

A Review of Fiqh Siyasah Dusturiyah on the Phenomenon of Money Politics in the 2023 Village Head Elections in Medan, North Sumatra (Case Study of Medan Estate VIII Veteran Complex)

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Abstract: The election of a village head is a manifestation of popular sovereignty at the village level, aiming to produce leaders who are just, have integrity, and prioritize the interests and welfare of the community. However, in practice, village head elections are often tainted by campaign violations, especially money politics. This phenomenon undermines democratic values, as people's votes can be bought, thus compromising the legitimacy of leadership. This study highlights the 2023 village head election in Medan Estate VIII, Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency, where strong indications of money politics were found, including cash handouts, basic goods distribution, and promises of projects or positions. The research is analyzed through the perspective of Fiqh Siyasah Dusturiyah, which views leadership as a trust (amanah) and strictly prohibits risywah (bribery), as it contradicts the principles of justice and public interest. In Indonesia's positive law, money politics is considered a criminal act as regulated in various legal instruments such as Law No. 7 of 2017, Law no. 6 of 2014 on Villages, and Government Regulation no. 11 of 2019. This study aims to contribute both academically and practically in building a clean and fair electoral system aligned with Islamic principles, while also raising public awareness of the dangers of transactional politics.

Keywords: village head election, money politics, fiqh siyasah, democracy, Islamic law.

1. Introduction

The election of village heads is part of the democratic process at the local level which aims to produce leaders who are fair, have integrity and prioritize the interests and welfare of the community (Patricia, 2024),(Retnani et al., 2024). Conceptually, the election of village heads is a manifestation of the principle of popular sovereignty, where the community surrenders some of its rights and powers to a village leader through a direct election process (Ainun, 2021),(Tanti, 2024).

However, in practice, the implementation of village head elections often faces various problems, one of which is the rampant practice of money politics (Wahid, Rajendra, Nabighah, & Cahyanti, 2024),(HARAHAP, 2025). Money politics is one of the most common forms of campaign violations and is highly damaging to democracy. This practice involves offering rewards in the form of money, basic necessities, or promises to encourage voters to vote for a particular candidate (Lampus, Lopian, & Sondakh, 2022). In this context, the people's voice no longer reflects a free and pure will, but rather becomes a commodity that can be bought, thus harming democratic values and undermining the legitimacy of leadership (Sudirman & Kurnia, 2022),(Kasma, 2023).

According to (Ariesa, 2023). Money politics is the use of money or other materials by election participants or candidates to influence voters' choices, either directly or indirectly. Money politics undermines the principles of honest and fair elections because voters' choices are no longer based on the program or quality of the candidate, but rather on material rewards (Edma, Darmawan, Rumanasen, Alfitrah, & Sinaga, 2025),(Nadilla, 2025).

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Legally, money politics in general elections, including village head elections, is a criminal offense. This is regulated by Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, specifically Articles 278, 284, 515, and 523, as well as General Elections Commission Regulation (PKPU) No. 23 of 2018 concerning Campaigns (Law No. 7 of 2017; PKPU No. 23 of 2018) (Usman, Mas, & Renggong, 2021), (Birza & Amrani, 2024). In addition, Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages and Government Regulation Number 11 of 2019 explicitly prohibit the practice of money politics in village head elections, and provide sanctions ranging from disqualification to criminal penalties for violators (Habiburrahman, 2025), (Novianto & Musofiana, nd).

From an Islamic legal perspective, the practice of money politics is categorized as *risywah* or bribery, which is strictly prohibited because it can damage justice and...cause social damage (Supriansyah, 2017), (VIA, 2022) Bribery is a gift intended to obtain something through wrongful and unlawful means according to Islamic law. Scholars agree that bribery is a major sin because it causes injustice in decision-making (Rosalia, 2022), (Masruri & Sudirman, nd).

The case of money politics in the election The 2023 village head election in Medan Estate VIII, Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency, has come under scrutiny due to strong allegations of various forms of money politics, such as the distribution of cash, basic food packages, and promises of projects and positions. This situation tarnishes democratic values, worsens the quality of elected leaders, and demonstrates that a transactional political culture remains deeply rooted in society (Hasibuan et al., 2023), (Jafar & Rasyid, 2024).

This research is important to conduct to analyze the phenomenon of money politics in village head elections from the perspective of *siyasah dusturiyah* fiqh, in order to provide a deeper understanding of political practices that are in accordance with Islamic principles. Apart from that, this research also aims to make academic contributions in the fields of Islamic law and politics, as well as becoming a basis for formulating policies that are more just and dignified.

2. Materials and Methods

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method, which aims to describe and analyze in depth the phenomenon of money politics in the 2023 village head elections in Medan Estate VIII, Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is considered capable of capturing social reality in a complete and contextual manner, especially regarding complex and dynamic social phenomena such as the practice of money politics in local elections (Moleong, 2017). The case study method allows researchers to comprehensively examine the events, actors, and factors that influence the ongoing practice within a specific and limited scope (Yin, 2018).

The data sources used in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with key informants such as community leaders, election committee members, village head candidates, and voters in the Medan Estate VIII area. Field observations were also conducted to directly observe the dynamics of the campaign and election. Secondary data were obtained through document reviews, scientific literature, and relevant regulations, such as Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning Elections, General Elections Commission Regulations (PKPU), and classical and contemporary books on Islamic jurisprudence.

The data analysis process was conducted qualitatively thematically using a content analysis approach, identifying important themes from the collected data to discern the patterns and meanings behind the practice of money politics. Furthermore, a normative approach to Indonesian positive law and theology, through the framework of *fiqh siyasah dusturiyah*, was used to assess the phenomenon of money politics not only from a formal legal perspective but also from an ethical perspective and Islamic leadership principles (Asmuni, 2020).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Findings of Money Politics Practices in the 2023 Village Head Election in Medan Estate VIII

Based on the results of field research conducted in Medan Estate VIII, Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra, it was found that the practice of money politics was a phenomenon that occurred massively and structured in the 2023 village head election process. This practice was carried out by several village head candidates, especially leading up to election day.

Residents interviewed stated that they received cash in varying amounts, ranging from Rp 100,000 to Rp 300,000 per person. In addition to cash, they also received basic food packages such as rice, cooking oil, and sugar. In some cases, residents were even promised certain positions in the village government, such as becoming hamlet heads or gaining access to development projects, if certain candidates won. These gifts were given covertly, usually through intermediaries within campaign teams or campaign volunteers.

This kind of practice creates an unhealthy electoral climate. People no longer choose based on the vision, mission, or capacity of village head candidates, but rather on the material rewards they receive. This clearly undermines the quality of democracy and opens the door to the emergence of incompetent leaders who lack a commitment to public service.

3.2 Analysis of Money Politics from the Perspective of Indonesian Positive Law

Legally, the practice of money politics is a serious violation in the general election process and village head elections. In Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, money politics is explicitly regulated as a criminal offense. Article 523 paragraph (1) states that any implementer, participant, and/or campaign team who promises or gives money or other materials to influence voters shall be punished with a maximum prison sentence of two years and a maximum fine of IDR 24,000,000.

In the context of village head elections, Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages also emphasizes that village head elections must be conducted directly, publicly, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly. Government Regulation (PP) Number 11 of 2019, which amends PP Number 43 of 2014, provides technical guidelines for the implementation of village head elections, including the prohibition of money politics practices and the sanctions therefor. Sanctions against candidates found to have engaged in money politics can include disqualification from the candidacy, disqualification, or even criminal sanctions as stipulated in the Criminal Code (KUHP). Thus, the practice of money politics in village head elections not only violates political ethics but is also an illegal act that undermines the legal order and local democracy.

3.3 The Perspective of Fiqh Siyasa Dusturiyah on Money Politics

From the perspective of Islamic jurisprudence, the practice of money politics falls under the category of *risywah*, or bribery, which is strictly forbidden in Islam. *Risywah* is the giving of something to someone to obtain a decision or power through illegitimate means. According to Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani in his book *Fath al-Bari*, *risywah* is "wealth given to obtain something that is not lawful for the giver, with the aim of changing or influencing a decision."

In the context of village head elections, *risywah* undermines the essence of leadership as a trust. Leadership in Islam is not a position to be fought for through dirty means, but rather a great responsibility that must be shouldered by the most morally, intellectually, and spiritually worthy person (Asmuni, 2020). In the Qur'an, Allah says: "Indeed, Allah commands you to convey trusts to those entitled to them..." (QS An-Nisa: 58).

This verse emphasizes that the mandate of leadership must be given to the rightful person, not to the person who bought it with money.

Scholars agree that bribery to obtain office is a major sin. Imam Al-Ghazali, in his *Ihya Ulumuddin* (The Great Controversy), states that bribery undermines justice and destroys the fabric of society because decisions are no longer based on truth but on per-

sonal gain. In the context of money politics, people no longer vote based on morals, work programs, and the integrity of candidates, but rather on material rewards, thus undermining the moral values of Islamic politics.

3.4 The Impact of Money Politics on Democracy and Village Governance

The practice of money politics in village head elections has had a profoundly negative and far-reaching impact on the democratic process and governance at the village level. These impacts are not only short-term, as seen in election results, but also have long-term implications for the quality of government and overall village community development.

First, money politics erodes the fundamental principles of democracy, which prioritize freedom, justice, and equality in determining leaders. When people's votes can be bought with money or other material means, the democratic process, which is essentially a manifestation of popular sovereignty, is tarnished. People's choices are no longer based on rational considerations, morals, or the candidate's integrity, but instead are influenced by temporary rewards given transactionally. This results in low-quality elections and does not reflect the true will of the people (Puji Istiqomah, 2020).

Second, money politics creates inequality in political competition. Candidates with greater funds tend to be able to buy votes en masse and win elections, while potential candidates with less funds are marginalized. This situation creates injustice in the political process and hinders the emergence of truly competent leaders with high integrity. This inequality also fuels corruption after being elected, as leaders who gain office through money politics will attempt to recoup their political capital in ways that harm the public interest (Jurdi, 2018).

Third, the practice of money politics undermines public trust in the political system and village government. When people perceive that village head elections are dominated by transactional politics, they lose confidence in the democratic process and election organizers. This has the potential to reduce public participation in subsequent elections and increase political apathy, which is detrimental to the development of democracy overall.

Fourth, in the context of village governance, money politics produces leaders who are unable to carry out their mandates effectively. Leadership born of dishonest processes tends to be weak in fair and transparent decision-making. This can hinder village development, impair public services, and reduce the accountability of village governments to the community. In other words, money politics creates poor governance, which ultimately negatively impacts the well-being of village communities (Amursi, 2013).

Fifth, money politics also has moral and social impacts on rural communities. This practice reinforces a consumerist and pragmatic culture in politics, teaching people to view elections as opportunities for material gain rather than as defining moments for the village's future. This has the potential to undermine the values of togetherness, honesty, and justice that are essential for harmonious and productive village life.

Therefore, eliminating the practice of money politics is crucial to maintaining the integrity of democracy in villages and ensuring the creation of clean, just, and effective village governance. This effort must be carried out through firm law enforcement, moral and religious-based political education, and active community participation in monitoring the election process. Collaboration between the government, election organizers, religious leaders, and the community is key to success in creating quality and democratic village head elections.

4 Conclusions

The practice of money politics in the 2023 village head elections in Medan Estate VIII is a serious violation of democratic principles and Islamic teachings. This phenomenon reflects the weak integrity of local politics, where people's votes are bought with money or other rewards. Under Indonesian positive law, this practice is considered a criminal offense, while under Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh Siyasah Dusturiyah), money politics is categorized as *risywah* (bribery), which is forbidden because it violates the values of jus-

tice, trustworthiness, and moral leadership. Its impacts include the emergence of incompetent leaders and a weakening of public trust in the village political system. The government and law enforcement officials need to take firm action against perpetrators of money politics to create a deterrent effect. Political education based on religious values must be strengthened to raise public awareness of the importance of electing trustworthy leaders. Religious and community leaders must also play an active role in educating the public about the dangers of money politics. Furthermore, the village head election system needs to be reformed to be more transparent, fair, and involve participatory oversight to achieve clean and dignified leadership.

This study makes an important theoretical contribution to the development of constitutional political jurisprudence in the context of modern local political contestation by highlighting the practice of money politics in village head elections. By integrating the principles of trustworthiness, justice ('adalah), and the prohibition of bribery, this study expands the relevance of fiqh siyasah from the normative realm to the analysis of democratic political systems at the village level. Practically, this research also offers an alternative political education model based on Islamic values, which can be implemented through local curricula or community forums to instill leadership ethics, voter integrity, and political awareness rooted in Islamic values and aligned with the social conditions of village communities.

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