



Efforts to Increase the Professionalism of The General Election Commission (Kpu) Of Pati District in Organizing The 2024 Regional Elections

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Abstract: This article will show how efforts to improve the professionalism of the Pati Regency KPU in organizing the 2024 Pilkada. This professionalism can be seen from the technical guidance (bimtek) for implementers and updating of voter data and monitoring activities, political education and socialization of the election to voters, provision of facilities and infrastructure, legality to candidates, and socialization of the neutrality of ASN and village heads in the 2024 Pati Regency Pilkada, as well as the integrity value of the Pati Regency KPU. We can see this from the community who dare to channel their opinions (aspirations) to government institutions (the Pati Regency KPU) which are used as a form of support or input for the future so as to produce democratic public policies (in accordance with the needs of the community). One of the objectives of this article is to see how efforts to improve the professionalism of the Pati Regency KPU in carrying out its responsibilities, especially approaching the election year, such as the quality of the services provided, whether they are effective and accurate according to the guidelines of the Central KPU. Meanwhile, this research method uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach type, interviews, and documentation at the Pati Regency KPU which is supported by online reference searches such as journals, E-books, papers, and the like. The results/findings of this research indicate that efforts to improve the professionalism of the Pati Regency KPU in organizing the 2024 Pilkada are able to provide performance wholeheartedly and accurate information that is poured out directly or indirectly so that it is hoped that public participation in the 2024 Pilkada can increase. Through this professionalism, the public is expected to give their voting rights according to applicable procedures so that it can help increase public trust in the performance of the Pati Regency KPU which will then be an improvement in the upcoming election. Therefore, the implications of this research if not carried out will have a negative impact on certain aspects, including the low level of supervision and evaluation of the performance of the Pati Regency KPU so that it will potentially lead to a decrease in the professionalism of the KPU itself which will have an impact on public trust being lost, considering that through public trust it can help to ensure justice and legitimacy in the election process. It is different if the implications of this research are carried out in order to prevent abstention behavior and public apathy and to ensure that the implementation of the regional elections runs according to applicable principles. Therefore, without this research, the risk of problems occurring in the implementation of elections will increase.

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Keywords: Professional; KPU; Regional Election.

1. Introduction

Pilkada is one of the democratic parties in a day that is contested by anyone who has an obsession to compete for seats in the legislature and executive. In the legislative election, namely candidates for council members both at the central (DPR) and regional (DPRD) levels (Anwartinna, 2017). Meanwhile, the executive election is to elect regional heads including governors, regents/mayors. Both take place democratically based on Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning general elections which are based on the principle of *luber jurdil* (direct, general, free, secret, honest, and fair) (DetikCom, 2023).

Then, when viewed in terms of time as explained in Article 22E paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution, in the process of organizing legislative and executive elections there is a regular period, namely every five years (KPU, 2019). However, it should be noted that

the election process is not always carried out simultaneously between one region and another. This shows that there are differences in the order of the election process schedule. One example of this difference can be seen in the process of organizing regional elections in each region, there are several differences in the implementation schedule, resulting in differences in the expiration of the term of office of regional heads. As a result of this difference, there is a political agenda, especially at the General Election Commission (KPU) which does not recognize rest time, meaning they tend to be busier with various preparations and arrangements, especially in the election agenda than focusing on the election results. In addition, the KPU is considered a unit in organizing elections that directly intersects with procedural and administrative stages which are very vulnerable to deviations if the professionalism of the KPU's work is less than optimal, one of which is the Pati Regency KPU, for example, there is a lawsuit when registering candidate pairs or political parties. If the applicant feels that something is lacking (they feel that what the KPU did was not in accordance with procedures), the applicant has the right to file a lawsuit.

2020 is the second point for the government as evidenced by the issuance of a policy on holding simultaneous regional elections, meaning that regional elections can be held in regions with terms of office that expire in 2020. Based on data from the central DKPP, there are at least 270 regions consisting of 9 provinces, 37 cities, and 224 regencies. Meanwhile, the implementation schedule is on December 9, 2020 (Saihu, 2021). Therefore, since the regional election policy was passed, the KPU has had extra duties and responsibilities in the election process so that the implementation of the regional elections can run smoothly. Perhaps at the regional level, the KPU is still focused on the elections of each region, but what needs to be considered is at the central level, namely the central KPU is quite tired seeing that the number of regional elections is much greater than the number of KPU members seeing that there are limited manpower.

Therefore, it is feared that this will affect the decline in the level of professionalism of the Pati Regency KPU in organizing the 2024 Pilkada if the number of voters decreases. This means that it is likely that the higher the number of voters in the 2024 Pilkada, the greater the various forms of fraud in it, so that the KPU is expected to maintain consistent professionalism in organizing the 2024 Pilkada. Thus, this article is important to discuss because of the need for professionalism of the Pati Regency KPU as a gateway to peaceful elections so as to create a prosperous democracy. Therefore, the author presents ideas related to "Efforts to Improve the Professionalism of the Pati Regency General Election Commission (KPU) in Organizing the 2024 Pilkada".

The literature review of this article includes, Rahardjo's research entitled "Measuring the Professionalism of the 2014 Election Implementation in the Salt City: Analysis of Leadership, Integrity, Independence, and Election Competence" explains that the level of professionalism in organizing elections is seen from its leadership, integrity, independence, and competence. The similarity with this research is in the election organizing institution (KPU) (Rahardjo, 2015). Meanwhile, the difference lies in efforts to improve professionalism as seen from technical guidance (bimtek) for implementers and updating voter data, political education for voters, election socialization to voters, election process simulations and provision of facilities and infrastructure, legality to candidates, and socialization of the neutrality of village heads in the 2024 Pati Regency elections, as well as the integrity value of the Pati Regency KPU.

Then, according to Indasari entitled "Strategy of the General Election Supervisory Body in Preventing Money Politics in Sinjai Regency (Case Study of the 2018 Pilkada)" emphasized that to prevent money politics in Sinjai Regency, the strategy chosen by Bawaslu was to provide technical guidance and training to the committee involved in the election. The similarity of this research is that the Pati Regency KPU collaborated with the local Bawaslu as an effort to improve the professionalism of the KPU in organizing the 2024 Pilkada (Indasari, 2020). Meanwhile, the difference with this research lies in the government institutions and the types of problems.

According to Ambar Purdanata Sebastin entitled "Professionalism of the South Halmahera Regency KPU in the Recapitulation of Vote Count Results in the 2015 Regent and Deputy Regent Election" explains that the responsibility as an election organizer is to uphold the principle of justice through a code of ethics, however, this is different from the South Halmahera Regency KPU which actually committed fraud which was proven during the 2015 South Halmahera Regency Regent and Deputy Regent election, there was manipulation of the recapitulation data for vote counts at the sub-district level. The similarity with this research is the professionalism of the Pati Regency KPU in the Regent and Deputy Regent election (Ambar Purdanata Sebastin, 2018). Meanwhile, the difference lies in the aspect of professionalism which is not only in the recapitulation of vote count results, but also during the stages of the regional election.

According to Husni, entitled "Efforts of the Tuban Regency KPU in Increasing Community Political Participation" explains that efforts to increase community participation in elections are influenced by several programs or activities such as political education and political socialization organized by the Tuban Regency KPU. The similarity with this research is the purpose of the results of the efforts that have been made, namely to increase community participation (Husni, 2021). Meanwhile, the difference lies in the location of the study. Then, according to Anusapati, entitled "Performance of the Kubu Raya Regency KPU Apparatus" explains that the performance of Kubu Raya Regency KPU employees is still not optimal, this is evidenced by the level of policy consistency of each work program which is still not in accordance with its role and function. The similarity with this research is to see how the performance or level of professionalism of KPU staff is (Anusapati, 2014). Meanwhile, the difference lies in the formulation of the problem.

2. Materials and Methods

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. While at the data collection stage, the author conducted interviews and documentation to collect various types of information related to the topic discussed. In addition, through online platforms such as journals, E-books, and papers, and other supporting data so that it is optimal when used as a consideration (Sugiyono, 2017). In this case, the number of literatures used by the author is approximately 20 literatures from trusted sources.

Then, the next stage is to conduct an interview on August 15, 2024 at 08.25 WIB with a resource person named Mr. Ulin Maftu Fiansah as the Head of the Finance, General, and Logistics Sub-Division of the Pati Regency KPU and the documentation used to understand the conditions and situations inside and outside on certain issues, so that through this method it can help the author to identify and analyze how the Pati Regency KPU's efforts to improve professionalism in organizing the 2024 Pilkada. In line with the opinion of (Sugiyono, 2017) data analysis techniques are a process of systematically compiling and searching for data that has been obtained from search results through online platforms that are categorized according to their respective fields, such as choosing which ones are worthy and important to study to the stage of making conclusions so that they can provide understanding to others. In this case, the stage in qualitative analysis is carried out through three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions.

Data reduction is a stage to think sensitively through breadth, intelligence, and depth to the knowledge and insights that have been obtained. Note, for those who are still early in doing data reduction, they can discuss it with people who are considered experts in the field. Then, through the discussion will provide knowledge and insights that will develop so that they are able to reduce data that has a value of renewal and can be developed through relevant theories.

The next stage is to present the data by categorizing the data based on the needs and functions of each through the compilation of various information that has been obtained and decision making is carried out. So, to be able to solve problems in research, it can be done through the data that has been collected and then analyzing and criticizing it. In this

case, the author uses a descriptive analysis method, namely a way to report data by providing a description and classifying and interpreting data that has been obtained in real terms (as is) according to which conclusions can then be drawn. The following is a research method scheme (Sugiyono, 2017):

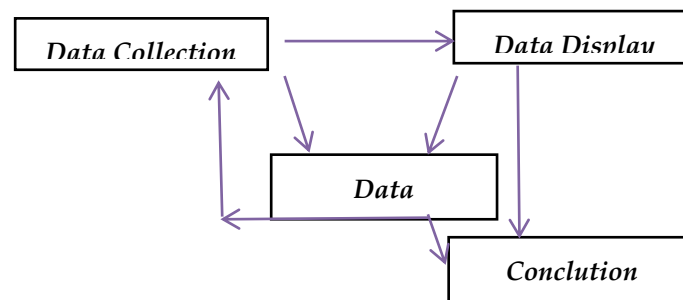


Fig. 2 Research Method

2.1 Research Objectives or reasons why this article is important:

First, as a form of assessment of the professionalism of the Pati Regency KPU, namely as a benchmark for the extent to which the KPU carries out its functions and duties through a good level of professionalism. Second, as material for analysis in the methods and processes of organizing regional elections, namely to examine the processes and methods carried out by the KPU, especially in organizing regional elections. Third, as material for identifying the challenges and obstacles faced by the Pati Regency KPU while carrying out its duties and responsibilities. Third, as material for recommendations to further improve the professionalism of the KPU, especially ahead of the election year. Finally, to provide an overview of how the Pati Regency KPU is able to carry out its roles and duties, especially in the 2024 Pilkada.

a. Benefits of Research:

The benefits of this research (for the author) include: (1) Increasing the author's knowledge regarding the professionalism of the Pati Regency KPU in organizing the 2024 Pilkada. (2) Increasing the ability and potential in compiling Scientific Papers. (3) Being able to provide a positive contribution in realizing quality democracy. Then, the benefits of research (for readers), include: (1) Providing knowledge and ideas ahead of the 2024 Pilkada. (2) Realizing community participation in organizing the 2024 Pilkada. Meanwhile, the benefits for institutions include: (1) Can be used as a source of reference in realizing democratic elections. (2) As a form of development of the election process in the future so that it will have an impact on a better democratic system.

b. Framework Of Thinking

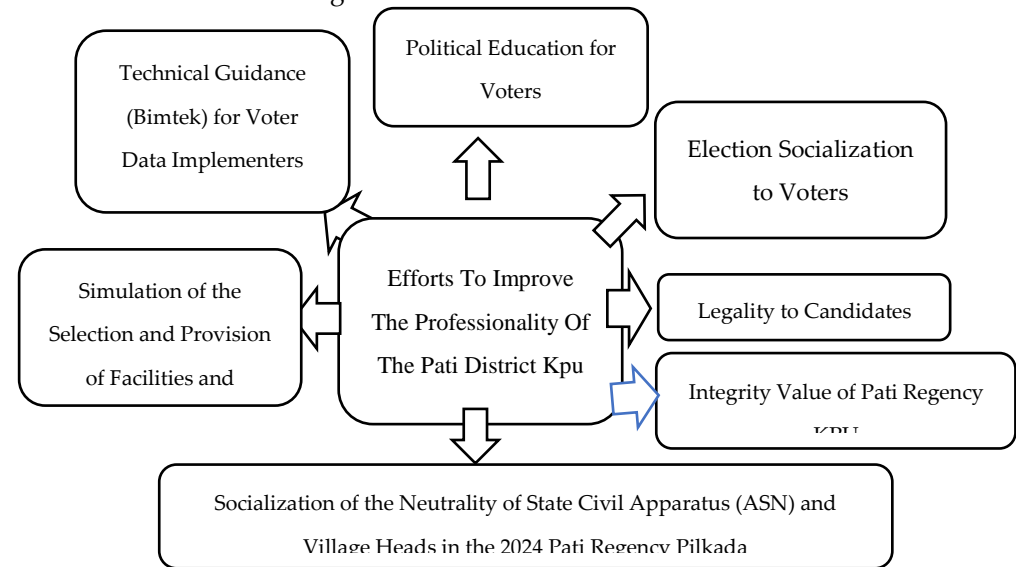


Fig. 2 Framework Of Thinking

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Structure of Sub-Division Heads and Stages and Schedule for the 2024 Regional Elections of the Pati Regency KPU

I Based on the interview results, the structure of the Head of Sub-Section (kasubag) of the Pati Regency KPU follows the structural guidelines of the Central KPU which consists of several sub-sections to support the operation of the institution. Then, the sub-section is responsible for various aspects under the leadership of the KPU secretary, including: First, the head of the community participation sub-section (parmas) and human resources (HR). Responsible for preparing HR in terms of elections, which means HR is under the coordination of the HR sub-section, including the Pati Regency KPU itself (recruitment is carried out every five years) and the secretariat (consisting of PNS and PPPK) and ad hoc bodies (every time there is an election activity, a formation will be carried out such as the District Election Committee (PPK), Voting Committee (PPS), Voter Data Update (Pantarlih), and KPPS (when the election day is approaching)). Then, the duties and responsibilities of parmas are to carry out socialization activities, all forms of information delivery to the community, agencies, and stakeholders.

Second, the head of data and information planning. Responsible for managing voter data which will later become the basis for determining who is entitled to vote. Therefore, before determining voter data, there are several stages that need to be carried out, including: (1) Receiving population data from civil registration, (2) Managing the data by an ad hoc body by going directly into the field to ensure that the data received is appropriate and accurate. It should be noted that in the KPU there are two sources of funding, namely from the APBN and grant funds (provincial and district). In this case, the process of revising the budget is carried out by the planning sub-division.

Third, the head of finance, general affairs, and logistics. Responsible for financial management based on the budget that has been processed by the planning sub-section, for example if in the election stage and daily operational implementation there is a grant budget and the APBN, it means that the finance sub-section will also manage the budget. Then, another task is to be responsible for general problems, such as office maintenance, facilities and infrastructure, and all things that support how the office can run. In addition, the duties of the logistics section include planning the amount of logistics that will be used during the election. In this case, the preparation of logistics will have a procurement officer who will process what goods are needed, after the goods are sent, the

KPU will manage them (group them according to type and purpose), and distribute and withdraw. After the goods are used, the next stage is to destroy them through an auction with several requirements, such as being allowed to sell them through the KPKLN on the condition that the auction winner promises to carry out the melting (destroy). So, what the KPU spends for the implementation of the election budget, is not one hundred percent lost money. However, there is feedback for the state (in the form of auctioned goods).

Finally, the technical sub-section head for election implementation and law. His main task is to be responsible for all stages related to the election implementation process, namely nomination, registration, to the verification process to the voting stage. Meanwhile, the legal division is tasked with resolving all legal problems that arise in the implementation of the election (bridging). Of course, the four sub-section heads are under the command of the Pati Regency KPU Secretary. The following is a table regarding the stages and schedule of the 2024 Pati Regency Pilkada:

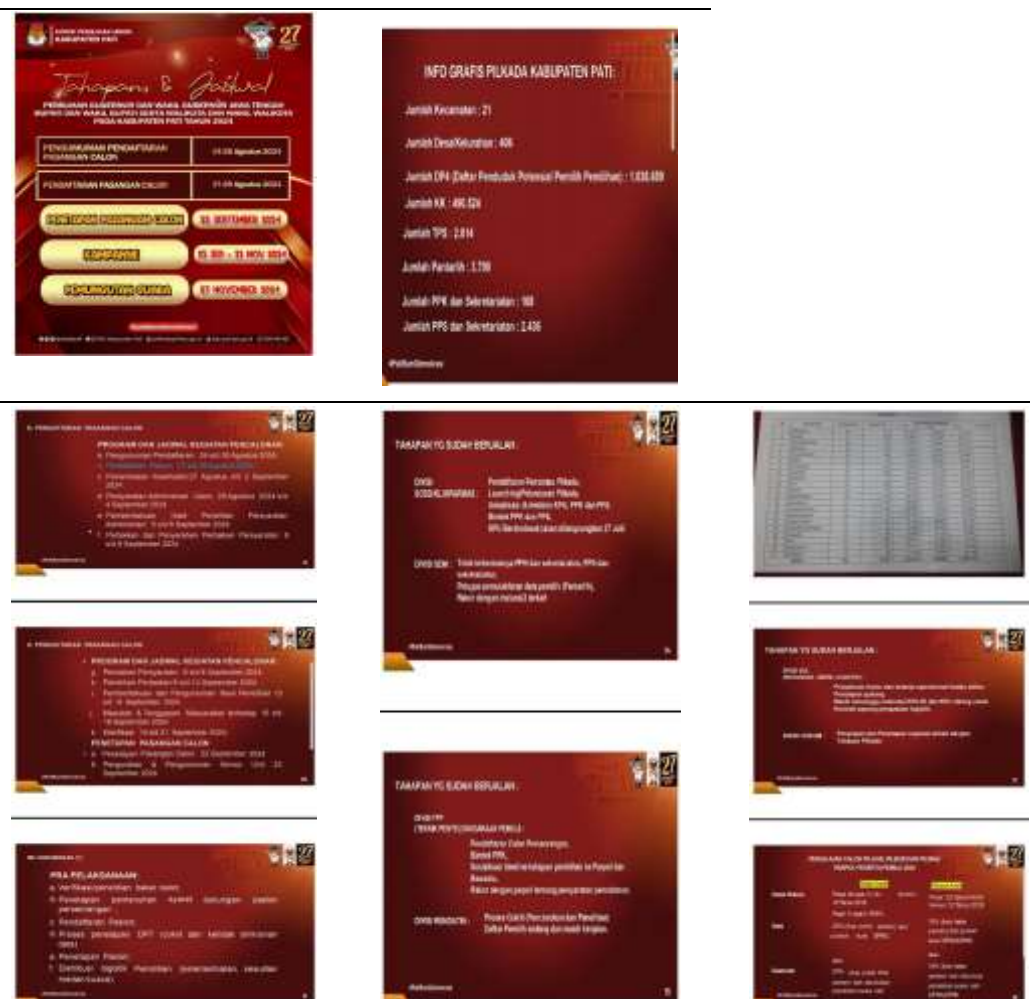


Fig. 3 Stages and Schedule of the 2024 Pati Regency Pilkada

Source: Results of the Socialization Activities for ASN Stages and Neutrality in the Election of Governor and Deputy Governor, Regent and Deputy Regent in Pati Regency in 2024 (August 11, 2024)

3.2 Efforts to Improve the Professionalism of the Pati Regency KPU Ahead of the 2024 Pilkada

a. Technical Guidance (Bimtek) for Implementers and Updating Voter Data and Monitoring Activities

This Bimtek is carried out by the Central KPU, which is more specifically for the implementers of activities in each stage, such as the nomination stage. This means that be-

fore the nomination schedule or agenda begins, there will be several implementers (operators) who are responsible or admins in implementing the activity. However, previously it had also been carried out by the Voter Data Information System (Sidalih) operator who would later be responsible for conveying the results of the Bimtek to the lower levels, namely PPK, PPS, and Pantarlih. In addition, monitoring in each sub-district in Pati Regency is expected to be able to identify which areas require full attention to ensure a fair, open, honest and effective election process.

b. Political Education for Voters

As users of voting rights, new voters are the first actors who have the right to receive political education, so that they are able to increase their understanding and awareness in the implementation of elections so that they can actively participate, especially in the implementation of regional elections, such as participating in using their voting rights, becoming a committee during the election process, and the like without coercion from certain parties (according to their conscience). Based on its implementation, the KPU is responsible for providing knowledge and understanding to the public about what regional elections are, how to find out dedicated and qualified leader candidates, and what benefits are obtained after using their voting rights and what to do if there are money politics practices, because not all people know the correct election system, considering that the majority of people choose candidate leaders not from their conscience, but because of these practices or simply following other people's choices (Lintang Yunisha Dewi, 2021).

Based on the interview results, it was proven in 2019 that the Pati Regency KPU conducted socialization activities to several voter bases, such as new voter bases, religious, and community organizations directly. In addition, currently the KPU also supports activities related to the election, for example by wholeheartedly supporting the cooperation offered by several parties, such as support provided by the KPU regarding materials, speakers, and budgets. In addition, the KPU also provides the widest possible space for schools or agencies that want to know or learn about the history of the election. The KPU is also willing if the school or agency invites them to provide direct direction. This was proven in 2023, the KPU provided direction at SMA Negeri 1 Pati and SMA Negeri 2 Pati.

c. Election Socialization to Voters

In order to increase public political participation, the Pati Regency KPU also conducted election socialization to voters. This was done so that through this activity, it is hoped that it will be able to create two-way communication between the KPU and voters, such as asking about the 2024 Pilkada system. In practice, socialization is carried out to voters (the community) regardless of age, gender, or level of education, because those with high levels of education do not necessarily have the awareness and understanding to choose quality leader candidates. Not only to the community, the Pati Regency KPU also conducted socialization to political parties to direct, guide, and inform the election nomination system which can change at any time. In its delivery, the KPU uses polite language that is easy to understand by various groups of people. In addition, the KPU also carries out socialization activities through the use of social media such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok as well as various methods that can attract public attention so that the message can be conveyed properly (Lintang Yunisha Dewi, 2021). The following is one form of socialization carried out by the Pati Regency KPU:



Figure 4. Coordination Meeting for the Socialization of the Election of Governor and Deputy Governor and Regent and Deputy Regent in 2024 (July 26, 2024).



Figure 4. Socialization of the 2024 Regional Elections to voters via Instagram media.

Source: KPU Pati Regency Instagram Media

d. Provision of Facilities and Infrastructure

In the context of the 2024 Pilkada, the provision of facilities and infrastructure comes from the grant budget, including the provision of election equipment to make it easier for the public to exercise their voting rights so that it is hoped that the level of public participation will continue to increase. This is one of the efforts to improve the professionalism of the Pati Regency KPU in organizing the 2024 Pilkada. Thus, the election process will run optimally (Lintang Yunisha Dewi, 2021).

e. Legality for Candidates

Each candidate will compete to be able to nominate themselves in this regional election, either through political parties or individually. Various political strategies have been prepared in such a way from several months before the election process takes place so that victory can be achieved. Among the strategies chosen are credibility, finance, and capability. In the nomination process, at least as a prospective regional head candidate, there are several processes that must be passed. This is seen from a procedural point of view, political parties are the main door used by candidates as a vehicle to the regional election. However, there are several rules that must be approved in accordance with the provisions of the General Election Commission Regulation (PKPU) Number 8 of 2024 concerning the Nomination of Governor and Deputy Governor, Regent and Deputy Regent, and Mayor and Deputy Mayor. The candidate will benefit from seeing that political parties have a high sense of solidarity towards their cadres so that it can be a great opportunity to win the regional election.

However, in context, political parties act as political organizations that can only nominate candidates. Then, the one who has the right to provide legality to candidates (can be said to be legitimate and allowed to participate in the regional elections) is the KPU as a bureaucracy in the regional elections, considering the function and responsibility of the KPU as an election organizer. This has been explained in Law Number 15 of 2011 (KPU U., 2011). Meanwhile, in Article 8 Paragraphs (3) and (4) and Article 10 Paragraph (3) concerning the duties, authorities, and obligations of the KPU (Hasibuan, 2022). Based on Article 10 Paragraph (3) point (i), it states that "The KPU has the opportunity to determine candidates for Regent/Mayor who have met the requirements" meaning that the KPU is the only access that can legally determine whether or not prospective candidates pass the regional elections. Therefore, according to the provisions of the Law which mandates that the KPU is one of the important institutions because it helps the government's task, namely supporting the optimal implementation of democracy. The following is one form of legality for candidates:

The following is a summary of the explanation above:

Table 1. Summary related to the explanation above

Actor	Form of Neutrality
ASN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information conveyed to others must be in the same proportion (not emphasizing differences). - Without any basis for directing to one of the candidate pairs.
Village head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that the people exercise their right to vote freely (without any pressure from anywhere) - Prohibited from making decisions and/or actions that benefit/disadvantage one of the candidates carried out through campaign movements. - Not currently an administrator of a political party, and/or; making decisions that benefit themselves, their families, certain parties and/or groups; participating and/or being involved in election and/or regional election campaigns.
Sub-district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not taking sides or supporting any of the candidates.
Head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not being involved in political campaigns either directly or indirectly - Ensuring that ASN under him are not involved in practical politics

Source: (Perdana, 2019)

3.4 Integrity Value of Pati Regency KPU

This point discusses how the professionalism of Pati Regency KPU can affect the quality of its government, considering that both of these things are interrelated with each other. This means that every regional head who has been declared to have passed the selection by the KPU is one who is politically capable in terms of competence, skills and personality and is ready to carry out the mandate of his people and prioritize public interests over personal or group interests (Halim, 2014).

In maintaining the integrity of the Pati Regency KPU, there are several principles that need to be upheld. Given that integrity is one of the values that need to be maintained by the Pati Regency KPU which is related to its function and responsibility as one of the election organizing institutions. This has been explained in Law Number 15 of 2011 Article 2 that the KPU as an election organizer is guided by the principles of fairness, independence, honesty, orderliness, law-abidingness, professionalism, transparency, accountability, proportionality, effectiveness and efficiency. Based on Madison's theory which emphasizes that the concept of government and bureaucracy is actually summarized in the same political mission, namely being able to provide protection to its people so as to create peace and shared prosperity (Dahl, 2013). Thus, this shows that as an election organizer, the KPU is able to protect itself from various forms of political intervention, therefore the KPU must be free from various interests that can bring a bad image to the KPU, especially ahead of the 2024 Pilkada.

4. Conclusions

Thus, based on the explanation above, the conclusion that can be drawn is that the Pati Regency KPU has shown a good level of professionalism ahead of the 2024 Pilkada so that it is expected to be able to provide transparent and accurate services and information to the public and be able to prevent abstention and apathy. In addition, through this professionalism, it is hoped that it can increase public participation such as daring to channel their voices (aspirations) that they want to convey to government institutions and can then be used as a form of support or input for the future so as to produce democratic public policies (in accordance with the needs of the community) and the level of public participation who use their voting rights are able to make the KPU's performance

always assessed and considered by the community so as to realize the role of clean, fair, and democratic elections. Therefore, if public participation increases (in using their voting rights) in the 2024 Pilkada, it means that efforts to increase the professionalism of the Pati Regency KPU are able to provide a shared awareness that the democratic system can be said to be successful if the community participates in choosing candidate leaders who can fight for the aspirations of their community so that they are given the trust to hold office as Regional Heads, and vice versa.

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