

VOTE BUYING AND VOTING BEHAVIOR IN INDONESIAN LOCAL ELECTION: A CASE IN PANDEGLANG DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT: *Vote buying is one of the prominent phenomena in Indonesian politics today, especially since the direct election era of 2004. This study discusses the influence of vote buying on voting behavior, by taking case in the 2011 Banten Gubernatorial Election at Pandeglang District, Banten Province. The main research questions is: does vote buying have influence to the voting behavior? Quantitative approach with Structural Equation Model (SEM) method was applied to examine the relationship between vote buying and voting behavior. The data collection was done by a survey of 400 respondents in selected 40 villages in Pandeglang District using stratified random sampling method. The results showed that: (1) socio-economic status did not significantly influence the vote buying experience among voters; (2) vote buying knowledge has negative effect to the vote buying experience; and (3) vote buying experience significantly influence voting behavior.*

KEYWORDS: Vote Buying, Voting Behavior, Voter Compliance, Voter Loyalty, Voting Behavior Model.

INTRODUCTION

Vote-buying has become a phenomenon practice in Indonesian modern politics post New Order's regime. This electoral fraud has been widely practiced either during national or regional elections; both in provincial and district elections as well as during presidential and legislative elections. Vote-buying have been highlighted in public discussion and practiced in almost every regional election across the country (Bunte and Ufen, 2009: 127; Erb, 2005: 31).

In 2009 legislative election, The Indonesian Electoral Commission (KPU) received 32 reports regarding vote-buying practices and again in 2004 obtained 50 reports (Center for Electoral Transformation Reform, 2009). The Indonesian Election Supervisory Agency (BAWASLU) also noted that the practice of vote-buying was ranked second highest at 20.6 percent among all forms of criminal offenses in the 2009 Presidential Election (Ramdanyah2010: 250). Police's record even showed that vote-buying was ranked first with 105 cases (out of 402 cases) or 26.1 percent of electoral violation cases in 2009 (*Kompas.com*, 15 April 2009).

Furthermore, the Indonesian Constitutional Court (MK) has received 182 lawsuit cases related to vote-buying accusation at regional election disputes (84.6 percent from total 215 cases between 2010 and 2011). According to Indonesian law, vote-buying is categorized as a prohibited act (Based on National Law No. 32 Year 2004 Chapter 82). Any candidate who has

been proved guilty in exercising vote buying by the court will be disqualified from the election process.

Yet the relationship between vote buying and vote behavior remains puzzling (Kramon, 2009:1). One of the causes is due to the fact that voting is voluntary and confidential, therefore the vote buyer could not control the voter's choice of politics (Stokes, 2005: 315). However, other references suggest that the influence of vote buying on the political process is different in each community, depending on its social and cultural characteristics (Schaffer, 2005). Therefore, it is an academic challenge for any researchers to study the relationship between vote buying and voting behavior.

Since the first direct election in 2004, in every five years period Indonesia has at least 544 regional elections which consist of 510 district elections and 34 gubernatorial elections. One example of vote buying practice in a gubernatorial election was the Banten Gubernatorial Election on 22 October 2011. The legal trial in the Constitutional Court has exposed that all the three governor candidates in Banten Election had tried to influence voters through giving away money, food, clothes and made certain promises in order to gain their votes (Constitutional Court Decree No. 114/PH PU.D-IX/2011). In reference with this case, this study tries to answer this question: did the vote buying influence the voting behavior?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vote buying carries different notions in different countries depending on the country's historical, cultural, political aspects and its election models (Schaffer, 2007: 25). One of the most cited definition on vote buying is from Etzioni-Halevy who defined vote buying as "*the exchange of private material benefits for political support*" (Heidenheimer et. al., 1989: 287) or "*the use of money and direct benefits to influence voters*" (Bryan, 2005: 4). Both definitions stressed the goal of vote-buying i.e. to gain private material or direct benefits for voters in return for their political support. Another similar definition was written by Fox who saw vote buying as "*exchanging political rights for material gains*" (Fox, 1994:151-184).

In this regard, vote buying can happen in election and in non-electoral competition as well. For Fox, the aspect of exchange between the material benefit and the political support is more significant than the objective of the vote-buying. In money politics context, the financial condition of the voters is considered to be one of the crucial factors. The voters accept the vote buying practice maybe because they do need the fund.

A survey in the Philippines in 2001 showed 29 percent of voters who were poor admit the reason they accepted the vote buying offer because they need the money. "*To be sure, economic motives are sometimes powerful*" (Schaffer, 2007: 173). Political parties or election contestants tend to exercise vote buying practice in the relatively low socio-economical region. "*The poor people might be more vulnerable to vote buying practices*" (Kramon, 2009: 7).

Voters' knowledge on vote-buying is based on their views or perceptions about vote buying practices. Due to various types and definitions of vote buying, the knowledge level about it may vary as well. The level of voters' knowledge about vote buying must be seen from the legal aspects i.e. the regulations about vote buying. So far, most countries in the world (71 out of 118 countries) officially forbid vote-buying practice or money politics during elections (Ward, et. al. 2003: 30). However, some researches' findings in those forbidden vote buying countries indicated that low level of knowledge about vote-buying is still existing.

Voter's knowledge on vote-buying tends to see money politics practice from the "demand-side" only (Schaffer, 2007: 161). However, vote buying practice involved at least two parties, the giver and the recipient. Therefore, it is necessary to look at voter's direct experience on vote buying practice (For more reference about *direct experience* or *personal experience*, see Bratton, 2008: 4). In this term, vote buying experience refers to voter's direct experience in accepting either money or other materials from any candidate or member of campaign team.

There is still no consensus among researchers about the influence of vote buying toward voting behavior. However, I did not find any reference stating explicitly that vote buying did not influence voting behavior. Stokes (2005) stated that the impact of vote buying is questionable given no coercive force occurred due to the secret ballots. Bratton (2008) also argued that giving money or material to voters not guarantee voters will follow the bidder's expectations.

Vicente is one of scholars who supported the view that vote-buying has significant effect on voting behavior. Based on his research in West Africa, he stated: "Our main findings provide evidence that vote buying is effective in changing voting preference/behavior" (2008: 31). He also argued that vote buying practice has increased the election enthusiasm.

According to Schaffer (Schaffer, 2005: 9) the aim of vote buying practice is to influence voters' choice that favor bidders. The willingness of the voters to follow the preference of the vote buying actors is called voter compliance which is commonly manifested to three different forms of compliances. Schaffer distinguished voter compliance into three forms i.e. instrumental, normative and coercive compliance. By introducing this voter's compliance concept, he admitted implicitly that vote buying can influence the political preference and voting behavior of the voters.

Based on the literature review, my three hypothesis research are: (1) The socio-economic status affects the vote buying experience; (2) The voter's knowledge on vote buying affects the vote buying experience; (3) Vote-buying experience affects voting behavior.

METHODOLOGY

This research applied the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as its quantitative method to asses the relationship between four latent variables. The variables are socio-economic status (Sosec), vote buying knowledge (VB_Know), vote buying experience (VB_Exp) and voting behavior (Voting_B). Sosec is formed by three indicators i.e. the level of income (X_1), the

level of education (X_2) and the type of occupation (X_3). Vote buying knowledge (VB_Know) measured the level of voter's knowledge on voting buying based on five indicators as follows: knowledge on promises and/or jobs given as vote-buying (X_4), knowledge on building materials given as vote-buying (X_5), knowledge on clothes given as vote-buying (X_6), knowledge foods given as vote-buying (X_7) and knowledge on cash given as vote-buying (X_8). The variable of vote-buying experience (VB_Exp) measured the voter's real experience whether the voter accept or reject the offer. VB_Exp variable has five indicators i.e. accepting promises and/or jobs (Y_1), accepting building materials (Y_2), accepting clothes (Y_3), accepting food (Y_4) and accepting some cash (Y_5). The voting behavior variable (Voting_B) which measured whether the voter changed his/her choice after accepting vote buying has three indicators i.e. voter's compliance (Y_6), voter's loyalty (Y_7), and voter's decision (Y_8).

The research population comprised of all turnout residents in Pandeglang District on the 2011 Banten gubernatorial Election. They are 552.894 voters or accounted for 74 percent of the total 757.156 registered voters.

Sampling data was acquired using the multi-stage sampling design (Levy, 1999: 22). The reason of using this method was due to no reliable sampling frame at individual level. The data collection process was performed by 40 well-trained surveyors from April 17 until April 30, 2012, about six months after the gubernatorial election event. Total respondents' number was 400, selected randomly from 40 villages -- out of total 335 villages in Pandenglang District. From each selected village then chosen randomly five neighborhoods ("*rukun tetangga*" or RT) and from each selected neighborhood then chosen two families. Finally one responden determined from each selected family using Kish Grid.

The SEM model fit test used the Goodness of Fit (GOF) especially the Absolute Fit Measures and Incremental Fit Measures (Hair, et. al., 1998: 621). While the reliability of the indicators was measured with the Construct Reliability and Variance Extracted with cut-off 0.7 and 0.5 respectively (Sharma, 1996: 165).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using Lisrel 8.70 program reveals that there are two variables that had loading factor below cut-off 0.50. Based on suggestions from Igarita et. al. (1997), indicator with loading factor less than 0.50 were excluded from the research model. The model fit test showed all GOF measurement meet the standard fit level based on its absolute and incremental measurement.

The Chi-square values is 146.64 with 73 degree of freedom. The comparison between the Chi-square and the degree of freedom at 2.00 indicated that the model is good. The Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) is 0.95, greater than the limit of good-fit 0.90. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is 0.051, lower than the limit of good-fit 0.08. The Expected Cross-Validation Index (ECVI) is 0.54, exactly equal to the ECVI value for Saturated Model at 0.54.

The Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI) is 0.92, beyond the limit of good-fit 0.90. The Normed Fit Index (NFI) is 0.95, also beyond the limit of good-fit 0.90.

The results of the measurement model for socio-economic status variables is shown at the Table 1. The largest loading factor value is the voter education at 0.78. This indicates that the indicator can represent voter's socio-economic status variable. In context of validity, the three indicators of socio-economic status are valid. However, for the reliability analysis, the construct reliability at 0.68 and the variance extracted at 0.45 is considered as nearly valid.

Table 1: Measurement Model of the Socioeconomic Variable

Indicator	Loading Factor	R ²	Variance Error	t-count	t-table	Remarks
Education Level (X ₁)	0.78	0.61	0.46	12.01	1.96	Valid
Income Level (X ₂)	0.62	0.38	1.09	10.84	1.96	Valid
Occupation type (X ₃)	0.59	0.35	0.39	13.45	1.96	Valid
<i>Construct Reliability</i>		0.68				
<i>Variance Extracted</i>		0.45				

The result of the measure model of the vote-buying knowledge variable (Table 2) illustrates that each indicator had a loading factor more than 0.50 and the t-count is higher than the t-table. This data shows that all indicators are valid. The Reliability analysis shows the value of the construct reliability is 0.86 and the variance extracted is 0.56, so this indicator is valid. The most dominant indicator is the food material given knowledge (X₇). This means the level of vote-buying knowledge is closely related to the knowledge of food (rice, instant noodles, sugar, coffee, et cetera) given as vote-buying.

Table 2. Measurement Model of the Vote Buying Knowledge Variable

Indicator	Loading Factor	R ²	Variance Error	t-count	t-table	Remarks
Knowledge on building material (X ₅)	0.82	0.67	0.42	25.17	1.96	Valid
Knowledge on clothes given (X ₆)	0.85	0.72	0.34	24.23	1.96	Valid
Knowledge on food given (X ₇)	0.88	0.77	0.29	27.41	1.96	Valid
Knowledge on cash given (X ₈)	0.73	0.53	0.70	20.22	1.96	Valid
<i>Construct Reliability</i>		0.86				
<i>Variance Extracted</i>		0.56				

The results of the measurement model analysis for the vote-buying experience variables (Table 3) shows the four indicators have a loading factor more than 0.5. t-count value is higher than t-table, means all the indicators are valid. The indicator of accept building materials is not counted its t-student as it serves as a reference indicator. The construct reliability is 0.80 and the variance extracted is 0.58, meaning the our indicators are reliable. The most dominant indicator in measuring the vote-buying experience is accept clothes (Y₃). This illustrates the

closed relationship between the the vote-buying experience with experience in accepting clothes (t-shirts, jackets, scarf, sarongs, prayer mats, etc.) as vote-buying.

Table 3. Measurement Model of the Vote Buying Experience Variable

Indicator	Loading Factor	R ²	Variance Error	t-count	t-table	Remarks
Accept building materials (Y ₂)	0.28	0.08	0.09	-	-	Valid
Accept clothes (Y ₃)	0.76	0.58	0.30	3.62	1.96	Valid
Accept food (Y ₄)	0.67	0.45	0.33	3.76	1.96	Valid
Accept cash (Y ₅)	0.53	0.28	0.32	3.95	1.96	Valid
<i>Construct Reliability</i>		0.80				
<i>Variance Extracted</i>		0.58				

The results of the measurement model analysis of the voting behavior variables shows that all three indicators have a loading factor beyond 0.50 and all the t-count are higher than the t-table. Indicators of the voter compliance is not calculated its t-student as it serves as the reference indicator. In context of validity, the three indicators are valid. However, the construct reliability and the variance extracted are slightly below the limit of good-fit 0.68 and 0.49. Therefore the indicators can be categorized as almost reliable. The most dominant indicator in measuring the voting behavior variable is the voter's decision.

Table 4. Measurement Model of the Voting Behavior Variable Model

Indicator	Loading Factor	R ²	Variance Error	t-count	t-table	Remarks
Voter compliance (Y ₆)	0.57	0.32	1.14	-	-	Valid
Voter loyalty (Y ₇)	0.60	0.36	0.46	9.93	1.96	Valid
Voter decision (Y ₈)	0.88	0.77	0.36	10.45	1.96	Valid
<i>Construct Reliability</i>		0.68				
<i>Variance Extracted</i>		0.49				

The structural model analysis shows the standard deviation of the influence of socioeconomic status (Sosec) toward the vote buying experience (VB_Exp) is 0.06 (Table 5). However, this is considered not significant, because the t-count (0.78) is lower than the t-table (1.96), with the confidence level 95 percent. Even when the confidence level was lowered to 90 percent (t-table: 1.65), the effect is also not significant. Based on these results, we concluded that the socioeconomic status of the voter is not related to the vote-buying experience.

The vote buying knowledge has negative impact on the vote buying experience with the 0.25 standard deviation. This influence is significant at the 95 percent confidence level because the t-count (2.49) is higher than the t-table (1.96). For every increase of one deviation standard of vote buying knowledge (VB_Know), the vote buying experience (VB_Exp) deviation standard will be decreased at 0.25 deviation standard. This means the higher the vote buying knowledge, the lower the vote buying experience. Respondent who has a relatively well level of vote buying knowledge tends to be able to avoid the vote buying practice.

Table 5. Result of Statistical Measurement of the Research Model

Hypothesis	Influence	Coeffisient	t-count	t-table	Remarks
1	Sosec → VB_Exp	0.06	0.78	1.96	Not significant
2	VB_Know → VB_Exp	-0.25	-2.49	1.96	Significant
3	VB_Exp → Voting_B	0.97	3.46	1.96	Significant

The vote buying experience influences the voting behavior at 0.94 standard deviation. This influence is significant at the 95 percent confidence level, because the t-count (3.46) is higher than the t-table (1.96). For every one increase of deviation standard of vote buying experience, the voting behavior will be increased at 0.94 standard deviation. In this study, the voting behavior is reflected by the voter's compliance, voter's loyalty (inversed measurement) and voter's decision. The higher the vote buying experience, the higher the influence on the voter's voting behavior. This findings confirm the conclusion of earlier studies that claimed vote buying affects the political preferences and voting behavior.

In this research, we assume there is no direct effect from vote buying knowledge to voting behavior. However, we can count the indirect influence, $-0.25 * 0.97 = -0.23$ standard deviation. This influence is significant at 95% confidence level because the t-value is higher than the t-table (1.96). This means that each one increase of vote buying knowledge standard deviation variable will result in a decrease of 0.23 standard deviations of voting behavior. The higher is the voter's knowledge about vote buying practice, the lower is its influence on the voter's voting behavior.

This study shows that the socio-economic status is not a determinant of vote buying experience. Whether the voters' socio-economic status are high or low, they have the same opportunities to vote buying experience. In other words, the vote buying experience is determined by factors beyond the socio-economic status of voters. These factors can be discreted distribution of cash like "dawn raid" – giving cash at the dawn of the election day. It could be caused by the notion that vote-buying is acceptable common tradition in elections, and so on.

Voters might experience a reluctant feeling to refuse a vote buying offer when the offer are from a campaign team's member who has a family connection with the voter, or the givers are the voter's friend or neighbor. Refusing accepting any offers - in form of food materials, clothes or cash - can be seen as not supporting or even as against the candidate. Such uneasy situation will make the voters - both low and high level of socioeconomic status – have a relatively similar response to the vote buying offer. In result, there is no significant difference reaction between the low and the high level of socioeconomic status of voters toward vote buying offer. From the perspective of the giver, the vote buying practice in Pandeglang District had targeted high and low level of socioeconomic status.

Unlike the vote buying knowledge which is completely influenced by the voter perception, vote buying experience cannot be determined or controlled solely by the voter. There are external factors that could affect the vote buying experience. One of the most obvious external factor is the offer from the giver, especially the member of the candidate campaign team. A

vote buying practice is a two-party transaction involving the givers (the candidate or campaign team) and the receiver (the voters). The decision to accept or not is not entirely in the hands of the recipient, but also in the hands of the giver.

The vote buying knowledge has negative influence on the vote buying experience. A fairly good knowledge about vote buying could decrease voters experience in vote buying practice. This means political awareness through voter's education and advocacy has a real influence in reducing vote buying practice. The vote buying experience is more determined by vote buying knowledge rather than socioeconomic status. Therefore, voters who have a better knowledge of vote buying is unlikely to experience vote buying compare to voters with a lack vote buying knowledge.

The most important finding of this study is that the vote buying has significant influence on the voting behavior. In this paper, the voting behavior variable is transferred as voter's compliance, voter's loyalty, and voter's decision. Therefore, this finding means the higher vote buying practice, the higher voter compliance toward the giver; the less loyal toward voter's own choice; and the decision is more align with the giver's preference.

Voters who accept vote buying practice feel normatively indebted to the givers and will likely follow the political choice of the giver. Voters who have experienced vote buying tend to favor the same candidate who abundantly provide food material, clothes, or cash to the voters. The loyalty of the voter who has embraced vote buying practice is not determined by the performance of the candidate or the sociological character of the candidate (gender, party identification, region-centered perspective and religion compliance), but rather to the "generosity" of the candidate in delivering consumer goods or cash to voters. These findings confirm the public general assumption that the provision of money or other materials to voters can affect their political preferences in the vote ballots.

CONCLUSION

The practice of vote buying has significantly affected the voting behavior in Pandeglang District. The vote buying experience has a positive influence to voter's compliance, has a negative impact on voter's loyalty, and has a positive effect on voter's decision to favor the giver's political choice. The vote buying experience makes the voters become more 'liquid' and be more easily influenced by a candidate who promises any kind of vote buying offering.

Based on this study, intensive voter's education and advocacy programs are urgent to be implied in order to build voters' awareness so they can recognise vote buying as an illegal practice that hamper our democracy. The political education needs to involve the prominent figures in society, the education institutions and the mass media in aim to spread the message to the public that "vote buying is a bad and unacceptable practice". The political parties should become the front-liners for the political education programs and enhance the voters's awareness of destructive effect of vote buying.

In addition, the participants of the future regional election needs to demonstrate accountability and transparency to the voters, especially the detailed information about their spent fund and their funding resources. Then the campaign fund reports should be also made available to the public.

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