

10-31-2021

Managing Indonesian Head of Local Government Elections During the COVID-19 Pandemic Period

Aditya Perdana

Center for Political Study University of Indonesia, aditya.perdana@ui.ac.id

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarhub.ui.ac.id/politik>



Part of the [American Politics Commons](#), [Comparative Politics Commons](#), [Geography Commons](#), [International and Area Studies Commons](#), [International Relations Commons](#), and the [Political Theory Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Perdana, Aditya (2021) "Managing Indonesian Head of Local Government Elections During the COVID-19 Pandemic Period," *Jurnal Politik*: Vol. 7: Iss. 2, Article 14.

DOI: 10.7454/jp.v7i2.1081

Available at: <https://scholarhub.ui.ac.id/politik/vol7/iss2/14>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at UI Scholars Hub. It has been accepted for inclusion in Jurnal Politik by an authorized editor of UI Scholars Hub.

Managing Indonesian Head of Local Government Elections during the Covid-19 Pandemic

ADITYA PERDANA*

Email: aditya.perdana@ui.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the Local Government elections (Pilkada) in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to its postponement by looking at three critical aspects in the electoral management framework decision-making process, service outputs, and service outcomes framed. Some findings of this paper are: first, decision making for conducting the Pilkada 2020 was politically uneasy; second, good quality of service outputs from Pilkada 2020 was signed by convenience dimension which can be captured by voter compliance on health protocols in the polling station; third, the best evaluation for service outcomes is coming from the high percentage of voters turn out that need to explore more on that phenomena.

Keywords: COVID 19, Elections, Electoral Management Bodies, Indonesia, Pilkada

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini menganalisis manajemen Pemilihan Kepala Daerah (Pilkada) di Indonesia pada masa pandemic COVID-19 dengan melihat tiga aspek penting dalam kerangka manajemen pemilihan umum, yaitu proses pembuatan keputusan, keluaran layanan dan hasil layanan dalam kasus Indonesia. Beberapa temuan dari tulisan ini adalah: pertama, pengambilan keputusan penyelenggaraan Pilkada 2020 secara politis tidak nyaman; kedua, kualitas output layanan 2020 yang baik dengan dimensi kenyamanan yang dapat ditangkap dari kepatuhan pemilih terhadap protokol kesehatan di tempat pemungutan suara; ketiga, evaluasi terbaik untuk hasil pelayanan berasal dari persentase pemilih yang tinggi sehingga perlu digali lebih dalam tentang fenomena tersebut.

Kata kunci: Badan Penyelenggara Pemilu, COVID-19, Indonesia, Pemilu, Pilkada

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of January 2020, the infected viral disease called COVID-19 has become the hottest topic around the globe while it has infected more than 83 million people and has caused 1,835,901

*The author is Director of the Center for Political Studies (PUSKAPOL) Universitas Indonesia and Associate Professor at the Department of Political Sciences Faculty of Social and Political Sciences Universitas Indonesia.

deaths.¹ To hold the spread of the infected virus, WHO (World Health Organization) strongly recommend that all countries adopt physical distancing and encourage people to stay at home for a while. Because of that, more than 70 countries (International IDEA 2020) decided to postpone their electoral agendas to avoid significant health problems among their voters as it requires public meetings in polling stations. However, some countries, including Indonesia, successfully held the elections with strict health protocols during the election days. In that case, these countries believe some dilemmas for implementing elections in uncertain circumstances like a virus pandemic that potentially harms voters can be managed as the elections are necessary to deliver citizen rights in a democratic country. Indonesian case has that position as indicated by the decision to reschedule the Concurrent Elections of Head of Local Government (Pilkada) from September 2020 to December 2020. The final decision has been made by KPU (National Election Commission), DPR (House of Representative), and Kemendagri (Ministry of Home Affairs) to delay the local election for three months after several meetings during March-May 2020. The final meeting has concluded that Pilkada can be held on 9 December 2020. The decision was not fully accepted, though, especially by major NGOs and academics that aspire to extend the postponement to March or September 2021.

Until the end of May 2020, there are two contesting ideas on how to implement the rescheduling decision on 30 March 2020. First, KPU, as one of the electoral management bodies for ensuring the quality of the electoral process in Pilkada 2020, believed safety was their primary concern even before the decision to move the election date has taken. Some electoral stages that involve close interactions between electoral officials and voters, such as voter registration, are difficult to adjust or modify during the COVID-19 pandemic. KPU has also delivered its strong argument to review their local budgets to implement these simultaneous elections to create the best quality of election. However,

¹ According to the current situation (4 January 2021) and data is coming from WHO that can be accessed: https://covid19.who.int/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwwr32BRD4ARIsAAJNf_1MBVHgn40-u3usiVB0HsLr_EMtKhlAvd3eBcgvVvbR_v7BZmiHiUaAmZpEALw_wcB

there were dominant perspectives among the head of local governments to prioritize their reallocation budgets for handling COVID-19 viruses in their regions. Not willing to confront the situation, KPU always states its position as the implementors of the election, especially if the national government takes the social distancing regulation and status out. Second, Kemendagri advises that the implementation of Pilkada must be held in 2020. The reason is, pragmatically, that it is not easy to find the caretakers of all heads of local governments if delay further. Not only that, Kemendagri dan DPR argued that if Pilkada postpones to the following year; they cannot guarantee the viability of national budgets while their prediction on economic recovery priorities after the COVID-19 pandemic passed over. In the end, the concurrent elections were successfully held with strict health protocol compliance from voters according to the Task Force of COVID-19.

The paper aims to analyze why managing concurrent Pilkada 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic is difficult to conduct and the contributing factors leading to the decision. This study argues that contestation ideas on managing elections during the outbreak of COVID-19 and conducive political environments contribute to the decision-making on the postponement of Pilkada. This paper consists of five parts: (1) introduction; (2) conceptual framework for managing elections; (3) contextual description about Pilkada 2020 during COVID-19; (4) lesson-learned analyses from what happened during the electoral process; (5) and conclusion section to end this study up.

MANAGING ELECTIONS: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

James et al. (2019) mentioned three activities to understand electoral management, which is organizing, monitoring, and certifying elections. Organizing and monitoring mean how EMB (Electoral Management Body) conducts the actual electoral process, such as pre-election registration, campaigning, ballot casting, and electoral counting, while certifying means to declare the electoral outcomes as part of the last stage of the electoral process. These electoral processes and stages activities require a legal framework that is usually provided as part of the

pre-electoral stage to ensure the electoral management can execute those processes and stages successfully.

In a similar article, James (2020) elaborates on seven elements for designing EMBs to produce electoral with a good level of integrity in a country. These elements are:

1. Centralization; refers to carrying electoral activities from national and sub-national levels of administration with different characters of designation and mandate of EMB in a country.
2. Independence; to show EMB works have independent from government and electoral participants.
3. Capacity; refers to which degree of electoral management organizations can deliver each stage with sufficient resources and maintain stability and sustainability.
4. Scope and division of tasks; consist of different types of activity for managing all electoral processes. Some tasks could be delivered for particular elements; however other tasks require and involve all resources in EMB.
5. Relation to external stakeholders. EMB could not directly run the electoral process without supporting actors or stakeholders groups such as political parties, national and international NGOs, national and local government agencies.
6. Technology supports all technical aspects (software and hardware); to organize and implement electoral activities.
7. Personnel means human resources; such as staff (national and locals) with permanent and temporary status for organizing election day.

These seven elements impact electoral performances (James et al. 2019; James 2020) such as service outputs quality, stakeholder satisfaction, impartiality, accountability, and others. In the end, James et al. (2019) expect electoral integrity and voters' and participants' confidence if EMB can design the electoral process and run all elements mentioned above very well.

This study refers to James (2020) to assess the implementation amid the pandemic. James defines five clusters of electoral management

evaluation, such as the process design, resource investment, service outputs, service outcomes, and stakeholder satisfaction. Firstly, the decision-making process requires essential aspects that should be existed in a democratic country to organize elections, such as accountability, participation, impartiality, and others. Those tasks are similar to conducting electoral integrity mentioned by experts (Norris, Frank, and Coma 2014). Secondly, resource investment means how the electoral process needs sufficient investment to achieve electoral integrity that the government must consider. It is necessary to notice that the electoral process requires personnel for managing election day, different types of carriers to transport ballot papers and voting box and other resources. Furthermore, service outputs mean how the electoral process can provide the best quantity and quality services based on several performance criteria such as the number of registered voters with amount ballot papers and the degree of voters convenience in the polling station. In addition, service outcomes consist of some crucial elements in the electoral process, such as voter turnout, the accuracy and completeness of voter registration, rejected ballot papers, the levels of violence in the polling station. Lastly, stakeholder satisfaction requires the perception of staff, voters, participants, and other stakeholder about the results and success of the electoral process. These clusters will deliver the electoral process in terms of democratic ideals in a country.

Based on these conceptual exercises, this study refers to James' assessment of electoral management to achieve electoral integrity. However, this study elaborates three dimensions of evaluation: decision-making process, service quality outputs, and service outcomes. These dimensions are essential to highlight the ability of EMBs in Indonesia to run elections during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, there are restricted research conditions for gathering data across the country in the pandemic. At least, these dimensions will cover qualitative explanations to answer what condition EMBs can manage Pilkada during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study elaborates elements of management of the elections mentioned above to understand the op-

portunities and limitations authorities of EMBs in Indonesia during the crisis.

PILKADA 2020 AND COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Most countries are caught in an ill-equipped situation to respond COVID-19 pandemic, including Indonesia. The first case of COVID-19 in Indonesia was announced on 3 March 2020 (Ihsanudin 2020). The government showed a denial response before announcing the first COVID-19 case to show the public that the virus was unnecessary to give full attention (Pramudiarja 2020), despite the expectation that the President would announce his quick steps for handling the spread of the virus (Suwignyo 2020). Since that day, President Joko Widodo delivered his response on preventing and handling the virus outbreak nationally.

Two weeks after the first response, the President established the Task Force to coordinate all ministries and relevant state agencies to reduce and control the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic (Djalante et al. 2020). However, during the first phase of the pandemic in Indonesia, it was clear that the situation was getting out of control and has increased the scale of intervention of health agencies for testing new cases and tracing patients' activities (Suwignyo 2020). The low capacity of health laboratories for PCR testing (polymerase chain reaction), a crucial indicator to diagnose the positive of infected COVID-19 virus, was a severe problem (Djalante et al. 2020). In contrast, many countries (i.e., South Korea) have accelerated their testing capacity to identify numbers of infected persons in one region. The government also showed some dilemma policies, such as restricting public transportation (bus and public train) and restricting public roads. These conditions dissatisfied the public to the national government on controlling the virus spread (Ghaliya 2020). However, a public survey notified that their head of local governments could control the spread of coronavirus rather than the national government (Astungkoro 2020).

During the early period of the outbreak in March-April 2020, Indonesia was recognized as one of the high mortal fatality rates in Asia by Worldometer (Wahyuni 2020). However, the mortality number de-

creased in the following weeks.² It indicates that COVID-19 infection cases did not subside or slow down. As occur in other countries, the outbreak in Indonesia does not merely affect the economy and business sectors but also the political realm.

The most significant political event in 2020 was Pilkada, with 270 regions that had to elect their head of local governments. Usually, it is easy to understand that electoral competitions become political conflicts among candidates. They mobilize supporters for showing their “real” supports during the campaign stage. The EMBs also involve numerous electoral officials from polling stations to city/regency levels (Kartika 2020). To conduct verification of nomination candidates and voters registration at the village level, EMBs need these officials. It means that there are high and intensive interactions between these officials and voters during some electoral stages, such as campaign and verification activities. In that sense, it is hazardous during the COVID-19 pandemic, as citizens should reduce their close interactions with others to potentially stem the spread of the virus.

In mid-March 2020, many government offices, including KPU, have forced their employees to work from home to reduce physical and social interactions. In order to continue the previous meeting agenda, on 14 April 2020, KPU, DPR, and Kemendagri selected the exact date of postponement of Pilkada (Astuti 2020). At that meeting, KPU delivered three alternative dates, which are 9 December 2020, 17 March 2021, and 29 September 2021. KPU also strongly endorsed no large-scale social restriction Pilkada would be conducted in that year. KPU claimed that their argument is supported by data-driven evidence published by the Task Force. The Task Force believed that the pandemic would have reached its peak around the end of June 2020, and new normal could be applied around July 2020 (Iqbal 2020a). Meanwhile, according to Pilkada Law and based on the latest electoral stage, KPU requires a maximum of six months before the election date in December 2020 to prepare a high-quality election.

² Information is based on the daily report of Task Force that can be freely accessed in <https://covid19.go.id/>

Furthermore, Kemendagri and DPR argued that it was not easy to arrange a new date for the following year in 2021. At least, they noted two crucial issues that should be noticed: first, related to the transfer of caretakers of governments in each area. According to Kemendagri, it was not easy to find suitable officials for taking this position for large portions of the head of local governments. Second, reallocation of the electoral budget is also tricky in this pandemic situation. Based on Kemendagri's prediction, 2021 would be utilised by many regions to resolve economic issues being badly affected by the pandemic. Therefore, according to Kemendagri's arguments, it was firmly believed that conducting Pilkada in 2020 was the best option.

Meanwhile, DPR offered a final decision at the end of May 2020 to update the situation based on the Task Force report. Although electoral stages have been reduced, DPR and Kemendagri strongly believed that KPU should prepare for the election day. At that time, DPR also requested the President to prepare for the Government Regulation in Lieu of Law to include the health emergency provisions. Elena (2020) mentioned that the DPR's request was to ensure a clear electoral framework for running the elections during pandemics. Meanwhile, KPU has mentioned that it was necessary to have an additional budget for supporting health logistics during the electoral process, but DPR and Kemendagri have not responded to this request. Finally, the Government Regulation in Lieu of Law was enacted in mid-May 2020 and asked KPU to prepare for the election in December 2020 with no date in order to have an emergency route that could extend the postponement. The Law assumed KPU would consider public health emergencies into consideration and have their risk mitigation to conduct the election day during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meanwhile, heads of local governments who have declared their nominations in the Pilkada effectively played their cards in pandemic. The national and local governments have prepared social and economic support to help people who are unable to work during the pandemic. Some head of local governments in Central Java and Lampung Province printed their pictures and stickers on those package of goods (i.e.,

rice stacks or cooking oil bottle) which were distributed to residents. Many of them surely were potential voters for the rescheduled election (Rachmawati 2020). Bawaslu (Electoral Supervisory Body) would not prohibit this action as the electoral process was stopped during this pandemic so these actions were not categorized as electoral campaigns (Sukoyo 2020).

To respond to the situation, the coalitional group of NGOs made an online petition to express the urgency of health issues during pandemic more than Pilkada 2020 as the PSBB (*Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar* or Extensive Restrictions of Social Activities) was still in place (Saputra 2020). However, KPU has reviewed two regulations for responding to the Government Regulation in Lieu of Law: the regulation about electoral stages review for considering the Pilkada on December 2020 and mitigation regulations for situating the electoral process during a disaster and emergency. Meanwhile, Kemendagri would ask all heads of governments organizing Pilkada to hold their electoral budgets and could be used as soon as possible.

As stated in online seminars discussing Pilkada with the Commissioner of KPU, representative of Kemendagri, and members of the DPR, it clearly showed that each actor has institutional and personal interests to exhibit during the negotiation process. KPU attempted to position itself as the implementor of postponement policy and were asked to protect millions of electoral officials from the pandemic. On the other hand, Kemendagri, as part of the government, believed that Pilkada could be conducted during the pandemic in accordance with the President's instruction to accept this uncertain situation and consider primary health protections during the electoral process. Meanwhile, politicians and political parties in DPR attempted to accommodate these contradictory perspectives from KPU and Kemendagri. However, it has to be understood that most DPR members are supporters of the Joko Widodo government (CNN Indonesia 2019). Moreover, Pilkada 2020 is known as in full swing of contestation between political parties after the national election 2019. For politicians, it is urgent to have a favourable political map in the regions these days. Most of the heads of

local governments have fought to dedicate themselves to give a decent response to the pandemic and expect positive credits in the Pilkada later. Otherwise, it is also known that state bureaucracies have the obsession to spend their annual budget as much as they can regardless of critics on its ineffective and inefficiency in its execution (Fadhilah 2015). Therefore, there are realistic and practical arguments why these tripartite groups endeavour the endorsements to execute the Pilkada 2020 in 2021. In short, it can be said that Pilkada can exert some economic activities to support the government's expenditure.

On 27 May 2020, KUP, DPR, and Kemendagri decided that the Pilkada would be conducted on 9 December 2020 (Zhacky 2020). While it is not surprising, the gentlemen's agreement among tripartite concluded one crucial issue to support additional budget for implementation of Pilkada, which was used for ensuring the health protocol in each electoral stage.

The first stage of potentially high-risk activities for infecting viruses in Pilkada was candidate registration to the KPUD Office in each region on 3-5 September 2020. All candidates have traditions and rituals to register their nomination accompanied by mass rallies in normal circumstances. Usually, each pair of candidates start the procession by having their supporters and followers declare the candidacy publicly and then continue their process to the KPUD Office. In fact, during the pandemic, although KPUDs have warned all candidates to limit the number of supporters that could enter the KPUD Office, most candidates violated this procedure. Mass media across the country circulated the stories of the registration of Pilkada candidates from many regions full of the failure of public figures to show their political commitment to comply with health protocol during the COVID-19 pandemic (Nugraheny, 2020). Kemendagri themselves hardly warned incumbent candidates who showed their disobedience to health protocol (BBC 2020). Only NGOs and netizens questioned candidates' commitment to the health issue, and some of them requested to postpone the Pilkada with this troubling situation (Farisa 2020).

However, the public outcry over the upsetting registration process has at least attracted the actors to the response. EMBs, Kemendagri, and DPR have agreed to continue the electoral process but with a more restricted health protocol. Therefore, KPU was demanded by many stakeholders to revise its technical regulations, especially during the campaign stage. In normal conditions, all candidates can campaign for their programs, introduce their profiles on many platforms, and set areas such as public rallies, huge meetings, canvassing and door-to-door campaign, as well as the virtual campaign in social media. However, stricter procedures were applied, especially to conduct huge meetings in open and closed areas as well as to run the public rally and other activities with a large number of attendants. Meanwhile, candidates were forced to switch their effort to maximize virtual campaigns such as television, radio, mainstream media, and social media. All candidates were also permitted to have small meetings in the village and travelled from door-to-door to meet voters. For almost three months (September-December), all candidates travelled from one point to another to promote themselves by maximizing small meetings and canvassing methods (Farhan 2020). Even though EMBs and stakeholders strongly suggested these campaign methods were less infectious, a number of candidates chose to focus on social media campaigns. At the end of the campaign, the Task Force COVID-19 announced no new cluster infected virus from many Pilkada 2020 regions, although the condition of the pandemic was still worrying (Iqbal 2020b).

Therefore, it is obvious that health protocol to avoid the spread of the infectious virus has become the main issue for the decision to delay the Pilkada. It is also the utmost concern during its completion. Since the first discussion for postponing or cancelling the Pilkada during March-May 2020, most stakeholders were in a similar position by expressing concern on the unclear status of infected cases of the COVID-19 virus. Therefore, EMBs have demanded that these stakeholder groups have clear regulations and sanctions to ensure the implementation of critical electoral stages such as campaigns and casting ballot papers on election day. From the government side, socialization of the importance

of health protocol and discipline to obey during Pilkada was massive. Although some candidates often broke the protocols, the Task Force COVID-19 stated that voters were relatively well-behaved in polling stations and acted in accordance with the health protocol (Harsono 2020). Voters arranged their voting time and followed EMBs instructions to go home after casting the ballot, thus the typical congregations at the polling stations were relatively absent. However, implementing Pilkada in the COVID-19 pandemics required hundreds of electoral officials on the ground and many candidates were also active to promote themselves. A number of them were infected (CNN Indonesia 2020) and sadly some of them passed away.

MANAGING THE POSTPONEMENT OF PILKADA 2020: LESSON-LEARNED

As described above, managing an election during the COVID-19 pandemic is an uneasy task. Many aspects should be considered by KPU, DPR, and Kemendagri. According to Mackay (2020), cancelling and continuing the elections would question the ruling party's political legitimacy and become a damaging precedent as an example and excuse for subsequent rulers. Not only that, voters may also demand democratic rights that the state should provide. However, should the election continue, several pre-conditions must be considered by EMBs, such as careful consideration of public health and electoral officials, mitigation risks, massive public communications to explain the reasons for the decision (Asplund and James 2020). Asplund and James also warned that this emergency could endorse authoritarian behaviours from political leaders to carry out undemocratic practices and make the electoral process less free and fair than it should be.

Mackay underlines crucial aspects of conducting elections during the pandemic. Firstly, the campaign stage is dangerous and may spread the virus while candidates have large rallies. Door-to-door canvassing also has a similar risk, as shown in the Iranian case when many infected politicians have intense contact with constituents during recent elections. Secondly, polling stations are one of the crucial stages to adapt

to the pandemic. The 2020 Wisconsin Democratic primary was one of the best examples when electoral workers failed to provide the request of 180 polling stations due to strict health requirements for each polling station. Thirdly, the preparation for all stages is more difficult while electoral officials are facing overload administrative and logistics works. Meanwhile, their mobility is limited as they are required to work remotely.

One of the best lessons comes from South Korea, which successfully conducted the legislative election on 15 April 2020. The South Korean Electoral Commission worked based on data-driven consideration to carefully decide on continuing the election. Before the election day, they were confident that the pandemic's peak had been passed and made the public aware of the election was a relatively low risk of infection. Meanwhile, the Electoral Commission provided two casting mechanisms for voters: postal voting and voting in person. In the poll station, the Commission enlarged the station's size to provide a minimum distance of one meter from one to another. The Commission also provided hand gloves and hand sanitizers and asked voters to use face masks at the station. Spinelli (2020) provides some reflections on the South Korean election. First, the Commission applied an adequate state capacity to ensure a safe environment for running the election. Second, the Commission produced a solid electoral framework with detailed procedures and mechanisms that have been successfully applied in previous elections complemented with strict health procedures. Then, adequate resources (i.e., financial funds, technology support, communication assets) helped the Electoral Commission arrange and modify electoral logistics. Lastly, a supportive political environment was one vital aspect of endorsing all political actors to accept limitations due to the outbreak.

Following James' (2020) electoral framework, the Indonesian case can be explained from three events: the decision-making process, service outputs, and service outcomes. As mentioned before, the final decision-making process has been decided. However, there are some interesting points to discuss the process. The first pre-condition is the

electoral framework to support the implementation of Pilkada. Although there is Government Regulation in Lieu of Law as substitution regulation to ensure the implementation of Pilkada to deal with a health emergency, the Decree put aside the pandemic as the main factor of the postponement. Therefore, KPU, DPR, and Kemendagri must sit together to make a decision on Pilkada. After the date has been decided, the next stage is to review each activity for the whole of the electoral cycles, including guaranteeing an additional budget for health provisions.

The second pre-condition before the election day is technical guidelines or regulations for logistics and operational procedures. For example, in some countries, South Korea and the USA, EMBs have provided emergency guidelines that can quickly be adopted and perhaps modify the whole, or particular, electoral cycle. Indonesia does not yet have a comprehensive mechanism as both countries have. There are some particular emergencies, such as floods or volcanic eruptions, that KPU has mitigated in the past, but not at the scale as the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, KPU acted swiftly to provide regulation to support their works on the ground later on.

James' argument that election requires public participation as part of the decision-making process, involving party politics, government, EMBs, and other election watch groups, can also be seen in the Indonesian case. During the pandemic, many online seminars have discussed this issue. Most participants of the discussion believed the local election on the following year was the best option. However, because the Indonesian electoral framework requires agreement between EMBs, the government, and parliament, it is understandable that decision-making is a challenging affair to manage and gave little space for other parties to participate. Even outspoken opinion leaders from civil society groups have mobilized online petitions to delay the election to the following year, they barely influenced the process. In order to respond to James' criteria on impartiality in the decision-making process, it is also clear to state that Indonesian EMBs requires other state actors to be part of the decision.

It is vital to notice that it is EMBs that should guarantee the quality of elections. There are dimensions such as convenience, efficiency, effectiveness, accuracy, and enforcement to examine these by using quick observation during the electoral process. For convenience at the polling station, health protocols were mostly complied by voters in terms of timeline and other procedures at the polling station. However, it is not easy to discuss the efficiency and effectiveness of the electoral process. KPU has limited resources to achieve a good standard of Pilkada. KPU have limited effort to develop alternative models to accommodate social and physical distancing regulation like voters registration. Limited resources on technology played a major role in this matter, especially at the regional level, and made the accuracy of voters administration during Pilkada a serious problem. Therefore, while delivering convenience to voters and candidates is not easy to achieve, resources and technical supports were rarely available.

The voter turnout, rejected ballot paper, the accuracy and completeness of electoral register, service denial, and violence need to be evaluated in the aspect of service outcomes. KPU announced that the national voter turnout for this Pilkada was 76%. The number is much better than other elections in several countries with similar problems during the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, accessing genuine data elections day in all regions is considerably challenging to describe rejected ballot papers and service denial. At the same time, there is no information on the official website of KPU. The accuracy of voters registration that we have discussed above is not only a typical problem in this Pilkada; it has become persistent trouble each election. However, one positive achievement in the Pilkada is no violence reported in all electoral stages and regions.

CONCLUSION

The study aims to deliver quick analyses on electoral management in the pandemic COVID-19 period in Indonesia. The optimistic tone of the Pilkada 2020 was signed from the general conclusion that Indonesian EMBs successfully implemented the health in all electoral stages

because they have strong supports from the national government and Task Force of COVID-19. However, regulations of Pilkada 2020 (including mitigation planning for this anomalous election) are particularly weak. This study provides some interesting points to emphasize. First, the decision-making process for conducting the Pilkada 2020 is politically tense while there are contested ideas between health issues and political issues to be committed as the country's priority. The decision on the postponement of Pilkada 2020 and conducting it as a government priority during the pandemic can be seen as successful. Second, the quality of service outputs from Pilkada 2020 is indicated by the convenience dimension, which can be observed by looking at voters' compliance to health protocols in the polling station. Other essential outputs (e.g. voters registration) are still latent problems that always occur in each election. Finally, the aspect of evaluation for service outcomes can be seen from the high percentage of voters which is a positive achievement.

Indonesian case is important to demonstrate the complexity of the decision-making process as regulation to support the irregular election is still absent. Although voters' awareness of elections is high as seen at the polling station, institutional problems such as voters registration persist on some electoral stages. This study provides brief outcomes as it was challenging to collect primary data during the pandemic. Thus, further studies to elaborate the electoral management framework in emergency crises, at the scale of the COVID-19 pandemic, are needed.

REFERENCES

- Asplund, Erik and James, Toby. 2020. "Elections and Covid-19: Making democracy work in uncertain times." *Democratic Audit*. March 30. <https://www.democraticaudit.com/2020/03/30/elections-and-covid-19-making-democracy-work-in-uncertain-times/>
- Astungkoro, Ronggo. 2020. "Penanganan Covid-19, Survey: Publik lebih puas daerah." *Republika.co.id*. May 26. <https://republika.co.id/berita/qaxllw396/penanganan-covid19-survei-publik-lebih-puas-daerah>

- Astuti, Nur Azizah. 2020. "Komisi II-Mendagri-KPU Sepakati Pilkada Serentak 9 Desember 2020." *Detikcom*. April 14. <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-4976846/komisi-ii-mendagri-kpu-sepakati-pilkada-serentak-9-desember-2020>
- BBC. 2020. "Pilkada 2020: Mendagri 'tegur keras' 51 kepala daerah terkait pendaftaran calon pilkada yang "tidak mematuhi protokol kesehatan". *BBC.com*. September 7. <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/indonesia-54052726>
- CNN Indonesia. 2019. "Parpol Koalisi Jokowi "Kuasai" 10 dari 11 Komisi DPR." *CNN Indonesia*. October 18. <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20191018212610-32-440858/parpol-koalisi-jokowi-kuasai-10-dari-11-komisi-dpr>
- CNN Indonesia. 2020. "Bawaslu: Petugas KPPS Positif Corona Masih Tugas di 1172 TPS." *CNN Indonesia*. December 9. <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20201209152553-32-580026/bawaslu-petugas-kpps-positif-corona-masih-tugas-di-1172-tps>
- Detikcom. 2020. "Pesan terbaru Jokowi ingin masyarakat produktif berdamai dengan corona." *Detik.com*. May 16 . <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-5016944/pesan-terbaru-jokowi-ingin-masyarakat-produktif-berdamai-dengan-corona>
- Djalante, Riyanti, Jonatan Lassa, Davin Setiamarga, Aruminingsih Sudjatma, Mochamad Indrawan, Budi Haryanto, Choirul Mahfud, Muhammad Sabaruddin Sianpoy, Susanti Djalante, Irina Rafliana, Lalu Adi Gunawan, Gusti Ayu Ketut Surtiari, and Henny Warsilah. 2020. "Review and analysis of current responses to COVID-19 in Indonesia: Period of January to March 2020." *Progress in Disaster Science* 6: 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pdisas.2020.100091>
- Elena, Khaterine. 2020. "The Legal Quagmire of Postponing or Modifying Elections." *International Foundation for Electoral Systems*. 14 April. <https://www.ifes.org/news/legal-quagmire-postponing-or-modifying-elections>
- Fadhilah, Umi Nur. 2015. "Permasalahan Mendasar Akibat Rendahnya Serapan Anggaran." *Republika.co.id*. August 24. <https://republika>

- co.id/berita/nasional/umum/15/08/24/ntk5nj326-permasalahan-mendasar-akibat-rendahnya-serapan-anggaran
- Farhan, Farida. 2020. "Kampanye Door to Door Dinilai Lebih Efektif Ketimbang Konser Musik". *Kompas.com*. September 20. <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2020/09/20/15373221/kampanye-door-to-door-dinilai-lebih-efektif-ketimbang-konser-musik>
- Farisa, Fitria Chusna. 2020. "Jika Protokol Kesehatan Kerap Dilanggar, Perludem Usul Pilkada Ditunda". *Kompas.com*. September 8. <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2020/09/08/09162091/jika-protokol-kesehatan-kerap-dilanggar-perludem-usul-pilkada-ditunda?page=all>
- Ghaliya, Ghina. 2020. "Most Indonesians dissatisfied with administrations' Covid-19 response, survey finds". *The Jakarta Post*. 27 May. <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/05/27/most-indonesians-dissatisfied-with-administrations-covid-19-response-survey-finds.html>
- Harsono, Fitri Haryanti. 2020. "Mayoritas Pemilih Pilkada Serentak 2020 Disiplin 3M, Satgas Covid-19: Ini Perlu Diapresiasi". *Liputan6.com*. December 10. <https://www.liputan6.com/health/read/4430394/mayoritas-pemilih-pilkada-serentak-2020-disiplin-3m-satgas-covid-19-ini-perlu-diapresiasi>
- Ihsanuddin. 2020. "Fakta Lengkap Kasus Pertama Virus Corona di Indonesia." *Kompas.com*. March 3. <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2020/03/03/06314981/fakta-lengkap-kasus-pertama-virus-corona-di-indonesia?page=all>
- International IDEA. 2020. "Global Overview of Covid-19 Impact on Elections." *International IDEA*. 18 March. <https://www.idea.int/news-media/multimedia-reports/global-overview-covid-19-impact-elections>
- Iqbal, Muhammad. 2020a. "Bos Gugus Tugas Buka-bukaan Soal Puncak COVID-19 Kapan?" *CNBC Indonesia*. 13 April. <https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/news/20200413135430-4-151523/bos-gugus-tugas-buka-bukaan-soal-puncak-covid-19-kapan>
- Iqbal, Muhammad. 2020b. "Klaim Mahfud MD: Pilkada Serentak 2020 Bebas Klaster COVID-19." *CNBC Indonesia*. 14 December. <https://>

www.cnbcindonesia.com/news/20201214190933-4-209042/klaim-mahfud-md-pilkada-serentak-2020-bebas-klaster-covid-19

James, Toby, Holly Ann Garnett, Leontine Loeber, and Carolien van Ham. 2019. "Electoral Management and the Organisational Determinants of Electoral Integrity: Introduction." *International Political Science Review* 40(3): 295–312. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0192512119828206>

James, Toby. 2020. "Adapting Elections to COVID-19: Five Key Questions for Decision Makers." *International IDEA*. 19 May. <https://www.idea.int/news-media/news/adapting-elections-covid-19-five-key-questions-decision-makers>

Kartika, Mimi. 2020. "KPU Rekrut 2,6 juta Petugas TPS di Pilkada 2020." *Republika.co.id*. November 29. <https://www.republika.co.id/berita/qkk2pr428/kpu-rekrut-26-juta-petugas-tps-di-pilkada-2020>

Mackay, Shaun. 2020. "Elections in the Time of COVID-19." *Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy*. 23 April. <https://nimd.org/elections-in-the-time-of-covid-19/>

Norris, Pippa, Richard W. Frank, and Ferran M. Coma. 2014. "Measuring Electoral Integrity around the World: A New Dataset." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 47(4): 789–98. doi:10.1017/S1049096514001061

Nugraheny, Diah Erika. 2020. "260 Bapaslon Langgar Protokol Kesehatan Saat Mendaftar Pilkada 2020". *Kompas.com*. September 8. <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2020/09/08/11551181/260-bapaslon-langgar-protokol-kesehatan-saat-mendaftar-pilkada-2020>

Pramudiarja, AN Uyung. 2020. "Indonesia 'Kebal' Corona COVID-19, Menkes: Semua karena Doa!". *Detikhealth*. February 15. <https://health.detik.com/berita-detikhealth/d-4900600/indonesia-kebal-corona-covid-19-menkes-semua-karena-doa>

Rachmawati. 2020. "Saat Foto Kepala Daerah di Kemasan Bansos, Kampanye Terselubung yang Dapat Dipidanakan." *Kompas.com*. May 5. <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2020/05/05/15250091/saat-foto-kepala-daerah-di-kemasan-bansos-kampanye-terselubung-yang-dapat>

- Saputra, Febrianto Adi. 2020. "Pegiat Pemilu Gagas Tunda Pilkada 2021." *Republika.co.id*. May 27. <https://republika.co.id/berita/qa-z9lw428/pegiat-pemilu-gagas-petisi-tunda-pilkada-2021>
- Spinelli, Antonio. 2020. "Managing Elections under the Covid-19 Pandemic: The Republic of Korea's Crucial test." *IDEA International*. <https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/managing-elections-during-pandemic-republic-korea-crucial-test.pdf>
- Sukoyo, Yeremia. 2020. "Bawaslu: Petahana Jangan Manfaatkan Bansos untuk Kepentingan Pilkada". *Beritasatu.com*. May 5. <https://www.beritasatu.com/nasional/628867-bawaslu-petahana-jangan-manfaatkan-bansos-untuk-kepentingan-pilkada>
- Suwignyo, Agus. 2020. "Indonesia at a Crossroads Amidst Efforts to Contain the Coronavirus." *CSEAS Chronicles*. 20 April. <https://covid-19chronicles.cseas.kyoto-u.ac.jp/post-018.html>
- Wahyuni, Natasia C. 2020. "Indonesia Currently has Highest COVID-19 Mortality Rate in Asia." *Jakarta Globe*. 27 April. <https://jakar-taglobe.id/news/indonesia-currently-has-highest-covid19-mortality-rate-in-asia>
- Zhacky, Mochammad. 2020. "Komisi II DPR Setuju Pilkada 2020 Digelar 9 Desember." *Detik.com*. May 27. <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-5031064/komisi-ii-dpr-setuju-pilkada-2020-digelar-9-desember>