

The Anti-Money Politics Village Movement (APU): Bawaslu's Participatory Strategy For Strengthening Electoral Integrity In Indonesia

Gerakan Desa Anti Politik Uang (APU): Strategi Partisipatif Bawaslu untuk Memperkuat Integritas Pemilihan Umum di Indonesia

Nur Kholis¹, Sayyida Faradiba Vahlevi², Octavia Novita Sari³,
Muhammad Irfan⁴, Maria Elida Tarigan⁵

^{1,2,4,5}Universitas Satya Terra Bhinneka, ³Universitas Gadjah Mada

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini menganalisis strategi Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum (Bawaslu) dalam mencegah politik uang melalui Gerakan Desa Anti Politik Uang (APU) pada pemilihan kepala daerah serentak di Indonesia. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi literatur terhadap berbagai sumber terbitan tahun 2017–2025. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa politik uang dipengaruhi oleh kerentanan ekonomi, rendahnya literasi politik, degradasi moral, serta lemahnya penegakan hukum. Gerakan Desa APU menjadi strategi partisipatif melalui pendidikan politik, pelibatan masyarakat, dan pengawasan berbasis komunitas. Penelitian ini mengintegrasikan Teori Ruang Publik Habermas untuk menjelaskan peran ruang publik dalam memperkuat demokrasi partisipatif, meningkatkan kesadaran politik warga, dan menjaga integritas pemilu secara berkelanjutan.

Kata-Kata Kunci: Gerakan Desa APU, Bawaslu, Politik Uang, Demokrasi Partisipatif.

Abstract:

This study examines the strategy of Indonesia's Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) in preventing vote-buying through the Anti-Money Politics Village Movement (APU) during simultaneous local elections. The study employs a qualitative approach using a literature review of sources published between 2017 and 2025. The findings reveal that money politics is driven by economic vulnerability, low political literacy, moral degradation, and weak law enforcement. The APU Movement represents a participatory strategy through political education, community engagement, and community-based monitoring. This research integrates Habermas's Public Sphere Theory to explain the role of public spaces in strengthening participatory democracy, promoting civic awareness, and sustaining electoral integrity.

Keywords: APU Village Movement, Bawaslu Money Politics, Participatory Democracy.

Korespodensi:

Nur Kholis (nurkholis@satyaterrabhinneka.ac.id)

Introduction

Electoral mechanisms are a fundamental mechanism through which democratic governments obtain political legitimacy and public consent. In Indonesia, direct elections and simultaneous regional elections are designed to strengthen democratic participation, accountability, and the sovereignty of the people (Kusdianita et al., 2022). However, despite continuous electoral reforms, the quality of democracy in Indonesia continues to face serious challenges, particularly the persistence of money politics practices that threaten electoral integrity and undermine public trust in democratic institutions.

Money politics remains one of the most widespread electoral violations in Indonesia. Vote buying practices occur when candidates, campaign teams, political parties, or intermediaries distribute money, goods, or other material incentives to influence voters' political preferences. Such practices weaken democratic competition because electoral choices are no longer based on policy programs, leadership capacity, or public interests, but rather on short-term material benefits (Schaffer, 2007; Corstrange, 2018). Consequently, money politics has the potential to produce political leaders with weak democratic legitimacy and poor public accountability. This is reflected in various electoral events across Indonesia. Data from Bawaslu indicate that money politics remains one of the most frequently reported electoral violations. During the 2018 Simultaneous Regional Elections, Bawaslu identified various forms of vote buying, including cash distribution, free medical services, low-cost bazaars, community gatherings, and the distribution of basic necessities (Riwanto et al., 2021). More recently, Bawaslu recorded 130 alleged cases of money politics during the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections, including 121 cases during the silence period and nine cases on election day itself (Subarkah, 2024).

These findings demonstrate that money politics continues to evolve through increasingly diverse and sophisticated methods. The persistence of money politics is influenced by multiple interconnected factors. Previous studies have identified economic vulnerability, weak political literacy, patron-client relations, high electoral costs, and ineffective law enforcement as key drivers of vote buying practices (Kitschelt & Wilkinson, 2007; Okeke & Nwali, 2020). In many cases, economically disadvantaged voters are more susceptible to material

inducements, while limited political awareness contributes to the normalization of transaction politics within electoral processes.

The importance of the APU Movement becomes increasingly relevant in the context of Indonesia's simultaneous regional elections. The growing complexity of electoral violations, the limited supervisory capacity of election institutions, and the persistence of transactional political culture demonstrate the necessity of broader citizen involvement in protecting democratic processes. Consequently, electoral integrity should not rely solely on regulatory enforcement but also on civic participation and democratic political education. From a theoretical perspective, Jürgen Habermas' concept of the Public Sphere provides an important framework for understanding how democratic participation can contribute to preventing money politics. Habermas (1989) argues that democratic legitimacy emerges when citizens engage in rational-critical deliberation within public spaces that are free from domination by political and economic interests. Furthermore, Habermas' concept of Communicative Action emphasizes consensus-building through dialogue, mutual understanding, and public reasoning rather than coercion or material incentives (Habermas, 1984). Within this framework, the Anti-Money Politics Village Movement can be understood not merely as an electoral prevention program but also as a democratic public sphere that facilitates political education, citizen deliberation, and collaborative electoral supervision.

Previous studies generally focus on three major themes. First, studies examining the causes, patterns, and impacts of money politics in electoral processes (Corstrange, 2018; Okeke & Nwali, 2020). Second, studies analyzing Bawaslu's supervisory role and preventive strategies in addressing electoral violations (Asmawi, 2021; Wardiyanti et al., (2023)). Third, studies discussing Anti-Money Politics Villages as local democratic innovations in preventing vote-buying practices (Alina, 2022; Bora et al., 2024; Priswari & Sari, 2023). However, previous studies still tend to discuss anti-money-politics initiatives within limited local contexts and have not comprehensively analyzed the Anti-Money Politics Village Movement as a participatory democratic model that can be institutionalized nationally (Kadir, 2022).

Furthermore, only a limited number of studies have integrated the Anti-Money Politics Village Movement with Habermas' concepts of Public Sphere, Communicative Action, and Deliberative Democracy to explain how citizen

participation and democratic dialogue contribute to strengthening electoral integrity. Therefore, a theoretical and empirical gap remains regarding the broader democratic significance of the APU Movement.

This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the factors driving money politics in Indonesia, examining Bawaslu's strategy through the Anti-Money Politics Village Movement, and evaluating its relevance in strengthening electoral integrity through Habermas' theoretical perspective. The novelty of this study lies in conceptualizing the Anti-Money Politics Village Movement not merely as a preventive electoral program but as a democratic public sphere model capable of strengthening civic engagement, communicative action, participatory supervision, and democratic culture in Indonesia's simultaneous regional elections (Anggraini et al., 2023).

Based on the background above, this study addresses three research questions: (1) What factors contribute to the persistence of money politics in Indonesia? (2) How can Bawaslu's strategy through the Anti-Money Politics Village Movement be optimized to prevent money politics in simultaneous regional elections? and (3) How can the Anti-Money Politics Village Movement be analyzed through Habermas' Public Sphere Theory? Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the factors driving money politics in Indonesia, examine Bawaslu's strategy in preventing money politics through the Anti-Money Politics Village Movement, and evaluate the movement's contribution to strengthening democratic participation and electoral integrity from Habermas' theoretical perspective.

To answer the previous questions this study employed a qualitative literature review approach to examine Bawaslu's strategy in preventing money politics through the Anti-Money Politics Village Movement (APU) in Indonesia's simultaneous regional elections. A literature review was selected because it allows researchers to systematically synthesize empirical and theoretical findings from various academic sources related to electoral integrity, participatory supervision, and democratic public spaces. The data were collected from scientific journal articles, books, government regulations, institutional reports, conference proceedings, and credible online news sources published between 2017 and 2025. The literature search process was conducted through Google Scholar, Sinta Indexed journals, institutional databases, and official reports from Bawaslu, KPU, and related organizations. The inclusion criteria consisted of 1.)

studies discussing money politics, electoral supervision, participatory democracy or political education, 2.) nationality and internationally reputable academic publications and 3.) sources relevant to the implementation of anti-money-politics movements and election supervision strategies.

Meanwhile, sources lacking academic credibility or unrelated to electoral integrity issues were excluded for analysis. Approximately 25 academic references were analyzed in this study. The collected data were examined using thematic content analysis by identifying recurring themes related to the causes of money politics, Bawaslu preventive strategies, participatory supervision, and the utilization of physical and digital public spaces in strengthening democracy. This study also adopted the literature review stages proposed by Onwuegbuzie and Freels, which include identifying research topics, collecting and organizing references, selecting relevant sources, synthesizing findings, and constructing analytical interpretations based on the reviewed literature.

This research was studied using sociological theory, namely Habermas's public sphere theory. From the perspective of Habermas' Public Sphere Theory, the APU movement can be interpreted as an effort to expand democratic public spaces by facilitating communication, deliberation, and public participation. Nevertheless, the quality of public deliberation remains dependent on the inclusiveness of participation and the ability of institutions to ensure equal access for all citizens. Therefore, strengthening public sphere mechanisms through continuous political education, community empowerment, and institutional collaboration remains essential for sustaining the long-term impact of anti-money-politics initiatives (Rusliana, 2021).

Factors that Drive the Practice of Money Politics in Indonesia

The practice of money politics has remained a recurring phenomenon in Indonesian elections. Evidence of such practices was documented during the 2009 General Election, the 2014 Legislative Election, the 2019 General Election, the 2020 Simultaneous Regional Elections, and the 2024 General Election and Simultaneous Regional Elections. This pattern demonstrates that money politics continues to pose a significant threat to electoral integrity, democratic accountability, and the quality of political representation in Indonesia. The relevant data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Trends in Money Politics Cases in Indonesian Elections

Election Year	Number of Cases	Description
2009 General Election	691 cases	Cases occurred during campaign activities, the silence period, voting day, and the announcement of election results.
2014 Legislative Election	313 cases	Based on Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW) findings, involving cash distribution, goods, services, and misuse of state resources.
2019 Election – 2020 Regional Elections	Number of cases not specified	Common practices included the distribution of food vouchers, electronic money, construction materials, and political promises to voters.
2024 General and Regional Elections	Potentially high prevalence	Money politics remains one of the major challenges in the implementation of simultaneous elections and regional elections.

Source: (Sari & Angraeni, 2025)

Money politics is a practice in which money or goods are used to influence people's political decisions in elections or regional elections, often packaged in the form of programs that pretend to be for the welfare of the people. This practice is not only in the form of distributing cash, but also goods, promises of office, and other rewards that can damage the integrity of democracy and obscure the aspirations of the people. To combat money politics, an effective prevention strategy is needed so that the election process reflects the true will of the people. Then, the types of money politics violations that occurred in the 2014 election also varied based on ICW 2014 (Sari & Angraeni, 2025) data as follows.

Table 3. Types of Money Politics Practices in the 2014 Legislative Election

Type of Violation	Number of Cases	Percentage (%)
Distribution of Goods	128	40.89
Cash Distribution	104	33.23
Misuse of State Resources	54	17.25
Provision of Services	27	8.63
Total	313	100.00

Source: (Sari & Angraeni, 2025)

Common money politics tactics include "dawn attacks", namely the distribution of money before the election, as well as mass mobilization by giving money or goods during the campaign process. The main driving factor for money politics is the economic crisis that forces people to accept rewards without considering the long-term impact. The crisis of moral values also plays a role, where people justify any means to achieve political goals, including accepting money politics as something normal.

Table 2. Distribution of Money Politics Cases by Electoral Stage in the 2009 General Election

Electoral Stage	Number of Cases	Percentage (%)
Campaign Period	537	77.71
Silence Period	95	13.75
Voting Day	57	8.25
Announcement of Election Results	2	0.29
Total	691	100.00

The data indicate that money politics was predominantly concentrated during the campaign period, which accounted for 77.71 % of all reported cases in the 2009 General Election. This finding underscores the susceptibility of the campaign phase the electoral malpractice, particularly vote buying and patronage based mobilization. Consequently, strengthening monitoring

mechanisms and preventive measures during the campaign period should become a strategic priority for election management and supervisory bodies.

In addition, the crisis of legal legitimacy worsens the situation, with regulatory gaps and weak law enforcement making it difficult to eradicate the practice of money politics. The low level of public political understanding also contributes, with many apathetic and choosing based on practical rewards rather than the qualifications of prospective leaders. So that in the end, the leaders who are elected are often incompetent and do not side with the welfare of the people. The persistence of money politics in Indonesia demonstrates that the problem is not merely individual misconduct, but also a structural issue rooted in socioeconomic inequality, weak political institutionalization, and limited civic education. Economic vulnerability often places citizens in pragmatic political situations where short-term material benefits are prioritized over long term democratic values. Consequently, money politics becomes normalized within electoral culture. Moreover, weak law enforcement, mechanisms, and inconsistent electoral sanctions contribute to the reproduction of money politics practices in many regions. In several cases, political elites are still able to mobilize patronage networks and exploit economic dependency relationships within local communities. This indicates that punitive legal approaches alone are insufficient to eradicate money politics without simultaneously strengthening political literacy, public participation, and democratic ethics. Therefore, efforts to combat money politics require multidimensional strategies involving legal enforcement, political education, participatory supervision, and the transformation of public political culture. In this context, Bawaslu's preventive approach through the Anti Money Politics Village Movement becomes important because it seeks to address the cultural and structural roots of money politics simultaneously.

Bawaslu's Strategy in Overcoming Money Politics in Simultaneous Regional Head Election in Indonesia

Based on the reality of the problems and violations of regional elections, namely money politics, which are increasingly worrying, it is considered important to pay more attention to handling the practice of money politics so that it does not get worse. Bawaslu as an institution that has the authority to carry out supervision needs to implement an effective strategy to overcome money politics.

Therefore, on this occasion the researcher would like to convey an offer and analysis related to the strategy that can be implemented by the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) both from the central, provincial and Regency/City Bawaslu levels in an effort to prevent money politics. The strategy that can be implemented by Bawaslu is to initiate and innovate policies to form an Anti-Money Politics (APU) village movement in villages with both a preemptive and preventive perspective. Preemptive is a preventive effort carried out at the planning and decision-making level. This effort is chosen with the aim of preventing other actions that may occur. While preventive is an effort to prevent implementation (execution). As explained below:

Building an Anti-Money Politics Village Movement (Pre-emptive Perspective)

One of the preventive measures against money politics that can be done is to build the Anti-Money Politics Village Movement (APU). APU is a movement that aims to provide political education related to money politics. This concept has been implemented in DI Yogyakarta. The Anti-Politics Village Movement is a form of political education with the concept of *pre-emptive efforts* initiated by the community. This movement collaborates with Bawaslu DI Yogyakarta and village community leaders. This movement was campaigned because there is an assumption that money politics has become a deep-rooted social problem and seems to have become part of the community's habits every time a democratic party is held in Indonesia.

The main objective of this movement is to form village actors as a team that will provide political education for the community, especially regarding the practice of buying and selling votes or money politics. There are two villages in Yogyakarta that are the benchmark for the success of the APU Village, namely Sardonoharjo Village and Murtigading Village. The people of the two villages can provide examples regarding the practice of moral values in maintaining the integrity and quality of democracy so that it remains protected from dirty actions, including money politics. Providing understanding and spirit to the community that one vote is very valuable. It cannot be bought with any amount of money. The successful results achieved from the consistency of the two villages were having main actors or community figures as movement influencers (Bora et al., 2024).

This success is due to *the support* and cooperation of various parties including the village government. The village government is the main key to the success of the APU movement. Learning from the success of the Anti Money Politics (APU) village movement in Yogyakarta and several other areas, it is considered necessary to innovate, namely by innovating by formulating policies with the aim of the Anti Money Politics (APU) village movement which was initially only in the local regional scope transformed into its implementation in the national scope. Political education as a *pre-emptive effort* is implemented to reduce patronage relations that often occur in the election stage. In the long term, this patronage relationship has a negative impact on society. The following are technical *pre-emptive efforts* that can be carried out by APU villages. First, is making an anti-money politics declarations. The declaration was made with the aim of uniting a joint commitment between election organizers in this case the KPU and Bawaslu or their representatives (PPK and Panwascam), regional head candidates (contestants), village governments, community leaders and all village residents to work together to fight all forms of money politics practices which can later have implications for preventing political corruption.

Second, is to hold technical guidance (Bimtek) activity that aims to strengthen the capacity and capability of the APU village team in understanding the signs of money politics cases. In addition, it is also to provide knowledge to the APU team in analyzing and responding firmly and appropriately to money politics practices and as provisions before providing education to other community members. Third, is to holding a workshop that invites experts in the field of elections such as lecturers, election activists, election observers, KPU and Bawaslu to provide education on the importance of avoiding and preventing money politics.

Next, is to establish joint action activities that can be translated into various forms such as healthy exercise as well as socialization of the negative impacts of money politics, distribution of stickers or posters rejecting the practice of money politics, to sounding a signal if there is an election violation including money politics by hitting the gong in the village. This is expected to be able to raise the spirit of the village community in fighting all forms of money politics.

Last, is to do literacy and education based on citizen dialogue. This activities is built to provide community education once a week by piggybacking on community activities such as RT/RW meetings, women's social gatherings,

youth organizations meetings, and so on. The material explained is about money politics and the role of the community in preventing it (Bora et al., 2024).

Anti-Money Politics Village Movement (Preventive Perspective)

Political education for residents can be carried out by APU villages with preventive efforts. Preventive efforts are a form of effort to prevent money politics in the election process. This is done to prevent the practice of buying and selling votes or *money politics* in the 2024 simultaneous regional elections. Some preventions that can be implemented include, establishing a complaint post in the village. Each Anti Money Politics (APU) Village can establish a complaint post that is open every day. This can be a means for residents to report if they find the phenomenon or practice of *money politics*. In addition, the post also functions as an information service unit regarding the stages and implementation of the simultaneous regional elections for the community. The complaint post needs to be continuously opened until the day of voting.

Next, is to collaborate with election monitoring institutions. In order for the prevention efforts carried out by APU villages to be more effective and able to carry out more comprehensive monitoring, they must cooperate with various parties who have the same commitment to make the simultaneous regional elections a success. APU villages can build cooperation and collaboration with election monitoring institutions registered with Bawaslu such as the Independent Election Awareness Committee (KISP), the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI), the Voter Education Network for the People (JPPR) and other monitoring institutions. APU villages can cooperate with election monitoring institutions to go directly to the field as volunteers to run anti-money politics campaigns. In addition, they can also invite the public to reject money politics by utilizing social media such as Instagram, Youtube, Facebook, X, threads and others. So, the work of preventing *money politics* can run more optimally and effectively.

Despite its potential to strengthen electoral integrity, the implementation of the Anti Money Politics Village Movement at the national level faces several significant challengers. First, political literacy among citizens remains uneven across regions. In many rural and economically vulnerable communities, money politics is still perceived as a normal electoral practice rather than a democratic violation. Second, local political culture characterized by patron client relationships often makes community members dependent on political elites.

This condition creates resistance toward anti money politics campaigns because some citizens fear losing economic and social benefits provided by local political actors. Third, institutional limitations within local Bawaslu offices also become a challenge. Limited human resources, budget constraints, and unequal supervisory capacity between regions may hinder the sustainability of the APU movement.

In several remote regions, digital infrastructure limitations also reduce the effectiveness of online political education and participatory monitoring programs. Fourth, the implementation of the APU movement may face resistance from political actors who benefit from transactional politics. As a result, anti money politics initiatives require not only institutional commitment from Bawaslu, but also broader collaboration involving local governments, educational institutions, civil society organizations, religious leaders, youth communities, and digital activists. These challenges indicate that the success of the APU movement depends not only on regulatory frameworks, but also on long term sociopolitical transformation aimed at strengthening democratic culture, civic awareness, and public participation.

Analysis of Simultaneous Regional Head Election in Indonesia from Perspective of Habermas's Public Sphere Theory

Discussing the implementation of regional head elections is inseparable from the public space contained therein. In every election, whether general or regional elections, the public sees and makes an assessment, then the final process is that the public uses their right to vote to choose a candidate or candidate for national leader or regional head. However, before the public uses their right to vote, there are several stages where they can first get to know and learn the vision and mission that the candidate for national or regional leader wants to achieve. Therefore, discussing political discourse is inseparable from the public space in which there is a dialectic of various thoughts or individual backgrounds, to throw objections or convey their ideas about politics.

Among the figures who study the theory of public space are Jurgen Habermas and Hannah Arendt, who discuss the theory of public space in political and state life and its relationship with society. According to Habermas, public space is a space that acts as an intermediary between society and the state where the public organizes itself as a bearer of public opinion. Public space must be autonomous, that is, independent of the state and the market. The creation of

public space must be able to provide certainty that every citizen has equal access to express public opinion. Not only that, the existence of public space provides the possibility for every citizen to have the freedom to express and express themselves. This is because in public space there is an opportunity for citizens to express their views. How is this political public space as a communication situation that is able to build solidarity in society to fight all sources that create imbalance, instability and injustice in the life of a capitalist market society and the power of the state bureaucracy (Fauzia, 2020).

It can be understood that Habermas's theoretical discourse focuses on communication procedures to realize a consensus (agreement) that can increase the integration of society and the state both in terms of thought, moral values, and democratic life. Thus, a reciprocal relationship will be built in a balanced manner in discursive communication to achieve political life as expected by postmodern society (Fauzia, 2020). Habermas' theoretical framework serves as the primary analytical lens in this study. The concepts of Public Sphere, Communicative Action, and Deliberative Democracy are employed to explain how democratic participation can be strengthened through collective dialogue and civic engagement. Within this framework, the Anti-Money Politics Village Movement represents a democratic public sphere where citizens are encouraged to engage in rational-critical discussions regarding electoral integrity and public interests. Through communicative action, citizens collectively construct shared norms rejecting vote-buying practices and develop democratic awareness independent of political or economic domination.

In the context of democracy and the implementation of Simultaneous Elections and Regional Elections, public space needs to be transformed into a transformative and supportive space to support the great work in making the regional head elections a success. Bawaslu can utilize public space, both physical and digital, as a means to provide political education for the community, including the younger generation.

In physical public space, the concept of an Anti-Money Politics (APU) village is one form of public space that can be used as a concrete strategy as a vehicle to increase the capacity and technical skills of the community in facing various simultaneous regional election challenges, especially money politics. Bawaslu can create dialogue or discussion activities about the negative impacts of money politics and how to overcome them. Bawaslu can hold political

education through Sentra Gakkumdu (Bawaslu, the Indonesian Police, and the Attorney General's Office of the Republic of Indonesia), so as to increase public understanding of the stages of the election, challenges and how to deal with them. In addition to the Gakkumdu Center, Bawaslu can also invite the KPU, KPK, regional governments, village governments, religious leaders and community leaders to participate in educating the political and democratic life of the community, especially for the young people whose numbers are very large. Several political education programs that have been run by Bawaslu include the Election Supervisory Citizens Forum, Social Media Management, Gowaslu, One Million Election Supervisory Volunteers, Supervision Corner, Thematic Community Service (KKN) for Election Supervision, Scout Work Unit (Saka) Adhyasta Election, and Participatory Supervisory Cadre School (SKPP). In addition to physical public spaces, what is no less important is political education through digital public spaces.

Bawaslu is an election supervisory institution, in carrying out its duties Bawaslu cannot work alone to supervise all stages of the election from start to finish. Therefore, Bawaslu requires active community involvement to participate in supervising as participatory supervisors. One of Bawaslu's political education programs and steps in fostering community participatory supervision is by holding the Participatory Supervisory Cadre School (SKPP). SKPP is a political education class held by Bawaslu with the aim of facilitating the general public so that they can participate in supervising the implementation of elections and regional elections. This SKPP program was initiated by Bawaslu in 2019. Young people aged 20-30 years are the main target. This Participatory Supervisory Cadre School is a joint movement between Bawaslu and the community in realizing an election process with integrity. Bawaslu needs to provide educational services, on the other hand, voters need the initiative to participate in supervising the implementation of elections and regional elections.

During the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, SKPP was carried out online, *the output* of which was to increase knowledge and practical skills related to elections, the end result of which was being able to produce cadres of election supervisors and observers. Even though it is no longer a pandemic, activities such as webinars can continue to be encouraged, because currently society is entering the digital era. Bawaslu and election activists must be able to seize the opportunity that the presence of digital public spaces can create new dynamics

for netizens. The existence of the internet makes it easy for internet people to conduct virtual deliberations. Habermas explained that in the digital era like today, the intensity of face-to-face meetings between individuals is decreasing. So it is necessary to hold discussions using text, images in digital spaces (Putri & Dwipriandi, 2022).

These activities are carried out using information technology and social media. Such digital public spaces need to be maximized to reach a wider community, including the younger generation who are mostly active on social media. Bawaslu needs to optimize the strategy of using digital public spaces as an effort to monitor election violations including money politics and their handling. Bawaslu can hold political education webinars for netizens (internet citizens) to be smarter in responding to money politics. Webinars can utilize social media such as Instagram, Google Meet, Zoom and so on. This aims to ensure that political education, socialization and supervisory work can more optimally reach a wider community, and have positive implications for minimizing the practice of money politics and other violations, strengthening public participation and improving the quality of national democracy.

Based on the analysis with the perspective of Habermas's public space theory, the researcher assesses that Habermas's concept of public space is aimed at political communication during the election. In this case, how Bawaslu and all related *stakeholders* are able to optimally utilize public space as a means of political communication, socialization and educational space to support Bawaslu's efforts in preventing the practice of money politics and the spirit of election supervision. The public space referred to here is both physical and digital. Therefore, Bawaslu needs to optimize the use of public space to reduce the number of money politics, mobilize public participation in monitoring the stages of the regional elections, voting, and the vote recapitulation process. Hopefully, a consistent and sustainable public space optimization strategy can maintain the integrity of the election and have implications for improving the quality of democracy so that it can produce regional leaders who are *legitimate*, trustworthy, and superior. In addition, what is no less important is that elections can bring prosperity to the community, region, nation, and state.

From Habermas perspective, the Anti Money Politics Village Movement (APU) can be interpreted as an efforts to reconstruct democratic public spaces at the grassroots level. Habermas emphasizes that public space should function as

an autonomous arena where citizens can engage in rational critical discussions regarding public interests without domination from political or economic power. In the context of simultaneous regional elections, money politics weakens the democratic public sphere because political communication becomes transactional rather than deliberative. Citizens are positioned merely as objects of electoral mobilization instead of active democratic participants. Therefore, the APU movement becomes important as a communicative platform that encourages citizens to collectively discuss, criticize, and reject money politics practices. Through citizen dialogue, political education, participatory supervision, and digital campaigns, the APU movement reflects Habermas concepts of communicative action. Community members are encouraged to build democratic consensus based on public reasoning and collective ethical awareness rather than material incentives. In this regard, the APU movement not only functions as a preventive electoral strategy, but also as a democratic transformation effort aimed at strengthening participatory political culture in Indonesia. Furthermore, the utilization of digital public spaces through webinars, social media campaigns, and online participatory supervision expands democratic access for younger generations. Digital public spheres allow broader civic engagement and facilitate collaborative monitoring between Bawaslu and society. Consequently, the integration of physical and digital public spaces can strengthen democratic participation and reduce the normalization of money politics practices.

Several empirical studies indicate that Anti-Money Politics Villages have generated positive outcomes in strengthening electoral integrity. Research conducted in Sardonoharjo Village, Sleman Regency, demonstrated increased public awareness regarding the dangers of vote buying and greater willingness among citizens to participate in election monitoring activities (Kusdianita et al., 2022). Similarly, (Bora et al., 2024) found that continuous political education programs significantly improved community understanding of electoral violations and encouraged collective resistance to money politics practices.

In Banyumas Regency, the implementation of Anti Money Politics Village Movement (APU) through collaborative penta-helix governance involving government institutions, civil society organizations, academia, media, and local communities contributed to strengthening participatory supervision and public engagement in election monitoring (Sari & Angraeni, 2025). These findings

suggest that the effectiveness of the APU Movement is reflected not only in efforts to reduce vote-buying practices but also in its ability to cultivate democratic norms, strengthen political literacy, and expand civic participation in electoral oversight.

Conclusion

This study reveals that the persistence of money politics in Indonesia is influenced by interconnected structural and cultural factors, including economic vulnerability, weak political literacy, declining moral values, and ineffective law enforcement mechanisms. These conditions demonstrate that money politics is not merely an electoral violation, but also a broader democratic challenge that threatens electoral integrity and public trust. As an electoral supervisory institution, Bawaslu has implemented various preventive and participatory strategies to address money politics, particularly through the Anti Money Politics Village Movement (APU). The APU movement represents an innovative democratic approach that combines political education, citizen participation and collaborative supervision involving communities, civil society organization, and local stakeholders.

Acknowledgment

The writers would like to express sincere gratitude to Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum (Bawaslu) for its contribution and commitment in strengthening democratic integrity through the prevention of money politics practices. Appreciation is also extended to all lecturers, academic staff, and related parties who have provided guidance, support, and valuable insights throughout the completion of this study.

Funding Statement

The authors receive no external financial support in conducting this research.

References

- Adlin, A., Harahap, H. I., & Yusri, A. (2022). Indonesian Elections In The Shadow Of Money Politics : Strengthening Stakeholders ' Commitment And Creating Anti-Money Politics Villages. *International Journal of Asia-*

Pacific Studies, 18(1), 169–196. <https://doi.org/>. <https://ijaps.usm.my/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/IJAPS-181-ART-8.pdf>

- Alina, Y. F. (2022). Reaktualisasi Pendidikan Politik Dalam Menghadapi Politik Uang Melalui Gerakan Desa Anti Politik Uang. *POLITICOS: Jurnal Politik Dan Pemerintahan*, 2(2), 145–163. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22225/politicos.2.2.2022.145-163>
- Anggraini, T., Zawani, N., & Ivanna, J. (2023). Peran Bawaslu dalam Mencegah Politik Uang Pada Pemilu 2024 di Kota Medan. *Jurnal Pendidikan Multidisipliner*, 6(12).
- Asmawi, M. (2021). Strategi Badan Pengawas Pemilu Kabupaten Serang dalam Pencegahan Praktik Politik Uang. *Indonesian Journal of Law and Policy Studies*, 2(1), 28–42. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31000/ijlp.v2i1.4296>
- Adhari, N. R., Sundawa, D., Darmawan, C., Syaifullah, & Basit, A. (2025). *Nurturing nationalism: A qualitative study of the role of the Ansor Youth Movement and Muhammadiyah Youth in defending the nation as a form of civic involvement*. *ASANKA: Journal of Social Science and Education*, 6(2), 275–288. URL artikel: <https://jurnal.iainponorogo.ac.id/index.php/asanka/article/view/11592>
- Angga, V. V., & Anggraini, J. (2020). *Dinamika menjelang pendirian Partai Rakyat Demokratik di masa Orde Baru*. *ASANKA: Journal of Social Science and Education*, 1(2), 55–66. <https://doi.org/10.21154/asanka.v1i2.2198>
- Bora, N. A., Susu, M. T., Pemerintahan, I., Katolik, U., & Mandira, W. (2024). Pendidikan Politik Dalam Pencegahan Politik Uang Melalui Gerakan Masyarakat Desa. *Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat Nusantara*, 5(4), 3879–3885. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.55338/jpkmn.v5i4.4519>
- Christian, R., & Kuntag, F. (2023). Upaya Pengawas Bawaslu (Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum) Dalam Memberantas Politik Uang (Money Politic) Di Kota Manado. *Lex Administratum*, 11(3), 1–10. <https://doi.org/https://ejournal.unsrat.ac.id/index.php/administratum/article/view/48090>
- Corstange, D. (2018). “Clientelism in Competitive and Uncompetitive Elections”:

- Comparative Political Studies. *Sage Journal*, 51(1), 76–104.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414017695332>
- Dairani. (2024). Strategi Pencegahan Tindak Pidana Korupsi Pada Pemilu Dan Pilkada Serentak 2024. *Hukmy: Jurnal Hukum*, 3(1), 346–363.
- Fauzia, M. E. (2020). Mengembalikan Tahapan Uji Publik Pada Pilkada : Gagasan Memperluas Ruang Publik Yang Deliberatif. *Jurnal Adhyasta Pemilu*, 3(2), 121–140.
https://doi.org/https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357966952_Mengembalikan_Tahapan_Uji_Publik_Pada_Pilkada_Gagasan_Memperluas_Ruang_Publik_Yang_Deliberatif/fulltext/63810d6e554def61936ea5a0/Mengembalikan-Tahapan-Uji-Publik-Pada-Pilkada-Gagasan-Memperluas-Ruang-Publik-Yang-Deliberatif.pdf
- Fitriyana, W., & Adham, M. J. I. (2023). *Membangun literasi demokrasi mahasiswa di perguruan tinggi melalui pendekatan case method*. ASANKA: Journal of Social Science and Education, 4(1), 54–62.
<https://doi.org/10.21154/asanka.v4i1.6151>
- Hidayah, Y., & Sujastika, I. (2024). *Strengthening civic disposition to build civic engagement and political participation in civic education in Indonesia*. ASANKA: Journal of Social Science and Education, 5(2), 233–240.
<https://doi.org/10.21154/asanka.v5i2.9867>
- Kadir, N. (2022). Media Sosial dan Politik Partisipatif: Suatu Kajian Ruang Publik, Demokrasi Bagi Kaum Milenial dan Gen Z. *RESIPROKAL: Jurnal Riset Sosiologi Progresif Aktual*, 4(2), 180–197.
<https://doi.org/https://resiprokal.unram.ac.id/index.php/RESIPROKAL/article/view/225>
- Kitschelt, H., & Wilkinson, S. I. (2007). *Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kusdianita, S., Hartana, M., Arsyad, M. Z., & Putri, Y. M. (2022). Perempuan Sebagai Modal Sosial Pengawasan Partisipatif di Masyarakat: Studi Implementasi Desa Anti Politik Uang di Kelurahan Sardonoarjo, Kabupaten Sleman. *Jurnal Adhyasta Pemilu*, 5(1), 59–69.

<https://doi.org/https://journal.bawaslu.go.id/index.php/JAP/en/article/view/84>

- Misran, Nurmandi, A., Mutiarin, D., & Suswanta. (2021). How Does Social Media Affect Money Politics Campaign Rejection in the 2020 Regional Head General Election Social Media? A Case Study of Indonesia. In *Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-71782-7_45
- Mufidah, N. (2020). Tinjauan atas Perkembangan Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan dalam Rumpun Ilmu Sosial. *ASANKA: Journal of Social Science and Education*,
- Fadiyah, D., & Mandela, M. F. (2025). Demokrasi jalan menuju kesejahteraan: Studi pada negara Korea Selatan dan negara India. *MADANI: Jurnal Politik dan Sosial Kemasyarakatan*, 17(2), 396–415
- Okeke, G. S. M., & Nwali, U. (2020). Campaign funding laws and the political economy of money politics in Nigeria. *Review of African Political Economy*, 47(164), 238–255. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/03056244.2019.1699043>
- Priswari, I., & Sari, P. P. (2023). Penguatan Program Desa/Kampung Pengawasan Pemilu Dan Anti Politik Uang. *Jurnal Analisis Kebijakan*, 7(2), 214–222. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37145/tzcx9j63>
- Putri, F. A., & Dwipriandi, R. (2022). Efektivitas kampanye dalam jaringan: Studi kasus pemilihan kepala daerah Kabupaten Luwu Timur Sulawesi Selatan. *Jurnal Analisa Sosiologi*, Riwanto, A., Achmad, A., Suranto, S., Firdaus, S., & Wahyuni, S. (2021). Membangun Model Desa Anti Politik Uang Sebagai Strategi Bawaslu Dalam Mencegah Pilkada Curang. *Masalah-Masalah Hukum*, 50(3), 279–289. <https://doi.org/https://ejournal.undip.ac.id/index.php/mmh/article/view/34412>
- Rusliana, I. (2021). Memperkuat Budaya Organisasi Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum Sebagai Konsolidasi Internal Untuk Menghadapi Tantangan Pemilu 2024. *Jurnal Keadilan Pemilu*, 2(2), 10–20.

https://doi.org/https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362070981_Menguatkan_Budaya_Organisasi_Badan_Pengawas_Pemilihan_Umum_Sebagai_Konsolidasi_Internal_Untuk_Menghadapi_Tantangan_Pemilu_2024 10, 110-13-. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.20961/jas.v10i0.47645>

- Saidi, M. A., & Charles, M. P. (2021). Money Politics in Election Campaigns: The Power of “Money Politics” and “Ethnicity” in Voting Decisions in Tanzania. *Global Business and Management Research: An International Journal*, 13(2), 84–95. https://doi.org/https://www.researchgate.net/publication/356291872_Money_Politics_in_Election_Campaigns_The_Power_of_Money_Politics_and_Ethnicity_in_Voting_Decisions_in_Tanzania
- Sari, Y. R., & Angraeni, W. (2025). Penta helix collaboration dalam mewujudkan DAPU (Desa Anti Politik Uang) di Kabupaten Banyumas. *Jurnal Ilmiah Pemerintahan (PRAJA)*, 13(1), 1–11.
- Saputra, F. I., Junaidi, J., & Ramadhan, R. M. (2024). Peran Kontekstual Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum Provinsi Lampung Dalam Mencegah Politik Uang Pada Pelaksanaan Pemilihan Umum. *Sosiologi: Jurnal Ilmiah Kajian Ilmu Sosial Dan Budaya*, 26(2), 60–76. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.23960/sosiologi.v26i01.1192>
- Schaffer, F. (2007). *Elections For Sale: The Causes and Consequences of Vote Buying* (Frederic Charles Schaffer (ed.)). Lynne Rienner Publishers. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1515/9781626372085>
- Shela, M., & Sutiyo, S. (2018). Peran Bawaslu Dalam Mencegah Money Politics Dalam Pemilihan Gubernur Provinsi Lampung Tahun 2018. *Wacana Publik*, 12(2), 75–81. <https://doi.org/https://wacanapublik.stisipoldharmawacana.ac.id/index.php/politik/article/view/22>
- Stokes, S. C., Dunning, T., & Nazareno, M. (2013). *Brokers, voters, and clientelism: The puzzle of distributive politics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Subarkah, T. (2024). *Bawaslu RI Ungkap Ada 130 Kasus Politik Uang Pilkada*

Serentak 2024 di Seluruh Indonesia.

<https://www.metrotvnews.com/read/KYVCDLBq-bawaslu-ri-ungkap-ada-130-kasus-politik-uang-pilkada-2024-di-seluruh-indonesia>

VOA Indonesia. (2024). *Kishida Bertekad Hentikan Praktik Politik Uang di Jepang.*

<https://www.voaindonesia.com/a/kishida-bertekad-hentikan-praktik-politik-uang-di-jepang/7463000.html>

Wardiyanti, M., Noer, S., & Huda, M. (2023). Strategi Badan Pengawas Pemilihan

Umum Kabupaten Jombang Dalam Mencegah Pelanggaran Pemilihan Umum 2019. *Jurnal Hukum, Politik Dan Ilmu Sosial*, 2(4), 191–198.

<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.55606/jhpis.v2i4.2645>