

Integrity of Election Organizers at the Crossroads: An Indonesian Case (2017–2022)

Muh Afrit Khomsani*

The Indonesian International Islamic University

Email: muhafitkhomsani@gmail.com*



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* Corresponding Author



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Abstract. Professional election organizers play an essential role in realizing elections with integrity. It refers to capable, insightful, fair, transparent, accountable, and independent election bodies. However, the organizers in Indonesia are entangled with classic problems, ranging from ethical and administrative to criminal violations. Such complications lie in the biased selection process, political interventions, inter-agency relations, and other personal characteristics. This qualitative research analyzes the verdicts of the Election Organizer Ethics Council (DKPP) to examine the dynamics of election organizers and elections in Indonesia. Primary data in this study are verdicts by DKPP for 2017-2022, and the secondary ones are journal articles, scientific research, reports, and mass media publications. Data are collected and analyzed based on actor relations, regions, violation cases, and final decisions. Research findings reveal that dominant factors affect the emergence of ethical abuses by election organizers. Moreover, the research conclusion suggests enforcing moral codes for election organizers and gaps to study this topic further.

Keywords: Ethics, Integrity, Election Organizers, Indonesia.

Abstrak. Penyelenggara pemilihan umum (pemilu) yang berkompeten dan profesional memainkan peran penting dalam mewujudkan pemilu yang berintegritas. Hal tersebut merujuk pada penyelenggara pemilu yang cakap, berwawasan, jujur, transparan, akuntabel, mandiri, dan independen. Tetapi, dalam faktanya penyelenggara pemilu di Indonesia masih dihadapkan pada beberapa permasalahan klasik, mulai dari pelanggaran etik, administrasi, sampai dengan pidana. Permasalahan ini dipengaruhi oleh beberapa faktor, seperti permasalahan pada proses seleksi, intervensi politik, hubungan antarlembaga, dan faktor privat lainnya. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan menganalisis putusan Dewan Kehormatan Penyelenggara Pemilu (DKPP) untuk melihat dinamika penyelenggara pemilu dan kaitannya dengan integritas pemilu di Indonesia. Data primer dalam penelitian ini adalah putusan DKPP tahun 2017-2022, sedangkan data sekunder adalah artikel, riset ilmiah, laporan penelitian, dan pemberitaan media massa. Data dikumpulkan kemudian dianalisis berdasarkan variasi aktor, pokok aduan pelanggaran, dan putusan akhir. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa terdapat faktor-faktor dominan yang mengakibatkan pelanggaran etik oleh penyelenggara pemilu. Kesimpulan dalam riset ini memberikan rekomendasi untuk penegakan kode etik penyelenggara Pemilu, dan celah untuk kajian selanjutnya tentang kode etik penyelenggara Pemilu.

Kata Kunci: Etika, Integritas, Indonesia, Penyelenggara Pemilu.

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizing the general elections with integrity reflects the implementation of upright democracy. As one of the vital elements of democracy, such an election at least refers to five primary conditions: reasonable regulations, impartial bureaucracy, well-educated voters, professional political parties, and proficient election organizers. First, good electoral rules regulate political parties as the participants in the election, the organizers, and other related parties in the election's organizing process. Consequently, the intelligibility of electoral laws and regulations can be used to minimize fraudulence in elections.

The second is the neutrality of the ruling power, the government. It is imperative to ensure that elections are held with no discrimination, unfairness, or abuse of power by the government to support the candidates. Impartiality by the regime aims to prevent public services from being affected by political interventions. Third, integrity in elections lies in the readiness of intelligent voters. Public awareness to recognize the runners from political parties, freedom and rights to vote, and active involvement after the election. The Fourth is the competency of political parties. Not only should they be bent on the electoral laws, but the Parties must also commit to political education to convince their members and voters to socialize the principles and values of the Parties.

The professionalism and integrity of the organizers point out the fifth element to realizing good elections. The former symbolizes the organizers' proficiency in managing and monitoring the electoral processes, and the latter shows a commitment to respect and obey the ethical codes of election organizers. In addition, their central roles stand for immense authority, from organizing and monitoring the election to decreeing the result of the election. Such establishments conclude that electoral integrity by the organizers powerfully impacts and is relevant to legitimate governments, resulting in the elections.

Based on Article 11 of Law Number 7 Tahun 2017 concerning Elections (Election Law), Election Management Bodies (EMBs) consist of the General Election Commission (KPU), the Election Supervisory Body

(Bawaslu), and the Honorary Board of Election Organizers (DKPP). KPU is a national, permanent, and independent institution that organizes elections. Bawaslu supervises the electoral processes, and DKPP is a unified functional body that monitors and is responsible for handling ethical abuses by election organizers.

The basic principles for the organizers are stated in Article 3 of the Election Law: Election organizers are guided by the main principles that must be fulfilled: independent, truthful, fair, lawful, orderly, open, proportionate, professional, accountable, effective, and efficient. Those ethical surroundings later encouraged political experts to examine, particularly elections-related studies. Recent works regarding the institutionalization of EMB suggest critical findings: how to build EMB as an institution, criticisms for the organizers, and notes on the comparison between the Indonesian EMB and those from other countries. One of those topics is that the EMBs in Indonesia still face the challenges of sluggish electoral reforms, decreasing the quality of democracy at the national level (Carter & Farrell, 2010).

Moreover, other problems of election institutions are a lack of accountability in the recruitment process, monitoring finance, and competencies of the organizers (James et al., 2019; van Aaken, 2009; van Ham & Garnett, 2019).

In Indonesia, the same critiques for the EMBs are about classical complications and how the institutions experience such problems: regulatory overlaps, limited authorities, lack of transparency, pseudo-independence, and well-skilled human resources. For instance, a study by Aldirensa, Saraswati, and Wardhani (2022) found that Bawaslu faces unsolved challenges related to the limited time available for handling reports and complaints of alleged election violations.

Studying the EMB and its inconsistency of electoral laws, Warjiyati (2020) confirms that the Center of Integrated Law Enforcement in Election or *Sentra Penegakan Hukum Terpadu* (Gakkumdu) –including the Bawaslu, Police and Attorney General's Office- is still problematic in works. The institutions have different understandings and norm standards in handling

and solving the cases. It makes the Sentra Gakkumdu ineffective (Esfandiari & Fatih, 2020).

The subsequent discussion is about critiques of the election organizers. The literature stresses that integrity is yet to be optimally applied. Some are even involved in electoral crimes, such as illegal ballot voting, vote swelling, bribery, and manipulation of election results (Iqbal & Wardhani, 2020). They often become political brokers that bridge and facilitate the political parties (Pratitaswari & Wardani, 2020). In addition, the EMBs lack female representatives as organizers due to structural defiance and political will (Hurriyah et al., 2022).

Besides, further studies on election executives focus on the influence of integrity on the quality of the election. Garnett (2019) emphasizes that the proficiencies of the organizers are essential to realizing elections with integrity, and Kasim (2019) says the relations between the qualified organizers and impact violations in elections. Studying the 2009 Indonesian election, Pahlevi (2016) examines how electoral integrity by the organizers can affect the disorder process of determining the voter lists and the elected legislative candidates.

Facts show that the integrity of the organizers in Indonesia is convoluted. On the one hand, the organizers are vital entities that enforce democratic agendas and goals in Indonesia. On the other hand, some have been involved in ethical abuses by election organizers. Two determinant factors affect the ethical conduct of the organizers: internal – self-behaviors, economic needs, and disciplines – and external – unfair and closed recruitments and political invasions (Taufik, 2021). The situation makes the EMBs trapped between independence and interventions by political actors, causing ethical violations, such as administrative abuses, vote manipulations, and corruption in elections (bribery, political brokers) at national and local levels (Pratitaswari & Wardani, 2020).

In addition, Ka'bah (2007) says that such violations are caused by a lack of integrity and frail control by society. Pahlevi's (2016) and Pangestu's (2022) study stress that underqualified human resources, untransparent performance, and unsynchronized electoral

regulations provide such misbehaviors. The trend of violations seems to increase when the election stage approaches. They range from managerial misconduct to criminal crimes, as stated previously.

The election organizers' corruption varies in modus and aims, such as bribery, embezzlement, and extortion (DKPP, 2019). For instance, some cases of violations happened to the organizers: corruption in grant funds in 2017-2018 by the Commissioners of Bawaslu, Prabumulih City, and corruption for the 2020 Governor Election, allegedly involved several members of the Bawaslu in Central Sulawesi (DKPP, 2018, 2020).

Data from DKPP show that actions against professionalism as part of the ethical principles of election organizers dominate reports and complaints in DKPP. Professionalism refers to the management, leadership, public service, and the level of understanding of the regulations by the organizer, while administrative aspects lie in the ability to run the election technically – calculating and recapitulating election results and data validity-. This article examines the integrity level of the election organizers by analyzing DKPP's verdicts in 2017-2022. This research aims to map the foremost features of electoral violations by the organizers and the inclinations of the judgments to analyze significant factors triggering the ethical abuses.

This paper aims to understand the dynamics, institutional roadmaps, and human resources in elections and their connections with integrity. Moreover, this study contributes to the scientific novelty of explaining the main reasons causing ethical violations, as unstated in previous works. The findings in this article are essential to explain the election organizers' current integrity level and provide academic suggestions and practical recommendations for the EMBs in Indonesia, particularly DKPP. As stated in this article, the presence of various and high numbers of violations by the election organizers shows that DKPP has yet to play its role well. As the ethical board to monitor the EMBs and their organizers, DKPP is pivotal in overseeing their integrity, respectability, independence, and credibility.

Moreover, recent studies confirm that there are critiques and debilities for upholding

the ethical codes of the EMB organizers. Maki et al. (2020) explain that, although DKPP's verdicts are final and binding, challenges remain that at certain moments reveal weaknesses in their implementation.. The fact refers to some judgments that have not been executed. Ameliorate recommendations include strengthening the authorities of DKPP in the draft revision of the Election Law (Puspitasari, 2018). In addition, the verdicts should adequately be used to guide the implementation of the policies in elections and step forward to evaluate and recover the ethical conduct of the organizers (Muhlisin et al., 2022). In line with this, Ridwan et al. (2017) recommend that DKPP can potentially practice strategies, including preventive and action approaches, to minimize ethical abuses by the organizers. The first strategy involves engaging social empowerment and other related actors: the EMBs, local governments, political parties, academia, and public figures. The second strategy includes law enforcement to enforce election integrity.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This qualitative article collects data and information to analyze the findings. A qualitative method is used to describe the research topic deeply. Based on McCusker and Gunaydin (2015), the qualitative research method aims to acknowledge questions about what, how, or why concerning what phenomenon is going on as research topics. This paper uses a descriptive approach to systematically examine the election organizers' integrity and dynamics.

This research takes two units of analysis: the author presents trends of ethical violations by the election organizers, explains dominant causes and dynamics, and maps the moral abuse and its connections among variables. Primary data originates from the verdicts reported by DKPP in 2017-2022. The chosen data refer to the term of office of the current EMBs -KPU and Bawaslu-, which selected the EMBs at regional levels to show a unity of one period. Secondary data are collected to support and strengthen the analysis of the findings. They are literature reviews by the author sourced from books, reports, scientific articles, and mass media.

Data is composed in some stages. First, the researcher collected all verdicts from 2017-2022 from DKPP websites and sorted them

based on the different dates of the cases decided. The judgments were obtained by downloading them via the website www.dkpp.go.id. During the period, there were 1188 decisions, as details will be explained in the discussion section of this paper. Second, the writer found 128 verdicts with the criteria as previously described. Third, the author then examined and analyzed 128 examples of decisions by paying attention to the variables of actor, agency, violation case, decision results, and the relationship between these variables.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Distribution and Trends of Ethical Violations by the Election Organizers

Data demonstrate that ethical violations by the organizers vary in subject complaints, both at stages and non-stages in elections. **Error! Reference source not found.** shows 1188 cases decided in total during 2017-2022. It also explains various sentences, ranging from rehabilitation to permanent dismissal, as well as positions and membership as election organizers. Table 2 displays the most common types of complaints in detail. Based on the table, the interesting one is that the violations rapidly rose when the election approached. For instance, in 22 stages, the 2018 local elections became the organizers' most reported objects of alleged ethical violations: registration of candidacy, campaigning, hiring ad hoc organizers, and support requirements for candidacy.

In addition, from 2017 to 2022, 2019 dominated the violation of the voting process and recapped the voting results. As shown in Table 3, data collected from the DKPP clarifies each defendant's various sentences. In the 2018 local elections and the general election 2019, 101 individuals were accused in 2017, and 77 persons in 2019 were given permanent dismissal. The situation shows us that the election stages would impact the increasing number of reports to DKPP.

Table 3.1 Number of Verdicts by DKPP in 2017-2022

	Year	Number of Complaints	Number of Verdicts
1	2022	83	30
2	2021	292	172

3	2020	415	196
4	2019	506	331
5	2018	333	319
6	2017	275	140
Total		1904	1188

Source: DKPP RI

Table 3.2 Distribution of Most Complaints in 2017-2022

Year	Stages of Election	Σ	Non- Stages of Election	Σ
1 2017	Registration and verification for Candidates in Regional Elections	N/A	Selection for the Election Organizers	N/A
2 2018	Registration and verification for Candidates	87	Selection for the Election Organizers	57
3 2019	Recapitulation of Vote Counting Results	189	Selection for the Election Organizers	37
4 2020	Fulfillment of support requirements for Candidates	36	Neutrality of the Election Organizers	30
5 2021	Campaigns in the 2020 Regional Elections	67	Immoral Behaviours	11
6 2022	Resolving Violations and Disputes on Election Results	1	Immoral Behaviours	11

Notes: N/A: no available data

Source: Annual Reports of DKPP RI 2017-2022

Table 3.3 Comprehensive Decisions by DKPP RI 2017-2022

Year	Numb.	A	B	C	D	E	Total
1 2017	140	276	135	19	50	8	488
2 2018	319	522	632	16	101	21	1292
3 2019	331	808	552	4	77	17	1458
4 2020	196	452	286	3	41	16	798
5 2021	172	399	210	3	14	5	631
6 2022	30	26	30	2	14	1	73
Total	1188	2483	1845	47	297	68	4740

Notes: Total in Persons

A	Rehabilitation	D	Permanent Dismissal
B	Written Warning	E	Discharge for the Chairmanship
C	Temporary Suspension		

Source: Annual Reports of DKPP RI 2017-2022

To analyze the verdicts further, the author examines 128 samples of 1188 in total during 2017-2022 based on the dates decided. It aims to map vital elements of reportedly alleged ethical violations by the organizers. The research findings show various and exciting trends, such as the distribution of actors, the EMBs (Bawaslu or KPU), areas of authority, subjects of violations, judgments, and their connections among variables. In the following

discussion, the author explains and analyses the findings in this article.

The variable of actors consists of complainants -who report alleged violations and defendants -who are reportedly involved in the suspected violations. As **Error! Reference source not found.**, the first actors vary in groups and their backgrounds, such as civil societies, Ad Hoc organizers, and the organizers from the EMBs at both national and local levels. The second actors include Ad Hoc organizers, the EMBs at federal and local levels, the overseas election committees, and the EMBs' secretariat. Civil groups and political parties dominated those who reported ethical abuses by the election organizers to DKPP. Meanwhile, Bawaslu and KPU at the local levels ranked 2nd as institutions reported to DKPP for the violations.

The civil groups include many professionals: civil society organizations (CSOs), students, activists, and government employees. From the side of political parties as election participants, the actors who report violations are campaign teams, legislative candidates, regional head candidates, and legislative members. Besides, the actors are ad hoc election organizers, such as Village Voting Organizers (PPS), sub-district voting Organizers (PPK), Village Election Supervisor (PKD), District Election Supervisors (Panwascam), and the EMBs at local and national levels.

The research findings show the main points of alleged ethical violations: administrative, professional, and criminal. The results exposed various decisions: faltered reports, ultimately rejected/rehabilitated, cautionary, strong caution, temporary dismissal and/or removal from office, and permanent dismissal.

Table 3.4 The Distribution of the Complainants and the Defendants reporting to DKPP RI 2017-2022

Groups	The complainants	The defendants
1 Civil Groups	36,8	0
2 Election Participants	17,8	0
3 PPS, PPK	0,0	1,3
4 PKD, Panwascam	0,4	0,9
5 KPU in Regency/City Level	6,3	40,8
6 Bawaslu in Regency/City Level	15,8	32,2
7 KPU in Province Level	11,9	9,9

8	Bawaslu in Province Level	7,5	5,2	Selection of Election Organizer	7,8	0	1	2	2	1	4	10
9	KPU	3,6	5,4	Corruption	7,8	0	0	0	0	2	8	10
10	Bawaslu	0,0	1,5	Professionalism (Conflict of Interests)	7,0	0	2	2	2	2	1	9
11	the Election Organizers in Overseas	0,0	0,4	Secretariat	6,3	0	4	1	1	1	1	8
12	Secretariat of Bawaslu/KPU	0,0	2,6	Private and Immoral Violations	4,7	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
Total (%)		100	100	Election Fraud	3,9	0	2	0	0	0	3	5
				Recruitment for the Ad hoc Election Organizers	2,3	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
				Outbreaks of Violence	0,8	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
				Withdrawn Reports	0,8	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
				Total	100	2	43	23	14	14	32	128
				Notes								
				A	Not Continued							
				B	Rejected completely, rehabilitation							
				C	Admonitions							
				D	Strong Warning							
				E	Removal from Position/Temporary Dismissal							
				F	Permanent Dismissal							

Source: www.dkpp.go.id and processed by the author

The professionalism of election organizers is the most common subject of violations reported to the DKPP. 19.5 percent of complaints are about such expertise in following up on suspected violations or recommendations for improvement. Of such several violations, one defendant was permanently dismissed due to unprofessional disputes towards the 2020 local election of Boven Digoel Regency.

Problems of professionalism by the organizers refer to their work performance (not attending plenary meetings three times in a row), resulting in the loss of the constitutional right to run for regional elections. Not only are there issues with professionalism, but the data findings also show many reports regarding neutrality, selection of election organizers, and corruption involving election organizers. Some are suspected of being involved in taking sides, being present, and being involved in political party activities. Concerning the selection of election organizers, the organizers were proven to have falsified their identities and had money transactions during the selection process. Additionally, election organizers have been involved in many corruption cases, ranging from corruption in procuring goods/services and withholding honorariums to promising to increase votes for political parties in exchange for money.

Table 3.5 The Distribution of Main Subjects of Ethical Violations by the Election Organizers 2017-2022

Main Subjects	%	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Professionalism	12,5	0	7	2	2	4	1	16
Professionalism (Alleged Violations)	19,5	0	14	8	2	0	1	25
Professionalism (Administrative, Performance)	18,8	1	8	5	3	1	6	24
Professionalism (Neutrality of the Organizer)	7,8	0	3	2	2	3	0	10

Source: www.dkpp.go.id and processed by the author

The data above shows that violations of the code of ethics by election organizers are not minor and vary significantly in their modes. Even though there are regulations regarding codes of ethics in the Election Law, KPU/Bawaslu regulations, and DKPP RI regulations, violations of the principle of ethics for election organizers still often occur. The complexity of the 2024 simultaneous elections makes the task of election organizers even more difficult. In an open proportional election system, the election organizers count the votes obtained by political parties and calculate the results obtained by each legislative candidate to be converted into seats and determined as the elected candidate. Political forces' potential for pressure and intervention on election organizers means they will face even more severe challenges.

Such suppression ultimately gives rise to the potential for violations of the code of ethics concerning aspects of professionalism, administrative governance, and even criminal matters. Therefore, strategic steps are necessary, namely maximum supervision from the community and transparency and accountability in implementing elections (Pangestu, 2022). Evaluation of the performance of election-organizing institutions is also an essential element. Evaluation can be carried out in 3 (three) main phases, namely before the election stage, during the election

stage, and after the election stage (Rizkiyansyah & Silitonga, 2019).

3.2 Professionalism and Integrity of the Election Organizers at the Crossroad

Many studies have been carried out on election-organizing institutions. Examining comparisons and criticism of election management institutions in several African countries, Makulilo et al. (2016) show interesting facts and findings. For example, countries in the East African region such as Burundi, Kenya, and Benin - even though they have adapted a lot to international standards - still face classic problems, such as electoral transparency, voter data that is not updated, dispute resolution that is not transparent, and inadequate education. Voter. Meanwhile, in West Africa, the countries of Benin and Ghana face the problem of low trust in election organizing institutions due to professionalism and poor quality of human resources.

Compared with election organizing institutions in other countries, Indonesia has complete institutional instruments for holding elections, supervising elections, and handling election violations, as well as a code of ethics for election organizers. For example, election-organizing institutions in Senegal and Spain combine independent components and government representatives (Wall et al., 2016). In both countries, separate parts supervise, review, and verify the election process. Meanwhile, the government representatives carry out the function of implementing elections.

Specifically regarding the comparison of the authority of election organizing institutions in handling election crimes, similar to Indonesia, the Philippines has a broader role in enforcing the election law in that country, carrying out investigations, and, if necessary, carrying out prosecutions for cases of election crime violations (Santoso, 2008). On the other hand, Malaysia has an independent election management institution that is free from intervention but does not have an institution tasked explicitly with handling election crimes (Santoso, 2008). Different Election Implementation Models in many countries will undoubtedly impact the actors' behavior. Nevertheless, all election organizers are

committed to holding elections that comply with democratic principles (Wall et al., 2006).

Election organizers are an essential element of election implementation. In the Political Consequences of Electoral Laws, Rae (1967) explains that elections can be seen as 2 (two) different things: election law or electoral laws and the electoral process or electoral process. Electoral laws refer to governance or regulations that regulate the conversion of votes into power distribution for election participants. These aspects include the election system, election principles, and election organization. Meanwhile, the electoral process is a method or mechanism for technical elections such as nominations, campaigns, voting, and counting votes. Due to this, the organizers are part of the electoral laws, namely the organizers of implementing the elections.

Election organizers who are professional and have integrity have a significant role in realizing election justice or electoral justice (IDEA, 2010). In their work, election organizers must be guided by the main principles, namely independence, impartiality, integrity, transparency, efficiency, professionalism, and service orientation. Independence and impartiality are the principles of not submitting to power or political power and not being a partisan of any group. Integrity is manifested in a commitment not to do things contrary to values, norms, and principles in elections. Transparency and efficiency refer to work operations that are wise and efficient and provide openness to the public to monitor the performance of election organizers. Others, professionalism and the principle of service are election organizers who are capable, competent, and committed to serving the community.

The principles of organizing elections have been regulated in the Election Law. However, the many violations of the code of ethics committed by election organizers show that they are contrary to the principles and integrity of election organizers. Furthermore, this condition will certainly impact the poor quality of election implementation and democracy in Indonesia. The analysis of the DKPP decision in this research reflects the requirements and challenges being experienced by election organizers. The distribution and trends in the previous discussion show severe

problems in this country's institutions and individual election organizers.

Researchers found that there were several strategic issues related to the subject of complaints regarding alleged violations of the code of ethics of election organizers, namely the professionalism of organizers at stages - such as registration and verification of candidate pairs or legislative candidates, fulfillment of support requirements for candidate pairs, campaign implementation - and the integrity of organizers at non-stages, such as transparency and accountability in the selection of election organizer candidates, neutrality of election organizers, corruption, and other immoral acts. For example, reports of alleged violations of the code of ethics in registering and verifying legislative candidates refer to the unprofessionalism of election organizers in carrying out legislative candidate verification. On the one hand, election organizers have to carry out many guarantees of administrative files for legislative candidates with limited verification time and helpful human resources.

On the other hand, election organizers are also faced with three classic problems, namely aspects of legal certainty, integrity of election organizers, and participation of all stakeholders (Ifah, 2018). Regarding legal certainty, the problem lies in the various interpretations of election regulations, which result in differences in verification procedures. Another challenge is the lack of support from political parties as election participants for the orderly administration of legislative candidate registration.

Election organizers also received many complaints about the stages of election counting and vote recapitulation of election results. At this stage, election organizers must face significant election dynamics, namely the meeting point between voters, political parties participating, and election organizers. Some of the main complaint points at this stage are the partiality or neutrality of election organizers, procedural violations, vote manipulation, and money politics. The involvement of election organizers in this violation often occurs when polling places (TPS) are counted, and recapitulation is performed at the sub-district level. Such violence happened due to power relations between election participants and

organizers (Husin et al., 2021). These relations include political intervention.

In its implementation, the principles and code of ethics for election organizers today face significant problems and challenges from internal and external institutions. The independence and impartiality of election organizers are currently highly questionable because many are still involved in neutrality issues, pressure from political groups, and intervention by power. For example, DKPP data regarding the category of violations in 2021 states that 38 election organizers were complained of for breaches of neutrality and partiality, such as supporting one of the candidate pairs and attending the winning meeting. Additionally, this principle is often violated in connection with the recruitment selection of prospective members of regional election organizers, where findings explain that many political party sympathizers, members, and even cadres pass and are appointed as election organizers.

The integrity of election organizers also appears to be a problem. Some violations of the code of ethics include corruption, bribery, sexual violence, and violence committed by election organizers. Many defendants involved in these violations were permanently dismissed from office as election organizers, which refers to a category of serious ethical violations.

Next is a violation of the principle of transparency. At the election stage, transparency is related to openness, willingness, clarity, completeness, and accessibility of information, and it is related to transparency in all process stages. One of the most frequent violations of this principle is the openness of the recapitulation of ballot counting results, such as manipulation and inflating ballot papers. Meanwhile, transparency in the non-election stages of the complaint category in the recruitment of election organizers is widespread. For example, there were money transactions, identity fraud, and corruption in the KPU and Bawaslu selection involving selected participants. These violations also often result in punishment for permanently dismissing election organizer members from their positions.

Lastly are the principles of efficiency, professionalism, and service. Efficiency refers to decision-making, budget use, and maximizing existing human resources. Many violations of the code of ethics were found in the election administration process, accuracy in file verification, and follow-up to reports of suspected election violations.

The paradoxical conditions faced by election organizers can also be seen from the background of complainants alleging violations of the election organizers' code of ethics to the DKPP. As shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**, civil society groups (36.8%) were the group that made the most complaints to DKPP, followed by election participants (17.8%) and Regency/City Bawaslu (15.8%). This situation indicates that the performance of election organizers is still not optimal per existing regulations.

This condition requires a response and strategic steps from the KPU and Bawaslu of the Republic of Indonesia as the parties responsible for the KPU/Bawaslu selection process in provinces, regions, and cities. Several criticisms and notes exist on the selection process, such as nepotism, transparency, accountability, and allegations of money transactions (Alibas, 2023; Irianto, 2023). Not only that, but many findings also explain that cadres, administrators, and campaign team members involved in political party activities passed and were appointed as election organizers (TribunNews, 2023). If all organizer selection mechanisms are not improved, efforts to realize the professionalism and integrity of election organizers will not occur.

3.3 The Role of Election Organizing Institutions in Enforcing the Code of Ethics

Efforts to enforce the code of ethics for election organizers in Indonesia have been regulated in the constitution, starting from the Election Law to regulations of related institutions. Referring to the Election Law, violations of the code of ethics for election organizers are handled by the DKPP. Article 159 of the Election Law explains that the DKPP is tasked with (1) receiving complaints and/or reports of alleged violations of the code of ethics by election organizers and (2) carrying

out investigations, verification, and examination of complaints and/or reports of alleged violations of the code of ethics by-election organizer.

Additionally, the DKPP also has the authority to (1) summon election organizers who are suspected of violating the code of ethics to provide explanations and defenses, (2) summon whistleblowers, witnesses, and/or other related parties for questioning, including for documents or evidence. Others (3) impose sanctions on election organizers who are proven to have violated the code of ethics, and (4) decide on violations of the code of ethics.

The code of ethics for election organizers is also regulated in DKPP Regulation Number 2 of 2017 concerning the Code of Ethics and Conduct for General Election Organizers. In detail, the regulation explains the principles, foundations, oaths, behavioral guidelines, and provisions for sanctions for violations of the code of ethics for election organizers. However, the variety and number of violations of the principle of ethics committed by election organizers in Indonesia reflect how the code of ethics for election organizers is implemented.

In this context, researchers see the urgency of the role and collaboration between election organizing institutions at all levels in Indonesia. This urgency stems from several essential notes regarding enforcing the code of ethics for election organizers. Among these are DKPP decisions and/or recommendations that the institution concerned does not continue or implement (Maki et al., 2020).

Referring to point 13 of Article 458 of the Election Law, the DKPP decision is final and binding. However, DKPP decisions, conclusive and binding, can still be challenged in court. This gap became increasingly open after the Constitutional Court (MK) Decision Number 32/PUU-XIX/2021 concerning Material Review of Article 458 letter (13) of the Election Law concerning the final and binding phrase in the DKPP decision. For example, the RI DKPP Decision Number 317-PKE-DKPP/X/2019 decided that Evi Novida Ginting Manik was dismissed from being a member of the RI KPU for the 2017-2022 period.

This decision then became the background for the issuance of Presidential

Decree of the Republic of Indonesia Number 34/P. of 2020 concerning the Disrespectful Dismissal of Members of the General Election Commission for the 2017-2022 Term of Office dated 23 March 2020, which was ultimately canceled by the State Administration Court (TUN) Court Decision Number 82/G/2020/PTUN-JKT. The decision raises significant questions about the "final and binding" nature of the DKPP decision regarding violations of the code of ethics for election organizers (Surawijaya, 2023).

The fact that there are legal loopholes in the institutional authority of the DKPP in general and DKPP decisions, in particular, explains the critical role of the KPU and Bawaslu in preventing violations of the code of ethics for election organizers. How can the three election organizing institutions collaborate to minimize violations of the election organizer's code of ethics?

The obligation to uphold the code of ethics for election organizers has been regulated in several regulations, namely (1) Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections; (2) Joint Regulations of the KPU, Bawaslu and DKPP Numbers 13, 11 and 1 of 2012 concerning the Code of Ethics for Election Organizers; (3) DKPP Regulation Number 2 of 2017 concerning Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct for Election Organizers; (4) DKPP Regulation Number 1 of 2021 concerning the Second Amendment to the Election Organizer Honorary Council Regulation No. 3 of 2017 concerning Procedure Guidelines for the Code of Ethics for General Election Organizers; and (5) DKPP Regulation No. 5 of 2017 concerning Regional Audit Teams as amended by DKPP Regulation No. 1 of 2019; (6) the institution's internal regulatory mechanisms for enforcing the ethics of election organizers.

There are several important things related to the role of election organizing institutions in enforcing the code of ethics for election organizers. The first is the role of DKPP. DKPP no longer has duties, authority, and obligations, as Article 59 of the Election Law explains. The position of DKPP must also be strengthened by the existence of firm and clear regulations for this institution to support enforcing the code of ethics for election organizers.

Maintaining the authority of the DKPP is carried out by including restorative justice in revising the Election Law, especially in the section regarding the DKPP, to ensure that the attribution has a robust legal basis in the law. So later, there will be no decision explaining that the DKPP decision is flawed and does not have a clear legal basis. DKPP can also collaborate with the KPU and/or Bawaslu to supervise the election organizer selection process.

Second, the role of the KPU in preventing violations of the code of ethics for election organizers in provinces, districts, and cities is enormous. The fact is based on the KPU's authority to conceptualize norms, designs, and programs and coordinate all stages of the election. Another is the KPU's authority through the Selection Team in recruiting and selecting KPU members in the regions.

It is necessary to have a strict, independent, and transparent internal mechanism to monitor the performance of election organizers. This step is essential due to the vulnerabilities and problems many Provincial/Regency/City KPUs face, such as intervention from external groups. Especially at the election stages, strict regulations, coordination, and a good understanding of election organizers are indeed perfect for minimizing violations of the code of ethics for election organizers.

Third is the role of Bawaslu. Having an equal position with the KPU, Bawaslu's role in supervising election administration is very strategic to maximize the effectiveness of election supervision, where there are checks and balances between election organizing institutions (Warjiyati, 2020). Such an institutional position increases Bawaslu's duties, authority, and obligations. Bawaslu is tasked with developing standards and procedures for monitoring the implementation of elections. Like the KPU, Bawaslu can recruit and select prospective Bawaslu members in the regions. Bawaslu is also tasked with acting against election administration violations and deciding election disputes.

Apart from the above, the three election organizing institutions also have internal mechanisms and codes of ethics guidelines for

supervising the performance of election organizers, which are contained in institutional regulations. However, many violations of the principle of ethics show that implementing the code of ethics for election organizers has not been maximized. From DKPP, the issue of DKPP authority and its decisions does not yet have a clear and solid legal basis. Weak control over the implementation of DKPP decisions by the KPU and Bawaslu means that supervision over violations of the code of ethics is still not optimal.

Furthermore, transparency in implementing elections and strengthening the capacity of election organizers must also continue. Availability and easy access to public information and community involvement in monitoring elections at every stage ensure that the election stages run smoothly and transparently. This urgency must start from a transparent organizer selection process and involve broader public participation.

4. CONCLUSION

The commitment of election organizers to obey and comply with the code of ethics for election organizers is the first step to realizing democratic election administration and integrity. The condition refers to the existence of election implementers who are professional, impartial, honest, and fair. In the end, election organizers who are independent and free from intervention will undoubtedly be able to carry out all their duties and provide the same service to all election participants without exception.

The phenomenon of violations of the code of ethics by organizers in this research has shown several interesting findings, such as variations in actors, principal violations, and sanctions in the DKPP decision. Civil society and election participants had the highest number of complainants who reported alleged violations of the code of ethics, and Bawaslu/Regency City KPU were the groups with the most complaints to DKPP. About the subject of the complaint, the public still complains about the professionalism of election organizers. Election organizers are still faced with a lack of understanding of electoral regulations and institutional relationship mechanisms. This situation then resulted in the emergence of election administration violations.

The involvement of election organizers in conflicts of interest, such as neutrality, partiality towards election participants, and corruption, also often occurs, and almost all of them receive sanctions of permanent dismissal from office. Election organizers are critical in implementing elections, especially in organizing elections. Election organizers who are professional and have integrity will ultimately realize election justice.

In the Indonesian context, even though the code of ethics for election organizers has been regulated in many existing regulations, such as the Law, DKPP Regulations, and Internal Regulations of the KPU/Bawaslu, there are still many violations of the code of ethics for election organizers, indicating that election organizers face significant challenges and problems, both from internal and external institutions. Internal factors are the lack of coordination between institutions and the inconsistency of supervisory regulations for election-organizing institutions, where election organizers are left to solve their problems independently.

The election organizers are still unable to be transparent in all stages of the election, which results in minimal public access to monitoring the performance of election organizers. Meanwhile, external factors refer to the intervention of groups and political forces in the work of election organizers. This problematic position of election organizers often means they are trapped in 'hidden agreements' with external groups regarding the implementation of elections.

Efforts to enforce the code of ethics for election organizers are the task of all related parties, namely DKPP, KPU, and Bawaslu. DKPP, as an ethical judicial institution for election organizers, must be able to formulate a good code of ethics for election organizers and supervise the follow-up to decisions regarding violations of the principle of ethics by election organizers. The KPU and Bawaslu, as implementers and supervisors of election administration, certainly should ensure that their institutions comply with the code of ethics. The two institutions must formulate internal efforts and mechanisms to monitor the code of ethics for election organizers. On the other hand, neither the KPU nor Bawaslu were parties

that allowed, facilitated or were even involved in violations of the code of ethics for election organizers.

More than that, transparency from election organizing institutions and active public participation is crucial to monitoring the performance of election organizers. Support from the government and DPR to strengthen election organizing institutions, especially the DKPP, in taking action against violations of the code of ethics is an urgent need. It is also essential to continue harmonizing institutional regulations for organizing elections. A more in-depth study of code of ethics violations by election organizers is urgently needed to see the facts more clearly.

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