

**Study of Student Perceptions on the Performance, Transparency, and Independence of Bawaslu as the Electoral Supervisory Agency s 2024**



**Studi tentang Persepsi Mahasiswa terhadap Kinerja, Transparansi, dan Kemandirian Bawaslu sebagai Lembaga Pengawas Pemilihan Umum pada Tahun 2024**

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**ABSTRACT**

General elections are one of the main pillars of a democratic system, serving to legitimize power through a peaceful and periodic process. In their implementation, the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) plays a central role as the supervisory body responsible for ensuring that elections are conducted in a direct, public, free, confidential, honest, and fair manner. This study aims to analyze students' perceptions of Bawaslu's performance, transparency, and independence in the implementation of the 2024 General Election. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with data collection techniques in the form of a closed Likert scale questionnaire distributed to students at the University of 17 Agustus 1945 Jakarta. The data obtained was analyzed using a descriptive approach based on the frequency distribution and percentage of respondents' answers for each indicator. The results show that the majority of students have a positive perception of Bawaslu's performance and transparency, with a total of 60% and 59.9% of respondents agreeing and strongly agreeing. However, perceptions of Bawaslu's independence tended to be lower, with only 49.4% of respondents agreeing and strongly agreeing, and 50.6% remaining neutral or disagreeing. This shows that although trust in Bawaslu is generally quite good, there are still doubts among students regarding the institution's neutrality from political intervention. This study emphasizes the importance of increasing information transparency, strengthening public communication, and protecting the institutional independence of Bawaslu as part of efforts to strengthen the legitimacy and quality of electoral democracy in Indonesia. The perceptions of students as young voters and a critical group are important indicators in measuring the success of election monitoring functions in the public eye. However, the weakness of this study is the limited number of respondents from one university and the use of a closed questionnaire as an instrument. Future research should involve respondents from various universities and combine quantitative methods with interviews or focus group discussions (FGDs) to obtain a more in-depth and representative picture.

**Kata Kunci**

*Bawaslu;  
 Persepsi;  
 Pemilu;*

**ABSTRAK**

Pemilihan Umum (Pemilu) merupakan salah satu pilar utama dalam sistem demokrasi yang berfungsi untuk melegitimasi kekuasaan melalui proses yang damai dan berkala. Dalam pelaksanaannya, Badan Pengawas Pemilu (Bawaslu) memiliki peran sentral sebagai lembaga pengawas yang bertanggung jawab untuk memastikan pemilu berjalan secara langsung, umum, bebas, rahasia, jujur, dan adil. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis persepsi mahasiswa terhadap kinerja, transparansi, dan independensi Bawaslu dalam pelaksanaan Pemilu 2024. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa kuesioner tertutup skala Likert yang disebarakan kepada mahasiswa Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Jakarta. Data yang diperoleh dianalisis dengan pendekatan deskriptif berdasarkan distribusi frekuensi dan persentase jawaban responden pada masing-masing indikator. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas mahasiswa memiliki persepsi positif terhadap kinerja dan transparansi Bawaslu, dengan total 60% dan 59,9% responden menyatakan setuju dan sangat setuju. Namun, persepsi terhadap independensi Bawaslu cenderung lebih rendah, dengan hanya 49,4% responden yang menyatakan setuju dan sangat setuju, serta 50,6% lainnya bersikap netral atau tidak setuju. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa meskipun secara umum kepercayaan terhadap Bawaslu cukup baik, masih

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|   | <p>terdapat keraguan di kalangan mahasiswa terkait netralitas lembaga tersebut dari intervensi politik. Penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya peningkatan transparansi informasi, penguatan komunikasi publik, serta perlindungan atas independensi kelembagaan Bawaslu sebagai bagian dari upaya memperkuat legitimasi dan kualitas demokrasi elektoral di Indonesia. Persepsi mahasiswa sebagai pemilih muda dan kelompok kritis menjadi indikator penting dalam mengukur keberhasilan fungsi pengawasan pemilu di mata publik. Namun, Kelemahan penelitian ini adalah jumlah responden yang terbatas dari satu universitas serta penggunaan instrumen berupa kuesioner tertutup. Penelitian berikutnya disarankan melibatkan responden dari berbagai perguruan tinggi dan memadukan metode kuantitatif dengan wawancara atau FGD untuk memperoleh gambaran yang lebih mendalam dan representatif</p> |
| <p><b>Article History</b><br/>Send 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2025<br/>Review 6<sup>th</sup> September 2025<br/>Accepted 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025</p> | <p>Copyright ©2026 <a href="#">Jurnal Aristo (Social, Politic, Humaniora)</a><br/>This is an open access article under the <a href="#">CC-BY-NC-SA</a> license.<br/>Akses artikel terbuka dengan model <a href="#">CC-BY-NC-SA</a> sebagai lisensinya.</p>   |



## **Introduction**

In a democratic country, general elections are one of the main instruments for realizing people's sovereignty, as well as an important indicator of the implementation of democratic governance. The general election system was first implemented during the Old Order era in 1955 under the leadership of President Soekarno, who at that time still applied a guided democracy system (Lubis et al., 2022). Elections are the only democratic procedure that legitimizes the authority and actions of people's representatives to carry out certain actions. Elections play a crucial role in democratic systems, including in Indonesia, as the main mechanism for expressing people's sovereignty. As a democratic country, Indonesia upholds the principle that sovereignty lies in the hands of the people, and elections are the main way to realize this. Through elections, citizens can participate directly in determining their leaders and representatives in government, as well as the direction of policies to be taken (Dharmawan et al., 2025). Elections are expected to result in a new government that is legitimate, democratic, and truly represents the interests of the electorate (Mu'in et al., 2021; Rosmayati et al., 2025). In order to ensure that elections are conducted fairly and free from various forms of fraud, independent institutions are needed to regulate, supervise, and enforce the code of ethics related to the implementation of elections. To that end, national, permanent, and independent election organizing institutions were formed, namely the General Election Commission (KPU) and the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu). These two institutions play a strategic role in ensuring the integrity of the electoral democratic process. However, the political reality in Indonesia often shows a tug-of-war between political forces and election organizing institutions, especially during crucial political moments such as the 2024 elections (Fayadh, 2025; Kori & Sariyani, 2024; Nazril et al., 2024).

Bawaslu has increasingly complex duties and authorities as stipulated in Law No. 7 of 2017 on General Elections. In general, under Law No. 7 of 2017, Bawaslu has the task of establishing standards for the implementation of election supervision, supervising each stage of the election, preventing election violations, receiving complaints of election violations and forwarding them to the relevant parties, and evaluating election supervision. To carry out its duties and authorities aimed at achieving effective election supervision, Bawaslu also implements bureaucratic reforms every five years in accordance with Presidential Regulation No. 81 of 2010 on the Grand Design of Bureaucratic Reform 2010-2025. The bureaucratic reforms are expected to create an effective, efficient, and accountable bureaucracy that provides quality public services. This is reinforced by the Bureaucratic Roadmap, which serves as a guideline for Bawaslu's internal stakeholders to implement bureaucratic reforms with the aim of improving performance and services related to election supervision. The quality of Bawaslu's services can be seen from the actions taken against violations that occur during the election process. When there are reports from the public regarding alleged election violations, Bawaslu will process these reports and decide whether or not to follow up on them (Cristiani et al., 2024).

Bawaslu's efforts to realize LUBERJURDIL elections are carried out through various activities, starting with socialization meetings between election organizers and community leaders. Bawaslu also plays a very important role in protecting the votes of millions of Indonesians (Antari & Mahendra, 2025). This is certainly related to the implementation of the principle of people's sovereignty as mandated by the constitution as stated in Article 1 paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (Puspita & Arfa'i, 2023). As a supervisory body, Bawaslu has a role in preventing and taking action related to elections and handling disputes in the electoral process. In the context of prevention, Bawaslu can be considered a proactive institution (Putri & Agustina, 2024).

The Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) has not been fully optimal in carrying out its duties in supervising the elections, because there is a discrepancy between the ideal conditions and the actual conditions in the field between the ideal conditions (*das sollen*) and the actual conditions in the field (*das sein*) (Kushartawan et al., 2024). In the 2024 elections, various challenges arose, such as money politics, administrative violations, and bias on the part of election organizers. The quality of democracy can be assessed through five main dimensions, namely freedom, rule of law, vertical accountability, responsiveness, and equality, as well as aspects of participation, competition, horizontal accountability, transparency, and effectiveness of representation. Unfortunately, transactional political practices such as money politics have worsened the state of democracy in Indonesia by undermining the essence of elections, which should be transparent and dignified (Munawar & Hendra, 2025). Based on data from the Indonesian Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu RI) as of February 2024, there were 1,023 alleged election violations throughout Indonesia, consisting of administrative violations, election crimes, code of ethics violations, and procedural disputes (Ardianto, 2024; Hidayatullah, 2024). In addition, the Constitutional Court (MK) ruled that 24 regions must hold a re-vote (PSU) due to the violations that occurred (Sitorus, 2025). This ruling has led to criticism of the performance of election organizers, including Bawaslu, indicating serious problems in the implementation of elections that require firm and consistent legal action (Indonesian General Election Supervisory Agency, 2023).

In a previous study entitled "Problems and Strategies for Handling Money Politics in the 2019 Simultaneous Elections in Indonesia," Delmana, Zetra, and Koeswara (2020) identified money politics as a crucial problem that threatens the integrity of the election process. Money politics violations occurred at various stages of the elections, with an estimated 19.4% to 33.1% of voters involved in this practice, placing Indonesia in an alarming position internationally (Delmana et al., 2020). The dynamics of the 2024 elections are increasingly complex with the phenomenon of a number of candidates who use unconventional campaign strategies passing, while senior politicians have failed. This adds to the urgency for an in-depth evaluation of the effectiveness of election law enforcement (Zahra et al., 2025).

Previous research on the perceptions of first-time voters regarding the performance of election organizers was conducted by Muhammad Solihin, Tree Setiawan Pamungkas, and Jhon Roi Tua Purba in a study titled "First-Time Voters' Perceptions of the Performance of the 2014 Presidential Election Organizers." This study found that first-time voters' perceptions of election organizers, both the General Election Commission (KPU) and the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), were still relatively low. Several obstacles were identified, including first-time voters' lack of knowledge about the roles and functions of election organizers, with 49.7 percent of respondents unaware of Bawaslu and only 65.1 percent aware of KPU. In addition, the level of trust among first-time voters in election organizing institutions remained moderate at 57.2 percent, while perceptions of the neutrality of these institutions reached 50.5 percent. The professionalism of election organizers was also only rated as

by 48.1 percent of respondents, and only 44.4 percent of first-time voters expressed satisfaction with the KPU's performance, while 40.5 percent were dissatisfied. This condition shows the need for more systematic socialization and education to increase the understanding, trust, and satisfaction of first-time voters towards the implementation of elections so that the democratic process runs better and more credibly (Solihin et al., 2017a).

Previous research on efforts to prevent and prosecute election violations, particularly those related to money politics, was presented by Mohammad Akbar in his article in Kompas and the results of a 2024 survey by Praxis Indonesia. This research revealed that money politics remains a practice that is difficult to eliminate in every five-yearly election in Indonesia, including the 2024 elections. One of the violations that often occurs is the giving of money to voters during the campaign period, the quiet period, and even on voting day. This phenomenon also extends to young voters, where a survey of 1,000 students as first-time voters showed that the majority of them accepted money politics and considered it a normal part of political contests, with only 10.99 percent firmly rejecting the practice. Furthermore, even though they accept money, most voters adopt a pragmatic attitude known by the slogan "take the money, don't vote for the person." In addition to giving cash, money politics has now developed into giving basic necessities, with the aim of influencing voters to vote for the election participants who give them (Akbar, 2024; Yuliastuti et al., 2023).

Previous research on students' perceptions of the performance, transparency, and independence of Bawaslu as the supervisory agency for the 2024 elections was conducted by Musdalifah, Nurdin Nurdin, and Fitriingsih Fitriingsih in their study titled "Perceptions of Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Students Regarding the Spread of Hoaxes on Social Media." This study found that students had different perceptions, with some students realizing the importance of reading and researching information or news they receive so that they can verify the authenticity of the news or information and not easily spread something whose truth is unknown. However, there were also some students who were involved in spreading hoaxes themselves, either because they were experimenting or simply following the crowd. This condition is closely related to students' perceptions of the performance and transparency of Bawaslu as an election supervisory agency, where understanding and trust in Bawaslu's independence are important factors in supporting effective supervision and preventing the spread of misleading information during the 2024 elections (Musdalifah et al., 2021).

Previous research on issues in resolving election disputes includes a study written by Enny Dwi Cahyani, Pradita Dwi Ariyani, and Ahmad Kamil Arrayyan on "Abuse of Power by the DKPP: Impact and Solutions." This study explains that there is an overlap of jurisdiction between Bawaslu and the State Administrative Court (PTUN) in resolving certain disputes, which causes confusion and legal uncertainty. For example, disputes involving KPU decisions can be decided by Bawaslu, but dissatisfied parties can resubmit the dispute to the PTUN. This situation not only prolongs the dispute resolution process but also has the potential to cause conflicting decisions between the two institutions. Further analysis shows that this overlap of authority results in inefficiency and ineffectiveness in resolving election disputes, thereby reducing legal certainty and undermining public confidence in the integrity and fairness of the electoral system. This could ultimately disrupt political and social stability in Indonesia (Cahyani et al., 2025).

One of the main problems identified is the gap between existing regulations and their implementation in the field. This is reflected in the large number of cases reported but not all of which can be followed up effectively, as well as criticism of Bawaslu's performance in handling election violations. The complexity of handling election violations, especially those related to criminal acts, poses a challenge for law enforcement and requires a more comprehensive and coordinated approach (Aspinall et al., 2020; Rundengan, 2022). Politics in this country is essentially a subject of endless discussion. Political issues in this case often become headlines that always adorn the mass media, one of which is related to trust. Trust in this case is important in relation to society and politics itself (Zahra et al., 2025).

According to Mu'in et al. (2021) and Saleh (2022), Bawaslu has the authority not only to conduct passive supervision, but also to actively follow up on findings of violations, provide recommendations to law enforcement officials, and handle reports of alleged election crimes. This shows that Bawaslu's performance goes beyond mere administrative supervision and instead holds a strategic position in maintaining the integrity of elections. Furthermore, Kusumo and Ambarwati (2025) emphasize that Bawaslu's role in resolving election disputes is crucial in maintaining public trust. Quick, fair, and transparent resolution is a key indicator of the success of this institution's supervisory function. In practice, Bawaslu's performance covers several important aspects: following up on reports of violations, coordinating across sectors with the police and prosecutors, fostering a team of election supervisors at the regional level, and conducting public education related to supervision and potential violations in elections. Although structurally and functionally strong, Bawaslu still faces serious challenges in terms of public perception. Kondoy et al. (2024) note that there is still a negative perception that Bawaslu only plays a complementary role in the implementation of elections. This perception indicates doubts about the firmness, independence, and professionalism of this institution in carrying out its constitutional duties.

One crucial aspect in building Bawaslu's credibility is transparency. In the context of election supervision, transparency is not only a matter of disclosing administrative data, but also involves openness regarding work mechanisms, decision-making processes, and the results of investigations into violations. Jannah et al. (2025) state that transparency is the capacity of an institution to be open and honest in providing relevant information to all stakeholders. Three dimensions of transparency that are important indicators include: (a) openness of access to oversight data, (b) clarity of institutional procedures and communication, and (c) the use of digital technology to support real-time transparency (Fahrnis et al., 2024). This transparency is closely related to accountability, whereby the public can directly evaluate and assess the quality and integrity of the election organizing agency. Limited access to information, procedural ambiguities, and slow responses to reports of violations can erode public trust in election results and even trigger the delegitimization of the democratic system as a whole.

In addition to transparency, independence is another equally important pillar. An independent institution is one that is able to work without pressure or intervention from external parties, such as the government, political parties, or certain interest groups. Simanjuntak (2016) emphasizes that independence and impartiality are absolute principles that must be upheld by election organizers so that their decisions are not laden with certain political interests. The 1945 Constitution also provides constitutional guarantees for this principle, which is embodied in the principles of democratic elections. Indicators of this independence include two important things: legal certainty in all stages of the election, and the implementation of democratic principles in the work processes of the institution. When this independence is not maintained, every policy or decision made by Bawaslu will easily be perceived as biased or partial. As a result, the credibility of the institution and the legitimacy of the election will decline.

In a social context, public perception of electoral management bodies is largely determined by psychological and sociological factors, such as personal experience, expectations, attitudes, and the information consumed. According to Judge and Robbins (2017) in Faqi et al. (2023), perception is the process of organizing and interpreting sensory stimuli to give meaning to the environment. Therefore, the image of institutions such as Bawaslu is highly dependent on how the public interprets the actions, policies, and communications of these institutions. One important group to observe in terms of perception is students. Students are an intellectual group with relatively high political awareness and the ability to think critically about public policy. Akbar (2016) refers to students as part of the educated middle class who are in daily contact with the search for truth in the academic environment. Meanwhile, Sanit (1981) emphasizes that students have great potential in political life because they: (1) have broad horizons of thought, (2) undergo a long process of political socialization, (3) live in a multicultural environment, and (4) are future social elites. On the other hand, students, as part of the young voters and critical groups in society, play an important role in safeguarding democracy. Students also play a role as potential agents of social change in maintaining the quality of democracy. They have the ability to objectively evaluate the electoral process and the role of its supervisory institutions. Their perceptions of Bawaslu's performance, transparency, and independence are early indicators of the younger generation's trust in the democratic system. Given Bawaslu's important role in upholding the principles of LUBERJURDIL (Nazril et al., 2024), students' perceptions of this institution are important to examine, especially before and after the 2024 elections.

International research on public perceptions of electoral management bodies (EMBs) provides an important foundation for this study. (Van Ham & Garnett, 2019) emphasize that the independence of EMBs must be viewed not only from a legal (*de jure*) perspective, but also from a practical (*de facto*) perspective, as covert political intervention can undermine the legitimacy of these institutions. These results are in line with the findings (González et al., 2024) which show that public perceptions of election fairness greatly determine the level of trust in democracy. This supports the theory that if students perceive elections to be unfair, public trust in Bawaslu will also decline.

(Schulz, 2024) found that young people's trust in political institutions is greatly influenced by civic literacy and information transparency, which explains students' cautious attitude in assessing the transparency of Bawaslu and underlies the focus of this study. (Partheymüller et al., 2022) added that direct experience in organizing elections can increase perceptions of integrity, while groups without experience are more often neutral. This is relevant because students who are active in elections can provide more critical assessments of Bawaslu's performance.

Furthermore, (Lundstedt & Edgell, 2022a) highlight that weak EMB oversight capacity correlates with increased money politics, which ultimately reduces public trust. This is consistent with the phenomenon also occurring in Indonesia. (Mongrain, 2023) also emphasizes that election results that do not meet voters' expectations can affect perceptions of fairness, explaining why some students are skeptical of Bawaslu's independence.

The results of research (Lundstedt & Edgell, 2022b) in the Electoral Integrity Project reinforce this view by showing that Indonesia's election integrity score is relatively low, especially in terms of transparency and independence. This indicates that there are structural problems that are relevant for further study. Research (Nshindano, 2025) in Africa found that the mechanism for appointing members of supervisory institutions has a significant effect on public perceptions of independence. These findings are relevant to the Indonesian context, where the recruitment process for Bawaslu members is often in the public spotlight.

Research (Kiess, 2022) highlights that democratic experiences in education have a positive effect on political trust and youth participation. Thus, students' political literacy is an important factor in shaping perceptions of electoral oversight institutions. An experimental study published (Ferrali et al., 2023) in *Science Advances* in Morocco also shows that digital information interventions can encourage youth political participation, although the impact is relatively limited. The implications of these findings are highly relevant for Bawaslu in designing more open and digital-based political communication strategies to increase public trust.

Overall, these international findings show that students' perceptions of Bawaslu's performance, transparency, and independence cannot be separated from global trends regarding public trust in election supervisory institutions. Factors such as independence, transparency, fairness, political experience, and digital communication strategies have been proven to play a major role in shaping public perception. The perceptions of students are important to study because this group plays a role as young voters and active agents of change in safeguarding democracy. Thus, understanding students' perceptions of Bawaslu's transparency, independence, and performance is important not only to evaluate the technical success of elections but also to measure the extent to which democracy in Indonesia is progressing substantively. This study seeks to re-examine the extent to which students in Indonesia assess the credibility of Bawaslu in the 2024 elections and is expected to contribute theoretically and practically to strengthening Bawaslu's position as a credible supervisory institution, as well as providing input for building a healthier and more integrity-based electoral democracy in the future .

## **Method**

The method used in this study is a quantitative descriptive method, which is research conducted with the aim of describing students' perceptions of the performance, transparency, and independence of the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) in the implementation of the 2024 elections. The research was conducted at the University of 17 Agustus 1945 Jakarta. The respondents in this research were 36 active students of the University of 17 Agustus 1945 Jakarta who were selected using purposive sampling, which is the determination of samples based on certain criteria. The criteria for respondents were students who had the right to vote in the 2024 elections.

Data collection in this study was conducted using a closed questionnaire instrument compiled based on indicators of performance perception, transparency, and independence of Bawaslu. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale, namely Strongly Agree (SS), Agree (S), Neutral (N), Disagree (TS), and Strongly Disagree (STS).

The collected data was then analyzed using quantitative descriptive analysis. Data analysis was carried out in three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is the process of filtering and simplifying data from questionnaires filled out by respondents to ensure that the data used is relevant and in accordance with the research objectives. After undergoing the reduction stage, the selected data can then be presented. Data can be presented in the form of tables or graphs so that it is

easier to understand. Drawing conclusions is the process of interpreting the trends that emerge from the data, so that an overview of students' perceptions of the performance, transparency, and independence of Bawaslu in the implementation of the 2024 elections can be obtained.

## **Results and Discussion**

The respondents in this study consisted of 36 people with a balanced gender distribution, namely 18 male respondents (50%) and 18 female respondents (50%). This balance reflects equal gender representation in data collection, so that the perception results obtained can fairly represent the views of both groups.

Based on the data obtained, the majority of respondents were in the 20–25 age range, namely 31 people (86.11%). Furthermore, there were 3 respondents (8.33%) aged 26–30 years, and 2 people (5.56%) under the age of 20. There were no respondents over the age of 30. This shows that the respondents in this study were predominantly young people, who were generally active students and fell into the category of first-time voters or young voters in the 2024 elections.

All respondents in this study were students or graduates of undergraduate (S1) education, totaling 36 people (100%). They were expected to have the cognitive and critical reasoning skills to assess the performance, transparency, and independence of supervisory institutions such as Bawaslu.

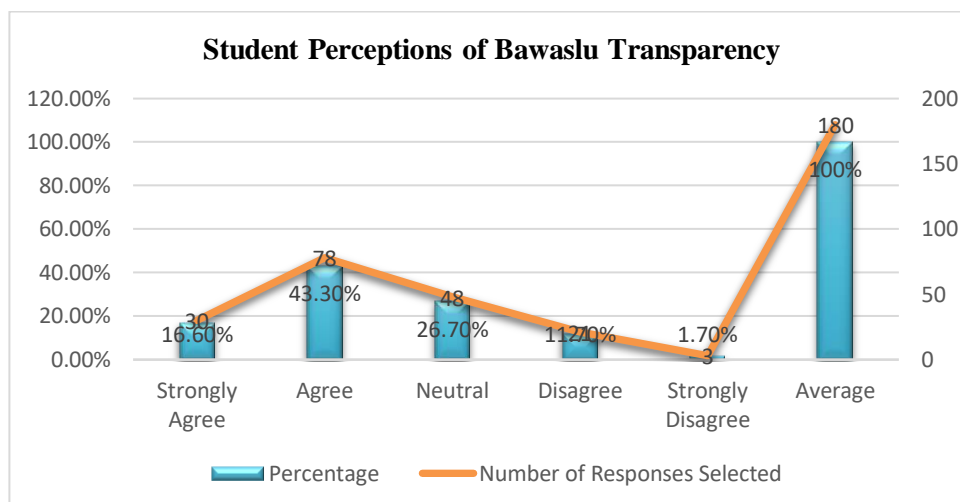
All respondents (100%) stated that they had the right to vote in the 2024 elections. This provides a strong basis that all respondents are valid and relevant voters to assess the performance of Bawaslu as an election supervisory agency. The fact that all respondents have the right to vote also confirms that they have a direct role in the democratic process and have the potential to experience firsthand the impact of Bawaslu's performance.

This study aims to describe students' perceptions of the performance, transparency, and independence of the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) in the 2024 elections. Data were obtained from 36 student respondents at the University of 17 Agustus 1945 Jakarta through a five-point Likert scale questionnaire.

### **Student Perceptions of Bawaslu Transparency**

Before assessing how students view Bawaslu's transparency, it is important to understand that transparency is one of the main pillars of public trust in state institutions. In the context of election supervision, transparency includes the extent to which Bawaslu can provide information openly, accurately, and in a manner that is accessible to the public. To

determine students' perceptions of Bawaslu's transparency, the following is a distribution of respondents' responses based on the Likert scale:



Based on the data obtained, 43.30% of respondents agreed and 16.60% strongly agreed with the transparency of Bawaslu. Thus, a total of 59.90% of students had a positive perception of the openness of information provided by Bawaslu in carrying out its election monitoring duties. These findings show that the majority of students considered Bawaslu to be quite open in conveying information needed by the public. However, 11.70% disagreed, 1.70% strongly disagreed, and 26.70% of respondents chose the neutral option, which means that more than a quarter of respondents did not have a firm stance in assessing the extent to which Bawaslu implemented the principle of transparency. This is a significant number, as it indicates a potential problem in public perception, particularly among students, regarding the performance of this election supervisory agency.

This neutral stance can be interpreted as uncertainty in understanding the information provided by Bawaslu. Students, as part of the younger generation who generally have broad access to information and high digital skills, should be able to critically assess the quality of public information. Therefore, when a group of students chooses to be neutral, it most likely reflects that the information provided by Bawaslu has not fully reached them, or perhaps it is not conveyed in a way that is easy to understand and relevant to the digital communication style they use every day. In addition, the neutral choice can also be interpreted as meaning that the available information is not considered sufficient to answer important public questions regarding the work process, supervision results, or reporting of election violations in an open and accountable manner.

This phenomenon is important to note because if even students, as a group with high literacy and digital access, still feel uncertain or doubtful about the transparency of state

institutions, then this reflects a deficiency in Bawaslu's public communication system. In the context of a healthy democracy, transparency is not only a matter of data openness, but also includes the ability of institutions to explain their work processes in detail, open up space for discussion, and establish two-way communication with the public. Therefore, ideal transparency should not stop at the publication of administrative reports alone, but also ensure interaction, clarification, and public involvement in the oversight process.

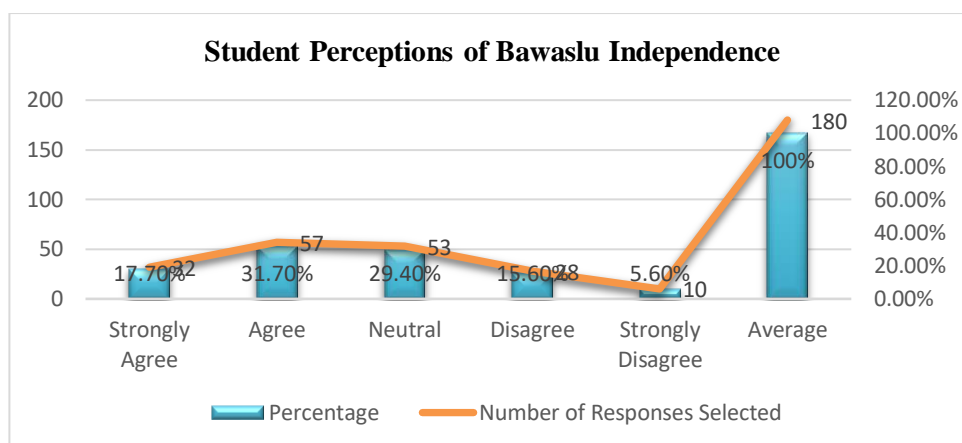
This is in line with the opinion of Sarwani et al. (2022), who state that transparency is not enough to simply convey administrative data, but must include clarity of process and active communication between institutions and the public. In other words, transparency must be two-way, not only providing information, but also listening, responding, and building trust through open communication. This view is reinforced by Jannah et al. (2022), who emphasize that the ability of institutions to provide accurate, complete, and easily accessible information is one of the main indicators in creating credible and accountable election monitoring.

Moreover, today's students live in a digital age that is highly dependent on the speed and openness of information through social media and online platforms. Therefore, their expectations of state institutions such as Bawaslu are also increasingly high. They demand that election monitoring information be accessible in real-time and presented in an attractive and easy-to-understand format. Fahrís et al. (2024) even emphasize the importance of implementing digital transparency, such as the direct publication of data from polling stations (TPS), as a concrete form of openness to the public. Initiatives such as this, if carried out seriously, can increase the younger generation's trust in the integrity of the election process and the performance of the supervisory agency.

Thus, the neutral data from students does not merely indicate doubt, but also signals the need to evaluate the public communication approach used by Bawaslu. A shift towards a more interactive, responsive, and technology-based model of transparency is essential so that the values of democracy and public participation can truly be felt by the younger generation as future voters and supervisors.

### **Student Perceptions of Bawaslu's Independence**

Independence is a key element for election supervisory agencies to carry out their duties neutrally and free from political pressure. Students' perceptions of the extent to which Bawaslu can maintain its independence in supervising the 2024 elections are crucial, given that students are a critical group that is highly sensitive to political dynamics and institutional integrity. The following data shows students' responses to aspects of Bawaslu's independence:



Based on the data obtained, 17.70% of respondents stated that they strongly agreed and 31.70% agreed that Bawaslu was independent. Thus, the total positive perception of students regarding Bawaslu's independence was 49.40%. However, 29.40% of students stated they were neutral, 15.60% stated they disagreed, and 5.60% stated they strongly disagreed. When added together, 50.60% of respondents doubted or did not fully believe in Bawaslu's independence, either because they were neutral or because they disagreed.

This finding indicates that independence is the aspect most questioned by students compared to other indicators such as transparency and performance. The high number of respondents who chose neutral indicates that there are still many students who are not yet convinced or do not have enough information to assess whether Bawaslu is truly carrying out its role independently and free from the influence of certain parties. This should be a serious concern, because independence is the main foundation for carrying out election monitoring functions objectively and fairly.

As an educated group, students naturally have high expectations for the independence of supervisory institutions. When the majority of them doubt this, it can be interpreted as a gap between what state institutions should be doing and the perception formed by the public. The neutral attitude shown by nearly one-third of respondents reflects doubt, skepticism, or even ignorance about the internal workings of Bawaslu, particularly regarding how they make decisions in complex political situations that are often fraught with pressure.

In the dynamic political context of Indonesia, suspicion of intervention by political parties, powerful actors, or certain elites in supervisory institutions is not uncommon. Students who actively follow political issues through social media or news reports tend to be more critical in assessing the independence of state institutions. Moreover, in some cases, such as the Constitutional Court's decision regarding the re-vote (PSU) in 24 regions (Sitorus, 2025), there is a perception among the public that the supervisory function carried out by

Bawaslu is ineffective and does not reflect the independence that it should have. Issues such as this can shape negative opinions and reinforce the perception that Bawaslu is vulnerable to external intervention.

As explained by Simanjuntak (2016), independence is a key requirement for election supervisory agencies to be free from political interference and able to fully carry out their democratic functions. The students' hesitant assessment reflects concerns about Bawaslu's impartiality in the face of pressure from political parties, the government, and certain elites. These concerns are even more relevant if there are no strong internal and external oversight mechanisms to maintain the integrity of the institution.

From an institutional theory perspective, independence is not only measured by the neutrality of individual Bawaslu members in carrying out their duties, but also concerns systemic structures such as transparent recruitment processes, funding sources that are free from interference by interested parties, and independence in decision-making that is not influenced by political pressure. Surbakti et al. (2008) state that independent institutions must be guaranteed legally and constitutionally in order to truly be able to carry out their democratic mandate with high credibility. Without such guarantees, institutions such as Bawaslu will easily lose public trust.

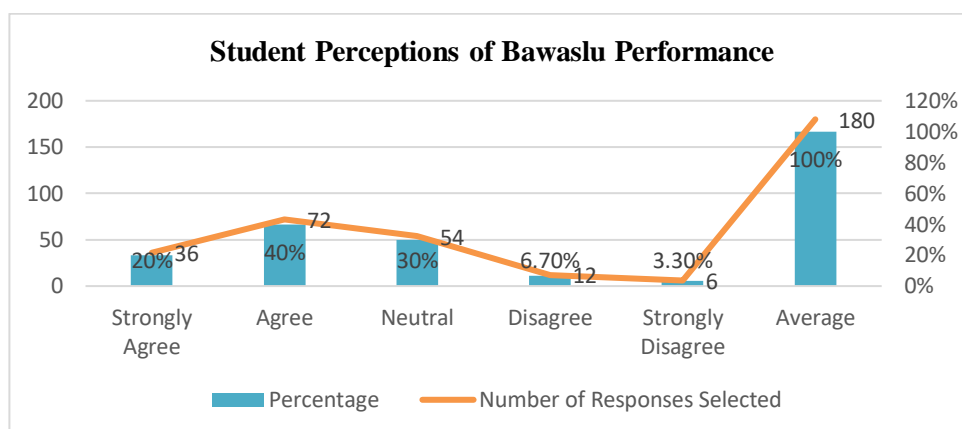
Especially for the group of students who declared themselves neutral (29.4%), it is important to understand that they are a group that is somewhere between believing and doubting. This means that they are a group that can potentially be convinced through political education, policy transparency, and wider access to information about how Bawaslu maintains its independence. Therefore, efforts to improve students' political literacy are needed so that they not only know the formal role of Bawaslu, but also understand how the *checks and balances* mechanism works in maintaining the integrity of election supervisory institutions in Indonesia.

By providing clear access to information, continuous public education, and transparency in every decision-making process, Bawaslu can rebuild public trust, especially among students as the next generation of democracy. Without trust in the independence of institutions, the legitimacy of election results will continue to be questioned and public participation in democracy will become increasingly weak.

### **Student Perceptions of Bawaslu's Performance**

Bawaslu's performance in carrying out its functions of supervising, enforcing, and preventing election violations is crucial to the legitimacy of election results. Therefore, it is

important to examine how students assess the effectiveness and seriousness of Bawaslu in carrying out its duties during the 2024 elections. The following is a tabulation of student responses to Bawaslu's performance:



Based on the results, 40% of respondents stated that they agreed and 20% of respondents stated that they strongly agreed with Bawaslu's performance, so that a total of 60% of students assessed that this institution had a positive performance in election supervision. On the other hand, 30% of respondents chose Neutral, 6.70% Disagree, and 3.30% Strongly Disagree. Although the majority of students showed confidence in Bawaslu's performance, there were still 40% of respondents who did not give a positive assessment, either because they were unsure or because they considered Bawaslu's performance to be below expectations.

These findings indicate that students' perceptions of Bawaslu's performance are relatively good, but not yet completely solid. The significant proportion of students who chose Neutral (30%) is an important indication that there is a significant group that does not yet have full confidence in the effectiveness of Bawaslu's work. This may be due to the lack of direct interaction between students and Bawaslu's supervisory activities or the limited information they have about the achievements and obstacles faced by this institution in carrying out its duties. As part of the younger generation with high expectations of the democratic system, students naturally want election supervision that is not only active but also open, measurable, and oriented towards electoral justice.

The performance that was rated positively by the majority of respondents was most likely influenced by Bawaslu's visible presence in the public sphere, whether through mass media, social media, or direct activities such as seminars, public dialogues, or open monitoring in the field. Bawaslu's presence in various forums, especially those involving the academic community, can give the impression that this institution is carrying out its

supervisory role in a concrete manner. However, there is still room for improvement, especially in terms of reaching student groups who do not yet fully understand the process and results of this institution's work.

The neutral attitude of 30% of respondents may also reflect that communication of Bawaslu's work has not optimally reached young voters. Students who do not have direct experience with the oversight process or have never accessed official information from Bawaslu tend to be neutral because they feel they lack a basis for assessment. In other words, this neutrality is not an indicator of satisfaction, but rather a reflection of a lack of literacy or involvement in the performance of the election oversight agency.

The 10% of respondents who stated Disagree and Strongly Disagree are a minority group who may have seen Bawaslu's weaknesses firsthand, whether in terms of its indecisive actions against violations, lack of supervision at the regional level, or allegations of bias. This group may be more critical because they have direct experience, follow news about election violations, or even participate in campus political activities. They may feel that Bawaslu is still symbolic, only present procedurally, but has not had a real impact in ensuring electoral justice.

As explained by Mu'in et al. (2021), the main indicators in assessing Bawaslu's performance include the extent to which this institution responds to reports of violations quickly and appropriately, takes firm action against violations, builds coordination with other institutions, and is able to resolve election disputes fairly and transparently. In this context, trust in Bawaslu's performance will be established if the public, including students, can see an open work process, tangible results, and firmness in enforcing the rules.

Furthermore, Kondoy et al. (2024) note that some members of the public still view Bawaslu as an ineffective institution, one that tends to be merely symbolic and lacks decisiveness in dealing with violations committed by major political actors. This view may influence the perceptions of students, especially those who obtain information from critical media or from actual political events that reveal the weakness of oversight enforcement.

From the perspective of perception theory, as stated by Judge and Robbins (2017), perceptions are formed from a combination of direct experience, individual attitudes, and information received. Students who have had negative experiences with Bawaslu's performance, or who obtain critical information through social media and news reports, are likely to give lower ratings, even if these are not entirely based on objective empirical data. Therefore, it is important for Bawaslu to establish more open communication, provide easily accessible performance data, and actively reach out to young people so that their perceptions

are not solely shaped by incomplete secondary information.

By increasing performance transparency, expanding student political literacy, and providing a forum for dialogue between Bawaslu and the academic community, it is hoped that positive perceptions of this institution can continue to be strengthened. Students, as the intellectual generation and first-time voters, have an important role in safeguarding the integrity of democracy, and their perceptions of the election supervisory agency will greatly determine long-term public trust.

### **Student perceptions as a group of young voters**

The perception of students as a young voter group and agents of change is a reflection of the quality of electoral democracy in Indonesia. These findings show that although Bawaslu is considered quite good in terms of transparency and performance, there are major concerns about its independence. These three indicators are very important to maintain because they are interrelated: transparency strengthens accountability, performance strengthens trust, and independence ensures legitimacy.

For Bawaslu, these results can be used as material for institutional evaluation, particularly in increasing public participation in oversight, increasing the involvement of young voters, and improving public communication mechanisms. For the academic world, this research reinforces the important role of students in democracy and the urgency of campus-based political education.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of this research, several important points can be concluded as follows:

The majority of students perceive Bawaslu's transparency as quite good, with 59.9% of respondents agreeing and strongly agreeing that Bawaslu has carried out its supervisory functions openly. However, 26.7% of respondents remain neutral, and a small percentage (13.4%) consider Bawaslu to be non-transparent. These findings reflect that although Bawaslu is generally considered open, there is still room to improve information disclosure and public access, particularly in terms of institutional communication and the use of information technology.

Perceptions of Bawaslu's independence show a lower tendency compared to other indicators. Only 49.4% of students agreed and strongly agreed that Bawaslu is independent, while the rest (50.6%) were neutral or disagreed. This indicates considerable doubt among

students regarding Bawaslu's freedom from political intervention and the interests of certain parties. Therefore, strengthening Bawaslu's integrity and internal mechanisms to ensure absolute neutrality is very important.

The performance of Bawaslu was generally viewed positively by students, with 60% of respondents agreeing and strongly agreeing with Bawaslu's effectiveness in carrying out its duties. However, 30% of respondents remain neutral, and 10% give a negative assessment. This shows that although Bawaslu is perceived as quite active and responsive in carrying out its supervisory role, its presence and performance are not yet fully known or felt by some young voters.

Overall, these three indicators show that students have a moderate to high level of trust in Bawaslu, but this is accompanied by a fairly high level of caution and criticism, especially regarding its independence. This reflects the character of students as an educated and critical group, who assess state institutions not only based on their performance, but also on the integrity and transparency of their processes.

These findings show that students' perceptions are influenced not only by direct experience, but also by expectations, information from the media, and public narratives about the performance of election supervisory institutions. Therefore, it is important for Bawaslu to not only work substantively, but also actively communicate its performance transparently and participatively to the public, especially young voters.

The weakness of this study lies in the limited number of respondents, who only came from one university, so the results cannot be fully generalized to all students in Indonesia. In addition, the research instrument was only a closed-ended Likert scale questionnaire, so it was not able to explore in depth the reasons and subjective experiences of students.

Recommendations for further research include expanding the scope of respondents from various universities in different regions in order to obtain a more representative picture. The next study is also recommended to combine quantitative methods with interviews or FGD (Focus Group Discussion), so that it can explore students' perceptions more deeply. Thus, the study of students' perceptions of Bawaslu will be more comprehensive and useful as policy input in strengthening the quality of electoral democracy in Indonesia.

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