

General Election Commission (KPU) of Makassar Efforts to Encourage Community Participation in the 2018 Regional Elections

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Abstract

This research aims to examine and describe the efforts of the Makassar City KPU in encouraging community participation in the implementation of the 2018 regional elections. This type of research uses qualitative descriptive research by determining the number of informants consisting of 9 informants selected using purposive sampling technique. The data collection techniques used were observation, interviews and documentation. The data analysis technique used by researchers goes through three work stages, namely data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The research results show that the KPU's efforts to encourage public participation in the 2018 regional elections include: a) carrying out regional elections professionally without black campaigns and the practice of money politics by ensuring that every citizen has the same rights and opportunities to participate in the regional election process, b) increasing voter participation by providing healthy political education by increasing public knowledge so that they can participate optimally in the regional election process, c) Transparency in the implementation of regional elections by providing information that is easily accessible, involving the public in decision making, using information technology, enforcing clear rules and sanctions, and involving independent supervision from supervisory institutions and civil society.

Keywords: *KPU Efforts, Voter Participation, Makassar City Pilkada*

INTRODUCTION

General elections and local elections are carried out in the framework of realizing people's sovereignty as well as implementing democratic principles or values, increasing people's political awareness to actively participate in elections and regional elections. Voters are the main supporters who are very important in every election, one of the parameters of a democratic election is the presence of an increasingly plural voter component (Rismawati & Mardiana, 2018). Every voter in the General Election or Regional Head Election cannot be separated from a political or sociological background, so this greatly influences their choice, this is what is called voting behavior or voter behavior (Amir & Sastrawati, 2019). The concept of regional elections in a democratic system departs from the sovereignty of the people which is referred to as the people's agreement.

The KPU is an election organizing institution that is guaranteed and protected by the 1945 Constitution, and is therefore categorized as a state institution that has what is called constitutional importance (Asshiddiqie, 2006: 23). As an important institution, the KPU is regulated in article 22E paragraph (5) of the 1945 Constitution which is stated to be national, permanent and independent (independent) whose institutional level is the same as other state institutions established by law.

Independence does not simply mean being independent, free, impartial, or not taking sides with individuals, groups or organizations with any interests, or not being dependent or influenced. Independence also means strength, paradigm, ethics and spirit to guarantee that the process and results of elections reflect the interests of the people, nation and state, now and in the future (Iskandar, Amir, & Kasim, 2023).

This relatively independent nature has been described in several articles in UU No. 22 of 2007 which is the legal framework for the three independent aspects referred to. The structural independence emphasized in the 1945 Constitution above, has also been relatively guaranteed by Law no. 22 of 2007 into several articles. First, in Article 15 paragraph (3) which states that the KPU, in carrying out its duties, submits reports during the election implementation stage to the President and DPR. The report referred to in this article does not mean accountability, but rather provides information to relevant state institutions. Second, in Article 16 paragraph (3) which states that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman are elected from and by the members. So it is not determined or appointed by other institutions (Amane et al., 2024).

In Article 22E paragraph (5) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, it is stipulated that "General elections shall be held by a General Election Commission which is national, permanent and independent". by the government. This provision is the basis that the government is independent from the KPU which is tasked with organizing elections as an independent organ in its performance.

Integrity, Neutrality and Independence are parts that cannot be separated and are interrelated with each other and are the main supporting factors in making each stage of the general election a success. So, every member and head of sub-

divisions is recommended to have an attitude of Integrity which is a concept in showing consistency between actions with values and principles (Sriwahyuni, Salemuddin, 2023). And the attitude of Neutrality, is a concept that shows the attitude and legality of a body or individual, which includes the rights and obligations in carrying out these duties and authorities. And finally, the attitude of independence that must be possessed by every member and leader of the Regency/Municipal KPUK, is a condition or position where an agency or individual is not bound by any party, meaning that the existence of an agency or individual is independent in carrying out its duties and authority.

The choice of the Regency/City KPU as an independent organizer is intended not only for efficiency and professionalism. However, the most basic thing is within the framework of creating more independence and impartiality. What is meant by independent and impartial is that in holding elections for regional heads and deputy regional heads, organizers and all related implementers are not under the control of a group, candidate pair or campaign team, political party, regional government and DPRD but are fully based on statutory regulations. and a Code of Ethics for Election Implementers which is enforced objectively and professionally (Nur, 2023).

Makassar City is one of the regions that held the General Election for Regional Heads in 2018. In its implementation, it was organized by the Makassar City KPU. In the process, each candidate pair carried out each stage of the regional election implementation smoothly in accordance with the event agenda managed by the KPU as the organizer. Starting from registration, verification of candidate pairs, determination of candidate pairs, drawing of numbers. sequence, campaign period, quiet period, until the election or voting.

The Makassar City KPU is an institution that has the task of organizing general election in the Makassar City area in accordance with the duties and authorities stipulated by law. In this regard, the effectiveness of the Makassar City KPU greatly influences how this institution can carry out its duties and authority optimally in holding regional elections. The city of Makassar itself is one of the regions that holds elections in its region in order to elect the Governor and Deputy Governor as well as the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, to be precise on June 27 2018. One of the benchmarks that can measure the success or failure of holding elections is the level of public participation in the elections. Therefore, the KPU plays an important role in the success of the 2018 simultaneous regional elections in Makassar City.

However, the implementation of the 2018 simultaneous regional elections in Makassar City was still not optimally successful, this can be seen in the failure to achieve the nominal voter participation limit as set by the central KPU, namely 75% participation in the regional elections held in Makassar City which only reached 59% in 2018 (KPU, 2018) . The failure to reach the nominal limit for voter participation in the 2018 Pilkada in Makassar City could be caused by several factors such as a lack of effective socialization regarding the importance of participating in election, some people who do not have a high interest or interest in politics, including in

terms of mayoral elections, and the existence of local political traditions that influence voter participation. For example, some people are not very participate in elections because they feel that the results have been determined by the dominant political forces, this can also cause low participation in the Pilkada in Makassar City.

Therefore, it is necessary to make efforts to increase the voter participation rate which of course cannot be separated from efforts to attract community participation, so the Makassar City KPU needs to make efforts to increase community participation in the Makassar City Pilkada. Because, in the implementation of the Regional Election, it is not only limited to the existing laws and regulations, but also the involvement or efforts of the KPU so that the public feels that their right to vote is protected and to avoid people not voting (abstention). On this basis, researchers are interested in conducting research to explore the KPU's efforts to encourage community participation in the 2018 regional elections in Makassar City.

METHOD

This type of research is qualitative descriptive research which aims to describe in depth the efforts of the Makassar City KPU in encouraging community participation in the implementation of the 2018 regional elections. This research was carried out at the Makassar City KPU Office. The research targets were the chairman of the Makassar City KPU and his staff, community leaders, academics, politicians and the Makassar City government, totaling 9 informants.

Apart from that, the selection of informants in this research also used a purposive sampling technique. In this research, researchers used several data collection techniques, namely, observation, interviews and documentation. Data analysis techniques consist of three components, namely data collection, data reduction, and drawing conclusions (Sarmila et al., 2023; Leo et al., 2024). This research uses source triangulation, where the data that has been collected is then linked to theories related to the research object (Hasyim, 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the findings of researchers in the field, researchers can describe several roles of the Makassar City General Election Commission (KPU) in the implementation of the 2018 Regional Elections in Makassar City, including the following:

1. Carrying out regional election professionally without black campaigns and money politics practices.

The democratic system that we follow provides space for the Indonesian people to contribute to the progress of the country. This contribution can be made in various forms, one of which is when every person has the right to vote and be elected. The right to vote is a basic right of every individual or citizen which must be guaranteed by the state. Provisions regarding this are regulated in Article 1 paragraph (2),

Article 2 paragraph (1), Article 6A paragraph (1), Article 19 paragraph (1) and Article 22C paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution. So, every people has the same right to elect their leader before the law. As stated by Mr. M. Farid Wadji as Chairman of the Makassar City KPU, who said that:

"In protecting the voting rights of Makassar City residents, as stated in a number of articles it is very clear that discrimination regarding race, wealth, religion and ancestry is not justified. The provisions of the 1945 Constitution above direct that the state must fulfill all forms of human rights of every citizen, especially with regard to the right to vote for every citizen in general elections. This encourages us as an institution that plays a role in running the democratic party to ensure that no Makassar City citizen has the right to vote, does not come to the polling station to elect a candidate for leadership, and we open space for all Makassar City residents to determine their choice, because limiting citizens' voting rights is a form of human rights violation."

A similar thing was expressed by Mr. Abd. Rahman as a member of the Makassar City KPU who is in charge of the legal and supervisory division who said that:

"Regarding the political rights of the citizens of Makassar City, we as the organizers really protect them, where we are based on the 1945 Constitution, for example in Article 25 that every citizen must have the same rights and opportunities without any distinction whatsoever and without unreasonable restrictions to participate in carrying out all public affairs, either individually or through randomly elected representatives. free, further to choose and be elected in free elections and with equal and universal suffrage and held through the issuance of a written and secret ballot which guarantees voters to express their will freely, and to obtain public services in their own country generally on an equal basis. This provision seems to confirm to us that political rights, voting and being elected are human rights, so that we as the KPU who play a role in this matter always protect and guarantee the voting rights of Makassar City residents in the democratic party."

Based on the results of interviews with the chairman of the Makassar City KPU and members of the legal and supervisory division which revealed that in fulfilling the human rights of every citizen of Makassar City in the 2018 regional elections, the KPU ensures that the involvement of citizens in voting or voting (right to vote) is a basic right of every individual or citizen which must be guaranteed to be fulfilled by the Makassar City KPU, without limiting their human rights and freely to vote in accordance with their political beliefs based on equal rights through direct, public, free, secret, honest and fair voting in accordance with the provisions of the laws and regulations in force in Indonesia.

Furthermore, the provisions of Article 515 of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections also state that every person who deliberately during voting promises or gives money or other materials to voters so that they do not exercise their right to vote or elect certain election participants or use their right to vote in a certain way so that their ballot is invalid. , shall be sentenced to imprisonment for a

maximum of 3 (three) years and a fine of a maximum of IDR 36 million. And Article 523 which states that every implementer, participant and/or Election Campaign Team who deliberately promises or gives money or other materials as compensation to Election Campaign participants directly or indirectly, whether during the quiet period or on voting day, shall be sentenced to imprisonment for a maximum of 4 (years) years. fined up to IDR 48 million. As stated by Mr. Abd. Rahman as a member of the Makassar City KPU in charge of the legal and supervisory division stated that:

"As a member of the Makassar City KPU who is in charge of the legal and supervisory division, we always supervise the honest and fair post-conflict regional election process without black campaigns and money politics practices and if there is a violation, and we have strong evidence, we welcome you to report it to the supervisory body or supervisory committee. as the party who has the authority to handle violations in elections. And if we think there is a violation that is criminal in nature, we always coordinate with the police to be ready to handle it. In essence, legal channels are available, if there is dissatisfaction with the implementation of the election. If you are not satisfied with the election results, please sue the Constitutional Court, do not use channels that violate the rules."

Based on the views of several informants above, it can be concluded that the role of the KPU is in encouraging the prevention of black campaigns and the practice of money politics by preventing the practice of money politics through political education with the concept of preventive efforts. This concept is in the form of initial efforts by carrying out awareness efforts for the community through political literacy or providing political socialization information related to understanding anti-money politics by collaborating with all stakeholders who are concerned with democracy such as the Makassar City Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), NGOs, universities, community leaders, and actors. local community.

2. Increase voter participation in Makassar City by providing healthy political education.

One of the factors that influences community political participation is the role of the General Election Commission (KPU) in socializing the operation of the general election system, be it presidential elections or regional head elections. The KPU plays a very important role in a country in realizing democracy, especially in Indonesia. As stated by Mr. M. Gunawan Mashar as a member of the Makassar City KPU who is in charge of the technical division of election organizers who stated that:

"In encouraging increased public participation in elections and elections up to regional head elections, especially in Makassar City, the KPU also carries out accurate voter data collection, also collaborates with parties in socializing and providing intensive voter education to specific groups, collaborating and coordinating with the government and related stakeholders both central and regional and to the community to increase voter participation."

A similar statement was expressed by Mrs. Endang Sari as a member of the Makassar City KPU who is in charge of the division of socialization, voter education, human resources, community participation, who stated that:

"The KPU has a very important role in every election and regional election process, one of which is increasing voter participation. And in the 2018 Regional Election, it was carried out in several ways by the KPU and this must be able to sensitize every individual in the community to participate in casting their vote. The KPU as an independent institution which is responsible for the implementation of each stage of the general election must strive to increase the legal awareness of the community, and provide an understanding of their rights and obligations as citizens in the implementation of the general election. Efforts that can be made are by increasing socialization regarding the implementation of the election, common at all levels. This socialization is primarily aimed at parties directly involved in the general election process, for example political parties participating in the election, organizations that monitor election activities and in general, socialization must be conveyed to all levels of society, especially those who have the right to vote or be elected. With several methods of socialization such as mapping socialization areas, involving religious institutions in socialization, involving community organizational structures in socialization, involving PPK, PPS and KPPS members in voter socialization activities, involving mainstream media (print, online, etc.) in socialization activities, meeting directly with the community and community leaders in socialization activities, and building volunteers in socialization activities. "This aims to increase voter participation, even though in the 2018 Regional Election there was only one candidate pair facing an empty box, but we always take several methods as stated above to increase voter participation."

Socialization is carried out not only in one particular group of society but can be carried out at every level of society, regardless of gender, age or level of education. A high level of education does not mean that the community has a high awareness of their political participation in choosing leaders. No exception to political parties, the KPU also carries out outreach to political parties to inform or guide them in the nomination system which can change at any time. As stated by Mr. Muh. Ansar Mangopo as regional secretary of Makassar City said that:

"In conducting outreach to increase voter participation in Makassar City, the KPU must be able to dialogue using polite language, and can be understood by various groups. Apart from that, the KPU can carry out outreach activities through mass media, democracy volunteers and various ways that can attract public attention, so I am sure that voter participation in Makassar City, especially in the Wali Election, will increase."

Based on the statements of several informants above, it can be concluded that the role of the Makassar City KPU is in increasing voter participation through improving the performance of election organizers by raising awareness of the importance of

community participation in organizing elections and efforts to increase voter participation and socialize the importance of community participation in the Regional Election.

This political education aims to ensure that the community is developed and able to develop knowledge in good political life. The important role of the community is a reason for carrying out this political education. Because in this national life it is the community that participates in the exercise of the rights and obligations of citizens. Especially for new voters, political education can shape leadership character. Furthermore, Mr. Abd. Rahman Jamaluddin as Academician, who stated that:

"This political education plays a role in making society more aware of the values of a good political system, so that society can become its own entity which is free and autonomous and has or has the ability and authority to determine various social, cultural and political decisions, and this political education needs to be sustainable in carrying out its implementation so that "The public can continue to improve their understanding of the world of politics, which is always experiencing development. The implementation of voter education aims to increase voter participation and increase political literacy in voter education."

Based on the views of several informants above, it can be concluded that the role of the KPU is in encouraging and providing political education which is able to enable someone to assume responsibility despite changes in attitudes towards participation in the world of politics and healthy political education which upholds the values of honesty, where the direction of political education can direct society towards transparency and openness and freedom.

3. Transparency in the Implementation of Regional Elections in Makassar City.

Makassar City KPU strives to maximize advances in information technology at every stage. Information Technology is an important factor in ensuring that the Election and Election stages are an effective, efficient and transparent working mechanism. As stated by Mr. M. Gunawan Mashar as a member of the Makassar City KPU who is in charge of the technical division of election organizers who stated that:

"We have to appear more informative and must not be inferior to the hoax makers, with information too, of course with more informative, valid and accurate packaging from official sources. If information is not updated consistently and continuously, there is a gap that has the potential for hoaxes to emerge which is very large. As the saying goes, once you row, you can reach two or three islands. Information penetration efforts carried out by the Makassar City KPU also have educational value. Even though we both know that the 2018 Regional Election made the mayoral election in Makassar City the first to occur, namely the disqualification of one of the candidate pairs, and at that time it was only filled by a single candidate, this is certainly a lot of information circulating among Makassar City residents that is negative in nature, such as interference from other parties. KPU, there is even news circulating that the KPU is not neutral, but we dispel all of this news with more

educative news from more trusted sources. And thank God, everything went well and the people of Makassar city were very satisfied with the democratic party at that time even though it was won by an empty city."

Based on the statements of several informants above, it can be concluded that the role of the Makassar City KPU in utilizing information technology towards transparent post-conflict local elections and equitable and fair information without fake news (hoaxes) by appearing more informative and not inferior to hoax makers must be with information too, of course with more informative packaging, valid and accurate from official sources which have been presented on the PPID website which is an online-based public information service of the Makassar City KPU.

Organizing elections with integrity means containing elements of organizers who are honest, transparent, accountable, careful and accurate in carrying out their duties and authority. Neutrality is an important thing that regional election organizers must have. Neutral means not taking sides towards one of the contestants. Neutrality means that election organizing institutions must not submit to directions from any party, whether the authorities or political parties. As stated by Mr. Abd. Rahman as a member of the Makassar City KPU who is in charge of the legal and supervision division, who stated that:

"As an institution born from the womb of the law, the KPU is an institution that has the authority to carry out the mandate of the law as the organizer of general elections at both the national and regional levels. The mechanism of the organizing process is also regulated in detail by the Election Law. As the organizer of elections or local elections, the KPU is often in the public spotlight, not because of its authority which is legitimized by law but rather its integrity in its duties and roles up to the stage of processing the vote count. The KPU's decisions often become polemics for the candidate participants, especially those who "lose" in the race, and the main target is the KPU to provide clarification on the decision. that it produces."

Based on the views of several informants above, it can be concluded that the integrity, neutrality and independence of Makassar City KPU members in the Wali election must prioritize the principles of independence, honesty, fairness, legal certainty, order, public interest, openness, proportionality, professionalism, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness without any influence from certain political parties. or state officials who reflect the interests of political parties or election participants.

In the context of political development aimed at realizing a political order based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, it is necessary to improve the capacity and quality of social and political organizations as a forum for channeling and fighting for people's aspirations, in accordance with applicable regulations (Iskandar et al., 2023). This shows that the level of community participation in making the general election a success is very clearly visible in the enthusiasm of the community in participating in the process of implementing the general election system, both at the Central, Provincial and Regional levels (Amane et al., 2024).

The general election commission (KPU) is a state institution that organizes general elections in Indonesia, which is national, permanent and independent, which is tasked with carrying out elections, namely including the General Election of the President and Vice President, the General Election of Members of the DPR/DPD/DPRD, the General Election of Regional Heads and Deputy Regional Heads (Noviyati & Yasin, 2021). All aspects related to the implementation of elections are the responsibility of the KPU as stipulated in Article 22E Paragraph (5) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia which states that: 2 "General elections are held by a National, permanent and independent General Election Commission" (Megawati & Pandang, 2020).

Apart from being a constitutional mandate, strengthening the authority of the KPU as a state institution in charge of organizing elections can also be read in Article 1 point 6 of Law Number 10 of 2008 concerning General Elections (Firmanzah, 2010: 55). Law Number 15 of 2011 concerning the Implementation of General Elections states that : "To improve the quality of holding general elections that can guarantee the implementation of people's political rights, it is necessary to hold professional elections that have integrity, capability and accountability through the General Election Commission."

The role of the district/city KPUK in organizing elections with the process of creating democratic general elections, this can be seen from the government's rejection of the political dynasty system, so that in nominating regional heads, the district/city KPUK is independent and independent both within the internal government and externally of the Makassar City government structure. In carrying out the duties of the Makassar City KPU, it is guided by the program, stages and time schedule for holding elections issued by the Central KPU. In general, the entire series of implementation of the Makassar City Election can run smoothly, problems that arise as dynamics develop in each implementation of the activity can be resolved well by prioritizing coordination steps with all related parties.

So it can be concluded that in carrying out its duties and functions, the KPU can design programs oriented towards increasing community political participation by utilizing resources in accordance with local wisdom whose achievements are measured based on the implementation and development of three aspects of democracy, namely civil liberties, political rights. , and democratic institutions (institutions of democracy), as well as holding simultaneous elections that are democratic, timely, efficient and effective.

Organizing fair elections means having elements of honesty, transparency, accountability, accuracy and precision in the implementation of one's duties and authority. Neutrality is important for election organizers. Neutral means neutral for the participant. Neutrality means that election organizers must not accept party instructions, either from the authorities or from political parties (Taufiqurrahman & Amal, 2022). The KPU must be able to operate and operate neutrally from politics and political prejudice and without interference, because it will directly influence

not only the confidence of policy makers, but the election process and election results.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The Makassar City KPU's efforts to encourage community participation in the 2018 regional elections in Makassar City, namely: a) Carrying out regional elections professionally without black campaigns and money politics practices by ensuring that every citizen must have the same rights and opportunities without any distinction and without unreasonable restrictions to participate in the regional election process while maintaining integrity. . b) Increase voter participation in Makassar City by providing healthy political education by increasing public knowledge so that they can participate optimally in the regional election process with political education that prioritizes the values of honesty, clear, and involves independent supervision from supervisory institutions and civil society. Furthermore, to increase public participation in the Regional Election, the KPU needs to implement various strategies which include voter education, public campaigns, facilitating voter registration, use of technology, collaboration with related parties, special programs for young voters, voter education, and local initiatives. With these steps, it is hoped that voter participation can be increased, which in turn will strengthen the legitimacy of the democratic process and the representation of the will of the people in general elections.

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