

# Fighting Money Politics and Shamanic Practices

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## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan memaparkan upaya kandidat perempuan mematahkan praktik politik uang dan pengaruh dukun dalam pemilihan kepala desa (pilkades) tahun 2018. Peneliti menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan studi kasus pemilihan kepala Desa Sriharjo, Kabupaten Bantul. Peneliti mengumpulkan data primer melalui wawancara, diskusi kelompok mendalam dan observasi. Adapun data sekunder dikumpulkan melalui studi literatur, internet, foto dan video proses pilkades. Hasil penelitian ini menemukan adanya penggunaan politik uang dan terindikasi melalui serangan fajar yang dilakukan oleh 'sniper' yang bertugas membagi-bagikan amplop dari rumah ke rumah penduduk pada malam hari (H-1), Selain itu kandidat dalam meraih simpati memberikan bantuan sarana dan prasarana kepada masyarakat. Selaras dengan hal tersebut, tim sukses juga menggunakan jasa kekuatan spiritual (*dukun*) melalui medium penebaran kembang di setiap padukuhan - tujuannya agar masyarakat di pedukuhan tersebut tidak memilih kandidat lain. Menyikapi strategi pesaing tersebut, kandidat perempuan menggunakan politik hati nurani untuk memberdayakan masyarakat, melakukan pengawasan ketat terhadap para 'sniper', membangun jejaring dan pemutusan kekuatan spiritual.

Kata kunci: politik hati nurani, politik uang, jejaring, kekuatan spiritual

## ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the efforts of female candidates to break the practice of money politics and the influence of shamans in the 2018 Sriharjo subdistrict election (*pilkades*). The author used qualitative methods with a case study of the Sriharjo village-head election in Bantul Regency. The author collected primary data through interviews, in-depth group discussions, and observations. Secondary data were collected through a literature review, online articles, photos, and video studies of the *pilkades* process. The findings of this study show the practice of money politics carried out by "snipers," whose job is to distribute envelopes containing money from house to house from night to dawn one day prior to election day. In addition, candidates also provide assistance and facilities to the community to get their votes. The success team also uses the services of shamans by spreading flowers in certain areas with the aim of spiritually binding people so as not to vote for other candidates. Responding to the competitor's strategy, the female candidate employed the politics of conscience to empower the community, monitored the snipers of other candidates, built networks, and broke the spiritual powers.

Keywords: politics of conscience, money politics, networking, spiritual power

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## INTRODUCTION

Ideally, the election for rural subdistrict head (*pilkades*) reflects substantive democracy because Indonesian democracy starts at the district level. This idea is in line with Hatta's (1960) belief that the roots of democracy in Indonesia lie in discussions among its people. Democracy in Indonesia has never been influenced by the democracy of the West, nor has it taken an authoritarian form. Instead, it has always been a real democracy, social democracy, upholding the values of villagers' cultures.

The rules on how to conduct an election for subdistrict head (*kepala desa*) are stipulated in Village Law No. 6 of 2014, Articles 31–34, which are opposed to the cultures of villagers. It appears that the election for district head stipulated in this Law is inspired by liberal democracy, where an election is direct, free from coercion, and confidentially carried out by the people as a mass. In other words, it may be described as “one man, one vote, and one value.” The implication of this direct election triggers tight competition among candidates and thus gives birth to money politics as a means of winning the contest.

Among villagers, most of whom are farmers, according to Scott (1972) the culture of patronage flourishes as it is perpetuated in a place with different social statuses. He defines patronage as a relation between two people of different class statuses, where the patron; a wealthy person, holds a higher status than the client; a farmer, for example. In the process of interaction between these people, the patron will give money, goods, or services to the client. In accordance with this, Shefter (1994) defines patronage as a form of material giving to an individual to gain personal support (Hutchcroft 2014, 176–177). However, Aspinall and Sukmajati (2015) hold a different perspective from Scott (1972) and Shefter (1994) regarding patronage and clientelism. Aspinall and Sukmajati (2015) believe that patronage is a form of material or goods giving through governmental programs.

Moreover, Aspinall and Sukmajati (2015) describe the personal exchange of goods or services as clientelism, where a patron has a personal relation with the supporter. While patronage is institutionalized through governmental programs, clientelism is more personal. There-

fore, patronage and clientelism, in which the political elite give money, goods, or services, are categorized as a practice of money politics. Aspinall and Sukmajati (2015) categorize the practice of money politics into five groups: (1) vote buying, (2) individual gifts, (3) services and activities, (4) club goods, and (5) pork barrel projects. These categories, according to them, exist in the elections for district head in Indonesia.

In a political contest, candidates usually use exchange money, goods, and services for political support. To determine how money politics works and how electoral candidates employ it, this research is a case study of the election for subdistrict head in Sriharjo, Bantul District. The election in Bantul was conducted in 30 villages, on October 14, 2018, and had 87 candidates competing for the head and deputy head district positions. The author chose Sriharjo Village as the corpora for three reasons. The first, poverty and local wisdom. Sriharjo Village is one of the poor areas in Bantul. Singarimbun and Penny (1976) revealed that the people in this subdistrict, especially those living in the Dukuh Miri area, lived in poverty due to a lack of agricultural land and high population growth. The rapid population growth, along with very limited agricultural areas and job opportunities, resulted in high unemployment and poverty in the area. The condition has persisted since the 1970s. Aside from the limited agricultural land and the rapid population growth, the subdistrict head also engaged in practices of corruption. He was imprisoned for his actions, which left governmental operations in the district stagnant. This condition resulted in the development of public facilities in the district being stuck in the status quo, causing economic growth in the area to drastically decrease. Three years without a district head caused the area to suffer from a financial deficit and marginalization in the economic, education, health, and workplace sectors. Under these circumstances, money politics had a very big impact as a means of getting votes for electoral candidates. But the Sriharjo people have a different local wisdom with Scott and Aspinall's theories. Even though they are physically poor, but they have a conscience that guides them in choosing candidates with integrity in the *pilkades*.

The second reason was a strong patronage relation. The people of Sriharjo mostly work as agricultural farmers or livestock farmers. Generally, farmers in this area live a simple life and help each other thrive. People who had land for farming were among the rich, while those who did not own such land only worked as farmers for the rich. Farmers did not have enough access to buy seeds, fertilizer, and tractors, and thus were dependent on the landlords for a living. In this case, Scott's (1972) theory of the relationship between two people of different statuses has proven to be true. However, although the candidate for the village head who has a large capital of capital handing out money and goods to the community, most people are aware and reject money politics.

Third, Javanese culture is the soul of the people's daily lives. The people live in a strong Javanese culture wherein they still perform rituals and practices from their ancestors, such as *bersih desa* (village cleansing), childbirth rituals, death rituals, and *kasekten* in elections for the district head. All in all, people's activities are greatly influenced by deep-rooted Javanese cultures and values.

Previous *pilkades* research was conducted by Latief (2000) and Hidayat, Prasetyo, and Yuwana (2018) in Sragen and Kediri Regencies respectively. The findings of their research showed that the elected candidates asked for help from shamans (*dukun*), took a personal approach to neighbors by giving them money and goods, and held a discussion, or *slametan*. The involvement of a shaman in *pilkades* is often overlooked and not investigated. Therefore, we cannot be sure if a candidate wins because of electability or the shaman factor.

In line with this, the contest between candidates in an election requires a winning strategy, and money politics is considered an effective tool for influencing voters' behavior. Research on *pilkades* in relation to money politics was also carried out in Pati (Fitriyah 2015), Nganjuk (Ratnasari and Adi 2016), Bangkalan (Ainillah 2016), Magetan (Harianto, Rahardjo, and Baru 2018), and Kediri (Hidayat et al. 2018). The research findings showed that the more money candidates gave to people, the greater the chance that they will get votes and thus win the election.

Likewise, Hidayat et al. (2018) examined the collapse of oligarchies in the Tanjung Village election in Kediri District. Their findings demonstrated that the power of oligarchs manifested in the form of material, money, and influence failed to shape voters' behavior. This suggests that the hypothesis that oligarchs with great power in the form of ownership of capital, goods, and influence is not directly proportional to winning in *pilkades*. In other words, candidates who have economic capital, sociocultural capital, and network capital will not necessarily win *pilkades*.

Based on the results of the research and the theory mentioned above, it appears that there have been few studies of the strategy of breaking the practice of money politics in *pilkades*. Aspinall and Sukmajati (2015) discussed the five patterns of money politics practices in Indonesia, which are also reflected in *pilkades*. Anderson (1972) described the concrete power practices that candidates employ in *pilkades*. Scott (1972) emphasized patronage relations as a "lubricant" element in the culture of the community that candidates could employ to influence voters' behavior. The present paper aims to fill in the gap in the theory of how candidates break the practice of money politics in *pilkades*.

#### PATRONAGE, MONEY POLITICS, AND SHAMANS

Analyses of contestation in *pilkades* cannot be separated from the presence of village heads in the Javanese perception. The figure of the village head, according to the Javanese people, is the "incarnation" of the Almighty God, like a king. Yet, while a village head is considered a "little king," their authority is still not as much and as powerful as that of a real king. Moedjanto (1986) believes that Javanese power is different from power in a democratic country, which he refers to as *ke-agungbinatharaan*. According to Moedjanto, in Javanese leadership, the king has power throughout the country (*wenang wisesa ing sanagari*). In addition, the king from the Javanese perspective is the king himself because the king is the incarnation of the Divine (God). Because the king has unlimited power and he is a country himself, a village head is considered a royal servant to the king as well as a smaller part of the king's power. In other words, Javanese culture perceives a village head

as a “little king” who has access to *tanah bengkok* (salary lands) and is required to be loyal to the king.

Village heads in the New Order era were under the control of the government, while in the Reform era there was quite a change, where village heads were directly elected by the community. The position of a village head who previously only implemented government policy has changed to that of building an independent government. In the context of *pilkades*, which upholds the value of one man, one vote, one value, the competition between candidates is intense. According to Husken (2001), who examined *pilkades* in Sambiroto, Pati Regency, competing candidates utilized patronage and money relations to win the *pilkades*. However, another finding from Husken was that incumbent families or capital owners did not participate in many *pilkades* contests because the position of a village head was not interesting and only gave that person power over crooked land, not to mention it brought with it little pay. Meanwhile, the amount of money needed to participate for the electoral process in *pilkades* is substantial.

In accordance with this, Scott (1972) argues that in an agrarian society, relations between patrons and clients really exist. According to Scott, patronage is defined as follows:

“The patron-client relationship—an exchange relationship between roles—may be defined as a special case of dyadic (two person) ties involving a largely instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socioeconomic status (patron) uses his own influence and resources to provide protection or benefits, or both, for a person of lower status (client) who, for his part, reciprocates by offering general support and assistance by offering general support and assistance, including personal services, to the patron.”

According to Scott (1972), patronage relations occur when people with higher economic status (patrons) provide protection or benefits to people of lower status (clients). As a result, the client repays the patron’s kindness with personal support, assistance, or services. To maintain the relationship between patron and client, a supporting element is needed.

The patron usually gives goods, money, or services that are valuable to the client (the community). In addition to the aforementioned valuables, patrons provide protection services from the threat of criminal activities. If the client considers the gift valuable, then he or she accepts the gift. With the gift received, the client then has an obligation to repay the patron. The patronage relation can be employed by candidates in *pilkades*, and the exchange will provide support for the patrons.

However, turning patronage relations into support for candidates is not enough without the provision of money and goods. Therefore, Aspinall and Sukmajati (2015) examined the use of patrons and the rise of money politics in Indonesia. Aspinall and Sukmajati (2015) argued that political elites or candidates used a campaign strategy with a patronage approach (Shefter 1994, 283; Hutchcroft 2014, 176–177). Elites as candidates (patrons) in the election bought votes, gave club goods, and engaged in pork barrel politics.

In carrying out the money politics strategy, the candidate used a “broker” or a “success team” that was in charge of giving money or goods to potential voters. Aspinall (2015, 4) defines patronage as the relationship between patron (candidate) and client (voter) in which vote buying and transactions involving money and goods occur. Aspinall’s view of patronage is in line with Muhtadi (2013, 3), who argues that patronage culture is one of the sources of the rise of money politics in elections. Aspinall and Sukmajati’s (2015), and Muhtadi’s (2013) assumptions are based on the fact that there are still many people in developing countries who are illiterate, poor, and less modern. In a context of poverty and social inequality, candidates have a significant opportunity to buy the votes of people of this social status through money politics.

Muhtadi (2013) found that the existence of patronage relations and the absence of closeness with political parties led to the flourishing of money politics (Atia and Herrold 2018; Schirmer and Apple 2018). This means that the implementation of patronage relations and the practice of money politics are done privately. In addition, the patronage culture factor in Indonesia has taken root in the community. At first,

the patronage culture only developed among families and communities, without political motives. Since then, the patronage relation in Indonesian society has become a rooted culture and has no other interests. Communities give money and goods to each other with the motive of helping each other without any political agenda (Tjahjoko 2016).

In the world of politics, however, the patronage relationship has changed into the practice of giving money and goods with an agenda to influence voters' behavior. Likewise in *pilkades*, each candidate gathers votes from community members by giving money, goods, and services. The generally accepted assumption behind this action is that the more a candidate gives in money, goods, and services, the more sympathy he or she will receive from the people. There are even people who promise a number of votes if given certain items.

Contrary to the foregoing, according to Bambang (community leader) up to now the Sriharjo villagers have witnessed the negative impact of money politics, where the village head is corrupt and goes to prison. Village infrastructure development has stopped and villages have tended to lag behind in terms of infrastructure and structure development. *"Therefore, my friends and I support Ms. Titik sincerely and reject money politics"*. (Interview with Bambang, March 27, 2019). This was confirmed by Suparjiyono (Chair of the Farmers Group) that he supported the *lurah* (head of urban subdivision of a district) candidate without money politics. *"I support Mbak Titik, because I have served the community by building flyovers"*. (Interview with Suparjiyono, March 27, 2019). In line with this Heri Santosa (youth leader) said: *"We young men/women support Ms. Titik with sincerity sincerely without money politics. We look for funds through making shirts and contributions"*. (Interview with Heri Santosa, March 27, 2019).

In addition, because in the tradition of village people, the figure of a village head is described as the "little king," *kasekten*, or power, is therefore needed in leading the village (Moedjanto 1986; Antlov and Cederroth 2014). This confers a sense of authority on the village head and symbolizes respect from the community toward that person. According to Anderson (1972), *kasekten* is concrete in form. The Javanese



believe that a village head is someone who receives “revelations” from the Almighty God. To find out who will be elected as village head, they usually have a tradition of “staying alert” until dawn to wait for a “falling star” coming from the sky to the village. Traditions like this have been believed and perpetuated for years because the people believe that a village head is a person who gets revelations from above. In Anderson’s term, power as understood in Javanese culture is concrete, taking the form of the appearance of falling stars, *keris* (a traditional weapon from Java), spears, and other heirlooms. Due to this belief, candidates in *pilkades* also use the services of shamans to obtain *kasekten* and influence voters’ choices.

## METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted in the village of Sriharjo, Bantul Regency for three months (February–April 2019) after the 2018 *pilkades*. The study used a qualitative method, with a case study as the study method. The case study was chosen as the method of study in this research because it has profound advantages in explaining a topic or phenomenon experienced by the subjects. In addition, the case study method also has advantages because the disclosure or exposure is carried out comprehensively so as to produce relevant knowledge. In summary, research with the case study method seeks to uncover the complexity of a problem to build a framework using primary data collection techniques, such as interviews, in-depth discussion groups, and observations (Stake 2005; Creswell 2007; Yin 2009).

Primary data were collected through interviews and in-depth discussion with 25 participants, consisting of people involved in *pilkades* as committee, the ex-head of the Village Assembly Agency, the families of candidates, and success teams. Three ways of collecting data were used, which are observation, interviews, and in-depth group discussions.

The first way that the author collected the data was through observations in Sriharjo Village in Bantul District. The author wandered around the village to get the whole picture of the daily lives of the people, who were mostly farmers. The author also observed the condi-

tion of governmental buildings and people's houses, which seemed not as modern as those in the surrounding districts. Public facilities in the village such as the health-care center, schools, and the subdistrict office were not well maintained. The author explained the intention of this research to the public officials there and presented the official permit from the Development Planning Agency of Bantul Regency.

Second, after observing the surrounding area, the author conducted interviews. Before the interviews, the author had prepared some interview guidelines about the process of *pilkades* in Sriharjo, the candidates' agenda, the candidates' capital, the campaign strategy, the strategy to deal with money politics, and programs proposed by each candidate. After the guidelines were established, the next step was to interview the district head, district secretary, and other public officials. In the interview process, the author documented and recorded everything. To reduce the participants' sense of being interrogated, the author carried out the interviews in a less formal manner. The results of the interviews were then processed and prepared, to answer the research questions after a validity test aimed at comparing the answers from the district head and other public officials. The three respondents had directly witnessed the contest in the previous *pilkades*. This validation is important in qualitative research as primary data must be collected from the people directly involved in the case being discussed. After the validation process, it was found out that their answers collaborated with one another, rendering the data valid. The valid data then became the reference for formulating this research.

Last, the author held in-depth group discussions with twenty two participants consisting of the following: *dukuh*, farmer groups, success teams, families, youth groups, and administrators of the neighborhood community with the aim of deeply exploring their experiences, especially regarding the winning process and the strategy for breaking the practice of money politics. The author carried out in-depth group discussions over dinner with the participants. After dinner, the author asked questions that were answered spontaneously by the participants. From the participants' answers, the author then escalated the discus-

sions by asking about other participants' point of view. The discussions seemed to flow smoothly and in a relaxed manner so that all participants related the true experience of volunteering for the winning team without getting paid. The author then went more deeply into the spirit of volunteerism with various questions related to money politics.

The results of these in-depth group discussions were then processed to formulate answers to the research questions. However, the data had to be validated so that its accuracy could be relied upon. To test the qualitative data, the author made a comparison between the data of the *lurah* and all discussion participants to see if the data from the *lurah* were synchronous and in harmony with the data from in-depth group discussions. In other words, to test the primary data from the head of the village, the author compared them with those of the other twenty two people. It turned out that the primary data matched the data from the results of the in-depth discussions. Thus, the data from the results of the in-depth discussions can be relied on for accuracy and can be used in formulating knowledge or scientific work.

The secondary data were collected through the study of accredited national and international journals published within the last five years. Likewise, the literature review of books was also taken from the publications that appeared within the last five years. The selection of this period of time was intended to keep the data and the topicality of the subject matter up to date, both in the national and the international context. The secondary data collection in the form of campaign videos, photos, and the Internet was intended to complement the visual data. Through observing videos and photographs of the Sriharjo *pilkades* contest, the author was able to get an overview of the situation at that time. Thus, the author was able to grasp what was experienced by candidates, the success team, and the Sriharjo community in *pilkades*.

After the primary and secondary data were collected, the author proceeded with three steps. The first step was to sort out the validated primary data to answer the research questions. Then, the primary data that had been tested and proven accurate were analyzed and formulated to build a framework of knowledge. The validated primary data

were the source for answering the questions in this research. In this case, the author did not incorporate new thoughts or narratives into the data that might obscure the concept of knowledge to be constructed. After the primary data had been validated, the next step was to create a framework of thoughts that encapsulated the results of the findings in this study. With the existence of such a framework, researchers can formulate the concept of knowledge. The third step was to formulate the concept of knowledge. Based on the validated primary data and the framework of knowledge, the author then analyzed and described the formulation in words. The formulation of these words was the result of research and the validation of primary data. This research uses a phenomenological approach that has originality, because it focuses on events experienced by respondents in the Sriharjo *pilkades* in 2018. According to Creswell (2015, 105), the purpose of the phenomenological approach is to explore the experiences of individuals into a description of the essence of the conception of knowledge. In summary, the phenomenological approach looks for the conceptual meaning behind what is experienced by the subject of the actor.

### *A Glimpse of Sriharjo Village*

Sriharjo Village is an administrative area of Imogiri District, Bantul Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta. The area of Sriharjo Village is 501.36 Ha, composed of rice fields, cultivation, plantation, animal husbandry, handicrafts, and small businesses. Sriharjo Village has thirteen hamlets/sub-villages: (1) Dusun Miri, (2) Jati, (3) Mojohuro, (4) Pelemadu, (5) Sungapan, (6) Gondosuli, (7) Trukan, (8) Dogongan, (9) Ketos, (10) Ngrancah, (11) Pengkol, (12) Sompok, and (13) Wunut. The largest area is Wunut, while the smallest is Dogongan. The composition of the population of Sriharjo Village is shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Numbers of Population in Sriharjo Village, Bantul

No.	Population	Total
1.	Male	5,047
2.	Female	5,361
3.	Age of 1–15 Years Old	1,940
4.	Age of 15–65 Years Old	6,897

No.	Population	Total
5.	65 Years Old and above	1,267
	Total	10,408 (3,020 families)

Source: Sriharjo Village Government (2018b)

Table 1.1 shows that the numbers of the female population are higher, with 314 more females than males. With a greater number of women than men, the public could understand the emergence of two female candidates in the Sriharjo *pilkades*: (1) Lily Wakhidah, S.Ag, head of the Sriharjo BPD (*Badan Permusyawaratan Desa*, Village Consultative Body), and (2) Titik Istiyawatun Khasanah, S.IP. In addition, the population of productive age amounts to more than 50 percent (aged 15–65 years), which indicates that the community had sufficient human resources to build and develop Sriharjo Village.

However, the population of the poor in Sriharjo Village was high, totaling 8,288 people. This condition allowed a space for money politics in *pilkades* to grow within the society because the poor were highly vulnerable to persuasion and money, which candidates saw as a good opportunity to exploit. An economic description of the Sriharjo Village generally is shown in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 Livelihoods of People of Sriharjo Village, Bantul

No.	Occupation	Total
1.	Civil Servant	142
2.	Police/Army	56
3.	Employee of a private company	957
4.	Entrepreneur/Trader	834
5.	Farmer	821
6.	Construction Worker	353
7.	Farm Worker	765
8.	Retired	74
9.	Breeder	280
10.	Service Worker	291
11.	Craftsman	38
12.	Art Worker	10
13.	Unemployed	575
14.	Other	2,054

Source: Sriharjo Village Government (2018b)

Considering the data in Table 1.2, it seems that people who were vulnerable to money politics were unemployed and others, a total of 2,629 people. If a candidate practiced money politics with the unemployed

group, that candidate was predicted to win, because the number of Permanent Voter Lists (DPT) in the Sriharjo *Pilkades* was 6,055 people.

The election of village head or district head of Sriharjo Village, Bantul was an implementation of Law No. 6 of 2014, where the community directly voted for the candidates. The Sriharjo *pilkades* was carried out through the stages of nomination, voting, and vote counting to determine the winner. The Sriharjo *pilkades* was held on October 14, 2018, with three candidates: (1) Lily Wakhidah, S. Ag., (2) Titik Istiyawatun Khasanah, S.IP, and (3) Tusiman. After going through the stages of nomination, voting, and winner determination, the Sriharjo Election Committee announced the results, shown in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Results of 2018 *pilkades* in Sriharjo, Bantul

No.	Candidates	Votes
1.	Lily Wakhidah, S.Ag.	519
2.	Titik Istiyawatun Khasanah, S.IP	4,681
3.	Tusiman	632
4.	Invalid Votes	223
5.	Total Voters	6,055

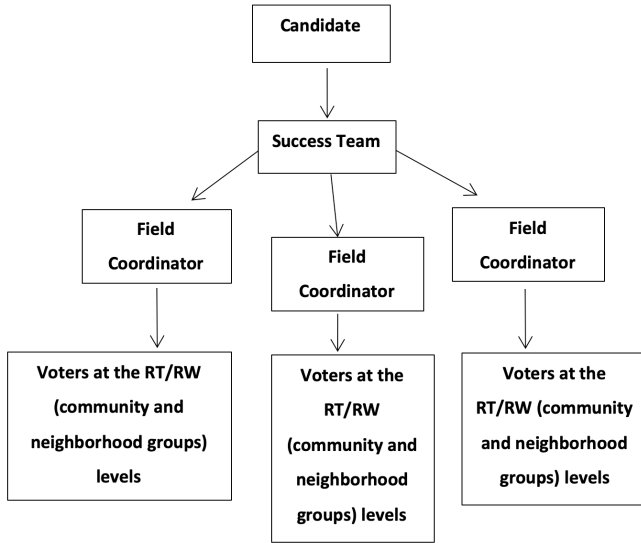
Source: Sriharjo Village Government (2018a)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This paper focuses on winning female candidates in the 2018 Sriharjo *pilkades*. In the process of the election, candidates used various efforts to win *pilkades*. Field findings show the efforts of candidates to influence voters through money politics and spiritual power. The giving of money and goods was considered effective in influencing voters' behavior. To assure the voters even more, the candidates asked for help from a shaman to practice their spiritual power. Figure 1.1 illustrates the flow of money politics in *pilkades*.

The figure indicates the flow of money, goods, and services to the voters as follows. First, candidates formed a success team because they realized such a team was the spearhead for their victory. Therefore, the candidate chose people who were loyal to them and willing to help in the winning process. The success team could consist of family members, community leaders, religious leaders, and young people. After

Figure 1.1. Money politics mechanism in pilkades.



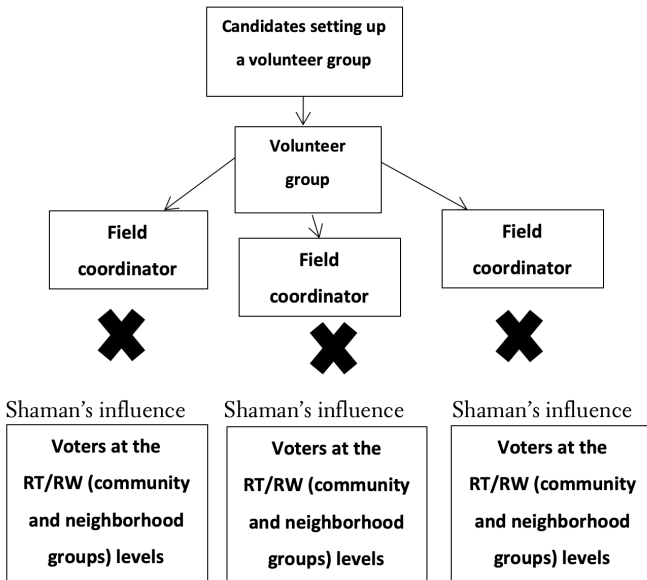
the success team was formed, they held regular meetings to discuss strategies to direct people’s choices to them. Second, the success team also acted as a distributor. The team immediately took concrete steps, such as setting up a budget to buy goods as well as allocating some of the money to be given to the people. After the budget was approved by the candidate, the success team then delegated to the field coordinators the task of distributing money and goods to the people living in their surroundings. In this case, the role of the success team was as the distributor of money and goods to the field coordinator. Third, there were field coordinators who acted as executors. After the field coordinators received money and goods from the success team, they immediately started to distribute the money and goods in the neighborhood community. The nickname “sniper” was given to the field coordinators by other candidates. Usually, these snipers worked from night until dawn, going door-to-door to distribute envelopes with money inside, buying people’s vote for IDR 50,000,- per vote. The number of envelopes given to each household depended on the number of eligible voters in the home. Let us say there were four eligible voters in a home. Then, each

eligible voter would get an envelope with IDR 50,000,- inside. As for the provision of goods in the form of tractors, devices for places of worship, village facilities, and infrastructure, the snipers gave them directly to the community leaders. The gifts were not free, of course, because they came with terms and conditions under which the recipient had to choose the candidate funding the activity for *pilkades*.

In addition to giving money and goods to the voters, the snipers also performed a ritual of “sweeping the land” of the *dukuh* at night. The purpose of this ritual was to “lock up” the voters so that the people in the area did not vote for other candidates.

The team’s success in influencing voters through money politics was opposed by other candidate teams. Figure 1.2 indicates the resistance effort to break the influence of money politics and spiritual practices.

Figure 1.2. Fighting money politics and shamans.

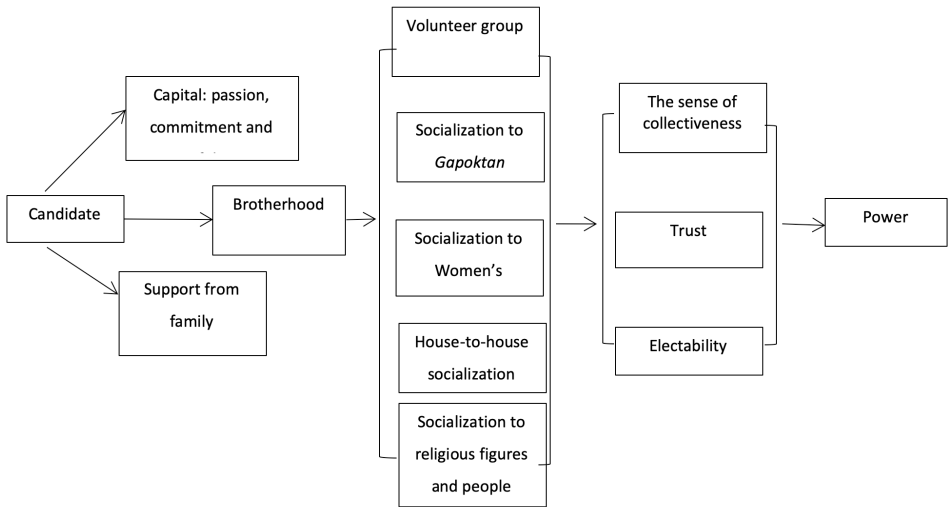


As Figure 1.2 shows, the fight against money politics and shamans was carried out by the Titik Istiyawatun Khasanah (TIK) team by first forming a volunteer team that consisted of young people from all villages, community leaders, and farmer groups. They were brought together in



the volunteer team because of a common vision and mission, namely to build an independent and developed village. Second, the volunteer team mapped out the snipers in each hamlet who would observe and supervise the area to prevent snipers from other success teams from engaging in money politics at night. They would wait for the snipers to leave the house and visit the villages every night, and then break the chain of money politics. This last step was aimed at breaking the practice of money politics and the spiritual practices by the shamans. When the snipers left the house at midnight, they were immediately stalked and arrested by the volunteers. When the snipers were arrested, the volunteers found a number of envelopes with millions of rupiahs. The money had been prepared to be distributed to the voters at the neighborhood community level. If these snipers were captured and interrogated, there would be enough evidence indicating that the other candidate was buying people's votes.

Figure 1.3. *Pilkades* without money politics and shamans.



In addition, the volunteers also tried to pinpoint which areas had been cast a spell on by the shaman. After that, the volunteers would urinate on the area to repel the spells cast by the shaman. They believed that

by doing so, the spells would be broken and the area would be clean again. In short, the volunteers struggled to break the chain of money politics and the spells cast by the shaman by capturing the snipers and urinating on the suspected areas.

However, are there other ways to win the contest besides practicing money politics and shamanism? Did TIK also practice money politics and ask for help from shamans to win votes? How could TIK win the contest in *pilkades* without the help of money politics and shamans? Figure 1.3. shows *pilkades* free from money politics and shamans.

Figure 1.3 is based on a research interview with TIK, the elected candidate, and her success team. When the author asked TIK about her capital and strategies to run for the village head, she said, “I feel guilty for not contributing to the Sriharjo community. I have to go home to build my village. The capital I use to run for the election is commitment and confidence” (Interview with Titik Istiyawatun Khasanah, March 12, 2019). From her answer, the efforts she made to win the contest can be described as follows:

The first type of capital she had was confidence and commitment to build a more advanced Sriharjo Village. It encouraged TIK as a woman to run for the village head. Confidence was quite instrumental for TIK because she did not have sufficient financial capital. However, her competitor possessed a lot of financial capital, which allowed money politics practices to be employed. However, TIK’s confidence capital was motivated by the former village head’s case where he was imprisoned for acts of corruption and forced to vacate his position. The temporary village head could not take any action in regard to policy making, village development, and urgent decisions in response to disasters. In this case, TIK also saw the right momentum to nominate herself as a village-head candidate because at that time there was no one in the village to take actions for change. An interviewee said, “The village head’s office is only operational for several days a week. Public officers in the village do not go to the office every day. Infrastructure development is not going well. We need leaders who can bring changes to Sriharjo” (Interview with Bambang, March 27, 2019). In summary, the village

government system was in a depressed condition because services to the community had not been running for more than three years. One of the impacts of nonfunctioning village government services was that Sriharjo was left behind compared to other villages, especially in terms of community economic empowerment and infrastructure development. This momentum, then, further strengthened the confidence of TIK to run for the village head.

The second type of capital was social capital. Self-confidence alone was not enough; therefore, TIK utilized a family gathering post-Eid 2018 to build her connections. Joko Supriyanto, a member of TIK's success team, said, "*Mbak* Titik wants to run for village head, so she is using this moment where her big family is here to announce her endeavor" (Interview with Joko, March 27, 2019). At the gathering, TIK spoke about her intention and desire to nominate herself as the village head of Sriharjo. She explained the condition of the village to her family, and it turned out that they were very supportive of TIK's intention. Her family showed great support, and some even helped with the funding for the nomination process. The family then started to build a network to back TIK. The support from her family boosted TIK's energy and positivity.

The third type of capital was network capital. After TIK received support from her extended family, the next step was to approach ex-youth cadets. Around 2003–2007, TIK was an active member of a youth organization. She said, "The village hall was my home. Every night I was at the village hall" (Interview with Titik Istiyawatun Khasanah, March 12, 2019). From her statement, it appears that she had been a village activist and worked to build the village from a young age. One of her friends said, "In the past *Mbak* Titik once built a flyover and collaborated with the Masri Singarimbun Museum" (Interview with Suparjiyono, March 27, 2019). It turned out that her friends from the *Karang Taruna* she belonged to were also concerned about Sriharjo's stagnant condition. Upon hearing that TIK would be running for village head, they came to her and pledged their support. The positive response from TIK's friends was motivated by three things: (1) TIK

had a proven track record of caring for the Sriharjo community, which was evidenced by real work, (2) the volunteers made their move to the neighborhood community and the hamlets to form a liquid volunteer team, and (3) they sincerely volunteered to help TIK win the contest without being paid. These volunteers spontaneously formed a team whose members could not be detected by other candidates. They called themselves a liquid team that blended into the community, without a leader, secretary, and treasurer, or a structured success team.

The fourth type of capital was true *sedulur* (comrades) virus. Because the bonds among Sriharjo community members were strong, social capital was one of the determining factors for TIK's victory. An interviewee said, "We support *Mbak* Titik with sincerity and without money politics in place. We introduced true *sedulur* as the real *sedulur* who would always be genuine" (Interview with Bambang, March 27, 2019). True *sedulur* became the glue for volunteers, and they were committed to never exchanging the bonds they had for the practice of money politics. This relation was an actualization of the values upheld by their ancestors. With the stagnant state of the Sriharjo government system and TIK as a candidate for village head, young people of the village were inspired to work hand in hand to build the village.

The last resource was socialization strategies. After family support and youth clubs were established, the next step taken by TIK was to bring her vision, mission, and programs to surrounding community groups. This process was carried out door-to-door or in discussions with farmers' groups, women's groups, religious leaders, and community leaders. For more than two months, TIK intensively conducted this socialization process by spreading the truth about Sriharjo's stagnant condition and campaigning for change to advance progress. When TIK met with people of the village, some of them asked for three generator sets. To that request, TIK replied, "I cannot give anything, but I can do anything" (Interview with TIK, March 12, 2019). In every aspect of this process, TIK emphasized the importance of citizens' voices and rejected the idea of money politics. "If I give money to you to provide you with the things you want and need, later on when I become the village head,

I will more likely look for ways to earn back the money I gave to you and not think about the progress of the village. Do you not want Sriharjo to progress like other villages?” said TIK in an interview on March 12, 2019. With this process of informing community members about the current status of Sriharjo and the building of the village, people began to understand what TIK was proposing and started supporting her.

The intensive process of going from house to house within a period of two months resulted in three things. The first was a sense of togetherness that everyone was in the same boat. The core of TIK's process was the presentation of the stagnant village government and her vision, mission, and programs to change Sriharjo for the better. This illustrated a sense of shared fate among the community. They suffered from the same difficulties because public services were not functioning well. The impact of stagnant economic development and infrastructure distinguished Sriharjo from neighboring villages, but in a negative way. When floods hit Sriharjo in 2017, the village government did not quickly respond to help the victims. “The village government did not have enough money to help the victims of the flooding. The people took the initiative to build a public kitchen to deal with the food shortage without the help of the village government” (Interview with Joko, March 27, 2019). It was the people of Sriharjo who spontaneously helped fellow villagers who became flood victims. It seems that the enthusiasm of the youth organization, working together to open a public kitchen, was repeated in the process of nominating TIK as the village head. The spirit of the people of Sriharjo was sparked as a result of their shared experience of malfunctioning public services. The second result was public trust. The emergence of TIK in the midst of the leadership crisis came as a breath of fresh air to the people of Sriharjo. Supported by her track record as a youth activist, TIK did not encounter many difficulties in gaining the public trust because she was thought to represent new hope to the village to once again progress economically like the neighboring villages. Community trust in TIK was important in the *pilkades* contest because without it, she would not have won and become the village head. This community trust was

transformed in the acquisition of votes for TIK. The last result was her rising electability. With the public trust, her electability increased. It was easy to predict that TIK would win the contest as she already won the people's trust and achieved high electability. This scheme could be seen in every hamlet neighborhood community in the village. In the Sriharjo *pilkades*, which had relatively few voters (6,055 people), electability mapping could be easily predicted, especially because TIK was supported by her liquid volunteer team in each hamlet.

## CONCLUSION

Village democracy comes from people's conscience based on the value of deliberation to reach consensus. However, the direct election of the village head breaks the culture of the village community. Candidates who do not have sufficient capital or goods will lose the village-head election.

The results of this study, however, show the opposite, because candidates seized power in the Sriharjo *pilkades* without employing money politics and the influence of shamans. The Scott patronage relation theory as interpreted by Aspinall and Sukmajati (2015) as the practice of money politics and clientelism with five categories, (1) vote buying, (2) personal gifts, (3) services and activities, (4) club goods, and (5) pork barrel projects- this is different from what happened in Sriharjo village, where they have local wisdom. This means that Aspinall and Sukmajati's money politics cannot be implemented in Sriharjo village. Because they are aware and put forward the politics of conscience that embodies the maturity of society.

The politics of conscience is the embodiment of community maturity. Even though people live in poverty, they were not easily bribed by money or goods in the 2018 Sriharjo *pilkades*. The politics of conscience differs from Scott and Muhtadi's theories about patronage. This finding also negates Scott's (1972) and Muhtadi's (2013) theories. Scott (1972) believes that patronage can exist in an agricultural society and that the patronage relation can be used by electoral candidates to get votes.

However, Muhtadi (2013) argues that poor communities are vulnerable and prone to the practices of money politics.

This political theory of conscience also raises questions different from Moedjanto's (1986) and Anderson's (1972) theory of *kasekten*, or concrete power. One of the findings of this study shows that the spells cast by shamans can be broken by urinating on the area in which spells have been cast. Concrete power also encourages candidates running for village head not to believe that shamans' powers can help secure people's votes. The correct way to win votes from the people is by winning their hearts by going door-to-door, spreading the word about the vision, missions, and programs proposed by a candidate. In addition, in this case the candidate was supported by a team of volunteers (youth clubs) who sincerely worked and blended in with the community, which left no trace for other competitors to detect.

Because TIK employed the politics of conscience, a sense of unity, trust, and electability in the community emerged. With this trust, the people of Sriharjo were not able to be bribed with money and goods, or controlled by shamans.

## SUGGESTIONS

The district government in carrying out the election for village heads should pay attention to the sociocultural factors of the community, where the rise of money politics is destroying the spirit of solidarity and harmony between villagers. In fact, the direct election for village head is not a reflection of substantial democracy. Rather, substantial democracy will be realized through deliberation to reach consensus, values respecting differences, and togetherness.

Future research on the same topic should employ other methods to produce quality and more accurate information.

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