Does Money Triumph over Identity?
a Survey Findings from the Local Levels

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Abstract
In this article, we try to analyze which factors emerged as the strongest determinants of voters' behavior in a new democratic country dominated by the web of patronage and clientelistic exchanges. We examine two main variables in this study, vote buying and identity politics. Previous studies on electoral clientelism in Indonesia are mostly centered on its causes and mechanisms as an electoral strategy to garner electoral votes during an election. The socio-political contexts that follow the electoral dynamics are less explained. Initially, we assume that the intensive mobilization of identity politics that made the 2019 Indonesia election more explosive would decrease since voters would also solidify their voting preference into identity lines. However, through a post-election survey at the local level by selecting four districts (N=503), we find that vote buying emerges as a more robust variable in driving voters' behavior rather than identity politics. Moreover, regional differentiation – land and coastal areas – also matter in this study where voters in the coastal regions are more likely to accept material inducements from candidates. Finally, our findings add many tasks for Indonesian democracy since clientelistic exchanges work as a more effective instrument for affecting voters' decision-making in elections rather than programmatic politics.

Keywords: Vote buying; Identity politics; Voters' behavior; The 2019 election

INTRODUCTION

Regular elections in Indonesia after the 1999 political reform ideally push electoral competitions toward more fruitful campaigns with massive programmatic politics to empower and elevate people's prosperity. However, contemporary Indonesian politics is dominated by the web of patronage and clientelism. A common form of political clientelism that emerges during elections is the distribution of cash and goods by candidates to voters. This practice is widely known as "money politics" in Indonesia. Most studies on money politics in Indonesia analyze what conditions made it grow flourishing and how it could be effective as an electoral strategy to secure a candidate's victory. Social-economic status has a crucial influence on individuals' attitudes toward money politics. For example, the degree of individual education could drive to what extent individuals accept or reject money politics (Tawakkal, et. al, 2017). Another factor is the degree of level of voters' identification with a particular political party following their ideological lines (Muhtadi, 2013). Moreover, voters'

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response to money politics becomes more complex as they also face social pressure from their community leaders that would cost social alienation if refusing the offer (Pradhanawati, Tawakkal, & Garner, 2019).

From institutional settings, the widespread of money politics is closely related to the introduction of an open-list proportional system in Indonesian legislative elections pushing competitions among candidates into dirtier political games in post-Suharto (Muhtadi, 2019a). As consequence, it has formed market logic mainly centered on candidates and their networks as means of electoral operations (Aspinall, et.al, 2017) (Aspinall, 2014; Muhtadi, 2019b). Money politics is not frequently a matter of a candidate's incentives to voters but also voters' demands for such material benefits during elections (Shin, 2015). This is not only occurred in executive and legislative elections at national and regional levels but also extends to elections for village heads (Aspinall & Rohman, 2017). It involves not only the distribution of cash and goods from politicians to voters but attempts to maintain good relations and even provide the amount of money to election commission officials to secure their victory (Aminuddin & Attamimi, 2019).

However, the 2019 election presented a particular dynamic and context that differs from previous electoral contestation. The most striking issue at that time is political polarization that divides voters into two opposing camps. Polarization has encouraged the use of identity politics by political entrepreneurs to gain electoral

advantages. We have seen how political polarization during the 2019 election divided Indonesians into ethnic and religious lines (Pepinsky, 2019; Warburton, 2019). With this background, did money politics remain pervasive in driving voters' behavior? if we assume that intense political competition during the election would decrease vote buying as an electoral incentive to influence voter behavior. The massive mobilization of identity politics in the 2019 elections also take us to discuss the interplays of money and identity politics as critical factors in influencing voters' attitudes and behaviors during the election.

METHODS

We apply the quantitative method in our study and surveyed four regions – Rokan Hilir, Kuantan Singingi Indragiri Hilir, and Pekanbaru city. The total respondents in our study are 503 whom we selected through multi-stage random sampling in these regions proportionately. Our poll is a post-election survey conducted in March-April 2020. Due to the increasing case of covid-19 and restrictions on individual mobility at the time, our survey in Indragiri Hilir was delayed. We finally carried out a survey there in March-June 2021. We analyze data through multivariate regression analysis to see the correlation and influence between existing variables and voter tendency toward vote buying.

We set vote buying as a dependent variable that we explore further its prevalences and impacts on voter behavior in the next section during the 2019 election. To measure its trend, we

use the vote buying index from Burhanuddin Muhtadi (2019b) comprising eight main items in total to gauge the prevalence of vote buying in the elections. These are "(1) during the last couple of years, related to the legislative election campaign of national parliamentary (DPR) candidates, how often have candidates or success team members offered you food, household items, and/or other goods to influence your vote in the election? (2) these situations sometimes occur during every election in Indonesia. Have you been offered money or goods to vote for a certain political party/DPR candidate?; (3) during the run-up to the April 17th, 2019 legislative election, did candidates or success team members offer you money, food, household items, and/or other goods (excluding propaganda hats, shirts, and posters)?; (4) during the run-up to the April 17th, 2019 legislative election, did you observe candidates or success team members offering people in your neighborhood money, food, household items, and/or other goods (excluding propaganda hats, shirts, and posters)?; (5) have you experienced being offered money or goods to vote for certain presidential/vice presidential candidates?; (6) have you experienced being offered money or goods to vote for a certain gubernatorial candidate?; (7) have you experienced being offered money or goods to vote for a certain regent/mayoral candidate?"; and (8) "if you are offered in elections by candidates, what are you going to do?" (Muhtadi, 2019b, 47-49). We also provide respondents with similar answers to Muhtadi's instrument consisting of four-point scales for the first question – 'very often=4, quite often=3 and rarely=2, rare=1, and never=0'. For items number 2, 5, 6, and 7, we record two-point scales with three available options to be chosen by respondents – 'yes, only once/twice=2; yes, several times'=1 and 'no' =0. And we offer two options for items number 3, 4, and 8 i.e. 'yes' =1 and 'no' =0.

We also ask respondents with additional 8th question to assess their attitudes toward vote buying – if you are offered cash in elections by candidates, what are you going to do? We give four available responses for this query i.e. refuse it, take it and vote for a candidate giving it, accept it but choose a candidate offering a bigger amount, take it but vote for a candidate of my own preference. We conducted re-tests for the vote buying index to see instrument consistency by distributing the questionnaire to 25 pilot respondents with 23 degrees of freedom. The result of validity tests shows high consistency where r-score values for each item are above the minimum standard of r-table that we set, 0.413. Our reliability analysis also presents a high score for Cronbach's alpha (α=0.876).

We arrange identity politics variable into seven items to capture how it shapes voters' preferences during elections. These are (1) candidates should be sons of the soil; (2) candidates have similar ethnicity to mine; (3) candidates should be party cadres; (4) candidates should be military/police retirees; (5) candidates should have an entrepreneurial background; (6) candidates should be religious, traditional, and organization leaders in my domicile; (7) candidates should be

supported by religious, traditional, and organization leaders in my place. We give four types of answer choices for each item – 'yes, it is obligatory=3', 'yes, it is priority=2', 'yes, if it is probable=1', and 'no' =0. We also conducted a validity test for these items. Its respondents, degree of freedom, and minimum standard for r-table value are like the vote buying index above. Overall, the values of the r-score for each item are mostly valid and have a high level of consistency. There are two items with an r-score below 0.413, but the gap for the score is not wide, and it remains valid to be part of the questionnaire items in our research instrument. Our instrument for measuring identity politics is also reliable where the score is 0.736. After all 531 respondents' data were collected, we re-calculated the reliability and validity of our two main variables. The tests result will be presented in the following results and discussion section.

We also set socio-economic status – education, age, ethnicity, income, gender, and occupation – as additional variables to be analyzed in this study. Apart from that, we also try to examine how individual engagement with social organizations and affiliation with political parties give impact their political preference here. For instance, to see voters' political ties toward parties, we first asked them basic questions i.e. some people feel they have emotional closeness to certain political parties and some are not. How about you? Do you also feel that you have an emotional connection with a political party? We provide two answer choices, 'yes' =1 and 'no' =0, to see the extent of voters' assertive responses in expressing their feeling toward a political party. Next, we also asked them a further question – which political party do you feel fits best with your point of view? We then offer lists of political parties in the response column that they considered the most suitable one with their perspectives. To see the degree of respondents' party affiliation, we give them another question – how would you describe your emotional feelings toward the political party you choose? We propound four answer options – 'not close at all =0, and 'somewhat close, close and very close =1'.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Vote buying, or money politics in Indonesian terms, is a common phenomenon occurred in developing countries. This issue is usually caused by socio-economic conditions (Canare, Mendoza, & Lopez, 2018; Carkoglu & Aytaç, 2015; Jensen & Justesen, 2014; Kramon, 2016b), the weakness of party institutionalization (Di Mascio, 2014; Hagopian, 2007; Novaes, 2018), and designs of political institutions (Aspinall & Berenschot, 2019; Aspinall & Sukmajati, 2015; Hicken, 2007; Muller, 2007). Vote buying itself refers to "the distribution of rewards – cash and goods – to individuals or small groups during the election in exchange for electoral choices" (Nichter, 2014). In other words, candidates and political machines give bribes to voters to persuade their voting preferences (Stokes, Dunning, Nazareno, & Busco, 2013). Here, voters are expected to give their votes on the voting day to a particular candidate distributing rewards to them. Thus, it creates intensely political transactions between candidates

and voters due to the existence of material advantages for the latter (Hicken, 2011). The pattern of relationship between voters and politicians here is based on "direct material inducement targeted to individuals and small groups of citizens whom politicians know to be highly responsive to such payments and willing to surrender their vote for the right price" (Kitschelt & Wilkinson, 2007, 2). Consequently, vote buying has catalyzed elections like an industrial market bringing together supply and demand between candidates and voters. It provides an information channel conveying candidate credibility to voters regarding their commitment to delivering development aid and other resources once getting elected (Kramon, 2016a). Here, candidates offering more lucrative material are usually considered to have a greater chance of gaining majority votes from voters.

However, giving rewards to voters during electoral campaigns does not automatically contribute to significant votes for candidates (Guardado & Wantchekon, 2018). The effectiveness of vote buying as an electoral strategy also relies on additional factors such as the monitoring ability of the party's machines, the strength of politicians' social networks, and targeted types of voters. Regarding voter classification, literature on vote buying generally identifies swing and core voters as the main objects for distributive politics (Cox & McCubbins, 1986; Lindbeck & Weibull, 1987). Core voters simply refer to individuals having strongly ideological affiliations with

political parties while swing voters are more flexible and pragmatic in delivering electoral support due to weak emotional linkages toward parties. Some scholars propose that parties and candidates should target swing voters. For example, Susan Stokes (2005, 2007) points out that distributing rewards to swing voters is more effective than core voters (loyalists) who would certainly give their votes to parties. By targeting swing voters, parties and candidates will gather additional votes that decisively affect electoral outcomes (Cox, 2010). In contrast, to the swing voter thesis, other scholars argue it is core voters that should be rewarded by parties to avoid risk aversion during electoral voting (Cox & McCubbins, 1986; Muhtadi, 2019b). Targeting core voters for material distribution will be useful for mobilization and increase turnout voting that enlarges the winning margin from the opposition vote share (Nichter, 2008). Diaz-Cayeros, et.al (2016, 10) explains that distributing rewards to core voter solve "three salient problems of vote buying – (1) sustain stable electoral conditions; (2) mitigate voter opportunism; (3) parties can extract more rents because it is cheaper to buy off voters the party knows". In this context, material rewards not only bind loyal voters based on ideological commitment but give them extra incentives to persuade swing voters to give electoral support in favor of their parties. Here, party machines can also use "a negative inducement" by threatening loyalists with the loss of economic benefits in the future if they do not vote for the party's candidates (Mares & Young, 2018). So, the core voter model has been more

reliable as an electoral strategy to prevent significant material losses and low support from voters.

Nonetheless, the core voter model faces difficulty to be applied in developing countries since it requires strong ideological attachment from voters toward political parties. The model generally exists in advanced democracies having high party institutionalization with broad-mass support. Indonesia is an example of this case where the degree of party institutionalization in the form of party identification/Party ID) remains low. Data from Indonesian Survey Institute (LSI) reveal that 83% of voter claims to have no close ideological affiliation with major political parties in Indonesia (LSI, 2015). This issue is mainly since party politics in Indonesia are trapped in the personalization of party politics (Fionna, 2016; Ufen, 2017). Consequently, parties depend frequently on the popularity of their elites rather than a proper organizational system and neat political recruitment forming party machines' effectiveness. If this is the trend, how can be an electoral strategy that relies on vote buying utilized by parties and candidates? An alternative to this question can be seen in the approach used by Burhanuddin Muhtadi (2019b) combining core and swing voter strategies with more emphasis on personal networks. This political connection is not based on party affiliation, but it focuses more on close relations between candidates and brokers in a clientelistic framework. Accordingly, political candidates in Indonesia often rely on political brokers outside parties but have critical influence over their communities (Aspinall, 2014).

In emerging democracies, social network linking candidates and voters is crucial elements so that vote-buying operations can work effectively. Social network here often takes place in the form of non-political organizations tying individuals emotionally based on demographic backgrounds like ethnicities, religions, regions, and professional associations. In the field of political behavior, it thus plays "an important role in sustaining relationships of political exchange and transmitting political information and political cues" following community preferences (Cruz, 2019, 385). Individuals with intense engagement and actively involved in it will be influenced by the political preference of their organizations due to short- or long-term material benefits offered by candidates and parties. In sum, it shapes collective action and gives pressure on individuals to follow the community's political orientations. When vote-buying operations take place, it creates a feeling of obligation and reciprocity among its members to give vote choices for candidates distributing rewards to their communities (Lawson & Greene, 2014). Due to its organizational cohesion, it offers well-founded trust networks that are favorably useful for political instrumentalization and mobilization to facilitate "a clientelistic exchange of electoral support for access to state resources" (Berenschot, 2015, 27).

Moreover, vote-buying effectiveness also relies on the utilization of political identity. It will be more efficient for candidates to avoid huge

material loss by distributing rewards to voters with similar identities to them in exchange for personal votes. In developing countries, identity remains an important card in the electoral competition where voters tend to first see the candidate's identity before the candidate's programs and party origin. Empirical research conducted by many scholars on distributive politics in developing countries has shown that there is a significant correlation between identity politics, vote buying, and electoral outcomes (Ejdemyr, Kramon, & Robinson, 2018; Kramon, 2019; Shockley & Gengler, 2020). In Indonesia, identity politics also offer socio-political bases for clientelistic exchange particularly vote buying during elections (Aspinall, 2011; Aspinall, Dettman, & Warburton, 2011; Van Klinken, 2008). Candidates generally incline to use primordial campaigns combined with money politics to gain large personal votes from their social bases (Ibrahim, 2015; Jafar, 2015). Here, identity politics acts as a linkage that connects candidates and voters to preserve patronage networks and mobilization to secure electoral victory (Damanik, 2015; Habyarimana et al., 2021; Nemčok, Komar, Batrićević, Tóth, & Spáč, 2021; Stankov, 2020).

However, extensive use of vote buying as an electoral strategy is bad for the development of democratic consolidation since it hinders political accountability and good governance. In advanced democracies, vote buying is gradually decreased with modernization progress. Aidt and Jensen (2017) expose those certain aspects of modernization – economic growth, industrialization, and education – significantly impact ways of political campaigns from vote buying to more programmatic offers. Individuals with a high level of income, and education and settled in urban areas with diversifications in economic activities tend to be more rational in giving electoral votes and their choice-making process is not mainly influenced by material rewards. Candidates and party machines often target poorer and less-educated voters as the main object of vote buying since they more value current benefits distributed by candidates (Knutsen et al., 2019; Stokes, 2005; Stokes et al., 2013). Moreover, the degree of economic development also poses a critical influence on vote buying reduction (Kitschelt & Kselman, 2013). It encourages political accountability and fosters more programmatic politics in party and voter relationships (Kitschelt & Wilkinson, 2007). Yet many analysts often emphasize increasing incomes as the main determinant for economic development and exclude diversification of economic activities as one of its key indicators. Berenschot (2018) exposes regions with limited economic sources and highly dependent on state resources are more prone to clientelistic politics than diversified economies dominated by industry, trade, and service sectors. Here, the diversity of economic concentrations can limit elites' ability to deliver clientelistic exchanges in the regions due to the expensive cost of persuading wealthier localities that prefer the availability of public goods and programmatic bids (Magaloni, Diaz-Cayeros, & Est´evez, 2007). This case leads to the conclusion that the more

varied the economic activities of a region, the higher the probability of good governance existing in that region(Lubke, 2012).

In general, we tested to what extent (1) socioeconomic characteristics, (2) civic engagement, and (3) identity politics affect voters involved in a vote-buying transaction which we calculated into (4) the vote-buying index. Based on these five existing variables configuration, we tested six models of analyses that further explain in the following table 1.

Table 1. Model of Analyses

No	Explanatory Variable	Indicators/Items	Model	Dependent Variable
1	Socio-Economic Characteristics	9	$2^{nd} - 6^{th}$	Vote-Buying Index (8 items)
2	Civic Engagement	2	$3^{rd} - 6^{th}$	
3	Party Identification (Party ID)	3	$4^{th} - 6^{th}$	
4	Identity Politics	7	1st & 6th	

From the discussions above, we can draw some assumptions for further examination in the next sections. First, voters' socio-economic backgrounds matter for the possibility of vote buying during elections. Individuals from the lower classes, if we use education and income as an instrument of measurement, are more likely to accept cash and gifts from candidates and parties because of their direct uses rather than programmatic offers that they will not automatically enjoy in the future. Second, people with a high attachment to a political party and are actively engaged in social organizations tend to tolerate material rewards during elections. Political machines usually would first target voters with intense activities in social organizations because it would be easier to monitor their political behavior and make the distributions of material inducements more effective. Moreover, political machines also expect that these kinds of people would mobilize other voters through their social networks to support the candidates giving them

material benefits in exchange. Last, candidates with their political machines also tend to target voters with similar identities to them to avoid massive material losses. Therefore, we also expect that identity could strengthen voters' acceptance toward vote buying distributed by candidates with similar identities to voters.

RESULTS
Preliminary Analyses

We developed averaged index of 'vote-buying index' and 'identity politics score' based on responses to the questionnaire. To test the construct validity of the vote-buying and identity politics scale, a principal axis factor analysis was conducted over its 8 and 7 items with varimax rotation methods. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy for the factor analysis for both variables was estimated. An initial analysis then was run to obtain eigenvalues for each factor, and small coefficients (absolute value < 0.4) were suppressed.

Reliability analysis was then re-conducted on these two variables with total respondent numbers. In terms of the vote-buying scale, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the variables that make up the vote-buying index is 0.874 meaning that the variables have a high degree of internal consistency. This suggests that the items in the test are highly correlated. We also run a factor analysis to examine the validity of vote-buying items to test the construct validity of the vote-buying questions. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy for the factor analysis was meritorious (KMO = 0.859. An initial analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues for each factor, and small coefficients (absolute value <0.4) were suppressed. The result shows component matrix value is above 0.5 for every seven items and 0.377 for the 8th item. Overall, it suggests that all items of the vote-buying variable are valid.

In the identity politics scale, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the variables that form the identity politics score is 0.819 meaning that the variables have a high degree of internal consistency. This also explains that the items in the test are highly correlated. We also run a factor analysis to examine the validity of its items to test the construct validity of the identity politics questions. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy for the factor analysis was middling (KMO = 0.797). An initial analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues for each factor, and small coefficients (absolute value <0.4) were suppressed. The result shows component matrix value is above 0.5 for every seven items. Overall, it suggests that all items of the vote-buying variable are valid.

Respondent Characteristics

The sample demographic characteristics are described in frequency table 2. Most of the respondents were between 22-55 years old (74.16%), consisting of 48.51% female, 51.49% male, and senior high school graduates (46.52%). In terms of the district, 32.21% of respondents live in Pekanbaru, 14.31% in Kuantan Singingi, 24.65% in Rokan Hilir, and 28.83% live in Indragiri Hilir District. The sampling was proportionated according to the real population data.

Table 2. Respondents' Socio-Economic Characteristics

Variables	Categories	Percentage
District	Pekanbaru	32.21%
	Kuantan Singingi	14.31%
	Rokan Hilir	24.65%
	Indragiri Hilir	28.83%
Coastal Area	Land Area	46.52%
	Coastal Area	53.48%
Gender	Female	48.51%
	Male	51.49%
Age	<17	0.80%
	17-21	7.36%
	22-30	38.17%
	31-40	28.63%
	41-55	20.28%
	>55	4.77%
Income	Don't Know/Not Answered	19.88%
	<Rp. 1,000,000.-	29.62%
	Rp. 1,000,000 - Rp. 3,000,000.-	34.39%
	Rp. 3,000,001 - Rp. 6,000,000.-	11.93%
	Rp. 6,000,001 - Rp. 10,000,000.-	3.18%
	Rp. 10,000,001 - Rp. 20,000,000.-	0.60%
	>Rp. 20,000,000.-	0.40%
Ethnicity	Malay	46.12%
	Java	17.89%
	Batak	12.33%
	Minangkabau	10.34%
	Banjar	9.34%
	Bugis	2.98%
	Tionghoa	0.20%
	Sunda	0.40%
	Nias	0.40%
Religion	Muslim	88.87%
	Protestant	8.75%
	Catholic	2.39%
Education	Never been in School	0.40%
	Elementary School	10.93%
	Junior High School	17.89%
	Senior High School	46.52%
	3rd Diploma	4.57%
	Bachelor Degree	18.29%
	Master Degree	1.39%

Variables	Categories	Percentage
Job/Occupation	Unemployed	1.59%
	Farmer/Breeder/Fisherman	19.28%
	Manual Laborer/Driver/Handyman	8.55%
	Merchant/Entrepreneur	20.08%
	Private Employees	14.91%
	Civil Servants (PNS)	3.58%
	Teacher	6.16%
	Professionals	1.39%
	Students	9.15%
	Housewives	14.51%
	Temporary Employees	0.60%
	Others	0.20%

Source: Authors' post-election local survey, 2020-2021

We classify these four districts into Land and Coastal areas where 46.52% live in Land Area residents and 53.48% in Coastal Region. Most respondents are Malays (46.12%) and Muslims (88.87%). The five top employment was primarily Merchant/Entrepreneur (20.08%), Farmer/Breeder/Fisherman (19.28%), Private Employees (14.91%), Housewives (14.51%), and Students (9.15%). Most of respondents' household income, over 80% of the sample, was ≤Rp. 3,000,000.- per month.

How close are the respondents to any civil society or non-governmental organizations? We asked two questions about respondents' civic engagement. The questions were (1) 'are you an active member in any civil society organization?' (2) 'what organizations are you involved in currently?' Our survey result shows quite interesting data. 42.74% of the respondents were active members of civil society organizations.

As can be seen in the following figure 1, when we asked about respondents' preference for CSOs/NGOs, most five of them were involved as members and/or supporters in Others Islamic CSOs/NGOs (25.05%), Political Party (12.53%), Youth Organization (12.13%), Sports Club (8.95%), Farmers and Fishers Organization (8.35%), and Labour Organization/Union (6.56%).

We also asked respondents about their political party identification. 36.58% agreed when we talked that some people feel they have emotional closeness to certain political parties. The second question we asked was, 'which political party do you feel fits best with your point of view?'. As can be seen in figure 2, PDI-P got the highest rate (30.42%) followed by Partai Demokrat (11.33%), and PKS (10.74%) as the party that fits best with respondents' point of view. 25.65% of the respondents feel close to their political party preferences.

Figure 1. Civil Society and/or Non-Governmental Organization that Respondents Follow/Participate
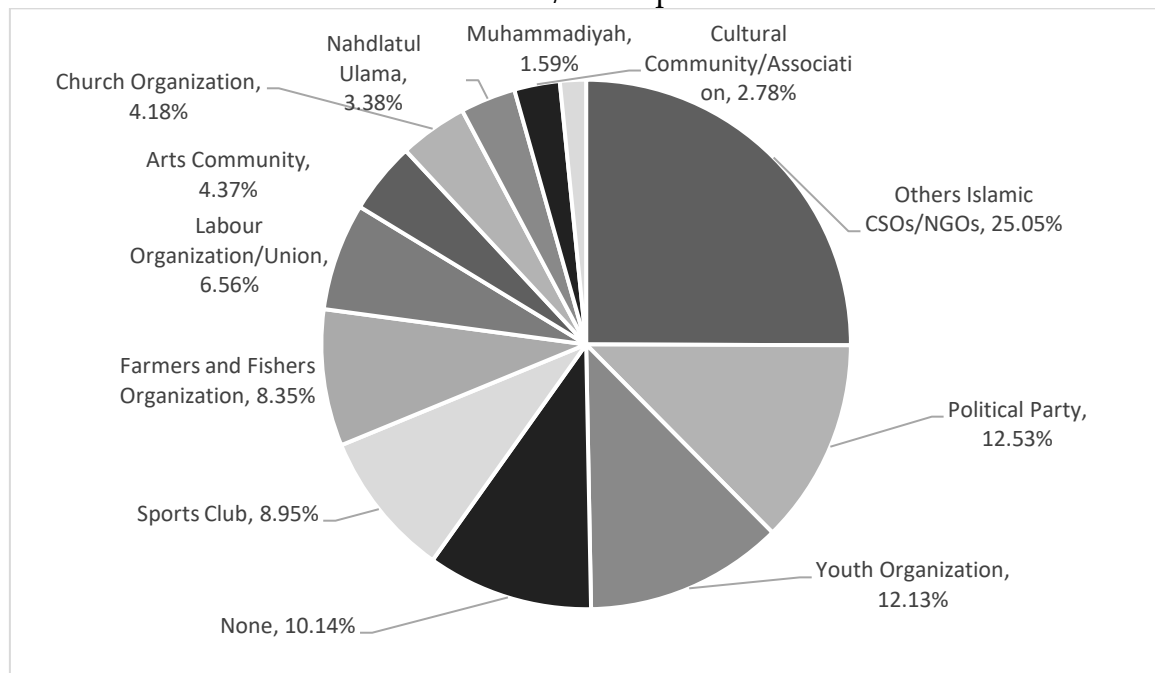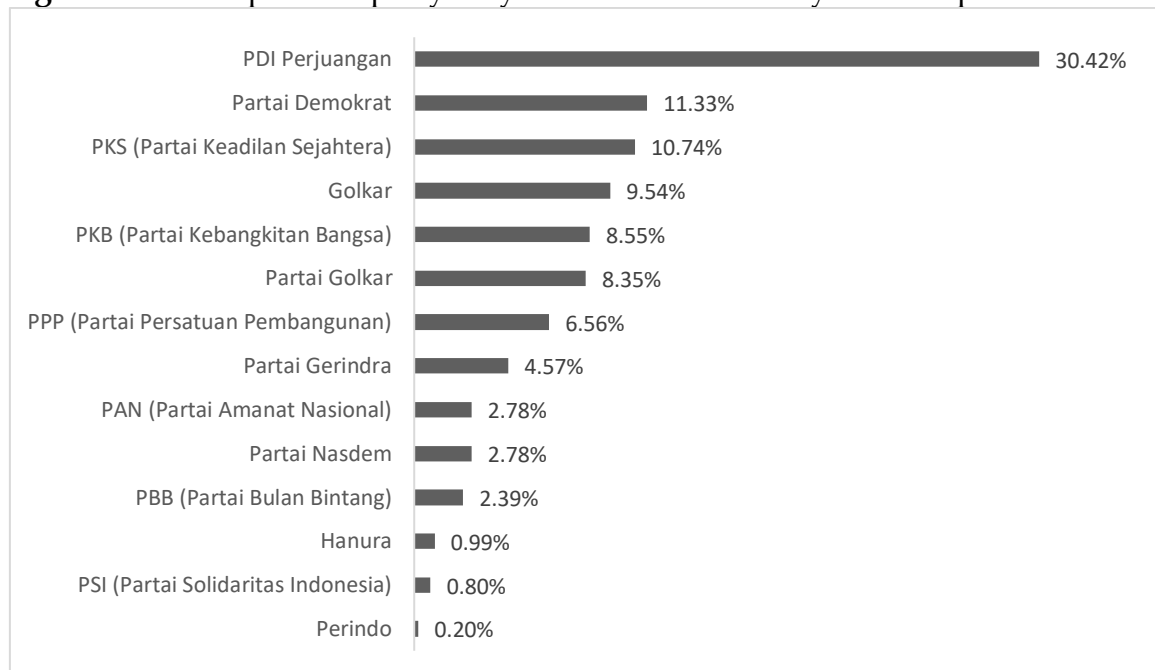

Figure 2. 'Which political party do you feel fits best with your own point of view?'

Source: Authors' post-election local survey, 2020-2021

Vote-Buying Prevalence.

How widespread is vote-buying in the four regions of Riau Province based on our measurement? In this part, we elaborate on the descriptive results of our findings on vote-buying in our sample regions Pekanbaru, Kuantan Singingi, Rokan Hilir, and Indragiri Hilir.

Table 3. Rates of being targeted for vote buying, 2020-2021 (%)

Variables	Responses	Percentage
During the last couple of years, related to the legislative election campaign of national parliamentary (DPR) candidates, how often have candidates or success team members offered you food, household items, and/or other goods in order to influence your vote in the election?	Never	30.82%
	Rarely	52.49%
	Quite Often	0.60%
	Often	11.13%
	Very Often	4.97%
Have you been offered money or goods in order to vote for a certain political party/DPR candidate?	Never	37.97%
	Yes, once or twice	46.32%
	Yes, several times	15.71%
During run-up to the April 17th 2019 legislative election, did candidates or success team members offer you money, food, household items, and/or other goods (excluding propaganda hats, shirts and posters)?	No	48.51%
	Yes	51.49%
During run-up to the April 17th 2019 legislative election, did you observe candidates or success team members offering people in your neighborhood money, food, household items, and/or other goods (excluding propaganda hats, shirts, and posters)?	No	37.38%
	Yes	62.62%
Have you experienced being offered money or goods in order to vote for certain presidential/vice presidential candidates?	Never	74.75%
	Yes, once or twice	13.32%
	Yes, several times	11.93%
Have you experienced being offered money or goods in order to vote for a certain gubernatorial candidate?	Never	59.84%
	Yes, once or twice	27.83%
	Yes, several times	12.33%
Have you been experienced being offered money or goods in order to vote a certain regent/mayoral candidate?	Never	48.71%
	Yes, once or twice	37.38%
	Yes, several times	13.92%
If you are offered in elections by candidates, what are you going to do?	Refuse the Money	40.16%
	Accepted the money but voted my own candidate	36.78%
	Accepted the money and voted the candidate who gave the money	19.48%
	Accepted the money and voted candidate who gave the most	3.58%

Source: Authors' post-election local survey, 2020-2021.

Using a four-point scale first question on respondents' experience being targeted to vote-buying, 69.18% of respondents reported have been offered electoral incentives 'very often', 'quite often, 'often', or 'rarely'. Compared to Burhanuddin Muhtadi's (Muhtadi, 2019b), our local survey results were way higher than his national post-election survey. This suggests that vote-buying practices in Riau Province, especially in our four sample districts, have become a common strategy in the electoral campaign. The second measure using a three-point scale produced a higher result. It is reported that 62.03% of the respondents answered 'yes, once or twice' and 'yes, several times' being offered cash or goods during legislative elections. Our third and fourth measures of vote-buying in legislative elections, which point to direct individual and neighborhood vote-buying in the 2-19 legislative elections show consistent findings. Using a dichotomous scale, overall, 51.49% of respondents admitted that they have been personally targeted for vote-buying during the 2019 campaigns. The fourth measure, expectedly, showed a higher result where 62.62% of the respondents observed certain candidates and/or successful team members offering their neighbors vote-buying.

Regarding the national and local executive elections, we found interesting results from our survey. In the presidential and vice-presidential elections, 74.75% of respondents answered never being offered money to vote for a certain candidate during the 2019 national election campaign. The result of the gubernatorial election shows almost 60% said never being offered money or goods to vote for a certain candidate. For district/mayoral election, the result becomes lower where 48.71% stated never being offered such an electoral exchange to vote for a certain regent/mayoral candidate. Based on these results, we found that the more local the election level that respondents take part in, the higher possibility they tend to be targeted in electoral exchange. This makes sense that our local post-election survey result on vote-buying rates is higher than existing research on the national level.

Our final question on vote-buying is what did you do when you were offered cash or goods to vote for a certain candidate during the 2019 election? 40.16% refused them. 36.78% took them but voted their own choices. 19.48% received them and voted for the candidate who gave them. Lastly, 3.58% of the respondents accepted them and elected the candidate who offered the most. In total, there is 59.84% probability respondents would take the material inducements as electoral exchange.

4.4. Identity Politics.

How does identity politics play an important role in shaping the voters' behaviors and political preferences? To what extent does identity politics affect voters' attitude toward vote-buying practices? We set seven three-point scales (3=yes, a mandatory; 2=yes, preferred; 1=yes if possible; 0=no) questions to identify whether a candidate should be sons of the soil, party members, military/police retirees, entrepreneurs, or

have similar ethnicity and religiosity. The details are presented in the figure 3.

Figure 3. Identity Politics Prevalence
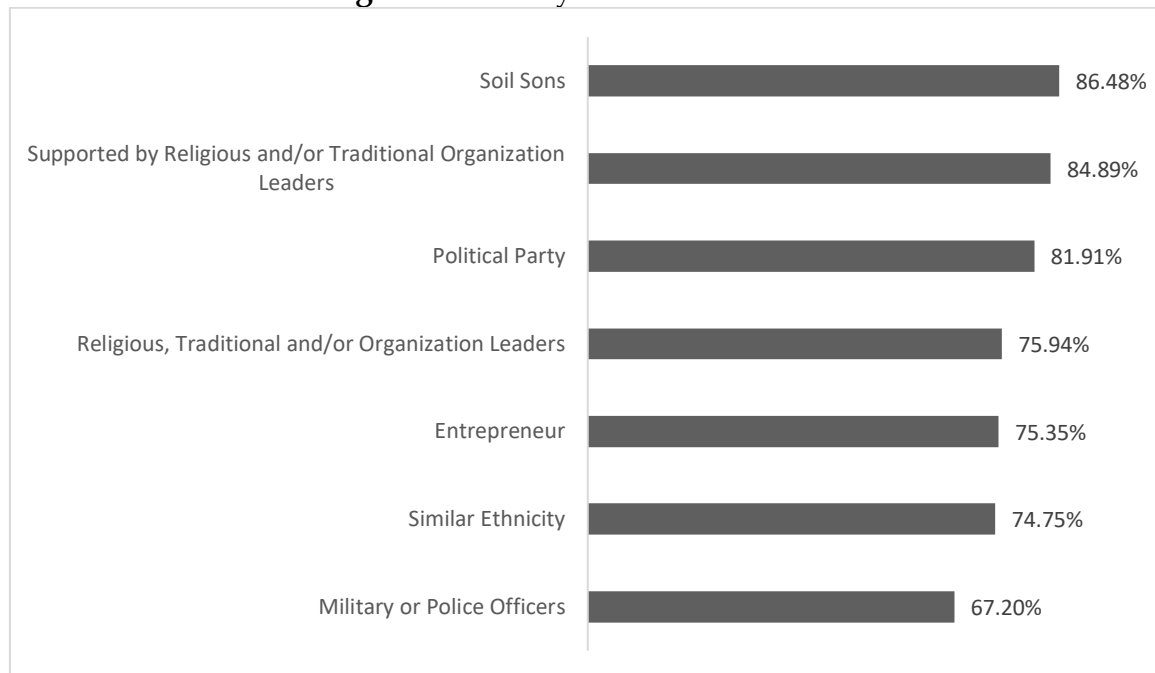
Source: Authors' post-election local survey, 2020-2021

Based on figure 3, most of the indicators are quite high—above 60% say yes. The top three voting basic considerations for identity are (1) candidates should be sons of the soil (86.48%); (2) candidates should be supported by religious, traditional, and organization leaders (84.89%); and (3) candidates should be party cadres/members (81.91%).

Our next research question is how does the type of area (Land vis-à-vis Coastal) affect the vote-buying and identity politics practice in the context of our sample regions in Riau Province? In the following table 4 and figure 4, we can see that both vote buying and identity politics are quite high in the coastal area. Coastal areas—in our sample are Rokan Hilir and Indragiri Hilir districts—are reluctant to be a target for clientelistic exchange and identity politics.
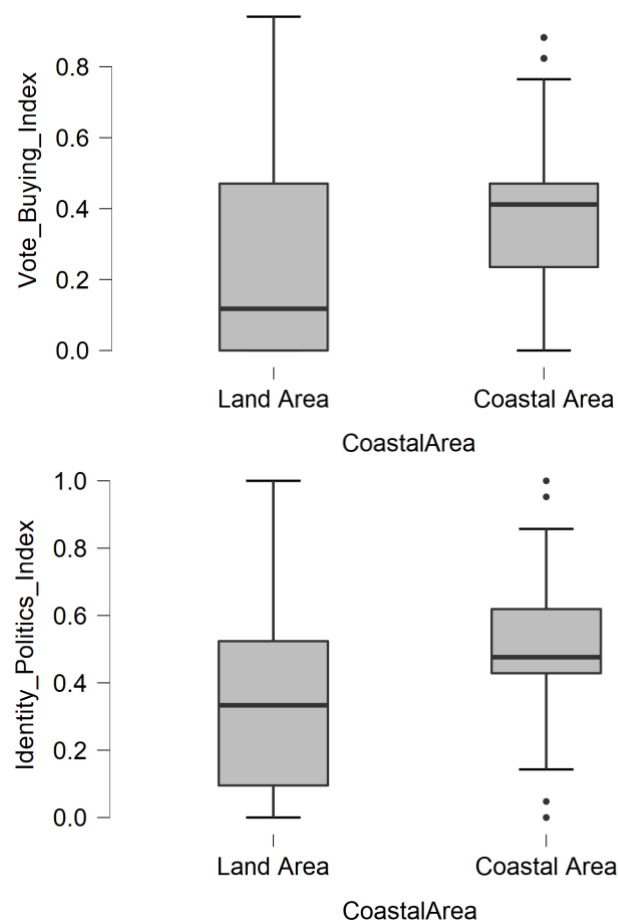
Table 4. Vote Buying Index and Identity Politics Score over Area Category

	Vote Buying Index		Identity Politics Score	
	Land Area	**Coastal Area**	**Land Area**	**Coastal Area**
Valid	234	269	234	269
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	**0.250**	**0.376**	**0.322**	**0.508**
Std. Deviation	0.271	0.222	0.225	0.141
Minimum	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

| | Vote Buying Index | | Identity Politics Score | |
	Land Area	Coastal Area	Land Area	Coastal Area
Maximum	0.941	0.882	1.000	1.000

Source: Authors' post-election local survey, 2020-2021

Figure 4. How Prevalent are Vote-Buying and Identity Politics over Land vis-à-vis Coastal Area

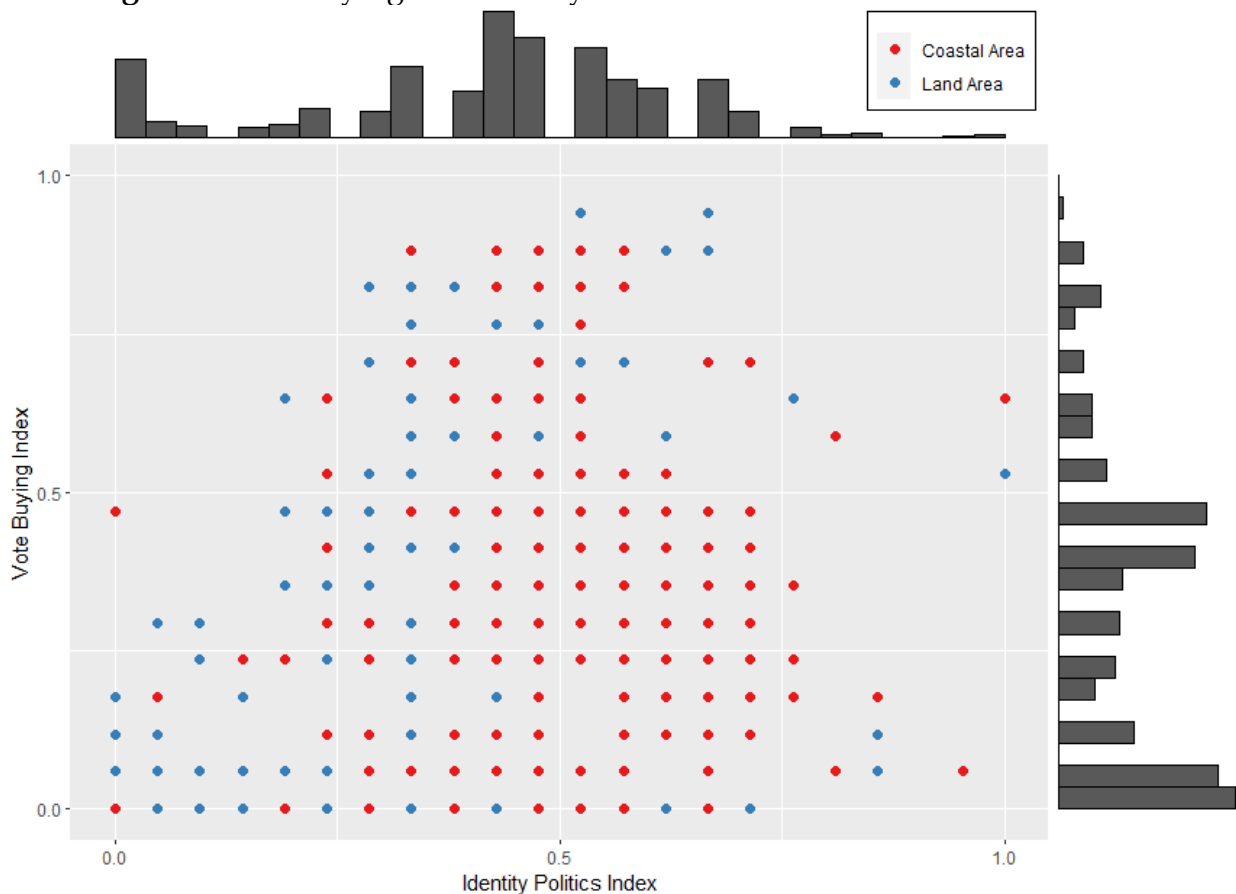Source: Authors' post-election local survey, 2020-2021

Furthermore, an independent sample t-test was conducted to compare vote buying and identity politics between land (Pekanbaru and Kuantan Singingi) and coastal areas (Rokan Hilir and Indragiri Hilir). For vote buying, there is a significant difference in the score of vote buying in the coastal area (M=.376, SD=.222) compared to the land area (M=.250, SD=.271); t(501)=-5.724, p=<.001. Further, Cohen's effect size value (d=.512) suggests middling practical significance.

These results imply that area type has a significant impact on vote buying practice in Riau. Then for identity politics, there is a significant difference in the score of identity politics in the coastal area (M=.508, SD=.141) compared to the land area (M=.322, SD=.225); t(501)=-11.252, p=<.001. Further, Cohen's effect size value (d=-1.006) presents strong practical significance. These results indicate that area classification has a significant impact on identity politics

practice in Riau as can be seen further in the following figure 5. The red-colored dots dominate our plotting area which explains both vote buying and identity politics are fairly high in the coastal area.

Figure 5. Vote Buying and Identity Politics over Coastal and Land Area

Source: Authors' post-election local survey, 2020-2021.

Does money triumph over identity?

Is vote-buying an effective strategy to win electoral competition although the region is relatively strong in identity politics? Our regression results are presented in the following table. We design six models of robust regression to overcome data that was contaminated with outliers or influential observations. Since our leverage and normalized residual squared plotting suggest some outliers data, we use robust regression in the models. Our OLS regression results will be also presented in the attachment section or replication files.

Table 5 presents our estimates of the model. Model 1 contains only the key independent variable—'Identity Politics Score', while Models 2-5 each add in one of the control variables. Finally, Model 6 includes all the controls in the same model breaking down the identity politics variable into its seven unique indicators ('*Soil Sons'* to *'Religious, Traditional, Organizational Supports'*) based on our local survey. In all six models, the coefficients indicate the effect of the covariates on the vote buying index as the dependent variable. A positive coefficient indicates that the covariate in

question increases the rate of the vote buying index. Conversely, a negative coefficient implies that the covariate reduces the vote-buying rate. The asterisk(s) indicates whether the covariates are statistically significant as predictor variables.

Table 5. The Effect of Identity Politics and Socio-Demographic Characteristics on Vote Buying Practices in Riau Province

VARIABLES	(1) Model 1	(2) Model 2	(3) Model 3	(4) Model 4	(5) Model 5	(6) Model 6
Identity Politics Score	0.402***	0.385***	0.364***	0.386***	0.333***	
	(0.0556)	(0.0562)	(0.0566)	(0.0558)	(0.0599)	
Gender		0.0122	0.0160	0.00854	0.00546	0.00995
		(0.0230)	(0.0228)	(0.0225)	(0.0224)	(0.0219)
Age		-0.0108	-0.00761	-0.0138	-0.0100	-0.00795
		(0.0113)	(0.0114)	(0.0112)	(0.0113)	(0.0110)
Income		-0.0291***	-0.0286**	-0.0286***	-0.0307***	-0.0324***
		(0.0112)	(0.0111)	(0.0109)	(0.0109)	(0.0106)
Education		-0.0372***	-0.0343***	-0.0432***	-0.0385***	-0.0429***
		(0.00957)	(0.00960)	(0.00962)	(0.00984)	(0.00968)
Civic Engagement			-0.0418*	-0.0541**	-0.0324	-0.00869
			(0.0232)	(0.0232)	(0.0243)	(0.0255)
Party ID				0.0548***	0.0571***	0.0652***
				(0.0141)	(0.0141)	(0.0141)
Coastal Area					0.0640**	0.0604**
					(0.0267)	(0.0280)
Soil Sons						0.0709***
						(0.0144)
Similar Ethnicity						-0.0218
						(0.0157)
Political Party						0.0106
						(0.0140)
Military or Police Officers						-0.0265
						(0.0191)
Entrepreneur						0.0724***
						(0.0151)
Religious Traditional Org. Leaders						0.000582
						(0.0175)
Religious Traditional Org. Supports						0.00437
						(0.0169)
Constant	0.138***	0.373***	0.370***	0.314***	0.259***	0.201***
	(0.0260)	(0.0684)	(0.0678)	(0.0683)	(0.0715)	(0.0699)

Observations	503	503	503	503	503	503
R-squared	0.095	0.143	0.148	0.173	0.182	0.239

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Six models of multiple regression are carried out to investigate whether identity politics and the control variables—socio-demographic characteristics—can significantly predict the vote buying rate. Overall, these models indicate that identity politics are statistically significant toward vote buying. In Model 1, we put only the key independent variable identity politics. The results of the regression show that the model explains 9.5% of the variance and that the model is a significant predictor of vote buying, F(1,501)=52.31, *p*=<.001. While identity politics contributes significantly to the model (B = .402, *p*<.001).

In Model 2, we put the key independent variable, identity politics with control variables -- gender, age, income, and education level. The results of the regression indicate that the model explains 14.3% of the variance and that the model is a significant predictor of vote buying, F(5,497)=16.59, *p*=<.001. While identity politics contributes significantly to the model (B=.385, *p*<.001). The income level is significantly negative to the model (B= -.029, *p*<.001). Education is significantly negative to the model (B= -.037, *p*<.001). On the other hand, gender and age are not significant. This model indicates that identity politics, income, and education are significantly predicting vote buying. As education and income increase, respondents will be less vulnerable to vote-buying practices. Meanwhile, our

model also demonstrates that respondents with a high rate of identity politics score tend to be a susceptible target for vote-buying practices. When adding the control variables, the coefficient of identity politics decreases, but still become significant.

In Model 3, we add Model 2 with the civic engagement variable. The results of the regression indicate that the model explains 14.8% of the variance and it is a significant predictor of vote buying, F(6,496)=14.38, *p*=<.001. Identity politics contributes significantly to it (B=.364, *p*=<.001). Income (B= -.029, p=<.05) and education (B= -.034, *p*=<.001) are still contributed negative significant to it. The significance of 'income' and 'education' remains significant in all the next models. Adding the civic engagement variable does not change the model of its insignificance. With all of the control variables, the coefficient of identity politics decreases but remains significant.

Adding the next independent variable, Party Identification in Model 4—F(7,495)=14.76, *p*=<.001 with 17.3% of the variance explains the model—interestingly changing the model especially civic engagement. Civic engagement is significantly negative in this model (B= -.054, *p*=<.05). This suggests that respondents involved with civil society organizations are less vulnerable to vote-buying practices. Surprisingly, respondents closed to a certain party in terms of party identification (B=.055, *p*=<.001), are more

vulnerable to such electoral exchange practices. This means that political parties play an important role in vote-buying brokerage. However, civil society organizations can be a solution to tackle such practices.

In Model 5, we add the 'coastal/land area' variable into the model to investigate how widespread vote-buying patterns are in the coastal area. We assume coastal areas are more vulnerable to vote-buying approaches since their geographical aspect is far from the center of the region's development. The results of the regression indicate that the model explains 18.2% of the variance and it is a significant predictor of vote buying, $F(8,494)=13.77$, $p=<.001$. Model 5 indicates that civic engagement is insignificant after adding the coastal/land area variable. In Model 5, income and education remain negatively significant while party identification and coastal area are positively significant. This suggests that living in the coastal area can increase the possibility to be targeted with vote-buying practices.

Finally in Model 6, we break down the identity politics variable into its origin indicators and include all the seven items in it. The regression results indicate that it explains 23.9% of the variance and it is a significant predictor of vote buying, $F(14,488)=10.97$, $p=<.001$. While income, education, civic engagement, party identification, and the coastal area remain significant to the model, our additional four items of identity politics contribute significantly as well, which are soil sons (B=.071, $p=<.001$) and entrepreneur background (B=.072, $p=<.001$) having a positive effect. Respondents who prefer a candidate who is a son of the region and has entrepreneurial background are more vulnerable to vote-buying. By these results, we find that money can triumph over identity, but that is not over socioeconomic status and civic engagement. Our final predictive model based on Models 5 and 6 are below:

$$
\begin{aligned}
Vote\ &Buying\ Index \\
&= 0.259 + (0.333 * Identity\ Politics) + (0.005 * Gender) \\
&- (0.010 * Age) - (0.031 * Income) - (0.038 * Education) \\
&- (0.032 * Civic\ Engagement) + (0.057 * Party\ ID) + (0.064 \\
&* Coastal\ Area)
\end{aligned}
$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
Vote\ &Buying\ Index \\
&= 0.201 + (0.010 * Gender) - (0.008 * Age) - (0.032 * Income) \\
&- (0.043 * Education) - (0.009 * Civic\ Engagement) \\
&+ (0.065 * Party\ ID) + (0.060 * Coastal\ Area) + (0.071 * Soil\ Sons) \\
&- (0.022 * Ethnicity) + (0.011 * Political\ Party) \\
&- (0.026 * Military.Police) + (0.072 * Entrepreneur) \\
&+ (0.001 * Religious, Traditional, Organization) + (0.004 \\
&* Religious, Traditional, Organization\ Supports
\end{aligned}
$$

DISCUSSIONS

Money does triumph over identity. Our regression models show that identity politics contributes positively to predicting vote buying. Combined with identity politics, money politics and/or clientelistic exchanges could be a more promising winning

strategy because it strengthens each other. A study from Burhanuddin Muhtadi (Muhtadi, 2019b) found that gender and age were positively significant, while our study found that gender and age were not in the local context of Riau Province. Precisely, differed from Muhtadi's, our results show that education and income play a significant role in vote buying practice as suggested by Pradhanawati et al and George Towar Ikbal Tawakkal et al (Pradhanawati et al., 2019; Tawakkal et al., 2017). Our study demonstrates that in the local context, especially in Riau, socio-economic status plays a more important role compared to gender, age, and religion at the national level. The different results also occurred in terms of civic engagement where our study presents that civic engagement contributes negatively significant toward vote buying while others stated that community group participation could bridge the vote buying and/or clientelistic attempts (Aspinall & Berenschot, 2019; Berenschot, 2015; Muhtadi, 2019b; Rueda, 2015).

What is rather new in our study is the geographical aspect could also get a role in such an electoral exchange cycle. The coastal area has become a susceptible target region for vote buying as our previous study found regarding the modernization and socio-economic problems (Saputra & Setiawan, 2021). Our study also underlines the importance of places as a critical determinant for voting behavior. Our findings here are in line with previous literature suggesting that places could trigger an individual's political participation during electoral competitions (Fudge & Armaly, 2021; Jacobs & Munis, 2019; Lyons & Utych, 2021; Schulte-Cloos & Bauer, 2021). In this case, a type of region creates differentiation in voters' attitudes on vote-buying approaches. Furthermore, if we analyze deeper on this regional divide, it is related to the concentration of economic activities in each region of our study. Economic activities, particularly industry, in land-locked regions (Pekanbaru and Kuantan Singingi) are more diversified than those of coastal areas (Rokan Hilir and Indragiri Hilir). It confirms a previous study suggesting that regions with a homogenous economy have a higher potential for the flourishing of clientelistic exchanges (Berenschot, 2018). Moreover, prior studies have noted the importance of socio-economic status on vote buying where poor voters—who are also less educated—are significantly more likely to be targeted for vote buying compared to the wealthier ones (Çarkoğlu & Aytaç, 2015; Carreras & İrepoğlu, 2013; Gonzalez-Ocantos, de Jonge, Meléndez, Nickerson, & Osorio, 2020; Jensen & Justesen, 2014).

Speaking of Party ID, our study find that political parties can harness party identification as vote buying means. An experimental design study by Ezequiel Gonzales Ocantos et al (Gonzalez Ocantos, de Jonge, & Nickerson, 2014) was conducted to assess hypothetical vote-buying situations for evaluation by analyzing the socio-economic status and client's political predispositions. Respondents who identified themselves as a traditionally clientelistic party leads to more

accommodating normative evaluations on vote buying. Concerning political parties from the ideological aspect, existing literature proved that respondents who identify themselves as democrats are less likely to be a vote-buying target (Carlin & Moseley, 2015).

Regarding identity politics, our study find that respondents who chose a certain candidate because of their place of birth and similarity with candidates are more vulnerable to voting-buying behaviors. Marcus Johnson (2020) esearched the relationship between skin color and vote buying practices in Latin America. He stated that voters with very dark skin tones have a greater probability of being targeted as clients of electoral exchanges (Johnson, 2020). This study suggests that ethnicity could contribute to voting buying probability as stated in previous research by Heru Syah Putra et al (Putra, 2017). In our study, we find that ethnic similarity is not significant as a predictor because a place of birth similarity has a stronger effect than ethnicity as Marcus Johnson said. Moreover, all five of our models suggest that identity politics play an important role in encouraging vote-buying practices. As noted by Kristen Kao et al (2022) that citizens are more likely to support candidates who promise club goods than those who offer handouts, especially those who are coethnics. Voters are also encouraged by candidates who got strong local social engagement with society.

Our final finding is respondents who accept candidates with entrepreneurial experiences or backgrounds tend to get into the vote-

buying situation. We assumed that people who like entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship tend toward entrepreneurial perspectives. This kind of entrepreneurial thing could encourage them to be involved in the vote-buying cycle because a study from Danjibo et al (2007) noted that vote buying and vote selling could therefore be perceived as a form of political entrepreneurship, even an investment. There is a possibility we assume that respondents who accepted money from vote buying saw themselves as a part of political investment or trade negotiation so the practices became more acceptable to them as a "business deal".

Conclusion

The existence of democracy needs productive ideas to make it more substantive especially in a new democratic state like Indonesia. The 1998 democratic reform in Indonesia on one hand has already opened a bigger space and opportunity for its citizens to participate in political realms. However, democratization since 1998 has also created a paradox for contemporary Indonesian politics. The electoral competitions have not been an arena for idea contestations among candidates. Most candidates hardly offer programmatic campaigns to influence voters' decision-making in an election. Instead, they rely on a shortcut strategy to collect personal support from voters, by giving material inducements in the forms of cash, gifts, and goods. This, of course, hinders the presence of substantive democracy and good government in Indonesia since the widespread vote-buying behaviors push

unaccountability and corruption among political elites in running the country.

The condition becomes more critical since the mobilization of political identity is appeared to be another method commonly employed by politicians to gain an electoral victory. To some extent, this is the case that happened in not only developing countries but also in developed ones. However, in developing states, voters do not have many rational considerations as a reference for electing the proper candidates, particularly from their programmatic proposals. In developing states like Indonesia, usually, most candidates try to persuade voters by giving them material incentives or triggering the sentiment of political identity. Accordingly, we rarely see productive debates among candidates during campaigns regarding governance qualities and people's prosperity. One of the crucial findings in our study is that vote-buying approaches have a bigger influence on voters' attitudes than political identity. It means that voters are more tolerant toward clientelistic exchanges, and the position of identity can be negotiated when it comes to an electoral contestation. This also indicates that voters have become more pragmatic and it is the right time for politicians to rethink their approaches to influencing voters' decisions in the forms of substantive agendas and commitments to voicing people's aspirations in government offices.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare none.

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