



HOW DOES BAWASLU GOVERN DIGITAL SPACES THROUGH COMMUNICATION AND STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS 2024 BLACK CAMPAIGNS?

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Abstract: *The 2024 Indonesian General Election has brought to light the central role that social media play in political narration, along with glaring instances of disinformation as well as black campaigns. These platforms are now used by political buzzers to transmit false information, which constitutes a major threat to electoral integrity. This study looks into the role of the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) in countering black campaigns and their preventive and repressive measures. The qualitative descriptive method and literature review are adopted, used to triangulate data from laws, government reports, and academic literature to test Bawaslu's role in counteracting digital disinformation. Some preventive measures, such as public digital literacy campaigns and participatory monitoring, include initiatives like "Jaga Ruang Digital" to strengthen critical thinking and public vigilance. On the repression side are enhanced regulatory enforcement and cooperation among Kominfo and Gakkumdu in technological measures, namely the Gowaslu application for reporting by the community. The results indicate that, notwithstanding the laudable activities of Bawaslu, challenges still exist regarding regulatory loopholes, limitations in resources, and difficulty in profiling actors operating anonymously. It supports those digital regulations need to be strengthened, inter-agency collaboration needs to be pursued, and the public has to be innovatively involved in ensuring electoral integrity and accountability for democracy in the digital age.*

Keywords: *Bawaslu; Black Campaign; Political Buzzers; Indonesian Elections; Digital Disinformation*

Abstrak: Pemilu 2024 telah mengungkap peran utama media sosial dalam narasi politik, bersama dengan contoh-contoh disinformasi dan kampanye hitam yang mencolok. Platform-platform ini sekarang digunakan oleh buzzer politik untuk menyebarkan informasi palsu, yang merupakan ancaman besar bagi integritas pemilu. Studi ini mengkaji peran Badan Pengawas Pemilu (Bawaslu) dalam melawan kampanye hitam dan tindakan preventif dan represifnya. Metode deskriptif kualitatif dan tinjauan pustaka diadopsi, digunakan untuk melakukan triangulasi data dari undang-undang, laporan pemerintah, dan literatur akademis untuk menguji peran Bawaslu dalam menangkal disinformasi digital. Beberapa tindakan preventif, seperti kampanye literasi digital publik dan pemantauan partisipatif, termasuk inisiatif seperti "Jaga Ruang Digital" untuk memperkuat pemikiran kritis dan kewaspadaan publik. Di sisi penindakan, peningkatan penegakan peraturan dan kerja sama antara Kominfo dan Gakkumdu dalam tindakan teknologi, yaitu aplikasi Gowaslu untuk pelaporan

oleh masyarakat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa, terlepas dari kegiatan Bawaslu yang terpuji, masih ada tantangan terkait celah regulasi, keterbatasan sumber daya, dan kesulitan dalam membuat profil aktor yang beroperasi secara anonim. Hal ini mendukung bahwa regulasi digital perlu diperkuat, kolaborasi antarlembaga perlu diupayakan, dan masyarakat harus terlibat secara inovatif dalam memastikan integritas pemilu dan akuntabilitas demokrasi di era digital.

Kata Kunci: Bawaslu; Kampanye Hitam; Buzzer Politik; Pemilu Indonesia; Disinformasi Digital.

1 | INTRODUCTION

The 2024 Indonesian General Election stands as a critical milestone for the nation's democratic governance. In an era where digital technology plays a pivotal role, social media has emerged as a significant tool for political campaigns. However, its widespread adoption also introduces new challenges, particularly the proliferation of disinformation campaigns. These black campaigns, propagated through political buzzers, pose a substantial threat to electoral integrity, societal harmony, and democratic processes. A buzzer is defined as a person who spreads and promotes certain messages (Anugerah, 2020). Addressing this issue is imperative to ensure fair and just elections, which are the backbone of any democratic system. With over 139 million active social media users as of January 2024 (Rizaty, 2024), Indonesia's digital landscape has become a vibrant yet contentious space for political discourse. Social media platforms or website, once valued for fostering public participation (Sajida et al., 2023), and could be increasingly exploited for malicious purposes. Black campaigns organized efforts to disseminate false information aimed at discrediting political opponents have become a troubling phenomenon. Political buzzers, initially engaged in commercial promotions, have shifted their focus to manipulating public opinion, often employing hate speech and fabricated content (Sugiono, 2020). The prevalence of black campaigns during the 2024 elections underscores the challenges faced by the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu). Despite its mandate to oversee fair elections, Bawaslu grapples with the complexities of regulating digital platforms, identifying anonymous buzzers, and addressing the rising frequency of electoral hoaxes. These challenges are exacerbated by the absence of comprehensive legal frameworks explicitly targeting black campaigns, leaving significant gaps in enforcement and prevention (Nasution et al., 2024). Previous studies indicate that Bawaslu's capacity for participatory monitoring remains limited, with power dynamics between the agency, social media platforms, and hoax perpetrators tilting against effective prevention (Ilmar et al., 2024).

Furthermore, while existing laws, such as the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE) and Election Law (UU No. 7/2017), address disinformation broadly, they fail to provide specific guidelines for tackling black campaigns and the operational intricacies of political buzzers. Empirical data further highlights the gravity of the issue. According to the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo), as of January 2024, over 2,882 pieces of hoax content related to the elections were identified on social media platforms (Kominfo, 2024). Additionally, the Election Vulnerability Index (IKP) for 2024 reveals moderate to high risks in 55.88% and 17.64% of Indonesian provinces, respectively, signaling the persistent threat posed by disinformation (Bawaslu, 2024). The context of Indonesia underscores the need for targeted intervention. With its vast archipelago and diverse population, the nation faces unique challenges in ensuring electoral integrity. Localized disinformation, tailored to exploit regional sensitivities, complicates efforts to maintain a unified approach to election supervision. Notably, past incidents, such as the spread of

fabricated scandals and identity-based provocations, highlight the destructive potential of unchecked black campaigns (Doly, 2020). This study aims to analyze Bawaslu's dual strategies, preventive and repressive, in addressing black campaigns on social media during the 2024 elections. Specifically, it seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of Bawaslu's measures in mitigating the influence of political buzzers and ensuring democratic accountability in the digital era. By exploring Bawaslu's role, this paper contributes to the broader discourse on electoral integrity in the digital age. It offers actionable insights for strengthening regulatory frameworks, enhancing public awareness, and fostering inter-agency collaboration to counter disinformation effectively. Ultimately, this research aims to support the development of robust mechanisms for safeguarding democracy in Indonesia.

2 | METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive methodology, utilizing an advanced literature review approach to explore the role of Bawaslu in addressing black campaigns on social media during Indonesia's 2024 elections. Following some previous studies on social science, this study using literatur review (Muluk et al., 2023; Sajida & Kusumasari, 2023a). The literature review serves as a systematic yet flexible framework, allowing the synthesis of diverse sources while adapting to the specific needs of the research focus (Sajida & Kusumasari, 2023b). This approach is particularly effective in providing a comprehensive understanding of complex sociopolitical phenomena, such as electoral supervision in the digital age. Data collection was centered on secondary sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, government documents, and reputable online databases. These sources were meticulously selected to ensure relevance, credibility, and alignment with the research objectives. The review included legal documents such as Indonesia's Election Law (UU No. 7/2017) and the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE), reports from the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), and statistics from the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo). Efforts were made to triangulate data by cross-referencing findings from multiple sources to enhance validity and reliability. Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative content analysis framework. This involved a detailed examination of the selected literature to identify patterns, themes, and relationships relevant to Bawaslu's preventive and repressive strategies. Special attention was given to contextualizing findings within Indonesia's unique electoral and digital landscape, highlighting both challenges and opportunities.

3 | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Role of Bawaslu in Enforcing Election Law

Article 1 paragraph (1) of Law No.7/17, elections are interpreted as a tool to realize Pancasila and people's sovereignty based on the 1945 Constitution with the principles of direct, public, free, secret, honest, and fair (*luber jurdil*) in the election of the President and Vice President, DPR, DPD, and DPRD (Ramdani, 2023). Meanwhile, Mahfud MD defines elections as the election of leaders and people's representatives in a political system where there is freedom and justice in the democratic process and community involvement (Salampessy et al., 2023). In essence, elections function as a tool to realize people's sovereignty in accordance with the applicable laws and principles to elect people's representatives. In elections, there is an institution tasked with supervising the running of all

stages in the election, namely Bawaslu.

Bawaslu has a crucial role for the implementation of the principle of *luber jurdil* and ensuring that there are no fraudulent practices in the implementation of elections. Bawaslu itself is an independent institution that is in a position parallel to the General Election Commission (KPU) and Bawaslu is institutionally not part of the KPU (Ramdani, 2023). From this brief understanding, the public's view of the Bawaslu institution is only limited to the body tasked with supervising the election so that democracy continues to run, even though the duties of Bawaslu are not only limited.

Reporting from the Bawaslu.go.id website, Bawaslu has the task to: a) set standards for the implementation of election monitoring procedures for election positions; b) prevent and take action against violations and disputes in election activities; c) supervising the initial planning of the implementation of the election consisting of 4 stages.; d) supervise the implementation of the election with a total of 11 stages.; e) to prevent the practice of *money politics*; f) to maintain the neutrality of the ASN, TNI, POLRI.; g) supervise the implementation of five decisions/decisions; h) report the alleged misappropriation of the code of ethics for election implementers to the DKPP.; i) report election irregularities to Gakkumdu.; j) Manage, maintain, and protect storage and shrink it based on the storage retention schedule in accordance with the rules and regulations; k) carry out the implementation of KPU rules.; and m) perform duties in accordance with the rules and regulations of laws and regulations (Bawaslu, 2024). On the other hand, the regulations used by Bawaslu as a reference to carry out their duties include Law No.7/2017 concerning Elections, the Law is a form of expansion of duties from those previously listed in Law No.15/2011 concerning Election Organizers. The following is an expansion of the task in question.

Table 1. Expansion of Bawaslu Duties
Based on Law No.15/2011 and Law No.7/2017

Assignment	Law No. 15 of 2011	Law No. 7 of 2017
Common	Bawaslu is in charge of supervising the implementation of elections, prevent violations, and take action to hold democratic elections.	Bawaslu is in charge of regulating and cracking down on election violations and disputes over election activities.
Election Supervision	Supervision is limited to campaign activities.	Supervising the process of election activities from implementation to campaign funds.
	There has been no monitoring of the ASN, TNI, POLRI.	Supervision of the ASN, TNI, POLRI has been listed.
Prevention of Election Violations	The problem of Structured, Systematic, Massive Money Politics (TSM) is not explicitly stated.	It has been listed.
Election Handling	Limited in monitoring the implementation of the decision	Monitoring the implementation of Bawaslu (province;

	to hold the election.	regency/city) decisions, official decisions on the neutrality of ASN, TNI, POLRI.
	The task of submitting alleged ethical violations of election misconduct to the DKPP has not been listed.	It has been listed.
	There has been no list of the task of submitting alleged criminal acts to the Integrated Law Enforcement Center (Gakkumdu).	It has been listed.
Prevention and Enforcement of Election Violations	There is no article on Bawaslu's duties in preventing, taking action, violations, and election disputes.	It has been listed.

Source: Data Classification Results (Law No.15/2011 and Law No.7/2017)

From the table, it can be seen that Bawaslu has expanded its duties. The latest regulations show that Bawaslu has increasingly strong duties and authorities in terms of enforcing election law, especially in taking action and deciding on violations (Anwar, 2019). More specifically, in enforcing election law, there are two major issues that are the main topics of discussion, namely related to election violations and disputes. As an election supervisory institution, Bawaslu also plays a role in handling election violations. Bawaslu has the authority to maintain election integrity by obtaining and processing reports of irregularities in election legislation activities, investigating, reviewing, and determining irregularities in the implementation of elections, especially the issue of money politics (Ramdani, 2023). However, in general, Bawaslu plays an active role in ensuring that all election processes run in accordance with the rules and taking firm action against all forms of violations committed by the KPU and all parties involved in the election, such as individual candidates or from political parties that support them (Kusuma et al., 2020).

What is expected in election enforcement is not necessarily in accordance with what is desired, but improvements are always sought in the process so that challenges and obstacles to law enforcement can be minimized (Carto et al., 2022). In enforcing election law, there are challenges faced by Bawaslu, including because the 2023-2024 period is filled with campaign activities, causing the involvement of ASN in this process, the occurrence of election violations reported to election supervisors, new modes of money politics practices, infrastructure and HR capabilities in supporting the implementation of violation handling tasks, and the large number of institutions involved in the election law enforcement system ultimately requires good commitment and coordination (Josviranto, 2022). The challenges that arise are a form of test for Bawaslu in maintaining public trust, questions about the weakness of law enforcement by Bawaslu always accompany Bawaslu. There are three elements influencing law enforcement as conveyed by Lawrence M. Friedman, namely regulatory challenges, legal structures, and legal culture (Ramdani, 2023).

Regarding the regulation issue in the 2024 Election, it can be seen that the regulation used is still the same, namely Law No. 7/2017, then the problem of money politics practices is still quite widely heard. One of them is the alleged violation reported by the West Java

Bawaslu, it was found that there were campaign and money politics violations spread across Bandung, Cimahi, Kerawang, Sukabumi, Depok, Cianjur, and Tasikmalaya (Costa, 2024). Then for the legal structure, although there is already a Gakkumdu Center, there are still problems in the form of ineffective performance of investigators or prosecutors, because of course they are also obliged to handle other tasks outside of election cases. For the problem of legal culture, the problem that is still a culture is some of the characteristics of society itself that still normalize money politics (Ramdani, 2023). Based on these three elements, the enforcement of election law carried out by Bawaslu in the 2024 Election can be said to still face complex challenges so that in overcoming these challenges, comprehensive efforts are needed that involve all stakeholders, both the role of the government and the community. Of the three elements, the regulatory challenges are related to campaign issues. In the complexity of the challenges that also color the 2024 Election contestation as well as the development of the digital era, the phenomenon of political buzzers and the problem of black campaigns that are rampant on social media certainly complicate Bawaslu's task in maintaining integrity in organizing elections.

B. The Phenomenon of Political Buzzers and Black Campaigns

The political world that continues to develop in line with digital developments has also influenced changes in political communication. Buzzers are interpreted as people who spread and promote certain messages (Anugerah, 2020). Another opinion defines buzzers as a group of people whose function is to spread opinions or ideas, especially on social media, because social media is an important platform for exchanging ideas, allowing people to express their thoughts that are usually not heard in the real world (Kurniawati, 2023). From these two opinions, it can be seen that the activity of conveying messages carried out by buzzers can be carried out individually or by a group of people. The history of the beginning of buzzers in Indonesia began in 2009, where along with the increasing number of Indonesian people using social media, especially the social media application X. Initially, buzzers played a role in marketing for business people. However, in the 2012 DKI Jakarta Pilkada, two types of buzzers emerged, namely unpaid buzzers who were on Jokowi's side, and buzzers who were paid to side with Foke, such as the @triomacan2000 account which attacked Jokowi's personal life (Sugiono, 2020). Then, the potential of buzzers in politics for the image business of candidate leaders was expanded in the 2014 Presidential Election and the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial Election (Mustika, 2019). It can be seen that as the years go by, the meaning of buzzers seems to become more negative because buzzers are dominant in voicing messages that attack the candidate's identity.

From several political contestations that have been carried out, it can be seen that the role of buzzers has shifted, from initially advertising products with or without compensation, but in Indonesia it is actually used by political elites to promote themselves and even to bring down their opponents. In this context, political elites use two types of buzzers, namely those who voluntarily do not get paid to spread positive or negative information and there are also paid buzzers whose focus is on forming opinions in attacking political opponents (Kurniawati, 2023). The first type, namely buzzers who move without compensation, usually spread messages on personal initiative, while professional political buzzers are usually recruited by political elites and their work methods are more structured.

The way political buzzers work adapts to the diversity and sophistication of the media, making it easier for them to carry out various activities. The ease of this method of working offers job opportunities that they consider promising and commercialized, because most

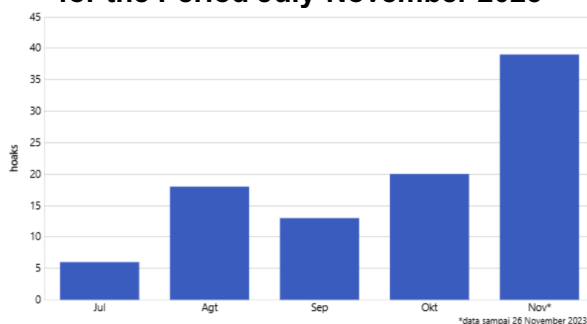
buzzers work by writing posts and sharing content about public and political issues, which seem spontaneous and individual. This content is usually intended to go viral and ultimately benefit the customers of the buzzer. In reality, this activity actually involves many roles, including customers who manage issues, data providers who provide relevant data, and digital strategists who research and design strategies, if revealed further, these buzzers are actually at the bottom of the hierarchy and are only tasked with distributing content that has been prepared and planned (Kurniawati, 2023). The effect of the messages echoed by these buzzers can threaten the integrity of society, supported by the fact that the low level of digital literacy in Indonesian society (Anugerah, 2020) causes public opinion to be easily influenced according to certain interests. Repetition of content carried out by fake accounts or bots in an environment of low digital literacy can lead to polarization, hate speech, fake news, or other negative political strategies to reduce the electability of other candidates (Kurniawati, 2023). Therefore, the public needs to be vigilant and critical of the messages conveyed by political buzzers, because the messages conveyed often contain provocative meanings.

It does not rule out the fact that the presence of buzzers on social media can provide job opportunities that can help reduce unemployment in Indonesia and be a form of democracy because people use technology to participate in politics. However, as well as being a form of democracy because people use technology to participate in politics. However, it is seen that over time there are more and more negative campaign messages being disseminated by political buzzers. Although negative campaigns are not prohibited, this can raise concerns that political buzzers will potentially spread hoax news and trigger conflict (Mustika, 2019). Negative campaigns themselves are defined as campaigns that convey negative information about opponents based on empirical data and research that has been proven to be valid or not, indeed if seen at a glance between negative campaigns and black campaigns they seem the same, but basically the two are different because black campaigns focus more on efforts to bring down opponents by spreading fake news without a basis in fact. Black campaign is defined as a campaign that contains seduction, satire, rumors that are damaging to candidates or prospective candidates to the general public so that an unethical perception arises in public policy (Susanto & Iqbal, 2019). This campaign has a negative impact on the political education of the community, because this campaign seems to allow any means to achieve goals, even to the point of killing characters that have the potential to trigger disputes between candidate pairs, campaign staff, and their followers (Pamungkas & Arifin, 2019).

The use of social media networks as a campaign method is now considered quite effective, as stated in Article 275 paragraph (1) letter e of Law No. 7/2017, Article 23 paragraph (1) letter e jo, and Article 35 paragraph 1 of KPU Regulation Number 28 of 2018 where these articles regulate the use of social media for political campaigns. Strengthened again by the large number of social media users in Indonesia, leading to increasingly rapid, and facilitating communication between politicians and the public on social media (Nur et al., 2022). So, conducting political campaigns on social media is legitimate, even though in reality there are risks that must be faced, black campaigns carried out by political buzzers for example. So far, there have been several issues that often arise in black campaigns which Turistiati then grouped into 3Ta (Wealth, Throne, Women) (Susanto & Iqbal, 2019), it is often said that wealth or property in the form of corruption, women in the form of infidelity, while the throne is considered an ambitious attitude. Issues related to black campaigns that have emerged during the election process in Indonesia, for example in the 2019 Election, Sandiaga Uno was the target of a black campaign, namely the "Sandiaga Scandal" which contained the spread of fake news about him. Other examples are the issues regarding the cessation of the

call to prayer if presidential candidate number 1 is elected, the revival of the PKI, banknotes with Prabowo's name on them, and the scandal of the three lovers of vice presidential candidate number 2. This information was disseminated through various media such as X, WhatsApp, brochures, and Facebook so that in the end the issue influenced the public's view of the candidate who was hit by the issue (Dewanti, 2022).

Figure 1. Data on the Number of Election Hoaxes on Social Media Found by Kominfo for the Period July-November 2023



Source: Databoks.id (Annur, 2023)

During the 2024 Election campaign, there was a lot of hoax news circulating on social media that caused confusion and distrust among the public. As can be seen from the data above, during July to November 2023 alone, the number of hoaxes that Kominfo could track was 96 hoaxes, this number does not include other news that was widely circulated on social media whose truth was unclear. The hoaxes that emerged included engineered photo or video content that depicted political figures in a negative or even misleading context, for example, photos that were edited in such a way as to give rise to the perception that President Jokowi was supporting a particular candidate. Then there were also widely circulated false claims about the policies that the presidential and vice presidential candidates would present, this is also a form of fraud that is rampant. This includes false promises that are spread to influence voters, and issues have also emerged that voter data has been manipulated to support a party (Kominfo, 2023). Black campaigns on social media often go undetected because it is difficult to find the creators and distributors of the content because in some cases the accounts that spread the campaign are anonymous accounts. In addition, the borderless nature of social media makes it difficult to categorize and evaluate these actions using conventional legal standards and qualifications (Thanzani et al., 2022), making the prosecution of black campaigns on social media a major challenge.

The major challenge that is present is magnified by the absence of clear rules or regulations that govern and prosecute buzzer activities in spreading black campaigns. Strict regulations are needed to ensure that black campaign actors or political buzzers do not run campaigns that can endanger political stability. This problem becomes more complicated when political buzzers use anonymous accounts, making it difficult for law enforcement to detect and prosecute violators (Fitria, 2023).

Figure 2. Content of Bawaslu's Appeal Regarding Hoaxes and Hate Speech



Source: Instagram @bawasluri

The government still relies on Law No. 11 of 2008 which was amended to Law No. 19 of 2016 concerning Information and Electronic Transactions (UU ITE) to combat hoax news, defamation, and hate speech on social media platforms (Doly, 2020). However, as previously explained, black campaigners are often difficult to catch because their identities are vague. The ITE Law does not specifically regulate influencers, buzzers, and other terms. Including if this is prosecuted under the Election Law if there is a violation or crime related to the election on social media. Its implementation is difficult because it is necessary to first identify the perpetrators behind fake and anonymous accounts that spread misleading narratives on the election.

If investigated further, some argue that there are actually implied rules governing this black campaign. One of the rules is in Law No. 7 of 2017, Article 280 paragraph 1, which prohibits organizers, participants and campaign teams from carrying out various actions, such as questioning the state philosophy of Pancasila, insulting a person or group of people, inciting, disturbing public order, and using state facilities for election campaigns. Those who violate this article are threatened with a maximum imprisonment of two years and a maximum fine of IDR 24,000,000. However, this provision does not specifically mention black campaigns, so further clarified regulations are needed to determine certain actions that fall into the black campaign category. In addition, this is also mentioned in Article 521 of Law No. 7/2017, but again this article is not strong enough to prosecute perpetrators of black campaigns. In line with the existing regulations, this problem can also be implicitly subject to Law No. 19/2016 Article 27 (3) and Article 28 (2). Article 27 paragraph 3 contains a prohibition on spreading electronic content/information containing insults or slander, and those who violate it are subject to a maximum prison sentence of four years and/or a maximum fine of IDR 750,000,000. Then, Article 28 paragraph 2 contains a prohibition on spreading information that can give rise to hatred or disputes based on SARA, and those who violate it are subject to a maximum prison sentence of six years and/or a maximum fine of IDR 1,000,000,000 (Doly, 2020). The prosecution of black campaign perpetrators with this ITE Law article ultimately became a rubber article because there was a lot of ambiguity in it. Seeing the phenomena that adorn every political contest shows that there needs to be a role for Bawaslu which acts as a supervisory institution in the implementation of general elections and all its stages. Including also in supervising the rampant black campaigns spread to social media by political buzzers. Reported from Instagram @bawasluri, during the 2024 Election,

Bawaslu has carried out 141,008 prevention efforts. This intervention can be seen through several activities as follows. First, Bawaslu carried out vulnerability identification by compiling the Election Vulnerability Index (IKP) from the vulnerability of the stages, special issues, to coordinating to the district/city level. Second, Bawaslu carried out educational prevention by conducting participatory supervision (P2P), socialization, Bawaslu Ngampus, supervision corners, to digital literacy education. Third, Bawaslu carried out community participation by managing participatory supervisor cadres, thematic KKN, participatory supervision citizen forums, participatory supervision villages, management of participatory supervision digital communities, to consolidation with election observers. Fourth, cooperation was carried out by collaborating with many parties through audiences, MoUs, cooperation agreements, and coordination forums with various stakeholders. Fourth, in publications, Bawaslu held conferences or press releases, podcasts, public discussions, coverage, news, and others. Fifth, the prevention service script is carried out by issuing circulars, instruction letters, appeal letters, decree letters in all Bawaslu ranks. Sixth, other prevention innovation activities include public complaint posts, consultations, meetings, supervision, and monitoring. Here are some evidences that Bawaslu is actively carrying out black campaign prevention activities on social media.

At the national level, Bawaslu is actively posting content on social media that urges the public to be aware of hoaxes, for example, what was done in a post dated February 20, 2024. Where that date is the sixth day after the 2024 Election. The content contains information about how the public should respond to hoaxes and hate speech, an invitation to report the incident to Bawaslu, and Bawaslu's efforts in Guarding Digital Space. Guarding Digital Space itself is Bawaslu's effort by spreading election messages peacefully through social media and collaborating with anti-hoax communities; together with election participants, peaceful coalitions, and social media platforms, making a peaceful declaration for the 2024 Election; synergizing with the Ministry of Communication and Information and social media platforms to eradicate hoaxes and all forms of misinformation about the election spread on social media; assisting law enforcement officers in enforcing the law against the behavior of spreading election hoaxes; and through the election hoax reporting hotline, cyber supervision is strengthened regarding the handling of public complaints about election hoaxes.

Figure 3. Campaign Appeal Content During Quiet Period



Source: Instagram @bawasluri

Bawaslu is actively disseminating information about election regulations, for example regarding the appeal to implement campaigns, Bawaslu has actually posted a prohibition on campaign activities during the quiet period, precisely on February 10, 2024. However, what is interesting is that during this quiet period there is a documentary film entitled "Dirty Vote", where this documentary film gives rise to the wild assumption that this film is a form of black campaign carried out during the quiet period, so that the public perception arises that Bawaslu is incompetent and seems to have failed to supervise the 2024 Election. At that time, as the chairman of Bawaslu, Rahmat Bagja responded that the film was still being studied by Bawaslu (Noviansah, 2024). Bawaslu appealed for digital literacy to be further improved because in Indonesia it is still relatively low. Digital literacy is an important added value in the use of social media to avoid black campaigns. By improving this ability, it can help in analyzing content and culture on social media, and this can be done by various elements of society (Dewanti, 2022).

Figure 4. Bawaslu Content How to Recognize Potential Hoaxes



Source: X @bawaslu_RI

To improve digital literacy, Bawaslu has done this by making new innovations, for example through the Recheck Sebelum Kegocek quiz. The quiz is a collaboration between Bawaslu and Google Indonesia involving the Indonesian Anti-Slander Society (Mafindo), the Alliance of Independent Journalists of Indonesia (AJI), and the Indonesian Cyber Media Association (AMSI). In addition, Bawaslu invites the public to be active in carrying out participatory supervision, for example in participatory supervisory education events.

Reflecting on the prevention efforts carried out by Bawaslu, it shows that synergistic law enforcement between state institutions and various social media providers and the public, in order to strengthen the prevention of black campaigns carried out by buzzers that can endanger the state. From the preventive efforts that have been taken, the next step is repressive steps.

Reported from Instagram @bawasluri, as of February 27, 2024 during the implementation of all stages of the 2024 Election, there were 46 alleged criminal violations handled directly by Bawaslu, where campaign violations were the type of violation that ranked first as the most criminal violations. This shows that the level of problems related to campaigns, including black campaigns, is still very high.

To that end, Bawaslu has a strategy to combat black campaign buzzers on social media by collaborating with a number of government agencies, namely the Ministry of Communication and Information, the Attorney General's Office, the police, and other agencies

related to the election. The expansion of Bawaslu's authority includes increasing supervision of black campaigns on social media. This is supported by changes to Article 93 of Law No. 7/2017, this change aims to enforce the law against parties involved in black campaigns on social media (Nasution et al., 2023).

Another repressive strategy is Bawaslu's efforts to increase the effectiveness of reporting from the public through Gakkumdu and Gowaslu. Gowaslu itself is an application to facilitate the reporting process if violations are found during the election, especially to monitor black campaigns on social media, because before this application, the public often experienced campaign violations but did not have access and understanding of the reporting mechanism at Bawaslu (Ilmar et al., 2024).

In taking action against buzzers, Bawaslu plays a role according to its duties in applicable regulations. Bawaslu's steps to determine fairness and freedom from violations can be seen from the identification and mapping of potential violations that are coordinated, supervised, directed, monitored, and evaluated by the election process. Supervising all stages of the election is the task of Bawaslu, starting from the updating of voter data until the end of the election when the results are determined. In addition, Bawaslu is tasked with investigating reports of alleged violations of laws and regulations related to the election, in addition to issuing regulations related to strategies for preventing election violations (Nasution et al., 2023).

From several efforts that have been made by Bawaslu above, it shows that Bawaslu has made good efforts to handle the problem of handling buzzers who carry out black campaigns on social media in the 2024 Election, so that it can be concluded that in dealing with this problem, Bawaslu is carrying out two major strategies, namely in the form of prevention efforts or preventive strategies and taking action against violations that occur during the election or repressive strategies.

4 | CONCLUSION

The study emphasizes Bawaslu's crucial role in confronting the black campaign challenges posed by the 2024 elections through preventive and repressive measures. The intricacies of regulating digital platforms, operational and structural inefficiencies in enforcement regimes, and the socio-political dynamics that normalize unethical electoral practices come into sharp relief. This is illustrative of broader systemic challenges that cut across Bawaslu's immediate capabilities; hence, comprehensive regulatory reforms, better technological support, and cultural change to uphold electoral integrity would be warranted. While Bawaslu remains engaged, its measures in combating this challenge are limited by their scalability and adaptability in our fast-paced digital world. Prevention can foster awareness and participation, yet these measures cannot match the reach of the widespread misinformation being countered. The same goes for repression; however, these measures are limited due to imprecise regulation, multiple agencies having jurisdiction over the same issue, and issues of resources. This situation necessitates an approach that integrates all aspects in order to achieve a correct balance between prevention and enforcement. Future research could investigate some alternative approaches for closing the regulatory void that exists, mainly in defining and targeting digital black campaigns. The intersection of artificial intelligence and big data with the opportunity of assessing and analyzing electoral misdemeanors should be explored as an interrogative avenue. Long-term studies on voter behavior and the effect of educational programs, such as those for digital literacy, would help

contribute to the understanding of how long preventive measures might work.

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