

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND DIGITAL MEDIA STRATEGY GENERAL ELECTION SUPERVISORY BOARD OF KARIMUN DISTRICT IN THE 2024 LEGISLATIVE & PRESIDENTIAL GENERAL ELECTIONS

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ABSTRACT. Elections are one of the most important democratic processes in Indonesia. This study examines the political communication carried out by the Election Supervisory Board (Bawaslu) Karimun Regency in the legislative and presidential elections of 2024, with a special focus on political communication strategies through digital media. This research uses a qualitative approach with a constructivist paradigm, collecting data through in-depth interviews and document analysis. The descriptive analysis method was used to analyze related literature. This research identifies problems to ensure elections are fair, transparent, and free from manipulation or violations. The analysis includes communication and situation analysis, including cooperation with the media to fight hoaxes, provide accurate information, and transparently oversee elections. The main focus of this research is how Bawaslu utilizes digital media such as websites, social media, and chat applications to convey information, interact with the public, and monitor the election process. Implementing and monitoring digital communication strategies are crucial to maintaining integrity and transparency in elections. Evaluation and re-planning of the digital communication strategy is a critical step in assessing performance and identifying areas for improvement.

Keyword: communication strategy; digital media; Election Supervisory Board, political communication; Indonesia election

ABSTRAK. Pemilu merupakan salah satu proses demokrasi yang paling penting di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji lebih dalam mengenai komunikasi politik yang dilakukan oleh Bawaslu Kabupaten Karimun dalam legislatif dan pemilihan presiden tahun 2024, dengan fokus khusus pada strategi komunikasi politik melalui media digital. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan paradigma konstruktivis, dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam dan analisis dokumen. Metode analisis deskriptif digunakan untuk menganalisis literatur terkait. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi masalah untuk memastikan pemilu yang adil, transparan, dan bebas dari berbagai bentuk manipulasi atau pelanggaran. Analisis yang dilakukan meliputi analisis komunikasi dan situasi komunikasi dan analisis situasi, termasuk kerja sama dengan media untuk melawan hoaks, memberikan informasi yang akurat, dan mengawasi pemilu secara transparan. Fokus utama dari penelitian ini adalah bagaimana Bawaslu memanfaatkan media digital seperti website, media sosial, dan aplikasi chatting untuk menyampaikan informasi, berinteraksi dengan masyarakat, dan memantau proses pemilu. Implementasi dan pemantauan strategi komunikasi digital sangat penting untuk menjaga integritas dan transparansi pemilu. Evaluasi dan perencanaan ulang strategi komunikasi digital merupakan langkah penting untuk menilai kinerja dan mengidentifikasi area yang perlu diperbaiki.

Kata Kunci: strategi komunikasi; media digital; Badan Pengawas Pemilu, komunikasi politik, pemilu Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

Elections are one of the main pillars of a democratic system that allows people to directly elect their leaders and representatives. In Indonesia, elections are not only a mechanism to form a legitimate government, but also reflect the quality of democracy practiced. A transparent, honest and fair electoral process is essential to ensure that the results are acceptable to all parties. In this regard, the existence of a supervisory institution such as the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) plays a strategic role, (Indriyati, 2022).

The Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu), an organisation charged with monitoring election

procedures, is essential to preserving the viability of a robust democracy. Digital media is one of the many communication channels used by the Election Supervisory Board (Bawaslu), one of the components of election supervision, to guarantee that the elections are held in a fair and open manner. In this regard, Bawaslu's digital political communication serves as a powerful instrument for information dissemination, public education, and oversight of electoral irregularities (Siahaan, 2021).

Political communication is the process of conveying information aimed at influencing the attitudes, opinions, and political behavior of the public (Djuyandi et al., 2015). In the context of elections, political communication is not only used by political

parties and candidates but also by election organizing institutions, such as the General Election Commission (KPU) and the Election Supervisory Board (Bawaslu). Political communication aims to create a good understanding of the electoral process, voter rights, and various policies related to the electoral process itself.

Bawaslu's political communication through digital media is not merely a means of notification, but also an effort to build greater political participation among the public, ensuring that every voter understands their rights and can participate to the fullest (Fatmawati, 2008). Therefore, it is important to analyze how Bawaslu's political communication strategies in this research identifies the problem of ensuring elections that are fair, transparent, and free from any form of manipulation or violations.

What is needed to overcome these problems is a collaborative effort between Bawaslu Karimun Regency and the local government, election organizers, and the community. Increased transparency of information, increased proactive communication with election participants and the wider community, and better protection of voter witnesses are important factors that need to be considered. Ignorance of political parties about election procedures and disputes is a problem that often arises, such as political parties' lack of understanding of election dispute resolution procedures and mechanisms. Political parties that do not have a clear understanding of these rules and procedures will have difficulty resolving disputes or handling disputes submitted by other parties. Therefore, it is important for Bawaslu to develop a strategy that is carried out through socialization, training, and providing clear information to political parties regarding the process of resolving electoral disputes.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the digital media political communication strategies implemented by Bawaslu in the 2024 presidential and legislative elections. In this analysis, various aspects will be discussed regarding how Bawaslu utilizes digital platforms to convey educational political messages, monitor election violations, and build political awareness among the public. Facing this challenge, Bawaslu developed a digital-based political communication strategy that includes the use of websites, social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube), as well as chat applications like Siwaslu. The official Bawaslu website serves as an information center, providing data accessible to the general public, such as official announcements, election guidelines, and monitoring

reports. Social media is used to reach a wider and more diverse audience, utilizing platforms like Instagram to attract the attention of the younger generation through engaging visual content, while Twitter serves as a channel to provide quick information on the latest developments. In addition, the Siwaslu application provides a direct communication channel for the public to report election violations easily and quickly.

A model that is often widely used to inform communication in development programs is the P-Process (Tweneboa-Kodua et al., 2008). The following is a brief explanation of the P-Process model which consists of five steps, namely: 1) Analysis consists of situation analysis and communication/audience analysis, including participants, behavior analysis, and communication channels; 2) Strategy Design, including communication objectives, channel choice, plan implementation; 3) Development and Testing, including message development and piloting; 4) Implementation and Monitoring, including capacity building; 5) Evaluation and Re-Planning.

Previous research with the title Transformation of Community Involvement Strategies in Supervision and Law Enforcement by Endro Wibowo Aji in 2020 discussed community participation and Bawaslu to organize fair elections. This research uses a qualitative research approach with descriptive analysis methods through library research. Several factors become obstacles and challenges in election monitoring activities carried out by the community; firstly, the message conveyed to voters has not been maximized about the importance of public supervision at every stage of the election. Second, the decline in monitoring activities occurs due to the distance between the stages and the reach of voters. Third, the factor of electoral information disclosure as an important note is a special concern for election organizers.

Another study entitled The Role and Function of the Election Supervisory Agency (BAWASLU) of Pesawaran Regency in Conducting Election Supervision Based on Law No. 07 of 2017 in Pesawaran Regency (2019 Simultaneous General Election Research Study) conducted by Fathul Muin, et al in 2021, this study examines the role and function of Bawaslu Pesawaran Regency in overseeing the 2019 Election, especially the active role and direct participation of Bawaslu in every election process, prevention of election violations and prosecution of election violations. This type of research uses empirical (applied) legal research with descriptive analytical type of research which aims to clarify the laws and regulations relating to legal theories which

are the object of research. The data sources used in this research are primary and secondary data sources which are then analyzed qualitatively (Mu'in et al., 2021).

In this study, there are references that are close to and have some similarities with research conducted by Lina Wati (2020) entitled similarities with research conducted by Lina Wati (2020) entitled "Communication Strategy of the Election Supervisory Agency of Tangerang City in Efforts to Enforce Violations of the 2019 Presidential Election Campaign". Both focus on Bawaslu's role in election supervision, especially in prosecuting campaign violations. This research both examines the communication strategies used by Bawaslu to socialize rules, coordinate with stakeholders, and involve the community in maintaining election integrity. In addition, both studies emphasize the importance of cross-sector collaboration and the use of mass media as a communication tool. The role of education to the community is also a key element in efforts to prevent violations in both studies.

The main difference lies in the electoral context, where this research covers the 2024 Legislative and Presidential Elections, while the research conducted by Lina Wati focuses on the 2019 Presidential Election. In addition, this research was conducted in Karimun Regency, which has the geographical characteristics of Islands and different infrastructure challenges compared to the urbanized Tangerang City. The research conducted by the researcher also highlighted the use of social media and digital technology, which will be more developed in 2024. The research also highlights the use of social media and digital technology, which will be more developed in 2024, while previous studies have mostly discussed conventional media. In addition, there is more focus on collaboration with stakeholders and institutions in Karimun Regency.

METHODS

The research using a qualitative method with case study approach. According to (Sugiyono, 2019), qualitative research is research that aims to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by the subject. According to (Blatter et al., 2016), qualitative research emphasizes quality over quantity and data collected not from questionnaires but from interviews, direct observation and other relevant official documents. Indeed, the relationship between the factors under study will be clearer if observed during the research process.

Robert K. Yin (2003) explains that case studies are among several modern research methods particularly suited to situations where researchers have minimal or no influence over the events being studied (Yin, 2003). This qualitative research approach involves examining real-life, defined systems (single cases) or multiple distinct systems (multiple cases) through comprehensive and detailed data collection from various sources of information (Creswell, 2016). Case studies draw on multiple sources of information during data collection to offer a comprehensive and detailed account of responses to an event. In this research, the team examines and describes the context or environment of Karimun Regency Bawaslu's communication strategy in empowering the community to use social media as a digital communication tool.

This research uses a case study approach by collecting qualitative data, namely observation, in-depth interviews and documentation. for the research informants are two key informants, namely the Chairman of Karimun Regency Bawaslu (Informant 1), and Commissioners of the Karimun Regency Bawaslu (Informant 2) and one supporting informant, namely the Chairman of the Tebing Panwascam (Informan 3). Purposive sampling technique was applied to select samples that were relevant to this research. This technique selects individuals who have characteristics in accordance with the research to dig up in-depth information from representatives who have experienced the phenomenon under study.

All participants in this study provided verbal consent to be identified using their initials and roles in the election monitoring process in Karimun District. They also gave oral and written consent to be partially or fully quoted in the interviews. The participants willingly shared information about the political communication strategies of Bawaslu Karimun Regency, hoping that the research findings would help enhance political participation and election oversight within the community.

The research data, collected comprehensively between November 2023 and April 2024, forms a robust foundation for this study. The corresponding author can make supporting data available upon reasonable request. The study employed various data collection methods, including direct observation and in-depth interviews. Researchers observed the implementation of election monitoring socialization activities carried out by Bawaslu Karimun Regency and analyzed their social media platforms as digital communication tools. Additionally, open and direct interviews were conducted with participants

involved in Bawaslu's communication strategies for promoting election supervision.

All in-depth interviews were recorded openly, with participants' full awareness, using recording devices. The recordings were used to preserve the interview data, which the research team later transcribed. Topics and questions relevant to the study's objectives were selected from the transcripts for further analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Digital Media Strategy of Bawaslu Karimun Regency

The research shows that Bawaslu's use of digital media has had a significant impact in maintaining election integrity. Bawaslu's official website is one of the main sources of information accessed by the public to obtain accurate data related to elections. Bawaslu's official website serves as an information center for the community. The information provided includes official announcements, monitoring reports, statistical data, and guidelines for reporting violations. The use of the website reflects Bawaslu's efforts to increase transparency and accountability.

Bawaslu's social media platforms have also succeeded in creating positive interactions with the community, especially in countering hoaxes and providing education related to voters' rights. The socialization campaign through Instagram and Facebook was designed to attract the younger generation's attention and engage in interactions and discussions on social media platforms to increase their participation in the supervision and implementation of elections in the Karimun Regency. Figure 1 is a screenshot of the Karimun Regency Instagram and Bawaslu accounts, which illustrates the lack of participation of the younger generation in engaging on Bawaslu's social media platforms.

The implementation of election supervision socialization covering the Karimun district area was also carried out by utilizing the @bawaslu_karimun Instagram account and the Karimun Regency Bawaslu Facebook account, messages related to the election supervision socialization program were conveyed to all stakeholders. The Karimun Bawaslu Facebook account is quite active in posting content related to social forestry program information, with photos and videos of the implementation of election supervision socialization activities. With this digital communication strategy, people in the Karimun district can receive messages related to programs and activities from Bawaslu Karimun. The @bawaslu_karimun Instagram account is also used to socialize

election supervision programs with content related to several activities that the community can carry out.

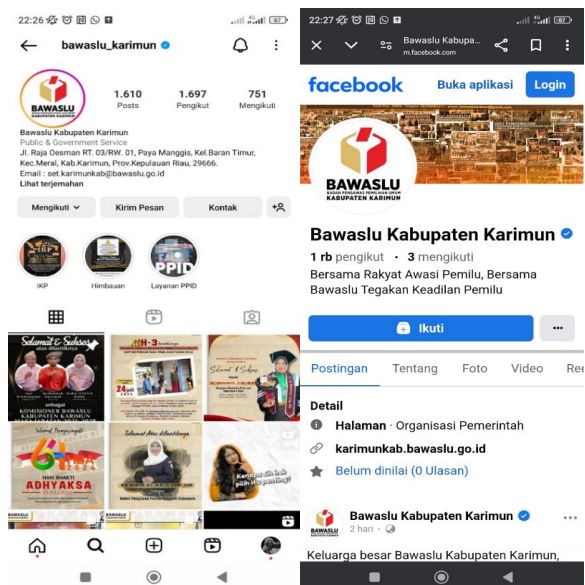


Figure 1. Social Media Instagram and Facebook Account of Bawaslu Karimun Regency

“Through platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, Bawaslu can disseminate information widely and quickly, reaching various groups (Interview with Informant 3, December 2023).

Social media and information technology play a very significant role in shaping public understanding of Bawaslu's role and the electoral process. Information technology also allows for more interactive and engaging information dissemination through educational videos, infographics, and live socialization events. Meanwhile, Twitter was used effectively to provide information quickly, especially regarding the latest developments during the election stages. YouTube is a platform that provides educational value through video documentation and tutorial content related to election monitoring.

Social media and information technology are key in improving political literacy and public participation in electoral processes. Social media is a form of social communication that functions as a bridge through which people can tell stories, participate, share, and form networks (Nugroho, 2020). With this interactive social media platform, Bawaslu Karimun can share information related to the implementation and supervision of elections through content in the form of written text, photos, and videos. This social media content aims to reach the voting community in the Karimun district, which is spread across several islands. Political communication mediated by social media is essential in the current era of cyber society, where social media

can provide a more complimentary and open space for anyone with access or connection to cyberspace.

In addition, the Karimun Regency Bawaslu uses a mobile application called Siwaslu and the official website <https://karimunkab.bawaslu.go.id/> to help provide easy and quick access to relevant information, strengthen transparency and accountability of election supervision. Reading news and information from the mobile application and website can be accessed using a smartphone or tablet, digital devices that are more compact and easy to use (Kaur & Saukko, 2022).

The Siwaslu application as seen in Figure 2 is also a very useful innovation in supporting election monitoring. With this application, the public can easily report violations that they encounter. Reports submitted through Siwaslu are received and followed up by relevant officers with a relatively quick response, thus increasing public confidence in Bawaslu's performance. According to Informan 1:

"The Siwaslu application allows election monitoring to be carried out quickly and efficiently. This application monitors data from polling stations directly so the center can immediately monitor deficiencies (Interview with Informant 1, January 2024)."

The Siwaslu application, developed by the Indonesia General Election Supervisory Board (Bawaslu Pusat), facilitates general election supervision. Its primary purpose is to simplify and improve the effectiveness of supervision by Bawaslu and the community. The application assists in reporting, monitoring, and handling election violations, so election supervision is expected to become more efficient, transparent, and responsive to violations that occur during the election process.



Figure 2. SIWASLU application created by Bawaslu of The Republic Indonesia

The political communication strategy implemented by Bawaslu through digital media is highly relevant in this digital era, where almost all information can be spread in seconds. The importance of political education through digital media, including infographics and short videos, is very effective in attracting public attention, especially the younger generation, who tend to be more active on social media. Bawaslu can communicate oversight messages more straightforwardly and more easily understood by various groups.

The idea of using information and communication technologies to offer opportunities to broaden political participation has been discussed in many political frameworks, from totalitarian to democratic systems. Digital media-based political communication has several advantages, such as community involvement in election supervision, transparency and accessibility of information, and challenges in dealing with hoaxes and disinformation (Aji, 2020; Dommett & Power, 2024).

Community involvement in election monitoring is carried out through two-way interaction between Bawaslu and the community through social media. The community feels more involved in the monitoring process. A quick response to complaints or reports from the public about alleged election violations builds trust in the election supervisory institution.

Bawaslu Karimun Regency aims to promote transparency and accessibility of information by using mobile applications and live streaming to provide opportunities for the public to gain a deeper understanding of the electoral process. This also increases the transparency of election administration, as the public can see first-hand how the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu) handles election-related violations or issues.

In addition, dealing with political hoaxes and disinformation in the cyber world presents challenges. Although Bawaslu is active on social media, the main challenge is the rampant spread of hoaxes and disinformation that can undermine the integrity of elections. Bawaslu must be more proactive in educating the public not to easily believe information from unclear sources and always verify the truth of information.

Political Communication Strategy of Bawaslu Karimun Regency in the 2024 Election.

The Election Supervisory Board (Bawaslu) communication strategy for the 2024 elections includes socialization and education to remind the public about the importance of fair and honest elections. Through socialization and education

activities, Bawaslu will implement this strategy by increasing public awareness of the importance of fair and honest elections. The implementation of this strategy will be carried out with cooperation and coordination with various stakeholders to strengthen supervision and prosecution of election violations.

Bawaslu's communication strategy for the 2024 elections also includes developing strategic collaboration and communication between election organizers such as Bawaslu and the General Election Commission (KPU). This cooperation aims to create synergy and ensure that the election stages are carried out democratically and honestly. According to Informant 2, *"Bawaslu uses unique methods for election monitoring, including monitoring corner programs and participatory supervisors and activating the community's role"* (Interview with Informant 2, February 2024).

In addition to actively involving the community as election supervisors and utilizing digital media, Bawaslu Karimun Regency cooperates with local mass media to disseminate the information so that the wider community can receive it and collaborate with other government agencies. One of the steps taken is to maintain transparency and openness in providing election-related information by providing various communication channels that the public can access.

"Bawaslu Karimun Regency ensures access to election information through PPID, a special room that provides data and hard copies to the public. In this room, some officers help access non-confidential information related to the holding of elections." (Interview with Informant 1 in March 2024).

The steps taken by Bawaslu aim to provide better access to information about the electoral process to the public and increase transparency and accountability in its implementation. With the PPID room and the services provided, it is hoped that the public can easily obtain the necessary information about elections so that they can actively participate in and understand the democratic process that takes place.

In its strategy to improve transparency and accountability in election supervision, Bawaslu will ensure that information related to election supervision, including the results of supervision and follow-up actions, is openly available and easily accessible to the public. This aims to strengthen public trust in the integrity and independence of the election supervisory body. Bawaslu Karimun Regency designed a political communication strategy to ensure that the election monitoring process is

carried out effectively, transparently, and fairly. By increasing public participation and trust, Bawaslu hopes to strengthen democracy in Karimun Regency and organize clean and democratic elections for all citizens.

Leading up to and during elections, including the 2024 General Election in Karimun Regency, there is always the possibility of violations. These violations can include various things, such as money politics, voter intimidation, unfair use of public resources, and other administrative violations (Hicken et al., 2022). In 2024, a case or violation that has entered into legal proceedings or an organization's internal investigation is registered, indicating that the investigation stage has begun. The team or division is responsible for handling the offense and then seeks opinions from experts or people with relevant expertise. These expert opinions will be used as a reference to take direct action against the breach. This step shows that the organization is serious about handling the breach and uses the right resources, such as experts, to ensure effective handling. The use of due process or internal investigations also reflects the organization's commitment to upholding rules and fairness.

Bawaslu Karimun Regency's approach to conveying political messages related to the implementation and supervision of elections is to create open, inclusive, and easily accessible communication channels for the public to ask questions, provide input, or report violations they witness. Two crucial factors in communicating on a strategic level are the audiences to be reached and the messages that need to be delivered (Arterton, 2023).

Bawaslu Karimun Regency in political communication conducts planning related to the audience to be reached and the message to be conveyed through several steps, namely situation analysis and communication, communication strategy design, development and testing of general election supervision, implementation and monitoring, and evaluation. Bawaslu Karimun Regency has conducted a thorough situation analysis and communication to ensure the election runs well and transparently. In the situation analysis, Bawaslu involved the community to participate and care about election supervision.

The community is expected not only to vote but also to report any fraud. In the communication analysis, the media has a strategic role in conveying information related to the preparation and implementation of elections. Bawaslu Karimun Regency collaborates with the media to counteract hoaxes and provide accurate information to the public. The media also plays a role in overseeing

the implementation of elections so that they run transparently and conductively.

The design of this communication strategy involves various aspects, such as planning, implementation, and monitoring, and considers factors such as corporate identity and image, effective communication, and proper planning. Effective communication and strong stakeholder collaboration are key to Bawaslu's election organization. Bawaslu cannot operate alone but requires cooperation with the KPU, political parties, the voting public, and the police. Constant communication ensures a common understanding of the purpose and procedures of elections, especially in key stages such as local elections. Each party has roles and responsibilities, and solid cooperation ensures a smooth, transparent, and fair electoral process. It is also essential to avoid sectoral issues and maintain the integrity of the electoral process. With open communication and strong collaboration, elections are hoped to run well and provide trustworthy results for the entire community.

Developing and testing electoral oversight is essential for maintaining integrity and transparency in the democratic process. A solid tiered structure, from the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) to the village and neighborhood levels, ensures that every aspect of the election can be closely monitored. Good cooperation between various levels, such as the police, the Sub-district Supervisory Committee (Panwascam), and the Sub-district Election Committee (PPK), is key to successful monitoring. Good coordination, mainly directed from the kabupaten level, allows problems to be dealt with effectively without being directly involved at every level.

At the village level, Babinsa and Bhabinkamtibmas played crucial roles in detecting and handling problems due to their deep understanding of their respective areas. Solid cooperation between the various parties ensures that all issues are correctly identified and addressed. With a well-organized structure, election monitoring becomes more effective in maintaining integrity and transparency. The synergy between Bawaslu, Panwascam, security forces, and other related parties confirms that good coordination is the primary key to carrying out election monitoring tasks thoroughly and efficiently.

Implementing the Karimun Regency Bawaslu's political communication strategy is crucial in maintaining integrity and transparency in the electoral process at the local level. An effective communication strategy is the foundation for building public awareness about the importance of participation in the democratic process and strengthening public

trust in the Karimun Regency Bawaslu institution. In addition, monitoring also allows Bawaslu Karimun to respond quickly and appropriately to changes in social dynamics, emerging issues, or challenges faced in implementing the communication strategy.

By actively monitoring the public's responses to the messages, the Bawaslu Karimun Regency can adjust its communication strategies to make them more relevant and effective. Thus, well-planned implementation and monitoring of the Karimun Regency Bawaslu Communication Strategy is key to strengthening the relationship between supervisory institutions and the community and maintaining integrity and transparency in implementing general elections.

Evaluation is an essential step in assessing the performance of the communication strategy that has been implemented, as well as to identify areas that require improvement. After the evaluation, re-planning is the next step, considering the evaluation results and external factors. This involves developing or adjusting new strategies, prioritizing activities, and allocating resources. By conducting regular evaluations and re-planning, Bawaslu can continuously improve the quality and performance of their communication strategies and be more responsive to social dynamics and challenges that arise in the field.

CONCLUSION

The political communication strategy implemented by Bawaslu through digital media in the 2024 elections has had a significant impact on increasing oversight and public participation. The use of social media, mobile applications, and live streaming allows Bawaslu to be closer to the public, provide clear information, and receive feedback quickly. Nevertheless, significant challenges remain in dealing with hoaxes and misinformation that can influence public perception of the electoral process. Bawaslu's official website acts as an information center that provides accurate data and can be accessed by the wider community. Social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube, are used to reach various segments of society, ranging from the younger generation to voters in urban areas. On the other hand, the Siwaslu application has made it easier for the public to report election violations, creating effective two-way communication between Bawaslu and the public.

However, the implementation of this strategy is inseparable from various challenges, such as the spread of hoaxes, the digital access gap, and the need for quick

responses on social media. To face these challenges, collaborative efforts between Bawaslu, the government and the community are needed. Strengthening digital literacy, increasing cooperation with traditional media, and using advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence are very relevant steps to support the effectiveness of this strategy. In conclusion, the success of Bawaslu's digital communication strategy depends on its ability to adapt to technological and social dynamics. With a strong commitment to continuously improve transparency, accountability, and community participation, Bawaslu can play a greater role in maintaining the integrity of democracy in Indonesia. Digital communication strategy is not only a tool to convey information, but also a foundation in building an inclusive and equitable democracy in this modern era.

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