

## ANALYZING SUBULUSSALAM COMMUNITY'S VIEWS ON ELECTORAL MONEY POLITICS IN 2024: IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP AND ITS BENEFITS

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### Abstract

This study aims to explore the perception of the citizens of Subulussalam towards the phenomenon of political bribe in the 2024 legislative election (PEMILU) and analyze its impact on the leadership and benefits of the community in Subulussalam City. The political bribe that occurs is often considered commonplace and culturalizes people's habits that are aware or do not damage democracy through the quality of community representation through the legislature. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, involving in-depth interviews with various key informants, including voters, politicians, and academics in Subulussalam. The results of the study show that there are various election violations, especially violations in terms of political bribery to get votes. When viewed from the perspective of Islamic law, money politics is seen as an illegal act because it violates the principles of justice and trust as stated in Maqashid Sharia. Meanwhile, from a formal legal perspective, this practice is considered a criminal act that must be eradicated to maintain the integrity and credibility of the election process. In terms of social impact, money politics in Subulussalam City in the election of legislative members has had an impact on the level of public trust in the political system and government which is greeted by rampant collusion and nepotism in the election. This study concludes that to realize quality leadership and benefit the people of Subulussalam, there need to be serious efforts from various parties to eradicate money politics by establishing an election system that is not tied to the party. Candidates are also expected to provide transparent information regarding campaign funding, funding sources, and financial coverage. This is useful for limiting the practice of unnatural distribution of money and capital among candidates and parties. Political education, strict law enforcement, and increasing public awareness of the importance of voting based on the competence and integrity of prospective leaders are also needed to achieve these goals.

**Keywords:** Political Bribery, 2024 Elections, Public Perception, Leadership

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is characterized by a country with a parliamentary democratic system in the form of the people's voice being represented by the legislative body (parliament). It can be said that the original 'voice of the people' as in Article 1 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia only reaches the election stage. No doubt, elections are an activity that gets participation from Indonesian citizens as a whole, which is regulated more clearly in Article 22E paragraph (6) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (Suriyanti and Mulyadi ZS 2021). Thus, elections become a very valuable part of democracy for society. However, in the course of the democratic process through elections, many violations occur during political campaigns (Setiawan 2018). It is suspected that many superstructural and infrastructural reasons underlie prospective voters and certain politicians who are trapped, whether they realize it or not, in campaign violations (Hannan 2023).

The campaign for the 2024 election according to KPU (General Election Commission) Regulation Number 15 of 2023 begins on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023 to 10<sup>th</sup> February 2024. The general election for legislative and presidential candidates will be held on 14 February 2024 (Satria 2019). From the various elections that took place in 2019, there were various campaign violations in Adi Mansar and Muhammad Arifin's report, 34 cases were found and 10 cases were reported from residents. Supervision regarding election-related violations (including campaigns) is regulated in Law No. 7 of 2017 which contains 77 (seventy-seven) criminal acts regulated in articles 488 to article 553 (Gerald Witera et al. 2021).

Especially in campaigns, various forms of violations occur such as the distribution of campaign banners/billboards (props) installed in government institutions or the installation of props before campaign time, illegal campaign financing, spreading false and fake news to increase political electability, use of facilities public without permission, spreading sexist or discriminatory racial messages (SARA), using government facilities, money politics, identity fraud, collecting voters' data for campaign purposes without permission and many more. The several points outlined above certainly do not fully cover the fraud that was spread during the campaign (Dairani 2021). In Subulussalam City there are various campaign violations such as violations of conducting a campaign before the campaign period begins, privacy that

collects data on ordinary citizens, identity politics, and money politics which seem to be a common ingredient in every election (Irawan 2022).

Subulussalam City, as a border area between North Sumatra Province and Aceh Province, has a very strong tendency to violate political campaigns. As a city that is separated from Aceh Singkil Regency, Subulussalam City has characteristics that also have cultural, social, and linguistic similarities with Aceh Singkil. In Aceh Singkil itself, there has been a protracted SARA conflict and still has not found a bright spot to this day, namely with the conflict between church burnings (2015) and the sealing of church houses, up to the sealing of the pastor's house (2020). This emerged from the campaign of one of the Regent candidates who used SARA to get the votes of the Christian community, who incidentally are a minority (but have a unified voting base). Subulussalam City also has the same great potential and deserves to be watched out for; this can be seen in the various SARA conflicts leading up to the mayoral election in Subulussalam City (Silambi et al. 2023).

The conflicts and suspicions that occurred among the people of Subulussalam City seemed to have risen to the surface due to the emergence of campaign violations that promoted ethnicity, religion, race, and inter-group (SARA) as well as identity politics. Conflicts during the campaign period did not only originate from simultaneous elections, since the Village Head Election there have been many conflicts that have plagued Subulussalam City (Araminta 2020).

In Islamic law studies, campaign implementation procedures are not as comprehensive as campaign governance implemented by positive law. In positive law, political campaigns are paradigmatically regulated in Law Number 7 of 2017 in article 280 paragraph (1) with the provisions, you are not allowed to question or challenge Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and the form of the Republic of Indonesia, you are not allowed to carry out activities that are harmful to the continuity of the State, you are not permitted to use SARA issues, must not incite, disturb public order, threaten, damage props and so on (Hariyanto 2021).

In article 280 paragraph (1) above, the explanation regarding campaign prohibitions includes superstructural and infrastructural bases. However, in Islamic law, there is no more detailed explanation regarding creating a democratic campaign. Thus, campaigns are often

carried out in quite worrying ways, such as political campaigns in places of worship or the realm of education. Especially in the realm of educational institutions, reports reported from us (Surahman et al. 2023).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research employs normative legal research, which is flexible in incorporating secondary data. This type of research serves as a method for evaluating legal norms in regulations following prevailing legal principles. In this context, the adopted legal principles are positive law principles and Maqashid Sharia is the main foundation of Islamic law. Given the use of normative legal research in this study, the approach is comparative. This research examines how positive law and Islamic law view campaign violations. The comparative analysis involves comparing Law No. 7/2017, Aceh Qanun No. 7/2007, and Maqashid Sharia in Fiqh (Irianto 2017).

The author collects data from written sources or library research and interviews. Library research is used to examine the theoretical foundations of law within the context of positive law and Islamic law in response to campaign violations in Subulussalam. Additionally, interviews are conducted with key figures in Subulussalam, following a semi-structured method to allow for further exploration by the respondents. Primary data includes sources directly from the research object, such as interviews and observations regarding election practices in Subulussalam related to public welfare and the ethical foundations of politics (Padilah and Irwansyah 2023). Key informants include the Chair of the Subulussalam Bawaslu, the Chair of the Subulussalam KIP, and the Chair of the Subulussalam Panwascam. Secondary data, which supports and explains primary data, is sourced from articles, books, and reports from institutions like KPU and Bawaslu on campaign violations. Tertiary data, including dictionaries and legal encyclopedias, provides supporting information for the research discourse. The data collected from primary, secondary, and tertiary sources is analyzed using content analysis, examining data coherence and correspondence (Saende, Sultan, and Syatar 2023). The comparative approach provides an objective analysis based on positive law and Islamic law. The writing technique follows the guidelines for theses and dissertations at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra Medan. Could you share more

about the specific challenges faced during the data collection process, particularly with the interviews conducted in Subulussalam (Riwanto 2015).

**Tabel 1**  
**Research Informants**

No	Position	Total	Description
1	Head of Bawaslu of Subulussalam City	1 Person	Key Informant
2	Head of KIP of Subulussalam City	1 Person	Key Informant
3	Head of Panswascam of Subulussalam City	5 Persons	Key Informant
4	Cultural Figure of Subulussalam City	1 Person	Regular Informant
5	Political Figure of Subulussalam City	1 Person	Regular Informant
6	Social Figure of Subulussalam City	1 Person	Regular Informant
7	Educational Figure of Subulussalam City	15 Persons	Regular Informant

Source: Processed Data, 2024

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Concept of Money Politics

Money politics refers to the use of financial resources to influence political outcomes, typically through vote-buying, bribery, and other forms of corruption. This phenomenon is not new and has been documented in various forms throughout history and across different political systems. Key aspects of money politics include (Masdar 2020): 1) Vote-buying: Offering money or goods to voters in exchange for their votes; 2) Bribery: Providing financial incentives to officials to secure favorable decisions; 3) Campaign Financing: Using large sums of money to finance political campaigns, often leading to unequal competition.

### Community Perceptions of Money Politics

Community perceptions of money politics can vary widely based on socioeconomic, cultural, and political factors. In Subulussalam, a city in Aceh Province, Indonesia, these perceptions are influenced by (Suhaeti 2022): 1) Economic Conditions: In areas with high poverty levels, money politics may be more prevalent as individuals are more susceptible to financial incentives; 2) Cultural Values: Local customs and traditions can shape attitudes

towards money politics, with some communities viewing it as a necessary evil or even a norm; 3) Political Awareness: The level of political education and awareness can affect how individuals perceive and respond to money politics.

### **Impact on Leadership**

The impact of money politics on leadership is profound, affecting the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of leaders. Key impacts include (Prasetyo 2020): 1) Legitimacy: Leaders elected through money politics often lack legitimacy and are perceived as corrupt or untrustworthy; 2) Accountability: Such leaders may prioritize the interests of their financial backers over those of the public, leading to poor governance and lack of accountability; 3) Competence: Money politics can result in the election of less competent leaders who are more focused on personal gain than public service.

### **Impact on Public Welfare**

The broader societal impact of money politics extends beyond leadership, affecting overall public welfare. These impacts include (Amatahir 2023): 1) Inequality: Money politics exacerbates economic and social inequalities by enabling the wealthy to exert disproportionate influence over political outcomes; 2) Public Services: Corrupt leaders are less likely to invest in public services and infrastructure, leading to poorer health, education, and social welfare outcomes; 3) Trust in Institutions: Widespread money politics erodes public trust in political institutions and processes, leading to cynicism and disengagement from the political system.

### **Case Study: Subulussalam**

Subulussalam, located in Aceh Province, offers a unique context for examining the impact of money politics. Factors influencing this context include: 1) Historical Context: The political history of Aceh, including its struggle for autonomy, has shaped local attitudes towards governance and corruption; 2) Economic Conditions: Subulussalam's economy, primarily based on agriculture and trade, influences the prevalence and acceptance of money politics; 3) Cultural Influences: Aceh's strong adherence to Islamic values and local customs can both challenge and facilitate money politics.

### **Policy Recommendations**

To address the issue of money politics and its impact on leadership and public welfare in Subulussalam, several policy recommendations can be made: 1) Strengthening Electoral Laws: Implementing stricter regulations and enforcement mechanisms to combat vote-buying and campaign finance violations; 2) Political Education: Enhancing political awareness and education among the public to promote a culture of transparency and accountability; 3) Community Engagement: Involving local communities in the political process and decision-making to ensure their voices are heard and respected; 4) Transparency Initiatives: Promoting transparency in political financing and governance to build public trust and reduce opportunities for corruption.

## CONCLUSION

Subulussalam is one of the cities in Aceh, established as a separate entity from Aceh Singkil Regency under Law Number 8 of 2007. The city, with its diverse ethnic composition predominantly consisting of Pakpak, Singkel, and Javanese communities, holds significant potential for SARA (ethnic, religious, racial, and inter-group) issues. This potential, combined with economic aspects and a lack of democratic awareness, has led to various violations in each democratic event (election).

In Subulussalam, these violations primarily manifest in two forms: money politics and SARA. Besides these, other violations include data manipulation/identity fraud of candidates or voters, violations related to campaign materials, non-transparent campaign funds, media bias, and hoaxes. Such violations call into question the integrity of the electoral process and the political legitimacy from the public's perspective regarding leadership and leaders themselves.

As a region with traditional and Islamic cultural roots, Subulussalam inherently possesses cultural (aesthetic) and religious (ethical) capital to counteract electoral fraud. However, due to several factors such as a weak understanding of culture and religion, the strong influence of traditional feudalism (influence of community leaders), and economic factors, money politics and SARA thrive in every election.

Islam strongly prohibits all forms of fraud, including electoral fraud. Electoral fraud and SARA politics contradict the objectives of Sharia (maqasid al-sharia). Violations in

aspects of *hifz al-din* pertain to the collapse of religious dignity and spirituality; aspects of *hifz al-nafs* relate to the social conflicts it causes; aspects of *hifz al-mal* concern the illegal transfer of property (corruption and bribery), which can also lead to inflation; aspects of *hifz al-aql* relate to the failure to conduct elections that respect intellectual integrity, such as truth manipulation (black campaigns). Additionally, *hifz ad-daruriyyah* concerns the loss of electoral integrity and the absence of political legitimacy from the public towards the elected candidates.

*Maslahah mursalah* relates to the public disturbances that arise. In reality, money politics and SARA undermine the overall integrity of democracy, create unfair competition, and result in defective and incompetent winners. On a broader scale, fraudulent elections will incite tensions between groups, create conflict-prone spaces, and disrupt harmony, order, and security.

Religious and cultural figures play crucial roles in two aspects: setting an example by being role models for honest and integrity-driven voters or candidates in elections, and as individuals who can re-emphasize the fundamental values in religion and culture to strengthen the awareness of clean and integrity-driven democracy.

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