political compensation for political party candidates.

In a study, La Ode (2016) explains the relationship between economic limitations and the rise of money politics in the Pilkada. The more poor people in an area, the more money politics will occur during the Pilkada. People with low economies tend to receive benefits from the practice of money politics in the Pilkada. Even the existence of money politics is considered to help reduce the family's economic burden. In contrast to people with upper middle income, the opposite will apply. In people who already have sufficient income, money politics will not have much influence on preferences and candidates to be elected in the Pilkada.

The relationship between the low economy of the community which will certainly cause money politics is also found in various studies. One of them is Przeworski and Limongi (1996) who found that under \$6,600 per capita society, would not be compatible with democracy. In this regard, BPS (2020) released the income per capita of the Indonesian people currently still at a nominal value of \$ 4,400. This figure puts Indonesia in a vulnerable condition when implementing democracy, especially direct democracy. One of the parameters that can explain this is that people's incomes are still low, which will lead people to tend to accept money politics. So that democracy cannot run as it should, and the regeneration of

national leaders will only stop at figures who have or can provide money for their political agenda.

The second factor causing money politics is the low level of education. The low level of education causes people to have low knowledge of politics and cannot understand the substance of the Pilkada contestation. According to BPS data (2021), the average length of education for Indonesian people is only around 8.24 years or has not finished at the junior high school level. This figure is still exacerbated by the illiterate population of 9.46% of the population aged over 45 years (BPS, 2020). People with low levels of education and poor literacy must have a systemic impact on the quality of democracy and politics. In line with this, Lipset (1959) stated that the higher the level of education, the more likely democracy is to grow sustainably. Therefore, it is difficult to imagine that Indonesia's democracy can develop well if we see that there is still a slump in the field of education.

The relationship between democracy and the level of education is also stated by Dewey (1916) who views that high education is a prerequisite for democracy. The existence of higher education can be a space for promoting a wider democratic culture that will lead to prosperity and political development. A high level of education is certainly greatly influenced by the economic

conditions of a society. An advanced and well-established economic condition is an instrument in realizing a high level of education that can trigger the growth of democracy. In addition, political awareness and political participation of the community are also correlated with knowledge and awareness of the rights and obligations of the community in political activities.

In addition to economic and educational factors, cultural factors also influence the widespread practice of money politics in Indonesia. Hicken's research (2007) shows that the cultural aspect influences the practice of buying and selling votes. Currently, the public considers the giving made by candidates in the Pilkada to exchange their voting rights as a natural thing. This is because there is a culture in the community where giving gifts or rewards is commonplace.

Concerning the culture of giving rewards, of course, it cannot be separated from the culture of feudalism which has been inherited since the days of the kingdom. Feudalism has created an unequal social stratification between the political elite and the lower-class indigenous people. One of the impacts is the emergence of a thick Patron-client phenomenon. In Indonesian political life, Patron-clients are difficult to avoid, especially with the direct Pilkada which has made the practice of Patron-Clients

more widespread. Without realizing it, the Client Patron has also been ingrained and transformed in various forms with various types of exploitation and suppression.

The fourth factor that causes money politics in society is a flawed political party institution. Money politics culture is the result of the lack of awareness of each political party carrying to discipline its candidates so as not to commit violations, which is the dominant record of the implementation of the Pilkada. The practice of money politics and the party system cannot be separated and influence each other. The existence of the practice of money politics in the party system and local elections is believed to be one of the causes of the declining quality and performance of democratic institutions in Indonesia. On the other hand, a transparent and accountable party system can reduce the practice of money politics within the party.

Money Politics in Pilkada

Money politics is not only prone to damage the democratic system, but it is also very vulnerable to damaging morals and social order in society. The frequent use of politics in the political arena has also fostered a beggar mentality in society. Even the role of religious leaders is also often involved to legitimize money politics carried out by candidates so that voters are willing to accept and

choose candidates who give this amount of money (Salama and Chikudate, 2021). So that people will tend to accept the amount of money given by the candidate without the burden of guilt. This is bad news for democracy in Indonesia because it will undermine the principles of democracy itself. Equality and equal opportunity for anyone competent to be able to develop the region will be evicted by someone rich and able to provide more material to voters.

Money politics in Pilkada can occur in various forms and stages. The forms and stages of money politics in the Pilkada are the existence of political dowries at the nomination stage, buying and selling of votes at the campaign and voting stages and bribes to election organizers against the voting results in the data recapitulation stage, some even up to the stage of dispute resolution on election results. . But the most widely performed in the elections is vote-buying (Vote Buying) and political dowry.

The sale and purchase of votes and political dowries are the cause of the high cost of contesting in the Pilkada. Candidates must prepare a large capital to be nominated and to buy people's votes to win the contestation. The intense competition makes the candidates have to get big financial support and often need sponsors. The KPK report (2020) also states that the sale and purchase of votes in the Pilkada has led to rampant

corruption cases in regional heads. In its research, the KPK found that 82.3 percent of the candidates for regional heads interviewed admitted to having donors in Pilkada funding (KPK, 2020). Funding by donors will not be done free of charge by expecting a certain return after the Pilkada can be won. As a result, the corruption of the Regional Head cannot be avoided because of the demand for a "return on capital" after the contestation. In the KPK data (2020) until 2020, no less than 143 regional heads have been charged with corruption. This of course refers to the rampant corruption committed by regional heads.

Financial problems also seem to ensnare political parties that tend to choose candidates with sufficient material to contest in the Pilkada. Political dowries are often a stumbling block for potential candidates or cadres to be able to advance in the election contestation. According to Yunus (2018), political dowries are money requested by political parties to carry certain candidates. This seems to be something that is commonplace and is applied by political parties in carrying their candidates in the Pilkada with the excuse of financing the campaign and witnesses in the Pilkada. Money politics has become a burden for candidates during the nomination and election process so that when elected, candidates will tend to seek replacement money through

corrupt means. This phenomenon is proven by the many cases of corruption that occur due to transactional politics such as political dowries (Ahmad, 2018). Apart from being able to have a systemic impact on the government, the issue of political dowry also clearly hinders potential leader candidates from being able to contest and serve as Regional Heads.

The rule that requires political parties to earn their own money, with very minimal assistance from the state, is another factor that also encourages political parties to expect dowry. Based on Law no. 2 of 2011 concerning Political Parties, one of the sources of funding for political parties comes from APBN assistance. The amount of this fund in PP Number 1 of 2018, is set at only Rp. 1000,- per vote. This value is very small when compared to the operational needs of Political Parties. This is what often encourages political parties to choose rich candidates, to cover the expenses of political parties. Therefore, it is very likely that cadres whose finances are limited even though they have potential cannot be candidates in the Pilkada.

Implications of Money Politics and Pilkada on National Leadership Succession

The rise of money politics in society has not only damaged the foundations of democracy but has also damaged the succession of national leadership.

Currently, Indonesia is faced with the difficult problem of finding a quality leader who can be relied upon to hold the milestone of national leadership. The "instant" leadership figure who currently leads several regions is the result of a money politics culture that has been lasting and widespread in society. This certainly shows the succession of Indonesian national leadership that has been noted. Jeffry (2020) states that there are three impacts of money politics on Indonesia's national leadership system, including inhibiting more competent candidates, damaging healthy competition, and destroying representative democracy.

One of the important pillars of democracy in Indonesia is representative democracy which is in line with the implementation of the values of Pancasila in the fourth precept which reads " Popularity led by wisdom in deliberation or representation ". Representative democracy is the hallmark of democracy in Indonesia. Article 18 paragraph (4) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia states that the Governors, Regents, and Mayors are elected democratically. The notion of democracy does not necessarily have to be carried out with direct local elections by the people. This is also confirmed by the Constitutional Court's Decision Number 072-073/PUU-II/2004 which states that both direct and indirect

democracy is constitutionally valid. Therefore, both direct and indirect elections can be carried out in Indonesia because they are following the ideological values of the Indonesian nation.

Seeing the diversity of regions both economically, culturally, or demographically, the implementation of direct and indirect Pilkada must pay attention to regional conditions. This is in line with the opinion of Lipset and Limongi in the previous discussion that the prerequisite for a mature democracy is the welfare of the people, followed by a well-established level of education and economy so that they can run democracy rationally. These are the problems faced by Indonesia with the obstacles to the implementation of democracy in the implementation of regional elections. The direct Pilkada system in Indonesia has fertilized the waste of democracy that raises problems such as corruption, money politics, and the large number of candidates for regional heads. The reality faced by the Indonesian people today is that it is necessary to improve a more compatible democratic system to be implemented in Indonesia for the sake of quality democracy and the sustainability of better leadership succession.

Asymmetric Election

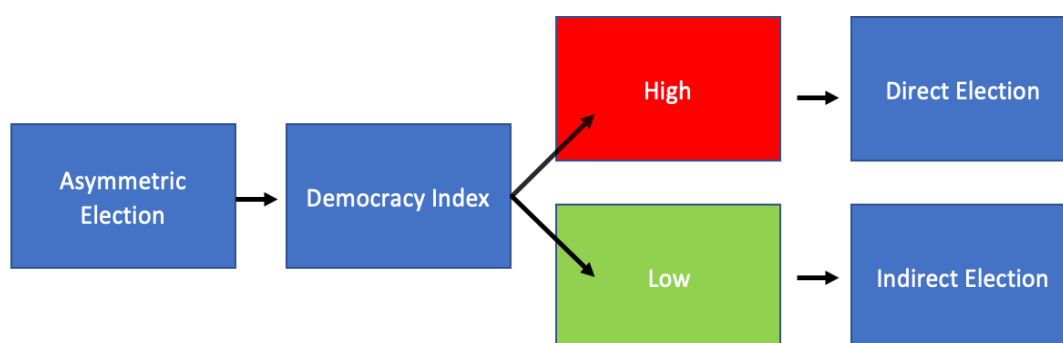
Based on some of the descriptions above, a tactical and deep-rooted step is needed to be able to resolve the problems of money politics that hinder the regeneration of national leadership. One of the efforts that can be done is to change the Pilkada system which has been run directly by the community to be replaced with a more compatible scheme to be implemented. The author is of the view that the Asymmetric Pilkada scheme can be applied to eliminate money politics and the crisis of national leadership. Asymmetric Pilkada is an election system carried out to accommodate the needs of each region by taking into account the conditions and challenges that exist in each region. Quoting Bung Hatta's sentence, "When people mention Indonesia, two things come to mind; First, Indonesia is a country that has a very wide area, and secondly, a country that has a very high level of community diversity. Indonesia's diversity is a gift, on the other hand, wisdom is also needed in managing this diversity. Therefore, the Pilkada that hits every region with a direct Pilkada scheme can injure Indonesia's diversity. Asymmetric Pilkada can be seen as a solution to accommodate differences in Indonesia. Mahardika and Fatayati (2020) also stated that the need for asymmetric regional elections is very urgent because

the direct regional election system presents a variety of more complicated problems.

The implementation of asymmetric regional elections is a manifestation of Indonesia's diversity which has its characteristics. Therefore, a review of the direct Pilkada system that has been carried out so far is an absolute must. So far, there have been several studies that explain the urgency of asymmetric elections in various platforms and schemes. Nuryanti (2015) explained that the implementation of asymmetric Pilkada itself is a form of government intervention so that higher quality Pilkada can be realized immediately. Another opinion was conveyed by Fatoni (2020) who explained that the asymmetric Pilkada is an urgent need to be implemented in politically and economically immature areas such as Papua. In areas such as Papua, political and economic consolidation is not as

well established as in big cities in Java. Therefore, the asymmetric Pilkada will be a solution to the impasse in the implementation of the Pilkada which is still not optimal so far.

The author is of the view that the asymmetric Pilkada that will be carried out will later divide the Pilkada system into several kinds of schemes by taking into account the parameters of democracy in the area. Some of the parameters that are measured include education level (average length of education and literacy rate), regional economic index (per capita income and regional original income), National Resilience Index, and Election Vulnerability Index. Some of these parameters will then determine the scheme that must be used in regional elections. The following is the asymmetric Pilkada scheme that the author proposes to implement in Indonesia.



Regions that have a HIGH parameter level are allowed to use the direct Pilkada scheme. This direct election

system is carried out with the assumption that every voter has matured in democracy. So that money politics will

have no effect and direct local elections can be carried out properly. The Pilkada in Makassar in 2018 is a clear example of the maturity of the community with high democratic parameters on the success of the Pilkada. In the Pilkada event, even though the candidate has succeeded in gathering all political parties to support his candidacy so that he fights the empty box, the public is still not tempted to vote for the candidate pair. Romli's research (2018) illustrates that in a mature society, rationality will be highly prioritized, so

that leadership succession will run better.

In contrast to regions that already have maturity in voting and democracy, regions with LOW parameters can hold elections indirectly. The implementation of indirect elections must be carried out a year before the term of office of the Regional Headends. This scheme is carried out by maximizing the role of DPRD as a representative of the community. The following is a timeline for the implementation of the indirect Pilkada stages proposed by the author.

Figure 1. Timeline of indirect elections

Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Nomination	Discussion I	Socialization II				Discussion II	Socialization II			Discussion III	Inauguration

Source: Author

The first step in this scheme is the nomination of candidates by political parties who will contest the Pilkada stage. Before that, however, the nomination of candidates had to go through the stages of a political party convention. This is done to get candidates who are considered under the needs of the local community. Candidates are allowed to follow the conventions of several political parties. This is intended to accompany the establishment of a coalition of political parties in proposing candidates from the beginning of the nomination.

After obtaining candidates who meet the criteria, political parties or coalitions of political parties formally submit candidates to the DPRD. Then the DPRD conducts the first deliberation to produce agreed candidates to take part in the next stage. In the next stage, namely socialization I, the DPRD introduces the agreed candidates to religious leaders, traditional leaders, youth leaders, community leaders, village heads, RW (Rukun Warga) heads, and if necessary, the RT (Rukun Tetangga) heads in each sub-district. In this process, candidates are also required

to convey the visions and missions that are carried as regional head candidates to get responses from community leaders. At the same time, community leaders have the right to express their views and attitudes or preferences towards the candidate, and the DPRD is obliged to pay attention to each of these aspirations to later become material in the second deliberation.

Deliberation II was conducted to narrow down the candidates based on the expectations of the community at the sub-district level. After going through the Second Deliberation, the DPRD conducted the second phase of socialization. In this stage, the DPRD will re-socialize the Regional Head Candidates to the public with a narrower number of candidates and focus on the candidate's vision and mission in regional development. At this stage, the community in each sub-district can still express their support or choice for the Regional Head Candidate. This is done so that the DPRD has provisions when conducting the third deliberation and aspirations can be well absorbed. After the socialization is carried out, the DPRD meets again to determine the names of the candidates who will become regional heads. If a deadlock occurs during the third deliberation, then in the eleventh month of the Pilkada stage, voting can be carried out as a last resort in the Pilkada stage.

The first, second, and third deliberation processes in the DPRD must be carried out openly so that the public can monitor it directly or through electronic media. If the DPRD is forced to vote, the public must also be given access to monitor the ongoing voting process. Through an election system like this, it is hoped that money politics will never exist so that in the succession of regional leadership candidates who are acceptable, accountable, and have integrity will be chosen.

In the end, the author hopes that money politics can be removed from the national political scene. Improvement of the asymmetric Pilkada system is one solution to change the situation towards a better national leadership succession system. The author also hopes that the Pilkada system through a deliberation mechanism by the DPRD that involves the wider community can be applied to improve the direct Pilkada system which has proven to be very harmful. Through this system, the essence of deliberation and consensus contained in the fourth principle of Pancasila, which had been lost due to the direct election mechanism, could be returned to the spirit of Indonesian democracy.

CONCLUSION

Money politics has become an obstacle in implementing democracy in Indonesia. The rise of money politics has

made political costs very high. So that the majority of Pilkada contestants have to spend and prepare quite a lot of money to participate in the Pilkada process in Indonesia. Such a system has produced many regional leaders who have not been tested in terms of capacity, quality, and integrity. Thus, presenting a domino effect for the ideals of administering a clean and responsible local government. Leaders who are produced from the practice of money politics do not have leadership qualities that are the focus of the community in regional development. The direct Pilkada system is one of the causes of the rise of money politics and the stagnation of the ideal national leadership succession. Therefore, it is important to make changes to the direct Pilkada system and replace it with an asymmetric Pilkada scheme which includes a consensus deliberation scheme. So it is hoped that Indonesia will restore democracy following the essence of Pancasila.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the explanations and conclusions above, the author would like to provide suggestions regarding the improvement of the Pilkada system to produce quality and capacity leaders. The author offers an asymmetric election system, namely an election system carried out to accommodate the needs of

each region by taking into account the conditions and challenges that exist in each region. In the future, this asymmetrical election system will reduce the space for money politics practices that are rampant in the community and give birth to a quality national leadership cadre based on the Pancasila democracy principle.

" Democracy must be based on the rule of law and equality of every citizen without distinction of race, ethnicity, religion, and origin, before the law." ~Abdurrahman Wahid

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