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# Money Trumps Ethnicity: An Overview of Local Election in Kendari

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## ABSTRAK

Tulisan ini menjelaskan bagaimana politik uang dan politik etnis bekerja, apa yang lebih berpengaruh ketika keduanya diperhadapkan. Dengan mengambil konteks Pilkada Serentak 2017 yang berlangsung di Kota Kendari, tulisan ini menemukan politik etnis dan politik uang digunakan oleh para kontestan Pilkada untuk meraih dukungan pemilih. Namun demikian, politik etnis mengalami kekalahan atau gagal dalam menjaga loyalitas pemilih, ketika diperhadapkan dengan politik uang yang didesain secara rapi, masif, tepat sasaran, terstruktur, serta didukung oleh tim yang solid dan militan.

Kata kunci: politik uang, politik etnis, pilkada.

## ABSTRACT

This paper explains how money politics and ethnic politics work at the same time, and which one of them is more influential when the two are confronted. By examining the 2017 regional election in the city of Kendari, this paper finds that both ethnic politics and money politics were used by contestants running in the election to gain voter support. Nevertheless, ethnic politics failed to maintain voter loyalty when contested with money politics that was designed carefully, massively, right on target, well-structured, and was supported by a solid and militant team.

Keywords: money politics, ethnic politics, local election

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## INTRODUCTION

Ethnicity plays an important role in Indonesian politics, especially in influencing voter behavior in regional elections (Choi 2007). As

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one of the demographic factors, it is often used as a mobilization tool and an electoral strategy in regional elections (Ambardi 2016). Ethnic factors appear in the areas where the population has ethnic diversity, particularly in an area with balanced strength between each ethnic group (Lingkar Survey Indonesia 2008). As has been revealed by some studies, this political condition is very prominent in a number of local elections such as in West Kalimantan, South Sulawesi, Bengkulu, West Nusa Tenggara, and North Maluku.

In West Kalimantan, for example, the competition between two major ethnic groups, Malays and Dayaks, has colored up the local political contestation (Buchari 2014; Kristianus 2016; Tanasaldy 2007). Ethnic-based political competition was also found in South Sulawesi (Nas 2007). The Buginese (or Bugis people) who live in the north and the Makassarese who live in the south represent the political and demographic division in South Sulawesi. In building a political coalition, the elites include both ethnic groups into their political calculation. Ethnicity is also found in the local political landscape in Bengkulu Province. Two local ethnic groups—Serawai (inhabiting the southern region) and Rejang (northern region)—have characterized the formation of a political coalition in Bengkulu. If a Serawai person runs for governor, the running mate will come from *Rejang* ethnic group, and vice versa (Achmad 2019).

In West Nusa Tenggara, ethnicity has always been a consideration in building political coalitions in the three latest regional elections, 2007, 2013, and 2018. A candidate for governor from Sasak ethnic group, inhabiting the island of Lombok, would pick a deputy governor candidate from the Samawa ethnic of Sumbawa or Mbojo ethnic of Bima. It was done to maximize the voting support in the Lombok and Sumbawa Islands (Suprpto 2020). The gubernatorial election of North Maluku in 2007 also presented a situation in which candidates coming from one ethnic could attract support. The Makian, Tobelo, and Galela people supported Armaiyn-Kasuba, a candidate pair who came from the same ethnic. Meanwhile, the Gafur-Pabanyo pair was supported by the people from the same ethnicities as them, namely, Tidore, Weda,

Patani, and Gebe (Achmad 2012). As an additional effort to strengthen support, ethnicity in Southeast Sulawesi was also taken into account when arranging candidate pairs for the regional head and deputy regional head. Candidates from the archipelagic ethnic groups, Muna people and Butonese, would be paired with candidates from ethnic Tolaki who inhabited the mainland and vice versa. This phenomenon was seen in the three election periods, 2007, 2013, and 2018 (Jabar 2009; Setyabudi et al. 2020).

It is common to use ethnicity to gain political support, as many believe that the dominant ethnic group's support will make victory easier. In reality, that assumption is not entirely accurate. A study conducted by Muhtadi (2018) on regional elections in five provinces of Jakarta, Maluku, North Sumatra, North Sulawesi, and West Kalimantan found that ethnic factors had significantly affected voters only in Maluku's regional election, while in four other provinces it had not showed any significance. The study explains that ethnicity has an important effect on a candidate pair's electability when other variables or factors are not included. On the other hand, ethnicity becomes less significant in influencing voters when other factors are included, such as satisfaction with government performance, candidate quality and performance, religion, number of candidate pairs, age, gender, educational level, and party identification. Thus, in reality, voters' decision to vote or not to vote is determined by many factors.

Another factor that often influences voters is money politics. In Indonesia, money politics has become an interesting discussion among political scholars. In fact, the level of money politics in Indonesia ranks third in the world, only inferior to Uganda and Benin (Muhtadi 2020). In Southeast Sulawesi for example, money politics is a common phenomenon and has become one of the electoral attractions in both legislative and regional elections. For example, in the 2014 legislative election, money politics was utilized by politicians in South Konawe (Suaib, Sahrun, and Kadir 2015). There was also money politics in 2015 South Konawe (Zuada and Suaib 2016) and North Konawe (Suaib et al. 2017) elections. The interesting part of these findings is that Southeast

Sulawesi people's political behavior was not unanimous in responding to money politics, and the impact on the election results was totally different.

The utilization of money politics and ethnicity described above illustrates that both are often used to influence voters. However, the impacts vary in each region and at every electoral moment. The limitation of this finding is that it examines the impact of money politics or ethnic politics separately without comparing them side by side. In fact, we believe that it is very likely for the impacts to be different when both means are carried out simultaneously. In the regional election in Kendari, it was found that ethnicity and money were used at the same time. At first glance both seemed to play an important role in mobilizing voters to help elites win the contestation.

The ethnic issue has become a characteristic of Kendari politics. It was reconstructed in the 2017 regional election when each pair of the candidates formed a coalition by combining three dominant ethnic groups, namely the Tolaki, Buginese, and Muna people. The symbol of ethnic uniformity is also used as a strategy to consolidate voters. However, apart from ethnicity, 2017 Kendari regional election was also marked by prominent money politics practices. The General Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) of Southeast Sulawesi found that of the seven regions that held elections in 2017, Kendari sat in the top rank on money politics reports (10 reports) and was in the top position in terms of confiscated money politics, amounting to 20 million rupiah (Senong 2017). Based on the phenomenon found in Kendari when ethnicity and money were used to mobilize voters, this paper tries to see how ethnic politics and money politics operate in the regional election in Kendari at the same time. More specifically, this paper is intended to see which factor is more effective or influential when ethnic politics is faced with money politics in the regional elections.

## THEORY AND LITERATURE REVIEWS

### *Money Politics*

The term money politics is uniquely Indonesian, which refers to attempts to influence voters and election results using material rewards. This concept is often interpreted in a narrow manner in which as if “money” was the only means of exchange material between candidates and voters. On the contrary, the means of exchange are not limited only to money, but also other materials, such as goods or services. As if it has become a common phenomenon, in the election process, candidates and voters exchange their favors with economic values, where candidates act as vote buyers, and voters act as vote sellers; this kind of practice is termed as “vote buying” (Schaffer and Schedler 2005).

Through the candidates’ viewpoint, vote buying is intended to produce instrumental, normative, and coercive obedience to voters. On the other hand, voters perceive vote buying as payments made by candidates to voters by giving gifts, assistance, wages, and other forms of help. Referring to Schaffer, the practice of vote buying has different meanings and strategies, which is not merely economic transactions through cash payments but also other material things, such as exchanges in goods, gifts, assistance, wages, auctions, and other materials, which aim to influence voters either instrumentally, normatively or coercively.

Nichter (2010) terms such phenomenon as electoral clientelism, which refers to Scott’s opinion who built the patron-client theory. Scott’s theory is modified by Nichter to see the exchange relationship between candidates and voters in the context of elections, which was then termed as electoral clientelism. The distinction between old clientelism (Scott) and electoral clientelism lies in the momentum and context of receiving benefits. Clientelism election in the form of benefit-giving takes place before elections, and in the moment of elections. As for the old clientelism, benefit-giving was not limited to the election period, and was not related to the election alone. Instead, it could be given in other contexts and lasted for a more extended period.

In various countries, the practice of exchanging material benefits between candidates and voters has different terms. Generally, this is based on the different modes and terminologies in the local community. In Indonesia, for example, it is called money politics (Muhtadi 2020). Money politics is meant to have a broad meaning, not only limited to money but also other materials, such as goods, services, and influence. In the United States, the exchange process between voters and politicians is referred to as “pork barrel.” The main characteristic of pork barrel is that the material resources used as a means of exchange come from state funds (Saragintan and Hidayat 2017). Thus, the pork barrel actors are very narrow; it is limited to politicians who have access to state resources—incumbent politicians or incumbent families. In Indonesia, the practice resembling pork barrel usually comes in the form of social protection, empowerment programs for the poor, and other development programs personalized by politicians using their access to state resources.

From another point of view, Aspinall and Sukmajati (2015) use the terms patronage and clientelism to describe such phenomenon. Patronage is a provision of cash, goods and services and other economic benefits distributed by politicians, including profits aimed at voters, whose resources come from private or public funds. Meanwhile, clientelism is a personalistic relationship between politicians and voters or supporters, in which the exchange process is carried out face-to-face and continuously.

Distinguishing factors of patronage and clientelism lie with the intensity of distribution and the identification between providers and recipients. In this case, the distribution of profits is one-off or non-recurring, and there has never been any acquaintance between the provider and the recipient and might never be after the exchange process. Clientelism, on the other hand, happens when the distribution of profits lasts for a long time, and both the provider and the recipient know each other. In clientelist practice, politicians generally use a network of brokers to reach all voters. Brokers are played by formal and informal figures or by any people who work on behalf of candidates

and voters. Brokers are generally organized in campaign teams, social network machines and political parties. Politicians usually reward brokers by paying money, providing contract-based work, or other benefits (Aspinall and Sukmajati 2015).

Aspinall and Sukmajati (2015) categorized five variants of patronage. The first is the distribution of cash or any in-kind payments from candidates to voters systematically a few days before the election, which is termed as vote buying. The second is individual gifts, the act of giving certain items, such as calendars, key chains, and basic necessities, to voters with indirect aim to influence voters. The next is services and activities, mainly in the form of candidates' efforts to finance various activities and services for voters, such as free medical services and sports tournaments. After that, there are club goods, which means giving benefits to certain social groups, such as religious groups, sports club youth association, women's groups, and farmer association, to gain votes from the respective members. The last one is pork barrel politics, which is generally in the form of government special projects in certain geographic areas (Aspinall and Sukmajati 2015). From the various characteristics of the exchange between politicians and voters described above, money politics in this context is interpreted the same way as Schaffer and Schedler (2005) define vote buying, which means the process of buying and selling votes in elections involving politicians and voters, where politicians act as buyers of votes, and voters act as vote sellers.

### *Ethnic Politics*

Ethnicity is a population with shared ancestries, historical backgrounds, cultures, historical territories, sense of solidarity—at least among their elites (Smith 1996). Meanwhile, ethnic groups are understood as membership in a group that is limited to those who have certain innate attributes or historical roots of the same ancestors (Kellas 1998). They have a cultural focus in one or more symbolic elements, such as family patterns, physical characteristics, religious affiliation and belief, dialect, ethnic affiliation, nationality or a combination of these characteristics (Tilaar 2007). Furthermore, ethnicity is defined as the ethnic identity



that each individual in a group has in a subjective and symbolic way to produce internal cohesion and differentiation with other groups (Brass 1991).

Ethnicity is one of the variables that influence voter behaviors. The similarity of ethnic identity often becomes a preference for voters in making political choices. The relationship between ethnicity and voter behavior has become a common phenomenon in multi-ethnic countries. Spanish descents in South Florida, United States, make mastery of Spanish to select political candidates (Hill and Moreno 2001). Ethnicity also influences voters and politicians' behavior in Kenya (Oyugi 1997) and other African countries (Norris and Mattes 2003; Posner 2005). In Russia, ethnicity is a factor that is considered important in seeing the public's response to political leadership (Marsh and Warhola 2001). Ethnicity also influences the political strategy of politicians in India (Vasrhney 2009). According to Vasrhney, in a multi-ethnic society, candidates tend to employ different political strategies. Often, ethnicity becomes a contributing instrument of politicians and political leaders to win political coalitions, regardless of whether the politician believes in the intrinsic values of ethnicity or not.

In post-New Order Indonesia, since the first democratic election, ethnicity has become a factor that influences voter support for candidates. Ananta et al. state that ethnicity is one among many ways to read voter behavior in Indonesia (Ananta et al. 2004). He further identifies ethnic power in elections by referring to the preference for political parties in the election. Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB) and Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (PDIP) were identified as parties that received support from Javanese voters, which was marked by the acquisition of dominant party seats in Java. On the other hand, PPP and Golkar are political parties favored by ethnic groups outside Java. It can be seen in the acquisition of the dominant seats of the two parties outside Java. Another study examining the relationship between voter behavior and ethnic groups was conducted by Liddle and Mujani. Unlike Ananta, Liddle and Mujani concluded that the ethnic aspect is an unimportant variable in explaining a person's choice of a party or

candidate (Liddle and Mujani 2007). Based on the description above, ethnic politics in this study is limited to the use of ethnicity as a political tool for politicians to gain support to win a political battle, which aims to influence fellow ethnic voters to make choices according to the politicians' will.

### *Money and Ethnicity in the Electoral Contestation*

Often, money and ethnicity are two instrumental things in mobilizing voters. According to voting behavior research, voting preference based on ethnic proximity factors is categorized as the sociological model (Mujani, Liddle, and Ambardi 2012). Meanwhile, preference to vote due to transactional factors, money, is not categorized explicitly as a typology of voter behavior. However, referring to the characteristics of rational voter behavior, where voters are guided by self-interest and profit maximizing behavior (Haryanto 2016), it can be presumed that money factor is closer to this type of typology.

In influencing voters, money and ethnicity are likely to work simultaneously but have different effects on voters. Voters who have strong ethnic identity will vote based on ethnicity, even when they also receive money at the same time from other candidates who come from different ethnic groups. On the other hand, it is also possible for voters to vote for the ones who give money and ignore the factor of ethnic proximity. The use of money and ethnicity to mobilize voters is outlined in Kramon's study in Kenya. Kenyan and African societies, in general, have a strong ethnic preference. Voters often identify their chosen candidates based on ethnic lines. At the same time, vote buying also happened in electoral contestations in Kenya. Kramon (2013) then tested the effects of ethnicity and vote buying. The results show that ethnicity-based voters will pledge a stronger loyalty if vote buying scheme is present. Nevertheless, ethnic loyalty is insignificant on poor voters in Kenya. In contrast, the preferences of poor voters in the country are strongly influenced by the distribution of vote buying.

The response of voters in Kenya to money politics and ethnicity differs from the findings of Lindberg and Morisson (2008) in Ghana. The

history of elections in Ghana generally bears a resemblance to Kenya, where ethnicity and clientelism always appear during elections. However, in the 1996 and 2000 elections, the voter behavior in the former country showed a different performance from the previous elections which relied more on ethnic factors and the distribution of clientelism. In the 1996 and 2000 elections, only 10% of Ghanaian voters were aware of ethnic factors and the distribution of clientelism, while the remaining 85-90% of voters were influenced by perceptions of corruption and the desire to have a leader who leave their bad habits in the past, such as corruption, ethnicity and clientelism. From the two studies above, it can be seen that voters have diverse responses to ethnicity and money.

## RESEARCH METHODS

To examine ethnic and money politics cases in Kendari, this research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data collection techniques in this study were carried out through documentation studies and field studies. Documentation studies were done by collecting media coverage and reports from the election organizers. Field studies were carried out in two ways: 1) by observing candidates' activities and their campaign teams from the formation time to the Election Day, and 2) by interviewing sources and informants using the semi-structured interview method. Throughout the interview process, this writer invited 17 respondents. Furthermore, the collected data were qualitatively analyzed (Miles and Huberman 2014). The data analysis activities began with organizing data, sorting, looking for and finding patterns, presenting data and drawing conclusions.

## ETHNIC GROUPS IN KENDARI: AN OVERVIEW

In the dynasty era, Kendari was part of the kingdom of Laiwoi inhabited by the Tolaki. However, due to civil migration, the ethnic groups living in Kendari has become increasingly diverse, especially since the arrival of the Buginese, Wajo, Muna, Wawonii and Javanese people. Until

1950, the city's largest population was Bugis people, followed by Muna and Bajo people. Meanwhile, there were fewer Tolaki people, most of whom lived outside Kendari, except for those who became government employees and officials (Chalik 1984). Since then, Kendari has been inhabited by various ethnic groups. In 2018 according to the statistical data from BPS, at least 65 ethnic groups lived in Kendari (Badan Pusat Statistik Kota Kendari 2018). Among many ethnic groups, the Tolaki, Buginese, and Muna people are the dominant ethnic groups (see table 1).

Table 1. Composition of People Based on Ethnicity in Kendari

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Tolaki	31 %
Buginese	25 %
Muna	21 %
Butonese	7 %
Others	16 %

*Source:* Kasim et al. 2017.

The population of Kendari is spread across ten districts and 64 sub-districts, although it appears that there are ethnic groupings in several areas. The Tolaki people inhabit Puwatu, Baruga, Kadia, Mandonga, Poasia, West Kendari, Kambu, Abeli areas. The Muna people are scattered in the Mata, Kampung Salo, Kendari Caddi, Gunung Jati, Abeli, Kambu, Poasia, Abeli, Puwatu, Kadia, Mandonga, and Alolama. The Buginese mostly live in Tanggano, Lahundape, West Kendari, Kadia, Mandonga, Wua-Wua, Abeli, Kendari, Kambu. The Butonese live in Butung Village, Kendari and West Kendari. The other small tribes spread in Baruga, Kambu, Poasia, Wua-Wua, Abeli, Puwatu, Kendari, Kadia, Mandonga, West Kendari (Chalik 1984; Sjaf 2014).

The education level of the population of Kendari is relatively high compared with the regional average. According to the government data, enrollment rate (APK) of Kendari in 2017, 116.80% enrolled in primary school, 83.43% in junior high school, 80.72% in senior high school, and 74% in tertiary education (Kendari Central Statistics Agency 2018). The level of education between the four largest ethnic groups in Kendari

is relatively similar. However, there are slight differences in economic conditions and employment opportunities between these ethnic groups.

The economic condition in Kendari is dominated by the service sector by 68.15%, small and medium enterprises by 25.07%, agricultural and non-agricultural workers by 1.76%, and family workers by 4.99%. Until 2017, the poverty rate in Kendari was 5.01%, with the depth and severity of poverty at 0.75% and 0.16%, respectively. Based on occupation by ethnicity, many Tolaki people work as civil servants and private employees. Meanwhile, Muna people generally work as farmers, laborers, fishermen, teachers, lecturers, port workers, civil servants and small traders. Furthermore, most Buginese work as wholesalers, medium-scale traders and some work as civil servants. Lastly, the Butonese, in general, work as medium-scale traders (Chalik 1984; Sjaf 2014; Zuada 2020).

In political contestations in the era of regional autonomy, ethnicity has become a striking sight in Kendari (Tirtosudarmo 2010; Sjaf 2014). Suaib said that policymaking in Kendari is based on ethnicity (Suaib 2005), and voters' behavior is strongly influenced by ethnic identity (Jabar 2009). In every regional election in multi-ethnic Kendari, ethnicity becomes one of the highlights that enliven the city. In the New Order, the three dominant ethnic groups, the Tolaki, Buginese, and Muna people, have been appointed as the administrative mayor. Furthermore, since Kendari changed its status in 1996 from an administrative city to an autonomous city, the mayor has always come from ethnic Tolaki. It happened because the Tolaki candidates have always won the election. Despite that, the Tolaki people do not necessarily dominate Kendari politics. The immigrant groups, Muna people, Butonese and Buginese, still occupied crucial positions (Tirtosudarmo 2010; Warsilah 2009). Even in the legislature, the Buginese and Muna people have been able to balance the domination of the Tolaki.

## EVOKING STRENGTH OF MUNA PEOPLE IN KENDARI ELECTION

Kendari regional election in 2017 showcased the battle of three candidate pairs. They were Abdul Razak-Haris Andi Surahman (Tolaki-

Bugis), Adriatma Dwi Putra-Sulkarnain (Tolaki-Bugis), and Muh. Zayat Kaimuddin-Suri Syariah (Muna-Tolaki). Each candidate seems to consider the representation of the three dominant ethnic groups—Bugis, Muna, and Tolaki—when choosing a pair. This ethnic combination was a repetition of what happened in the 2007 and 2012 regional elections. Based on previous elections, the candidates fully recognized the importance of embracing and colliding with these ethnic strengths. The difference between this election and the 2007 and 2012 elections was the fewer number of candidate pairs and the single candidacy from Muna people. Meanwhile, two other ethnic groups, Tolaki and Bugis, had more than one representation. It was considered a benefit to Zayat as the only Muna candidate to maximize support from his own people.

Muna people who live in Kendari were considered newcomers, but the population of Muna people competes with other ethnicities who have settled in Kendari long before. Many of Muna people work in Kendari as lecturers at universities. Apart from lecturers, there are also a large number of students from Muna who are studying in tertiary institutions. These students carry out many prominent activities in Kendari by becoming activists such as PMII, HMI, IMM, KAMMI, GMNI, and often leading demonstrations. Gradually, these roles led them to be known publicly. After obtaining their degrees, they would occupy important positions in democratic institutions such as the KPU, KPI, Bawaslu, and many others throughout Southeast Sulawesi regencies and cities, as well as at the national level. This group generally acts as the “controller” for people who hold power and others with lower social status. Based on social stratification, this group is referred as the middle class, which is characterized by a very dynamic power relationship, but still maintains traditional values (Jati 2016). Another term that fits the description of this group is the educated middle class.

However, there are also a large number of Muna people who work in the city as working class, such as street vendors, fish sellers, port workers, construction workers, fishermen and other manual laborers. This working class of Muna people generally rely on patron-client relationships in building social relations. They have a strong dependence on

job providers, such as the public and private sectors. Such relationships can be seen between construction workers as clients and contractors as patrons, shopkeepers as clients and shop owners as patrons, and other unbalanced power relations. Some of them analogize employment as a plate on which they eat. When their plate breaks, their livelihoods are lost. For these people, job availability is a matter of life and death. Their condition is vastly different from Muna educated middle class, many of whom have essential roles in society.

Based on our observation, the number of Muna populations from the educated middle class is equal to Muna's lower class. If Muna people make up about 21% of the Kendari population, half of it is the working class. Unlike the case with Muna people, other dominant ethnic groups, such as the Bugis and Tolaki have a better economic condition. The Bugis control medium-sized businesses, as many of them own shophouses and stalls in markets or shopping centers, while Tolaki people mostly work as government and private employees, especially in banking institutions. Thus, it can be said that the Muna people in Kendari compete with Bugis and Tolaki in terms of the ethnic population. However, considering the power resources (economy and authority), the Bugis and Tolaki are superior. Nevertheless, because of their ability to compete with the other two dominant ethnic groups, the Muna people are always taken into account in electoral politics in Kendari.

Since the first direct Kendari election in 2007 and the second and third in 2012 and 2017, Muna people have always tried to show their existence, both as voters and electoral candidates. As electoral candidates, Muna people always run either for mayor or deputy mayor and become competitors for the other two major ethnicities. Apart from relying on Muna voters who are relatively large, the Muna candidacy was also supported by Muna's past leadership as the pioneers of Kendari and Southeast Sulawesi development.

An important figure of Muna people is Laode Kaimuddin, who served as Governor of Southeast Sulawesi from 1992 to 2003. He is one of the well-remembered Muna figures in Kendari. He has made

significant changes to the development of the city, especially road opening and urban planning. The works done by Laode Kaimuddin are very beneficial, so they instill a long-lasting memory for the people of Kendari. After his death, the people of Kendari, especially the Muna community, will always look forward to someone who can imitate his longed-for leadership.

In the direct local elections era, Muna people's efforts to win the political office have been carried out since 2007. In every election, Muna people had always sent their candidate but always failed to win. The winners always came from a mix of Tolaki and Bugis. The Muna candidate's defeat was regarded as a result of the many candidates from Muna, which resulted in the split in support for fellow Muna people (Laode Muhammad Bariun. Chairman of Zayat Campaign Team, January 20, 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari).

The defeat in the 2007 and 2012 elections became a reflection and evaluation for the Muna people. When facing the 2017 mayoral election, Muna figures try to maintain their ethnic solidarity in Kendari. This step began with holding a forum at a hotel in Kendari. The deliberation aimed to consolidate and find a Muna figure to be nominated as a candidate to run for Mayor of Kendari. The result of the discussion was the formation of 'a team of nine' (*tim sembilan*), consisting of government officials, community leaders, political party figures, and academics from Muna community. The task of the team was to find a figure to run for the mayoral election in Kendari, as told by the team member in the following quote:

The members of *tim sembilan* were selected by Muna people at a meeting at a hotel. At that time, more than 100 people, all of whom were local figures from universities and from outside the campus, were invited. The purpose of the meeting was to select a Muna representation to run as a mayor candidate. (Respondent WS. Member of Tim Sembilan 31 January 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari)

After several selection processes, the team came to one decision to nominate Muhamad Zayat Kaimuddin, son of a former Southeast Sulawesi



Governor, Laode Kaimuddin, to run for the election. The process of selecting Derik, Zayat's nickname, was told by WS.

In the first screening, we selected 32 Muna people living in Kendari, Muna Island, and Jakarta. The first criterion to select the candidate was willingness, which was determined by the number of billboards. If there are billboards that showed his/her face, it means that he/she wants to run. Secondly, the person had to be a party official because a political party was the door to enter a political contestation. Furthermore, we hope that a political party official, for example, the chairman, would also choose Muna people, not the other ethnic groups. The third was financial power because, with a lot of money, we can buy tickets from political parties. The last was the experience in the bureaucracy. From the 32 names, Derik was selected. He was chosen because the other Muna people in several political parties did not want to run to the election. They thought that Derik would be unbeatable because he had experience in the bureaucracy when he was the acting regent of Muna, additionally, his father's achievements in the development of Southeast Sulawesi was also another legacy. (Respondent WS. Member of Tim Sembilan, 31 January 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari)

Another detail of selecting Zayat as a mayoral candidate from Muna people was also shared by Laode Muhammad Bariun, one of the Muna candidates and later the Zayat campaign team chairman.

Historically, Muna people always propose more than one candidate to run either for mayor or deputy mayor in the regional election. Why do we have to compete if we are always going to lose? We will lose if there are more than one candidate from Muna. Therefore, we made a team led by Saleh Lasata, who was at that time served as deputy governor. This team did the initial screening. From several people, then three people were selected, which are Mr. Saidin, Mr. Derik, and me. Mr. Saidin was not able to advance to the next step as he was still a staff member at the governor office. Then, I

stated that I did not want to run if I was only to embarrass Muna people, even though Mr. Saleh wanted me to continue running for the candidate. I wanted to withdraw from the selection process if Mr. Derik wanted to run. Finally, there is only one candidate left, Mr. Derik. The name was then discussed in Muna communities in Gunung Jati, Kendari District; Labibia, Mandonga District; and Abeli, Abeli District. After that Mr. Derik was introduced to see the community's response. From the evaluation we conducted, it turned out that 70% of Muna people supported Zayat. (Laode Muhammad Bariun. Chairman of Zayat Campaign Team. January 20, 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari)

When the selection team nominated Zayat as a candidate for city mayor representing Muna, his former competitors were not disappointed; rather many supported and helped him to win. None of them had violated the original agreement, which is consolidating the strength of Muna people. As shown in the table below, Zayat was the only Muna to run for mayor or deputy (See table 2).

Table 2. Mayor and Deputy Mayor Candidates of 2017

No	Name	Party	Ethnicity
1 (Razak-Haris)	Abdul Razak- Haris Andi Surahman	Golkar and Nasdem	Tolaki-Bugis
2 (ADP-SUL)	Adriatma Dwi Putra-Sulkarnain	PAN, PKS, PKB, PBB, PKPI	Tolaki-Bugis
3 (Zayat-Syariah)	M. Zayat Kaimuddin- Suri Syariah Mahmud	PDI.P, Demokrat, Hanura, PPP.	Muna-Tolaki

The three candidate pairs certified by the Regional General Elections Commission (KPUD) of Kendari showed that the coalition did not only focus on political party support but also give consideration to ethnic representation. The arrangement of Zayat as a candidate for mayor who was paired with Suri Syariah Mahmud of Tolaki showed that there was an effort to combine two ethnic forces, Muna and Tolaki people. Two of Zayat's competitors did the same thing, combining two ethnic forces, the Tolaki and Bugis people. This coalition building was an effort to

gain support from each ethnic group in the Kendari mayoral election in 2017.

Although the formation of candidate pairs had put a high consideration on the factor of ethnic identity, the pairs tried to present the notion of diversity during the campaign. For example, the pair of Zayat-Syariah promoted the jargon “all groups” (*semua golongan*). This jargon was used because both Zayat’s parents and his in-laws had multi-ethnic blood. Zayat’s father, Laode Kaimuddin, was from Muna, and Zayat’s birth mother is Buginese. Meanwhile, Zayat’s wife is a mixture of Bugis and Tolaki. The “all groups” jargon gave an innuendo to the previous Kendari leaders, who were considered for prioritizing their ethnic groups, without paying attention to the diversity of the people of the city.

The “all groups” slogan that Zayat-Syariah tried to build did not reflect in the Zayat campaign team’s composition, which was dominated by figures and young people from Muna people and only a few from Bugis and Tolaki people. It was because Muna people saw Zayat as part of their family. Zayat’s biological father is a native Muna and of noble descent. That said, referring to the kinship system of Muna people who adhere to the patrilineal line, Muna people would not doubt Zayat’s Muna lineage. Moreover, Zayat once served as the acting Muna regent from 2015 to 2016. Due to a shared ethnic identity, most Muna voters who lived in several sub-districts in Kendari, such as Kendari, West Kendari, Poasia, Kambu, Wua-Wua, Mandonga, and Puwatu supported Zayat.

Muna figures who were members of the Zayat-Syariah campaign team, at every visit to Muna families and every campaign at Muna neighborhood, tried to influence the voters by reconstructing the local identity of Muna people, who were termed *Kaseiseha* (unity) and *Kawunaha* (fellow Muna people). It was intended to build teamwork and strengthen the loyalty of Muna voters to Zayat. Bariun explained that:

Initially, we took a persuasive [approach], but recently, we have already given threats if anyone does not pay respect to this *Kaseiseha*,

then do not blame us for giving social sanctions for your betrayal towards what we have built. There was even a village head, a Muna, who tried to bribe for votes by giving free rice to the community. I said, “If you want to embarrass Muna people, just look for another tribe to be part of! Do not you dare to violate the unity of the Muna people! If I give you 50 thousand or 100 thousand, how long can you survive with the money? 5 years? Do not just think about today or only about yourself, but think about the next generation!” This is about pride; we have been insulted and humiliated. There was never a time when Muna people did not hold a position in the local government office. When the local election is close, then the position of the sub-district head (*lurah*) will be handed over to us, but when it is finished, we will not be chosen again. We are just being used. (Laode Muhammad Bariun. Chairman of Zayat Campaign Team, January 20, 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari)

The explanation from Bariun can be referred to as one of the examples of their efforts to build ethnic solidity among Muna people, which was disturbed by the current mayor of Kendari at that time, Asrun, the father of the mayoral candidate Adriatma Dwi Putra (ADP). One month before the voting day, Asrun changed the village heads in Kendari. Among the 64 *lurahs* who were inaugurated, 38 were assigned to Muna. According to Bahtiar, the Dean of Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at Halu Oleo University, who was also from Muna, “changing officials was one of the strategies of Mayor Asrun to test the loyalty of the *lurah* who came from Muna, whether they remain loyal to their ethnic group to support Zayat, or remain loyal to their leadership by supporting ADP” (Bahtiar. Dean of Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at Halu Oleo University, January 30, 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari.).

Not long after the change of sub-district heads, they were assigned in each neighborhood unit (*Rukun Tetangga*, abbreviated as RT) to elect their heads immediately. In practice, what was done in the field was not an election, rather a direct appointment by the *lurah*. This practice was found in several locations. People were invited to elect a new RT

chairman, but once they arrived at the meeting place, the lurah had already announced the name and appointed his personal choice. One of the examples was in Wowawanggu Village RW 003/RT 010, Kadia District. It caused resentment among members of the community. They considered that the inaugurated heads of RT were not the people's choice, but the choice of the *lurah* as a form of bureaucracy mobilization at the behest of their superiors, by appointing people who could support ADP victory.

#### CANDIDATE STRATEGIES IN PRACTICING MONEY POLITICS

In the momentum of elections in Southeast Sulawesi, money politics is one of the key strategies chosen by politicians. At the time of the Kendari mayoral election in 2017, money politics became a striking phenomenon. Candidate pairs bought votes with various means, such as distributing money (Rido 2017) sarongs and rice (Rustam 2016), free medical treatment and distribution of glasses (Ose 2017b), building materials such as sand and cement, as well as pavement blocks for residential hallways. It appears that all candidates practiced money politics to gain support from voters. The things that distinguish each pair of candidates were strategy, the amount of money and the value of goods, goals, teamwork, and forms of money politics. The following is an explanation of the money politics efforts made by the candidates.

#### *Adriatma Dwi Putra-Sulkarnain (ADP-SUL)*

ADP-SUL pair was the candidate with the strongest political resources, compared to the other two competitors. ADP is the son of the current mayor, Asrun. Based on the ethnicity, ADP is a Tolaki, an ethnic group with a large population in Kendari. When running for mayor, he was a member of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) of Southeast Sulawesi Province, based on the result of the 2014 election. At a relatively young age, 25 years old, in 2014, he ran as a legislative member in the electoral district of Kendari. He was elected with the

highest vote, along with his older brother, Asrisal Pratama, Asrun's first child. This success was suspected to be the product of money politics and the mobilization of the bureaucracy his father did. In the 2014 election, the ADP team, together with his brother, were reported to have distributed numbers of items to voters.

ADP's running mate, Sulkarnain Kadir, is a Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) politician known to have a solid and militant supporter team. When running for deputy mayor, Sulkarnain was a member of the Kendari DPRD. Sulkarnain is a Buginese. Thus, the strength of ADP-SUL is the support of the incumbent and the PKS's strong political machine. Asrun's support was shown by the deployment of bureaucratic machinery starting from the head of the department to the lowest level of government. The bureaucracy was used to apply pressure and distribute money politics to voters. Meanwhile, the party machine was responsible for mapping support, especially for those who required unique treatments in receiving money or goods.

ADP-SUL campaign team gave cash (vote buying), sarongs and rice (individual gifts), provided cement and sand materials to sports clubs and mosques (club goods), and paved the roads (pork barrel). These practices occurred during the campaign (Rustam 2016). The distribution of money was done when voters attended their meetings or campaigns at the sub-district level. The amount of money given was 200.000 rupiah in an envelope. Also, 50kg bag of rice was distributed to each family. For every item and money given, there was a sticker with the picture of ADP-SUL on it. The distribution was carried out by the RT officers in each sub-district.

After the campaign period, ADP-SUL also practiced money politics a few days before the election day, as told by the following informant:

Just before the election day, the sub-district head and I prepared 100 million rupiah to be distributed to the registered voters. We also identified those who did not pledge their support to us (ADP). We did not give money to them. Of the total money available, we still pocketed 50 million rupiah left, and we have returned it to the

central team. (Respondent P. ADP's Distributor. February 16, 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari)

In the distribution of money politics, ADP-SUL had a solid and well-connected team. The composition of the team comprised bureaucrats, campaign team (*tim sukses*), and family members. The involvement of elements of the civil servants and their families in Kendari's regional elections was visible. Some of them were caught holding stickers and distributing money by the election supervisory committee (*Panwas*). However, those who were caught red-handed after the investigation were declared not guilty as there was not enough evidence (Jumriati 2017). Furthermore, the district heads (*camats*), *lurahs*, and RT chairmen played a significant role in the vote buying. *Camats* acted as the coordinator of the district area and the treasurer. Then they handed over the money to the main distributor (*peluncur utama*).<sup>1</sup> To ensure that the money was delivered on target, the *lurah*, assisted by the RT chairman, would collect the data and analyze the residents' choices. Voters who were identified as not going to vote for ADP would not receive the money. Meanwhile, those who have been trusted as supporters of ADP would receive the money before the election. Meanwhile, for voters who were considered still indecisive about whom to vote, the money will only be given after the election, which must be proven by photographs (Respondent R. Spouse of one of ADP's Field Agents March 27, 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari).

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<sup>1</sup> *Peluncur* is a term that refers to members of the campaign team whose role is to identify the voter base and distribute money to voters.

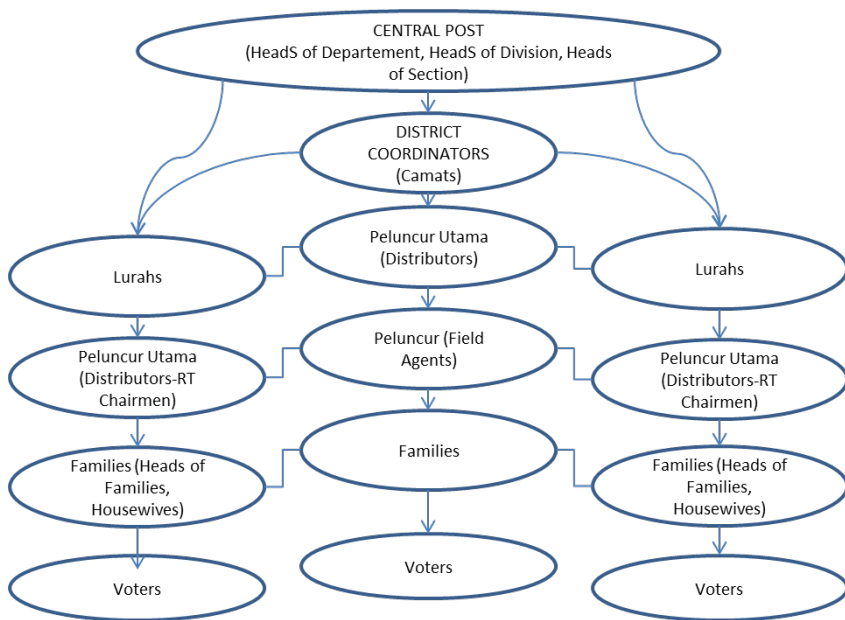


Figure 1. ADP Distributor Structure and the Flow of Money

The involvement of RT chairmen as part of ADP’s team was told by the wife of one of the RT chairmen in the Kemaraya Sub-district. She said that from the beginning, her family supported Zayat. As a result of his support towards Zayat, her husband was neither assigned to manage the money from ADP’s campaign nor collect voters’ data. RT chairmen who did not support ADP-SUL would not be given any role in the ADP’s team, as revealed by a resident who said, “His father is an RT chairman, but is not the same as RT chairmen in other places where money was given. His father supported Zayat, so he was not assigned to distribute ADP’s money like other RT chairmen in other places. He was also never invited by the city government in a meeting with fellow RT chairmen.” (Respondent B. Kemaraya Sub-district Resident March 27, 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari).

In practicing money politics, the ADP-SUL team had a neat and well-planned strategy. Before distributing the money, the ADP-SUL team first conducted a census. The census was conducted by visiting voters to find out whom they would support, whether they had not made



up their minds on a choice for the election, and who would not vote. Through the census, it was possible to identify areas that required more attention, including identifying voters who wanted money. This census was carried out by party members.

Aside from relying on party machine, the distribution of money was done by bureaucratic machine. This phenomenon was illustrated by the composition of the ADP winning team in a district in Kendari. One main distributor said that he was led by a *camat* and a *lurah* of Muna ethnicity, and was assisted by an RT chairman. The distributors were given a target of recruiting ADP supporters, as many as 30-40 people. Each of them who met the target was promised a bonus of five million rupiah. In addition, to maintain the loyalty of the field agents (*peluncur*), the ADP-SUL team provided them with operational money and pocket money (*uang rokok*) of five hundred thousand rupiah. They were also provided with money to pay voters as much as 200 thousand rupiah for one voter. The more voters, the more money they will get. The agents were evaluated regularly to maximize their performance. Usually, it was done at night at one of the agent's shop-houses. To avoid the suspicion of their rival, they covered up the meeting by doing other activities like playing chess, playing dominoes, and drinking coffee. These agents knew each other personally. Generally, they had family relations with one another and were from the same neighborhood with the *camat* and *lurahs*. When recruiting field agents, the *camat* and *lurahs* would generally recruit their families to mitigate the chance of betrayal.

The ADP team's money distribution strategy was also revealed by a Kemaraya resident who is a Muna man. According to him, the distribution of money to voters was discreetly done.

I was once asked to become a part of the ADP team. I would receive ten million rupiah but had to work with a target. I refused because I could not do that, and I was confused about how to distribute the money, because most of the residents in my place chose Zayat. They then looked for other people to be recruited as their field agents.

When recruiting, they were cautious. They did not dare to do a recruitment process in areas whose residents rooted for Zayat because they feared being arrested. However, in areas where the people and their kinship are not solid, they would do the recruitment process. They recruited people who would act as distributors. (Respondent B. Kemaraya Sub-district Resident March 27, 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari)

When distributing the money, the campaign team first studied the characteristics and tendency of support for residents in their target areas. The testimony of the local resident above shows how money politics works and how the targets are very vulnerable to people whose ethnic relations are less solid, less harmonious and individualist. On the other hand, for regions with more solid ethnic relations, money politics had difficulty in swaying voters.

In addition to money, ADP also did the practice of pork barrel by paving the housing roads of Halu Oleo University lecturers. The project targeted voters who did not want money but preferred to exchange their votes with infrastructure improvements. In general, the voters who received pork barrel projects were those with higher-middle income and better education levels. The ADP-SUL campaign team also targeted sports clubs by offering material support, like cement and sand, for facility reparation. This practice was found in Kambu Sub-district when a member of the campaign team contacted an influential member of a sports club and offered them help. This influential club member then initiated a community service to repair the badminton court.

#### *Abdul Razak and Haris Andi Surahman (Razak-Haris)*

Razak-Haris was a candidate pair that had a fairly good approval rating in the Kendari community. The main strength of this pair lies in the figure of Abdul Razak. He was known to have a humble personality and had a reasonably high recognition as the Speaker of the Kendari DPRD for two terms. Despite being the speaker of the city parliament, Razak was not an arrogant person. His character did not change, both

before and after becoming a government official. He had a vast social network and liked helping people of the lower-middle class, especially his neighbors in Abeli District, which was mostly inhabited by Muna people. Razak's childhood was spent in an environment inhabited by mostly commoners, unlike his two competitors who came from elite families.

When running for mayor, Razak gained sympathy from the people of Kendari as Asrun, Mayor of Kendari betrayed him. Previously he was asked by Asrun, who was also the chairman of National Mandate Party (Partai Amanat Nasional, PAN) branch in Kendari and as a fellow PAN cadre, to make himself known as a candidate for mayor. However, Asrun's support changed when he gave the ticket to his son, ADP. Razak then decided to run in the mayoral election with other parties, Golkar and Nasdem. Although he had left the party that raised him, Razak remained popular among the people. The community rooting for Razak was wide-spread and formed in all districts, under various names. The social status of Razak supporters generally came from the lower and middle classes. The weakness of this pair, however, lay in the deputy candidate, Haris Andi Surahman. He was not very popular with the public. Even if anyone knew him, it would be more to his negative image, for instance, as a convicted corruptor. Nevertheless, this pair had a great optimism in the electoral contestation.

Razak-Haris' sense of optimism was eroded after money politics was carried out and the mobilization of the bureaucracy by the ADP-SUL team during the campaign. As election day was approaching, Razak-Haris base was getting weaker. As an effort to maintain the base of support, money politics also became the choice for Razak team. They, too, bought votes by distributing envelopes to voters a few days prior to polling day. One of ADP's distributor who has Muna ethnicity said that:

Razak allocated 100 thousand rupiah per house. Meanwhile, ADP did not see it per house. Instead, he gave 200 hundred rupiah per person. When I was supporting ADP, I was also asked to join Razak's team because I was actually very close to Razak's supporters. But

after the sub-district head came to my house, I started to work as double agent secretly. I was reported\$ to Razak's team that I supported ADP, but the Razak's team did not buy it. The same person also reported me to the head of the sub-district. However, he also did not believe the report. Both the ADP and Razak's side still had trust in me. In the morning before the election, ADP's people came with money to me. In the afternoon, one of Razak's men contacted me. I was told to go to his house to get money. At that time, I was given three million and five hundred. But I kept the money because I had distributed the money from ADP. After the election, I contacted Razak's team, saying that I still had the money. I did not share it because it was already too late that the ADP team had done it earlier. I said I was going to his house to return it. But Razak's men said that I could use that money, so I spent the money to pay my car installments. (Respondent P. ADP's Distributor, March 31, 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari)

The voters' response to the distribution of money given by Razak's team was different from the efforts made by its competitors. Voters who got money from ADP were more affected than those who received money from Razak as told by a voter in Alolama, Mandonga District.

The distribution of money from ADP came earlier, and the amount was 200 thousand rupiah. Meanwhile, the money from the Razak team came later. The amount of money was also smaller compared to ADP's. The person who distributed it was also untrustworthy. He is a *haji* but was not trusted because he only handed out a portion of the amount that was supposed to be distributed in the previous election. Razak's amount of money was less (than ADP's), only 50 thousand and 100 thousand. Voters preferred the larger amount and the one that came first. (Respondent M. Alolama Sub-district Resident, March 27, 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari)

Several voters claimed that the money from Razak was not completely distributed to them. Even if it reached the voters' hands, the amount of

money has decreased from what should have been distributed. Therefore many voters were disappointed with Razak, while ADP had more money, a reliable team, and bureaucratic support. Apart from distributing money, Razak-Haris also distributed cooking oil to voters in Poasia District. When distributing the money, Razak-Haris' men did not target all regions, rather focused only on areas that became their support base. From this information, it appears that Razak-Haris' money politics strategy was aimed at safeguarding his voting base from shifting to other candidates.

*Muhammad Zayat Kaimuddin-Suri Syariah Mahmud (Zayat-Syariah)*

The Zayat-Syariah pair was considered the “dark horse.” This pair's strength lay in Zayat, who was the only candidate who came from Muna people, the third largest population in Kendari after the Tolaki and Bugis people. The support of Muna people was evident from the agreement of Muna leaders to nominate Zayat as the only mayoral candidate from Muna people. Although Zayat represented Muna community, he was also seen as a representative of the Buginese, because even though Zayat's father, Laode Kaimuddin was a Muna, his mother was a Buginese. Besides, his wife also has Bugis descent. Thus, the support of the Bugis for Zayat was expected. Zayat was born into a politico-bureaucrat family of because his father was the former regent of Muna and governor of Southeast Sulawesi for two terms. In his father's footsteps, Zayat also became a bureaucrat and the acting Muna regent in 2015 and 2016. Meanwhile, Zayat's wife is the daughter of a politico-bureaucrat, Andi Pangerang Umar, a former regent of Kolaka.

Based on their ancestry, both Zayat and his wife are descendants of noble families. Zayat's grandfather was king of Muna, while his mother, Andi Norma Kaimuddin, and his wife were Bugis aristocrats. Meanwhile, Zayat's running mate, Suri Syariah Mahmud was a member of the Kendari DPRD from the Democratic Party (Partai Demokrat, PD) and the wife of Muh. Endang, the Chairman of the PD branch in Southeast Sulawesi province. Syariah was believed to be able to ac-

commodate the representation of ethnic Tolaki, which Zayat could not do. The Muna, Bugis, and Tolaki bloodline in this pair gave rise to the political slogan that represented diversity in Kendari, so it was hoped that they can embrace the three dominant ethnic groups in Kendari.

Having a high social status and being supported by his ethnicity did not make Zayat confident in beating his opponents. To win the election, Zayat, like ADP and Razak, also conducted money politics. However, unlike other candidates, this candidate bought votes by providing services and conducting social activities. During the campaign, Zayat distributed glasses to the elderly. He also conducted free health services for senior citizens and children, such as cataract surgery and mass circumcision (Ose 2017b). Furthermore, he also provided construction sand and cement to repair the pedestrian way, although it did not guarantee that he could win in the area, as told by one resident of Kemaraya Sub-district.

Nowadays, it will be difficult if there is no money, even though he is still related to us. Zayat has no money, while others are handing out money. Here Zayat dumps sand and cement to revitalize the sidewalks, but it does not have much effect. They preferred cash distributed directly by the *peluncur* team. (Respondent K. Kemaraya Sub-district Resident. March 27, 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari)

In addition to providing goods and social services, Zayat's team in several regions also gave money to a number of voters. The source of money from Zayat's team came from his sympathizers' personal funds, especially Muna people. One of his supporter stated:

So when I met Muna people, a question arose from them. "Is there no attack, in this case, money? It does not have to be a big amount of money. What is important is the money is there, ready to be distributed to voters." I then told them, "We will work on it, as long as they stick with Zayat." (Respondent S. Zayat Supporter, January 30, 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari)

Zayat's sympathizers who gave money for his campaign were generally Muna people who were economically stable. However, the amount of money distributed was not much. The distribution of money was given to poor Muna voters who hoped for money politics. This effort was made by Zayat's team to keep the support of Muna voters.

#### THE FAILURE OF ETHNIC POLITICS AND THE TRIUMPH OF MONEY POLITICS

The 2017 Kendari regional election showed that all candidates used ethnic politics and money politics to gain support and win the election. The candidates sought to claim ethnic groups as their supporters. For example, Razak-Haris campaign team claimed that their support came from the majority of Bugis-Makassar community and some Tolaki settlers from Wawotobi. Meanwhile, the Zayat-Syariah campaign team claimed that their support came from Tolaki enclaves, Butonese, most Muna people who lived in Kendari, and members of Muhammadiyah. Meanwhile, ADP-SUL team claimed their support base came from some Tolaki community of Sampara, Pondidaha, and Wonggeduku origin, some Makassarese, most migrants who came from Turatea area (Makassar, Jeneponto, Takalar, and Bantaeng). The support also came from most of the community at the Mandonga and Sentral traditional market, as well as the PKS Islamic movement network in mosques, campuses, religious assemblies and mosque youth groups.

The Political Science Laboratory of Halu Oleo University, which conducted a survey ahead of the mayoral election in 2017, found that ethnic-based voter preference in Kendari was very strong.

Table 3. Voters Preference Based on Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Razak-Haris	ADP-SUL	Zayat-Syariah	Not yet decided	No answer	Total
Buginese	<b>37.5 %</b>	17.04 %	15.90 %	14.77 %	14.77 %	100 %
Butonese	19.04 %	4.76 %	23.80 %	28.57 %	23.80 %	100 %
Javanese	48.14 %	14.81 %	7.40 %	25.92 %	3.70 %	100 %
Makassar	26.08 %	34.78 %	8.69 %	17.39 %	13.04 %	100 %
Muna	13.95 %	4.65 %	<b>50 %</b>	17.44 %	13.95 %	100 %
Tolaki	<b>46.34 %</b>	24.39 %	4.87 %	10.97 %	13.41 %	100 %
Others	32.55 %	11.62 %	6.97 %	32.55 %	16.27 %	100 %

Source: Political Science Laboratory of Halu Oleo University 2017

The table above shows that the support for Zayat, who were the only candidate to represent Muna, came mostly from Muna people. Meanwhile, most Tolaki and Buginese voters supported Razak-Haris and then ADP-SUL pair.

The regional election in Kendari was also intensified by various initiatives by each campaign team, such as gathering information about the voter list for each sub-district and RT, mapping the support, and identifying the need for the distribution of money and goods. Although there were differences in method, number, and effect on voters, all candidates engaged in the practice of money politics.

Meanwhile, ethnic politics can be seen from the pairing of each candidate that combined their ethnic strengths. Both Razak-Haris and ADP-SUL pair were a combination of Tolaki and Bugis ethnic groups, while Zayat-Syariah was from Muna and Tolaki ethnicities. With this composition, if voters based their choices according to ethnic preferences, then the Zayat-Syariah pair should be the candidate with the highest chance to win, as Zayat was the only candidate from Muna ethnicity. Meanwhile, Tolaki support was divided into three candidates, ADP, Razak and Syariah, and Bugis votes were divided into two, Haris and Sulkarnain. Based on the ethnic base, Zayat and Syariah were expected to control at least three sub-districts, and had the potential to gain swing voters in five sub-districts. On a different side, ADP-SUL and Razak-Haris had control over two sub-districts and were competitive in five sub-districts (See figure 2, left side).

Nevertheless, apart from the efforts to maximize the ethnic factor, the Kendari election results spoke differently. ADP-SUL managed to win eight out of ten districts. The ADP-SUL victory was generally based on the results of two sub-districts which were the base of Muna people: Kambu District and Kendari District. ADP-SUL also managed to excel in two sub-districts of Tolaki ethnic base, Baruga District and Puwatu District. ADP-SUL won four other sub-districts where the populations are more diverse and evenly balanced, West Kendari, Mandonga, Kadia, and Wua-Wua districts. Razak-Haris pair came second, winning only in Poasia and Abeli sub-districts. Meanwhile, Zayat-Syariah pair lost in



all districts. Zayat-Syariah pair failed to win in the three sub-districts where Muna people dominate.

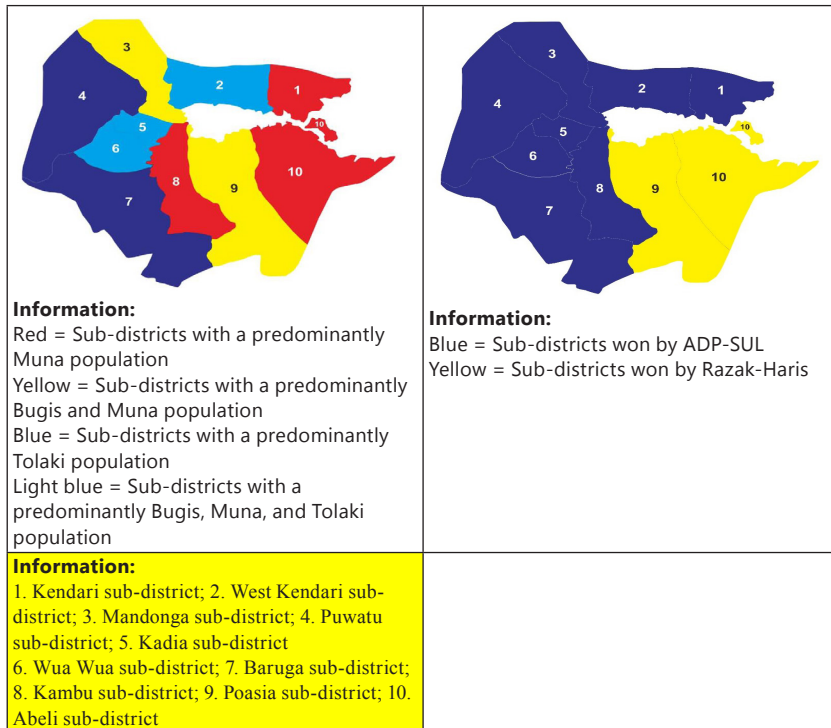


Figure 2. Comparison of Ethnic Base (left) to the Election Results (right)

Zayat’s defeat shows that the strategy designed by Muna figures, which was nominating Zayat as the only Muna candidate, did not work. The late transfer and replacement of Muna *camats* and *lurahs* by Asrun, including in the area where the money distributors lived, was able to divide the votes of Muna voters who previously tended to vote for Zayat.<sup>2</sup> These bureaucrats of Muna ethnicity actively communicated with the voters by using their family network. They also recruited field agents, who came from their families and the same area to make coordination easier and anticipate betrayal.

<sup>2</sup> In the span of 5 months before the election, then-Mayor Asrun has made three rotations of echelon II, III, and IV officials. Nearly half of the appointed *lurahs* (38 of the 64 sub-districts) were ethnic Muna. The *camats* were also filled by Muna people. Interestingly, these Muna officials were placed in areas where the majority of the population is Muna people.

Contrasted with Zayat-Syariah's failure to count on ethnic politics strategy, ADP-SUL managed to influence voters by relying on money politics. The distribution was nicely executed by the bureaucratic and party machine. Meanwhile, the other candidates' effort in practicing vote buying and distributing individual gifts had only little effect. It was ineffective, as the amount of money given was smaller compared to ADP-SUL. Besides, the money politics strategy carried out by Razak and Zayat teams only targeted the areas where their core voters live.

The objective of money politics carried out by Razak-Haris and Zayat-Syariah was to increase voter turnout in their base. This strategy is known as "turnout buying," which targeted the loyal voters to increase their participation (Nichter 2008). On the other hand, ADP-SUL's money politics strategy targeted many voters, both swing voters and their opponents' loyal voters. The distribution of money to floating voters was carried out so that they would pick ADP-SUL over other candidates. Meanwhile, the distribution of money aimed at Razak and Zayat loyal supporters was intended to prevent them from coming to the polling stations. A team member from ADP said that:

Money politics carried out by ADP team did not only target people who supported ADP, but also voters who supported Zayat or Razak. The goal was that they could change their decisions, not attend at the polling places, or hand over their C6 (voting invitation) form to the one who gave them money. So, there were various ways to it. (Respondent P. ADP's Distributor March 31, 2017. Interviewed by Author. Kendari)

The purchase of a C6 form in the 2017 Kendari local election was in the findings of the Southeast Sulawesi Bawaslu (Ose 2017a). According to the Head of Southeast Sulawesi's Bawaslu, the motive for collecting C6 forms was to give them to other people who did not have the right to vote. The perpetrators said the purchase of the C6 forms had been a common practice since the 2012 mayoral election. This shows that the strategy carried out by ADP-SUL was aimed not only at increasing the voter turnout among their supporters but also at reducing their rivals'

voters participation. Nichter calls this kind of method as *negative turnout buying*, which means money politics aimed at reducing the other competitors' votes (Nichter 2008).

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that all candidates practiced money politics, but ADP had an advantage over his two competitors. This was due to the larger amount of money allocated, the support from a solid team, and a more coherent strategy. The ADP-SUL team was driven by party and bureaucratic machines. The bureaucratic machine consisted of the *camats*, *lurahs*, government employees, chairmen of RT, and field agents recruited based on the closeness of the family bond. They were promised money as a bonus for their work. Differed from the case of the Razak-Haris team, who did not get a bonus. Furthermore, the money received by voters did not even reach the nominal amount that should have been distributed. The Razak-Haris team's dishonesty resulted in disappointment and distrust, not to mention the momentum of the distribution of money was also late.

Meanwhile, the Zayat-Syariah pair, which mostly used ethnic politics, suffered defeat in all sub-districts in Kendari. The defeat of Zayat-Syariah in the Kendari regional election shows that the same ethnicity between candidates and voters did not necessarily affect the voters' attitude to elect candidates who were the same as their ethnicity. This finding strengthens Muhtadi's (2018) opinion that ethnicity is not the only factor that plays a role in the regional election, as well as Kramon's (2013) findings that voter loyalty is primarily determined by how much profit and material benefits are obtained.

## CONCLUSION

The Kendari mayoral election has shown that ethnic politics strategy had been carefully designed by Muna figures, and money politics supported by the Asrun's bureaucratic machine worked well. Ethnic politics was carried out by utilizing Muna people's local wisdom, known as *Kaseiseha*, which means "unity" and *Kawunaha*, which means "fellow Muna people." Money politics is driven by bureaucratic and party machines and designed from the neighborhood level to the district level.

However, when both were confronted, ethnic politics was successfully disrupted by money politics. In other words, if ethnic politics directly encounters money politics, money politics tend to be more effective than ethnic politics, especially when it was deployed by candidates with more material resources and support from local bureaucracy. This finding should be followed by further investigations, for example, by looking at different context between urban and rural. The extent of territory where direct elections are conducted can also be investigated as smaller areas such as villages might have more significant immaterial elements such as cultural and spiritual than material.

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