

Politicos: Jurnal Politik Dan Pemerintahan



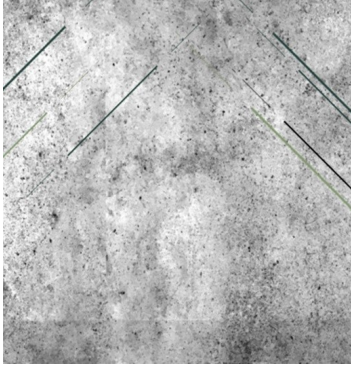
ISSN PRINT : 2776-8031
ISSN ELECTRONICS : 2776-8023

Volume 4, Number 2, 2024

ISSN: 2776-8031 (Print) | 2776-8023 (Electronics)

Publication details, Including author guidelines

Visit URL: <https://www.ejournal.warmadewa.ac.id/index.php/politicos/onlinesubmissionandauthorguideline>



Boosting Novice Voters: Strategy of the Independent Election Commission for the 2024 General Election in West Aceh District

Alfi Mansyur, Vellayati Hajad

Universitas Teuku Umar, Meulaboh, Indonesia.

Article History

Received : July 01, 2024

Revised : August 05, 2024

Accepted : August 07, 2024

Published : August 30, 2024

How to cite this article (APA)

Mansyur, A., & Hajad, V. (2024). Boosting Novice Voters: Strategy of the Independent Election Commission for the 2024 General Election in West Aceh District. *Politicos: Jurnal Politik Dan Pemerintahan*, 4(2), 80-92. <https://doi.org/10.22225/politicos.4.2.2024.80-92>

Universitas Warmadewa (as publisher) makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications. However, we make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors and are not the views of or endorsed by Universitas Warmadewa. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Universitas Warmadewa shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to, or arising out of the use of the content.

Politicos: Jurnal Politik Dan Pemerintahan is published by Universitas Warmadewa comply with [the Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing](#) at all stages of the publication process. Politicos: Jurnal Politik Dan Pemerintahan also may contain links to web sites operated by other parties. These links are provided purely for educational purpose.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](#).

Boosting Novice Voters: Strategy of the Independent Election Commission for the 2024 General Election in West Aceh District

Alfi Mansyur, Vellayati Hajad*

Universitas Teuku Umar, Meulaboh, Indonesia.

Abstract

This comprehensive study examines the strategies employed by the Independent Election Commission (IEC) to boost the participation of novice voters in the pre-election phase leading up to the 2024 General Election in West Aceh District. Novice voters aged 17 to 21 play a significant role in measuring electoral efficacy and vitality. Recognized by political stakeholders, their engagement affects the electoral landscape due to their diverse characteristics and challenges compared to previous generations, such as lack of interest, awareness, knowledge, and apathy. So, this research was carried out to analyze the strategies used by the IEC towards novice voters. This study adopts David's (2004) strategy theory in strategic management, which includes formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Conducted in West Aceh Regency, this study examines the initiatives and challenges of the IEC in engaging novice voters. Through careful empirical data analysis, this study aims to improve the electoral process and consolidate democracy in Indonesia. The research findings reveal insights into the effectiveness of the IEC's strategies and highlight areas for improvement. This study provides valuable insights for future election planning, encouraging more equitable and inclusive practices. However, several problems in its implementation need to be resolved, mainly the need for more human resources and budget.

Keywords: Novice Voters; Independent Election Commission (IEC); Electoral Participation; Electoral Strategy; Democracy Norms

Introduction

Novice voters are citizens or voters registered by the general election organizer in the voter list who participate in election activities for the first time and give their voting rights with an age range of 17-21 years (Rahman, 2018). This group of voters is an essential group of voters because the participation of this group is an indicator of the success of holding general elections (Widodo et al., 2018). Novice voters are also an important and significant influence on implementing general elections, which prospective leaders and political parties should know (Nur Wardhani, 2018). This group of novice voters has many roles in organizing general elections, and it is a new generation of voters with diverse characteristics, backgrounds, experiences, and challenges that are different from the previous generation (Fathurokhman, 2022).

The Independent Election Commission (IEC) is a general election organizing institution responsible for organizing elections from the preparation stage to the vote-counting stage (Risपालman & Mukhlizar, 2021). The IEC is the general election organizing institution at the regional level, especially Aceh Province, by the authority stated in the Law. In contrast, this institution is called the General Election Commission (KPU) at the national level. This commission is a general election organizing institution with an independent and non-partisan position, so there is no hierarchy among general election organizers or government organizations where this commission is accountable to the Provincial Regional Representative Council (Wisma, 2017).

*Corresponding author: Vellayati Hajad. Universitas Teuku Umar, Melaboh, Indonesia.
Alue Peunyareng, Kec. Meureubo, Kab. Aceh Barat, Provinsi Aceh 23615, Indonesia
Email: vellayati.hajad@utu.ac.id

So far, research on novice voters has talked a lot about factors inhibiting novice voters' participation in general elections, namely busyness, the influence of the family environment, and a feeling of inability to participate in political activities (Loader et al., 2016). In recent years, there has been growing concern about novice voters' political awareness and engagement. Some attribute this lack of awareness to the busyness and self-centeredness of students, causing them to overlook their rights and obligations as citizens (Street et al., 2012). Others argue that the low political awareness among novice voters is primarily due to their high levels of ego and self-interest, which hinder them from fully understanding the importance of participating in general elections. However, it is important to consider that political awareness and engagement among novice voters can be influenced by various factors. For example, popular culture can play a significant role in connecting with and engaging undergraduate students in politics (Ross & Rivers, 2017).

The concept of boosting novice voter participation focuses on strategies and initiatives aimed at increasing the participation and involvement of new voters in the electoral process. Novice voters may not have a deep understanding of elections and democracy. Therefore, targeted efforts are needed to educate and motivate them to participate actively in elections. In the context presented, the research highlights some challenges novice voters face. One is a lack of understanding; new voters may not fully understand the election process or the importance of democracy (Hajad & Ikhsan, 2019; Islah et al., 2020). In addition, some parties see first-time voters as apathetic, showing little interest in politics (Farisi & Maulana, 2020). There is also an opinion that first-time voters have less interest in politics, which causes lower participation rates (Mursyid & Larissa, 2021). On the other hand, novice voters are considered to need more preparation, which causes doubts among them, so they tend not to participate in the election process (Lestari & Arumsari, 2018).

To overcome this problem, the General Election Commission (GEC) strategy in boosting the participation of novice voters is essential. By GEC Regulation Number 9 of 2022 concerning Community Participation in Elections and the Election of Governors and Deputy Governors, Regents, and Deputy Regents, as well as Mayors and Deputy Mayors, the GEC is responsible for overcoming problems faced by novice voters, such as low political education and lack of interest in politics. These strategies may include educational campaigns, which provide information about the election process, the importance of voting, and the role of elected officials. Additionally, engagement initiatives can be undertaken by creating platforms and events where first-time voters can learn about political issues, meet candidates, and engage in discussions.

Support systems are also critical, offering resources and assistance to help novice voters understand the voting process, such as guides on registering and voting. Additionally, targeted messages using language and platforms that resonate with young audiences can capture their interest and motivate participation. By implementing these strategies, the GEC can ensure first-time voters become more informed, engaged, and ready to participate in elections, thereby increasing voter participation levels and strengthening the democratic process. In this context, the General Election Commission (GEC) or Independent Election Commission (IEC) is responsible for organizing elections and increasing public participation (Syafii et al., 2023). Novice voters or the general public can actively participate in elections by electing potential leaders and deputies, joining political parties as either cadres or witnesses. They can also be involved as implementing officers, such as being part of the Voting Organizing Group, Voting Committee, District Election Committee, and Election Supervisory Committee.

This research moves by using strategy theory according to David (2006) in Strategic Management, the strategy theory provides a systematic framework for analyzing this research. This theory emphasizes the importance of a unified, comprehensive, and integrated approach to achieving organizational goals. It outlines three critical stages: formulation, implementation, and evaluation, which are essential for guiding an organization or company toward its objectives (Ahadiat, 2010). In the context of this research, the formulation stage involves identifying the specific goals and objectives that the Independent Election Commission (IEC) aims to achieve, su-

ch as boosting the participation of novice voters. This stage includes designing strategic plans that outline how these objectives can be met. For instance, the IEC might develop programs targeting young and novice voters, focusing on education about the electoral process and the importance of democratic participation.

The implementation stage pertains to implementing the formulated strategies. This is where the theoretical plans are translated into practical steps, such as conducting educational campaigns, creating engagement initiatives, and providing resources to help novice voters understand the voting process. The research can explore how these strategies are executed on the ground, including the challenges faced and the methods used to overcome them. Finally, the evaluation stage involves assessing the outcomes of the implemented strategies. This stage is crucial for determining the effectiveness of the IEC's efforts in increasing novice voter turnout and engagement (Taufiqrokhman, 2016)

This research was conducted in West Aceh Regency, specifically at the Independent Election Commission (IEC). The Independent Election Commission (IEC) of Aceh Province was established in 2005 and is fully responsible for organizing the general elections that are being held (Risपालman & Mukhlizar, 2021). General elections in Indonesia have been held from 1955 to 2019. They are part of implementing popular sovereignty, which is held democratically, directly, publicly, freely, secretly, honestly, and somewhat in the process of selecting leaders or government officials by the citizens of a country. This general election aims to ensure that every citizen has the same opportunity to express their voting rights and determine the leader who will represent them in government to be able to listen to complaints in society.

Aceh is indeed one of the provinces in Indonesia; however, when holding general elections in Aceh, there are special regulations governing their implementation resulting from the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Helsinki in 2005 between the Free Aceh Movement and Indonesia at that time. The MoU resulted in a special autonomy law called Aceh Government Law (AGL), which also regulates the holding of general elections in Aceh Province. Therefore, the Aceh Independent Election Commission (IEC) has the authority to hold general elections for President/Vice President, members of the People's Representative Council, members of the Regional Representative Council, members of the Regional People's Representative Assembly, elections for Governor, Regent, and Mayor in Aceh Province. This commission was only formed in Aceh Province, so it differs from other provinces where general elections are held by the Regional General Election Commission (GEC). With the formation of this commission, it is hoped that the general election can carry out its vision well as an organizer who has integrity, is professional, independent, transparent, and accountable for creating quality democracy (Hayatullah & Sardini, 2022; Saefulloh et al., 2020; Winarno & Kumalasari, 2023).

In its implementation, this commission must be fair and equal in conveying information about general elections to the public (Muhammad, 2020). In general elections, there are several types of voter groups, one based on voters (Farisi & Maulana, 2020). These voters have a network base with comprehensive coverage, such as family bases, novice voters, women voters, voters with disabilities, marginalized people, religious communities, democracy volunteers, and internet citizens (Lubis et al., 2022). Among the many groups of voters, the one that is very interesting to discuss is the novice voters. This group is always in the spotlight when general elections are held. West Aceh Regency is included in the low number of novice voters (Huljanna & Ikhsan, 2022).

In the 2024 general election, based on data from the West Aceh Regency Independent Election Commission (IEC), the Permanent Voter List was determined to be 143,205 people, whereas in 2019, it was 133,692 people. The number of novice voters based on data from the West Aceh Regency IEC in the 2017 regional elections was 4,346 people. Meanwhile, in the 2024 general election, based on IEC data from West Aceh Regency, the number of novice voters or Gen Z aged 17 to 26 years was around 10,188 people. The number has increased significantly in the last 5 years, with the number of men being 5,103 and women being 5,085. This number is very small compared to the total number of new voters at the national level, which is 25 million people aged 17 to 25.

Based on the data and problems during the general election, research is exciting and vital. This will affect the success of holding general elections and the number of voters participating in the upcoming 2024 general election. It is also hoped that this can improve the quality of democracy and the implementation of general elections in Indonesia (Pamungkas et al., 2021). Looking at the description of the problem, the formulation of this research problem is the strategy of the Independent Election Commission (IEC) in increasing the participation of novice voters in the pre-2024 general election stage in West Aceh Regency. This research aimed to determine the strategies used by the Independent Election Commission to increase the participation of novice voters in the pre-2024 general election stage in West Aceh Regency.

Method

This study employs qualitative research methods with a case study approach, which aligns with Yin's (1992) perspective. This approach is deemed appropriate for research that poses "why" and "how" questions (Pahleviannur et al., 2022). The focus of this study is to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies employed by the Independent Election Commission (IEC) of West Aceh District to boost the participation of novice voters in the run-up to the 2024 General Election.

The data sources in this research comprise both primary and secondary data. Primary data is gathered through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The technique for collecting informants utilizes purposive sampling, which involves selecting informants based on the research objectives and their relevance to the topic under study. The informants in this research is the Independent Election Commission of West Aceh District and the community, particularly novice voters. Direct observation was conducted on the IEC 's political socialization and education activities. This observation aims to understand firsthand the efforts made by the IEC to increase first-time voter participation. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with IEC officials, staff, and novice voters to obtain detailed insights into the strategies implemented and the responses of novice voters to these efforts. The documentation collected includes official IEC documents, activity reports, and other relevant publications, providing additional context and supporting findings from observations and interviews.

Once the data was collected, data analysis was conducted through the stages proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), which include data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involved sorting and selecting data relevant to the research focus while eliminating irrelevant data. Data display was carried out in descriptive narratives, tables, or diagrams that facilitate understanding of research findings. This presentation aids in identifying patterns, relationships, and key findings from the data. The final stage is conclusion drawing, where conclusions are based on consistent and significant findings that emerge during the analysis process. The validity of the conclusions is tested through data triangulation, comparing findings from various data sources (observations, interviews, and documentation). This approach allows researchers to explore the specific context of West Aceh District in depth, ensuring that the findings have high practical relevance for improving the quality of future electoral processes. With this research methodology, the study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the IEC's strategies to increase novice voters participation and the factors influencing it. The case study approach used enables researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the specific local dynamics and identify best practices that can be adopted to enhance first-time voter participation in elections.

Results

The strategy implemented by the Independent Election Commission (IEC) to boost the participation of novice voters in the 2024 pre-election stage in West Aceh Regency is well contextualized within the Strategic Management theory proposed by David (2006). This comprehensive strategy involves three main phases: formulation, implementation, and evaluation. These stages are essential in guiding an organization, such as the IEC, to achieve its long-term go-

als (Amida et al., 2024; Saefulloh et al., 2020). By applying David's strategic management theory, the IEC can systematically plan, implement, and evaluate its efforts to increase the participation of novice voters. This structured approach not only boosts the strategy's effectiveness but also ensures that the strategy contributes to the overall success of the 2024 general election in West Aceh Regency.

In this democratic contestation, of course, there are targets set in its implementation, such as increasing voter participation (Moeller et al., 2014). For the 2024 general election, the voter participation rate is targeted at around 81 percent. However, many influencing factors prevent voters from participating. In its implementation, there are many groups of voters, one of which is the novice voters. These new voters are a group of apathetic voters who need more political understanding, political awareness, and political interest (Zeglovits & Aichholzer, 2014). Therefore, the group of novice voters whose population is more than 50 percent of the total voters registered as voters in general elections must receive attention by making efforts to overcome these inhibiting factors.

Current State of Defense Infrastructure in the Ibu Kota Nusantara Area

The strategy formulation stage involves developing specific plans and approaches to achieve organizational goals. In the West Aceh Regency Independent Election Commission (IEC) context, this stage involves identifying and designing strategies to boost public participation in the general election, focusing on engaging novice voters. This strategy is formulated based on an analysis of the needs and preferences of the target audience, aiming to effectively increase voter participation and political awareness among new voters. The Independent Election Commission (IEC) of West Aceh Regency is a part of the General of Election Commission (GEC), which has duties and authorities, one of which is boosting public participation in holding general elections, especially novice voters.

In this case, there are several strategies used by IEC West Aceh Regency to increase the participation of novice voters, namely carrying out outreach activities, disseminating information through social media, partnering with several parties, holding games and quizzes, distributing brochures, and carrying out Focus Group Discussion. In carrying out outreach activities to provide voter or political education to novice voters, there is a unique program called the IEC Goes to School and Goes to Campus. This can be seen through the statement from the Head of the Technical Subdivision of Election Organizers, Participation and Public Relations of IEC in a research interview who stated that: "Regarding novice voters, we have created many programs such as outreach, the first of which we directly go to campuses, which we routinely carry out in schools." (Interviewed, Andi Sayumitra, 2024).

The outreach program aims to increase voter awareness, knowledge, understanding, and voter interest and change the apathy of novice voters. This group of novice voters are citizens exercising their right to vote for the first time (Rahman, 2018). So, the voter or political education carried out by IEC for the community, especially novice voters, is to make voters aware of politics and its developments, which can impact the future of the Indonesian nation. Therefore, this outreach activity is an effort to educate voters in general. This can be seen through the statement from Cici Darmayanti, the Chairman of IEC of West Aceh Regency in an interview who stated that:

"In general, novice voters are said to be the first to choose when they can have voting rights, namely aged 17 years and over. So there is a need for socialization for voters because it is their first time, they cannot determine the criteria for the legislative candidates they choose, right, especially how to identify legislative candidates, be smart in choosing whether they are voting at the invitation of their family or self-awareness. So socialization is very important, it's worth not choosing the leader, we have to educate about things like that." (Interviewed, Cici Darmayanti, 2024).

In the socialization activities, the IEC held games and quizzes, which were also an effort to overcome the problems among novice voters. Novice voters are known as a group with low interest in matters related to politics, one of which is general elections. Therefore, to attract their

interest, games, and quizzes are carried out to create a sense of interest in them regarding politics and the like with methods and approaches that adapt to the character of potential voters. Another effort carried out by the IEC to increase voter participation, especially among novice voters, is by massively disseminating information through social media or online (Stier et al., 2018). Disseminating information regarding holding general elections via social media is an effective way to reach novice voters in the current era, where smartphones are dominant. Then, to reach the wider community more evenly, especially novice voters, the IEC is trying to partner with several other parties besides schools and campuses, such as women's organizations, religious leaders, the National and Political Unity Agency, and mass media. The mass media partners that disseminate information and educate voters regarding the general election are Radio of the Republic of Indonesia Meulaboh and Haba Aceh Barat.

The efforts planned and implemented by the IEC can enable groups of novice voters and the public to participate in holding general elections. Holding general elections is called political participation, which is the participation of citizens as voters who play an active role in political activities. Voters' expected participation is active participation in which they take part in selecting potential leaders, participate in political party activities, become party witnesses, and provide input and criticism to potential leaders and political developments in Indonesia. Holding general elections is an important matter which aims to form a democratic government by obtaining the support of the people in realizing national goals by the law. Holding this general election is a form of implementation of people's sovereignty, which is one of the objectives of the general election itself, carried out directly, publicly, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly. Public participation is one of the critical factors in holding general elections, especially novice voters, who make up 50 percent of the total voters in Indonesia for the 2024 general elections.

In order to increase community participation, especially among novice voters, IEC created a planning design for the goals to be achieved in holding the 2024 general election, which aims to overcome the factors that influence the group of novice voters not to participate. Therefore, IEC uses several strategies that are carried out with the potential and time they have. Especially the implementation of socialization activities, which is a form of providing voter or political education, which is a form of duty and authority of the IEC as a general election organizing institution, which is part of the GEC.

Strategy Implementation Stage

The strategy implementation stage is the phase in which the plans and strategies developed during the formulation stage are put into action. This stage focuses on executing the established strategies to achieve organizational objectives and address identified goals. In implementing the efforts made by the IEC to increase community participation, especially novice voters, the outreach activities were carried out in eleven segments with various methods and approaches that potential voters readily accepted. The implementation of socialization activities for novice voters with a unique program called IEC Goes to School. It Goes to Campus has been carried out by visiting schools and campuses in West Aceh Regency to provide education regarding holding general elections and other political matters.

The IEC has implemented a socialization activity program for novice voters to provide voter or political education. The IEC has visited 15 schools and recorded and published in the IEC information media. This is like the statement made by the Head of the Technical Subdivision of Election Organizers, Participation and Public Relations of IEC who said, "We already have several schools, we also have several campuses such as Universitas Teuku Umar (UTU), Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Dirundeng (STAIN Dirundeng), and Politeknik Kesehatan Meulaboh." The number of schools visited by the IEC is relatively tiny. This is because there are 94 schools with junior high, high school, and vocational school levels in West Aceh Regency. The inequality in implementing outreach activities to prospective voters is because the IEC needs more resources. Figure 1 shows the socialization activities carried out by the Independent Election Commission (IESC) at schools.



Figure 1. Socialization Activities by The Independent Commission Election (IEC) of West Aceh Regency

Source: Independent Election Commission's Instagram (2024)

The implementation of outreach activities for schools and campuses in West Aceh Regency was carried out directly by IEC. This activity was carried out by the Technical Election Organizer, Participation, and Public Relations section of the IEC. Apart from that, several other divisions in IEC also assisted in carrying out the socialization activities. This differs from several previous studies, where in other studies regarding novice voters, socialization activities were carried out by democracy volunteers recruited by the KPU/IEC in the area concerned. Recruited volunteers are given understanding and materials as educational materials, which are then conveyed to the public, especially novice voters. Previous research on novice voters was not all successful. However, the presence of volunteers can make the reach of the community or novice voters broader and more efficient. Therefore, to increase the participation of novice voters, the IEC is also partnering with several parties to reach a broad scope, provide education, and convey information regarding general elections.

The IEC disseminated massive amounts of information about general elections on social media to increase community participation, especially among novice voters. Social media provides exciting and up-to-date information expected to enlighten novice voters and the general public. Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, or, In this case, Instagram is a massive social media IEC of West Aceh uses to attract voters' interest and provide information about the general election. This can be seen from the statement in the interview:

"Then, we also encourage socialization on social media. There are many accounts, including Twitter, TikTok accounts, Facebook, and Instagram. If all media is used. Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook. The name everyone uses is the same: IEC of West Aceh." (Interviewed, T. Sulaiman, 2024).

In holding general elections, one of the influencing factors influencing novice voters not to participate is their need for more political interest. Therefore, besides carrying out quizzes and games during socialization activities, the IEC also carries out quizzes on Instagram to attract voters' interest in general elections and other political matters. Efforts to attract voters' interest in participating in general elections and other political matters are a positive thing carried out by the IEC. Quizzes that are given with rewards to those who take part are effective in getting potential voters to take part. After posting the quiz, the quiz carried out increased interaction between the community and IEC on the IEC of West Aceh's Instagram account. There are 80 comments in this post, more than in other posts, where sometimes there are only 1 to 5 comments per post. Even though the comparison between followers of the account and people who comment is quite large, and those who comment are not necessarily novice voters, this is one of the reasonable efforts made by IEC. Therefore, with the online quiz, followers of the IEC's Instagram account can find out about the questions given so that they gain new knowledge.

To increase community participation, especially among novice voters, the material and information presented by IEC aims to create intelligent and rational voters who can make their

own choices. Prospective voters are given an understanding of how to determine potential leaders by looking at their vision, mission, and track record. Apart from that, in the current era where the development of information technology is very massive, prospective voters must be able to determine which information is accurate and which is a hoax. Therefore, voter education is carried out as a form of responsibility of the IEC, which has authority over this matter. General elections are a means of realizing people's sovereignty through the largest democratic contestation in Indonesia. Of course, what is desired is success in its implementation. However, more concrete efforts must be made to overcome the factors that influence or hinder novice voters from actively participating in general elections. This is because, during the implementation of socialization activities, it was found that voters did not understand and were confused about politics. This was found especially among prospective voters who had particular educational backgrounds, such as nursing students who were health workers.

Therefore, voter education through outreach activities provides new understanding and knowledge and invites them to participate in using their voting rights. However, it also invites them to participate actively more than just using their voting rights: joining a political party, becoming a party witness, or being an organizing officer on election day. In its outreach activities, the IEC also explains material relating to general elections, democracy, the benefits of participating, the use of ethnic, religious, racial, and inter-group issues, money politics, and other politics-related matters to prospective voters. So, voter or political education is not just about inviting them to come and vote on the day of the general election; it is more than just that (Intyaswati et al., 2021; Ohme, 2019).

Implementing other efforts to reach a more comprehensive community coverage, IEC collaborates with several parties such as religious leaders, women's organizations, and mass media such as Radio of the Republic of Indonesia Meulaboh and Haba Aceh Barat. Distributing information is quite effective because specific figures in the community or organizations can disseminate information and encourage novice voters to attend the polling stations. Then, IEC, in creating intelligent voters, also carried out massive collaboration with the mass media, where the content created by packaging went through the feasibility verification stage by considering the education and information side. In this case, every citizen should be aware of political developments or other political activities to be informed in determining the future direction of the nation. So, whether at the student level or those who fall into the category of novice voters, there is a need for essential learning about politics to broaden the knowledge of potential voters. This can overcome novice voters with a low level of understanding, knowledge, awareness, and interest in politics by providing them with initial education through exceptional learning. So, the outreach activities carried out by IEC are not only inviting voters to participate but also using their voting rights. However, it also provides new knowledge to the public, especially novice voters, regarding general elections, participating as officers, and the like in holding general elections in the West Aceh Regency.

Evaluation Stage

This evaluation stage is related to the smooth and successful implementation of the efforts to achieve the desired goals. The socialization activities carried out by the IEC to increase the participation of novice voters went well and smoothly and were responded to well and openly by participating voters. Socialization activities are carried out using approaches that adapt to the character of voters, language that is easy to understand, and not too formal. So this made the participating voters interested in listening to the explanation given by the IEC and created a lively and interactive atmosphere for socialization activities. This was stated during an interview by the Head of the Technical Subdivision for Election Organizers, Participation, and Public Relations of IEC, who said there were no obstacles in the socialization process. The response received was very good.

During the socialization activities, the material and information were delivered directly by explaining and using power point to assist in presenting the material to novice voters. Then, in ed-

educating voters through outreach activities, potential voters feel the positive impact of the activities. They feel the benefits of the activities carried out and the addition of new knowledge about politics. This was conveyed by one of the Politeknik Kesehatan West Aceh students who said:

"I think this activity is good because I am also confused at the election time, how to vote. Besides, we in the health sector don't know much about politics. So thank God there are socialization activities." (Interviewed, Ulfa, 2024).

This is felt especially by prospective voters who have yet to study politics in general, such as those with special education in the health sector. One factor that also influences or hinders novice voters from participating is that they have difficulty making their choices and are confused about matters related to politics. Therefore, it is essential that voter education is carried out evenly and reaches all groups of novice voters. In implementing efforts to increase the participation of novice voters, the IEC had budget constraints, which were reduced late. The government's budget process for the IEC, which is given in stages, means there is no freedom to carry out planned activities. These obstacles will affect other activities that IEC wants to carry out. This is because the budget is significant to support the implementation of activities. As a result, developing novice voters' knowledge needed to be improved, and the reach of political education by the IEC became narrow to only twenty schools and colleges.

In conveying information to the community, the IEC also uses brochures, social media, and partnerships with several parties (Ohme et al., 2018). The distribution of brochures to the public coincides with any activities carried out by the IEC in various areas in the West Aceh Regency. Socialization activities are carried out by directly visiting schools and campuses and also being a resource person to provide material regarding general elections. Based on the interview results, implementing outreach activities to novice voters, which is the task and responsibility of the IEC, does not evenly reach all schools in West Aceh Regency. The limited human resources owned by IEC could be more effective and efficient in reaching all schools in the West Aceh Regency. In carrying out an activity, human resources are significant, which, if you have human resources with much capacity, will significantly influence the achievement of a goal you want to achieve as well as other resources. Your obstacles can hinder performance in the preparation process until the implementation of activities. This could be a future evaluation for IEC in carrying out activities such as forming materials-equipped groups.

Discussion

The Independent Election Commission (IEC) has formulated a comprehensive series of strategies to increase the participation of novice voters in the 2024 general election in West Aceh. The importance of these efforts must be considered, considering that novice voters, who comprise more than 50% of the total voting population, often demonstrate low political awareness and minimal interest in the political process. Therefore, the IEC is committed to overcoming this challenge through a structured and innovative approach: strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation.

Strategy formulation is the first step in the IEC's efforts to increase the participation of novice voters. Based on David's (2006) strategic management theory, the IEC started by designing initiatives to effectively engage novice voters. One of its flagship programs is "IEC Goes to School" and "IEC Goes to Campus," which focuses on educational outreach in schools and universities. Through this program, the IEC seeks to increase political knowledge and awareness among students. Apart from that, IEC also utilizes social media such as Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and Facebook to disseminate information. This use of social media is driven by the high use of smartphones among novice voters, making it easier to access information and increase interaction. Collaboration with various institutions, such as schools, universities, women's organizations, religious figures, and local media, such as RRI Meulaboh and Haba Aceh Barat, is essential to IEC's strategy to expand its reach. The IEC also uses interactive methods such as quizz-

es and games during outreach activities and on social media to make political learning more exciting and fun for novice voters. Educational materials such as brochures are distributed to strengthen the information presented during outreach activities (Schäfer et al., 2020).

Strategy implementation involves translating formulated plans into concrete actions. IEC actively visits schools and universities to hold interactive sessions to clarify the electoral process and political participation. Despite limited resources, the IEC managed to visit 15 schools, although this number still needs to be more extensive compared to 94 regional educational institutions. Campaigns on social media are the backbone of IEC's efforts to engage novice voters. Through these platforms, the IEC offers the latest updates and interactive content to maintain the interest and engagement of novice voters (Bhatti & Hansen, 2012). Collaboration with various stakeholders is also strengthened to ensure a broader and more effective reach. These stakeholders include educational institutions, religious organizations, and the media, all of whom educate and motivate novice voters. Interactive methods such as quizzes and games are used offline during school visits and online via social media to engage voters and make political education more interesting. Online quizzes, especially on Instagram, have been proven to increase interaction and engagement (Aldrich et al., 2016).

The evaluation stage aims to assess the effectiveness and impact of the implemented strategies. Key results show that the outreach activities were well received by the targeted audience, indicating increased interest and understanding among novice voters. Despite this, the IEC faces significant challenges, such as funding delays and limited human resources, which hinder the broader implementation of their initiatives. Limited budgets limit the scope and reach of their programs, requiring efficient resource allocation and strategic prioritization. The use of interactive methods shows positive results. Engagement on social media is increasing, with quizzes on platforms like Instagram generating substantial engagement. This shows that the strategy implemented effectively attracts novice voters' attention and encourages their participation (Intyaswati et al., 2021). Continuous participant feedback helps the IEC refine and adapt its strategy to meet novice voters' needs and preferences better. The interactive nature of outreach programs has encouraged a more dynamic and responsive approach to voter education.

The strategic initiative undertaken by the IEC aims to transform novice voters into informed and active participants in the democratic process. Despite promising initial results, ongoing challenges such as limited resources highlight the need for better support and collaboration. These efforts are essential for building a politically aware and engaged electorate, which is crucial to the success of the 2024 elections and the broader democratic process in Indonesia. The IEC approach emphasizes the importance of targeted voter education and engagement, especially for novice voters, who represent a significant portion of the electorate. By utilizing modern communication tools and collaborative efforts, the IEC seeks to overcome barriers to political participation and ensure a more inclusive and representative democratic process. IEC's efforts are increasing voter participation and building the foundations for a more robust and sustainable democratic future in West Aceh and Indonesia in general.

Conclusion

Based Based on the research on the strategies of the Independent Election Commission (IEC) to boost the participation of novice voters in the pre-election phase of the 2024 general elections in the West Aceh Regency, it can be concluded that the IEC West Aceh Regency is putting the IEC Goes to School and Goes to Campus campaigns into action to boost the involvement of novice voters. IEC has taken significant steps to boost novice voter participation. The IEC's strategies include socialization through the IEC Goes to School and IEC Goes to Campus programs, Forum Group Discussions, partnerships with various stakeholders, the use of social media, interactive activities, and brochure distribution. These efforts have proven effective in boosting the interest and understanding of novice voters regarding political processes. Moreover, these initiatives are crucial for ensuring a representative and democratic electoral process, as the engagement of novice voters can significantly impact the overall voter turnout and the quality of democratic part-

icipation in West Aceh District. However, issues with its implementation need to be resolved, chief among them being the absence need of more human resources and budget. Addressing these challenges is essential to maximize these strategies' efficacy and foster a more inclusive and participatory election environment for the upcoming general election.

This study has several limitations that should be considered. First, the research is limited to one area, West Aceh Regency, so the results may need to be more generalizable to other regions in Indonesia. Second, the study does not directly measure the impact of each implemented strategy but focuses more on describing the strategies employed. Third, the data used in this research primarily comes from internal reports of the Independent Election Commission (IEC) and interviews, which may have certain biases. For future research, comparative studies in various regions are recommended to determine whether the same strategies can be effectively applied in different contexts. Additionally, experimental research that measures the direct impact of each strategy on increasing the participation of novice voters would provide deeper insights into the effectiveness of these strategies.

References

- Ahadiat, A. (2010). *Manajemen Strategik: Tinjauan Teoritikal Multiperspektif (Issue Strategic Management, Business Policy)*.
- Aldrich, J. H., Gibson, R. K., Cantijoch, M., & Konitzer, T. (2016). Getting out the vote in the social media era. *Party Politics*, 22(2), 165–178. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068815605304>
- Amida, T. L., Nababan, S., Widhiatmini, & Utomo, A. S. (2024). General Election Commission Public Communication Strategy in Increasing General Election Participation in Blitar. *MUKASI: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 3(1), 17–30. <https://doi.org/10.54259/mukasi.v3i1.2364>
- Bhatti, Y., & Hansen, K. M. (2012). Leaving the Nest and the Social Act of Voting: Turnout among First-Time Voters. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion & Parties*, 22(4), 380–406. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17457289.2012.721375>
- David, F. R. (2006). *Manajemen Strategis*. Salemba Empat.
- Farisi, M., & Maulana, R. Y. (2020). Peran Relawan Demokrasi (Relasi) Dalam Meningkatkan Partisipasi Pemilih Pada Pemilu 2019 di Provinsi Jambi. *Ganaya: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Humaniora*, 3(2), 363–378.
- Fathurokhman, B. (2022). Partisipasi Politik Pemilih Pemula Dalam Pemilihan Umum (Pemilu). *Journal of Research and Development on Public Policy (Jarvic)*, 1(1), 51–59. <https://doi.org/10.24114/jupiis.v10i1.8407>
- Hajad, V., & Ikhsan, I. (2019). Pendidikan Politik Bagi Pemilih Pemula di SMAN 1 Meureubo Kabupaten Aceh Barat. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat: Darma Bakti Teuku Umar*, 1(1), 19. <https://doi.org/10.35308/baktiku.v1i1.1237>
- Hayatullah, H., & Sardini, N. H. (2022). The integrity of election organizers in the 2020 simultaneous regional head elections in Sekadau Regency. *Jurnal Inovasi Ilmu Sosial Dan Politik (JISoP)*, 4(1), 107. <https://doi.org/10.33474/jisop.v4i1.15928>
- Huljanna, Y. M., & Ikhsan. (2022). Strategi Badan Kesatuan Bangsa dan Politik Kabupaten Aceh Barat Dalam Meningkatkan Partisipasi Politik Pemilih Pemula Di Kecamatan Johan Pahlawan. *INDEPENDEN: Jurnal Politik Indonesia Dan Global*, 3(2), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.24853/independen.x.x.xx-xx>
- Intyaswati, D., Maryani, E., Sugiana, D., & Venus, A. (2021). Using Media for Voting Decision among First-time Voter College Students in West Java, Indonesia. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 10(1), 327. <https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis-2021-0028>
- Islah, K., Juardi, J., & Nasim, E. S. (2020). Sosialisasi Pemilu 2019 Untuk Pemilih Pemula Kota Depok. *Jurnal Komunitas: Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 3(1), 46–50. <https://doi.org/10.31334/jks.v3i1.969>
- Lestari, E. Y., & Arumsari, N. (2018). Partisipasi Politik Pemilih Pemula Pada Pemilihan Walikota Semarang Di Kota Semarang. *Integralistik*, 29(1), 10. <https://doi.org/10.15294/integralistik.v29i1.14602>

- Loader, B. D., Vromen, A., & Xenos, M. A. (2016). Performing for the young networked citizen? Celebrity politics, social networking and the political engagement of young people. *Media, Culture & Society*, 38(3), 400–419. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443715608261>
- Lubis, I. A. R., Ramdan, A. T. M., & Wiryany, D. (2022). Politik Digital: Manifestasi Komunikasi di Era Digital. *Jurnal Lensa Mutiara Komunikasi*, 6(1), 193–206. <https://doi.org/10.51544/jlmk.v6i1.3064>
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. : Sage Publication. Sage Publication.
- Moeller, J., de Vreese, C., Esser, F., & Kunz, R. (2014). Pathway to Political Participation. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 58(5), 689–700. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764213515220>
- Muhammad, M. (2020). Realizing Accountability of General Election With Quality and Integrity Thru Transformation of The General Election System. *Proceedings of the Proceedings of the 1st Hasanuddin International Conference on Social and Political Sciences, HICOSPOS 2019*, 21–22 October 2019, Makassar, Indonesia. <https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.21-10-2019.2291520>
- Mursyid, S., & Larissa, D. (2021). Peran Kpu Dalam Meningkatkan Partisipasi Pemilih Pemula Pada Pilkada Kabupaten Bulukumba Perspektif Siyasa Syar'lah. *Siyasatuna: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Siyasa Syar'Iyyah*, 2(2), 442–453.
- Nur Wardhani, P. S. (2018). Partisipasi Politik Pemilih Pemula dalam Pemilihan Umum. *Jupiis: Jurnal Pendidikan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, 10(1), 57. <https://doi.org/10.24114/jupiis.v10i1.8407>
- Ohme, J. (2019). When digital natives enter the electorate: Political social media use among first-time voters and its effects on campaign participation. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, 16(2), 119–136. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2019.1613279>
- Ohme, J., de Vreese, C. H., & Albaek, E. (2018). The uncertain first-time voter: Effects of political media exposure on young citizens' formation of vote choice in a digital media environment. *New Media & Society*, 20(9), 3243–3265. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444817745017>
- Pahleviannur, M. R., Grave, A. De, Sinthania, D., Hafrida, L., Bano, V. O., & Saputra, D. N. (2022). Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif. In Pradina Pustaka.
- Pamungkas, S., Wardaningsih, A., & Simorangkir, D. (2021). The Development of "Generaksi.org", a Media and Politics Literacy Platform for Indonesia's First-time Voter. *Proceedings of the 1st ICA Regional Conference, ICA 2019, October 16-17 2019, Bali, Indonesia*. <https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.16-10-2019.2304330>
- Rahman, A. (2018). Konsep Dasar Pendidikan Politik bagi Pemilih Pemula. 10(1), 44–51.
- Rispalman, R., & Mukhlizar, M. (2021). Upaya Komisi Independen Pemilihan Kota Banda Aceh Dalam Memenuhi Aksesibilitas Bagi Penyandang Disabilitas Pada Pemilihan Umum. *Jurnal Justisia: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum, Perundang-Undangan Dan Pranata Sosial*, 6(2), 235. <https://doi.org/10.22373/justisia.v6i2.11539>
- Ross, A. S., & Rivers, D. J. (2017). Digital cultures of political participation: Internet memes and the discursive delegitimization of the 2016 U.S Presidential candidates. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 16, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2017.01.001>
- Saefulloh, S., Abdoellah, O. S., & R, M. (2020). Integritas Komisi Pemilihan Umum Kota Bandung Dalam Pelaksanaan Pemilihan Presiden Tahun 2019. *Jurnal Civic Hukum*, 5(1), 97. <https://doi.org/10.22219/jch.v5i1.10999>
- Schäfer, A., Roßteutscher, S., & Abendschön, S. (2020). Rising start-up costs of voting: political inequality among first-time voters. *West European Politics*, 43(4), 819–844. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2019.1638141>
- Stier, S., Bleier, A., Lietz, H., & Strohmaier, M. (2018). Election Campaigning on Social Media: Politicians, Audiences, and the Mediation of Political Communication on Facebook and Twitter. *Political Communication*, 35(1), 50–74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2017.1334728>
- Street, J., Inthorn, S., & Scott, M. (2012). Playing at Politics? Popular Culture as Political Engagement. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 65(2), 338–358. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pa/gsr037>

- Syafii, A., Elya Rohimi, U., Shobichah, S., Atikah, N., & Rani, P. (2023). Broadcasting Communications in Encouraging Public Participation in Elections. *Journal of World Science*, 2(4), 571–575. <https://doi.org/10.58344/jws.v2i4.256>
- Taufiqurokhman. (2016). *Manajemen Strategik* (Ipank, Ed.; 1st ed., pp. 1–134). Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik Universitas Prof. Dr. Moestopo Beragama.
- Widodo, Y., Gama, B., & Kusumastuti, H. S. (2018). Tingkat Partisipasi Politik Pemilih Pemula Faktor Penentu Keberhasilan Pemilu. *Seminar Nasional ...*, 7–11.
- Winarno, & Kumalasari, A. D. (2023). Integrity and Professionalism of Election Organizers to Realize The Reality of Democratic Elections (pp. 329–336). https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-148-7_27
- Wisma, H. (2017). Kesiapan KIP Aceh Dalam Penyelenggaraan Pilkada Serentak Tahun 2017 Hendra. *Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa FISIP Unsyiah*, 2, 1–11.
- Yin, R. K. (1992). The Case Study Method as a Tool for Doing Evaluation. *Current Sociology*, 40(1), 121–137. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001139292040001009>
- Zeglovits, E., & Aichholzer, J. (2014). Are People More Inclined to Vote at 16 than at 18? Evidence for the First-Time Voting Boost Among 16- to 25-Year-Olds in Austria. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*, 24(3), 351–361. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17457289.2013.872652>