

RESEARCH ARTICLE



The Effectiveness Of The Regional Head Election (Pilkada) Implementation In Bengkulu City

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the performance of the Secretariat staff of the Bengkulu City General Election Commission (KPU) in the implementation of the 2018 Regional Head Election (Pilkada). A descriptive qualitative method was used, with data collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The research focused on five effectiveness indicators according to Hasibuan: job performance, responsibility, discipline, honesty, and teamwork. The findings indicate that KPU Secretariat staff carried out their duties in alignment with these indicators, although several technical challenges were encountered. The election schedule was implemented according to the planned timeline, and inter-staff cooperation was notably high. Therefore, the staff's performance is categorized as effective and contributed significantly to the successful execution of the Pilkada in Bengkulu City. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the importance of professionalism and accountability among election administrators as a foundation for local democratic governance.

Keyword: Effectiveness, Employee Performance, Regional Election, Electoral Commission, Local Governance

Introduction

Regional Head Elections (Pilkada) are an important instrument in the local democracy system in Indonesia. This process provides space for the community to participate directly in determining regional leadership through a legitimate and constitutionally recognized voting mechanism. In this context, Pilkada is not just an electoral routine, but also a representation of the implementation of people's sovereignty at the local level (Prihatmoko, 2003). The importance of Pilkada in Indonesia's decentralized government system is emphasized through Law Number 32 of 2004 concerning Regional Government, which states that regional heads and deputy regional heads are directly elected by the people (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2004). This shows the state's commitment to strengthening regional autonomy and increasing the accountability and legitimacy of regional leaders. However, the success of Pilkada implementation is highly dependent on the quality and effectiveness of election organizing institutions, especially the General Election Commission (KPU). The KPU as a national, permanent, and independent institution has the responsibility to ensure that each stage of Pilkada runs in accordance with the principles of democracy, justice, and openness (Nadir, 2005). At the regional level, the Bengkulu City KPU has a strategic role in ensuring that the Pilkada is held efficiently and professionally. In the context of the 2018 Bengkulu City Pilkada, challenges not only arise from technical and logistical aspects, but also from the internal side, namely the performance of secretariat employees as the main implementers of Pilkada operational activities. The performance of KPU secretariat employees reflects the quality of the institution itself. According to Hasibuan (2005), the

effectiveness of employee performance can be measured by five indicators, namely: work performance, responsibility, discipline, honesty, and cooperation. These indicators are an important basis for assessing the success of implementing institutional tasks, especially in the context of complex election implementation. Common obstacles faced in the implementation of Pilkada often involve low levels of discipline, poor use of time, lack of coordination between departments, and suboptimal employee responsibility in completing work according to deadlines. If not handled properly, this condition can have direct implications for the legitimacy of the election results and public trust in the KPU (Yazid, 2009). The 2018 Bengkulu City Pilkada is a relevant study to examine the effectiveness of the implementation of the Pilkada from the aspect of internal performance. Implementation that is timely, accurate, and free from internal conflict indicates that the KPU secretariat employees are able to carry out their roles optimally according to the institutional mandate. Conversely, if there are delays or administrative chaos, this indicates the need for structural and managerial improvements. Based on these conditions, the formulation of the problem in this study is: How effective is the implementation of the Bengkulu City Regional Head Election (Pilkada)? This question is the basis for the overall analysis carried out on the institutional performance of the Bengkulu City KPU in implementing the Pilkada. This study aims to analyze and describe the effectiveness of the performance of the Bengkulu City KPU secretariat employees in implementing the 2018 Pilkada. The analysis focuses on the five indicators of work effectiveness that have been mentioned, in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the internal dynamics of the institution and its contribution to the success of the Pilkada. Through a descriptive qualitative approach, this study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of public administration science as well as practical contributions to strengthening the institutional organization of elections at the local level. The findings of this study are also expected to be a reference for formulating institutional policies that are more responsive to the challenges of implementing electoral democracy in the regions.

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Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the effectiveness of the implementation of the 2018 Bengkulu City Regional Head Election (Pilkada), especially in the context of the performance of the General Election Commission (KPU) secretariat employees. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the socio-institutional dynamics comprehensively, and emphasizes the interpretation of complex and contextual empirical realities (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research is considered relevant to reveal the meaning, motivation, and perceptions of research subjects towards the implementation of institutional functions substantively. The location of the study was determined purposively at the Bengkulu City KPU office as an institution that has the main authority in organizing the Pilkada. The research subjects included KPU secretariat employees who were directly involved in the process of implementing the Pilkada stages. The determination of informants was carried out using a purposive sampling technique, namely the selection of informants based on the criteria of active involvement and in-depth understanding of the administrative and technical processes of organizing the election (Sugiyono, 2017). This criterion is used so that the data obtained truly represents the experience and capacity of the institution authentically. Data collection techniques in this study consisted of in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with key informants to explore empirical narratives about work processes, obstacles, and perceptions of institutional effectiveness. Observations were used to directly observe employee work practices and internal institutional interactions, while documentation included a review of official documents such as Pilkada stage reports, meeting minutes, and other administrative instruments.

In maintaining the validity and reliability of the data, the researcher applied triangulation of sources and methods to ensure consistency of information from various data collection techniques. All data were analyzed using an interactive model from Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which includes the process of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The analysis was carried out thematically by grouping findings based on five indicators of work effectiveness according to Hasibuan (2005), namely: work performance, responsibility, discipline, honesty, and cooperation.

Through this approach, it is hoped that the results of the study will be able to provide academic contributions in the study of public administration, especially in the context of evaluating the performance of election organizing institutions at the local level. In addition, this research is expected to be able to produce practical recommendations that can be used as a basis for consideration in the preparation of strategic policies that support the strengthening of effective, professional and democratic election institutions in the future.

Results and Discussion

This study focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of the implementation of the 2018 Bengkulu City Regional Head Election (Pilkada), with an emphasis on the performance of the General Election Commission (KPU) secretariat employees. The analysis was carried out using five indicators of effectiveness formulated by Hasibuan (2005): work performance, responsibility, discipline, honesty, and cooperation. Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies. Each finding was analyzed thematically and examined in the institutional context of the KPU as a local election organizer. The first indicator, work performance, shows that most employees succeeded in carrying out their responsibilities efficiently. The stages of the Pilkada—from voter data verification, logistics distribution, to vote counting—could be completed according to the set schedule, although there were technical obstacles in the delivery of

logistics in remote areas. The fact that the Pilkada was successfully implemented in one round and did not cause administrative disputes shows the high achievement of employee performance. This success reflects their adaptive ability in facing operational challenges and the dynamics of a complex work field. A review of the responsibility indicators indicates that employees demonstrate a high professional commitment. Their responsibility is reflected in their willingness to complete work outside of working hours and active involvement in all technical stages, without having to wait for direct instructions from their superiors. Employees actively take the initiative to anticipate administrative and operational obstacles. This shows a level of independence and work integrity that is worthy of appreciation, while also reflecting the institutional capacity to form a responsive work culture. Discipline indicators show that employees are present on time and follow all scheduled agendas, including coordination meetings, technical training, and simulations of election stages. Procedural order and administrative discipline are part of the work routine that is internalized by employees. Although there were one or two cases of absence due to personal factors, internal supervision and close relationships between employees were able to minimize the potential for disruption to the continuity of work. Compliance with work protocols is a strong indicator of the institutional discipline that has been established.

Evaluation of honesty shows that KPU employees consistently maintained neutrality throughout the implementation process. No evidence was found of involvement in data manipulation practices, conflicts of interest, or deviations from administrative procedures. A work culture based on integrity was formed through continuous coaching and structural supervision, which resulted in collective awareness of the importance of maintaining the legitimacy of public institutions. Honesty is not just a moral requirement, but is a working principle inherent in carrying out tasks.

Cooperation indicators show that relations between divisions are harmonious and constructive. The division of tasks is carried out fairly and proportionally, with a high level of collaboration, especially during the crucial period leading up to voting day. The work teams not only complement each other in their functions, but also support each other under high work pressure. Cross-sector coordination between the KPU, Bawaslu, security forces, and local governments has been effective, showing that institutional cooperation is one of the main pillars of the success of the Pilkada.

Documentation of activities during the Pilkada process has been systematically compiled, including stage reports, meeting minutes, and other administrative documentation. The availability of complete and transparent archives supports public accountability and opens up space for evaluation for better implementation in the future. Although the effectiveness of the implementation is relatively high, this study found technical challenges such as imbalances in workload, limited facilities, and lack of advanced technical training for new staff. These challenges indicate the need for more systematic institutional capacity building efforts.

The findings above serve as a reminder that the effectiveness of public organizations is not a static condition, but rather an achievement that must be continuously maintained and updated. Periodic institutional evaluations need to be carried out so that adaptation to regulatory dynamics and public expectations can be realized optimally. The five indicators used in this study produce a solid picture of the functional capacity of employees in carrying out institutional mandates. The combination of technical skills, moral commitment, and work synergy creates a strong foundation for the implementation of credible elections. Empirical evidence obtained from this study shows that the effectiveness of the implementation of the Pilkada is not only determined by the regulatory and budgetary aspects, but is substantially supported by the quality of human resources working behind it. This quality is reflected in their ability to maintain professionalism amid structural limitations.

Based on the overall findings, it can be concluded that the performance of the Bengkulu City KPU secretariat staff in the implementation of the 2018 Pilkada met the established effectiveness indicators. This performance reflects the institutional readiness to organize the local democratic process with integrity and accountability, as well as being a model of good practice for other regions facing similar challenges.

Discussion

The research findings show that the implementation of the 2018 Bengkulu City Pilkada has been effective based on the five indicators analyzed. This effectiveness reflects the success of the KPU secretariat employees in carrying out institutional functions optimally. This achievement reflects the managerial and operational quality of public organizations in the context of local election implementation, which is often faced with technical, logistical, and political challenges. Employee performance, as demonstrated by the successful completion of all stages of the Pilkada on schedule, shows the suitability between the plan and the implementation of organizational tasks. Robbins and Coulter (2012) stated that organizational effectiveness can be measured by the extent to which goals can be achieved without significant deviations. This finding strengthens this concept, where the completion of technical stages without significant delays is concrete evidence of solid implementation capacity. The high responsibility of employees is seen from their active involvement in work that is not limited to formal working hours. In the framework of public administration, responsibility is not only interpreted as a structural obligation, but also as an ethical commitment to the success of the organization (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015). The level of initiative and autonomy shown by Bengkulu City KPU employees indicates that the value of responsibility has been well internalized. High discipline contributes significantly to the operational stability of the organization. Discipline is not only procedural, but also a reflection of institutional work culture. Hasibuan (2005) places discipline as one of the foundations of employee effectiveness, because regularity in carrying out tasks is the basis for creating efficiency and consistency of performance. Success in maintaining work rhythm during the election period indicates the existence of a functional monitoring and coaching system. The honesty indicator is a crucial dimension in the context of elections, because it is directly related to the legitimacy of the results and public trust in the organizing institution. The success of employees in maintaining neutrality and avoiding conflicts of interest is evidence that integrity values are not only understood as ethical norms, but also used as work principles that are applied consistently. This is in line with the theory of bureaucratic morality which emphasizes the importance of accountability and public ethics in the implementation of government administration (Frederickson, 1997). Cooperation between personnel and work units strengthens the effectiveness of institutions in responding to field dynamics. Modern organizational theory places team synergy as a vital element in dealing with the complexity of multidimensional tasks (Schein, 2010). Cross-sector coordination, both internal and external, is an important instrument in maintaining a smooth process, from logistics distribution to security during voting. Although work effectiveness is relatively high, a number of obstacles still arise, especially those related to uneven workload distribution, limited technological resources, and minimal further training for implementing staff. This finding shows that work effectiveness is not an absolute condition, but rather a dynamic process that requires continuous evaluation and improvement. The concept of "learning organization" as proposed by Senge (2006), is relevant to be applied in the institutional context of the KPU. Non-structural factors such as intrinsic motivation, participatory work culture, and supportive leadership also play an important role in shaping employee performance. This shows that the dimension of effectiveness does not only depend on technical variables, but also on relational quality within the organization. This approach supports the New Public Service

view which emphasizes the importance of a humanistic and inclusive public service orientation (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015). The integration of administrative and ethical aspects in carrying out tasks creates harmony between procedures and values. This is important in the context of organizing elections that not only demand technical performance, but also demand commitment to democratic principles. The success of employees in maintaining both aspects reflects an institution that is mature both normatively and operationally. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation of this Pilkada is a reflection of the quality of the KPU institution in managing the electoral democracy process. Amidst the complexity of regulations and external pressures, the success of employees in completing tasks with integrity and competence shows that the quality of regional bureaucracy has developed towards a reliable standard of professionalism.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study concludes that the implementation of the 2018 Bengkulu City Regional Head Election (Pilkada) can be categorized as effective based on five performance indicators of the General Election Commission (KPU) secretariat employees as formulated by Hasibuan, namely work performance, responsibility, discipline, honesty, and cooperation. The implementation of all stages of the Pilkada took place according to the set schedule, with a solid level of internal coordination and a high level of institutional participation. Employee work performance is reflected in the ability to complete tasks on time and accurately, even when faced with logistical limitations and field dynamics. The responsibility shown by employees is not only in the form of compliance with structural roles, but also in the form of personal initiatives that support the smooth running of the election process. Work discipline is well maintained through punctual attendance and compliance with the institutional activity schedule. The aspect of honesty is the main strength of the institution, marked by maintaining neutrality, transparency, and freedom from irregular practices during the election process. In addition, cooperation between work units and with external partners such as Bawaslu, security forces, and local governments shows that collaboration between institutions is an important foundation in the implementation of credible elections. However, several notes need to be considered, such as the imbalance of workload, limited technical facilities, and lack of intensive training for new technical staff. These findings indicate that institutional effectiveness needs to be continuously improved through sustainable coaching and structural improvement mechanisms.

The suggestions are:

- **Improving Employee Capacity**
The Bengkulu City KPU needs to hold regular technical and managerial training for all secretariat employees to strengthen adaptive capacity to increasingly complex election challenges.
- **Proportional Workload Distribution**
An internal evaluation of the division of tasks and responsibilities is needed, so that there is no work inequality that can reduce the performance and morale of the work team.
- **Strengthening Infrastructure and Information Technology**
Procurement and updating of work support facilities, especially information technology systems and logistics devices, need to be prioritized to support efficiency and accuracy in managing election data.
- **Institutional Learning and Periodic Evaluation**
The Bengkulu City KPU is advised to implement an institutional evaluation system based on data and previous election experience, so that each implementation can be the basis for learning that strengthens institutional capacity in the future.
- **Strengthening the Culture of Integrity and Collaboration**
Internalization of the values of integrity, neutrality, and cross-sector collaboration needs to be continuously strengthened through ethical development mechanisms,

participatory communication, and evaluative forums with strategic partners.

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