EFFECTIVENESS AND CHALLENGES OF COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT OF THE TANAH BUMBU GENERAL ELECTION COMMISSION IN THE SOCIALIZATION OF THE CANDIDACY STAGE OF THE 2024 REGIONAL HEAD ELECTION

Bustanul Mubarok [a*)], Aminah Swarnawati [a)]

[a)] *Muhammadiyah University of Jakarta, South Tangerang, Indonesia*

*)Corresponding Author: bustanulmubarok32@gmail.com

Abstract. The regional head election (Pilkada) is a contestation that requires proper management. One of the most important management aspects is the Communication Management by the General Election Commission (KPU) as the organizer of the regional head election. KPU Tanah Bumbu, as the organizer of the Pilkada in Tanah Bumbu Regency, South Kalimantan, has implemented communication management adjusted to various problems and the dynamics of local politics. The purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness and challenges of communication management by the General Election Commission (KPU) of Tanah Bumbu Regency during the candidacy stage in the implementation of the 2024 Regional Head Election (Pilkada). This research was conducted in Tanah Bumbu Regency during the candidacy stage of the Pilkada 2024 participants. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with a case study approach. Data collection techniques employed in this study included in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The study found that the communication management strategy of KPU Tanah Bumbu relies on communicators' competence resources which are already good, adequate technological support, well-established cooperative relationships with related parties, and the availability of very sufficient budget. This study also successfully identified the main challenges of communication management faced by KPU Tanah Bumbu, namely the low level of public literacy, infrastructural obstacles, and unpredictable socio-political dynamics..

Keywords: communication management; KPU Tanah Bumbu; communication channels

I. INTRODUCTION

The General Elections Commission (KPU) is an institution responsible for organizing General Elections (Pemilu) in Indonesia. Law No. 22 of 2007 serves as the legal foundation for the KPU, Provincial KPU, and Regency/Municipal KPU in carrying out their duties (Muhazir [1]). The Regency/Municipal KPU is tasked with organizing Regional Head Elections (PILKADA) at the regency/municipal level. One of the crucial stages in the PILKADA is the nomination stage. This stage is the first and important step in determining who is eligible to participate in the PILKADA contestation [2]. The Regional KPU, as the organizing body at the regency/municipal level, bears a significant and challenging responsibility in carrying out various activities related to the implementation of the PILKADA. The technical regulations for the implementation of the 2024 PILKADA concerning the nomination of Governors and their Deputies, Mayors and their Deputies, as well as Regents and Deputy Regents are stipulated in KPU Regulation Number 8 of 2024 concerning the nomination of Governors and Deputy Governors, Regents and Deputy Regents, and Mayors and Deputy Mayors [3].

In communicating with PILKADA participants, especially regional head candidates and their supporting political parties, appropriate communication management is required so that PILKADA participants understand the process and it is expected to result in a lower rate of disputes over the determination of PILKADA candidate pairs. This condition receives special attention, particularly for the KPU of Tanah Bumbu Regency, South Kalimantan, which carries a heavy burden in organizing the PILKADA in its region [4]. A communication process that is not accompanied by proper management typically results in numerous disputes against the KPUD as the election organizer, especially concerning the determination of verification results of regional head candidates. Therefore, it is necessary to further examine how the communication management of KPU Tanah Bumbu is carried out with the 2024 PILKADA participants during the nomination stage [5]. Communication management in the context of PILKADA is not merely about delivering information but also includes strategies for conveying messages that are clearly received, correctly understood, and capable of building public trust in the electoral process [6]. Effective communication management involves planning,

organizing, implementation, and evaluation in the delivery of information. From a communication management perspective, effective communication plays a role in building the trust and credibility of an organization. KPU, as the institution responsible for organizing the PILKADA, must manage its communication effectively, just as a business entity manages its relationship with customers and other stakeholders. The principles of efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness in information dissemination must be part of the KPU's communication strategy to increase voter participation and ensure compliance with electoral regulations.

In reality, in Tanah Bumbu Regency, many candidates and political parties do not receive clear information regarding the nomination procedures. Many candidates do not understand the regulations governing the nomination stage, resulting in confusion and potential violations. The suboptimal use of media has led to uneven dissemination of information. Socialization is often one-directional, where information is merely conveyed without providing space for discussion or questions and answers. Some members of the public hold negative views of the political process, which may hinder their participation in the PILKADA. These problems form the basis for the importance of this study so that they can be academically explained, and so that the commissioners of the KPU Tanah Bumbu Regency can, in the future, improve their communication management in the areas that are still considered lacking..

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted at the General Elections Commission (KPU) of Tanah Bumbu Regency, South Kalimantan Province. The implementation of this study took place during the candidate nomination stage from July 1 to August 2024. The approach used in this study was qualitative, which is expected to obtain data based on field findings that cannot be reached by statistical methods [7]. This was done to explore as much information as possible from the field related to the Communication Management of KPU Tanah Bumbu towards the participants of the 2024 Regional Head Election (Pilkada). The method employed in this study was descriptive qualitative. This research applied a case study method. A case study is a study that investigates in-depth a phenomenon that naturally occurs within a particular setting or context. According to Diwan [8], case study research is conducted intensively to examine the interactions, positions, and conditions of the field of a research unit (for example: social units or educational units) as they are. The research subjects can be individuals, communities, or institutions. In essence, the subject of the research is relatively small. However, the focus and variables examined are quite broad.

According to Yin [9], a case study is an empirical research method that explores contemporary phenomena in detail within a real-world context, where the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are clearly evident but not obvious. Furthermore, the researcher has limited control over the phenomena and the context that occurs. Moreover,

according to Samsu [10], this method is used to produce in-depth findings and has a broader scope so that it can strengthen the consistency and validity of the research.

The qualitative research used in this study aimed to analyze the effectiveness and challenges of communication by KPU Tanah Bumbu Regency during the candidate nomination stage of the 2024 Pilkada. In this study, data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews, which aimed to uncover problems more openly, and documentation studies. Additionally, this research also used observation techniques, which are data collection methods to observe human behavior, work processes, natural phenomena, and respondents (Sugiyono [11]). Subsequently, the research involved direct observation to find facts in the field. The instrument used was unstructured non-participant observation. To obtain more complete data from this study, documentation techniques were also employed, which are methods used to trace historical data (Afifuddin & Saebani [12]), with the aim of obtaining clearer and more comprehensive information regarding the Effectiveness and Challenges of Communication Management by KPU Tanah Bumbu towards the 2024 Pilkada Participants..

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As part of the national organization of the General Elections Commission (KPU), the KPU of Tanah Bumbu Regency is tasked with coordinating the implementation of elections within the jurisdiction of Tanah Bumbu Regency. The KPU Tanah Bumbu was established based on Law Number 2 of 2022, effective since March 20, 2002. The administrative area of Tanah Bumbu Regency comprises 12 districts (kecamatan) and 157 villages (desa), all located within the Province of South Kalimantan.

To carry out the election administration in the Tanah Bumbu region, the KPU Tanah Bumbu is led by a team consisting of five members: one chairman who also serves as a member, and four additional members. Having completed the duties of organizing the legislative and presidential elections held in February, the KPU Tanah Bumbu must now prepare for the Regional Head Election (Pilkada) to elect the Governor and Deputy Governor, as well as the Regent and Vice Regent, scheduled for November 27, 2024. Data updating is conducted by KPU Tanah Bumbu to ensure that election-related data is more current.

The results of the data updating by KPU Tanah Bumbu indicate a total of 550 polling stations (TPS), consisting of 544 regular TPS and 1 special TPS located in a correctional institution (Lembaga Pemasyarakatan). The Permanent Voter List (DPT) resulting from the data update includes 243,014 eligible voters, with a composition of 123,685 males and 119,329 females. This corresponds to the Decree of KPU Tanah Bumbu Number 689 of 2024 concerning the DPT for the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Head Election (Pilkada Serentak). The 2024 Simultaneous Regional Head Election

represents the largest simultaneous pilkada in the history of regional elections in Indonesia. It covers 37 provinces and 508 regencies/cities across Indonesia concurrently. In total, the pilkada encompasses 545 regions and involves 207.1 million eligible voters.

The 2024 Pilkada is also considered complex because it is conducted concurrently in the same year as the legislative elections as well as the presidential and vice-presidential elections, with only a few months of preparation time for the organizers. This situation requires KPU Tanah Bumbu to implement effective communication management with all stakeholders at every stage of the pilkada, in order to ensure understanding among pilkada participants and the public, with the hope that no disputes or objections will be raised against KPU as the pilkada organizer by dissatisfied parties..

Effectiveness of Supporting Factors in the Communication Management of KPU Tanah Bumbu

The communication management carried out by KPU Tanah Bumbu during the candidacy stage of the 2024 regional election (Pilkada) naturally has supporting and inhibiting factors. The supporting factors for KPU Tanah Bumbu in the communication of the candidacy stage of Pilkada are as follows:

1. Competence of Communicators and Special Team: The first point that serves as a supporting factor in the communication of the 2024 Pilkada candidacy stage is the competence of the communicators and the Special Communication Team. The staff and members of KPU appointed as communicators are trained in public communication and conflict management. Furthermore, KPU Tanah Bumbu also established a communication management team focused on message delivery and media management.
2. Technological Support and Cooperation with Stakeholders: The next point that supports communication in the 2024 Pilkada candidacy stage is the availability of technological support and good cooperation with stakeholders, both from the media side and the community. Additionally, KPU Tanah Bumbu utilizes digital platforms including social media, official websites, and other platforms to reach a broader audience.
3. Budget Readiness: The final point that acts as a supporting factor in the communication of the 2024 Pilkada candidacy stage is the readiness of the budget. It cannot be denied that budget is an important aspect in communication activities directed to the public. Many expenditure items require a budget to support communication.

Communication Management Obstacles Faced by the Tanah Bumbu KPU

In addition to supporting factors, the Tanah Bumbu KPU inevitably faces obstacles in the communication process during the 2024 Pilkada candidacy stages, which are as follows:

1. Community Literacy Level: The first point that becomes a hindrance factor in the communication of the 2024 Pilkada candidacy stages is the low level of community literacy, especially regarding matters related to general elections.
2. Infrastructure Barriers and the Presence of Hoaxes: The second point that serves as an obstacle in the communication during the 2024 Pilkada candidacy stages is the existence of infrastructure barriers that result in limited access to information.
3. **Socio-Political Dynamics:** The last point that acts as a barrier in the communication of the 2024 Pilkada candidacy stages is the uncertain socio-political dynamics**.**

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The effectiveness of the Communication Management of the Tanah Bumbu General Election Commission (KPU) during the candidate nomination stages of the regional election (Pilkada) is supported by the availability of human resources in the form of a competent number of communicators and communication expert teams, adequate technological support, good cooperation with stakeholders in the Pilkada process, and budget readiness to optimally fund the implementation of communication management. In carrying out Communication Management, the Tanah Bumbu KPU faces several factual challenges, such as the low literacy level of the community, uneven infrastructural barriers, and the volatile social and political dynamics within society. Based on the results of this study, several recommendations can be made: as the official election organizing institution in Indonesia, the Tanah Bumbu KPU must thoroughly understand the obstacles and challenges of communication management in the regency by taking into account the conditions of community literacy, technological limitations, limited reach of mass media, risks of widespread and systematic hoax dissemination through social media, and propagandas played by political elites for short-term pragmatic interests. Furthermore, the Tanah Bumbu KPU needs to design a more effective communication management strategy to address the identified communication barriers and challenges based on scientific research findings. The designed communication management strategy should be regularly evaluated to allow improvements during the ongoing stages of legislative elections (Pileg) and regional elections (Pilkada) in the future.

REFERENCES

[1] Muhazir, A., Miranti, A., & Sayidatina, K. Strategi Komunikasi Politik KPU Kabupaten Banyumas Meningkatkan Peran Sosialisasi Tahapan Pemilihan Umum Tahun 2024. *Jurnal PIKMA: Publikasi Media Dan Cinema*, 5(2), 176–189. 2023

[2] M. S. R., Firdaus, Hardianti, T., Suswanto, B., & Hidayanto, S. *Manajemn Komunikasi. In Angewandte Chemie International Edition*, 6(11), 951–952. 2019.

[3] Hasmawati, F. Manajemen Dalam Komunikasi. *Al-Idarah*, 5(6), 76–86. 2018

[4] Rizal, A. Indonesian Annual Conference on Pemilukada Serentak 2024 : Dinamika , Urgensi dan Tantangan. *Indonesian Annual Conference Series*, 1, 136–140. 2022.

[5] Venus, A. *Manajemen Kampanye: Panduan Teoritis dalam mengefektifkan Kampanye Komunikasi*. Jakarta: PT. Simbiosa Rekatama Media. 2009

[6] Rahmat, P. S. Strategi belajar mengajar. Pt. Scopindo Media Pustaka. Riinawati, R. *Pengantar Teori Manajemen Komunikasi dan Organisasi*. 2021.

[7] Slamet, Y. *Pendekatan Penelitian Kualitatif* (1st ed.) (1st ed.). Graha Ilmu. 2019.

[8] Diwan, P. Management principles and practices. *Excel Books India*. Public relations politik Bawaslu. Rena Cipta Mandiri. 2019.

[9] Yin, R. K. Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods 6th edition. *Singapore: SAGE Publications*, Inc. 2018.

[10] Samsu, S. M. Metode Penelitian: (Teori dan Aplikasi Penelitian Kualitatif, Kuantitatif,Mixed Methods, serta Research & Development). *Jambi: Pusat Studi Agama dan Kemasyarakatan* (PUSAKA). 2017

[11] Sugiyono, D. Memahami penelitian kualitatif. 2010.

[12] Afifuddin, B. A. S., & Saebani, B. A. *Metodologi penelitian kualitatif*. Bandung: Pustaka Setia. 2009.