

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengevaluasi kebijakan pemilihan kepala desa (Pilkades) secara *e-voting* di Desa Senaning, Kabupaten Batanghari, serta menelaah dampaknya terhadap prinsip-prinsip demokrasi di tingkat desa. Meskipun pada awalnya Desa Senaning direncanakan mengikuti Pilkades serentak tahun 2021 menggunakan sistem *e-voting*, kebijakan tersebut tidak terlaksana. Penolakan dari masyarakat muncul akibat rendahnya literasi digital, minimnya sosialisasi, serta kekhawatiran terhadap potensi kecurangan dalam sistem elektronik. Akibatnya, kepala desa ditunjuk langsung oleh camat, tanpa melalui mekanisme pemilihan oleh warga. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode empiris dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara terhadap warga Desa Senaning. Hasil temuan menunjukkan tiga implikasi utama dari tidak dilaksanakannya *e-voting*: (1) pelanggaran terhadap asas demokrasi desa karena hak memilih diabaikan; (2) timbulnya apatisme politik dan menurunnya kepercayaan masyarakat terhadap pemerintah desa; dan (3) menguatnya dominasi elit lokal yang menyebabkan lemahnya partisipasi warga dalam tata kelola desa. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan pentingnya kesiapan sosial dan teknologi sebelum penerapan *e-voting*, dengan menekankan perlunya sosialisasi menyeluruh, pelibatan aktif masyarakat, serta pengawasan yang transparan agar kebijakan digital dapat berjalan sesuai dengan prinsip demokrasi yang partisipatif dan inklusif.

Kata Kunci: Pemilihan, Kepala Desa, *E-voting*

ABSTRACT

This study aims to evaluate the policy of implementing electronic voting (e-voting) in the village head election (Pilkades) in Senaning Village, Batanghari Regency, and to examine its impact on democratic principles at the village level. Although Senaning Village was initially scheduled to participate in the 2021 simultaneous village elections using the e-voting system, the policy was not implemented. Public resistance emerged due to low digital literacy, lack of adequate socialization, and concerns over potential fraud in the electronic system. As a result, the village head was appointed directly by the sub-district head (camat) without going through an electoral process involving the citizens. This study employs an empirical method with data collected through interviews with residents of Senaning Village. The findings reveal three main implications of the failure to implement e-voting: (1) a violation of democratic principles at the village level, as the right to vote was neglected; (2) the emergence of political apathy and declining public trust in the village government; and (3) the strengthening of local elite dominance, leading to weakened citizen participation in village governance. This study recommends the need for both technological and social readiness prior to the implementation of e-voting, highlighting the importance of comprehensive socialization, active community involvement, and transparent oversight to ensure that digital policies align with participatory and inclusive democratic values.

Keywords: Election, Village Head, E-voting.