



Implementation of Election-Level Simplification in Legal Perspective to Overcome Waste of Election Resources and Costs

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Abstract. *This study aims to analyze the implementation of election-level simplification from a legal perspective to overcome the waste of election resources and costs. Elections in Indonesia have faced various challenges, including waste in excessive paper usage, overlapping stages, and inefficient budget allocations. These inefficiencies not only burden the General Elections Commission (KPU) but also affect the effectiveness and transparency of the democratic process. Simplification of election levels is expected to be an effective solution to reduce the administrative and material burdens that hinder the implementation of elections. By streamlining the structure and reducing redundant stages, election organizers can focus more on quality, security, and public participation. This study uses a normative juridical approach by analyzing relevant laws and regulations, such as Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, as well as various policies and proposals related to election-level simplification. The analysis also includes legal principles such as efficiency, effectiveness, and legal certainty. Furthermore, the study examines how other democratic countries manage election logistics efficiently to draw lessons that can be contextualized in Indonesia. The results of this study are expected to provide concrete policy recommendations that support the implementation of simplified election systems. These recommendations are aimed at optimizing the election process by minimizing waste, both in terms of budget and the use of natural and human resources, while maintaining the integrity and legitimacy of the democratic process. Thus, this study contributes to the discourse on election reform and democratic strengthening in Indonesia.*

Keywords : *Cost Efficiency, Election Resources, Legal Perspective, Simplification, Waste Reduction.*

1 INTRODUCTION

General elections (elections) are the main pillar in a democratic system that guarantees people's participation in determining the direction of state administration. In a modern democratic country, elections are not only a routine five-yearly activity but also a symbol of the legitimacy of power obtained legally through the will of the people (Azis, 2022). Through elections, people are allowed to elect their representatives in legislative and executive institutions, so that the policies and decisions taken by the government reflect the aspirations of the people. Thus, elections play a central role in maintaining political stability, strengthening the legitimacy of government, and ensuring that the circulation of power takes place peacefully and constitutionally (Huda N. &., 2017).

As a means of realizing people's sovereignty, elections represent the basic principle of democracy, which states that the highest power lies in the hands of the people. In this context, elections are the main vehicle for people to exercise their right to vote freely, directly, generally, secretly, honestly, and fairly as regulated in the Indonesian constitution (Sukmajati, 2019). The right to vote guaranteed by the state provides space for citizens to actively participate in the political process, both as voters and as elected candidates. With elections, people are not only the object of policy but also active subjects in determining leaders and the

direction of public policy. Therefore, democratic elections are not just technical procedures, but a reflection of respect for human rights and the principle of equality of citizens before the law (Surbakti, 2022).

Therefore, the implementation of elections must be done equitably, efficiently, and transparently so as not to betray the essence of democracy itself. Fair elections ensure that every participant has an equal opportunity to be elected, without discrimination or manipulation. (Dedi, 2019) Meanwhile, efficiency in organizing elections is critical to ensure that the democratic process does not become a heavy administrative or financial burden for the state. Transparency is also a crucial aspect of building public trust in the election results and the organizing institutions (Nugroho, 2020). If these principles can be upheld properly, then elections will not only be a mechanism for seizing power but also an instrument that strengthens the foundations of a just state of law and democracy.

The election system in Indonesia is known as one of the most complex in the world because it involves various levels and types of elections held simultaneously. In one election period, the Indonesian people simultaneously elect the President and Vice President, members of the People's Representative Council (DPR), the Regional Representative Council (DPD), and members of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) at the provincial and district/city levels. In addition, in a different cycle, regional head elections (Pilkada) are also held which include the election of governors, regents, and mayors. The election structure that involves many institutions and levels requires very complex coordination, starting from budget planning, procurement of logistics, and distribution of ballot papers, to tiered vote recapitulation (Ardipandanto, 2019).

The implementation of simultaneous elections, although intended to simplify the schedule and reduce the frequency of elections, poses enormous administrative challenges. The 2019 simultaneous elections are a real example of how the high workload caused extraordinary fatigue among Voting Organizing Group (KPPS) officers, resulting in hundreds of them dying from exhaustion. In addition, the logistics distribution process to various regions, including remote areas and islands, is complicated and prone to delays (LIPI, 2018). Moreover, voters are often confused because they have to choose many candidates at a time, with complicated ballot designs and unclear information. All of this shows that the implementation of simultaneous elections during a layered system requires extraordinary readiness in terms of human resources, technology, and supporting regulations (Asshiddiqie, 2006).

The multi-layered election levels also hurt the effectiveness and efficiency of the overall election implementation. In terms of budget, the costs that the state must spend are large to print millions of ballots, supporting logistics, honorariums for officers, and security and supervision costs (Solihah R. , 2018). Not to mention in terms of effectiveness, overlapping election stages make the time needed for preparation and implementation longer and prone to conflict. The manual and gradual vote recapitulation process also slows down the announcement of results and increases the potential for disputes. This complexity not only drains the state budget but can also erode public trust in the integrity of the election (Nasution, 2017).

The implementation of elections in Indonesia requires a considerable budget allocation, most of which is absorbed in logistics and operations. For example, in the 2019 Simultaneous Elections, the budget issued by the General Election Commission (KPU) reached more than 25 trillion rupiah, with most of it allocated for the procurement of logistics such as ballots, ballot boxes, ink, and supporting forms (Huda K. F., 2018). The number of printed ballots reached hundreds of millions of sheets because they had to be adjusted to the many types of elections and the number of electoral districts (daily). In addition, the distribution of logistics to all corners of Indonesia, from big cities to remote areas in the mountains or islands, requires a lot of transportation costs and extra security to prevent damage and misuse. Inefficiency in logistics planning may cause waste due to overprinting, unused ballots, or damage before voting day (Solihah R. , 2018).

Another problem is the high workload borne by election organizers in the field, especially the Voting Organizer Group (KPPS) (Suswantoro, 2015). In the 2019 Election, the KPPS was responsible for implementing five types of elections in one day, from preparing polling stations and guiding voters to manually counting and recapitulating votes until late at night. This extraordinary work pressure causes physical and mental fatigue that leads to an increased risk of errors in vote counting (human error) and causes thousands of officers to fall ill, and hundreds have reportedly died. It raises public concern and questions about whether this complex election system is still worth maintaining without structural reform.

In addition to logistical aspects and workload, waste is also seen in the inefficiency of the budget for honorariums, training, and procurement of technological devices that have not been well integrated. The large funds allocated for officer training are often not comparable to the results in the field because the training time is too short or the material is too technical. Reliance on manual systems slows down the process and increases the possibility of errors that can lead

to disputes over election results (Pranoto, 2018). In the long term, this kind of waste not only burdens the APBN but also reduces public trust in the effectiveness of the existing democratic system.

The complexity of the election system in Indonesia, which involves many levels and types of elections, has raised various problems that cannot be ignored. The enormous costs, heavy logistical burdens, and physical and mental pressure on the organizers indicate that the existing system needs to be evaluated comprehensively. In the context of good democratic governance, the implementation of elections should prioritize efficiency without reducing the quality and legitimacy of the results (Simamora, 2012). Therefore, it is increasingly urgent for the state to conduct an in-depth study of the weaknesses that emerged during the election process, not only from a technical perspective but also from a normative and institutional perspective. This evaluation is important to ensure that the principles of democracy are maintained, but are implemented in a more rational, measurable, and sustainable manner.

As public and academic awareness of the burden of implementing simultaneous elections with a multi-layered system increases, discourse has emerged regarding the need to simplify the levels of elections. This idea proposes a review of the structure and mechanisms of elections to make them more streamlined but still representative. For example, there is discourse to separate national and regional elections again or to simplify the number of ballots and voting procedures. In practice, this simplification is not just a technical change, but also part of a systemic reform to create elections that are more humane, resource-efficient, and able to reduce the potential for errors and conflicts. This discourse is also in line with efforts to strengthen democratic institutions through the efficiency of the election bureaucracy and strengthening the institutional capacity of organizers (Agustyati, 2013).

Furthermore, reform of the election system is not only a technical need but also a legal and political need. In a democratic system that continues to develop, the law must be adaptive to the dynamics of society and the realities on the ground. Therefore, election reform must be accompanied by an update of the legal framework that allows for innovation in general election governance. It includes revisions to the election law, strengthening the role of supervision, and developing information technology to support a more transparent and efficient election process. Thus, efforts to simplify elections are not just to save costs or reduce paper, but as part of the transformation towards a democracy that is healthier, more efficient, and responsive to the needs of society and the challenges of the times.

Simplification of election levels emerged as a rational solution in responding to the complexity and waste that has burdened the implementation of elections in Indonesia. One of the main ideas that emerged was the selective combination of election types, considering the level of urgency and efficiency of their implementation. For example, national legislative elections (DPR and DPD) can be held separately from regional head elections, or regional legislative elections (DPRD) combined with regional head elections to simplify the recapitulation and logistics processes. In addition, simplifying the design of ballot papers is a concrete step that can reduce the technical burden on voters and speed up the vote-counting process. The use of more prominent party symbols, grouping candidates in a more concise list, or utilizing technology for e-voting in the future can be additional options to be more efficient.

Not only that, the election stages that are considered too long and overlapping also need to be restructured. The process of verifying participants, campaigning, distributing logistics, and vote recapitulation can be compressed without reducing its democratic substance. With a more streamlined system, election organizers do not need to experience extraordinary fatigue due to tight schedules and excessive technical work. Likewise for voters, a simpler election process will increase comfort in exercising their voting rights and minimize the potential for confusion or abstention due to an overly complicated election design. Simplification also allows for efficiency in the state budget that has been spent only on technical aspects of the election, so that funds can be diverted to other more urgent sectors.

However, every simplification effort must be based on a strong legal basis so as not to cause inconsistencies with the principles of democracy and the Constitution. Election reform is not merely a matter of administrative technicalities, but rather a political process that concerns the constitutional rights of citizens. Therefore, the simplification of election levels needs to be outlined in transparent regulations based on the 1945 Constitution, especially regarding the principles of free and fair elections. The formation or revision of the election law is an important step so that this reform can be implemented legally, consistently, and bindingly. With legal legitimacy, changes to the electoral system will gain broader political support, and guarantee that its implementation continues to prioritize participation, justice, and accountability as the spirit of true democracy.

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a normative legal method, namely legal research conducted by examining legal materials as the main basis for answering the problems studied. The main focus of this method is the legal norms contained in laws and regulations and legal doctrines that develop in the literature. The research was conducted through two approaches, namely the legislative approach and the conceptual approach. The legislative approach is carried out by examining various relevant regulations, such as Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning Elections, the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, and technical regulations from the KPU and Bawaslu. The conceptual approach is conducted by examining the views of legal experts and basic concepts of efficiency, electoral system reform, and democratic principles that form the basis for formulating public policies in elections.

The data sources in this study come from primary and secondary legal materials. Primary legal materials include laws and regulations, relevant Constitutional Court decisions, and official documents of election organizers. Secondary legal materials include legal literature, scientific journals, seminar results, and opinions of legal experts related to the election system and its reform. Data collection techniques are performed through library research, namely by collecting and reviewing legal materials and literature relevant to the research focus. The collected data are then analyzed using qualitative normative analysis techniques, namely by interpreting existing legal norms and linking them to relevant legal concepts and theories, to draw logical and systematic conclusions to answer the formulation of the problem in this study.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Current Election Level System in Indonesia is Regulated in Legislation and the Complexities that Arise in its Implementation

General elections in Indonesia are based on the principle of people's sovereignty as stipulated in Article 22E of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (UUD 1945). This article emphasizes that elections must be held every five years to elect the legislature (DPR, DPD, DPRD) and the head of state (President and Vice President). In its provisions, Article 22E underlines six main principles in organizing elections, namely direct, general, free, secret, honest, and fair. It is the main foundation for organizing elections which should provide ample space for every citizen to participate without any obstacles or discrimination. These principles also reflect Indonesia's commitment to true democracy, where every political

decision is taken based on the voice of the people who are freely and openly involved in choosing their leaders (Halili, 2018).

Furthermore, Article 22E gives authority to the House of Representatives (DPR) to draft and stipulate laws and regulations related to elections, including regulations on the election system, the formation of political parties, nomination mechanisms, and the formation of independent election organizing institutions, such as the General Election Commission (KPU) and the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu). The establishment of these bodies is intended to ensure clean elections that are free from political manipulation, corruption, or other illegitimate practices. Thus, Article 22E not only ensures the implementation of democratic elections, but also strengthens the principles of transparent and accountable governance, and ensures the mechanism of checks and balances in the Indonesian democratic process. The principles in Article 22E are the main reference in the drafting of election laws and further regulations in election practices, which continue to develop along with the political and social dynamics in Indonesia.

Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections (Election Law) is a legal regulation that is the basis for organizing elections in Indonesia, replacing Law Number 8 of 2012 which was previously considered to still require several improvements related to the implementation of more efficient and transparent elections. This law provides more detailed arrangements regarding various aspects related to elections, starting from the type of election, and election stages, to regulations on the rights of voters, election participants, and the working mechanisms of election organizers. One of the most crucial things in this Election Law is the determination of the election system, which refers to Article 1 paragraph (1), which states that elections are the process of filling positions in government carried out through general elections by the people. It emphasizes that elections are not only a means of democracy, but also an instrument to ensure the sovereignty of the people through a direct, free, secret, honest, and fair election process (Choudry, 2019).

This Election Law regulates the open proportional system used in legislative elections, which allows voters to directly elect legislative candidates from the list of candidates submitted by political parties, not just electing political parties as a whole. This system gives voters more freedom to choose the people's representatives they consider most suitable, even if they come from the same political party. This rule is further regulated in Article 168 concerning the procedure for electing legislative members and counting votes. In this case, the Election Law prioritizes the principle of more accurate representation and reflects the people's choice. In

addition, this law also includes provisions regarding the election of the President and Vice President, which is carried out with a two-round system if no candidate pair wins more than 50% of the vote in the first round.

In addition to regulating the election system, Article 10 of the Election Law emphasizes the obligations of the General Election Commission (KPU), the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu), and the Election Organizer Honorary Council (DKPP) in organizing, supervising, and maintaining the independence of the election process. This law also includes various technical regulations related to election financing, including regulations on budget allocation for organizing elections that involve several activities, ranging from procurement of logistics, and campaigns, to the establishment of polling stations (TPS). These financing rules are explained in more detail in Article 172 and Article 173, where the government is responsible for providing sufficient funds for the smooth running of the election. In addition, the Election Law also regulates a complex logistics distribution mechanism considering the vast territory of Indonesia, which requires efficient logistics management so that it can reach remote areas on time.

No less important, the Election Law also provides provisions regarding sanctions for various violations that occur during the election process. These violations include administrative, criminal, and ethical violations. This law creates a clear legal framework to handle violations, from violations committed by election participants to those committed by election organizers. This is regulated in Articles 545 to 556, which include sanctions in the form of fines for the cancellation of election participants who are proven to have committed fraud or violations.

To ensure that the implementation of elections in Indonesia runs by the provisions of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, the General Election Commission (KPU) and the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) as election organizers and supervisors, each issue various technical regulations that serve as guidelines for technical implementation in the field. KPU regulations have a vital part in regulating the various stages of the election, from preparation to the implementation of voting and vote counting. One of the important regulations issued by the KPU is KPU Regulation Number 3 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of Simultaneous Elections. The regulation governs the implementation detail of the first simultaneous elections in Indonesia in the 2019 elections. It simultaneous election involves legislative elections (DPR, DPD, and DPRD) as well as presidential and vice-presidential elections at the same time. In this regulation, the KPU regulates the procedures for

voting that must be done at polling stations (TPS), the vote counting process carried out by officers at TPS, and the recapitulation of election results involving various levels of examination up to the national level. The regulation also regulates other technical matters such as the making and distribution of ballot papers, supervision of the smooth running of the election, and resolution of logistical problems that may occur during the election stages (Amelia Yoga Lestari, 2024).

In addition to KPU Regulation Number 3 of 2019, another important regulation is KPU Regulation Number 15 of 2018 concerning the Election of President and Vice President. This regulation provides detailed guidelines regarding the mechanism for nominating the president and vice president, including nomination requirements, determining candidate pairs, and campaign procedures, and implementing candidate debates. In this regulation, the KPU stipulates that the nomination of the president and vice president must meet the provisions stipulated by laws and regulations, as well as paying attention to provisions on political campaigns, which must be carried out with fair and transparent principles. This regulation also includes regulations regarding the use of mass media for campaigns, a debate schedule that is set to provide equal opportunities for all candidate pairs to present their vision and mission to the public, and guidelines for organizing candidate debates so that they run smoothly and do not violate applicable regulations. All of these regulations aim to create a fair and equal atmosphere for all election participants and to avoid fraudulent practices that can damage the credibility of the election.

Meanwhile, Bawaslu as the institution tasked with overseeing the election process, also issues regulations that ensure that the election takes place by existing provisions. One of the important regulations issued by Bawaslu is Bawaslu Regulation Number 28 of 2018 concerning Simultaneous Election Supervision. This regulation focuses primarily on the obligation to supervise each election stage, whether by the public, political parties, or the election participants themselves. Bawaslu not only supervises the implementation of elections at the central level, but also at the regional level, and ensures that all parties involved in the election comply with existing regulations. This regulation regulates administrative supervision, which includes monitoring the procedures for implementing election stages, as well as ethical and criminal supervision, which includes efforts to detect and prevent violations related to money politics, fraud, or abuse of authority. In this regulation, Bawaslu also establishes a complaint mechanism that allows the public to report suspected election violations, as well as procedures for resolving disputes that may arise during the implementation of the election. In addition, this

regulation also includes rules related to sanctions for election participants who are proven to have committed violations, whether administrative, ethical, or criminal violations, to ensure a deterrent effect and maintain the integrity of the election process.

Elections in Indonesia involve various levels and types of elections held to elect various positions in government. The Presidential and Vice Presidential Election is the highest election, regulated in Article 6A of the 1945 Constitution, where the people directly elect the presidential and vice-presidential candidate pairs who will lead the country for five years. This election is a symbol of the people's sovereignty in determining the head of state and government. In addition, there is also an election for the People's Representative Council (DPR), which consists of legislative members elected through an open proportional system, where the people vote for legislative candidates from the relevant political party. The election for the Regional Representative Council (DPD) is held to elect DPD members who represent the province in the field of legislation, to represent the regions in Indonesia. The election also includes elections for the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) at the provincial and district/city levels, which aims to elect people's representatives at the regional level who will determine local policies.

In addition to legislative elections, Indonesia also holds Regional Head Elections (Pilkada) to elect Governors, Regents, and Mayors, which are elections for executive positions at the provincial and district/city levels. Pilkada is also carried out directly by the people, and the election process is regulated by Law Number 10 of 2016 concerning Pilkada. These regional head elections are often held simultaneously with legislative elections, depending on the policies in effect in a particular period. This means that in a given year, the Indonesian people must elect the head of state, legislature, and regional heads at the same time, which directly impacts the complexity of the election implementation and the distribution of election logistics throughout Indonesia.

With the existence of various types of elections, Indonesia implements a simultaneous election system which is implemented to minimize the costs and time required to hold elections. In simultaneous elections, elections for several positions are held on the same day, starting from the election of the president and vice president, members of the DPR, DPD, and DPRD, to regional elections in several regions. This system aims to improve the efficiency of election implementation, reduce logistical waste, and simplify election administration throughout Indonesia, which consists of thousands of islands and regions spread widely. However, simultaneous elections pose major challenges, especially the administrative burden faced by

the General Election Commission (KPU) and other organizing institutions. The heavy administrative burden includes the preparation of election logistics involving the procurement of ballots, ballot boxes, and other voting equipment that must be distributed to all corners of Indonesia. TPS officers must also be prepared to handle several types of elections at once, which requires adequate training and coordination to avoid errors or technical mistakes during voting.

In addition, the impact of simultaneous elections is also seen in terms of vote counting and recapitulation of election results. Vote counting carried out at TPS must be carried out more carefully, considering that there are many types of ballots that must be counted at one time. This adds complexity and can extend the time for vote recapitulation. Coordination between the central KPU, provincial KPU, district/city KPU, Bawaslu, and other related agencies must be carried out to ensure that election results can be counted accurately and transparently. This simultaneous system also brings challenges in terms of supervision by Bawaslu, because there are many stages that must be monitored at once, from the campaign process to the vote counting in each region. Therefore, although the simultaneous election aims for efficiency, the administrative burden borne by the election organizers and supervisors becomes weighty, which requires large resources and a well-integrated system.

The implementation of elections in Indonesia involves various institutions that have important roles in ensuring the smooth running of the election process from start to finish. Coordination between institutions involved in organizing elections, such as the General Election Commission (KPU), the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu), the Election Organizer Honorary Council (DKPP), and other government agencies, is a major challenge in simultaneous elections. The KPU is tasked with regulating, organizing, and supervising the election process, while Bawaslu is tasked with ensuring that the process is carried out fairly, free from fraud and abuse of power, and supervising the ongoing elections. The DKPP, as the institution responsible for maintaining the integrity of election organizers, plays a role in supervising the behavior of election organizers that is not by the established code of ethics. Coordination between these institutions must run smoothly, both in terms of dividing tasks and in joint supervision during the election stages, so that no overlap or negligence can damage the smooth running of the election.

However, the complexity of coordination between these institutions is increasing with the vast territory of Indonesia which consists of thousands of islands, as well as the cultural, social, and economic diversity that exists. Logistical preparation for the election is also a major

challenge. The KPU must ensure that election logistics, including ballots, ballot boxes, voting equipment, and campaign materials, can be distributed throughout Indonesia, both in urban areas and in remote and hard-to-reach areas. This distribution process requires very good coordination between various levels of the KPU, starting from the central, provincial, and district/city KPU. Areas with difficult geographical conditions, such as mountainous areas, small islands, and other remote areas, require extra efforts in terms of logistics distribution to ensure that all polling stations (TPS) receive the necessary equipment on time. Delays in logistics distribution can hamper the election process, and can even affect the validity of the election results.

In addition to logistics distribution, elections also require training and readiness of human resources (HR) in the field, which is no less important. The implementation of elections involves thousands of officers throughout Indonesia, both at the central, provincial, district/city, and TPS levels. These officers must be well-trained to understand the procedures for voting, vote counting, and election supervision procedures. Training of polling station officers is essential to ensure they have a clear understanding of the stages of the election and can handle situations that may arise, such as disruptions in the voting process or problems with ballot papers. In addition, officers must be prepared to deal with potential social conflicts or political tensions during the election, which requires good communication and problem-solving skills. The quality of these human resources is directly related to the speed and accuracy of the election, so ensuring that they have adequate skills is essential to maintaining the accuracy of election results and minimizing the potential for errors or technical mistakes.

The technical and administrative complexity of elections also includes challenges in terms of supervision and evaluation. Bawaslu and DKPP must work hard to ensure that all stages of the election run by applicable regulations. This supervision involves close monitoring of campaigns, prevention of election violations, and handling of disputes that may arise. The challenges in this supervision are even greater with the many elections being held simultaneously, where various types of elections are held at the same time, such as legislative elections, presidential elections, and regional elections. An effective system is needed so that the implementation of elections in each region can be monitored carefully and reported accurately.

One of the real impacts of the multi-layered and simultaneously held election system is the accumulation of workload on the Voting Organizing Group (KPPS). In the implementation of simultaneous elections, KPPS is responsible for facilitating voting for one and several types

of election, such as the election of the President and Vice President, DPR, DPD, and DPRD. In one working day, KPPS officers must manage election logistics, distribute different ballot papers, ensure that the voting process runs according to procedure, and carry out manual counting for each type of ballot paper. As a result, KPPS face very high physical and mental burdens, especially because they often work from morning until the next morning in less-than-ideal conditions. Many reports indicate that KPPS officers experience extreme fatigue and even die due to excessive workloads, as happened in the 2019 Election. This phenomenon indicates that an overly complex system can have a direct impact on the health and safety of organizers at the lower levels. Human resources at TPS have limited capacity, and if elections are held without considering this capacity, the effectiveness of the election will be disrupted.

With the many types of ballots that must be counted manually in simultaneous elections, vote recapitulation is one of the most significant challenges in a multi-layered election system. After the voting process is complete, KPPS must count the results for each election separately, from the president to regional legislative members. This process is not only time-consuming but also very susceptible to technical errors and human error, especially because it is carried out by officers who are already exhausted. Errors in recording numbers, filling out forms, or counting the number of votes can lead to conflicting election results, legal disputes, and delegitimizing the democratic process.

These difficulties do not stop at the polling stations. Multi-level recapitulation from the sub-district to the national level requires complex coordination and data verification. Any error that occurs at the lower level can have a domino effect at a higher level, and trigger a lawsuit to the Constitutional Court. This system has too many layers that slow down the overall recapitulation process. In some cases, the election results can only be officially announced weeks or even months after voting day. This inefficiency shows that although the multi-layered system aims to accommodate broad representation if it is not accompanied by efficiency and a good management system, it will damage the effectiveness of the election itself.

One of the crucial impacts of a multi-layered and complex election system is the increased potential for conflict, both at the community level and the political elite level. When election results are not immediately announced due to the slow recapitulation process, this creates political uncertainty and opens up space for speculation, suspicion, and accusations of fraud. In a competitive political situation and high polarization, this delay in results can trigger horizontal conflict in society, especially if there are parties who feel cheated or are dissatisfied with the recapitulation process. Elections that should be an event for democratic consolidation

have the potential to cause social fragmentation and political instability, if not managed properly.

Furthermore, the potential for conflict also increases because this layered system involves many political interests at one time. On the one hand, political parties compete for legislative seats at various levels, while on the other hand, they also support presidential candidate pairs. When everything is at stake in the same momentum, political tensions become higher. This tension is further exacerbated by the administrative and technical challenges that have been explained previously. Therefore, simplifying the election levels is not only important in terms of efficiency but also from the side of political and social stability.

3.2 Forms of Waste of Resources and Costs that Occur in the Implementation of Simultaneous Elections with the Current Level System

Simultaneous elections in Indonesia that combine various types of elections in one implementation period are indeed aimed at efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of democracy. However, behind this goal, the election system currently implemented poses a major challenge in terms of efficient use of resources and state financing. The complexity of the multi-layered election system causes logistical needs to be very large, both in terms of the quantity of materials such as ballots, ballot boxes, and booths, to distribution to all corners of the country that are geographically diverse. Not only in terms of physical, waste also occurs in terms of very high operational costs, ranging from officer honorariums, and information technology needs, to voter security and socialization.

One of the most obvious forms of waste in the implementation of simultaneous elections is the use of a very large number of ballots. Each voter in Indonesia, in the national simultaneous elections, receives five types of ballots at once: for the President and Vice President, the Indonesian House of Representatives, the Indonesian Regional Representatives Council, the Provincial DPRD, and the Regency/City DPRD. This number is multiplied by the number of active voters reaching more than 200 million people in the 2019 Election, resulting in the need for billions of sheets of paper that must be printed, sorted, and distributed in a timely manner. The impact is not only on the swelling costs of printing and purchasing ink, but also on the additional logistical needs for packaging, transportation, and storage of the large volume of ballots. Not to mention the risk of damaged ballots, misprints, or overproduction that causes many ballots to be unused and end up as waste, increasing the burden on the environment and the state budget.

In addition to ballots, the procurement of ballot boxes and voting booths is a major logistical challenge that also contributes to budget waste. In this complex and simultaneous election system, each polling station (TPS) requires a minimum of five ballot boxes for each type of ballot, plus adequate voting booths so that the election process runs orderly and confidentially. Imagine if there were more than 800,000 TPS throughout Indonesia—meaning more than 4 million ballot boxes needed to be produced, distributed, and stored in safe conditions. Coupled with the relatively expensive production costs of special waterproof cardboard ballot boxes, as well as the need for folding voting booths, pallets, and other additional equipment, the logistics budget becomes one of the largest wasteful components in the implementation of elections. This situation shows that the system of election levels running simultaneously is not only administratively complex but also very burdensome in terms of materials.

No less important is the issue of logistics distribution to remote areas, especially the 3T (Frontier, Outermost, and Disadvantaged) areas in Indonesia. This country has very challenging geographical conditions—in the form of remote islands, high mountains, and difficult-to-reach forest areas. Distributing election logistics to these areas requires special vehicles, extra security, and high transportation costs, whether by land, sea, or air. In some cases, logistics distribution even has to be carried out by helicopter or small boat, which of course adds significantly to expenses. On the other hand, delays in distribution in these areas often cause elections to not be able to be held on schedule and trigger the implementation of follow-up elections, which again suck up additional budget. Therefore, the current multi-layered and simultaneous election system shows how the enormous logistical burden can be one of the main sources of waste in organizing national elections.

One of the largest components in the election financing structure is the honorarium and operational costs for election organizers at various levels. With a simultaneous election system that includes five to six types of elections in one day, the number of officers needed is also considerable. In each Polling Station (TPS), there are at least seven members of the Voting Organizer Group (KPPS), not including order officers and supervisors. If Indonesia has more than 800,000 TPS, then the total number of KPPS officers can reach more than 5 million people. Expenditures for honorariums, consumption, training, and work equipment are an extraordinary budget burden. In fact, the workload given to these officers is often not comparable to the compensation they receive, which indicates waste in terms of efficiency and effectiveness of financing.

In addition to the honorarium for officers, the cost of socialization and voter education is another aspect of the cost that is quite high. The complexity of the ballot papers and the large number of candidates in the simultaneous election system means that the public needs a deeper understanding to vote correctly. The KPU and Bawaslu, as well as other institutions, must allocate large funds to print socialization materials, organize face-to-face activities, voting simulations, and social media and television campaigns. These activities are important to prevent voter confusion that can lead to a high number of invalid votes. However, because the election system is very complex, the effectiveness of the socialization campaign is often not optimal, causing the higher costs not to provide commensurate results in the form of increasing the quality of voter participation.

No less significant, the need for technology and information security also adds to the list of wasteful costs in implementing elections. The vote recapitulation information system such as Sirekap (Electronic Recapitulation Information System) requires high-tech infrastructure, hardware, software, and operator training at the TPS level. In addition, protecting data and systems from cyber attacks or information leaks requires additional investment in a qualified digital security system. Not to mention the cost of maintenance and repairs if there are technical problems during the election. Although the digitization of elections aims for efficiency, in conditions of a multi-layered and manual election system in many parts, spending on technology is often not optimal in increasing the effectiveness of the process, so it has the potential to be a waste of a lot of money.

In terms of time efficiency, simultaneous elections with many levels cause serious problems. The voting process takes much longer because voters have to vote for five to six ballots, each a long and complex list of candidates. In some areas, long queues at polling stations are a common sight, even causing voters to become exhausted and ultimately choose not to use their voting rights. The vote-counting process by the KPSS also takes a very long time. After the polling stations are closed, officers must count the ballots one by one from each election category, which can last until the early hours of the morning. This has an impact on the effectiveness of the overall process because exhausted officers are more prone to making mistakes or even physically collapsing as happened in the 2019 Election, which recorded more than 500 officers dying from exhaustion.

The workforce deployed in the election is also a source of waste that needs to be reviewed. The multi-layered election system not only requires big officers at polling stations, but also involves many parties at the sub-district, district/city, and national levels in the vote

recapitulation and validation process. Each of these levels requires administrative, technical, and supervisory personnel who work for days without sufficient rest. As a result, productivity and accuracy decrease, and the potential for input or recapitulation errors increases. The training provided to officers is often insufficient to prepare them for high work pressure and an enormous burden of responsibility in a short time. It shows an imbalance between the available human resources and the complexity of the system being implemented.

Furthermore, the time wasted in the post-voting process is also a form of waste that impacts public trust. The manual and multi-level vote recapitulation process, from the polling station level to the national level, takes a very long time. Delays in announcing election results often give rise to speculation, potential conflict, and political tension. This long waiting time is not only detrimental administratively and politically, but also hampers the next stages, such as the formation of a new government or the inauguration of elected officials. This is where it can be seen that wasting time in elections is not just a technical matter, but has broad implications for the stability of government and delayed public services.

3.3 The Concept of Simplifying Election Levels Can Be Applied Normatively and Legally as a Solution to Increase the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Elections in Indonesia

The practice of simultaneous elections implemented in Indonesia since the 2019 Election marks a major change in the electoral democracy system, but at the same time gives rise to unprecedented complexity. At one time, voters are faced with five to six types of elections at once—starting from the election of the President and Vice President, members of the DPR, DPD, Provincial DPRD, to Regency/City DPRD. This complexity creates a heavy burden, not only for voters who have to understand many candidates and ballot papers, but also for election organizers who have to manage logistical, technical, and administrative processes on a massive scale. The impact is waste in many aspects: excessive use of logistics, the need for large human resources, and a swollen state budget to finance all the tiring and layered stages. The most obvious effects of this system are mass fatigue of KPPS officers, an increase in the number of invalid votes, and vulnerability to recapitulation errors that threaten the credibility of the election results.

Therefore, the urgency of reforming the election system is very real and urgent. The government and lawmakers need to reconsider the design of a simpler and more efficient election, both in terms of administration, budget, and implementation time. A more streamlined system allows for efficiency in logistics distribution, officer training, and simplification of vote recapitulation stages. Furthermore, elections that are designed in a more structured manner will

encourage higher-quality public participation because voters can focus on understanding their choices without confusion. This reform can also strengthen the legitimacy of election results because the process is more transparent, and accountable, and minimizes conflict. By reducing the administrative burden and systemic pressures that currently exist, the quality of democracy in Indonesia may advance because the entire election process can run more orderly, affordable, and inclusive.

One of the main ideas in simplifying election levels is the combination of several types of legislative elections to make their implementation more efficient. For example, the election of members of the DPR and DPRD—which are currently held simultaneously but use separate ballots—can be combined into one ballot with a simpler design that is easier for voters to understand. Another alternative is to separate the voting days for the national and regional legislative levels so that voters are not burdened with too many choices at once. This will lighten the workload of officers at Polling Stations (TPS), reduce the potential for voting errors, and increase voters' focus on determining their representatives. By reducing the number of ballots or dividing them into different voting days, logistics can be significantly saved and the election process becomes orderly.

In addition to merging or separating the types of legislative elections, another crucial idea is to reschedule the executive elections (presidential/vice presidential and regional head) so that they are no longer held simultaneously with legislative elections. The combination of presidential and legislative elections on one day has proven to cause high complexity both for voters and organizers. If the executive elections are scheduled separately, for example, a year before or after the legislative elections, then the distribution of workload and logistics can be arranged more measurably. Voters will also be able to focus more attention on the candidates and their respective visions and missions without being distracted by the many types of elections taking place simultaneously. The rescheduling provides time for deeper political reflection and allows for more optimal supervision of each stage of the electoral process.

The overall restructuring of the election stages is an important point in simplification. Currently, the election stages are prolonged and multi-layered, from party verification, nomination, campaign, voting, and recapitulation, to disputed results, which last for more than a year. This system reform can be carried out by cutting stages that are considered inefficient, accelerating the recapitulation process with a verified digital system, and adjusting the campaign duration to be more proportional. Of course, this simplification must still refer to the principles of democracy, such as justice, transparency, and participation. The goal is not to cut

democracy, but to enhance its quality through a more effective process that does not burden voters or organizers.

Article 22E of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (UUD 1945) provides a constitutional basis that is flexible enough to allow for changes in election design. This article stipulates that elections must be carried out directly, generally, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly, but does not explicitly determine the form and level of the current complex elections. It provides room for policymakers to revise the election implementation mechanism without contradicting the democratic principles contained in the constitution. In addition, Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections (Election Law) also provides a legal basis that allows for changes to the election design, such as merging several types of elections or rescheduling legislative and executive elections. The Election Law provides a fairly broad framework for technical and substantive adjustments to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of future elections, as long as the changes remain in line with the principles of democracy mandated by the 1945 Constitution.

Changing the election design process cannot be conducted without the active involvement of the DPR and the government. As a law-making institution, the DPR has a critical role in formulating new regulations that regulate the implementation of more efficient and structured elections. The government, in this case through the Ministry of Home Affairs or related agencies, plays a role in proposing policies that support election transformation, as well as ensuring that any changes can be implemented with sufficient budget and resources. On the other hand, the General Election Commission (KPU) has the authority to draft more technical derivative regulations, such as KPU Regulations, which will provide detailed guidance in implementing these changes. The KPU can adapt existing regulations, for example, by designing a simpler election system, compiling more efficient ballot papers, or arranging more concise and structured election stages without reducing the quality of the democratic process.

The simplification of election levels has major benefits that can be obtained. First, reducing the workload of organizers, especially in TPS and vote recapitulation officers, will accelerate the implementation of elections and reduce technical errors. It has a positive impact on the efficiency of the state budget, due to the reduction in logistics needs, procurement of election materials, and other operational costs. Second, with a more structured and simple system, the accuracy of election results can be better maintained, reducing the potential for errors in vote counting or data manipulation. Third, a system that is easier to understand will encourage a higher level of public participation, because voters feel more comfortable and are

not burdened by the many types of ballot papers or complex stages. Ultimately, these changes can strengthen public trust in the election process, increase the legitimacy of election results, and ensure democracy runs more effectively and inclusively.

4 CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the analysis on the implementation of the simplification of election levels in Indonesia shows that the complex election system with various levels and types of elections, both executive and legislative, has caused many problems in terms of waste of resources, costs, and heavy administrative burdens for organizers and voters. Simultaneous elections involving various elections in one day, such as the election of the President, DPR, DPD, and DPRD, present major challenges in terms of logistics, distribution of ballot papers, and recapitulation of results that are prone to errors. Therefore, it is important to reform and simplify the election system to make it more efficient and effective, which can ultimately improve the quality of democracy and reduce unnecessary waste.

Simplification of election levels can be carried out with several strategic steps, such as combining types of legislative elections in one ballot paper separating voting days between executive and legislative elections, and rescheduling election stages to be more concise. By paying attention to the normative legal aspects contained in the 1945 Constitution and the Election Law, and involving the DPR, government, and KPU in formulating new regulations, this change can be implemented without reducing the basic principles of democracy. Through this reform, it is expected that state budget efficiency can be achieved, the workload of organizers reduced, and public participation increased, which will ultimately strengthen the credibility of election results and democracy itself.

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