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Democracy Disrupted: High Political Costs, Transactional Politic, and Corruption

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Abstract: High political costs result in the degradation of democratic values that cause democratic disruption. This study aims to examine the disruption of democracy in Indonesia that occurs with the phenomenon of high political costs and offers possible solutions. This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method. The results show that high political costs are the start of transactional politics and corruption. High political costs result in the use of various illegal means by candidates/figures to find sources of financing. High political costs and a democratic process based on financial capability open up the opportunity for the emergence of figures/candidates lacking integrity and quality ideas/performance. Several solutions can be offered to achieve a more substantive, higher quality, and dignified future era of democracy, including: (1) Political parties and the government should promote the optimization of legal sources of funding for political parties, both in cash and non-cash while strengthening accountability and transparency, (2) The government and election organizers should enhance regulatory enforcement, and supervision, and impose strict sanctions on political party funding, (3) Political parties should prioritize the selection of candidates with high integrity and quality based on their ideas and performances, (4) The government and election organizers should consider implementing e-voting for future elections in Indonesia to enhance digital democracy.

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I. Introduction

The 2024 general election is an important momentum for the Indonesian nation towards a more dignified era of democracy. This year's general election, which includes the presidential and vice-presidential elections, regional head elections, and legislative elections, is expected to lead Indonesia towards a better quality of democracy. Democratic consolidation has become an important concept in the current development of electoral democracy. Democratic consolidation has become a key concept in the current development of electoral democracy. In its most widespread acceptance, a "consolidated" democracy is a democracy that will not be easily disrupted (Sorensen, L., 2020, p. 8), where behavioral, attitude or structural factors of democratic consolidation are determining factors (Schedler, A., 2001, p. 66).

A transparent, accountable, and fair democratic process that guarantees all rights is essential in the succession of local and national leadership. This cannot be achieved without stabilization, institutionalization, and democratic legitimacy (Morlino, L., 2019, p. 459). The success of managing and ending various problems that disturb the democratic process depends on the shared belief in these values among political elites and society.

Indonesia's democracy index is currently at the flawed democracy level. One of the problems is the disruption of political culture in the process of electoral democracy in Indonesia (The Economist Intelligence Unit/EIU, 2022, p. 16). Sorensen (Sorensen, L., 2020, p. 8) stated that democratic disruption refers to the degradation of democratic values due to various problems in the democratic process. A successful democratic country is characterized by a system that meets certain criteria. These criteria include clean competition, open space for political competition of ideas and performance, and effectiveness and efficiency (Bettiza, G., & Lewis, D., 2020, p. 559).

In Indonesia, political parties tend to have vague manifestos (Aspinall, 2014, p. 548). Financial capability currently drives the electoral democracy in Indonesia, making it a powerful

factor in the high-cost process of elections. The significant implication of the high political costs is the emergence of transactional politics. This type of political system prioritizes individuals with financial capability over those who uphold values of integrity and quality (Avis et al., 2022, p. 167).

Political preferences that are not based on rational considerations mean that political decisions are often based on pragmatic considerations, one of which is money. Findings from the Politics and Government Research Center (PolGov) and the Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs at the Australian National University (ANU) conclude that Indonesian politics is a transactional politics of money (Aspinall & Sukmajati, 2016, p. 37). Indonesia has the third largest prevalence of transactional money politics in the world in the last decade, with a rate of 25-33%, according to the Vote Buying Index (Muhtadi, B., 2019 p. 46).

Transactional politics are practices and behaviors to ensure the candidate's victory in a general election. Transactional politics occurs because of the mutually beneficial relationships that are carried out between candidates, political parties, oligarchs, and society (Aspinall & Sukmajati, 2015, p. 4; Aspinall & Berenschot, 2019, p. 20). Transactional politics will also generate a phenomenon of patronage and clientelism. Thus, a pattern of mutually beneficial exchange relationships is formed (Aspinall & Berenschot, 2019, p. 20; Hicken et al., 2019, p. 61).

Currently, high political costs have caused the emergence of transactional politics and corruption for at least several reasons, namely: high campaign and logistics costs, witness costs, high costs of political research and political consultants, the political dowry within political parties, and weak law enforcement (Ibadurrahman, 2021, p. 774; Hayati & Noor, 2020, p. 110; Solekha et al., 2022, p. 53; Satria, H., 2019, p. 7). This leads to the degradation of democratic values, which results in democratic disruption (Sorensen, L., 2020, p. 8). Political parties, governments, and election organizers should be able to play a crucial role in reducing the high political costs that affect the growth of transactional politics and corruption in Indonesia.

The research question of this study is how democratic disruption occurs in the process of electoral democracy in Indonesia. The novelty of this study is that it offers possible solutions to counter the democratic disruption in Indonesia due to the high political costs. This is an important momentum for a future era of democracy that is more substantive, has a higher quality, and is dignified.

II. Methods

This study used a qualitative approach with the library research method, namely research conducted through various objects from literature information sources (Khoa et al., 2023, p. 187; Marlow, 2023, p. 51). The main data was obtained using data documentation collection methods, such as academic books, academic journals, mass/digital media, and other sources that directly correlate with the problem being studied.

This study explains how democratic disruption occurs in the process of electoral democracy in Indonesia by referring to the theoretical framework explained by Sorensen (Sorensen, L., 2020, p. 8) and offers possible solutions to counter the democratic disruption that occurs in Indonesia due to the problem of high political costs, by referring to the theoretical framework explained by Bettiza and Lewis (Bettiza, G., & Lewis, D., 2020, p. 559). To provide relevant results, the researcher then used descriptive analysis, an approach that focuses on comprehensive and critical investigation of the problem being studied (Nassaji, 2015, p. 129), which used several stages of analysis: data processing, data analysis, and data verification (concluding) (Khoa et al., 2023, p. 187).

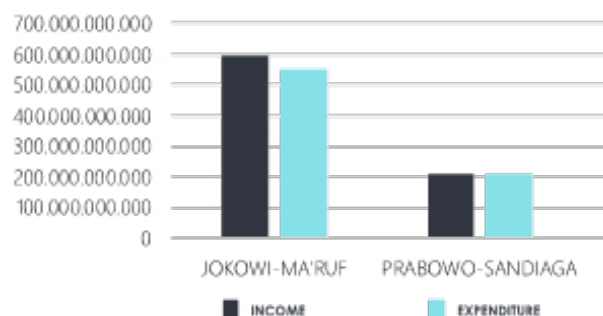
III. Results and Discussion

A. Democracy Disrupted: High Political Costs, Transactional Politic, Corruption

Currently, high political costs at least for several reasons, namely: high campaign and logistics costs, witness costs, high costs of political surveys and political consultants, the existence of political dowries within political parties, and weak law enforcement (Ibadurrahman, 2021, p. 774; Hayati & Noor, 2020, p. 110; Solekha et al., 2022, p. 53; Satria, H., 2019, p. 7).

In Indonesia's electoral democracy process, high political costs are reflected in the costs incurred by the figures/candidates, the political parties participating in the election, and the election organizers in the general elections for the president and vice president, regional heads, and members of the legislative bodies.

For example, in the 2019 general election for president and vice president, the high political costs required in general elections can be seen from the campaign fund receipts and expenditures reports of the candidates (figure 1). In 2019, Jokowi-Ma'ruf reported campaign fund receipts of IDR 594,883,534,772 with expenditures of IDR 549,231,435,632, while Prabowo-Sandiaga reported campaign fund receipts of IDR 210,780,974,526 with expenditures of IDR 211,464,770,813 (Bawaslu RI, 2019). (Bawaslu RI, 2019). In practice, however, the report on campaign finance receipts and expenditures often does not reflect the actual costs incurred by election participants (Bawaslu RI, 2022). Nevertheless, this report indicates the high political costs associated with the current president and vice president elections in Indonesia.



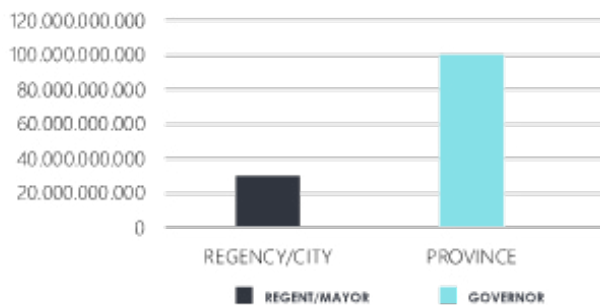
Source: Processed from Bawaslu RI, 2023.

Figure 1. Report on Receipts and Expenditures of Campaign Funds in the 2019 General Elections for President and Vice-President (IDR Billions)

Meanwhile, for the regional head elections at the provincial level (governor and deputy governor) and the regency level (regent and deputy regent), the high political costs are evidenced by the costs incurred by each regional head candidate to compete in the general election (figure 2).

As stated by General (Ret.) Prof. Drs. H. Muhammad Tito Karnavian, B.A., M.A., Ph.D. (Minister of Home Affairs), that:

“To become a regional head at the provincial level requires funds of at least up to 100 billion” (Delivered at a joint meeting with Committee I DPD RI at the Parliament Complex, Senayan, Jakarta, 18/11/2019) (CNBC Indonesia, 2019).



Source: Processed from CNBC Indonesia and Kompas, 2023.

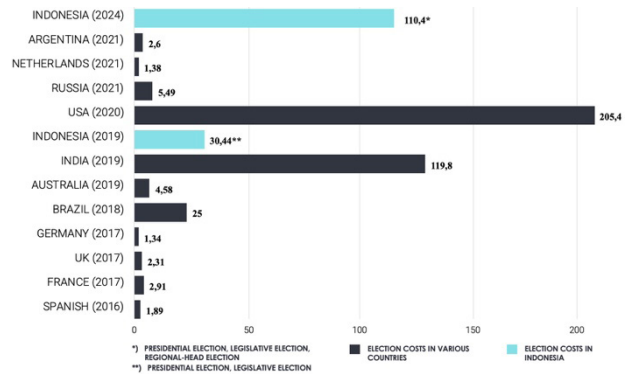
Figure 2. Political Costs Required in Regional Head Elections (IDR Billions)

As stated by Dr. Drs. Bahtiar, M.Sc. (Director General of Politics and General Government, Ministry of Home Affairs), that:

“The minimum costs incurred by regional head candidates (regent and deputy-regent) in the range of 25-30 billion” (Delivered at the Parliament Complex, Senayan, Jakarta, 02/12/2019) (Kompas, 2019).

From the perspective of general election organizers, the high political costs can be seen in the costs incurred by the government to hold general elections.

For example (figure 3) in the 2019 and 2024 general elections, Indonesia is one of the countries with the highest cost of holding general elections compared to others. This shows that the government has to allocate a large budget to hold general elections in Indonesia.



Source: Processed from various sources, 2023.

Figure 3. Costs for General Elections in Various Countries (IDR Trillions)

The high political costs pose a significant challenge during the electoral democracy process in Indonesia. This is especially true for candidates participating in the general election who must find sources of financing to cover these expenses. Unfortunately, this often leads to the use of various methods to secure the necessary funds by the candidates (Table 1) (Agustino et al., 2023, p. 44).

Table 1. Corruption Case Allegedly for Funding for General Elections

NAME	POSITION	CASE	XPLANATION
Yana Mulyana	The Mayor of Bandung	Project Bribery	Allegedly the proceeds of corruption are to be used to fund the regional elections in Bandung City in 2024.
M. Adil	The Regent of Kepulauan Meranti	Budget Corruption and Project Bribery	Allegedly the proceeds of corruption are to be used to fund the 2024 governor elections in Riau.
Ben Brahim S. Bahat & Ary Egahni	The Regent of Kapuas & Member of House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia	Budget Corruption and Project Bribery	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund operational activities for the 2018 election of the Regent of Kapuas and the 2020 election of the Governor of Central Kalimantan Province, as well as operational costs for the election of members of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia in 2019.
Marianus Sae	The Regent of Ngada	Project Bribery	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund the 2018 governor election in NTT.
Rudi Erawan	The Regent of Halmahera Timur	Project Bribery	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund the 2018 Governor election in North Maluku.

Siti Masitha, Soeparno, Amir Mirza Hutagalung	The Mayor of Tegal	Project Bribery	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund the 2018 election in Tegal.
Sri Hartini	The Regent of Klaten	Buying and Selling Positions	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund the 2018 election in Klaten .
Taufiqurrahman	The Regent of Nganjuk	Buying and Selling Positions	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund the 2018 election in Nganjuk.
Imas Aryumningsih	The Regent of Subang	Project Bribery	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund the 2018 election in Subang.
Nyono Suharli Wihandoko	The Regent of Jombang	Project Bribery	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund the 2018 election in Jombang.
Atty Suharti	The Mayor of Cimahi	Project Bribery	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund the 2017 election in Cimahi .
Damayanti Wisnu Putranti	Member of House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia	Project Bribery	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund the 2015 election in Central Java.
Adriansyah	Member of House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia	Project Bribery	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund the 2015 governor election in South Kalimantan.
Luthfi Hasan Ishaq	Member of House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia	Project Bribery	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund political party interests in 2014.
Yesaya Sombuk	The Regent of Biak Numfor	Project Bribery	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund the 2014 election in the Biak Numfor.
Amran Batalipu	The Regent of Buol	Project Bribery	Allegedly, the proceeds of corruption are used to fund the 2012 election in Buol.

Source: Processed from various sources, 2023.

As stated by General (Ret.) Prof. Drs. H. Muhammad Tito Karnavian, B.A., M.A., Ph.D. (Minister of Home Affairs), that:

“This high-cost political system causes acts of corruption to emerge by regional head candidates when they officiate. The problem is that the phenomenon of corruption can occur because of greed, need, and situation” (Delivered at the 2021 Rakorwasdanas, 08/31/2021) (CNN Indonesia, 2021).

Table 2. Alleged Case of Transactional Politics (Political Dowry) in the General Election

NAME	LOCATION	CASE	EXPLANATION
Sandiaga Uno	Presidential Election	Political Dowry	There were allegations of a political dowry given to PAN and PKS by Sandiaga Uno to gain support as a vice presidential candidate in the 2019 Presidential Election.
La Nyala Mattalitti	East Java Province Regional Election	Political Dowry	There were allegations of a request for political dowry from the Gerindra Party to La Nyala Mattalitti in the 2018 East Java province election.
Siswandi	Cirebon City Election	Political Dowry	PKS did not provide a letter of recommendation for Siswandi in the 2018 Cirebon City election. Allegedly, Siswandi did not submit the political dowry to PKS.
John Krisli	Palangka Raya City Election	Political Dowry	There were allegations of a request for political dowry from the Gerindra and PPP to John Krisli in the 2018 Palangka Raya City Election.
Yan P. Mandenas	Biak Numfor Regent Election	Political Dowry	There were allegations of a request for political dowry from the Hanura to Yan P. Mandenas in the 2018 Biak Numfor Regent Election.

Source: Processed from various sources, 2023.

Furthermore, as stated by Asmarni, S.E., MM. (Expert Staff of the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs for Natural Resources and the Environment), that:

“The problem of financing political parties and high-cost politics has encouraged the emergence of transactional politics in the democratic electoral process in Indonesia, between candidates and political parties (political dowry), and between political actors and oligarchs, especially in the natural resources sector” (Delivered at the Coordination Meeting, 08/18/2022) (Kemenko Polhukam, 2022).

The current problem, however, is that the prosecution of transactional politics is often hampered by the difficulty of proving it. As a result, transactional political issues often appear and disappear without a detailed and complete explanation to the public. Even the alleged transactional politics (political dowry) issues listed in table 2 have not enter the legal sphere.

High political costs will have an indirect impact on the emergence of figures/candidates without integrity and quality. As such, when these figures/candidates are elected/officiated, they would carry out reciprocal exchange relationships that are mutually beneficial between the actors involved in transactional politics. Furthermore, it causes the emergence of acts of corruption by these figures/candidates when they are elected/officiated, which will naturally harm the development process (Ibadurrahman, 2021, p. 779).

Overall, it can be seen that high political costs are the starting point of the phenomenon of transactional politics and corruption in Indonesia. In several cases, there are indications that high political costs have resulted in figures/candidates participating in general elections using various illegal methods to seek sources of financing to meet political costs, which at the same time has shown that high political costs tend to open the opportunity for the emergence of figures/candidates without integrity and quality.

B. Funding of Political Parties and Strengthening Regulatory Enforcement

In this phenomenon, there is a paradox in the Indonesian democratic process, where the democratic process is based only on financial capacity, only those with financial capacity will be nominated, with no consideration for their integrity and quality through their ideas and performance. Therefore, political parties, governments, and general election organizers need to work together to counter the democratic disruption that occurs in this phenomenon. Political parties and the government can play a role in reducing high political costs by prioritizing legal sources of funding for political parties.

For example, Germany is one of the countries with low election costs. Political parties in Germany spent only €92 million or US\$109.6 million (IDR1.6 billion) in a parliamentary election (Deutscher Bundestag, 2020). The main reasons for this are the strict implementation of laws on political party financing, state financing of political parties, and transparency of political party financing.

In Germany, there are no limits on the amount of donations that can be received and spent on election campaigns. The main requirement is that all donations over €50,000 must be reported by political parties to the German parliament, the Bundestag. The Bundestag then publishes a list of donations on its official website, along with the names and addresses of the companies or individuals who donated (Deutscher Bundestag, 2020). Political parties in Germany receive state funding (Table 3) if they manage to win at least 1% of the vote at the state level or 0.5% of the vote in the national election. It is hoped that strengthening aspects of regulation enforcement, optimizing state funding of political parties, as well as increasing the accountability and transparency in political party funding can be promoted in the democratic process in Indonesia.

Table 3. Political Parties Funding Assistance in Various Countries

COUNTRY	TOTAL	PURPOSE	SCHEME
Indonesia	Rp 1.000/votes	Political party operations and political education	Political parties that reach the parliamentary threshold in the election (lump sum).
German	€ 0,7/votes; € 0,38/€ 1 (member donations)	Political party operations and political education	Political parties that receive 0.5% of the votes in the election (reimbursed/at cost).
France	Limited by maximum ceiling € 808,300/year	Political party operations	Political parties that obtain at least 5% of the votes in the election (Reimbursement/ at cost).
Australia	30% of the needs of political parties	Political party operations	Political parties that reach the electoral threshold of at least 4% in the election (Reimbursement/at cost).
Japan	250 yen/votes	Political party operations	Political parties that obtain a minimum of 5 seats in the election (Lumpsum).
India	Non-cash (in kind/ free access to media)	Political party operations	Political parties that reach the parliamentary threshold in the elections (lumpsum).
Thailand	Limited to a maximum ceiling of 0.01% of total central government spending	Political party operations	Political parties that reach the parliamentary threshold of votes in the election (lumpsum).
Filipina	Non-cash (in kind/ free access to media)	Political party operations	Candidates/individuals.

Source: Processed from various sources, 2023.

In Indonesia, several regulations (table 4) regulate the legal funding sources for political parties. In addition, Government Regulation No. 1 of 2018 regulates the increase in funding support

for political parties reaching the parliamentary threshold in the legislative election, namely from IDR 108/vote to IDR 1,000/vote. This increase in support is expected to help the political parties minimize the transactional political practices and corruption that occur in the democratic process in Indonesia due to the high political costs.

Table 4. Sources of Funding for Political Parties in Indonesia

REGULATION	SOURCE	DONATION LIMITS	RECIPIENT	LIMIT
Law Number 2 of 1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member dues; Donations; State Assistance. (Article 12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal: maximum IDR 15 million; Company: Maximum IDR 150 million. (Article 18) 	Political parties that receive votes in elections. (Article 12 paragraph 2)	No limit
Law Number 31 of 2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member dues; Donations; State Assistance. (Article 17) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal: maximum IDR 200 million; Company: Maximum IDR 800 million. (Article 18) 	Political parties that have seats in the DPR/DPD. (Article 17 paragraph 3)	No Limit
Law Number 2 of 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member dues; Donations; APBN/APBD assistance. (Article 34 Paragraph 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of political parties are regulated in the AD-ART; Non-members: Maximum IDR 1 billion; Company: Maximum IDR 4 billion. (Article 35 paragraph 1) 	Political parties that have seats in the DPR/DPD. (Article 34 paragraph 3)	No Limit
Law Number 2 of 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member dues; Donations; APBN/APBD assistance. (Article 34 Paragraph 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of political parties are regulated in the AD-ART; Non-members: IDR 1 billion; Company: Maximum IDR 7 billion. (Article 35 paragraph 1) 	Political parties that have seats in the DPR/DPD. (Article 34 paragraph 3)	No Limit

Source: Processed from various sources, 2023.

In addition, apart from cash support to political parties from the state, Indonesia can also learn from India and the Philippines (table 3). India and the Philippines provide support to political parties that reach the parliamentary threshold in the general election in the form of non-cash support, one of which is the provision of free media access to political parties that can be used to conduct political education activities and political campaigns to voters (Kapur & Vaishnav, 2018, p. 15; Hamada & Agrawal, 2021, p. 6). With the common goal of reducing the high political costs for candidates and political parties, the

government and election organizers can consider this option with the support of a comprehensive regulatory arrangement.

In addition, the government and election organizers play a crucial role in transactional politics, including through stronger enforcement of regulations and promotion of accountability and transparency in the funding for political parties (table 4).

Table 5. Sanctions To Transactional Politics in General Elections

REGULATION	NCERNING	ARTICLE	CONTENTS/EXPLANATION
Law Number 7 of 2017	General Elections	228 (1-4)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Political Parties are prohibited from accepting compensation in any form during the nomination process for President and Vice President. If a Political Party is proven to have received compensation as intended in paragraph (1), the Political Party concerned is prohibited from nominating candidates in the next period. Political parties receiving compensation, as referred to in paragraph (2), must be proven by a court decision that has permanent legal force. Every person or institution is prohibited from providing compensation to Political Parties in any form in the process of nominating the President and Vice President.
Law Number 7 of 2017	General Elections	286 (1-4)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Candidate pairs, candidates for members of the DPR, DPD, provincial DPRD, (and) district/city DPRD, campaign implementers, and/or campaign teams are prohibited from promising and/or giving money or other materials to influence Election Organizers and/or Voters. Candidate's pairs, as well as candidates for members of the DPR, DPD, Provincial DPRD, and Regency/Municipal DPRD who are proven to have committed violations as referred to in paragraph (1) based on the Bawaslu recommendation, may be subject to administrative sanctions of cancellation as candidate pairs as well as candidates for members of DPR, DPD, Provincial DPRD and Regency/Municipal DPRD by the KPU. Violations, as referred to in paragraph (2), are violations that occur in a structured, systematic, and massive manner. Imposing sanctions for violations, as referred to in paragraph (2), does not invalidate criminal sanctions.

Law Number 8 of 2015	Election of Governors, Regents and Mayors	47 (1-6)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Political parties or coalitions of political parties are prohibited from receiving compensation in any form in the process of nominating governors and deputy governors, regents and deputy regents, as well as mayors and deputy mayors. 2. In the event that a political party or coalition of political parties is proven to have received the compensation referred to in paragraph (1), the political party or coalition of political parties concerned is prohibited from nominating candidates for the next period in the same area. 3. Political parties or coalitions of political parties receiving compensation, as referred to in paragraph (2), must be proven by a court decision that has permanent legal force. 4. Every person or institution is prohibited from giving compensation to political parties or a combination of political parties in any form in the process of nominating governors and deputy governors, regents and deputy regents, as well as mayors and deputy mayors. 5. In the event that a court decision that has permanent legal force states that every person or institution is proven to have provided compensation during the nomination process for governor and deputy governor, regent and deputy regent, as well as mayor and deputy mayor, the determination as a candidate, elected pair of candidates, or as governor, deputy governor, regent, deputy regent, mayor or deputy mayor are canceled. 6. Every political party or coalition of political parties proven to have received compensation, as referred to in paragraph (1), will be subject to a fine of 10 (ten) times the value of the compensation received.
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Source: Processed from Law Number 7 in 2017 & Law Number 8 in 2015, 2023.

Existing laws regulate legal sources of funding for political parties, such as membership fees, donations, and state support for political parties. Without strengthening the enforcement of regulations, supervision, and strict sanctions as contained in Law No. 7 of 2017 and Law No. 8 of 2015 (Table 5), it will be very challenging to implement accountability and transparency in political party financing. Moreover, the phenomenon of transactional politics will continue.

The prosecution of transactional politics is often hampered by the difficulty of proving it. As a result, transactional political cases often come and go without being fully explained to the public. In fact, out of several alleged cases of transactional politics, not a single case has been brought to court.

Overall, political parties, the government, and election organizers have a crucial role in reducing high political costs. Political parties and the government can prioritize legal sources of support for political parties, both cash in the form of membership fees, donations, state support, and future, non-cash options. Of course, this must be accompanied by strengthening enforcement of the laws along with promoting accountability and transparency in political parties' financing. The government and election organizers can strengthen the enforcement of strict regulations, supervision, and sanctions to promote the presence of a democratic process in the general elections in Indonesia that is of higher quality and dignity.

C. Encourage Political Competition of Ideas/ Performance

The high political costs in the democratic process in Indonesia are indicative of a lack of program substance and significant performance. The electoral democracy process is solely based on financial capability, resulting in the election of candidates based on their financial status rather than their integrity and quality of ideas and performance. This tendency towards high political costs creates opportunities for the emergence of figures/candidates without integrity and quality.

A successful democratic country meets certain criteria, including opening space for political competition in ideas and performance (Bettiza, G., & Lewis, D., 2020, p. 559). Therefore, political parties must promote candidates with integrity and quality values through their ideas and performance as a form of programmatic politics. Programmatic politics (Sukmajati & Disyacitta, 2019, p. 79) is a strategy to mobilize support in elections by relying on a party's vision, mission, image, and specific political products. Of course, it needs to be accompanied by an electoral democracy process that does not focus on the financial capability of the figures/candidates.

political positioning, in the form of ideas or performance, has a beneficial effect on the voter's final decision (Satriawan, & Purwaningsih, 2021, p. 141). This implies that financial resources are not always the decisive factor in acquiring votes during Indonesia's electoral democratic process.

In the 2019 presidential and vice-presidential general elections, political positioning (figure 4) was effectively used to present the candidates' ideas and performances based on the needs of various political segments. This approach had a positive impact on increasing the votes for both Jokowi and Prabowo, as demonstrated in figure 5 (Satriawan, & Purwaningsih, 2021, p. 141).

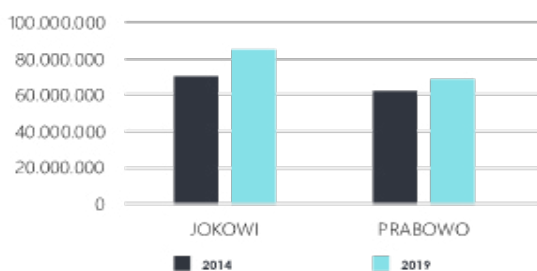


Source: Processed from Satriawan & Purwaningsih, 2021, 2023.

Figure 4. Political Positioning (Political Image and Products) of Participants in the 2019 Presidential and Vice-Presidential General Elections

In the 2019 presidential and vice-presidential general elections, Jokowi-Ma'rif utilized a reinforcement strategy to promote their ideas and performance, highlighting their image and accomplishments in areas such as human resources, infrastructure, investment, economic focus, appropriate targets, and bureaucratic reform. This approach aimed to reinforce Jokowi's achievements from his previous period in office.

Prabowo-Sandiaga presents their ideas and performance through a rationalization strategy, highlighting their political positioning in key areas such as economics, politics, law, defense and security, education, health, culture, and the environment. This tailored strategy addresses the needs of various political segments that they have.



Source: Processed from KPU RI, 2023.

Figure 5. Jokowi and Prabowo's votes in the 2014 and 2019 General Election for President and Vice President

Jokowi received 70.997.833 votes in the 2014 general election for president and vice president, while Prabowo received 62.576.44 votes. Both candidates received more votes in the 2019 election. Jokowi received 85.607.362 votes, and Prabowo received 68.650.239 votes, as shown in (Figure 5). The increase in votes is correlated with political positioning, encompassing their political image and products (Figure 4). This positioning is portrayed as their idea or performance that caters to the diverse needs of various political segments (Satriawan, & Purwaningsih, 2021, p. 141).

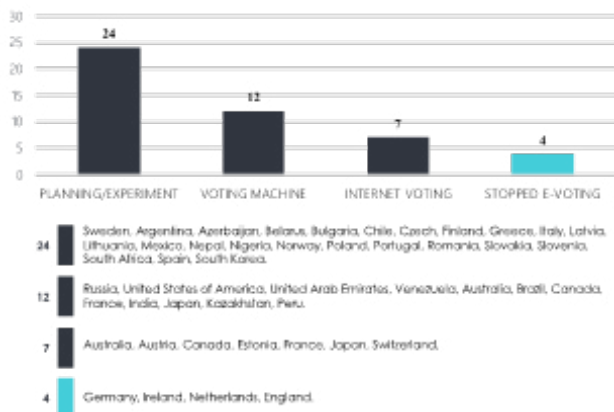
Overall, high political costs and an electoral democratic process based on financial capability, will only deliver those with financial capability and tend to create opportunities for the emergence of figures/candidates without integrity and quality. With an electoral democratic process that is not based on financial capability, political parties need to encourage the presence of figures/candidates who have integrity and quality through their ideas/performance.

Political positioning has a positive impact on increasing the number of votes received by candidates during general elections, demonstrating that financial resources are not the sole determining factor in the electoral democratic process in Indonesia. This can be a solution in reducing the high political costs for figures/candidates and encourage a future era of democracy that is more substantive, high-quality, and dignified and promotes the presence of figures with integrity and quality through their ideas and performance.

D. Encouraging Low Political Costs with Digital Democracy (E-Voting)

The government and election organizers have a crucial role in reducing high political costs, including considering the use of digital democracy through e-voting in the implementation of general elections.

E-voting (electronic voting) is a method for making ballot papers, voting and counting votes, processing digital information in calculating vote results, displaying vote results, and maintaining and producing audit trails in a general election. (Hennen et al., 2020, p. 11; Congge et al., 2023, p. 2; Stoica & Ghilic, 2016, p. 58).



Source: Processed from various sources, 2023.

Figure 6. E-Voting Categories in Various Countries

E-voting is the primary method for elections in many countries worldwide (Tang, 2023, p. 2). At the time of this study, 47 countries have adopted e-voting in elections (figure 6). There are four categories: (1) 24 countries are in the planning and trial stage of e-voting; (2) 12 countries use voting machines to implement e-voting; (3) 7 countries use internet voting to implement e-voting; and (4) 4 countries have stopped implementing e-voting

Table 6. Implementation of E-Voting in Several Countries

COUNTRY	METHOD	BENEFIT	CHALLENGE
USA	Direct Recording Electronic (DRE)	Low costs, fast accurate, transparent, minimizing the occurrence of human error cases.	Confidentiality and data security (fraud).
Russia	Remote Election Voting and Internet Voting	Low costs, fast-accurate, transparent, minimizing the occurrence of human error cases.	Confidentiality and data security (fraud).
Belgium	Smart Cards and Touch-Screen Computer	Low costs, fast accurate, transparent, minimizing the occurrence of human error cases.	Confidentiality and data security (fraud).
Netherlands	Smart Cards and Touch-Screen Computer	Low costs, fast-accurate, transparent, minimizing the occurrence of human error cases.	Confidentiality and data security (fraud).
Sweden	Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) and Internet Voting	Low costs, fast-accurate, transparent, minimizing the occurrence of human error cases.	Confidentiality and data security (fraud).

Australia	Internet Voting	Low costs, fast-accurate, transparent, minimizing the occurrence of human error cases.	Confidentiality and data security (fraud).
Canada	Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) and Internet Voting	Low costs, fast-accurate, transparent, minimizing the occurrence of human error cases.	Confidentiality and data security (fraud).
France	Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) and Internet Voting	Low costs, fast-accurate, transparent, minimizing the occurrence of human error cases.	Confidentiality and data security (fraud).
Japan	Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) and Internet Voting	Low costs, fast-accurate, transparent, minimizing the occurrence of human error cases.	Confidentiality and data security (fraud).
India	Electronic Voting Machine (EVM)	Low costs, fast-accurate, transparent, minimizing the occurrence of human error cases.	Confidentiality and data security (fraud).

Source: Processed from various sources, 2023.

The analysis of e-voting implementation in various countries (table 6) leads to the conclusion that e-voting significantly reduces election costs. This finding is consistent with previous research by Goodman and Stokes (Goodman & Stokes, 2020, p. 1164). The e-voting not only provides benefits such as improved speed, accuracy, and transparency but also minimizes human error. However, it is important to be prepared for potential challenges, such as maintaining data confidentiality and security, as well as guarding against fraud in data manipulation.

In Brazil, for example (Figure 6), the use of DRE (Direct Recording Electronic) type e-voting machines without VVPAT (Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail) has raised significant concerns about the credibility of election results (Perludem, 2020). Thus, to successfully implement digital democracy through e-voting in Indonesia, it is crucial to consider factors such as facility and infrastructure readiness, data confidentiality and security, human resource capabilities, and regulatory and budgetary support.

Digital democracy through e-voting is a viable solution to address the high cost of the electoral process in Indonesia and should be considered for future general elections. As stated by General (Ret.) Prof. Drs. H. Muhammad Tito Karnavian, B.A., M.A., Ph.D. (Minister of Home Affairs), that:

“To prevent general election issues with high political costs, it is necessary to implement an e-voting system in the upcoming general elections, to be able to reduce high political costs” (Delivered at Discussion on the Urgency of Realizing Democratic and Quality Regional Elections 2020, 09/03/2020) (Kompas, 2020).

Considering the significant benefits of implementing e-voting in general elections, particularly in reducing high political costs, the application of digital democracy through e-voting in general elections in Indonesia is an important option for future consideration for the government and election organizers. However, the readiness of facilities and infrastructure, aspects of data confidentiality and security, human resource capabilities, as well as support from regulatory bodies, and budgetary considerations should be taken into account. E Voting is a viable solution, especially in reducing the high political costs associated with organizing elections.

High political costs are the starting point for transactional politics and corruption to occur, which has implications for the degradation of democratic values and can cause democratic disruption in Indonesia. Political parties, governments, and general election organizers must work together to fight this phenomenon and prevent democratic disruption.

IV. Conclusion

The prevalence of transactional politics and corruption in Indonesia can be attributed to high political costs. These costs, in turn, have contributed to the deterioration of democratic values in Indonesia.

These costs include high campaign and logistics expenses, witness costs, expensive political surveys and consultants, political dowries within political parties, and weak law enforcement. Political candidates often resort to illegal methods to finance their campaigns due to the high costs involved. These methods include transactional politics and corruption while in office.

High political costs and the electoral democratic process based on financial capability create opportunities for the emergence of

candidates who do not prioritize integrity and quality in their ideas and performance.

Promoting the presence of candidates who demonstrate integrity and quality through their ideas and performance is crucial. Political positioning, through political image and products offered based on the needs of various political segments, has shown a positive impact on the number of votes received by candidates in general elections. This indicates that financial capability is not the sole determining factor in acquiring votes during the democratic electoral process in Indonesia.

Implementing e-voting in general elections has significant advantages, particularly in reducing high political costs. Therefore, the application of digital democracy through e-voting in general elections in Indonesia should be considered by the government and election organizers. This is subject to the availability of necessary facilities and infrastructure, data confidentiality and security safeguards, human resource capabilities, as well as regulatory and budgetary support.

For a future era of democracy that is more substantive, have a better quality, and dignified, solutions that can be offered to political parties, the government, and election organizers are:

1. (1) Political parties and the government must promote the optimization of legal sources of political party funding assistance, both in cash and non-cash options, while ensuring accountability and transparency.
2. (2) The government and election organizers must enforce regulations, provide supervision, and impose strict sanctions on political party funding.
3. (3) Political parties must prioritize selecting candidates based on their integrity and values rather than their financial capabilities, supported by an electoral democracy process that is not based on financial capability
4. (4) The Indonesian government and election organizers should implement e-voting for future elections to promote digital democracy.

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