BROKERAGE IN ELECTION: MEASURE VOTERS AND ITS IMPLICATION (A CASE FROM INDONESIA)

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Abstract - As a form of brokerage activity, vote brokerage in election require clear and measurable voters. Candidates will not hire vote broker when commodity (voter) can not be measured. Similarly, vote broker will not get job if there is no clear commodity that can be offered to candidate. That logic being the beginning of this study. In fact, at least in research field, indicated rising of debate about whether voters in brokeragewere measured actually. Some brokers registered voters, and others did not, it rised question about the logic.destabilizing the logic. Was vote brokerage really measurable? Did they have different method of measuring? What was the implication on brokerage?. To answer those questions, I made observations and interviews in central Java Province during their local election (2015-2017). Results, vote brokerage always measurable. Registering voters in listindicated that measurement was by name, which led to distribute material(money, goods, etc) to names in the list.Others, no register, but measurement was by estimation, targeting on how large social influence of broker. The use of different method is influenced by two characteristics of voters, ie transactional and non-transactional, then influenced strategy of brokerage.

Keywords - Vote Broker, Measurement, Estimation, Social Influence

I. INTRODUCTION

Mid-2015, kinship has brought me to vote brokerage environment. Currently, it was period of Pilkada, local election in Kabupaten (regency) to select Bupati (head of regency). I interacted with candidates, party leaders, and vote brokers. One time, I had opportunity to observed activities of Joko. Joko was vote broker (locally, called vote as *sabet*. I watched, Joko was busy to writing names on paper. I asked question to him, "what are you doing?". Joko said, "writing names of voters". Other time, i met Parno, also a vote broker. I asked question to him, “did you write names of voters like Joko did?” Parno said, “no”. Both made me hard to understand why Joko should made list of voters, while Parno should not. Did they work different brokerage? The facts made me think hardly. I guessed, Joko did it for calculating how many voters which can involved to brokerage. That made sense for me. But, how about Parno? He did not do as what Joko did. Did Suroso not calculate voters?

As transactional activities, I believe, vote brokerage always measurable, have clear amount of voters who being commodity. Logically, candidates would not do transaction for unclear things. In fact, not every brokers provided list of voters who will be object. At least, we can seen Parno. The questions above, and initial logic that I believe, prompted me to examine deeply about how to explain the differences, and implications of the difference.

This article consists of three parts. First, presenting finding about how voters were measured in vote brokerage. This part describes several methods of measurement to be used as objects of vote brokerage. Second, presenting findings about how to build voter’s commitment in each measurement method. The part describes what they did with the methods, to made voters have commitment to vote candidate. Third, discussing the first and second parts, to get a conclusion.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

Informations I will show in this article, were collected through indepth interviews and observe more than twenty brokers and some candidates in local elections in Pati and Demak, two of regencies in Central Java, during 2015-2017. Both sites have characteristics of rural communities. Reasoning for selecting rural communities, not the city, was because vote brokerage occurred dominant in village communities. It refers to many scholars, like Triantini[1], Rahman[2], Aspinall[3], Hellmann[4], Ocantos[5], Blaydes[6], Wu and Huang[7],who mentioned that vote broker always related to vote-buying, also refer to Aspinall and Sukmajati[8]who confirm that most vote-buying took place in village. Selection of both locations based on sociological grounds, taking intothesis of Geertz[9]about division of Javanese society. He divided Javanese society into three, namely *santri*, *priyayi*, and *abangan*. Santri, referring to the religious community. *Priyayi*, referring to civil servant or aristocrat. *Abangan*, referring to people who are still applying the values of java culture, although they also embrace a particular religion. *Santri* and *abangan* are community who dominates in java society, so I used them to selecting sites. Demak was dominated by *santri* community, while Patiwas dominated by *abangan* society. In both locations, vote broker has been entrenched and present long

time. There areevidence, they have local name for vote brokers. In Pati, vote broker commonly was called as *Sabet*, while in Demak it was called as *Gapit*. Both have same meaning

Not easy to interact with vote brokers. They tend to shut down when there is a stranger to see and interview them. As note, vote brokerage often closely related to vote-buying, and vote buying is illegal. But, fortunately, by my social network, they let me to interact observe them.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Measuring Voters as Brokerage Commodity

As a form of brokerage, vote brokerage should have measurement mechanism. Brokerage that occured between candidate and brokers,have to be measured. In this case, the measurement refers to number of voters who becomes commodity in brokerage. Candidate, as person will get votes, should find out how many voters will be provided by brokers for him. Similarly, brokersshould provide data about number of voters who will be offered to candidates. So, the brokerage has number of voters, which is known by the candidate and brokers.

Studies that have been done before, not in detail to explain measuring voters on brokerage. Blaydes[10] simply described how vote broker supervise and control voters in Egypt election, to ensure that voters vote for candidates they support. Blaydes does not explain how to determine number of voters whom they controlled, and how to measure achievements of voters who becomes commodity. Finan and Schechter[11]also just explained vote broker's background as a community leader, and the relationship between broker and reciprocity norms. The use of social networks mentioned by Finan and Schechter, did not answer how social networks are measured or not measured, how to determine number of voters on the social network owned by vote broker. Similarly, Hellmann[12]described vote broker is people who has an influence on voters. Same with previous studies, there were no answers in Hellmann's study about how to measure number of voters who became scope of influence, and how to determine number of voters within their community.

Few literature talked about list of voters, as example is in Aspinall and Sukmajati[13]. They explained how vote broker network provides list of voters who will be covered. As part of *success team* (generally, it is campaign team), vote broker in *dusun* or *RT / RW* level (neigborhood level) made a list of voters who agreed to vote for a candidate, then gave the list to his superiors structure, to be used as basis of distributing money. Aspinall's explanations provide insight that brokerage have a clear measuring. Brokerage associated with vote buying, using the list as the basis for distributing money and calculating number of voters that will vote for him.

But, findings in the two sites shown a variety of measurement methods, not only by list of voters. In Pati and Demak,list of voters was also found. Some brokers created a list of voters who can be mobilized by him, at his village. They stated that they submitted the list to upper broker, and then exchanged with envelope containing money as number of voters in the list. In contrast,some brokers did not register voters and did not make list of voters.

The informations in both provided knowledge about different methods in measuring commodity of brokerage. There are two method of brokerage. One is based on voter's names, namely brokerage *"by name"* and, other based on estimation, namely brokerage *"by estimate"*. Brokerage *by name* is brokerage where use list of voters as basis. Brokers registered voters who will be offered to candidate. Usually, brokers in neigborhood level was person who did it. They came to voters, the asked voters to vote the candidate in election day. If voter agreed, broker will enter his name on the list. Then, the list submitted to upper broker (brokers in higher level) to be forwarded to the candidate.

Brokerage *by estimate* is brokerage where use estimation for calculating how much effect of broker in order to influence voters. This brokers did not perform list of voters. One reason why candidate used the brokers is, because the brokers were peoples who have influence socially, not only in vote brokerage, but also in daily social interaction. So, brokerage considered figure of brokers. In both locations, usually, this method was carried out by religious leaders or community leaders or social elit, who have position as a social reference. This method can be combined with other method (*by name)*through brokerage network.

Candidate or campaign advisor, will measure how much voters by considering how much follower of the broker. For example, they will consider how much student of a religion leader. It can be used for estimating how much voter will follow the religion leader if he support a candidate. Other example, candidate will consider how much family members of a big family. As note, in village, usually people still have family ties among them, and have a person as leader. Number of family members can be used to estimate how much voter can be collected from the family by hiring the family leaders as broker.

3.2.Implications of The Measurement

Implications of using different method can be seen on how they influence voters. Previous studies showed that broker influence voters through distributing money or goods to voters.

Blaydes[14]explained,through cash to voters. Other forms were through opening cheap market for voter, by offering main goods, or gift vouchers, also using clientelism relations. In Paraguay, Finan and Schechter[15] explained, through distributing money or goods, then asked voters to promise that they will vote the candidate.

Kennedy[16] described it in China, with some patterns, delivering promise of candidates to voters about benefits of policy if the candidate wins, delivering promise about award if the candidate wins, as well as provide cash from candidates to voters. In Indonesia, Aspinall[17] generally mention that distribution of money tovoters by brokers is crucial step in brokerage activities. How broker betrayed and affected victory of candidates, was discussed by Aspinall in context of distribution of money to voters.

I proposed question to some brokers. I asked Joko, why do you make a list of names of voters? Joko said, "I will send to candidate, and the names will get money". The explanation is also shown by other brokers, that the names will be submitted to upper broker, then forwarded to candidates, and then get some envelopes containing money. Both explanations can be understood that the list was needed to calculate amount of material that will be distributed to voters. The list of voters will serve as a basis for measuring vote brokerage. It mean that brokers who performed list of voters will lead to distribute material to voters. I also asked Parno, "why do you not make list of voters? Parno explained that he did not need to provide list of voters because he would not distribute money to voters. Some brokers who did not distribute material confirmed his statement.

I found some methods was used by brokers. In Pati, brokers have distributed money to voters. When they met and hand over the money, they told voters that the money is for voting a particular candidate. Some broker did other method. They made several activities aimed to influence voters. For example, a religion leader hold some islamic forum, then declared his supporting, and promoting. No distributing money to voters in this forum. Some religion leaders told clearly, but some told unclearly. Some brokers talked and promoted a candidate.

Similar to Pati, I found those informations in Demak, in, 2015 Demak election. A religion leader, as well as owner of educational institutions, did not distribut money. He only gave a statement to worshipers and peoples in his educational institution, that he supports a candidate. Other religion leaderalso did it, but speaking more subtle, unclear. Altough subtle,can be understood by his followers about who candidate is. Some brokers distributed money to voters in their environment, usually in their neighborhood area. Some brokers organized facilities developing which funded by candidate, such as road, worship places, etc.

Differences in measurement method lead to differences in influencing voters. Distributing material to voters by brokers, was not consequence from their activity. In other word, distributing money or good was not because they submitted list of voters. Interviews to some brokers confirmed the statement. They explained that from beginning they have been directed to make list of voters, making sure that name in the list agreed to vote for the candidate. Candidate has planned to distribute money to voters. That is why they made list of voters, to be based for distributing money. Similarly, brokers who did not distribute material to voters, is not consequences from their activity. Interviews explained that they were not prepared for distributing material. A campaign advisor confirmed that the brokers did not need to register voters because they will not distribute material to voters. Interview provided an understanding that measuring method and distributing material or non-material, were something already planned as brokerage strategy.

Both locations provide sufficient informations to categorize brokerage activities. The activities can be classified into twomethods, candidate centres, and broker centres. In candidate centres, brokers share candidate resources to voters, including money, goods, public facilities renovation, etc. It was based on what candidate served. It placed brokers as courier, who connected between candidate and voters. As a bridge, brokers just brought candidate resources to voters. Then voters considered who candidate is, what they got, how much money, in election day.

Influencing voters by candidate centres has two distribution pattern, ie, personal distribution and collective distribution. Personal distribution is, distributing material or services to individual voters. The materials were distributed and received personally by each voter. In other words, every voter received money or good or services for itself. It was most of brokerage activities. Collective distribution is, distributing resources in public facilities that can be used together with other voters. For example, distributing resources to develope public facilities in village. But it was rarely in field. Personal distribution was common pattern.

In broker centres, broker used their selve-resources to influence voters. The brokers gained what voters thought about the brokers. Although the brokers promoted a candidate, but actually the brokers was not selling the candidate. They were selling themselve. For example, a community leader promoted a candidate. He was triying to use his social status to influence voters. Who candidate is, was not important in this case. It sound like he said "i am your

leader, you will follow me, so vote the candidate". Voters (actually, his community members) considered who the broker is, what relationship they have, and so forth. In this case, broker act more than courier. The brokers have reference value for voters.

Influencing voters by broker centres, was built through values of non-material believed by voter, for example, patronage values. There is no distributing money or goods in this method. Brokers only stated his position to voters in his social network. Hopefully, voters depended his choice on the broker. Voters seen candidate who get supporting from good broker as good candidate. That mean, broker is person whom voters considered.

3.3.Characteristics of Voters Lead to Methods

Why did vote brokerage use some methods? Vote brokerage is activity that aim to get voters through social networks owned by brokers. For that, brokerage must consider characteristics of society. I followed up the question by observing characteristics of voters in both sites. Result, there were two main characteristics of voter, transactional and non-transactional voters. Transactional voters are voters who based their vote on logic of vote-buying. Transactional voters would not come and vote if they do not receive money or goods from candidate. They have slogan for that, *ora ono duit ora nyoblos* (no money no vote). The logic is found when interviewed to some voters. Non-transactional voters are voters who based their choice on other, not on vote buying logic. That can be showed in some form, such as patron-client logic, religious logic, and so forth.

The characteristics of voters will be basis for candidate to decisive what types of brokers they need, it have implication to what measurement method would be used in brokerage. Transactional voter wanted to have "trading" with candidate. The motivation made them can be registered easily. Voters with non-transactional characteristics can not be touched by registering their name. They did not think about "trading" with candidate. That made them can not be registered. In other words, it can be stated that measuring by name can be done to transactional voters. To non-transactional voters, can not measure by name. Measurement only can be done by estimation.

Characteristics of voters also can answer why brokerage have some methodes to influence voters. Transactional voters wanted to have "trading" with candidate. That mean, they wanted candidate to buy their vote. The motivation made candidate need to do vote buying. That is why broker can distributing material to the voters. On the other side, voters with non-transactional characteristics did not think about "trading" with candidate. They have non-material reasons in election. Candidate need to find way toinfluence voters. In the sites, social relation still drawed patronage relation, based on economic, religion, or so forth. Some voters with strong relationon patronage will follow what patron did. Worker follow owner, student follow teacher, and whatever like those. So, candidate looked for patron who agree to be broker. The broker did not need to distributing material. They only need to declare his political position to client (voter). I see it as distributing patronage value (no money, no goods, no material).

Next question is whether characteristics of voters can be clearly separated? Evidence on the fields shown that there were no separation area. In a village, there could be two characteristics of these communities, who live together. That become a reason for using both methods simultaneously. First, the difficulty of sorting out the specific characteristics voters. In one area, such as villages or RT, the characteristics of the constituents is not uniform characteristics. While brokerage based on level area, lowest is the RT (Neighborhood). Secondly, there can be multiple characteristics voters, ie voters who require reference, but also need the material.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion is, vote brokerage always have a measurable commodity or object (voters). Measurements were made with two methods of measurement, ie, by name and by estimate. By name refers to registering voter, which the output is list of voters.. By estimate refers to calculating voter based on estimates. No list of voters in estimation. The use of both methods, is closely related to influencing voters. Vote brokerage which use by name, will be followed by the distribution of material to voters in the list (candidate centres). Vote brokerage which based on estimation, was not followed by the distribution of the material, but targeting to influence of broker personality (broker centres). The reason why there were two methods of measurement and two methods of influencing voters, is difference in the characteristics of voters. Transactional voters tent to based their choice on the logic of vote-buying. It allowed voters to be registered, to become a commodity in vote brokerage. Non-transactional voters did not based their choice on the logic of buying and selling votes, but on other considerations. For example, in communities where the patron-client relationship is present. So candidate will hire patron as broker,then act as reference. Voters will voteas what their patron vote. That why, registering voters can not be done by name, but can be estimated through how large social influence of broker.

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