



Inter-Agency Coordination and Electoral Data Integrity: A Governance Perspective from Bengkulu

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A B S T R A C T

This study analyzes the coordination between the Provincial Office of Population and Civil Registration (Disdukcapil) and the Bengkulu Provincial General Election Commission (KPU) in synchronizing voter data for the 2019 General Election. The research aims to examine the forms and effectiveness of inter-institutional coordination in ensuring the accuracy and reliability of voter data to support electoral implementation. A qualitative approach with a descriptive method was employed. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and a systematic review of official documents related to the 2019 election in Bengkulu Province. The analysis focuses on the role of both institutions as problem-solving actors in addressing technical and administrative challenges, including duplicate voter records, inconsistencies between domicile data and voter allocation, and other data-related discrepancies. The findings reveal that coordination was conducted through formal coordination meetings, plenary sessions, inter-agency communication, data consolidation, matching processes, as well as field verification and validation activities, supported by joint decision-making mechanisms. These efforts contributed to improving data accuracy and administrative efficiency. However, the study also identifies persistent challenges, indicating that coordination and data management practices require further optimization to achieve more effective electoral governance.

INTRODUCTION

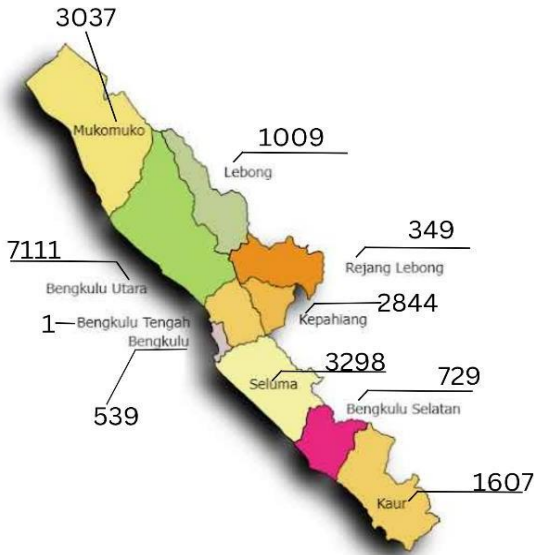
General elections represent a fundamental instrument for realizing democratic governance, as they enable citizens to elect their representatives and directly influence public policy direction (Arfi et al., 2025). Beyond their procedural dimension, elections function as a substantive mechanism to ensure political legitimacy, accountability, and inclusiveness within democratic systems (Donnelly, 2021). In this context, the integrity of electoral processes is highly dependent on the accuracy and reliability of voter data, which serves as the foundation for guaranteeing citizens' voting rights and maintaining public trust in democratic institutions. In Indonesia, the General Election Commission (KPU) is mandated to administer electoral processes, including voter registration and the compilation of voter lists, as stipulated in Law No. 15 of 2011 on General Elections (Law Number 15 of 2011 Concerning General Elections, 2011). This responsibility is closely interconnected with the Office of Population and Civil Registration (Disdukcapil), which manages population administration data under Law No. 23 of 2006 (Law No. 23 of 2006 on Population Administration, 2006). Instruments such as the Potential Voters Population List (DP4) and the Final Voter List (DPT) play a crucial role in ensuring electoral inclusiveness and administrative accuracy (Fadhil & Ilham, 2009). Furthermore, the utilization of electronic identity cards (KTP-el) strengthens legal identity verification and supports the development of reliable population databases required for electoral governance (Agranoff, 2006). Consequently, the effectiveness of voter data synchronization depends heavily on the quality of coordination between these two institutions.

From a theoretical perspective, coordination theory provides an essential framework for understanding how multiple organizations align their actions to achieve shared objectives. Coordination is particularly critical in public sector settings characterized by institutional fragmentation, overlapping authority, and complex administrative processes. (Peters, 2018) emphasizes that ineffective coordination can lead to policy inconsistency, duplication of efforts, and reduced administrative performance. Similarly, (Bouckaert, 2016) and Christensen and Lægreid (2017) argue that coordination in public organizations involves not only formal mechanisms but also informal processes such as communication and mutual adjustment. The quality of coordination, therefore, determines the extent to which institutions can effectively integrate their functions and resources. Complementing this perspective, collaborative governance highlights the importance of joint decision-making and shared responsibility among public institutions. (Ansell & Gash, 2008) emphasize that collaboration enables institutions to address complex policy problems that cannot be resolved individually. (Emerson, 2015) further note that effective collaboration requires sustained interaction, trust, and shared motivation. In the context of electoral administration, collaboration between Disdukcapil and KPU is essential to ensure that voter data is continuously updated and validated through coordinated processes (Agranoff, 2006; Robert, 2006).

In addition, the advancement of e-government and data integration plays a significant role in improving the management of population and electoral data. Digital governance facilitates real-time data sharing and enhances administrative efficiency (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Kim, 2019). However, the implementation of integrated data systems remains constrained by institutional fragmentation, technological limitations, and organizational

resistance (Heeks, 2005). The lack of interoperability between information systems often leads to inconsistencies and duplication of data, thereby undermining the effectiveness of public service delivery (Klievink, 2014).

Figure 1. Duplicate Final Voter List (DPT) Data in the 2019 General Election in Bengkulu Province.



Source: Bawaslu Bengkulu, 2019.

Empirical evidence from Bengkulu Province further illustrates these challenges. Discrepancies between population data managed by Disdukcapil and other institutional sources have resulted in inaccuracies in voter lists, including duplicate records and the exclusion of eligible voters. Field analysis identified substantial cases of duplicate voter records across several regencies and municipalities in Bengkulu Province. These included 729 duplicate entries in South Bengkulu Regency, 1 case in Central Bengkulu Regency, 7,111 cases in North Bengkulu Regency, 1,607 cases in Kaur Regency, 2,844 cases in Kepahiang Regency, 1,009 cases in Lebong Regency, 3,037 problematic records in Mukomuko Regency, 349 cases in Rejang Lebong Regency, and 3,298 duplicate entries in Seluma Regency. In total, the number of problematic or duplicate entries in the Final Voter List (DPT) reached 19,985 cases. Such findings indicate significant administrative challenges and may generate public perceptions regarding weaknesses in voter data management by both Disdukcapil and the KPU.

These conditions reflect underlying problems in coordination and data integration, particularly in relation to unreported population mobility, delayed updates of civil registration data, and inconsistencies in data sources (Sitanggang, 2021). Despite existing efforts to improve voter data synchronization, coordination between institutions has not yet functioned optimally in addressing these challenges.

Previous studies have examined voter data management and administrative coordination; however, most have focused on general performance aspects rather than analyzing coordination as a strategic and problem-solving mechanism. Moreover, limited research has integrated coordination theory, collaborative governance, and e-government perspectives within the context of electoral administration. This indicates a significant research gap in understanding how these

frameworks can be applied to improve voter data accuracy and electoral governance (Juarez-Garcia, 2021).

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the coordination between Disdukcapil and the KPU of Bengkulu Province in synchronizing voter data for the 2019 General Election (Wibowo et al., 2020). The study focuses on examining coordination processes, identifying institutional and technical challenges, and evaluating the effectiveness of inter-agency collaboration. The novelty of this research lies in its integrative approach, combining coordination theory, collaborative governance, and digital governance perspectives to explain how coordination functions as a problem-solving mechanism in electoral data management (Meijer, 2016). Accordingly, the research problem can be formulated as follows: how does coordination between Disdukcapil and the KPU influence the accuracy and reliability of voter data in the 2019 General Election in Bengkulu Province, and what challenges hinder the effectiveness of this coordination? Addressing this issue is significant not only for improving electoral governance in Indonesia but also for contributing to the broader discourse on inter-agency coordination, collaborative governance, and digital transformation in public administration (Cordella, 2015).

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design to examine the coordination between the Provincial Office of Population and Civil Registration (Disdukcapil) and the General Election Commission (KPU) of Bengkulu Province in synchronizing voter data for the 2019 General Election. This approach was selected because inter-agency coordination involves complex institutional interactions, decision-making processes, and administrative dynamics that require in-depth exploration and contextual understanding, which cannot be adequately captured through quantitative methods (Creswell, 2016; Yin, 2018). The study utilizes qualitative data in the form of interview narratives, observations, and official documents, complemented by secondary data such as administrative records and regulatory frameworks to strengthen analytical depth and validity (Sugiyono, 2023; Bowen, 2009).

Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement and relevance to voter data synchronization processes (Patton, 2002). A total of twelve informants participated, consisting of key institutional actors (Heads of Disdukcapil and KPU Bengkulu Province), supporting officials responsible for population and electoral data management, and community representatives to capture external perspectives. Data collection was conducted through observation, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Observation was carried out in a non-participatory manner to capture actual coordination practices and communication patterns. Interviews were designed to explore experiences, perceptions, and problem-solving strategies, while document analysis of official reports, coordination records, and regulatory documents was used to validate and triangulate the findings (Bowen, 2009; Creswell, 2016).

Data analysis followed an interactive qualitative process consisting of data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 2014; Moleong, 2006). Data were systematically coded and categorized into key

themes such as coordination mechanisms, communication patterns, data integration processes, and institutional challenges. The reduced data were then presented in structured narratives and matrices to facilitate interpretation and comparison across informants. Conclusions were drawn by identifying patterns and relationships within the data and were continuously verified through triangulation of sources to ensure consistency, reliability, and analytical rigor in explaining the effectiveness of coordination in voter data synchronization (Miles et al., 2014; Yin, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Institutional Fragmentation and Constraints in Voter Data Governance

Based on the overview, nickel mining in Raja Ampat, Papua, is a core industrial sector that produces minerals to support economic growth. Beyond that, we sought to explore the scientific literature on mining's ecological impacts, which has focused on terrestrial effects (e.g., deforestation, soil erosion, and water pollution). In the case of Raja Ampat, Papua, the new studies we analyse indicate that the risks extend beyond land-based consequences. Here, the proximity of mining sites to coastal and marine areas, along with heavy metal runoff, sedimentation, and acid mine drainage, directly degrade coral reef systems, mangrove forests, and fish nursery ecosystems, which are integral to global biodiversity and indigenous food security.

The findings of this study reveal that coordination between the Provincial Office of Population and Civil Registration (Disdukcapil) and the General Election Commission (KPU) in Bengkulu Province operates within a centralized yet fragmented data governance system, which fundamentally constrains the effectiveness of voter data synchronization. While formal coordination mechanisms are clearly established and procedurally implemented, their outcomes remain limited due to structural and institutional barriers embedded in the governance architecture.

Empirical evidence demonstrates that population data managed by Disdukcapil cannot be directly accessed or exchanged with the KPU at the local level. Instead, the data must be transmitted through the Ministry of Home Affairs, creating a hierarchical data flow that introduces delays, reduces flexibility, and limits responsiveness. This institutional arrangement produces a condition of vertical dependency, where local coordination is subordinated to centralized control, thereby weakening horizontal collaboration between agencies.

The implications of this structural arrangement are evident in the persistence of significant data discrepancies. The study identifies 60,751 eligible citizens who remain unrecorded in the population administration system, alongside 19,985 duplicate or problematic voter entries in the Final Voter List (DPT). These figures are not merely technical anomalies but reflect systemic weaknesses in data governance. Specifically, they indicate the inability of existing coordination mechanisms to ensure data accuracy and consistency across institutional boundaries.

From a theoretical standpoint, these findings illustrate a condition of institutional fragmentation, where authority is distributed across multiple actors without sufficient integration mechanisms. Coordination, in this context, becomes procedural rather than adaptive. Institutions comply with formal coordination requirements—such as meetings, reporting, and

verification processes—but lack the capacity to dynamically adjust to emerging challenges in data synchronization. This aligns with coordination theory, which emphasizes that effective coordination requires not only formal structures but also mutual adjustment, flexibility, and real-time information exchange (Peters, 2018).

Moreover, the study highlights the critical role of data interoperability in shaping coordination outcomes. Despite the increasing adoption of digital governance principles, the integration between population administration systems and electoral data systems remains limited. The absence of interoperable platforms prevents seamless data exchange, resulting in inconsistencies, duplication, and delays in data updating processes. This finding is consistent with digital governance literature, which argues that technological solutions alone are insufficient without corresponding institutional alignment and integration (Klievink & Janssen, 2014).

The centralized nature of Indonesia's population data management further exacerbates these challenges. While centralization ensures standardization and regulatory compliance, it simultaneously restricts local autonomy in managing and updating data. Consequently, local institutions are often unable to address discrepancies promptly, as they depend on higher-level authorization and data processing mechanisms. This creates a governance paradox, where efforts to maintain data uniformity inadvertently undermine coordination effectiveness at the operational level. In addition, the findings suggest that coordination challenges are deeply intertwined with administrative capacity and institutional design. The fragmentation of authority between Disdukcapil and KPU, combined with the lack of integrated data systems, results in overlapping responsibilities and unclear accountability structures. This condition leads to inefficiencies in data management, as each institution operates within its own system without adequate synchronization mechanisms.

Importantly, the study also reveals that coordination is not merely a technical or administrative process but a structural phenomenon shaped by governance arrangements. The persistence of data discrepancies indicates that coordination failures are not due to a lack of effort or commitment among institutional actors, but rather the result of systemic limitations that constrain their ability to collaborate effectively. Thus, the analysis demonstrates that improving voter data synchronization requires a fundamental transformation of the underlying data governance system. Specifically, it necessitates the development of integrated, interoperable, and decentralized data management frameworks that enable real-time coordination and reduce institutional dependency. Without such reforms, coordination will continue to function as a procedural formality rather than a substantive mechanism for achieving accurate and reliable voter data.

Coordination Effectiveness, Digital Limitations, and Implications for Electoral Integrity

Despite the structural constraints identified above, the findings indicate that coordination between Disdukcapil and KPU involves intensive interaction and multi-actor engagement, reflecting a strong institutional commitment to ensuring the accuracy of voter data. Coordination processes such as data matching (coklit), verification, validation, and updating are

conducted systematically and involve multiple stakeholders, including Bawaslu, Pantarlih, and community representatives.

This multi-actor coordination reflects elements of collaborative governance, where different institutions and stakeholders work together to address complex policy problems. The presence of shared objectives—namely, the production of accurate and reliable voter data—demonstrates a high level of alignment between Disdukcapil and KPU. However, the persistence of data discrepancies suggests that coordination effectiveness remains limited.

This paradox highlights a critical distinction between procedural coordination and substantive coordination. While procedural coordination is evident through the existence of formal mechanisms and regular interactions, substantive coordination requires the ability to produce tangible outcomes, such as accurate and integrated data. The findings indicate that coordination in this context remains largely procedural, as it fails to fully resolve underlying data inconsistencies. From a collaborative governance perspective, this limitation can be attributed to the lack of institutional coherence and resource integration. Effective collaboration requires not only shared objectives but also the alignment of institutional capacities, technological systems, and operational practices. In the absence of such alignment, coordination efforts are unlikely to produce optimal outcomes (Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015).

Furthermore, the study reveals that coordination effectiveness is significantly influenced by societal factors, particularly public participation in population administration processes. The lack of public awareness and compliance in reporting demographic changes—such as migration, death, and changes in domicile—contributes to inaccuracies in population data, which subsequently affect voter data. This finding underscores the importance of viewing coordination as a multi-level process that involves not only institutional actors but also citizens as active participants in data governance.

The role of digital governance is also central to understanding coordination effectiveness. Although digital tools and information systems are utilized, their impact remains limited due to the absence of fully integrated and interoperable platforms. Data synchronization processes are often conducted manually or through semi-integrated systems, which increases the risk of errors and delays. As a result, coordination functions as a reactive mechanism, addressing discrepancies after they occur rather than preventing them through proactive data management. This limitation reflects broader challenges in the implementation of e-government initiatives, where technological adoption is not accompanied by institutional transformation. Without changes in organizational structures, processes, and culture, digital tools are unlikely to achieve their full potential in improving coordination and service delivery.

The implications of these findings extend beyond administrative efficiency to the broader issue of electoral integrity. Accurate voter data is a fundamental prerequisite for democratic governance, as it ensures equal political participation and prevents electoral irregularities. The presence of duplicate and unrecorded voter data not only undermines administrative credibility but also raises concerns about the fairness and legitimacy of the electoral process. In this context, coordination failures can have significant consequences for public trust in electoral institutions. When voter data is perceived as inaccurate or unreliable, it may lead to skepticism

regarding the integrity of elections, thereby weakening democratic legitimacy. Therefore, improving coordination is not merely an administrative necessity but a normative imperative for sustaining democratic governance.

To address these challenges, the study suggests a comprehensive approach that integrates institutional reform, digital transformation, and societal engagement. First, institutional reform is needed to reduce fragmentation and enhance coordination capacity, including the establishment of clearer roles, responsibilities, and accountability mechanisms. Second, digital transformation should focus on developing integrated and interoperable data systems that enable real-time data synchronization and reduce reliance on hierarchical data flows. Third, societal engagement must be strengthened through public awareness campaigns and mechanisms that encourage citizen participation in updating population data.

In theoretical terms, this study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that coordination effectiveness in public administration is not solely determined by institutional interaction, but by the alignment of governance structures, technological systems, and societal participation. It extends coordination theory by emphasizing the importance of data governance architecture as a critical determinant of coordination outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that inter-agency coordination between Disdukcapil and the KPU in Bengkulu Province is formally well-established and procedurally implemented, yet substantively constrained by structural, technological, and societal limitations. The central finding of this research is that coordination in voter data synchronization functions effectively at the level of administrative compliance but remains limited in producing fully accurate and integrated electoral data. The analysis reveals that the persistence of voter data discrepancies—particularly the 19,985 cases of duplicate and problematic records—reflects a broader issue of institutional fragmentation within a centralized data governance system. While coordination mechanisms such as data sharing, verification, and joint decision-making are actively conducted, their effectiveness is reduced by hierarchical data flows, limited interoperability between population and electoral databases, and restricted local-level flexibility. This indicates that coordination operates more as a procedural mechanism rather than a problem-solving system capable of real-time integration.

Furthermore, the study highlights that coordination effectiveness is not solely determined by inter-institutional interaction but is significantly shaped by data governance architecture and system integration capacity. The lack of fully integrated digital systems results in reactive rather than proactive data management, while low levels of public participation in reporting demographic changes further exacerbate data inaccuracies. Consequently, electoral data integrity emerges as a multi-dimensional governance issue, involving institutional design, technological infrastructure, and citizen engagement. The findings contribute theoretically by extending coordination and collaborative governance perspectives, demonstrating that effective coordination in public administration requires not only shared objectives and interaction but also structural alignment, digital integration, and societal participation. In practical terms, the study

underscores the need for a more integrated governance approach, including strengthening horizontal coordination mechanisms, developing interoperable and real-time data systems, and enhancing public awareness and compliance in population administration.

However, this study has several limitations. First, the analysis is geographically limited to Bengkulu Province, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to other regions with different administrative and socio-political contexts. Second, while institutional coordination is examined in depth, the role of community participation is not extensively explored, particularly in relation to behavioral factors influencing data reporting and compliance. Third, the study relies primarily on qualitative data, which, while rich in context, may benefit from complementary quantitative validation. Future research should therefore expand the scope by incorporating comparative regional analysis, integrating mixed-method approaches, and examining more deeply the role of citizen participation and digital governance innovations in improving electoral data accuracy. Such efforts would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how coordination can be transformed from a procedural requirement into a substantive governance mechanism that ensures electoral integrity and democratic legitimacy.

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