

# Communication Strategies in Electoral Bodies Empowerment

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**Abstract:** This paper aims to understand if, and how, communication strategy by the Election Supervisory Board in Riau to electoral bodies empowerment. Communication Strategies are needed to maintain organization, reputation and realize to a democratic election. This paper is based on interviews with key informants, and there is 14 person with purposive sampling. The research used to the qualitative method, and analysis techniques were descriptive. Steps communication strategies by the Election Supervisory Board in Riau have been categorized into objective, programme, action and Evaluation. All of steps communication strategy as the exchange of ideas, duties and obligations, and political activity as Election Supervisory Board in Riau. The practical implication was used to the Election Supervisory Board in Riau and stakeholders for the created strategy of communication to be a supervisor institutional at Local Election. Results of this research are a model of communication strategy by the Election Supervisory Board in Riau for Institutional Empowerment..

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In the history of election implementation in Indonesia, the term election monitoring emerged in the 1980s. However, institutionally, this election supervisor experienced quite high dynamics. They are starting from ad-hoc institutions until constitutionally legalized based on the latest Election Law, Law Number 7 of 2017. Election Supervision is a conscious, deliberate, and planned process to realize the essential democratization. Elections which are carried out without a free and independent mechanism and climate of supervision, result in elections being vulnerable to fraud. This makes the Election lose its legitimacy, and the resulting Government actually lacks integrity and accountability. Supervision is a basic need for elections and local elections. In Indonesia, the election supervisory body is called Bawaslu (Election Supervisory Body). The existence of this institution is at the central level (Bawaslu), province (Provincial Election Supervisory Board), district/city (District/City Bawaslu), sub-district (Panwascam) and village (PPL - Field Supervisory Committee).

In authority as an election supervisor, the Election Supervisory Board in Riau has the duty to oversee all steps of the Election. As one of the

election organizers, the Election Supervisory Board in Riau must be able to coordinate with other election organizers, namely DKPP, KPU, Police, participants, the Government, and the public. Therefore, the right communication strategies is needed in an effort to strengthen electoral institutions. This study wants to describe how the election supervisory communication strategy in an effort to strengthen electoral institutions, especially the election supervisory institutions at the provincial level. Communication, as one of the important elements in building interpersonal relationships within an institution and among related institutions in order to achieve the objective of supervision, is a dignified election based on the principles of democracy.

A lot of research has been done on communication strategies. However, researchers who focus on the communication strategies carried out by the election organizer (Bawaslu) have not been widely carried out. Harminus carried out the same topic in his thesis (Harminus, 2017), Communication Strategies by the election supervisory board at West Java in maintaining the neutrality of the state civil apparatus in the local elections 2015. The results of the study said that the communication strategies consisted of five stages:

analysis, strategic design, development and testing, implementation and Evaluation. In addition, the implementation of the communication strategies carried out emphasizes more on group communication than on mass or interpersonal communication. Hallahan, etc. (2007), *Defining of Strategic Communication*; King (2009), *Emergent Communication Strategies*; Zeffass (2009), *Institutionalizing Strategic Communication: Theoretical Analysis and Empirical Evidence*.

## 2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The strategy is an idea or conception put forward by practitioners to achieve certain goals. Rogers (1982) said that strategy is a design that is made to change human behaviour on a larger scale through the transfer of new ideas (Cangara, 2014). The communication strategy is the best combination of all communication elements, from communicators, messages, channels, effects designed to achieve optimal communication goals (Middleton, 1980). This research design focuses on the stages of communication strategies proposed by Cutlip, Center and Broom (2006), namely: 1. Develop goals both short term (as a communication influence) and long term (as a relationship gauge). 2. Planning a communication program to improve goals. 3. Take action and communicate (by implementing public programs, actions and communications designed to achieve specific goals for each public in order to achieve program objectives) 4. Evaluate the program by evaluating the preparation, implementation and results of the program. Communication planning is about sets of action in a goal (Fergusson, 2009).

## 3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### *Communication Strategy of Stages:*

The success of the Election is a determining factor for the effectiveness of work from an institution called the election supervisory board. It is when there is a guarantee for the implementation of an honest and fair election. All frauds and violations committed by election stakeholders will be minimized if the supervision carried out by the election supervisory board is very strong and has integrity. Based on Law Number 7 of 2017, the duties and authorities of the Election Supervisory Body are confirmed even by all members of Election Supervisory Body up to the district /city level.

Therefore, the Election Supervisory Body becomes a very strategic institution in monitoring all stages of the General Election. At present, the role of the Election Supervisory Body is no longer a sender/successor or analogous as a "postman" that is, overseeing, receiving and forwarding/reporting violations. Following are the stages of the Riau Election Supervisory Board strategies in strengthening institutional elections:

### *Objective*

The objectives consist of two long-term and short-term goals. The long-term objective of the Riau Election Supervisory Board in the effort of institutional strengthening is the implementation of democratic elections. Whereas in the short term, the aim is first, to carry out the duties and responsibilities as an election organizer with integrity. Second, the existence of supervisory board. Election supervisory bodies need to make various efforts to show their existence to the public so that they are confident and trust the existence of election supervisors.

### *Program*

The election supervisory board has three programs that become strategies in efforts to strengthen electoral institutions, namely: Supervision programs, cooperation programs and institutional optimization programs.

#### 1. Supervision

The supervision program carried out by the election supervisory board consists of 3 types:

- a) *Active supervision*. Active supervision is the identification and mapping of violation points at each stage of the Election and the focus of supervision based on potential mapping violations. Referring to the great authority based on the latest election law, the election supervisory board has a complete function. Election supervisors even have the authority to supervise election participants, the public and other organizers, the KPU.
- b) *It is adhering supervision*. Attached supervision is supervision carried out together with other election organizers, namely KPU. In each stage of the Election determined by the KPU, the election supervisory board must be present in supervising each stage that is running. Therefore this supervisory performance is largely determined by good coordination and cooperation between the two.
- c) *Participatory supervision*. Participatory supervision is a monitoring movement carried

out by involving the active role of the community and all parties involved, both election participants, political parties, election participants, the Government and the community. Participatory supervision is needed to support democratic elections.

The need for direct involvement of outsiders in carrying out participatory; The firstly, the presence of large-scale voters in Indonesia. Second, efforts to equalize perceptions among stakeholders and at the same time, increase awareness of the courage to report indications of violations of election implementation. Third, as a political education for the public to participate in all stages of the Election, and fourth, in an effort to introduce the duties and authority of the election supervisory board to the community so that the community is willing to support the work of the Election Supervisory Body in conducting election monitoring.

## 2. Cooperation

The reason for cooperation conducted by the election supervisory board of Riau Province consists of two things: first, subjective reasons, namely personnel limitations. And the second reason is objective reasons, namely: a very wide area of supervision and a limited ratio of election supervisory personnel when viewed from the unbalanced number of government administrative areas. Therefore the election supervisory board of Riau Province cooperates with various parties, including KPU, DKPP, Sentragakkumdu, Universities, Community Organizations, Media, and Communities.

The concrete step of the election supervisory board in conducting participatory supervision, as part of a program of cooperation with other parties is to create a "One Million Volunteer Election Movement". This movement was raised when guarding the 2014 election. The election supervisory board actively formed a million volunteers from various elements, including the community, students, the media and activists of community organizations who were concerned about election supervision.

The principles used in raising election supervisor volunteers are: first, mutual respect, without coercion, beneficial both parties and transparently accountable. Second, creating dependency, planned, measured and has legal certainty. Third, proportional, professional, effective and efficient.

## 3. Institutional Optimization

The strengthening of the election supervisory board consists of two categories, namely: internal institutions and external institutions of strengthening:

### a) *Internal institutional of strengthening*

Optimization of the internal institutions of the election watchdog organization is carried out in two ways: first, Strengthening the performance of supervisors. The main role of the election supervisory body is as an institution that oversees all stages of the Election. Therefore, the performance indicators of the election supervisory board are the success of democratic elections at the provincial level with integrity supervision. In the oversight process carried out, the Election Supervisory Body identifies various violations that occur in the election process. Second, strengthening human resource capacity. This step is carried out by coaching the election supervisory board members at the provincial level down to the following ways: education related to supervision and guidance that originates from findings/information in the field.

### b) *External institutional of strengthening*

External institutional strengthening consists of two, namely: building synergy with stakeholders and creating a positive image in the community.

## 4. Actions

The action is a follow-up action from the program prepared by the election supervisory board in an effort to strengthen the institution. The election supervisory board implemented two actions in carrying out its authority as election supervisors, including first, preventive measures—prevention of potential violations by taking action, optimal steps and efforts to prevent early potential violations. Prevention must be results-oriented. The methods used are socialization, stakeholder involvement, early warning, mass media publications and recommendations. Second, repression. Enforcement of alleged violations by taking action to deal quickly and accurately with the findings and/or reports of alleged election.

## 5. Evaluation.

Evaluation is the final stage of the communication strategy carried out by the election supervisory board in institutional strengthening. In the Evaluation, phase consists of two activities, namely monitoring and Evaluation. Monitoring is carried out periodically to all the performance of personnel and

staff at the lower level. While the Evaluation was carried out by looking at the targets achieved by the election supervisory board, this stage is carried out at the end of each election stage. Money to the lower level election supervisors is carried out alternately by the commissioner with the secretariat team.

Based on the findings, a communication strategy model can be made by Riau Election Supervisory Bodies:

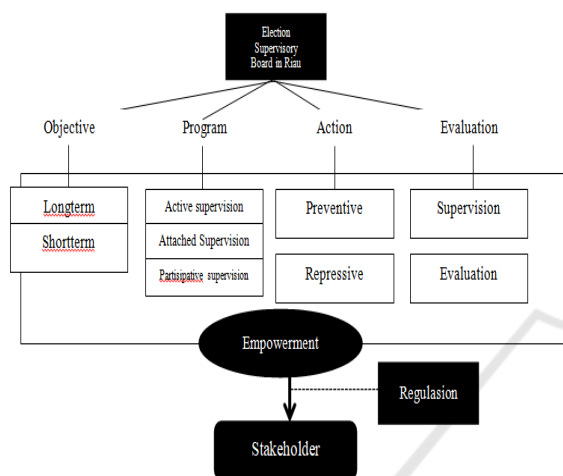


Figure 1. Model Of Communication Strategies By Riau's Election Supervisory Board

This research has shown that the right strategy in communicating policies is needed by the election supervisory board in order to be able to carry out the process of the stages of elections in a democratic and in accordance with the laws and regulations as a constitutional basis for action. All stages in the communication strategies are the efforts of the election supervisory board in strengthening electoral institutions. Communication strategies start with determining goals, formulating programs, actions, and evaluations. All stages of the Election will not be passed when these stages are not properly communicated to all stakeholders.

#### 4 CONCLUSION

Bawaslu Riau's communication strategy in optimizing electoral institutions consists of 4 steps: Objectives, programs, Actions and Evaluations. The objectives consist of two types, namely long-term goals (realizing democratic and integrity elections), and short-term goals (carrying out the duties and functions of the election supervisory institution). The program has three types of supervision, namely

active supervision, attached supervision and participative supervision. Action is a step taken by Riau Bawaslu in implementing the planned program, consisting of two, namely preventive and repressive. While the final step is Evaluation, carried out through two activities, namely supervision and Evaluation.

The communication strategy process carried out by Riau Bawaslu is a long, planned and measurable process that is based on legislation to strengthen electoral institutions. Synergy with other institutions both directly as Bawaslu's work partners or not becomes an important and inseparable part of Riau Bawaslu. As an election supervisory institution, every individual in it strives to realize the ideals of democracy through elections and elections that are carried out well and with integrity. The communication strategy is a process of exchanging ideas developed within the organization's internal and external organization. Organizational dynamics emerged in the oversight process carried out by Bawaslu, in the form of conflict, the same orientation and support for the institution. The strategy is also part of the organization's political decisions in strengthening institutions. Negotiations and lobbying occur in small discussion groups involving individuals, groups and organizations outside the Election Supervisory Body.

In 4.0 industry era, an organization is required to be more sensitive to all changes. a dynamic environment must be faced with a system that is not rigid and closed. a strong organization supported by human resources that are able to keep up with the times that are tailored to the needs of the organization.

The communication strategy model implemented by Riau Election Supervisory Body must be able to make this institution strong and credible and integrity. The main aim of this paper was to know how communication strategies by Election Supervisory Board in Riau to electoral bodies empowerment. There are four steps, namely: objective, program, action and Evaluation. All of these steps constitute a unified strategy aimed at strengthening institutions. Communication strategy as an exchange of ideas, duties and obligations, consists a political activity as Election Supervisory Board in Riau. This step is a derivative result of the institution's policy above (The Election Supervisory Body of RI). The communication strategy of Riau's Bawaslu in strengthening electoral institutions is a strategic, planned and measurable step that goes through four stages.

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