



Bawaslu's Strategy in Preventing Ballot Counting Violations in the 2024 DPRD Election Stages in Lahat Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the strategies implemented by the Election Supervisory Body BAWASLU of Lahat Regency to prevent violations during the vote-counting stage in the 2024 Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) Election. The focus of the research is to identify potential forms of vote-counting violations and evaluate the effectiveness of Bawaslu's preventive strategies in ensuring the integrity and transparency of election results. This research employs a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. Data were collected through field observations, in-depth interviews with Bawaslu officials, and documentation. The data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results indicate that Bawaslu of Lahat Regency has implemented several preventive strategies, such as monitoring patrols, public engagement through outreach and participatory supervision, and the use of digital tools like Siwaslu and Sirekap applications. However, the implementation faces challenges such as limited human resources, uneven public awareness, and technical issues in operating digital systems. The evaluation suggests the need for improved inter-agency coordination and strengthened capacity of field supervisors. In conclusion, Bawaslu's preventive strategies have been relatively effective, yet they require further enhancement, especially in officer training, technology optimization, and public awareness campaigns. The study recommends Bawaslu to intensify civic education, improve collaboration with law enforcement, and develop technology-based monitoring systems to ensure fair, honest, and transparent elections.

INTRODUCTION

Elections are one of the main pillars in the democratic system that ensures people's representation in government. However, in its implementation, various challenges often arise, especially in the vote counting stage. This stage is very vulnerable because it determines the final outcome of the election process. The General Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) has a strategic role in ensuring that the vote count runs in accordance with the principles of honesty, fairness, transparency, and free from violations. In Lahat Regency, the strategy to prevent vote counting violations is the main focus of Bawaslu to ensure the integrity of election results.

According to Rahmat Bagja, Chairman of the Indonesian Bawaslu, in the 2024 Election there were 19 problems that included the voting and vote counting stages. Of these, six of them occurred at the vote counting stage, including the inaccessibility of the Recapitulation Information System (Sirekap) in 11,233 places

Prevention of violations is also carried out in collaboration with the security forces. The Lahat Police, for example, plays a role in maintaining order during the vote counting process to prevent conflicts at the polling station and sub-district levels. Studies from Norris (2014) shows that safe and orderly elections can minimize pressure on election organizers in carrying out their duties independently and professionally. However, the main challenge that is still faced is the lack of awareness among some people about the importance of election supervision. In several polling stations in Lahat Regency, there are still indications of

voters who do not understand their rights and obligations in ensuring the transparency of vote counting. Therefore, further socialization is needed regarding the importance of participatory supervision as part of the violation prevention strategy.

With various strategies that have been implemented, the next step that needs to be taken by the Lahat Regency Bawaslu is to strengthen coordination with various stakeholders, including election organizers, election participants, and the wider community. As affirmed by (Constitutional Court, 2024), the validity of the election results is highly dependent on a transparent and accountable process. Therefore, efforts to increase supervisory capacity and optimize supervisory technology must be the top priority in maintaining the integrity of elections in Lahat Regency.

In the research (Rio Ranbila) the strategy carried out by the Bogor Regency Bawaslu in 2024 is to carry out socialization in various government agencies, the private sector, academics, and the community, whether they are members of organizations or not. Visiting all political parties in Bogor Regency to convey information about the prohibition on holding elections. Carry out patrols related to the practice of money politics. In addition, forming and developing participatory supervisory cadres and establishing participatory villages. With this strategy, the Bogor Regency Bawaslu aims to reduce election violations, especially the criminal act of the 2024 Election (Rio Ranbila). Another research conducted by the Lampung Provincial Bawaslu Bawaslu has established partnerships with JMSI, Netfid, and educational institutions to reduce violations on social media. SKPP (Participatory Supervision Cadre School) was established to train the younger generation in providing education to the community. In addition, forums such as the Participatory Supervision Digital Community were also formed, and Bawaslu actively created educational content on social media (Farel Pramudyo Duto). Based on the above research, the author is interested in researching strategies for preventing ballot counting violations in the 2024 Election Stages in Lahat Regency.

The implementation of this PSU occurred in the Lahat IV Constituency, which includes several villages in Tanjung Sakti Pumi and Tanjung Sakti Pumu Districts. Based on the search results, there are six Polling Stations (TPS) designated for PSUs because of the discrepancy between the C.Results and D.Results forms. This difference in votes is considered significant and has the potential to change the results of obtaining seats. The data on the difference in ballots is presented in the following table:

Table 1. Table of Ballot Differences for the 2024 Election Tanjung Tebat District

No.	TPS	Village/Village	Dapil	Legitimate Voice	Invalid Votes
1	TPS1	Tanjung Kurung Ilir	All IV	191	9
2	TPS 1	Tanjung Kurung Ulu	All IV	185	7
3	TPS 2	Tanjung Kurung Ulu	All IV	191	9
4	TPS 2	Cape Win	All IV	231	9
5	TPS 1	Padang Perigi	All IV	222	18
6	TPS 2	Padang Perigi	All IV	242	2

Source : Bawaslu of Lahat Regency, 2024)

The data indicates that potential violations in the form of differences in the results of vote counting are not only caused by technical factors, but also due to weak supervision and unpreparedness of election resources in the field. Therefore, the violation prevention strategy must be directed not only to technical aspects such as the use of technology, but also to mapping vulnerable polling stations in each sub-district, as well as strengthening the capacity of human resources of organizers and supervisors at the lower levels.

In addition to the difference in vote results between polling stations identified in Table 1.1, it was also found that there were differences in the results of votes obtained between political parties submitted as disputes at the Constitutional Court. The following table 1.2 illustrates the data on the dispute over votes between the respondent's version (KPU) and the applicant's version (the Applicant's Political Party) which is the basis for the argument for the 2024 Election dispute in Lahat Dapil IV Regency:

Table 2 Data Ballot disputes

Yes	Political parties	Procurement	Sound	Differences
		Respondent's version	Applicant's version	
1.	PKB	1,464	1,464	-
2.	GERINDRA	3,625	3,625	-
3.	PDIP	5,662	5,326	336

4.	GOLKAR	8,893	8,893	-
5.	NasDem	2,649	3007	358
6.	LABOR	31	31	-
7.	The Indonesian People's Movement	64	64	-
8.	SMEs	966	944	22
9.	PKN	14	14	-
10	Hanura	17	78	-
11.	Indonesian National Guard	39	39	-
12	PAN	189	189	-
13	United Nations	16	16	-
14	Democrats	6,846	6,846	-
15	PPP	183	183	-
16	Ummat Party	2,202	2,202	-

Source : Bawaslu of Lahat Regency, 2024)

Overall, the prevention strategy implemented by Bawaslu in supervising the vote count in the 2024 Election in Lahat Regency is an important step in maintaining a healthy democracy. By combining a technological approach, community participation, and cooperation with the security forces, it is hoped that potential violations can be minimized. However, challenges in the implementation of this policy still need to be overcome so that future elections will be cleaner, more transparent, and trusted by the public.

RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach. This approach is based on theoretical frameworks, expert ideas, or researchers' understanding based on experience. This research was developed to identify problems and solutions to obtain accurate empirical data. Qualitative methods are chosen because they are considered appropriate for understanding various social conditions in depth, finding patterns, hypotheses, and theories (Last, 2022). Researchers are the main instrument in this study, which must be able to adapt to the research environment. Researchers who use this method must have extensive knowledge and be able to conduct direct interviews, analyses, and construct research objects clearly (Rukin, 2019). This study aims to in-depth observe the strategy for preventing violations of ballot counting in the 2024 election stages in Lahat Regency

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of observations made by researchers at the Lahat Regency Bawaslu Office and supervision activities in the field, it was found that the process of formulating the supervision strategy was carried out systematically and based on factual conditions. The researcher noted that the Lahat Regency Bawaslu had held several internal coordination meetings to discuss the results of the evaluation of previous election supervision. The meeting became the main forum in formulating strategic steps to anticipate potential violations in the upcoming elections.

In addition, the researcher also observed that the Lahat Regency Bawaslu actively utilizes mapping data on areas prone to election violations which is displayed in the form of vulnerability maps in the data center room. The map shows the level of vulnerability based on indicators such as money politics, civil servant neutrality, and administrative violations by election participants. This data is the main reference in determining the areas that receive priority supervision.

In a socialization activity carried out in one of the sub-districts, the researcher noted that Bawaslu members delivered participatory supervision material to the community. The material was delivered in easy-to-understand language, accompanied by case studies of violations that had occurred in Lahat Regency. This activity is part of the violation prevention strategy implemented through an educational approach.

Observations were also made on the training activities given to Panwascam and PKD. The researcher saw that the training was held in a structured manner, with speakers coming from academics, election law practitioners, and the police. The training material includes understanding laws and regulations, procedures for handling violations, and reporting the results of supervision through a digital system.

The researcher also found that the existence of the Gagundu Forum plays an important role in building communication between agencies. One of the concrete evidence is the existence of the minutes of the coordination meeting between Bawaslu, the Police, the Prosecutor's Office, and the Regional Government which shows collaborative efforts in following up on the findings of supervision. This forum is considered to be an integral part of the formulation of strategies that are not only internally oriented, but also involve other stakeholders.

Observations of the public complaint room show that Bawaslu has provided fairly representative service facilities, including picket officers and reporting forms. This reflects Bawaslu's readiness to follow up on community reports as part of an integrated supervision system. This reporting system is integrated with the Gowaslu application, which is also observed to function actively in recording complaints and their follow-up.

During the observation, the researcher also noted that the surveillance strategy at the village level encountered several obstacles, especially in terms of limited human resources and difficult geographical terrain. Several PKDs said that the need for transportation and technological devices is the main challenge in supervision in remote areas. This obstacle has been noted by Bawaslu and is part of the region-based strategy adjustment plan.

Finally, the researcher noted that the strategy that has been formulated by the Lahat Regency Bawaslu is not static. Each stage of the election is evaluated through daily and weekly reports from the ranks of supervisors at the sub-district level. This shows that strategy formulation is dynamic and able to adapt to conditions in the field. The data obtained from this observation strengthens the finding that the strategy formulation process at Bawaslu Lahat has been carried out with a participatory, adaptive, and evidence-based approach.

Based on the results of observations conducted at the Lahat Regency Bawaslu Office and several locations of supervision activities, the researcher found that the formulation of the supervision strategy was carried out systematically and based on data. Bawaslu Lahat holds regular internal coordination meetings aimed at evaluating the implementation of previous election supervision and developing new strategies that are more adaptive. This is in accordance with the opinion of Bryson (2021) who states that a good strategy must be built through a systematic and analytical thinking process, which considers existing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Furthermore, the researcher observed the use of election vulnerability maps as a reference in determining priority areas for supervision. The map is compiled based on certain indicators such as money politics, ASN neutrality, and potential administrative violations. This supports the view of Wheelen and Hunger (2022), who stated that the strategy formulation process must begin with the identification of external and internal factors that can affect the achievement of organizational goals.

Socialization activities to the community are also an important part of the supervision strategy. In this activity, Bawaslu delivered participatory supervision material in an educational manner. This is in line with the opinion of Mintzberg et al. (2020) who stated that strategies are not only formed deliberatively by organizations, but also arise from patterns of actions that develop through interaction with the environment, including through public education.

The researcher also noted training for Panwascam and PKD as part of efforts to strengthen the capacity of field supervisors. The training includes election law materials, supervision techniques, and the use of reporting applications. This activity is in line with the theory of Human Capital put forward by Becker (2020), which states that increasing knowledge and

The skills of the apparatus will have a direct impact on the effectiveness of the organization.

In addition, through observations of the Gagundu Forum, researchers found that cross-sector collaboration (Bawaslu, police, prosecutor's office, and local government) has become part of the formulation of supervision strategies. This is in accordance with the concept of Collaborative Governance by Ansell and Gash (2019), who explain that strategic decision-making involving many actors will increase the legitimacy and effectiveness of public policies.

On the other hand, the provision of public complaint services was also observed to have gone quite well. Bawaslu provides picket officers and an integrated reporting system through the Gowaslu application. This supports the management information system theory put forward by Laudon and Laudon (2020), that information-based digital systems can accelerate the process of appropriate and accountable decision-making in organizations.

However, in the observation of the village area, several obstacles were found in the implementation of the supervision strategy. PKD faces geographical obstacles and limited technological facilities. These findings reinforce the statement of Robbins and Coulter (2016) that organizational strategies need to be adapted to the external environment and available resources in order to be implemented effectively.

However, the researcher noted that the Lahat Regency Bawaslu has conducted a routine evaluation of the strategy implemented. This shows that the strategy formulation process is dynamic and responsive to factual conditions. Argyris (2018) in his theory of double-loop learning explains that organizations that are able to correct strategies based on the results of field evaluations show the characteristics of learning organizations.

Furthermore, the researcher sees that the approach used by the Lahat Regency Bawaslu in developing a supervision strategy is not only top-down, but also bottom-up, by paying attention to input from the field supervisors. According to Drucker (2020), an effective strategy is one that takes into account input from the operational level, since they are the ones who interact directly with the reality on the ground.

Thus, based on the results of field observations attributed to various expert opinions, it can be concluded that the formulation of the supervision strategy by the Lahat Regency Bawaslu has met the principles

strategic in public organizations. A systematic, data-based, collaborative, and responsive approach to field challenges is a strong indicator that the formulated strategy has the right direction in democratic and integrity election supervision.

CONCLUSION

Adaptive and Collaborative Strategy Formulation

The supervision strategy prepared by the Lahat Regency Bawaslu has been designed through a collaborative approach involving various stakeholders, such as the KPU, TNI/Polri, local governments, NGOs, the media, and the community. This formulation process pays attention to the evaluation of previous elections, mapping of vulnerable areas, and the social and geographical dynamics of the region. The Gagundu Forum is a concrete form of inter-institutional synergy in designing a more responsive supervision strategy.

Implementation of Supervision by PTPS as the Spearhead

Polling Station Supervisors (PTPS) play a crucial role in executing strategies at the field level. They supervise the entire voting process to the counting of votes, record the findings of violations, and submit reports in stages. Open recruitment, technical training, and the use of tools such as the Model C form and the Siwasli S-Recap application support the effectiveness of PTPS tasks. However, challenges such as limited access, logistics, and time pressures remain obstacles that need to be overcome.

SUGGESTIONS

Continuous Capacity Building of PTPS

Bawaslu needs to organize more intensive and applicable training for PTPS, especially in the technical aspects of monitoring vote counting, using digital applications, and reporting violations quickly and accurately.

Optimizing the Use of Siwaslu and S-Recap Applications

Supporting infrastructure such as internet networks, technical training, and other technological support needs to be improved so that the Siwaslu application can be optimally utilized by supervisors in the field for real-time reporting.

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