

Original Research Article

The Serious Challenges to the Rights of Citizens in Developing Countries: A case study of Indonesia

Osbin Samosir

Abstract

E-Mail: osamosir@gmail.com

Political Science, Faculty of Social and
Political Sciences, Christian University of
Indonesia

Democracy requires respect for the political rights of citizens as the main thing to become state policy, one of which is through general elections. Democracy development often does not run smoothly, especially in developing countries that do not have a democratic tradition like Indonesia. Indonesia's democratic growth index until 2021 is still very low. The holding of honest and fair elections is one of the challenges in the growth of democracy in Indonesia. The unsatisfactory performance of election administrators, as one of the pillars of Indonesian democracy, is one of the highlights in efforts to build Indonesian democracy. Election organizers forget the main task of serving the political interests of citizens with dignity. Since the ethical institute for election administrators was established in 2021, unsatisfactory performance of election organizers has increasingly shown.

Keywords: Democracy; political right, Fair election, Political interest, Professionalism

INTRODUCTION

One of the determinants of democratic growth is the professionalism and independence of election administrators. In many modern countries, such as Europe and the United States, organizers will certainly act professionally and impartially. The biggest challenge in a country whose democracy is growing very slowly, such as Indonesia and a number of emerging countries, is that the general election process often wins candidates who are financially strong even though they are not elected by the people (Ashiddiqie, Jimly. *Presentationn at the Anniversary Celebration of the Honorary Council for the Election of the Republic of Indonesia*. DKPP Meeting Room, June 12, 2018). The same challenges for holding elections in Indonesia. For Indonesia, election management is one of the pillars for upholding democracy because of the bad experiences during the authoritarian New Order regime of 1966-1998.

One of the demands of democracy is the strengthening of the process of implementing honest and fair elections and respect for the people's voice by the legislature and the executives of the results of direct general elections by the people (Miriam Budiarmo. *Basics of Political Science*. Edition, Revised II. Jakarta, Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2010.). Throughout 2019-

2021, three election organizers at the central level were forced to be dismissed, not including the provincial and district/city level election organizers. Indonesia's stagnation of democracy is a serious concern because it has been almost 80 years since Vice President Mohmaad Hatta's Declaration Number X in November 1945, Indonesia decided to adopt democracy as a format in the state process.

Indonesia has high hopes for election administrators for the repair of its democracy after the breakdown by the authoritarian New Order government (Interview with Nur HidayatSardini, Chairman of the Bawaslu of the Republic of Indonesia in 2008-2011 and a lecturer in Political Science at Diponegoro University, Semarang, Central Java, on Monday, February 7, 2022). Indonesian democracy is expected to grow, one of which is by giving birth to a number of state institutions as election administrators. The Indonesian democracy index released by The Economist Intelligence Unit-EIU places Indonesia in the category of flawed democratic growth (<https://www.eiu.com/n/democracy-index-2021-less-than-half-the-world-lives-in-a-democracy/> 10 Februari 2022). Indonesia is placed in 52nd place in the world with a fairly low score of 6.71 with a flawed democracy growth rate

Table 1. Number of Complaints of Election Organizers by the public throughout 2012 to 2021 (Data from the Trial Section of the DKPP RI, January 31, 2022)

No.	Year	Number of Report Files
1	2012	99
2	2013	606
3	2014	879
4	2015	478
5	2016	323
6	2017	304
7	2018	521
8	2019	506
9.	2020	454
10.	2021	297
Total		4.467 cases

(flawed democracy). One of the measuring tools used is the democratic general election process which is considered to have not placed the political authority of Indonesian citizens in a dignified place. The general election process in Indonesia is organized by the General Election Commission (KPU) and the General Elections Supervisory Body (BAWASLU).

From an institutional perspective, all efforts have been made to break the chain of political character of collusion, corruption, and nepotism that became a common culture during President Soeharto's New Order administration (Interview with JeirrySumampou, Coordinator of the Indonesian Institute of TEPI (a Non-Governmental Organization related to General Elections and Democracy) on Monday, 7 February 2022). Since the birth of the 1998 Reformation Era, there has been a political policy to present a number of institutions to hold general elections, namely: KPU, Bawaslu and the Election Organizing Honorary Council (DKPP). In addition to the three institutions, there are a number of state institutions that are still dealing with the enforcement of democracy in Indonesia, namely: the Constitutional Court (MK), the Attorney General's Office, the State Police, the State Administrative Court (PTUN), and the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK). The low index of Indonesia's democracy as mentioned by The Economist cannot be separated from the quality of work of election organizers in Indonesia.

It is very possible that Indonesia is the only country in the world that has many state institutions dealing with elections. Even the affairs of the ethical behavior of election organizers are designed to be tried by a special institution, namely the DKPP which was formed in 2012. The examination process is open to the public, the disputing parties are presented together by bringing witnesses and their respective evidence. The trial process is publicly broadcast through electronic media and can be watched live in the courtroom, and the verdict is read open to the public, just like the general trials for

criminal courts and civil courts. The reason, as stated by JimlyAshiddiqie, is that the affairs of the election administration are matters that are directly related to the political interests of citizens (Ashiddiqie,2018,n.1). Because it deals directly with the political rights of citizens, the ethical affairs of election organizers must also be opened to the public. Table 1

The results found from the behavior of election administrators for the development of democracy in Indonesia are not encouraging. Data for the last 10 years since DKPP was established (2012 to 2021) shows the behavior of election organizers can be categorized as bad as shown in Table-01 for the very high level of public disappointment with the non-neutral and unprofessional attitude of election organizers. It turns out that the bad behavior of election organizers is not only found in lower-level election organizers, but also at the central and provincial levels.

At least from 2019 to 2020, DKPP gave an Ethics Court Decision to dismiss three commissioners of the KPU RI, namely: concerning Disrespectful Dismissal as Commissioner of the Indonesian KPU on behalf of Wahyu Setiawan(Case of the Election Organizer Code of Ethics, Number 01-PKE-DKPP/1/2020.) and EviNovida Ginting (Case of the Election Organizer Code of Ethics,Number 317-PKE-DKPP/X/2019.), and concerning Dismissal from the position of Chairperson of the RI KPU on behalf of Arief Budiman (Case of the Election Organizer Code of Ethics,Number 123-PKE-DKPP/X/2020.). These three court decisions for the dismissal of members of the KPU at the central level are a serious concern in the development of democracy in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

From the main issues above, this research answers the question: why the behavior of election administrators in

Indonesia does not support the development of democracy? How has the ethical behavior of election organizers been in the last 10 years? What efforts should be made to improve the quality of the election organizers? This research will use a qualitative research methodology, a research that focuses on the strength of data and arguments obtained from the review of literature and in-depth interviews with a number of parties. The review of literature will utilize data taken directly from decisions on ethics cases since 2012, in general, and from the decisions on ethics cases in 2021.

The thoughts and views of Indonesian election leaders regarding the honesty and professionalism of election administrators, namely: JimlyAshiddiqie, former Chairman of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia and an expert on constitutional law from the University of Indonesia; Ida Budhiati, former member of the KPU of the Republic of Indonesia; Nur HidayatSardini, former Chair of the General Elections Supervisory Agency of the Republic of Indonesia; AlfitraSalamm Chairman of the Indonesian Political Science Association; and JeirrySumampou from a non-governmental organization that advocates for elections and democracy. Other sources include the thoughts of experts on democracy and political development through elections: Lary Diamond, Robert Dahl, Franz MagnisSuseno, and Miriam Budiarjo.

The Difficult Democracy and Expectations on Election Organizers

Since the end of Suharto's authoritarian New Order government, the intention to uphold democracy has become one of the demands for the birth of the reform era in 1998. The public hopes that democracy is enforced by one of them holding elections as soon as possible in 1999 (Interview with Nur HidayatSardini, n.3.). Democracy is always trying to strengthen democracy in the realm of general elections by changing election administrators elected by the government to become independent and professional organizers named the General Election Commission. Not only was the holding of democratic elections held as soon as possible in 1999, the state institutions for organizing elections were also added to become three institutions.

Because it is directly related to the political rights of citizens, the ethical affairs of election organizers must also be opened to the public. It is very likely that Indonesia is the only country in the world that has many state institutions that handle elections. In 2008 the General Election Supervisory Body was formed and in 2012 a special ethics court was formed for all election management institutions throughout the country, namely the Election Organizing Honorary Council. The examination process is open to the public, the disputing parties are presented together with witnesses and each.

proof. The trial process is broadcast openly through electronic media and can be witnessed live in the courtroom, and decisions are read openly to the public, as is the case with general trials in criminal and civil courts. The reason is, as stated by JimlyAshiddiqie, that the affairs of the election administration are matters that are directly related to the political interests of citizens (Ashiddiqie, Jimly. *Presentation in the DKPP Performance Report and the National Coordination Meeting of the Regional Examination Team (TPD)*. The Mercure Ancol Hotel, North Jakarta on Friday, December 20, 2019.).

The public is very disappointed and complains about the performance of the election organizers from the central level to the lowest level which is certainly one of the sources of difficulties in the growth of democracy in Indonesia. The latest disappointment is of course the ethical decision on the dismissal of the Chairperson of the KPU RI and two members of the KPU RI. The most disappointing behavior, of course, was caught by a member of the Indonesian KPU, namely Wahyu Setiawan in the bribery case by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK). The Ethics Council did not hesitate to issue a permanent dismissal decision as a KPU commissioner to Wahyu Setiawan.

Another KPU commissioner who was given a permanent dismissal by the Ethics Council was EviNovidaGinting. Evi was dismissed because she was deemed to have done an action that was detrimental to one candidate and benefited another candidate in the z are increasingly far from reach, namely election organizers at the sub-district and village levels which of course will be further away so that the election implementation cannot be monitored and controlled.

Disappointment with the poor performance of election administrators in Indonesia is not a new problem. The origin is of course the holding of elections since the early days of the birth of the authoritarian New Order government which conducted six general elections (1971, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997) which were only a formality. Election organizers throughout Indonesia during the New Order were required to win the sole power of President Suharto, who was supported by three political machines, namely: the military (ABRI), the bureaucracy, and the political party (Golkar) was obliged to win over the political parties of Suharto's New Order government. So when the New Order government fell in 1998, election organizers in Indonesia were not ready to act professionally and independently in general elections during the Reformation Era since 1998.

The main demands of the 1998 Reformation Era included general elections so that election administrators were freed from the three main enemies of democracy, namely: Collusion, Corruption, and Nepotism so that every citizen's political choice was converted to a seat or candidate's victory in an honest and fair manner. The idea of Indonesian democracy gave birth to three

Table 2. Number of Election Organizers reported to DKPP2021(The data from the complaints section of DKPP RI, January 8, 2022)

Reported Institution	Number of People
Regency/City KPU	550
Regency/City Bawaslu	362
Provincial Bawaslu	85
Provincial KPU	71
Bawaslu of the Republic of Indonesia	23
KPU of the Republic of Indonesia	4
Election organizers at the sub-district level and below	79
Total	1174 people

electoral institutions, namely the KPU in 1998, as the technical organizers and stages of the general election. To oversee the duties of the KPU, Bawaslu was formed in 2008, and the judiciary when their ethical behavior was sued by the public for the work of the two institutions was formed DKPP in 2012. With the birth of the DKPP, in Indonesia, the personal ethical behavior of every election organizer at all levels has become a public matter that open for public.

This open session is very important because, as Lary Diamond said (Diamond, Larry, et al. (eds) (1990). *Political and developing Countries: Comparing Experience with Democracy*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienne, p. xvi, 6-7.) , in the practice of democracy, general elections are an arena for the parties to compete because there is a place to compete as contestants who struggle to seize political power, then there is citizen participation that determines political choice, there is an aspect of political liberalization as citizens' civil and political rights are free to make their choices. In this process, the election administrator becomes the most decisive actor in the running of an election process based on the principles of direct, general, free and confidential. Every adult citizen (one person) has the right to use only one vote (one vote) whose price is assessed (one value) equal to the votes of all other citizens. Democracy, one form of which is elections, is an opportunity for all parties, both opposition parties and citizens to carry out the function of control and supervision of the party and government in power.

Since the beginning of the behavior of election organizers in Indonesia, it has become a very serious problem, so that before the birth of the DKPP RI Institution, the ethical behavior of election organizers had been tried since October 2010.

Looking at Table 2, just for the year 2021 alone, the number of election administrators reported to the state ethics agency for having unsatisfactory performance in carrying out elections was 1174 people. This number is of course very large and is really concerning. The strengthening of the existence of DKPP in the second period was reformulated in Law Number 7 of 2017 with the additional authority of DKPP to form regional

assemblies in every province throughout Indonesia.

Public Courts for Election Organizers

Due to the many negligence of the performance of the election organizers, the public court for the conduct of the election organizers becomes very important. In JimlyAshiddiqie's mind, all allegations of violations of the ethics by election administrators are always related to the political interests of the state and the political rights of its citizens. In a democracy, election management is the fourth pillar that strengthens the democratic process (Ashiddiqie, 2019, n. 15). The position and authority possessed by the election organizers, who are professional and independent from all the interests of the parties who are competing for political power, will very likely be to help democracy grow stronger and more fertile in the archipelago. On the other hand, the behavior of the election organizers is most likely to damage the cohesion and social order of society, which is getting more complicated and full of social conflicts, if such behaviors are unprofessional and favoring either one of the candidates in the organization of the general elections. Public discontent with the performance of election organizers is very often the cause of electoral disputes that lead to destruction and burning of government offices and other public facilities, and even to fatalities. Examples of which could be found in North Tapanuli, Palembang City, in most of areas on the island of Papua, in eastern Indonesia, and in a number of other areas in Indonesia.

Election organizers are very likely to be tempted by the lure of power, promises of future positions if elected, the possibility of receiving money, or close family or organizational relationships. The effects of such political collusions make it very possible for the election organizers to act unprofessionally and side with one of the candidates or parties most likely to win the political competition. Whereas in a dignified democracy, all election administrators must put themselves out of the way of any of the competing parties because they are the organizers, referees and breakers at every stage of the

election for all election participants to obey. So the position of the election organizers must be in the middle, to have an impartial character and to carry out all the steps in a measurable, accountable and transparent manner with the main characteristic - independence. Election organizers must serve all parties who are competing for power, and serve the electorate as the party who will determine the victory or defeat of a competing candidate.

It is hoped that the DKPP's decisions will make the election organizers act better because on their shoulders the Indonesian democratic party is placed upon at every step of the electoral exercise. The success and dignity of the Indonesian democratic process is largely determined by the process of holding elections by the election organizers. Elections are the most real and most basic democratic processes in any democratic country. There is no country in the world that calls itself a democracy that does not hold elections. Even a number of countries that are actually authoritarian or communist in character also conduct elections, which of course is very different from the process and purpose of elections that are understood by countries that glorify democracy.

Ida Budhiati emphasized that the basic attitude of election organizers was that they should not side with one of the election participants. Election organizers are not only not allowed to take sides, they are not allowed even to appear to be taking sides or making gestures that can be construed as siding with any of the candidates. The reason is very clear; because all the behavior and movements of the election organizers, whether proven or just suspicions, are always being watched by all politically competing candidates. Efforts to suspect and spy on every election organizer's attitude are a necessity for every election participant because every candidate wants a political victory, and if possible, dirty competition are carried out.

Why is the level of suspicion towards election administrators so high as shown in the total number of 243 decided cases by the ethics court in 2021? This is because in the democratic process in Indonesia, election administrators are directly involved in determining the circulation of power, especially with regards to the election of executive political power at the center and in the regions. This different from the legislative elections which are participated in by hundreds or even thousands of candidates so much so that the hard competition is not felt that much because the ratio of winners to losers is almost 1 is to 20. In contrast, the election for executive positions is participated in on the average by two to four pairs of candidates; the presidential elections in 2014 and 2019 were only contested by the same two presidential candidates: President Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto.

Democracy turned into a riot that was very worrying, the masses did not accept the defeat of the presidential candidate they were carrying. Elections for governors,

regents, and mayors often follow a similar pattern which often ends in riots, burning government offices, and destruction of public facilities. The political temperature in the election of a regent or mayor is much hotter because it is located in a small area, the competing candidates are directly in contact with family ties that are intertwined by blood relations between each candidate and the voters with each other.

Need Strong Steps

Firm steps are urgently needed to improve the development of democracy in Indonesia from the point of view of the behavior of election administrators who are still disappointing. That step has been tried to start in the 2012 ethical incident, during the early days of DKPP leading to the 2014 national elections for the Legislative and Presidential elections, one of the biggest ethical cases was when all of the Indonesian KPU commissioners were sued by Bawaslu for unprofessional and unfair treatment of the 18 political parties deliberately crossed out from the list of election candidates. According to Bawaslu, the RI KPU did not carry out the final requirement of field verification to determine whether or not a political party is eligible to participate in the 2014 election. In an open trial on Friday, November 11, 2012, it was revealed that the commissioners of the KPU RI had difficulty carrying out their duties which were deliberately hindered by the secretariat of the KPU RI. At that time, the Commissioner of the Indonesian KPU, Ida Budhiati, said that there was disobedience and an attempt to boycott the 2014 general election conducted by the General Secretary of the KPU. The secretariat did not carry out its support function optimally in the preparation for the election.

In a Decision on Friday, 27 November 2012, the Ethics Council decided to dismiss four main KPU secretariat officials who were not even named in the complaint. The four people dismissed were the Secretary General, the Deputy Secretary, the Head of the Legal Bureau, and the Deputy Head of the Legal Bureau (Case of the Code of Ethics for Election Organizers, Number 23-25-DKPP-PKE/I/2012.). In addition, DKPP ordered the Indonesian KPU to do a second field verification process of all political parties, especially those felt disadvantaged. In this event, what Lary Diamond said holds true that democracy in the form of general elections is a constitutional system for the purpose of selecting political parties on a competitive and regular basis. There are universal adult citizens' suffrage rights, both for the election of members of the legislature and for the election of the chief executive such as president, prime minister, or other designations.

Table 3 shows the number of election administrators who have been charged during the national elections and simultaneous regional head elections by year. The data

Table 3. Decisions on the Code of Ethics for Election Organizers for the Year 2012-2021 (Data from the Trial Section,n. 14.)

No	Year of Case	Number of Cases	Cases Decided	Court Decision (people)						Total (people)
				R	WW	TS	FS	DP	RES	
1	2012	30	30	20	18	0	31	0	3	72
2	2013	141	141	399	133	14	91	0	28	665
3	2014	333	333	627	336	5	188	3	122	1281
4	2015	115	115	282	122	4	42	2	13	465
5	2016	163	163	376	173	3	46	2	10	610
6	2017	140	140	276	135	19	50	8	5	493
7	2018	319	319	522	632	16	101	21	40	1332
8	2019	331	331	808	552	4	77	17	46	1504
9	2020	196	196	452	286	3	41	16	0	798
10	2021	172	172	399	210	3	14	5	11	642
Amount		1940	1940	4161	2597	71	681	74	278	7862 People
				Cases		Reported				

Description:

R =Rehabilitation

TS= Temporary Stop

DP=Dismissal from Position

WW= Written Warning

FS = Fixed Stop

RES = Resolution

Table 4. Comparison of the Decisions on the Code of Ethics for 2012, 2017, and 2021 (Data from the Trial Section,n. 14.)

No	Year of Case	Number of Cases	Court Decision (people)						Total (people)
			R	WW	TS	FS	DP	RES	
1	2012	30	20 (27,8%)	18 (25 %)	0	31 (43,1%)	0	3 (4,2)	72 people (100%)
2	2017	140	276 (56%)	135 (27,4%)	19 (3,9%)	50 (10,1%)	8 (1,6%)	5 (1%)	493 people (100%)
					Dismissed election organizer: 77 orang (15,62%)				
3	2021	172	399 (62,15%)	210 (32,71%)	3 (0,47%)	14 (2,18%)	5 (0,8%)	11 (1,7%)	642 people (100%)
					Dismissed election organizer: 22 orang (3,4%)				

show that the number of those charged increased annually. The question is: has been a change in the behavior of election administrators in the ten years of DKPP's existence?

If you look at the data in Table 4, it can be seen that throughout 2012 to 2017 and in 2021, the percentage of complaints filed with the ethics board drastically rose. After ten years of the establishment of DKPP, there is a real change in the ethical behavior of election organizers. Although there were 642 election organizers on trial in 2021, only 22 were dismissed (3.4%). This number is much smaller than that of 2012, 31 people comprising 43.1% of the total for that year, and 77 people comprising 15.62% of the total in 2017. Meanwhile, the number of election organizers who were given a written warning in 2021 was much larger, 210 people (32.71%) compared to

the previous years. The number of rehabilitated election administrators dominates at 399 people (62.15%), a very high percentage compared to previous years. Table 4

What are the most prominent ethics violations during National General Election? Table 5 shows that most problems come up more during vote count summation (39.4%) and during the determination of the elected candidate (33.3%); it is at these stages that parties are more suspicious of the voters' performance as well as that of election organizers. This proves that there is a serious problem in the performance of election organizers who are deemed unprofessional and may potentially side with a candidate to win the election. Most violations occur at the three final stages of a national general election at 84.8%. However, the most common categories of ethics violations?

Table 5. Ethics Violations during the 2021 National General Elections (Data from the Trial Section,n. 14.)

No	National General Elections Process	Reported total	
1	Vote Count Summation	13 people (39,4%)	The three final stages of national elections: 84,8%
2	Determination of the Acquisition of Elected Chairs and Candidates Without Requests for Disputes over Election Results	11 people (33,3%)	
3	Voting and Vote Counting	4 people (12,1%)	
4	Supervision of Election process	3 people (9,1%)	
5	Dispute Resolution of Election Results for Parliament, Senate, Provincial Parliament, and Regency/Municipal Parliament	2 people (6,1%)	
Total		33 people (100%)	

Table 6. Violation of Ethical Principles in 2021 (Data from the Trial Section,n. 14)

No	Ethical Principles	Reported total
1	Professional	168
2	Legal Assurance	76
3	independent	20
4	Accountable	19
5	Fair	10
6	Openness	10
7	Public interest	8
8	Honest	6
9	Accessibility	5
10	Orderly	5
11	Proportional	3
12	Efficient	2
Total		332 people

Table 6 shows the ethical principles violated in 2021. The professional principles topped the list with 168 defendants followed by principle of legal certainty (76), independence (20), accountability (19), and fairness and openness (10,10).

The data in Table 6 shows that professionalism and legal certainty as basic qualities of election administrators are still low. The quality of the understanding of election administrators that is far from expectations will certainly have an impact on all performances at every stage of the election. This low quality is very likely determined by the inadequate reasoning ability of election administrators. Also because election administrators tend to be complacent to improve the quality of each individual; especially so if the election organizers have low work discipline. The stagnant professionalism and legal certainty of election administrators will further complicate the democratization process in Indonesia. If the election administration is handled by inadequately capable people, it will be very difficult for Indonesia to advance democratically, and it will have more potentials to create social conflicts.

At which political level did the organizers get the most public suspicions? The biggest problem in organizing elections is at the district/city level as shown in Table-10.

The data shows that the apex of the violations of the code of ethics is mostly in the periphery of the district/city areas. Firstly, this is because the district/city is very far from the capital city of Jakarta, making it difficult to reach electoral fraud process and the organizers' ethical observance is not as good as at the provincial and central levels. The second reason is that the district/city level is an area that directly participates in the national simultaneous direct regional head elections in December 2020. The limited social scope in the district/city enables collusion among election organizers and candidates for regents and mayors in the regions. With the above-mentioned conditions, election organizers are very likely to be tempted to commit election violations.

The data from Table 7 show that most violations of the code of ethics happened in the districts/cities; apart from being very far from Jakarta, making it difficult to reach and fostering a code of ethics, the districts/cities are also the areas that directly dealt with regional head elections in December 2020. So there is a higher possibility of temptations to violate the code of ethics, add to this the limited social scope in the district and city areas, making election organizers vulnerable to temptations and collusions with candidates competing in the regional head election for the Regent or Mayor positions.

Table 7. Defendant of Ethics by Institution in 2021 (Data from the Trial Section, n. 14.)

No.	Organizing Agency	Number of Defendants	Description
1	General Election Commission of the Republic of Indonesia	30 (3,2%)	
2	Election Supervisory Body of the Republic of Indonesia	1 (0,1%)	
3	Provincial Election Commission	64 (6,9%)	
4	Provincial Election Supervisory Body	78 (8,4%)	
5	Regency/City General Election Commission	447 (48,1%)	754 people
6	Regency/City Election Supervisory Body	307 (33 %)	(81,1%)
7	District Level Organizing Committee	3 (0,3%)	
Total		930 people (100%)	

The very large of public dissatisfaction in the district/city area shows a higher probability of political power collusion at this third level (Ida Budhiati, *Explanation at the National Coordination Meeting for the Regional Examination Team (TPD)*, the Mercure Harmoni Hotel, Jakarta, Thursday 16 December 2021). Distance from the center of power in Jakarta, geographical hindrances and inadequate transportation facilities compound the inaccessibility issues suffered by the election organizers from the provincial level which could possibly be an opportunity for the election organizers to conspire with the most powerful candidate in the area. Close family ties, ethnicity, and shared local culture among the election organizers, competing candidates, and voters alike contribute to a higher possibility of collusion. The shared culture and blood ties strongly influence the struggle for political power among the candidates and their respective camps because what is at stake is their cultural pride in familial lineage or sanguine relations. Thus, kinship make it harder for the election organizers to show professionalism and fairness.

Emergency Improvement of the Quality

Improving the quality of election management in Indonesia has strongly urged the growth of Indonesian democracy. The democratization process in Indonesia will always be polluted if the election administrators are not honest and fair but maintain practices that have become enemies of Indonesia's reform since 1998. The three New Order election practices that became the biggest enemy of the Reformation Era were when election administrators colluded to win candidates who paid or paid for the election. promising certain positions, committing corruption by receiving money by abusing authority, and acting nepotism when only the closest people or relatives are forced by the election organizers to win the general election.

Improving the quality of election management has started with the presence of three electoral institutions that share roles, namely: KPU, Bawaslu, and DKPP. The members of the three institutions at all levels are also not

formed by the government but come from civil society. The open selection process produced at election management institutions at all levels must always be evaluated, maybe even the selection process needs to be considered following the formula carried out with the selection of Candidates for Civil Servants who use the Computer Assisted Test (CAT) System in the early stages of selection. The selection method using software with computer aids is carried out so that it is expected to obtain a minimum standard of basic competence for applicants for candidates for KPU and Bawaslu members and DKPP so that commissioners are obtained who are more professional, independent, and dignified. Selection using written manual methods as so far does not provide maximum results because the assessment can be very personal so that the assessment is not objective.

Quality improvement has been carried out with an open ethical examination process following the general court pattern. The courage to break old patterns and habits becomes a stepping stone for open ethical examinations which have been considered taboo to bring personal ethical behavior to the public. This open examination is a demand for Indonesia's democratic development efforts through the electoral process. It is hoped that the quality of Indonesian elections implementation would increase year on year, especially in the years leading to the 2024 Simultaneous National Elections for Presidential, Legislative, and Regional Head throughout Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Like developing countries, the holding of elections for five times after the fall of Suharto's New Order authoritarian government did not make Indonesian democracy quite encouraging. It is strongly suspected that the electoral process was more disturbed by the interests of political parties and competing candidates which led to the election organizers being dishonest and unfair. Perhaps also because we do not have the democratic tradition as understood in the West and in America. The seeds of democracy in Indonesia do not have strong roots. When

the founding fathers of the nation decided to adopt democracy as a form of statehood, which would be established in August 1945, the reason for that was because the world was growing rapidly respect for human rights and the freedom of human dignity, which took shape in a democratic system of government.

Of course, this study is not perfect to test the importance of the existence of ethical institutions for Indonesia in the development of its democracy. Further studies are needed on how important the existence of an ethical body is for the development of democracy. It is interesting to conduct a similar study in the Southeast Asian region which is almost entirely dominated by a non democratic government system and a monarchy so that it is far from democratic in quality. Neighboring countries with low democratic quality, such as: Thailand (rank 74), Vietnam (rank 131), Cambodia (rank 134), Laos (rank 159), Myanmar (rank 166), Brunei, and other Southeast Asian countries have no character democratic.

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