

The Government's Role in the Success of the Village Anti-Money Politics Program in Rembang

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Abstrak:

Penelitian ini mengkaji Program Desa Anti Politik Uang oleh Badan Pengawas Pemilu (Bawaslu) untuk meningkatkan partisipasi masyarakat dalam pengawasan pemilu dan memerangi korupsi pemilu. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini berfokus pada Kabupaten Rembang, sebuah daerah yang berisiko tinggi terhadap pelanggaran pemilu. Implementasi program yang dilakukan secara bertahap, yang melibatkan proses sosialisasi, koordinasi pemangku kepentingan, dan keberlanjutan. Terlepas dari keberhasilan ini, tantangan seperti pelanggaran yang terus terjadi dan kebutuhan akan lebih banyak tenaga pengawas tetap ada. Studi ini menyoroti efektivitas program dalam mempromosikan integritas demokrasi dan memberikan rekomendasi untuk mempertahankan dan meningkatkan inisiatif di masa depan.

Kata Kunci: Peran Pemerintah, Pemilu, Partisipasi Masyarakat, Rembang

Abstract:

This research examines the Election Supervisory Agency's (Bawaslu) Anti-Money Politics Village Program to increase community participation in election monitoring and combat election corruption. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this study focuses on Rembang Regency, an area with a high risk of election violations. The implementation of the program was conducted in stages, involving a process of socialization, stakeholder coordination, and sustainability. Despite these successes, challenges such as persistent violations and the need for more supervisory personnel remain. This study highlights the effectiveness of the program in promoting democratic integrity and provides recommendations to sustain and improve the initiative in the future.

Keywords: Government's role, Election, Community Participation, Rembang

Introduction

Community participation in regional election monitoring is essential for upholding democratic principles, ensuring electoral integrity, and fostering a transparent and inclusive electoral process. This active participation not only promotes inclusivity in democratic processes but also helps prevent election violations, thereby fostering an honest and fair election environment (Handoko, Israwan Setyoko, & Kurniasih, 2023). The level of community participation in elections serves as a benchmark for assessing the level of democracy in a region (Anderson & Kuswanto, 2021).

Efforts to enhance community participation in regional elections include providing better platforms for monitoring elections, sharing information in real-time, and encouraging public communication strategies to engage voters (Jha & Shayo, 2019). The democratization process and the credibility of elections are closely tied to the level of public participation and monitoring. Election observers play a crucial role in evaluating the legitimacy of elections and informing scholarly studies on democracy (Bush & Prather, 2017; Kelley, 2009). Establishing high-quality democracy and boosting public participation in regional elections require concerted efforts to raise awareness and educate the public about the importance of participation (Winengan, 2018).

The implementation of regional elections is not only the responsibility of the KPU, but the Supervisory Committee has the duty and obligation to take action against violations that occur during the campaign process. Rembang Regency is one of the regions that occupies the top ten vulnerability rates of General Elections. The implementation of the elections in Rembang cannot be separated from the findings of violations, one of which is related to the practice of money politics. Where Central Java has a high level of vulnerability and Rembang Regency is ranked as medium vulnerability (Bawaslu, 2024).

Increased public awareness is needed to improve the quality of democracy, one of which is through community involvement in the process of political activities. This participation is a vital part of the political system in the input and output of a country's political process. In order for the holding of elections to have more quality, integrity and fulfill democratic elements as noble values in the state system, the role of the community in organizing elections is a necessity. The more people who are involved in elections and the more eyes that oversee the implementation of elections, the more democratic values and the principle of Luber Jurdil (Direct, General, Free, Secret, Honest and Fair) elections will be realized. The implementation of the election is ultimately carried out by the Election Organizer, the General Election Commission (KPU) and its staff with integrity and supervised by the Election Organizer, the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) and its staff with integrity as an institution that is constitutionally mandated and the community who has the moral responsibility of holding the sovereignty of the people.

The Anti-Money Politics Village Program is a step taken by the Election Supervisory Agency to suppress the practice of money politics which has been rooted in election problems. This program began in 2021 which focused in Rembang began with a "*rembug warga*" program containing elements of society who have concerns and visions so that the implementation of elections in the following years can be carried out properly, democratically and with quality. The establishment of the Anti-Money Politics Village has guidelines in its formation, which pay attention to the preparation stage criteria consisting of preparing program design, socialization, creating joint commitment between elements of society and determining the area as a pilot project, secondly

coordination with village stakeholders, preparation of work programs, encouraging citizen interest through creative competitions, and thirdly as a follow-up activity there is coaching involving the community who are members of the Anti-Money Politics Village, further cadre, and encouraging the government to form a special front group to preserve the program that is already running. So that the success of the program certainly requires various stakeholder support in achieving Public awareness regarding elections is crucial for ensuring a transparent and democratic electoral process. The purpose of this study is to analyze how the process of improving the quality of community participation through the Anti-Money Politics Village Program by considering aspects of the government's role as regulator, dynamizer, and facilitator to see the success of the program from the perspective of the role played by the government (Musa, 2017).

Methods

This research exploring at the program of “*Desa Anti Politik Uang*” uses descriptive qualitative research to identify and analysis of those programs (Sugiyono, 2020). The complexity of “*Desa Anti Politik Uang*” can be identified many stakeholders were involved as driving factors in achieving Public awareness regarding elections in Indonesia is crucial for ensuring a transparent and democratic electoral process. Therefore the final results can be analyzed through community participation in participating in the Village anti-money politics program.

Results and Discussion

Public awareness regarding elections in Indonesia is crucial for ensuring a transparent and democratic electoral process. Various studies have highlighted the significance of public engagement and awareness in the electoral context of Indonesia. For instance, research has emphasized the importance of fostering awareness of bureaucratic integrity and neutrality to uphold public service duties and promote good governance in the country (Noer, 2024). Additionally, public participation in elections is seen as a means of political education for citizens, contributing to the growth of democracy in Indonesia (Paskarina, Hermawati, & Nuraeni, 2018; Sunarso, Suyato, Kuncorowati, Manik, & Fathurrahman, 2022). Political actors at election events have a target of increasing voter votes, where one way to gain votes is through the distribution of money either in the form of cash or in the form of other valuable goods. Where this has an impact on the cost of election contestation is increasingly expensive and provides an indication that there is a trend of increasing capital in each candidate. Public participation is needed to improve the quality of people's political literacy, there is a link between political literacy for voters and hoax information control, and understanding of elections Anshori et al. (2023). The government through the Anti-Money Politics Village Program seeks to increase political understanding through communal community empowerment so that ideal democracy can be achieved.

Government's Role as Regulator

One of the mandates listed in Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections is that the Regency / City Bawaslu is obliged to "develop participatory election supervision". Bawaslu as one of the government actors has the authority to empower the community in active involvement in participatory elections in order to realize democratic elections. The Bawaslu in the district / city in

2021 has a '*rembug warga*' program, a community forum that contains elements of society who are concerned, critical, and have a vision so that the implementation of elections in the following years can be carried out properly, democratically and with quality.

Through the Supervision Village and Anti-Money Politics Village Development activities, Bawaslu Rembang Regency is present to the community in eight (8) locations in the Rembang Regency area including Suntri Village, Ngulahan Village, Sanetan Village, Pasarbanggi Village, Bulu Village, Ronggomulyo Village, Tasikharjo Village, Karasgede Village by providing political education, understanding to the community and enlightening the importance of election supervision and inviting the community to reject money politics. Bawaslu has a way to increase community commitment, namely through an integrity pact involving stakeholders such as community leaders, Village Tourism Awareness Groups, Youth Organization, Attorney General's Office and Police. So that if a violation is found, Bawaslu has one voice with the Prosecutor's Office and the Police to proceed to the investigation. So that the expected outcome is that the community is consciously committed starting from themselves, their families, neighbors and surroundings to oversee the implementation of elections and dare to reject money politics so that elections become better without any transactions while still participating in the success of every General Election event.

The success of the program lies in monitoring and enforcing election organizers in all elements of society. However, until the implementation of the 2024 General Election, there were still violations involving ASN in the Rembang region, it was noted that Rembang was among the areas with high violations in the first place with the findings of 9 cases, followed by Karanganyar Regency with 5 cases, Semarang City with 3 cases, Grobogan Regency with 2 cases, and Blora and Wonogiri Regencies with 1 case (Bawaslu, 2024). The phenomenon of money politics is also still found ahead of the election period, where the nominal given varies such as money of 100,000.00 rupiah to 500,000.00 rupiah. The phenomenon of neutrality of the state civil apparatus and money politics that is still high needs guidance as a form of development in the anti-money politics program. So that the implementation of elections in a democratic manner requires a special strategy in ensuring the quality of the implementation of elections, for example, innovation in the use of social media as an involvement of participatory supervision and an increase in the number of supervisory personnel so that irregularities in general election activities can be reduced (Solihah, 2018).

Government's Role as Dinamisor

Bawaslu as a state institution is given the duty and authority to supervise the implementation of elections, the urgency is a division for the involvement or participation of the community in the simultaneous election supervision process. Supervision carried out by the community is part of the application of the concept of good governance, where state institutions together with the community work together in realizing good controlling governance. Related to the active participation of the community, Bawaslu's policies concerning this participation are contained in Bawaslu's Strategic Plan for 2010-2014, 2015-2019, 2020-2024 and Bawaslu Regulation Number 13 of 2012 concerning Election Supervision Procedures which regulates forms of community participation so that these two policies explain Bawaslu's efforts to involve and encourage community participation in election supervision. The role of government as a dynamizer is characterized by the level of public participation as voters in general elections which is considered to be quite high in the

Rembang region, seen during the election of the Regent and Vice Regent that the average community has an average voter turnout rate of 86% (See Table 1).

The government is very good at encouraging the public to participate in elections so that this increase in the number of voters needs to be considered as an opportunity to encourage the public to monitor elections. Until now, Bawaslu as an institution that is given the authority to supervise still has obstacles in the number of personnel and the amount of budget that is very limited when organizing general elections, causing potential violations of neutrality. In addition to the potential for neutrality irregularities, there are other issues in organizing elections that need to be monitored, Maftuhin, a member of the Rembang Regency Bawaslu, Coordinator of the Supervision and Inter-Agency Relations Division, explained:

"The number of supervisory personnel is limited, there is one supervisor in the village, three in the sub-district and one in the polling station. From the small number of personnel in the supervisory ranks, the community must participate in supervising all stages of the implementation. There are several problems or issues that always arise during elections or regional elections, namely SARA, money politics, hoax news, voter data and others. As participatory supervisors, the public must have the courage to reject money politics and report to the supervisory ranks if suspected violations are found."

It can be seen that Bawaslu has a role as a dynamizer where there are efforts to mobilize community participation by providing direction and placing a number of personnel in the implementation of general elections at each polling station (TPS) as a place for reporting people who want to report election irregularities.

Table 1. Percentage of Community Participation in General Elections in Rembang Regency Years 2021

Number	District	Percentage of Community Participation in General Election (%)
1	Sedan	89
2	Rembang	82
3	Kaliori	86
4	Sumber	89
5	Lasem	83
6	Bulu	87

Sources: Processing Data by Author (2024)

Government's Role as Facilitator

Governments can act as facilitators by creating conducive conditions for innovation and collaboration (Molenveld, Verhoest, Voets, & Steen, 2020; Wagemans & Witschge, 2019). Several factors can influence the success of elections in post-conflict settings. Bawaslu in collaboration with the prosecutor's office and the police have a commitment to creating peaceful elections by forming a Gakkumdu center that has the impact of increasing public confidence in the course of elections.

Bawaslu Rembang Regency established the Anti-Money Politics Village Program as a village that has a high political awareness character and consciously realizes a clean and dignified democracy in resisting money politics. In order to create the desired community, there are several criteria to be achieved, such as the relationship between community/religious leaders and the community is open, the community is open to new information, there is synergy between stakeholders and the community, and there is a strong mutual will to improve the quality of democracy.

Bawaslu Rembang in carrying out its role as a facilitator has carried out the determination of villages that are used as Anti-Money Politics Village Programs, and formed coordination with cross-stakeholders. This can be seen from community participation in calling attention to the rejection of money politics so that the community does not compromise on various forms of irregularities. As stated by Habermas (1990) the success of an activity depends on the consent of all affected in their capacity as participants in practical discourse. The implementation of the Anti-Money Politics Village program, especially in Rembang Regency, has only limited follow-up as an effort to strengthen the integrity pact that has been agreed upon. According to the guidelines for the establishment of the Anti-Money Politics Village, there are still shortcomings, especially in the coaching that involves the community who are members of the Anti-Money Politics Village group and the formation of a special front group to preserve the program (Bawaslu, 2021).

Conclusion

Rembang Regency is one of the areas that formed the Anti-Money Politics Village pilot structure. There are eight Anti-Money Politics Villages as Pilot Project activities, namely Suntri Village, Ngulahan Village, Sanetan Village, Pasarbangi Village, Bulu Village, Ronggomulyo Village, Tasikharjo Village, Karasgede Village. The role of the Government in pioneering Anti-Money Politics Villages in Rembang Regency is able to encourage the community to participate and increase public awareness and political understanding that there are long-term impacts that will be received from money politics. There is a synergy formed called Gakkumdu which consists of involvement between stakeholders such as Bawaslu, the Attorney General's Office and the Police to oversee the election neutrality process. The eight villages as pilot areas have several notes to develop the Anti-Money Politics Village for the better, such as the need for efforts to sustain the perpetrators of irregularities, the need for guidance for cadres in the Anti-Money Politics Village, and encouraging the formation of a special front group for the sustainability of the Anti-Money Politics Village program so that the quality of Indonesian democracy becomes even better through the program.

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