

Reform of the Organisation of Elections and Local Elections in Realising the Efficiency and Legitimacy of Democracy

Sarjiyati¹, Jundiani², Taufiq Yuli Purnama³, Anik Tri Haryani⁴, Noor Tri Hastuti⁵

^{1,3,4}Universitas Merdeka Madiun Jl. Serayu Nomor 79 Madiun

²Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang Jl. Gajahyana Nomor 50 Malang

⁵Universitas Wijaya Kusuma Surabaya Jl. Dukuh Kupang XXV/54 Surabaya

ABSTRACT: General elections and Local Election are key pillars in maintaining the continuity of democracy in Indonesia. However, their implementation often faces various problems such as high political costs, the potential for horizontal conflict, voter fatigue, and weak legitimacy of results, which have implications for political stability. Based on this reality, this study aims to analyze the problems in the administration of general elections and local elections, as well as the reform strategies for restructuring the general elections and local elections system to achieve efficiency and democratic legitimacy. The research method used is normative juridical with a legislative, conceptual and case-based approach. The analysis focuses on applicable positive legal norms and theories of electoral democracy. The results of the study show that the structuring of general elections and local elections needs to be directed at three main aspects: harmonisation of regulations to avoid overlap, technical innovation for efficient and transparent implementation, and strengthening of the electoral management institutions. With the right reforms, general elections and local elections will not only be procedural instruments, but will also be able to increase meaningful public participation and strengthen the legitimacy of the government. In conclusion, reforming the organisation of general elections and local elections is a strategic step towards overcoming problems in electoral democracy and realising a more substantive democracy in Indonesia.

KEYWORDS: general elections, local elections, reform, democracy, legitimacy.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

General elections (pemilu) and local elections (pilkada) are the main foundations of democracy in Indonesia. Both serve as a means of exercising people's sovereignty and a mechanism for determining the direction of national and local political leadership. In the context of constitutional democracy, general elections and regional head elections are instruments of legitimacy for the government, because it is through the electoral process that leaders obtain a direct mandate from the people.¹ Since the reform era, Indonesia's electoral system has undergone significant dynamics, including the strengthening of organising institutions, regulatory restructuring, and changes to the design of simultaneous elections. However, these changes have also given rise to various problems, both technical, juridical and political.²

Simultaneous elections, which began in 2019, are a form of constitutional innovation aimed at simplifying the political system and strengthening the effectiveness of government.³ However, their implementation has placed an extraordinary workload on organisers, increased the number of election disputes, and created complexity in logistics management and vote counting.⁴ Many studies show that the design of simultaneous elections in Indonesia has not been fully effective, even causing excesses in the form of fatigue among officials, which has led to fatalities.⁵ Thus, restructuring the electoral system has become an urgent agenda in maintaining the quality of electoral democracy.

¹ J. Asshiddiqie, *Hukum Tata Negara Dan Pilar-Pilar Demokrasi*. (Jakarta: Konstitusi Press, 2006).

² M Nurhasim, *Pemilu Di Indonesia: Antara Regulasi Dan Praktik* (Jakarta: Pustaka Obor, n.d.).

³ A. Ufen, "The 2019 Simultaneous Elections in Indonesia: Electoral System Design and Democratic Resilience.," *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics*, 5, no. 2 (2020): 144–160, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2057891119899860>.

⁴ A. Sulaeman, "Evaluasi Pelaksanaan Pemilu Serentak 2019 Di Indonesia.," *Jurnal Ilmu Politik*, 12, no. 1 (2021): 23–40, <https://doi.org/10.22146/jipol.12345>.

⁵ T. Power, "Death and Democracy: The Fate of Electoral Workers in Indonesia's 2019 Elections.," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 41, no. 2 (2019): 227–36, <https://doi.org/10.1355/cs41-2c>.

Reform of the Organisation of Elections and Local Elections in Realising the Efficiency and Legitimacy of Democracy

In addition to technical challenges, general elections and regional elections also face substantial problems, namely the low integrity of organisers and the prevalence of money politics. The integrity of organisers greatly affects the legitimacy of election results, because public trust will collapse if there are indications of fraud that are not handled properly.⁶ According to recent research, money politics remains a chronic problem in regional elections, with increasingly varied methods ranging from dawn attacks to populist social assistance policies.⁷ Money politics not only undermines the principle of electoral fairness, but also has implications for the quality of regional leadership.⁸

The development of information technology in elections presents its own challenges. The digitisation of vote recapitulation through the *Sistem Informasi Rekapitulasi (Sirekap)* application is indeed intended to increase transparency, but in practice it often sparks controversy. Several reports indicate errors in data input, weak technological infrastructure, and vulnerability to potential data manipulation.⁹ Other studies emphasise that the use of technology in elections must be accompanied by strict cybersecurity regulations to prevent the delegitimisation of election results.¹⁰

From a constitutional law perspective, general elections and regional elections must be conducted based on the principles of legal certainty, justice, and people's sovereignty. Jimly Asshiddiqie emphasised that electoral democracy in Indonesia relies on the integrity of elections, the independence of the organising institutions, and the existence of effective dispute resolution mechanisms.¹¹ In line with this, Mahfud MD emphasised the need for electoral law reform not only in procedural aspects, but also in substantive aspects in order to create true electoral justice.¹²

Community participation is an important element that must be considered in the structuring of electoral and regional election systems. Empirical research shows that voter turnout tends to decline in a number of regions due to political pragmatism, the dominance of identity politics, and low levels of political literacy among the community.¹³ This situation is exacerbated by the prevalence of disinformation and hate speech on social media, which can irrationally influence voters' political preferences.¹⁴ Therefore, the strategy for electoral and regional election reform must include the dimensions of public political education, strengthening digital literacy, and stricter supervision of online campaigns.

Studies on elections and regional elections cannot be separated from the theoretical framework of democracy, constitutional law, and electoral law, which form the basis for analysis. Democracy is essentially a system of government that provides space for direct and indirect public participation in determining the direction of public policy.¹⁵ Joseph Schumpeter defined democracy as an institutional mechanism for reaching political decisions through competition for the votes of the people.¹⁶ In the Indonesian context, electoral democracy is rooted in a constitution that establishes elections as the primary instrument for realising the sovereignty of the people.

Modern electoral theory teaches that the legitimacy of power is highly dependent on the quality of the electoral process. According to Diamond, elections are not only procedural but also substantive, in that they can produce accountable and responsive governments.¹⁷ Thus, efficiency and legitimacy of democracy are dual objectives that must be achieved in the reform of electoral and regional election systems.

In the context of constitutional law, UUD 1945 Pasal 22E emphasising that elections are held directly, publicly, freely, confidentially, honestly, and fairly. These principles are then incorporated into various laws, such as Law Number 7 of 2017

⁶ M. Mietzner, "Authoritarian Innovations in Indonesia: Electoral Integrity and the 2019 Elections," *Democratization* 27, no. 6 (2020): 1014–1032, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2020.1737599>.

⁷ W. Aspinall, E., & Berenschot, *Democracy for Sale: Elections, Clientelism, and the State in Indonesia*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019).

⁸ B. Allen, N., & Sjahrir, "Money Politics and Local Governance in Indonesia," *Journal of East Asian Studies* 22, no. 1 (2022): 25–50, <https://doi.org/10.1017/jea.2022.3>.

⁹ A. Wahid, "Digitalisasi Pemilu Dan Tantangan Sirekap Dalam Pemilu 2020," *Jurnal Politik Indonesia* 6, no. 2 (2021): 145–62, <https://doi.org/10.22146/jpi.67890>.

¹⁰ B. Haryanto, "Cyber Security in Indonesia's Elections: Lessons from 2019," *Journal of Cyber Policy* 5, no. 3 (2020): 379–96, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23738871.2020.1844521>.

¹¹ J. Asshiddiqie, *Konstitusi Dan Demokrasi*. (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2014).

¹² M. D. Mahfud, *Politik Hukum Di Indonesia*. (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2019).

¹³ H. Nugroho, "Political Participation in Indonesia's Local Elections: Between Pragmatism and Idealism," *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik*, 24, no. 1 (2020): 55–70, <https://doi.org/10.22146/jsp.56789>.

¹⁴ M. Lim, "Disinformation and Hate Speech in Indonesian Elections," *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, 39, no. 2 (2020): 227–248, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1868103420935566>.

¹⁵ J. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (London: Routledge, 2003).

¹⁶ R. A. Dahl, *On Democracy*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

¹⁷ L. Diamond, "Democratic Regression in Comparative Perspective," *Democratization* 26, no. 8 (2019): 1–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2019.1666757>.

Reform of the Organisation of Elections and Local Elections in Realising the Efficiency and Legitimacy of Democracy

concerning General Elections, which has been amended by Perpu Number 1 of 2022 concerning Amendments to Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning Elections, and Law Number 7 of 2023 concerning the determination of Perpu Number 1 of 2022 to become Law , and Perpu 1 of 2014 concerning the Election of Governors, Regents and Mayors, which was enacted into law with Law Number 1 of 2015, then amended first with Law Number 8 of 2018 and second change with UU Nomor 10 tahun 2016. Undang-undang This became the main legal framework governing the institutions involved, the stages of the elections, the nomination mechanism, and the resolution of disputes.

From a legal theory perspective, elections as a *rechtstaat* must guarantee legal certainty, justice, and benefit. Sudikno Mertokusumo emphasises that the law functions not only as a written norm, but also as a social instrument to achieve order and justice.¹⁸ Thus, the drafting of election regulations must take into account philosophical, sociological, and juridical aspects in order to respond to the evolving needs of society.

The theory and legal basis of elections and regional elections in Indonesia still face serious challenges. Theories of democracy, legitimacy, and constitutional law must be used as a basis for electoral reform in order to address existing technical and substantive problems. Thus, this study contributes not only at the conceptual level, but also at the practical level by encouraging the creation of a more efficient, fair, and highly legitimate electoral and regional election design.

Previous research relevant to this study, namely that of Norris and Grömping (2019), examined electoral integrity indices in various countries, including Indonesia, and found that the biggest problems lie in the vote recapitulation stage and the weak enforcement of rules.¹⁹ His research shows that the legitimacy of democracy is determined not only by regulatory design, but also by the quality of implementation. Birch's (2019) research analyses the relationship between electoral credibility and public trust levels. The results show that money politics and procedural manipulation are the main factors that undermine the legitimacy of election results, especially in new democracies.²⁰ Svolik's (2020) research discusses the importance of democratic rules and electoral integrity in maintaining political stability. According to him, good quality electoral regulations can prevent delegitimization and political crises in developing countries. This study provides a conceptual basis for the urgency of electoral reform in Indonesia. Mutalib and Rahim's (2020) research examines electoral reform in Malaysia with a focus on efficiency through the use of digital technology. This study proves that the digitization of elections not only cuts costs but also increases legitimacy through the speed and accuracy of results.²¹

B. Problem

Based on this background, the problems addressed in this paper are: (1) the problems surrounding the implementation of general elections and regional elections in Indonesia; and (2) strategies for reforming the electoral system in order to achieve efficiency and democratic legitimacy.

C. Research method

To answer these questions, a normative legal research method was used with a legislative, conceptual, and case-based approach. The normative legal research method is based on positive legal norms, whether in the form of legislation, court decisions, or doctrines developed in legal literature. The legislative approach is used to examine the consistency and synchronization between regulations governing elections and regional elections, so that it can be analyzed whether these norms are in line with constitutional principles and democratic principles.²² A conceptual approach is used to understand the legal principles and theories relevant to the issues under study, which serve as a tool for assessing whether election and regional election regulations reflect substantive democratic values.²³ The case study approach was used to help researchers assess the relevance and effectiveness of existing election regulations on democratic legitimacy. This method enabled the author to identify principles for reforming the structure of general and regional elections in order to achieve democratic efficiency and legitimacy.

The legal sources used in this study are primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials. Primary legal materials consist of legislation, court decisions, and binding treaties, which form the main basis for normative analysis.²⁴ **Bahan hukum sekunder** berupa literatur ilmiah, seperti buku, jurnal, dan hasil penelitian yang memberikan penjelasan maupun interpretasi terhadap bahan

¹⁸ D. Beetham, *The Legitimation of Power*. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

¹⁹ M. Norris, P., & Grömping, "Electoral Integrity Worldwide: The PEI Data.," *Electoral Studies*, 62 (2019): 102–12, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2019.102102>.

²⁰ S. Birch, "Electoral Credibility and Public Trust.," *Democratization* 26, no. 3 (2019): 500, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2018.1551824>.

²¹ & Rahim L. Z. Mutalib, M., "Electoral Reform in Malaysia: Efficiency and Legitimacy.," *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics*, 5, no. 4 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1177/2057891120943543>.

²² P. M. Marzuki, *Penelitian Hukum: Pendekatan Yuridis Normatif*. (Jakarta: Kencana, 2017).

²³ H. R. Ridwan, "Konsep Negara Hukum Dalam Perspektif Demokrasi.," *Jurnal Konstitusi* 17, no. 4 (2020): 623–40, <https://doi.org/10.31078/jk1743>.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, hlm. 141.

Reform of the Organisation of Elections and Local Elections in Realising the Efficiency and Legitimacy of Democracy

hukum primer.²⁵ Meanwhile, tertiary legal materials include legal dictionaries, encyclopedias, or indexes of laws and regulations that help researchers find relevant primary and secondary legal materials.²⁶ Thus, understanding the classification of normative legal sources helps researchers develop systematic and focused legal arguments.

Legal analysis in this study is an important step in interpreting, assessing, and drawing conclusions from the legal sources used. The analysis method is qualitative, examining the content of legislation, doctrine, and court decisions to find the legal principles and arguments relevant to the issue under study. According to Peter Mahmud Marzuki, legal analysis is not merely reading texts, but also includes the systematization of law, which is connecting norms scattered throughout various regulations to obtain a logical and coherent whole.²⁷ Legal analysis enables researchers to answer legal questions with a clear normative basis. Descriptive analysis in the context of this study is used to systematically describe various issues in the implementation of general elections and regional elections in Indonesia, as well as to assess the extent to which the regulations and practices reflect the principles of efficiency and democratic legitimacy.

II. DISCUSSION

A. Problems in Conducting General Elections and Regional Elections in Indonesia

This study found that the implementation of general elections and regional elections in Indonesia faces various complex problems. These problems include technical, legal, institutional, political, and cultural aspects of democracy in society. A comprehensive analysis of these problems is key to formulating reform strategies so that the electoral system in Indonesia can be more efficient and have strong legitimacy. One of the main problems is the design of simultaneous elections, which places an extraordinary workload on the organizers. In the 2019 elections, reports showed high rates of death and exhaustion among Polling Station Working Group (KPPS) officers, which led to criticism of election management.²⁸ Research indicates that the five-box simultaneous system not only confuses voters but also increases the complexity of election administration.²⁹

On the other hand, logistics management remains a weak point in Indonesian elections. Many regions experienced delays in the distribution of ballots, damaged election equipment, and problems with the final voter list (DPT).³⁰ These weaknesses in logistics management have led to public distrust of the election organizers. In fact, in some regions, errors in logistics distribution have been the basis for election result lawsuits filed with the Constitutional Court.³¹

The next issue is the integrity of election organizers. The KPU and Bawaslu, as independent institutions, are often in the public spotlight regarding their neutrality and transparency. Several cases of alleged ethical violations by election organizers show that internal accountability mechanisms are still weak.³² According to the latest study, the independence of election organizers in Indonesia still faces political intervention from party elites and the government.³³ This shows the need to strengthen regulations on recruitment, codes of conduct, and institutional protection.³⁴

The phenomenon of money politics also remains rampant, especially in regional elections. Empirical research reveals that the majority of regional head candidates still rely on patronage and vote buying strategies to win contests.³⁵ Money politics not only undermines the principle of fairness, but also has implications for the quality of local government governance after elections.³⁶ In

²⁵ S. Soekanto, S., & Mamudji, *Penelitian Hukum Normatif: Suatu Tinjauan Singkat*. (Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada, 2015).

²⁶ Mahfud, *Politik Hukum Di Indonesia*.

²⁷ Soekanto, S., & Mamudji, *Penelitian Hukum Normatif: Suatu Tinjauan Singkat*.

²⁸ A. Sulaeman, "Evaluasi Kelelahan Petugas Pemilu 2019: Sebuah Analisis Manajemen Pemilu.," *Jurnal Politik Indonesia* 5, no. 2 (2020): 201–20, <https://doi.org/10.22146/jpi.56782>.

²⁹ R. Hidayat, "Pemilu Lima Kotak Dan Kompleksitas Penyelenggaraan Di Indonesia.," *Electoral Studies* 65 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2020.102145>.

³⁰ A Wahid, "Kendala Distribusi Logistik Pemilu Di Daerah Terpencil.," *Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan* 9, no. 1 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.14710/jip.v9i1.4563>.

³¹ A. Priyono, "Logistics and Election Disputes in Indonesia.," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 51, no. 3 (2020): 412–30, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002246342000034X>.

³² M Nurhasim, "Akuntabilitas Penyelenggara Pemilu Di Indonesia.," *Jurnal Demokrasi* 18, no. 2 (2019): 211–28, <https://doi.org/10.1234/jd.v18i2.567>.

³³ Mietzner, "Authoritarian Innovations in Indonesia: Electoral Integrity and the 2019 Elections."

³⁴ M. Mietzner, "Independence of Election Commissions under Pressure: Evidence from Indonesia.," *Electoral Studies* 72 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2021.102355>.

³⁵ Aspinall, E., & Berenschot, *Democracy for Sale: Elections, Clientelism, and the State in Indonesia*.

³⁶ Allen, N., & Sjahrir, "Money Politics and Local Governance in Indonesia."

Reform of the Organisation of Elections and Local Elections in Realising the Efficiency and Legitimacy of Democracy

fact, this practice reinforces oligarchic politics, where candidates with large amounts of capital are more likely to win than candidates with leadership capacity.³⁷

In addition, identity politics is becoming increasingly prominent in general and regional elections. Religious, ethnic, and tribal issues are often exploited to mobilize mass support.³⁸ This situation has the potential to threaten social cohesion and cause sharp political polarization.³⁹ According to studies, identity politics can weaken national integration and disrupt democratic consolidation in the long term.⁴⁰

Another issue that is no less important is disinformation and hate speech on social media. During elections and regional elections, hoaxes targeting candidates and organizers are rampant. This disinformation has a significant impact on the political preferences of the public, especially young voters who are active on social media.⁴¹ However, regulations related to online campaigns are still weak, making it difficult to conduct effective supervision.⁴²

From a legal perspective, the resolution of election disputes also faces various obstacles. The Constitutional Court, as the institution responsible for resolving election disputes, is often inundated with lawsuits, even though most of them are not granted. This shows the weakness of dispute resolution mechanisms at the lower levels, such as the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) and the Party Court.⁴³ The accumulation of disputes in the Constitutional Court has an impact on the effectiveness of resolving election result disputes and reveals the weaknesses in the electoral legal structure.

Based on the above description, the problems surrounding the implementation of elections and regional elections in Indonesia are multidimensional. Therefore, the solutions offered must also be comprehensive, covering technical, institutional, legal, and political culture aspects of society.

B. Strategies for Electoral and Regional Election Reform to Achieve Efficiency and Legitimacy in Indonesian Democracy

Electoral and regional election reform in Indonesia is an urgent necessity in order to address the aforementioned problems in the implementation of elections. This reform strategy must be directed at improving the design of the electoral system, strengthening the institutions involved in its implementation, improving regulations, and transforming the political culture of society. Thus, reform is not only technical in nature, but also touches on structural and cultural aspects. The following are the reform strategies that need to be carried out in the structuring of elections and regional elections.

Reforming the design of the election and regional election system is an important first step. The five-box simultaneous election model implemented in the 2019 elections proved to create an extraordinary workload and resulted in poor quality of implementation.⁴⁴ Therefore, it is necessary to reconsider a limited simultaneous election model, for example by separating legislative and executive elections. This design is more realistic in maintaining a balance between efficiency and quality of democracy.⁴⁵

Strengthening the institutions that organize elections must be a priority. The KPU, Bawaslu, and DKPP require greater institutional capacity, including in terms of human resource professionalism, strengthening recruitment systems, and budgetary

³⁷ V Hadiz, "Oligarki Politik Dan Demokrasi Elektoral Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Politik* 7, no. 1 (2020): 1-22, <https://doi.org/10.7454/jp.v7i1.1209>.

³⁸ S Munjani, "Politik Identitas Dalam Pemilu Indonesia," *Jurnal Ilmu Politik* 20, no. 2 (2019): 145-62, <https://doi.org/10.22146/jipol.6743>.

³⁹ S. Liddle, R. W., & Mujani, "Religious Identity Politics in Indonesia's Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 32, no. 3 (2021): 111-25, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2021.0049>.

⁴⁰ T. Pepinsky, "Polarization and Democracy in Indonesia," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 42, no. 3 (2020): 305-28, <https://doi.org/10.1355/cs42-3c>.

⁴¹ Lim, "Disinformation and Hate Speech in Indonesian Elections."

⁴² H. Nugroho, "Pengawasan Kampanye Daring Dalam Pemilu Indonesia," *Jurnal Hukum Dan Media* 4, no. 2 (2021): 189-207, <https://doi.org/10.23917/jhm.v4i2.12567>.

⁴³ T Santoso, "Election Dispute Resolution in Indonesia: The Role of the Constitutional Court," *Indonesia Law Review* 9, no. 2 (2019): 203-20, <https://doi.org/10.15742/ilrev.v9n2.568>.

⁴⁴ A. P. Budiatri, "Evaluating Simultaneous Elections in Indonesia," *Electoral Studies* 66 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2020.102168>.

⁴⁵ L. Suryadinata, "The Challenges of Electoral Reform in Indonesia," *Asian Survey*, 59, no. 4 (2019): 635-657., <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2019.59.4.635>.

Reform of the Organisation of Elections and Local Elections in Realising the Efficiency and Legitimacy of Democracy

support.⁴⁶ Studies show that the independence of election organizers is directly proportional to the level of public trust in election results.⁴⁷ To that end, internal and external oversight mechanisms need to be strengthened to maintain the integrity of organizers.⁴⁸

Electoral and regional election regulatory reforms are needed to address legal inconsistencies that are often a source of dispute. Law No. 7 of 2017 on Elections and Law No. 10 of 2016 on Regional Elections still contain many inconsistencies.⁴⁹ The codification of election law into a single law is a strategic step to simplify regulations and provide legal certainty for all parties.⁵⁰

Strengthening the election dispute resolution mechanism is also crucial. The Constitutional Court has been the mainstay for resolving election result disputes, when ideally disputes should first be resolved by the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) or the Party Court.⁵¹ By strengthening the authority and capacity of dispute resolution institutions at the lower levels, the burden on the Constitutional Court can be reduced and the electoral justice process can run more quickly and efficiently.⁵²

The eradication of money politics and identity politics must be carried out through a legal approach as well as political education. The application of criminal and administrative sanctions against money politics practices is still weak in implementation, so it is necessary to strengthen regulations and the courage to enforce the law.⁵³ On the other hand, continuous political education can shape voters' awareness to reject transactional practices and identity issues.⁵⁴

Digital transformation in elections also needs to be made a reform strategy. Digital technology can be used in voter verification, electronic vote counting, and more transparent online campaigns.⁵⁵ However, the use of technology must be balanced with cybersecurity and personal data protection to prevent manipulation.⁵⁶

Civil society participation must be strengthened in the election monitoring process. Civil society organizations can be strategic partners for organizers in promoting transparency and accountability.⁵⁷ Research shows that active civil society involvement can reduce fraud and increase the legitimacy of election results.⁵⁸

By implementing these strategies, it is hoped that electoral and regional election reform will not only result in greater efficiency in implementation, but also strengthen the legitimacy of democracy in Indonesia.

III. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion, it can be concluded that:

1. The problems in organizing general elections and regional elections in Indonesia are caused by, among other things: (a) general elections and regional elections in Indonesia are still marred by various issues, ranging from the design of the five-box simultaneous election system that causes fatigue for organizers, logistical problems, to budget and institutional capacity limitations. This shows that electoral design reform is the first step that must be taken to create a system that is simpler, more efficient, and more user-friendly for both organizers and voters; (b) there is a disharmony between the Election Law and the Regional Election Law. This inconsistency has led to overlapping authorities, difficulties in law enforcement, and an increase in the number of election result disputes. Therefore, the codification of election laws is a strategic solution to unify all regulations into a comprehensive, simple,

⁴⁶ N. Susanti, "Institutional Strengthening of Indonesia's Election Management Bodies," *Journal of Southeast Asian Politics* 12, no. 2 (21AD): 145–163, <https://doi.org/10.1177/18681034211034567>.

⁴⁷ Norris, P. *Strengthening Electoral Integrity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press., 2019

⁴⁸ H. Rahman, "Public Trust and Election Commissions in Indonesia," *Jurnal Ilmu Politik* 21, no. 1 (2022): 55–74, <https://doi.org/10.22146/jipol.90876>.

⁴⁹ S. Harijanti, "The Fragmented Legal Framework of Elections in Indonesia," *Indonesia Law Review* 10, no. 1 (2020): 77–95, <https://doi.org/10.15742/ilrev.v10n1.611>.

⁵⁰ E. Sihombing, "Towards Codification of Election Law in Indonesia," *Jurnal Hukum* 8, no. 2 (2021): 211–29, <https://doi.org/10.20885/jh.v8i2.14321>.

⁵¹ A. Yulianto, "Bawaslu and Electoral Dispute Resolution in Indonesia," *Jurnal Konstitusi* 16, no. 4 (2019): 701–20, <https://doi.org/10.31078/jk1646>.

⁵² D. Butler, "Electoral Justice in Southeast Asia: Lessons from Indonesia," *Asian Journal of Comparative Law* 15, no. 2 (2020): 255–73, <https://doi.org/10.1017/asjcl.2020.21>.

⁵³ Aspinall, E., & Berenschot, *Democracy for Sale: Elections, Clientelism, and the State in Indonesia*.

⁵⁴ E. Hiarij, "Political Education as a Solution to Money Politics in Indonesia," *Jurnal Pendidikan Politik* 6, no. 1 (2020): 89–105, <https://doi.org/10.17509/jpp.v6i1.25560>.

⁵⁵ M. A. Santoso, "Digital Transformation in Indonesian Elections," *Journal of E-Government Studies*, 5, no. 2 (2021): 101–18, <https://doi.org/10.28989/jegs.v5i2.983>.

⁵⁶ A. Setiawan, "Cybersecurity and Electoral Technology in Indonesia," *Journal of Information Security* 11, no. 1 (2022): 55–73, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19393555.2022.210876>.

⁵⁷ M. Mietzner, "Civil Society Engagement in Indonesian Elections," *Journal of Democracy*, 31, no. 4 (2020): 95–109, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2020.0068>.

⁵⁸ Mietzner, "Independence of Election Commissions under Pressure: Evidence from Indonesia."

Reform of the Organisation of Elections and Local Elections in Realising the Efficiency and Legitimacy of Democracy

and consistent legal framework; (c) there are still weaknesses related to the independence and accountability of the KPU, Bawaslu, and DKPP, which need to be strengthened so that they are able to carry out their functions of organizing and supervising elections professionally. Strengthening human resource capacity, improving recruitment mechanisms, and providing adequate budgetary support must be integrated into the institutional reform framework. This is in line with the need to maintain public trust as the foundation of democratic legitimacy; (d) The prevalence of money politics, identity politics, and disinformation in elections shows that reform is not only structural but also cultural. Continuous political education, strengthening digital literacy, and actively involving civil society in election monitoring are integral parts of building a healthy and participatory democracy.

2. The strategy for reforming the structure of general and regional elections to achieve efficiency and democratic legitimacy in Indonesia is multidimensional reform, covering aspects of system design, regulation, institutions, and political culture. This strategy is expected to improve the efficiency of the electoral process while strengthening the legitimacy of election results. Ultimately, efficient and legitimate elections and regional elections are not only procedural goals, but also substantive instruments for strengthening Indonesian democracy. Consistent, participatory, and integrity-oriented reforms will form the foundation for the development of a fair, inclusive, and sustainable political system.

The results of this study provide a conceptual basis for policymakers in drafting a national Election Code and promoting elections that are both fair and efficient as a form of constitutional democratic consolidation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the analysis in this study, there are several strategic recommendations that can be proposed to strengthen electoral and regional election reform in Indonesia:

1. **Reform of the Electoral and Regional Election System Design** The government and the House of Representatives need to reconsider the simultaneous election model so as not to cause an excessive administrative burden. Limited simultaneous elections, separating legislative and executive elections, could be a realistic option to reduce complexity.
2. **Codification of Election Law** An Election Code needs to be drafted that integrates all election and regional election rules into one comprehensive law. This step could reduce regulatory disharmony while providing legal certainty for all parties.
3. **Strengthening the Institutions of the Organizers** The KPU, Bawaslu, and DKPP must be strengthened through improving the quality of human resources, a transparent recruitment system, and an adequate budget. The independence of the organizing institutions must also be maintained with stricter internal and external oversight mechanisms.
4. **Protection of Voters' Constitutional Rights** The government needs to improve logistics management, voter data, and accessibility for vulnerable groups (people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, residents in remote areas) so that the principle of inclusive elections can be realized.
5. **Eradication of Money Politics and Identity Politics** Law enforcement must be strengthened through the application of strict criminal and administrative sanctions. On the other hand, political education of the public must be continuously promoted to reduce dependence on transactional practices and identity narratives.
6. **Responsible Use of Digital Technology** The digitization of elections (e-recapitulation, voter verification, and online campaigns) must be complemented by adequate personal data protection and cybersecurity systems to prevent data manipulation and leaks.
7. **Civil Society Engagement** Civil society organizations need to be encouraged to actively participate in election monitoring, voter education, and campaign oversight on social media. Synergy between organizers and civil society will increase the transparency and legitimacy of election results.
8. **Strengthening Political Education and Digital Literacy** Political education is not only the responsibility of political parties, but also educational institutions, the media, and community groups. Digital literacy is key to equipping voters to deal with disinformation and hate speech in the digital public sphere.

REFERENCES

- 1) Allen, N., & Sjahir, B. "“Money Politics and Local Governance in Indonesia.” *Journal of East Asian Studies* 22, no. 1 (2022): 25–50. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jea.2022.3>.
- 2) Aspinall, E., & Berenschot, W. *Democracy for Sale: Elections, Clientelism, and the State in Indonesia*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019.
- 3) Asshiddiqie, J. *Hukum Tata Negara Dan Pilar-Pilar Demokrasi*. Jakarta: Konstitusi Press, 2006.
- 4) ———. *Konstitusi Dan Demokrasi*. Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2014.
- 5) Beetham, D. *The Legitimation of Power*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- 6) Birch, S. "Electoral Credibility and Public Trust." *Democratization* 26, no. 3 (2019): 500. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2018.1551824>.
- 7) Budiatri, A. P. "“Evaluating Simultaneous Elections in Indonesia.”” *Electoral Studies* 66 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2020.102168>.

Reform of the Organisation of Elections and Local Elections in Realising the Efficiency and Legitimacy of Democracy

- 8) Butler, D. "Electoral Justice in Southeast Asia: Lessons from Indonesia." *Asian Journal of Comparative Law* 15, no. 2 (2020): 255–73. <https://doi.org/10.1017/asjcl.2020.21>.
- 9) Dahl, R. A. *On Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- 10) Diamond, L. "Democratic Regression in Comparative Perspective." *Democratization* 26, no. 8 (2019): 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2019.1666757>.
- 11) Hadiz, V. "Oligarki Politik Dan Demokrasi Elektoral Di Indonesia." *Jurnal Politik* 7, no. 1 (2020): 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.7454/jp.v7i1.1209>.
- 12) Harijanti, S. "The Fragmented Legal Framework of Elections in Indonesia." *Indonesia Law Review* 10, no. 1 (2020): 77–95. <https://doi.org/10.15742/ilrev.v10n1.611>.
- 13) Haryanto, B. "Cyber Security in Indonesia's Elections: Lessons from 2019." *Journal of Cyber Policy* 5, no. 3 (2020): 379–96. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23738871.2020.1844521>.
- 14) Hiariej, E. "Political Education as a Solution to Money Politics in Indonesia." *Jurnal Pendidikan Politik* 6, no. 1 (2020): 89–105. <https://doi.org/10.17509/jpp.v6i1.25560>.
- 15) Hidayat, R. "Pemilu Lima Kotak Dan Kompleksitas Penyelenggaraan Di Indonesia." *Electoral Studies* 65 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2020.102145>.
- 16) L. Z. Mutalib, M., & Rahim. "Electoral Reform in Malaysia: Efficiency and Legitimacy..". *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics*, 5, no. 4 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2057891120943543>.
- 17) Liddle, R. W., & Mujani, S. "Religious Identity Politics in Indonesia's Democracy." *Journal of Democracy* 32, no. 3 (2021): 111–25. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2021.0049>.
- 18) Lim, M. "Disinformation and Hate Speech in Indonesian Elections." *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, 39, no. 2 (2020): 227–248. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1868103420935566>.
- 19) Mahfud, M. D. *Politik Hukum Di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2019.
- 20) Marzuki, P. M. *Penelitian Hukum: Pendekatan Yuridis Normatif*. Jakarta: Kencana, 2017.
- 21) Mietzner, M. "Authoritarian Innovations in Indonesia: Electoral Integrity and the 2019 Elections." *Democratization* 27, no. 6 (2020): 1014–1032. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2020.1737599>.
- 22) ———. "Civil Society Engagement in Indonesian Elections." *Journal of Democracy*, 31, no. 4 (2020): 95–109. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2020.0068>.
- 23) ———. "Independence of Election Commissions under Pressure: Evidence from Indonesia." *Electoral Studies* 72 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2021.102355>.
- 24) Munjani, S. "Politik Identitas Dalam Pemilu Indonesia." *Jurnal Ilmu Politik* 20, no. 2 (2019): 145–62. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jipol.6743>.
- 25) Norris, P., & Grömping, M. "Electoral Integrity Worldwide: The PEI Data." *Electoral Studies*, 62 (2019): 102–12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2019.102102>.
- 26) Norris, P. *Strengthening Electoral Integrity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press., 2019.
- 27) Nugroho, H. "Pengawasan Kampanye Daring Dalam Pemilu Indonesia." *Jurnal Hukum Dan Media* 4, no. 2 (2021): 189–207. <https://doi.org/10.23917/jhm.v4i2.12567>.
- 28) ———. "Political Participation in Indonesia's Local Elections: Between Pragmatism and Idealism." *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik*, 24, no. 1 (2020): 55–70. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jsp.56789>.
- 29) Nurhasim, M. "Akuntabilitas Penyelenggara Pemilu Di Indonesia." *Jurnal Demokrasi* 18, no. 2 (2019): 211–28. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jd.v18i2.567>.
- 30) ———. *Pemilu Di Indonesia: Antara Regulasi Dan Praktik*. Jakarta: Pustaka Obor, n.d.
- 31) Pepinsky, T. "Polarization and Democracy in Indonesia." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 42, no. 3 (2020): 305–28. <https://doi.org/10.1355/cs42-3c>.
- 32) Power, T. "Death and Democracy: The Fate of Electoral Workers in Indonesia's 2019 Elections." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 41, no. 2 (2019): 227–36. <https://doi.org/10.1355/cs41-2c>.
- 33) Priyono, A. "Logistics and Election Disputes in Indonesia." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 51, no. 3 (2020): 412–30. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002246342000034X>.
- 34) Rahman, H. "Public Trust and Election Commissions in Indonesia." *Jurnal Ilmu Politik* 21, no. 1 (2022): 55–74. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jipol.90876>.
- 35) Ridwan, H. R. "Konsep Negara Hukum Dalam Perspektif Demokrasi." *Jurnal Konstitusi* 17, no. 4 (2020): 623–40. <https://doi.org/10.31078/jk1743>.
- 36) Santoso, M. A. "Digital Transformation in Indonesian Elections." *Journal of E-Government Studies*, 5, no. 2 (2021): 101–18. <https://doi.org/10.28989/jegs.v5i2.983>.
- 37) Santoso, T. "Election Dispute Resolution in Indonesia: The Role of the Constitutional Court." *Indonesia Law Review* 9,

Reform of the Organisation of Elections and Local Elections in Realising the Efficiency and Legitimacy of Democracy

- no. 2 (2019): 203–20. <https://doi.org/10.15742/ilrev.v9n2.568>.
- 38) Schumpeter, J. *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- 39) Setiawan, A. “Cybersecurity and Electoral Technology in Indonesia.” *Journal of Information Security* 11, no. 1 (2022): 55–73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19393555.2022.210876>.
- 40) Sihombing, E. “Towards Codification of Election Law in Indonesia.” *Jurnal Hukum* 8, no. 2 (2021): 211–29. <https://doi.org/10.20885/jh.v8i2.14321>.
- 41) Soekanto, S., & Mamudji, S. *Penelitian Hukum Normatif: Suatu Tinjauan Singkat*. Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada, 2015.
- 42) Sulaeman, A. “Evaluasi Kelelahan Petugas Pemilu 2019: Sebuah Analisis Manajemen Pemilu.” *Jurnal Politik Indonesia* 5, no. 2 (2020): 201–20. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jpi.56782>.
- 43) ———. “Evaluasi Pelaksanaan Pemilu Serentak 2019 Di Indonesia.” *Jurnal Ilmu Politik*, 12, no. 1 (2021): 23–40. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jipol.12345>.
- 44) Suryadinata, L. “The Challenges of Electoral Reform in Indonesia.” *Asian Survey*, 59, no. 4 (2019): 635–657. <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2019.59.4.635>.
- 45) Susanti, N. “Institutional Strengthening of Indonesia’s Election Management Bodies.” *Journal of Southeast Asian Politics* 12, no. 2 (21AD): 145–163. <https://doi.org/10.1177/18681034211034567>.
- 46) Ufen, A. “The 2019 Simultaneous Elections in Indonesia: Electoral System Design and Democratic Resilience.” *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics*, 5, no. 2 (2020): 144–160. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2057891119899860>.
- 47) Wahid, A. “Digitalisasi Pemilu Dan Tantangan Sirekap Dalam Pemilu 2020.” *Jurnal Politik Indonesia* 6, no. 2 (2021): 145–62. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jpi.67890>.
- 48) Wahid, A. “Kendala Distribusi Logistik Pemilu Di Daerah Terpencil.” *Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan* 9, no. 1 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.14710/jip.v9i1.4563>.
- 49) Yulianto, A. “Bawaslu and Electoral Dispute Resolution in Indonesia.” *Jurnal Konstitusi* 16, no. 4 (2019): 701–20. <https://doi.org/10.31078/jk1646>.