

EVALUATION OF THE AD-HOC BODY IN THE ELECTION AND REGIONAL ELECTION IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS IN MALAKA REGENCY IN 2024 & ELECTION PROSPECTS FOR THE 2029 ELECTION

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Abstract

This article evaluates the performance and institutional capacity of ad-hoc bodies in the implementation of the 2024 General Election and Regional Head Elections in Malaka Regency and analyzes their implications for strengthening electoral governance towards the 2029 General Election. Ad-hoc bodies—which include the District Election Committee (PPK), the Voting Committee (PPS), and the Voting Organizing Group (KPPS)—are temporary institutions that play a strategic role in ensuring the integrity of election stages at the local level. This community service-based research uses a descriptive qualitative approach through participatory observation, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews with election organizers and stakeholders. The findings indicate that although the ad-hoc bodies are able to carry out administrative and technical functions in accordance with the regulatory framework, there are structural issues that affect the effectiveness and independence of the institutions, such as limited technical capacity, disproportionate workload, local socio-political pressures, and weak legal protection and welfare systems. These conditions have implications for the vulnerability of electoral governance at the grassroots level. This article emphasizes the need for a more sustainable, professional, and capacity-based reformulation of ad-hoc agency management policies as a strategy to improve the quality of local democracy ahead of the 2029 General Election.

Keywords: *Ad-Hoc Body; Election Implementation; 2024 Regional Elections; Election Governance; Election Integrity; Local Democracy; Malaka Regency*

INTRODUCTION

General elections and regional head elections (Pilkada) are fundamental instruments in the practice of electoral democracy in Indonesia. Through elections, the principle of popular sovereignty is realized both procedurally and substantively, making the quality of election administration a primary prerequisite for maintaining political legitimacy and democratic stability. However, the complexity of election administration in Indonesia is determined not only by the design of the electoral system and regulatory framework but also depends heavily on the institutional capacity and integrity of the organizing actors at various levels. Within the election administration structure, **ad hoc bodies**, including the Sub-district Election Committee (PPK), the Voting Committee (PPS), and the Voting Organizing Group (KPPS), hold a strategic position because they play a direct role in implementing election stages at the local level. Ad hoc bodies are the spearhead of election administration, dealing directly with voters, election participants, and socio-political dynamics at the grassroots level. Therefore, the quality of ad hoc bodies' performance directly impacts the integrity of the voting and vote counting process, as well as public confidence in the election results.

Despite their crucial role, ad-hoc election management bodies in Indonesia are temporary and operate for relatively short periods, with heavy workloads and significant responsibilities. Various studies have shown that ad-hoc bodies often face classic challenges, such as limited technical capacity, minimal ongoing training, local political pressure, and weak guarantees of legal protection and welfare. These conditions have the potential to create vulnerabilities in election governance, particularly in regions with specific geographic and social characteristics. Malaka Regency, as a border area in East Nusa Tenggara Province, faces unique challenges in organizing the 2024 General Election and Regional Head Elections. Relatively difficult geographic conditions, limited infrastructure, and local socio-political dynamics place ad hoc bodies in a highly vulnerable position, both technically and psychologically. In this context, ad hoc bodies are required not only to operate professionally and neutrally but also

to be able to adapt to the social and political pressures that frequently arise in local electoral processes. This community service activity was implemented in response to the need for a critical evaluation of the performance and institutional capacity of ad-hoc bodies in the implementation of the 2024 General Election and Regional Head Elections in Malaka Regency. Unlike election research that focuses on normative or quantitative analysis of election results, this activity places ad-hoc bodies as the primary subject of evaluation, emphasizing their empirical experiences, work practices, and the challenges they face in the field. This approach is expected to provide a more contextual picture of the reality of election administration at the local level.

Furthermore, the evaluation of ad-hoc bodies is not only relevant to assess the success of the 2024 General Election and Regional Elections, but is also important as a basis for formulating institutional strengthening policies towards the 2029 General Election. With the increasing complexity of elections and public demands for democratic integrity, a more systematic, sustainable, and human resource-oriented management strategy for ad-hoc bodies is needed. Therefore, this article aims to evaluate the role and performance of ad-hoc bodies in Malaka Regency and formulate prospects for strengthening election governance as part of efforts to improve the quality of electoral democracy at the local level.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Broad studies of election administration place election organizers as a key pillar in maintaining the integrity of electoral democracy. From an electoral governance perspective, elections are understood not simply as periodic political events, but as a series of institutional processes that demand administrative capacity, professionalism, and independence from the organizing actors (Mozaffar & Schedler, 2002). This perspective is relevant for understanding the role of ad hoc bodies as part of the election governance structure, operating at the lowest level but having a direct impact on the quality of election results.

Normatively, ad-hoc election management bodies in Indonesia are established to ensure the effective implementation of election stages at the local level. Surbakti (2014) emphasizes that election integrity is determined not only by sound regulations but also by the capacity of election organizers to translate rules into technical practices on the ground. In this context, ad-hoc bodies function as an extension of the state in ensuring the protection of citizens' political rights. However, the temporary nature of ad-hoc bodies often raises issues regarding the sustainability of capacity and consistency of performance across election cycles.

From an institutional theory perspective, ad hoc bodies can be understood as institutions operating within limited resources, time, and authority. North (1990) stated that weak formal institutions lacking adequate incentive mechanisms tend to produce suboptimal performance. Previous research on election organizers in Indonesia indicates that short-term recruitment of ad hoc bodies, minimal ongoing training, and weak evaluation systems contribute to low institutional capacity (Prasetyo, 2019; Lestari, 2020).

Beyond institutional issues, the literature also highlights the local socio-political dimensions that influence the performance of ad hoc bodies. Aspinall and Sukmajati (2016), in their study of local democracy in Indonesia, demonstrated that regional elections are often influenced by patronage relations and pressure from local elites. In such situations, ad hoc bodies are in a vulnerable position, having to perform their duties impartially amidst close, often hierarchical, social relations. This situation is particularly relevant to the context of Malaka Regency, which has strong kinship ties and intense local political dynamics.

International literature also emphasizes the importance of legal protection and the well-being of election officials. Norris (2014), in his study on *electoral integrity*, asserted that election officials working under high-pressure conditions without adequate protection are likely to experience a decline in independence and work quality. This finding is reinforced by studies on the workload and health risks of polling station (KPPS) staff during the simultaneous elections in Indonesia, which show that well-being is directly correlated with the sustainable quality of election administration (Fitriyah, 2021).

In the context of community service, an evaluative approach to ad hoc bodies is crucial as a form of practical reflection on the implementation of election policies at the local level. Several previous community service studies have shown that participatory evaluation forums, focus groups, and technical assistance can be effective tools for identifying field issues while simultaneously improving the capacity of election organizers (Rahman & Hidayat, 2020). However, community service studies that specifically link ad hoc body evaluations to the prospects for medium-term institutional reform, such as preparation for the 2029 elections, are still relatively limited. Based on the review of previous theories and research, it can be concluded that there is a need for an evaluative study that integrates the perspectives of election governance, institutions, and local socio-political dynamics. This community service activity in Malaka Regency seeks to fill this gap by presenting an empirical-based evaluation of ad-hoc bodies

in the implementation of the 2024 General Election and Regional Head Elections. Thus, this article not only contributes to strengthening election administration practices at the local level but also enriches academic discourse on the management of ad-hoc bodies as strategic actors in Indonesian electoral democracy.

METHOD

This article is compiled based on the results of community service activities carried out in Malaka Regency with the aim of evaluating the performance and institutional capacity of ad-hoc bodies in organizing the 2024 General Election and Regional Election. The approach used is descriptive qualitative, which allows for in-depth exploration of the experiences, perceptions, and socio-political dynamics surrounding the work of ad-hoc bodies at the local level. The primary method used in this activity was a Focus Group Discussion (FGD). FGDs were chosen because they allow for interactive dialogue between actors involved in the election process, allowing for clarification, confirmation, and open discussion of differing perspectives. This approach is relevant in the context of institutional evaluation, as the performance of ad hoc bodies can be assessed not only from the internal perspective of the election organizers but also from the perceptions and experiences of other stakeholders.

The FGD participants comprised various stakeholders directly and indirectly involved in the 2024 General Election and Regional Head Election (Pilkada) process in Malaka Regency. These stakeholders included representatives from the Malaka Regency General Elections Commission (KPU), ad-hoc bodies (PPK, PPS, and KPPS), local politicians, political party representatives, community leaders, media representatives, and voter representatives. This multi-actor engagement was conducted purposively, taking into account functional representation, experience, and involvement in election stages.

The involvement of these actors aimed to strengthen the process of confirming data and field findings related to the performance of the ad-hoc bodies. The perspectives of the General Elections Commission (KPU) and the ad-hoc bodies provided insights into the technical and administrative aspects of election administration. Meanwhile, politicians and political party representatives provided assessments from the perspective of election participants who interacted directly with election organizers. Community leaders and voter representatives presented public perspectives on transparency, accessibility, and the quality of election services. Media representatives contributed to confirming aspects of information transparency and the dynamics of news coverage during the election stages. With this composition, the FGD served not only as a forum for internal reflection but also as a space for participatory evaluation that brought together diverse interests in a shared discourse.

Apart from FGD, this community service activity is also equipped with field observations, and in-depth interviews as a supporting method to strengthen the validity of the findings. Field observations were conducted to understand the factual context of the election administration in Malaka Regency, including geographic conditions, polling station distribution, supporting infrastructure, and patterns of social interaction at the community level. These observations helped capture empirical realities not fully revealed in forum discussions. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants selected based on their relevance and depth of experience in election administration. Key informants included members of ad hoc bodies with direct experience in crucial stages (voting and vote counting), commissioners or technical staff from the General Elections Commission (KPU), and community leaders with significant roles in local socio-political dynamics. These interviews aimed to explore the dimensions of personal experiences, pressures faced, problem-solving mechanisms, and reflections on the institutional strengths and weaknesses of ad hoc bodies.

Data obtained from focus group discussions (FGDs), observations, and interviews were analyzed qualitatively through data reduction, thematic categorization, and analytical interpretation. Triangulation between sources and methods was conducted to ensure consistency of information and enhance the credibility of the findings. This approach enabled an evaluation that was not only descriptive but also reflective and comprehensive in understanding the institutional dynamics of ad hoc bodies in Malaka Regency. With this methodological design, this community service activity not only functions as a discussion forum, but also as a participatory evaluative instrument that produces recommendations based on collective experience and cross-actor confirmation to strengthen the implementation of elections towards the 2029 General Election.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Overview of the Community Service Area: The Context of the Pilkada Implementation in Malaka Regency

Malaka Regency is a regency in East Nusa Tenggara Province that shares a direct border with the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste. As a border region, Malaka has unique geographic, social, and political characteristics. Geographically, much of the region consists of rural areas with uneven infrastructure access. Distances between villages and road conditions in several sub-districts remain challenges, particularly in the mobilization of logistics and distribution of voting equipment. In the context of the 2024 regional elections, these geographic conditions directly impact the work of ad hoc bodies, particularly the Election Committee (PPK), Election Committee (PPS), and Election Working Committee (KPPS), which must ensure all stages run on time and according to procedures. Distributing election logistics to areas with limited access requires intensive coordination and high administrative precision. Several informants during community service activities cited weather factors, limited transportation, and a lack of supporting facilities as significant technical challenges.

Beyond geographic challenges, Malaka Regency also has a social character marked by strong kinship ties and community relations. Its relatively homogeneous social structure, based on genealogical relationships, allows interactions between political actors and the community to occur within a very close social space. In the context of regional elections, this social proximity has the potential to create symbolic pressure on ad hoc bodies, particularly when they must make decisions that conflict with the interests of specific candidates or groups. Regional elections, as a form of local political contestation, often present intense competitive dynamics. Based on the results of the focus group discussions (FGD), the 2024 regional elections in Malaka Regency are inseparable from the polarization of political support at the community level. This polarization occurs not only among the political elite but also permeates the grassroots level. In such situations, ad hoc bodies are in a strategic and vulnerable position, as they directly interact with election participants, witnesses, and voters in a situation fraught with competing interests.

Another identified issue is the limited technical and administrative capacity of some ad hoc body members, particularly those involved in election administration for the first time. The ever-evolving complexity of regional election regulations demands a detailed understanding of procedures, forms, and reporting mechanisms. Meanwhile, the relatively short training period is often insufficient to ensure that all ad hoc body members have a consistent level of understanding. In terms of welfare and protection, ad hoc bodies also face a high workload, particularly on election day and vote counting. Long working hours, along with administrative and social pressures, are the realities of the field. In some cases, this pressure does not necessarily take the form of direct intervention, but arises through community expectations and close scrutiny from various parties, including witnesses and candidate campaign teams. Thus, Malaka Regency, as a dedicated service area, presents a complex context for the implementation of regional elections. Geographical challenges, local socio-political dynamics, and the limited institutional capacity of ad-hoc bodies are intertwined factors that influence the quality of election administration. Understanding these real-world conditions is crucial as an analytical foundation for interpreting the findings of the service, as well as for formulating contextual and applicable recommendations for a more effective 2029 election.

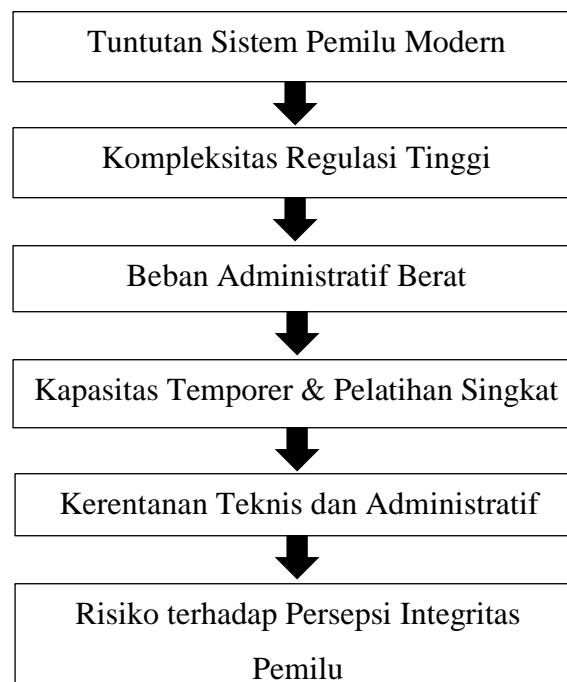
2. Technical Capacity of Ad-Hoc Bodies between Demands of Professionalism and Institutional Limitations

Field findings indicate that the technical capacity of ad hoc bodies in Malaka Regency varies across a spectrum. This variation is primarily influenced by prior experience in election administration, educational background, and the quality of training received. Members with prior election experience demonstrate better adaptability to regulatory dynamics and administrative pressures. Conversely, new members tend to take longer to grasp procedural details. The FGD revealed that the technical guidance provided by the KPU was concise and normative, oriented toward conveying regulations, but did not fully address simulations of problematic situations that frequently arise in the field. This created a gap between normative knowledge and practical problem-solving skills. In this context, the ad hoc body operated within the framework of "procedural compliance" but had not yet fully achieved the level of "reflective technical competence." More systematically, the field findings can be summarized in the following table:

Table 1. Mapping of Field Findings on the Technical Capacity of Ad-Hoc Agencies

Evaluation Aspects	Field Findings	Analytical Implications	Need for Repair
Understanding Regulations	Diverse; older members are more adaptive	Internal capacity imbalance	Standardization of tiered training
Administration and Documentation	Prone to technical errors	The complexity of the regulations is not commensurate with the training time.	Simplification of procedures and digitalization
Field Problem Solving	Depends on individual experience	Professionalism is not yet institutionalized	Mentoring system between organizers
Consistency of Implementation	Generally comply with procedures	Professionalism is formalistic	Case simulation based training
Internal Coordination	Relatively good, but informal	Dependence on a particular figure	Strengthening coordination SOPs

The table shows that the main problem lies not in low commitment, but rather in the lack of systematic capacity-building design. In other words, the problem with ad hoc bodies is more structural than individual. Field observations show that the high administrative burden forces polling station (KPPS) members to work under tight time pressure. In such situations, even small errors can significantly impact the legitimacy of the results. This situation indicates an imbalance between the complexity of the election system and the capacity of technical implementers at the grassroots level. Critically, these findings reveal an institutional paradox: the state demands high integrity, maximum accuracy, and impeccable professionalism, yet still manages ad hoc bodies as temporary institutions with minimal capacity investment. Herein lies the fundamental problem of ad hoc agency governance. Reflectively, these community service activities point to the idea that ad hoc bodies should no longer be viewed as "temporary technical personnel," but rather as "architects of micro-democracy" at the local level. They are not merely implementers of procedures, but guardians of political legitimacy at the grassroots level. To clarify the conceptual synthesis, here is a diagram of the relationship between the demands and capacities of ad-hoc bodies:



This diagram shows that the risk of technical errors is not solely due to individuals, but rather due to structural imbalances in the governance design of ad-hoc bodies. As an argumentative synthesis, it can be emphasized that improving the quality of the 2029 Election requires a reformulation of the approach to strengthening ad-hoc bodies. The training model needs to shift from a regulatory approach to problem-based learning. Furthermore,

consideration should be given to establishing a database of experienced election officials who can be selectively re-recruited to maintain the continuity of institutional capacity.

3. Workload, Welfare, and Structural Vulnerabilities of Ad-Hoc Bodies

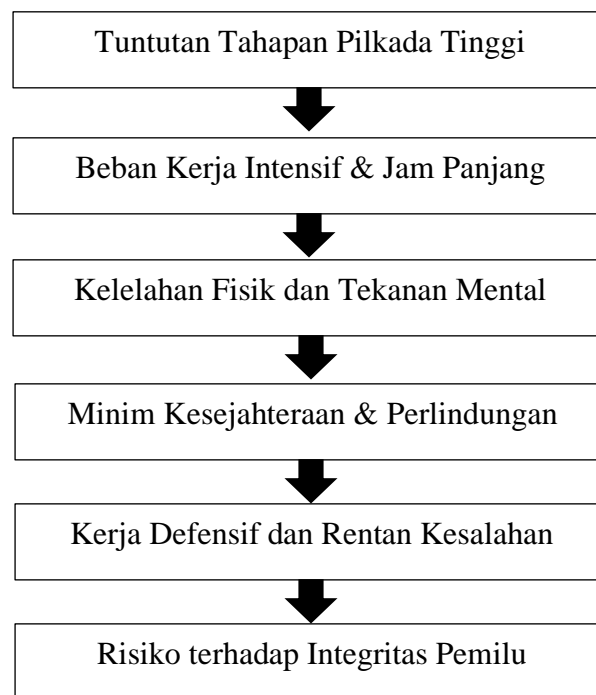
Field findings indicate that the workload of ad-hoc bodies in the 2024 regional elections in Malaka Regency is extremely high, particularly during the voting and vote counting stages. Polling Station (KPPS) members, as the spearhead of the election process at the polling station (TPS) level, face long working hours, strict demands for administrative accuracy, and psychological pressure from various stakeholders. This workload is not only quantitative but also qualitative, requiring concentration and precision in often challenging situations. The focus group discussion (FGD) revealed that many ad hoc agency members viewed their duties as "temporary service" requiring physical and mental sacrifice. However, this perception of service was often not matched by adequate welfare support and protection. The honorarium received was deemed disproportionate to the workload and risks faced, particularly for polling station (KPPS) staff who worked almost non-stop on election day and vote counting. This situation highlights the disparity between state demands and the compensation provided to technical implementers in the field. Field observations reinforce these findings by demonstrating that physical and mental fatigue are inherent in the work of ad hoc agencies. In some cases, this fatigue leads to decreased concentration and an increased potential for administrative errors.

While these errors are often minor, in the context of elections, even small errors can have significant implications for public trust and the legitimacy of the results. Analytically, this situation reflects the structural vulnerability of ad hoc bodies as temporary institutions burdened with strategic tasks without commensurate structural support. The state positions ad hoc bodies as the vanguard of election integrity, yet still treats them as temporary resources that can easily be replaced. This perspective often positions welfare and protection as secondary issues, rather than primary prerequisites for professionalism. The legal protection dimension also emerged as a crucial issue in field findings. Some members of the ad hoc body expressed concerns about potential criminalization or legal reporting due to inadvertent administrative errors. This concern created additional psychological stress and encouraged cautious, even defensive, working practices. In the long term, this situation has the potential to undermine decision-making skills and hinder the effectiveness of the ad hoc body's work. To clarify the pattern of findings, the following is an analytical mapping of the workload and structural vulnerabilities of the ad-hoc agency:

Table 2. Workload and Structural Vulnerabilities of Ad-Hoc Agencies

Dimensions	Field Findings	Impact on Performance	Long-Term Implications
Working hours	Very long on a crucial day	Physical and mental fatigue	Decrease in work quality
Administrative Burden	Height and detail	Risk of technical errors	Delegitimization of results
Welfare	Not worth the load	Latent demotivation	Low interest in re-participation
Legal Protection	Perceived as weak	Defensive work	Decreased decision-making courage
Psychosocial Support	Almost unavailable	Stress and pressure	Institutional vulnerability

The table shows that the workload of ad hoc agencies does not stand alone but is intertwined with issues of welfare and protection. When these three aspects are not managed in an integrated manner, ad hoc agencies face systemic vulnerability. Reflectively, these findings point to the understanding that the quality of election administration is determined not only by regulations and procedures, but also by the working conditions of election officials. Excessive workloads without adequate welfare support and protection have the potential to erode election integrity from within. In other words, election integrity has material and psychosocial dimensions that are often overlooked in policy discourse. To strengthen this synthesis, the relationship between workload and structural vulnerability can be described as follows:



As a novel idea, this finding calls for a redefinition of future ad hoc agency management policies. Ad hoc agencies need to be treated as strategic assets of democracy, not merely temporary technical instruments. Strengthening welfare, guaranteeing legal protection, and more humane workload management must be integral to the design of the 2029 election. Without this paradigm shift, ad hoc agencies will continue to experience a cycle of structural vulnerability that repeats itself in every election.

4. Local Socio-Political Pressure, Neutrality, and the Ethical Dilemmas of Ad-Hoc Bodies

Field findings indicate that the neutrality of ad hoc bodies in Malaka Regency is tested not only by formal political actors, but also by the intimate and layered configuration of local social relations. Kinship ties, community closeness, and customary-based social structures create a dense social space, where the position of ad hoc bodies is never entirely "socially neutral," despite normative demands for political neutrality. This condition makes neutrality a practice that must be continually negotiated, not simply a legal status. In focus group discussions (FGDs), several members of ad hoc bodies revealed experiences facing implicit pressure, such as requests for help, symbolic expectations, or simply intense social scrutiny from the surrounding community. This pressure rarely took the form of direct instructions to break rules, but rather manifested as moral expectations that were difficult to avoid. In this context, enforcing election rules was often perceived as "socially insensitive," even if procedurally correct.

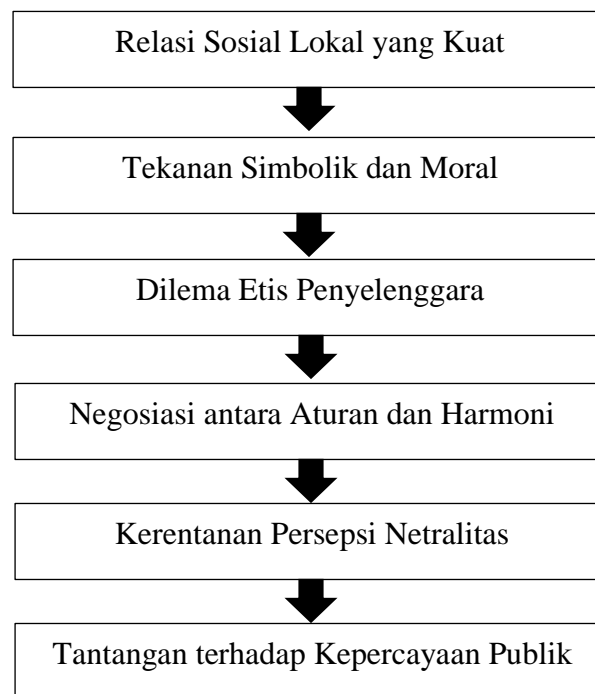
Field observations show that the most acute ethical dilemmas arise at crucial stages, such as handling ineligible voters, witness objections, or minor administrative disputes at polling stations (TPS). KPPS (Election Working Committee) and PPS (Election Committee) members are faced with a choice between procedural consistency and social harmony. Any choice made has the potential to have social consequences, including open conflict and stigma within the community. Analytically, these findings demonstrate that the concept of election organizer neutrality cannot be understood solely as adherence to regulations. Neutrality also has social and cultural dimensions that are often not accommodated in election policy design. Ad-hoc bodies do not operate in a vacuum, but rather in a social field fraught with meaning, power relations, and reciprocal expectations. When these dimensions are ignored, election organizers are left to bear the ethical burden individually. The involvement of politicians, political party representatives, and the media in the FGD revealed varying perceptions regarding the neutrality of the ad-hoc body. Some participants assessed the ad-hoc body as having performed quite professionally, while others remained skeptical about the consistency of the implementation of regulations at the polling station level. These differing perceptions emphasize that neutrality is determined not only by the actions of the election organizers, but also by how those actions are perceived and communicated to the public.

To clarify the pattern of socio-political pressures faced by the ad-hoc body, field findings are summarized in the following table:

Table 3. Forms of Socio-Political Pressure and Ethical Dilemmas of Ad-Hoc Bodies

Pressure Source	Pressure Form	Impact on Organizers	Ethical Risks
Kinship Relations	Expectations of solidarity	The dilemma between rules and social harmony	Implicit bias
Local Elite	Informal supervision	Psychological pressure	Defensive work
Election Participants	Objections and protests	Stress and over-caution	Inconsistency of decisions
Community	Social stigma	Post-election social burden	Personal delegitimization
Media	Public spotlight	Reputational pressure	Over-justification of actions

The table shows that pressures on ad hoc bodies are multidimensional and not always readily apparent. Symbolic and social pressures are often stronger than formal political pressures, as they are embedded in the organizers' daily relationships as community members. Reflectively, these findings point to the understanding that ad hoc bodies actually serve as boundary-keepers between the logic of procedural democracy and the logic of communitarian socialism. In this position, they are not only enforcers of rules but also mediators of value conflicts at the local level. Unfortunately, this mediating role has not been explicitly recognized in the institutional design of election administration. The relationship between socio-political pressures and the neutrality of ad hoc bodies can be illustrated as follows



As an argumentative synthesis, these findings generate a new idea that strengthening the neutrality of ad hoc bodies in the future cannot be achieved simply by enforcing rules and sanctions. An approach that integrates ethical and social capacity building is needed, such as training in handling ethical dilemmas, public communication strategies, and post-election social protection mechanisms for election organizers. With this approach, ad hoc bodies will be prepared not only as technical implementers but also as ethical actors capable of maintaining democratic integrity amidst local social complexities leading up to the 2029 elections. A synthesis of the overall field findings indicates that the performance of ad hoc bodies in the 2024 regional elections in Malaka Regency cannot be understood partially through technical indicators alone. Rather, this performance is the result of a complex interaction

between individual capacity, institutional design, structural workload, and local socio-political dynamics that frame the work of election organizers at the grassroots level. The evaluative approach used in this community service activity demonstrates that ad hoc bodies operate in a demanding environment with relatively minimal systemic support. In terms of technical capacity, findings indicate that the professionalism of ad hoc bodies remains highly personal and situational, dependent on individual experience and informal networks. The state demands high levels of procedural compliance and accuracy, but has not yet fully established institutional mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of such capacity. As a result, ad hoc bodies tend to operate within a framework of "administrative compliance," rather than "reflective competence" that enables adaptive decision-making in the field.

The high workload and imbalance between welfare support exacerbate the structural vulnerabilities of ad hoc bodies. Field findings show that physical exhaustion, mental stress, and concerns about legal risks foster defensive work patterns. This pattern implicitly impacts the quality of election administration, as organizers focus more on avoiding errors than on optimizing democratic services. In this context, election integrity is at stake not only at the regulatory level but also at the working conditions of election organizers. The synthesis also shows that the neutrality of ad hoc bodies is a far more complex concept than simply adherence to the rule of law. In the social context of Malaka Regency, neutrality is tested by kinship relations, community expectations, and the symbolic pressures inherent in everyday social life. Ad hoc bodies act as mediators between the logic of procedural democracy and local social logic, a role that has not yet been fully recognized and supported institutionally.

If the three dimensions of the findings—technical capacity, workload and well-being, and socio-political pressures—are read integratively, a pattern of systemic vulnerability of ad hoc bodies emerges. This vulnerability is not simply a problem of individuals or specific regions, but rather a reflection of the electoral governance design, which still positions ad hoc bodies as temporary technical actors, rather than as strategic pillars of electoral democracy. In other words, the problem of ad hoc bodies is a governance problem, not merely an implementation problem. From a reflective perspective, the results of this community service have yielded a new understanding that the quality of elections is determined not only by how well-formulated the rules are, but also by how humanely and contextually the election system is implemented. An electoral democracy with integrity requires administrators who are not only technically competent but also protected, prosperous, and able to navigate ethical dilemmas in a complex social context.

As a conceptual contribution, this article proposes a new understanding of ad hoc bodies as actors in democratic micro-governance, namely actors operating at the intersection of the state, law, and community. Within this framework, ad hoc bodies are no longer understood merely as implementers of election stages, but rather as guardians of democratic legitimacy at the local level. This conceptual repositioning opens up space for the formulation of more progressive and equitable policies in the management of ad hoc bodies leading up to the 2029 elections. Overall, this synthesis confirms that improving the quality of future election administration requires a paradigm shift in how ad hoc bodies are viewed and managed. Technical reforms without institutional and social reforms will only yield superficial improvements. Therefore, the findings of this community service are not merely evaluative but also offer a direction for transforming election governance to be more inclusive, sustainable, and contextual.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Community service activities conducted in Malaka Regency demonstrate that the ad-hoc body organizing the 2024 regional elections (Pilkada) has carried out its role procedurally and in accordance with applicable regulations. However, behind this administrative success, several structural and contextual issues significantly impact the quality of the ad-hoc body's performance in the field. These findings emphasize that the success of regional elections cannot be measured solely by the smooth running of the stages, but also by the working conditions, capacity, and social standing of the organizers. The results of community service demonstrate that the technical capacity of ad hoc bodies remains heavily dependent on individual experience and informal learning. Short, procedural-compliance-oriented training has not fully developed reflective and adaptive professionalism. This situation is exacerbated by high workloads, limited welfare, and weak legal protection, which collectively create structural vulnerabilities for ad hoc bodies as temporary institutions with strategic responsibilities. Furthermore, the findings indicate that the neutrality of ad hoc bodies at the local level faces complex challenges due to the strength of social relations and the dynamics of community politics. Ad hoc bodies confront not only formal political actors but also symbolic pressures and social expectations inherent in everyday life. In this context, neutrality becomes a negotiated practice, not simply a legal norm, thus demanding ethical and social capacities not fully facilitated by the

institutional design of election administration. Overall, this community service activity concluded that the primary problem with ad hoc bodies lies not in individual commitment, but rather in the election governance paradigm, which still positions ad hoc bodies as temporary, technical actors. Yet, ad hoc bodies are pillars of micro-democracy, playing a crucial role in maintaining legitimacy and public trust in the electoral process at the local level.

Recommendation

Based on these conclusions, this article recommends several strategic steps to strengthen the performance of ad hoc bodies in preparation for the 2029 General Elections and Regional Head Elections. First, a reformulation of the capacity-building approach for ad hoc bodies is necessary by developing a tiered and sustainable training system. This training should focus not only on understanding regulations but also on case simulations, decision-making under pressure, and contextual problem-solving in the field. Second, ad hoc agency management policies must seriously consider welfare and legal protection. Proportional adjustments to the workload, health insurance, and clear and accessible legal protection mechanisms are essential prerequisites for the professionalism of election organizers. Without this support, ad hoc agencies will remain vulnerable, recurring in every election cycle.

Third, strengthening the neutrality of ad hoc bodies needs to be done through a more contextual and ethical approach. Ethics training for election organizers, strengthening public communication capacity, and developing post-election social support mechanisms should help ad hoc bodies navigate local socio-political pressures. This approach is crucial to ensuring that neutrality is not only upheld normatively but also understood and accepted within the community's social context. Fourth, a conceptual repositioning of ad-hoc bodies within the election administration architecture as strategic actors in local democracy is needed. This repositioning can be achieved through the development of a database of experienced election organizers, a more selective and sustainable recruitment mechanism, and strengthened coordination between permanent and temporary election organizers. This way, institutional capacity doesn't have to be built from scratch for every election. Through these recommendations, this community service activity is expected to provide practical and reflective contributions to improving election governance at the local level. Furthermore, these findings and recommendations are expected to provide strategic input for policymakers and election organizers in building a more integrated, equitable, and sustainable election system leading up to the 2029 elections.

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