

Selection of KPU and Bawaslu Members: Fit and Proper Test in the Perspective of Election Law and Meritocracy

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Abstract

Commission II of DPR RI plays a crucial role in selecting election organizers at the national level by conducting a fit and proper test (FPT) process. The decisions and mechanisms of the FPT process directly affect the integrity of the election results. This research aims to identify aspects of political recruitment that are applied in the design of the FPT for prospective members of the Indonesian KPU and Bawaslu for the 2022-2027 period using qualitative descriptive methods and data collection techniques through literature studies and interviews. The results show that there is a gulf between the candidacy (candidates' suitability) and selectorate (political actors) aspects, namely the involvement of political party members in the selectorate aspect, which leads to preferential selection guided by the interests of the political parties. In the technical and location aspect, the difficulty of access for candidates outside Jakarta, a lack of in-depth exposure to the FPT process, the absence of assessment instruments, and limited public involvement are obstacles in what should be a merit-based system in principle. This finding implies that the selected election organizers who are free from political interests are an anomaly in selection processes run by political institutions.

Keywords:

Fit and proper test; Commission II DPR RI; Political recruitment; KPU and Bawaslu selection.

INTRODUCTION

The integrity and credibility of elections highly depends on the independency and performance of election organizers (Catt et al., 2014; James et al., 2019; Norris & Grömping, 2019; van Ham & Garnett, 2019), because election organizers hold a crucial role in logistics management, rule and regulation formulation and carrying out elections with a commitment in integrity (Norris, 2017; OSISA, 2017).

Therefore, it is very important to create a democratic environment in the recruitment system of public servants (Linz, 2001). There are three forms of election organizers in many countries. Firstly, party-based organizers, chosen by political parties based on party consensus. Parties can nominate their cadres based on party quotas, or to non-party member experts in order to give non-partisan, neutral parties authority (López- Pintor, 2000).

Secondly, non-partisan organizers chose from their professional competencies and backgrounds from

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fields such as law and political sciences, background as a public figure, and political neutrality. However, in heavily politicized situations, said organizers could have connection to particular political parties or factions, and there is a possibility that said parties give the position to candidates by tying their affiliation to election management institutions (Catt et al., 2014; van Ham & Garnett, 2019). *Thirdly*, a mix of partisan and non-partisan organizers such as judges, civilians, academia, and public servants. These mixed organizers face many difficulties in decision making, for example during the 1999 Indonesian General Elections, organizers cannot ratify the elections' results because some small parties refuse to acknowledge the results, except if they are given seats they didn't win (Surbakti & Nugroho, 2015).

As time goes on the composition of election organizers in Indonesia changes continuously. According to Law No. 17 of 2017 regarding General Elections, election organizers, which are the Komisi Pemilihan Umum (KPU) and Badan Pengawas Pemilu (Bawaslu), must come from non-partisan. As independent organizations, KPU and Bawaslu's member recruitment process must be carried out independently (Catt et al., 2014; The International IDEA Handbook, 2006; López-Pintor, 2000).

The selection process for KPU and Bawaslu members is carried out by two entities, the Selection Team (Tim Seleksi) and Commission II of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI). *Firstly*, the Selection Team is given the authority to decide

and follow through with the process and the schedule of the selection in accordance with Law No. 7 of 2017 regarding Elections to name recommendations for the Top 14 KPU and Top 10 Bawaslu members. The selection process consists of registration, administration selection, written selection, initial psychological tests, medical tests, advanced psychological tests, and interviews. This team consists of 11 members appointed by President Joko Widodo by Presidential Decree No. 120/P of 2021 (presidenri.go.id, 2022). The membership consists of three elements, namely government, academics, and community leaders, including:

Table 1. Composition of the Selection Committee Membership

Name	Position	Category
Juri Ardiantoro	Chair of the Selection Committee	Government
Chandra M. Hamzah	Vice Chair of the Selection Committee	Community Figure
Bachtiar Baharuddin	Secretary	Government
Edward Omar Sharif	Member	Government
Airlangga Pribadi K.	Member	Academician
Hamdi Muluk	Member	Academician
Endang Sulastris	Member	Academician
I Dewa Gede Palguna	Member	Community Figure
Abdul Ghaffar Rozin	Member	Academician
Betti Alisjahbana	Member	Community Figure
Poengky Indarti	Member	Government

Source: Presidential Decree Number 120/P 2021

Secondly, Commission II DPR RI has the final authority to select 7 KPU and 5 Bawaslu members utilizing the FPT. Commission II has 55 members, namely 5

Chairmen of Commission including Ahmad Doli Kurnia Tandjung (Chairman/Golkar Faction) and Deputy Chairpersons consisting of Junimart Girsang (PDIP Faction), Saan Mustopa (Nasdem Faction), Luqman Hakim (PKB faction), and Syamsurizal (PPP faction). Meanwhile, its membership consists of 11 members of the PDIP faction, 7 members of the Gerindra faction, 6 members of the Golkar faction, 5 members of the Nasdem faction, 5 members of the PKB faction, 5 members of the Demokrat faction, 5 members of the PKS faction, 4 members of the PAN faction and 1 member of the PPP faction.

The authority possessed by these two institutions places Commission II with the most determining authority in selecting members of the KPU and Bawaslu RI, where its authority is greater than that of the Selection Team which only recommends names. Even though Commission II has the most decisive authority in matters of selection, the mechanism is no more detailed than that specified for the Selection Team as stated in Law No. 7 of 2017. This law mandates Commission II to carry out a FPT, but this regulation does not include a more detailed mechanism regarding stages, implementation schedule, and assessment instruments, so Commission II was given its authority to regulate the FPT design that will be used.

The stages determined by Commission II include presenting the vision and mission and a question and answer session with all members of the Commission held on February 14-16 2022. After the presentation on the third day was completed, Commission II will hold

an open plenary meeting to determine the 7 KPU members and 5 Bawaslu members elected through a consensus deliberation or voting mechanism. Although the mechanism design in place made by the Commission has referred to the merit aspect, considering the background of the membership of Commission II as representatives of political parties, this provides the potential for party interests to be inserted through very large authority in making recruitment designs for election organizers.

Moreover, as independent organizations, election organizers are often counter-intuitive to the limited integrity of elections (Birch, 2007; Norris, 2017). After the selection results for KPU and Bawaslu RI members for the 2022-2027 period of 7 KPU members including Betty Epsilon Idroos, Hasyim Asy'ari, Mochammad Afiffudin, Persadaan Harahap, Yulianto Sudrajat, Idham Holik, and August Mellaz, and 5 Bawaslu members including Lolly Suhenty, Rahmat Bagja, Totok Haryono, Puadi and Herwyn J.H. Malonda, several problems were found within the process of determining the selection of election organizers. Among them are the issues of selection transparency, women's representation, and strengthening political intervention which are still ignored by selectors, even though Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning Elections as a reference rule has regulated aspects to encourage transparency and public involvement. This includes requiring a minimum of 30 percent female representation in KPU and Bawaslu membership (Hafiz, 2022).

Before the FPT took place, a chain message circulated among journalists regarding the name lists of members of the Indonesian KPU and Bawaslu for the 2022-2027 period who were said to be selected (Kompas, 2022), indicating that the FPT was no longer a mechanism for assessing the members, because the candidate has been determined even before the FPT. The chain message stated that based on the agreement of the coalition parties, the candidate's names were released, also including their political party and community organization affiliations (Amirullah, 2022; Umam, 2024). KPU and Bawaslu members includes:

Table 2. List of KPU and Bawaslu Members

Name	Political Party Affiliation	Affiliation of Mass Organizations
KPU Members		
Persadaan Harahap	Golkar	HMI
Idham Holik	Nasdem	HMI
Betty Epsilon Idroos	Nasdem	HMI
August Mellaz	PDIP	GMKI
Yulianto Sudrajat	PDIP	GMNI
Mochammad Afifuddin	PKB	PMII
Hasyim Asy'ari	Gerindra	Ansor
Bawaslu Members		
Rahmat Bagja	Golkar	HMI
Lolly Suhenty	PKB	PMII
Totok Haryono	PDIP	GMNI
Herwyn J. H. Malonda	Nasdem	GMKI
Puadi	Gerindra	HMI

Source: Tempo.com

The results of the selection revealed the truth of the contents of the chain message, thus giving a signal that the FPT process was far from the meritocratic recruitment process which was aimed at achieving integrity and independence from the election organizers.

Moreover, the results show a map of close political and organizational affiliation of each member. This shows that there is an additional preference based on personal relationships of each member with the members of the DPR or political parties in terms of organizational membership and political interests. Said organizations are the Islamic Student Association (HMI), the Indonesian Islamic Student Movement (PMII), the Indonesian National Student Movement (GMNI), and the Indonesian Christian Student Movement (GMNI). These organizations are extra-campus student movement organizations that often dominate intracampus institutions and show a perceived affiliation to certain political parties (Husin, 2014).

The emergence of preferences based on personal relationships, specifically referring to certain mass organizations, indicates that Commission II has carried out acts of favoritism (Mungiu, 2006). Political favoritism occurs when political elites allocate resources and positions disproportionately to certain sub-groups (Golden & Min, 2013). In the context of political selection, previous studies mostly highlight favoritism based on ethnic similarities (Burgess et al., 2015; De Luca et al., 2018; *The Oxford Handbook of Electoral Systems*, 2018), regional or regional similarities (Aidt & Shvets, 2012; Fabre & Sangnier, n.d.; Fiva & Halse, 2016; Golden & Min, 2013), similarity of place of birth (Carozzi & Repetto, 2016; Hodler & Raschky, 2014), and the relationship of political elites with their constituents or partisans (Curto-Grau et al., 2018).

Favoritism also leads to political patronage practices which is still a major problem in political recruitments in new democratic countries like Indonesia. In Southeast Asia, political patronage is strongly linked with elitism, a structural principle growing in society (Blunt et al., 2012; Scott, 1972). These strong relationships and patronage used by Commission II creates a largely non-merit based process in an ideally democratic process mandated by Law No. 7 of 2017. Serious implications can happen due to weak efforts of regulatory change and reform in post-Reformation Indonesia (Perdana, 2016).

Commission II prefers candidates to have strong ideological and organizational ties with members of political parties. On the other hand, Chairman of Commission II, Ahmad Doli Kurnia Tanjung, also added that the selection process involves both objective and political considerations in the DPR itself and for each political party (dpr.go.id, 2022).

In the selection of KPU and Bawaslu members as central elections organizers, the authority given to the DPR is still too large because they are the final determinants of chosen members via FPT (Liany, 2016; Martini, 2019), including the lack of details in its selection process design in Law No. 7 of 2017, potentially making politically charged selections inevitable. Jimly Asshidiqie (2013) states that the general elections system designed by political elites will prioritize the interests of political elites, and formal political arenas will be the basis of legitimacy for dominant political powers in decision making processes.

This research will review the selection process of KPU and Bawaslu members, specifically in the FPT process by Commission II of DPR RI. Various researchers have provided studies of similar cases, for example a study by Valina Singka Subekti shows that the selection mechanism of KPU and Bawaslu members is more political in nature, especially after the Selection Team recommends names of 14 KPU and 10 Bawaslu candidates to the President to be assessed by Commission II of DPR RI. This political nature is the result of political preference that already determines who will be chosen by the DPR (Subekti, 2019).

A study conducted by Hurriyah, Delia Wildianti, and Fuadil Ulum of the selection process of KPU and Bawaslu RI members with a perspective of women's representation shows that the DPR almost completely does not use preferences that pushes the fulfillment of women's representation, and makes it extremely hard for women to be "champions" in the selection processes (Hurriyah et al., 2022). Rina Martini in her study also examines the selection contexts in Commission II, which shows that while the mechanism formulated by DPR has followed the appropriate regulations, there still are efforts to inject the interests of political parties (Martini, 2019).

These three studies have shown that the selection process design for KPU and Bawaslu members still provide a large opportunity for political interests influencing the process of selection. However, said studies are limited to mechanism analysis in the Selection

Team, and in the context of the FPT held by Commission II, still haven't provided a detailed examination of the FPT process, so the implementation of the election organizer recruitment design has not been fully answered.

The urgency for this research is to examine the FPT designed and carried out by Commission II of DPR RI and its implementation, in order to comprehensively understand the alignment of the process done by Commission II as mandated in Law No. 7 of 2017 regarding Elections, and its commitment in creating meritocratic recruitment system to produce election organizers with integrity and independence. This research will complement studies that have not been touched upon by previous researchers so that it can provide new knowledge in the context of the recruitment of election organizers in Indonesia at the central level.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The research questions in this article include:

1. How is the authority of Commission II DPR RI in the FPT members of the KPU and Bawaslu RI aligned with Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning Elections?
2. What is the FPT mechanism for the selection of KPU and Bawaslu RI members in Commission II DPR RI and its implications for meritocratic recruitment?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This article uses the Theoretical Framework of Political Recruitment and Its Implementation by Pippa Norris (1997) to analyze the selection process of KPU and Bawaslu Members for 2022-2027 by Commission II via the FPT mechanism designed in accordance with Law No. 7 of 2017 regarding Elections.

Pippa Norris (1997) provides four important aspects of political recruitment, including the selection of election organizers, which include:

- 1) Who are the candidates who will be selected (candidacy)?

The basic criteria for qualifications required in a recruitment formation, for example, education, experience, competence, integrity, and independence that candidates must possess.

- 2) Who are the selectors?

Includes entities that have the authority in political recruitment to carry out a series of selection activities and select candidates to be selected, for example, political parties, Special Selection Teams, or assigned Independent Bodies.

- 3) Where will candidates be selected?

This context includes political recruitment arenas whether geographical location, for example, certain electoral areas, institutional (in political parties or government institutions), or digital platforms.

- 4) How is the decision made to select selected candidates?

Includes mechanisms and procedures for decision-making to select selected candidates, which can be in the form of voting, achievement-based evaluation, interviews, or certain tests.

These four points refer to the integral elements of political recruitment. Each element plays an important role in recruiting suitable candidates with abilities and qualifications needed for the position on offer. Norris emphasizes the importance of meritocratic recruitment, namely by providing criterias and preferences based on track record and accomplishments for objective assessments. This can bring transparency and fairness to the selection process and avoid external influence or personal interests that disrupts the integrity of the process. In the context of political recruitment, said accomplishments can be professional achievements, experiences, and relevant skills from candidates, while track record refers to the candidate's consistency and contribution for their prior responsibilities.

RESEARCH METHOD

This writing uses a descriptive qualitative method to gain an in-depth understanding of the mechanism and implementation of the FPT design in the Selection of Indonesian KPU and Bawaslu Members for the 2022-2027 Period. In qualitative studies, research writing emphasizes interpretive aspects that include case, culture, and context (Miles et al., 2013; Neuman, 2014). The method used in this research is the case study method, namely in the form of an

intensive study of one unit to understand other similar units but within a wider unit scope (Gerring, 2006). This case study method aims to carefully explore programs, events, processes, or cases limited to a certain period and activities by collecting data comprehensively through various information collection procedures (Creswell, 2013). This research focuses on the FPT case in the selection of Indonesian KPU and Bawaslu members for the 2022-2027 period.

Data collection will be carried out by primary and secondary data collection (Creswell, 2014). Secondary data are collected from library research, including studies of electoral regulations, political party regulations, Selection Team decisions, Commission II decisions, print and electronic media, and literature reviews of prior research. Primary data collection is conducted via in-depth interviews from relevant informants, including members of Commission II, Elections Expert Staff of Commission II, Faction Expert Staff of Commission II, and participants of the selection process for KPU and Bawaslu Members for 2022-2027.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The authority of Commission II DPR RI in the FPT and its alignment with Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning Elections

The election organizers in Indonesia, in reference to Law No. 7 of 2017 regarding Elections, includes Komisi Pemilihan Umum (KPU) which are responsible for the technical aspects of elections, Badan Pengawas Pemilihan

Umum (Bawaslu) which are responsible for election supervision in accordance with existing regulations and settlements for election disputes, and Dewan Kehormatan Penyelenggara Pemilu (DKPP) which supervises the work of KPU and Bawaslu. These three institutions are independent and function collectively to carry out elections in Indonesia. KPU and Bawaslu members are selected by the Selection Team and Commission II.

The selection of KPU and Bawaslu members by Commission II is crucial because they hold the highest authority in the selection process. As stated in Law no.7 of 2017, Article 25 and Article 121 Paragraphs 1, 2, and 3, within a maximum of 30 working days of document reception of KPU and Bawaslu member candidates by the President, DPR RI will reselect these candidates via a fit and proper test (FPT) in which the highest ranked candidates will be selected. In the event where the number of candidates are less than required, DPR RI may ask the President to renominate a maximum of twice as many candidates required in a period of 14 days since DPR RI's rejection letter was sent. This process can only be carried out once.

There is no specific regulation regarding the mechanisms of the FPT except the procedures of DPR. In accordance with Article 26 and Article 122, the selection results will then be sent to the President via Commission II to then be ratified with a Presidential's Decree within 5 working days.

Because there is no in-depth ruling about the FPT mechanism,

Commission II is authorized to create their own. These mechanisms are created in accordance with Law No. 7 of 2017 regarding elections and Regulation of the House of Representatives No. 1 of 2020 regarding Rules of Procedure, specifically in Article 226 Paragraph 1 that states

"Inside statutory regulations require the DPR to propose, approve or give consideration to candidates to fill a position, the DPR plenary session assigns the Deliberative Body to schedule and assign the discussion to the relevant commission."

Furthermore, Paragraph 2 explains the procedures for carrying out discussions that will be determined by the Commission, including 1) Administrative research; 2) conveying the vision and mission; 3) fit and proper test (FPT); 4) determining the order of candidates; and 5) notification to the public, both through print and electronic media.

Then, Commission II followed up on these regulations through the DPR RI Bamus (Deliberative Body) Meeting Decision on February 7th, 2022, and the DPR RI Commission II Internal Meeting Decision on February 9th, 2022. In the Bamus Meeting, the DPR RI will deliberate to determine the context of the selection task. KPU and Bawaslu members will be mandated to which Commission, the results of which will then appoint Commission II in charge of Home Affairs, State Secretariat, and Elections as the executor of the duties of the election organizer membership selection process. After the appointment was made, Commission II held an Internal Meeting to discuss the draft

which included 1) Standing Orders; 2) Fit and Proper Test Mechanism; and 3) Schedule and Determination of Candidates for KPU and Bawaslu Members for the 2022-2027 Period.

And so, the authority of Commission II in the process of KPU and Bawaslu members selections, in principle, has reflected an effort for the electoral organizations' credibility. While Law No. 7 of 2017 is not quite enough to regulate Commission II's role, the internal legal basis of the DPR from Regulation of the House No. 1 of 2020 gives additional context in the recruitment process.

FPT Mechanism for Candidates for KPU and Bawaslu Members and Implications for Meritocracy Recruitment

The mechanism established by Commission II will be reviewed through Pippa Norris's (1997) ideas regarding political recruitment, which includes aspects of candidacy, selectorate, place of selection, and decision-making process. The use of this analytical framework will help understand the FPT design in the political recruitment process.

1. Candidacy: FPT Selection Participants, KPU and Bawaslu Members

The design of the FPT mechanism in Commission II has selection criteria for participants that refer to Article 21 and Article 117 Paragraph 1 of Law No. 7 of 2017, containing requirements that include:

a. Indonesian citizen.

- b. At least 40 years old at registration.
- c. Loyal to Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, the Republic of Indonesia, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, and the ideals of the Proclamation of 17 August 1945.
- d. Integrity, strong personality, honest, and fair.
- e. Knowledge and expertise in elections, state administration, and party affairs (plus election supervision for Bawaslu).
- f. Minimum Bachelor's degree.
- g. Resides in Indonesia.
- h. Physically and mentally healthy, free from narcotic abuse.
- i. No political party membership for 5+ years when registering.
- j. Resign from political, government, or state/regional enterprise positions when registering.
- k. Resign from organizational management upon election (statement required).
- l. No criminal record of imprisonment for 5+ years.
- m. Full-time commitment (statement required).
- n. No political, governmental, or state/regional enterprise roles during membership.
- o. Not married to another Election Organizer.

The requirements for KPU and Bawaslu member candidates are very much the same except for point (e), which states that KPU requires candidates to have expertise in election

organization while Bawaslu requires candidates to have expertise in election supervision, reflecting the differences between KPU and Bawaslu. Furthermore, Article 21 and Article 117 Paragraph 1 of Law no.7 of 2017 contains: *"If a candidate for a KPU member is an incumbent, the Selection Team will pay attention to their track record and performance during their time as a member of the KPU."*

Several other administrative documents must be fulfilled in the FPT including 1) Paper, Vision, and Mission Manuscripts; and 2) Administrative equipment which includes: a) List of Assets of Candidates for KPU and Bawaslu Members, b) Taxpayer Identification Number, c) Curriculum Vitae. Thus, the candidacy aspect applied in the design of the FPT mechanism for prospective KPU and Bawaslu members in Commission II DPR RI conceptually refers to efforts to fulfill a meritocratic recruitment system. This system prioritizes the competency, integrity, and independence of the selection participants who will become election organizers.

2. Selectorate: Commission II of the DPR RI on Home Affairs, State Secretariat, and Elections.

Membership formation of Commission II, consisting of 55 members, namely 5 Chairs of Commission II, including Ahmad Doli Kurnia Tandjung as Chair (F-Golkar) and Vice Chair consisting of Jumart Girsang (F-PDIP), Saan Mustopa (F-Nasdem), Luqman Hakim (F-PKB), and Syamsurizal (F-PPP). Meanwhile, the

composition of Commission II members consists of 11 F-PDIP members, 6 F-Golkar members, 7 F-Gerindra members, 5 F-Nasdem members, 5 F-PKB members, 5 F-Demokrat members, 5 F-PPS members, 4 F-PAN members, and 1 F-PPP member. Even though in the regulations the members tasked with implementing the FPT are members of Commission II, there is authority to exchange members from one Commission to another, namely through the authority under Operational Control (BKO). Fractions can propose member exchanges through the Chair of the Fraction Group and then obtain approval from the Leadership of Commission II.

Regarding the urgency of transferring other Commission's members to Commission II, Informant IMB, member of Commission II, PAN Faction, states that it is done to fill empty positions or replace members unable to serve, so that each faction has the proper amount of seats. Informant AH, member of Commission II, PKS Faction, added that members who are involved in the FPT must be able to represent the party's DPP (Dewan Pemikiran Pusat) ideology.

The turnover of members present in FPT reflects these statements, with 54 on the first day, 55 on the second, and 56 on the third. Each faction has the right to fill empty faction seats, or even add more members, with the same mechanisms for member replacement proposed by the Leader of Party Factions to the Chairperson of Commission II in accordance to their seats won in the previous elections. This proves that political interests in the selection process are very much present and shown

clearly, with Commission II members directly involving their parties' interests in the process.

Based on information gained from a KPU member candidate, Informant LS, track record, "trust", and vision are important things to have in the selection process. Informant IH also strengthened this sentiment and added that said "trust" is created by the candidates' ability to use strategic communication with political parties by 1) social networks; 2) common interest with the political party; and 3) common interest with DPR members.

These social networks are related to organizations such as HMI, PMII, GMNI, and GMKI. Candidates who are members of these organizations tend to have higher chances of establishing political connections with fellow members in DPR or political parties. This is because the values embedded in the organization's cadre formation are very deep-rooted, giving rise to strong emotional relationships among its alumni. However, organizational membership must be parallel with closeness to political parties, because political parties are the primary factor of candidate's selection.

On the other hand, the track record of the candidates is also determining, especially the incumbent election organizers at both the central and regional levels who nominate themselves in the selection process, this refers to crucial electoral considerations for political parties. MAS informant, one of the prospective KPU members, stated that:

"Not only the interests of political parties but also the interests of individual DPR members who will nominate again in certain electoral districts. For example, information has been circulating since the beginning that the "PH" candidate who is currently serving as a member of the North Sumatra KPU is a candidate who is being guarded and supported by the chairman of Commission II, who is a member of the DPR from the electoral district in North Sumatra. Candidate "IH" who is a member of the West Java KPU, is supported and escorted by the Deputy Chair of Commission II who was elected from the West Java Region" (MAS informant)

Thus, these factors are more determinant of a candidate's chances in the selection process over the substance of Commission II's FPT. This is a direct consequence of having DPR members, who are political party representatives, as the selectors of KPU and Bawaslu members, with ambitions of winning another election. Additionally, the mechanism design does not involve professionals to deepen the understanding of candidates' competence and understanding of elections, which in turn makes the assessment far from the base of professionalism and accountability. Finally, the FPT process itself is more political and strategic in terms of substance.

3. Location for the FPT selection of KPU and Bawaslu Member Candidates

The FPT is held in the Commission II Meeting Room, Gedung Nusantara II, Jakarta Pusat, and all KPU

and Bawaslu member candidates have to be present. Informant D, one of the KPU member candidates, said that the ease of access for the FPT itself is most relevant for candidates from Jakarta. Informant MAS added that candidates from outside Jakarta and primarily outside Java face harder challenges because of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the lack of financial subsidies. There is a significant difference in the ease of access which makes candidates not from Jakarta needing to spend more financially. Apart from that, this context also includes procedures for implementing selection in FPT design. Referring to Article 226 Paragraph 2, DPR RI Rules of Procedure, it is stipulated that the FPT mechanism in Commission II of the DPR RI goes through several stages as follows:

Level 1:

- 1) Publication of FPT for KPU and Bawaslu member candidates via print/electronic/website media and opening for public involvement (7-11 February 2022).
- 2) Administrative research and material deepening (12-13 February 2022).
- 3) Plenary Meeting of Commission II DPR RI to ratify the FPT mechanism and rules (7 February 2022).

Level 2:

- 1) Candidate presentations in the FPT are scheduled alphabetically, as per Presidential Letter R-01/Pres/01/2022 (12 January 2022).
- 2) FPT spans 3 days (14-16 February 2022):
 - a. Day 1: 8 KPU candidates.

- b. Day 2: 8 KPU and Bawaslu candidates.

- c. Day 3: 8 Bawaslu candidates.

- 3) Each candidate has 15 minutes to present their vision and mission.
- 4) A maximum of 10 Commission II members ask questions, with each given 3 minutes.
- 5) Candidates have 5 minutes to answer each question.
- 6) Candidate responses form part of the assessment by Commission II members.
- 7) Selection is through consensus deliberation or voting.
- 8) Results are submitted to DPR Leadership for ratification at the DPR Plenary Meeting on 18 February 2022, then sent to the President.

In essence, this mechanism involves every technical and administrative aspect formulated to guarantee transparency and accountability. Informant AZ, Commission II Expert for Electoral Affairs, said that FPT is designed with merit-based recruitment in mind, because it includes information openness, a selection board, deliberation, and voting that wholly gives the public, the selectors, and the candidates full rights to oversee the FPT.

However, there are a few weaknesses. First, being political party members with their interests in mind, DPR members could cloud objective assessments of candidates' competence as their faction's political considerations

will be more dominant. Secondly, the allotted time for presentations and questions and answer sessions (5 and 15 minutes respectively) is not enough to dig deeper into candidates' suitability, and subjective questions from DPR members can also hurt objective judgment for the candidates. Lastly, while the public is actively involved in the FPT process, public feedback in the decision making process is questionable, especially considering the final decision is made by Commission II. While the mechanism of the FPT is contextually merit-based, the selector's perspectives will eventually influence the regulations to come.

4. Decision making for selected KPU and Bawaslu members

To the decision-making mechanism that has been set by Commission II of the DPR RI for the implementation of FPT is as follows:

- a. Leadership and members of Commission II present and meeting quorum at the FPT session have voting rights.
- b. Selection is conducted through consensus deliberation or voting by Commission II leadership and members.
- c. Per Article 25 (2-4) of Law No. 7/2017, Commission II selects 7 KPU members from 14 candidates proposed by the President. If fewer than 7 are elected, the DPR requests the President to propose additional candidates.
- d. Per Article 121 (2-4) of Law No. 7/2017, Commission II selects 5

Bawaslu members from 10 candidates proposed by the President. If fewer than 5 are elected, the DPR requests the President to propose additional candidates.

- e. Commission II submits the election results to the DPR Leadership for decision and ratification at the DPR Plenary Meeting.

Even though the final decision in the existing mechanism is based on deliberation or voting and is open to the public, Informant AZ said that the decision regarding the selection of KPU and Bawaslu members for 2022-2027 is done behind closed doors to accelerate the decision making process and because of the pandemic. The voting system is also done via block vote (one vote per faction), erasing the principles of one man, one vote. This process is still considered still within the merit corridor because voting and deliberation is still done, even though on the faction level only.

Since the beginning, there is no assessment instrument given for the evaluation of candidates' competence. The assessment is more subjective, and even the questions asked by members of Commission II do not have a clear indicator of assessment. On the other hand, Informant EJT, Nasdem Faction Expert, states that each faction has already chosen their candidates based on political communication and lobbying behind the scenes even before the FPT process has begun. This eliminates the merit-based nature of the FPT process itself because said lobbying is of the utmost importance in the process of choosing a faction's candidate of choice.

In the end, the FPT process only gives candidates with better ability to accommodate the interests of factions inside the DPR. The non-merit aspects of decision making in Commission II is too strong because of political preferences so large it disturbs the meritocratic design of the recruitment processes in accordance with Law No. 7 of 2017. As long as the selection process is in the hands of the DPR, it is impossible to guarantee it is carried out democratically because the DPR is a political institution with political interests of its members in mind. This also contrasts with the independence of KPU and Bawaslu and their responsibilities in future elections. DPR as a selection entity for electoral organizers potentially opens up a large room for conflict of interest.

CONCLUSION

The results of this research confirm and expand the theoretical framework of political recruitment proposed by Pippa Norris (1997), namely by integrating aspects such as candidacy, selectorate, selection location, and decision-making process in the context of the design of the FPT for prospective members of the Indonesian KPU and Bawaslu for the 2022-2027 period. 2027 organized by Commission II DPR RI. First, the candidacy aspect of candidates for KPU and Bawaslu members in Commission II of the DPR RI which is implemented in the FPT mechanism has shown a preference that refers to the suitability of the criteria as election organizers, namely giving priority to competence, integrity and independence. Regulation of the House of

Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2020 concerning Rules of Procedure, provides a reference that complements Law no.7 of 2017 concerning Elections in creating the FPT Mechanism for KPU and Bawaslu member candidates in Commission II DPR RI.

Secondly, the selectorate aspects shine a light on the consequences of appointing members of the DPR, who are notably political party representatives with reelection ambitions in mind, as selectorate for KPU and Bawaslu members, which influences candidate selection based on each faction's electoral interests. Third, the location of the FPT itself is designed with merit-based recruitment in mind, because it is accessible, has voting and deliberation, and has exposure of participants that gives selectors, candidates, and the general public the ability to oversee the whole process. However, it still faces many obstacles such as accessibility issues for candidates from outside Jakarta, the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, limited presentation time, lack of assessment instruments, and lack of public involvement.

Finally, the decision making process in Commission II DPR RI shows that while the recruitment mechanism is designed with merit in mind, there are no guarantees that it is carried out democratically because of the DPR being a political institution, the perspectives used will always be oriented towards electoral gains. In the end, a selection free from political interests is an anomaly in recruitment processes held by political institutions.

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