



Electoral Justice in a Legal Perspective: A Study on the Function of the Gakkumdu Center

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the effectiveness of the Integrated Law Enforcement Center (Sentra Gakkumdu) in upholding electoral justice in Indonesia using the legal system theory framework, which includes legal structure, legal substance, and legal culture. The research aims to identify normative and practical obstacles in the enforcement of election crimes and to formulate strategies for improving relevant regulations. This study employs a normative juridical approach through literature review and analysis of statutory regulations related to election law enforcement. The findings indicate that the effectiveness of Gakkumdu is largely influenced by inter-institutional coordination among election law enforcement bodies, the quality of human resources, and budgetary support. Several obstacles were identified, including differing interpretations of provisions in the Election Law, limited timeframes for handling election crime cases, and procedural complexity that hinders effective case resolution. To enhance the role of Gakkumdu, regulatory improvements are necessary, particularly in clarifying the definition of election crimes, strengthening coordination mechanisms, and improving the capacity and integrity of law enforcement officials. This research is expected to contribute both academically and practically to strengthening the election law enforcement system in Indonesia in order to promote fair, honest, and democratic elections.

Keywords: Electoral Justice, Gakkumdu, Election Law Enforcement, Legal System Theory, Indonesia.

1. Introduction

General elections (elections) are one of the fundamental instruments in the modern democratic system. Elections are seen as a means of realizing people's sovereignty as well as a mechanism to determine the leadership and direction of the country's development (Basuki 2020). In the context of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), elections are not only a formal procedure to elect representatives of the people and government leaders, but also a symbol of the consolidation of democracy based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. Through elections, the people are given the opportunity to participate directly in determining the direction of state policies, so that the principle of people's sovereignty can really be realized. The implementation of direct, public, free, secret, honest, and fair elections (Luber Jurdil) is an absolute requirement for the sustainability of democracy (Agustapa 2024). Quality elections not only produce people's representatives or leaders with strong legitimacy, but also create political and social stability that has a positive impact on national development (Agustin, Maharani, and Ramadhani 2024). In practice, the integrity of elections is largely determined by election organizers, applicable legal mechanisms, and the role of law enforcement officials in supervising and handling various forms of violations. Therefore, it is not enough for democratic elections to be carried out procedurally, but must also be carried out with the principles of accountability, transparency, and the rule of law (Monopoli, Usaha, and Lalu 2025).

Within the legal framework in Indonesia, the implementation of elections is under the responsibility of the General Election Commission (KPU) as the technical organizer and the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) as the supervisory institution (Hayckel, Paskarina, and Solihah 2024). The KPU drafts regulations, implements stages, and ensures that the process runs in accordance with the provisions of the law (Nugroho and Sukmariningsih 2020). Meanwhile, Bawaslu not only plays a role in supervising the running of the election, but also handles various alleged violations both administrative, ethical, and election crimes. The presence of Bawaslu shows that democracy in

Indonesia emphasizes the aspect of strong supervision so that the election process is not only legally valid but also morally and politically legitimate. However, a big challenge in the implementation of elections in Indonesia is the rampant practice of violations, especially money politics (Ananingsih 2016). This phenomenon has long been a chronic disease of democracy that is difficult to eradicate, both in the election of presidents, legislative members, and regional heads. Money politics not only injures the principles of justice and honesty, but also has the potential to produce leaders who lack integrity (Syifaullah 2025). Furthermore, this practice strengthens the culture of transactional politics which results in a weak quality of public policy in the future. In this context, election law enforcement is the main key. To strengthen the coordination and effectiveness of handling election crimes, an Integrated Law Enforcement Center (Gakkumdu) was formed consisting of Bawaslu, the Police, and the Prosecutor's Office. The presence of Gakkumdu is an institutional innovation that is expected to be able to unite perceptions, strengthen coordination, and provide legal certainty in every case of election violations (Junaidi 2020).

Although Gakkumdu is expected to be at the forefront of election law enforcement, in practice various obstacles are still found. For example, in the last few elections, there have been differences in interpretations between institutions regarding the category of election criminal violations, whether they are administrative, ethical, or criminal (Ersan and Erliyana 2018). This difference often causes confusion in the process of handling cases, thus delaying or even thwarting law enforcement efforts (Fadhilah 2025). In addition, coordination between Bawaslu, the Police, and the Prosecutor's Office still faces obstacles, both in terms of procedural and substance. Not infrequently, reports of alleged violations submitted by the public cannot be processed optimally due to limited human resources, budget, and high workload (Ilham 2025). This condition causes the effectiveness of the Gakkumdu in upholding electoral justice to be questioned. Money politics cases that are proven visibly in the field are sometimes difficult to bring to the legal realm due to evidentiary constraints or inconsistency of views between institutions within the Gakkumdu. This situation ultimately has an impact on the decline of public trust in the integrity of elections and law enforcement officials.

The main problem that arises is how effective the Gakkumdu is in carrying out its role as an instrument of election law enforcement. Has the coordination between institutions within the Gakkumdu been carried out in accordance with the initial purpose of its formation? What is the quality of handling cases of election violations, especially money politics? And to what extent is Gakkumdu able to make a real contribution in creating honest and fair elections? Other issues relate to structural, substantial, and cultural aspects of the law. In terms of structure, there is a problem of coordination and synergy between institutions. In terms of substance, there is still a vagueness of norms or differences in legal interpretation. In terms of legal culture, the low awareness of the public and political elite on the importance of clean elections has also worsened the situation. This shows that election law enforcement through the Gakkumdu still faces serious challenges that must be studied further.

Several studies on the role and effectiveness of the Integrated Law Enforcement Center (Gakkumdu) in election law enforcement have been conducted previously. (GUSTIA 2020) examined the implementation of Gakkumdu's authority in handling regional head election crimes in Takalar Regency, Parepare City, and Sidenreng Rappang Regency, South Sulawesi, concluding that its effectiveness has not been optimal due to weak inter-agency coordination and limited institutional resources. (Buntu, Ode Husen, and Qamar 2022), in their study in Makassar City, found that Gakkumdu's law enforcement performance remains constrained by the complexity of electoral procedures and the involvement of multiple actors, including election supervisors and law enforcement agencies. These studies reveal a recurring pattern of structural and procedural challenges, particularly related to coordination, resource limitations, and bureaucratic complexity, which hinder the optimal functioning of Gakkumdu in upholding electoral justice.

However, existing studies predominantly focus on empirical and regional case-based analyses, without sufficiently examining Gakkumdu's effectiveness through a comprehensive legal system theory perspective that integrates legal structure, legal substance, and legal culture. Moreover, limited attention has been given to identifying normative weaknesses within election law regulations that directly affect inter-institutional coordination and procedural effectiveness.

Therefore, this research seeks to fill this gap by offering a normative juridical analysis of Gakkumdu's effectiveness grounded in legal system theory. The novelty of this study lies in its integrative approach, which not only maps practical obstacles but also critically evaluates regulatory substance and institutional design to formulate systematic recommendations for strengthening election law enforcement. By doing so, this research contributes

both theoretically and practically to the development of a more coherent and effective electoral justice framework in Indonesia.

In addition, elections in Indonesia that are held simultaneously on a large scale demand responsive and professional law enforcement. Therefore, this research is urgent to be carried out as an academic contribution in providing recommendations for improving the electoral law enforcement system. The results of the research are expected to be valuable input for policymakers, law enforcement officials, and election organizers in order to strengthen democracy in Indonesia.

This study aims to analyze in depth the effectiveness of the Integrated Law Enforcement Center (Gakkumdu) in upholding electoral justice in Indonesia. The analysis will be carried out using the framework of legal structure, legal substance, and legal culture to obtain a comprehensive picture of the role of the Gakkumdu. Specifically, this study aims to:

1. Identify the problems faced by the Gakkumdu in handling election crimes.
2. Analyze the coordination between institutions involved in Gakkumdu, namely Bawaslu, the Police, and the Prosecutor's Office.
3. Assessing the effectiveness of election law enforcement through Gakkumdu is reviewed from the aspects of legal structure, substance, and culture.
4. Providing policy recommendations to strengthen the role of the Gakkumdu in creating honest, fair, and democratic elections.

2. Method Research

This study uses a normative juridical method with an analytical descriptive design, which was chosen because this study focuses on the analysis of the applicable positive law as well as examining its effectiveness in the context of election law enforcement in Indonesia (Hastia 2025). The normative juridical method emphasizes the study of laws and regulations, legal doctrines, and relevant court decisions as the main source, so as to be able to clearly describe how the rule of law is designed and the extent to which it functions in practice (Boli and M 2025). Analytical descriptive design is used to describe the legal phenomena that occur while conducting a critical analysis of the implementation of legal norms in the enforcement of election crimes. The data sources in this study consist of primary legal materials, such as Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, government regulations, regulations of the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), as well as court decisions related to election crimes; as well as secondary legal materials in the form of books, scientific journals, articles, research reports, and other publications relevant to the research topic. The data collection technique is carried out through library research by browsing legal literature, analyzing official documents, and reviewing court decisions related to election crimes (Irwansyah 2022). The choice of this method is considered appropriate because the problem studied emphasizes more on the clarity of the norms and the effectiveness of applicable law enforcement, rather than on the collection of empirical data from the field.

The collected data were analyzed using a qualitative legal analysis with clearly defined and structured stages. The analysis began with an open coding process, in which primary and secondary legal materials, such as statutory regulations, court decisions, official documents, and relevant scholarly works, were systematically reviewed to identify key concepts, recurring issues, and normative problems related to election law enforcement and the role of the Integrated Law Enforcement Center (Gakkumdu).

Following this, the identified codes were organized through categorization and thematic analysis, whereby similar codes were grouped into broader analytical categories corresponding to the three elements of Lawrence M. Friedman's legal system theory, namely legal structure, legal substance, and legal culture. This stage enabled the researcher to establish conceptual linkages between institutional arrangements, regulatory norms, and socio-legal practices in election law enforcement.

To enhance analytical rigor and validity, the study employed data triangulation, by comparing and cross-referencing statutory provisions, doctrinal legal interpretations, and findings from previous empirical studies. This triangulation ensured consistency of interpretation and reduced normative bias in drawing conclusions.

Through these analytical stages, the study develops systematic and argumentative conclusions regarding the effectiveness of Gakkumdu in upholding electoral justice, identifies structural, substantive, and cultural obstacles, and formulates normative recommendations aimed at strengthening democracy and electoral integrity in Indonesia.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 The Concept of Electoral Justice and Measuring the Power Center of Gakkumdu

Citing a summary of the International Publication of the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) published in 2010 entitled Electoral Justice explains the scope of the concept of electoral justice. In the writing, it is emphasized that electoral justice guarantees that every Act, procedure, and Decision related to the election process is in accordance with the legal framework; protect or restore voting rights; and allowing citizens who convince citizens who believe their voting rights have been violated to file complaints to attend hearings and get a verdict. The electoral justice system is an important instrument to enforce the law and ensure the full application of democratic principles through the implementation of free, fair, and honest elections. The electoral justice system was developed to prevent and identify irregularities in elections, as well as a means and mechanism to correct these irregularities and provide sanctions to the perpetrators of violations (Idea 2020)

The implementation of the electoral justice enforcement system requires an institution that is independent and formed based on the applicable laws and regulations. The presence of the election supervisory institution which also serves as an election justice enforcement institution has a fairly long history until finally the General Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) was formed (Tobing, Purnamasari, and Sastrawan 2024) The presence of the Gakkumdu Center at the central, provincial to district/city levels is a hope for the community, students, and election participants and oversees the running of the democratic party and becomes an institution that enforces justice for election crimes. An instrument for the community and election participants in seeking justice if the implementation of the election does not run in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations. In measuring the success of the Gakkumdu Center in upholding criminal justice in elections, several indicators are needed. Lawrence M. Friedman, in his book *The Legal System*, explains that the effectiveness and success of enforcement depends on three elements of the legal system, namely *the structure of law*, *the substance of law*, and *the legal culture* (Razak 2023).

3.1.1. The Effectiveness of the Gakkumdu Center Reviewed from the Aspect of Legal Structure

The legal structure concerns law enforcement. Structure is a pattern that shows how the law is carried out according to the provisions of its formal provisions. This structure shows how the courts, lawmakers and legal bodies and processes run as they should. The tangible manifestation of the law enforcement institution is Bawaslu which is also an election justice enforcement institution as stated in Article 468 of Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning Elections. Then institutional strengthening in Article 468 paragraph 1 of Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning Elections. In the Article, it is very clear that Bawaslu was then given the authority to establish the Integrated Law Enforcement Center (Gakkumdu) which is the center of election law enforcement activities consisting of Bawaslu, the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia and the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Indonesia.

One of the important factors is the quality of coordination between institutions. Junaidi emphasized the importance of Bawaslu as a central institution in the Gakkumdu to ensure harmonization and synchronization in handling election violations. However, in practice, coordination between agencies often faces challenges. Differences in legal interpretations, different procedures, and different interests can hinder effective coordination (Junaidi 2020)

Table 1. Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of the Gakkumdu Legal Structure

Factor	Description	Implication
Inter-Agency Coordination	The quality of communication, cooperation, and synergy between Bawaslu, the Police, and the Prosecutor's Office.	Good coordination speeds up case handling, reduces differences in interpretation, and increases the effectiveness of law enforcement.

Factor	Description	Implication
Human Resources	The quality and quantity of personnel involved in the Gakkumdu, including education, training, and experience.	Qualified personnel can handle cases professionally, understand the law in depth, and make informed decisions.
Budget and Facilities	Adequate budget availability and supporting facilities, such as offices, equipment, and information technology.	Adequate budgets and adequate facilities support the smooth enforcement process, speed up case resolution, and increase efficiency.

In efforts to enforce the law on election crimes, Bawaslu often experiences difficulties, especially in the realm of similarity of understanding or perception with the police and prosecutor's office who are members of the gakkumdu center. In the discussion of cases, there are often differences of opinion or perception to follow up on the election criminal process. If you look at the cases that exist in various regions. In the North Kalimantan region, in particular, the bawaslu carried out the process of handling election crimes but was stopped because the time given by Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning Elections was very limited.

Limited time for the Gakkumdu Center, Bawaslu in handling violations of findings and reports if there is a conflict of regulations, then the process of handling violations committed by the Gakkumdu Center becomes outdated as an example if what is processed by Bawaslu is a Legislative Member who is still active and is a candidate for the next legislative candidate, then two laws and regulations apply, namely Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning Elections and Law No. 2 of 2018 concerning the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR), the House of Representatives (DPR), the Regional Representative Council (DPD), and the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD). The matter is regulated in Article 245 paragraph 1 which states that summons and requests to members of the House of Representatives in connection with the occurrence of criminal acts that are not related to the implementation of duties as referred to in Article 224 must receive written approval from the president after consideration from the Honorary Court of the Council (MKD). As a consequence of all that, the investigation of the suspect was stopped because it had expired and could not be extended anymore. In response to this, it is necessary to adjust and affirm the position of active membership status as a Legislative Member and status as a Legislative Member Candidate.

3.1.2. The Effectiveness of the Gakkumdu Center Reviewed from the Aspect of Legal Substance

According to Sri Soemantri, the constitution is essentially the same as the Constitution, which is the basic law that is the basis for the administration of the state (Hasim 2017) The substance of the law in the context of Gakkumdu refers to the legal rules that regulate election crimes. Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections is the main legal basis that regulates election crimes. However, the effectiveness of this legal substance is highly dependent on the clarity, comprehensiveness, and consistency of the rules. The study of the substance of law focuses on the rules, norms, and patterns of real human behavior in the legal system. If the substance of the law concerns the applicable laws and regulations that have binding power and become a guideline for law enforcement apparatus. Legal substance deals with how a rule or regulation should be applied, which in legal terminology is known as *dassollen*. Article 486 paragraph 5 of the Election Law emphasizes that investigators and prosecutors are temporarily seconded and given other duties from other agencies while carrying out their duties. Meanwhile, the facts in the field in handling violations at Bawaslu are very demanded by the activeness of the Gakkumdu Center in conducting initial mapping of cases that will be handled both in the form of findings and reports, while individuals who are members of the Gakkumdu Center at Bawaslu, both from the police and from the prosecutor's office, also have strategic positions in each institution. Of course, this is an obstacle for the gakkumdu center in carrying out its duties as an election integrity enforcer.

One of the main challenges lies in the unclear and insufficiently detailed definition of election crimes. Several provisions in the Election Law remain open to multiple interpretations, leading to differing understandings among law enforcement officials (Fitri and Hanafi 2022). This situation may result in inconsistent case handling and undermine legal certainty. Furthermore, the Election Law needs to provide more detailed clarification regarding the

qualifications of acts that are categorized as violations or criminal offenses (Razak 2023). Such clarification is essential to offer clear guidance for law enforcement authorities in determining appropriate sanctions. In addition, the criminal sanctions stipulated in the Election Law require further evaluation. Several studies indicate that conditional criminal sanctions, which are frequently applied in election crime cases, have not been effective in creating a deterrent effect. Therefore, it is necessary to assess the effectiveness of existing sanctions and consider the implementation of stricter penalties to enhance deterrence and prevent future election violations (Hidayat et al. 2023). examine the disparity in the severity of sanctions between the Election Law and the Regional Head Election Law concerning the offense of unlawfully exercising another person's voting rights.

In addition to the issue of legal substance, the effectiveness of Gakkumdu in the enforcement of election laws is also influenced by the existing legal structure. Legal structure according to Lawrence M. Friedman refers to the law enforcement agencies and officials that enforce the regulations. In the context of elections, Gakkumdu is a forum for coordination between Bawaslu, the Police, and the Prosecutor's Office. Ideally, the existence of this structure ensures that the process of handling election crimes runs synergistically, quickly, and effectively. However, the reality is that there is often sectoral ego between institutions that hinders coordination. This is exacerbated by the fact that the apparatus seconded to the Gakkumdu often still has strategic positions in their home institutions, so that the concentration on handling election cases is not optimal. Thus, the weakness of this legal structure also contributes to the inhibition of fair election law enforcement.

On the other hand, legal culture is also an important factor that determines the success of Gakkumdu in carrying out its duties. Legal culture includes attitudes, values, and levels of legal awareness from both law enforcement officials and the community. In the practice of elections in Indonesia, there are still many people who view money politics or administrative violations as something commonplace, even natural in political contestation. This low legal awareness makes many violations not reported, or if reported, often considered part of a purely political strategy. On the part of the authorities, a legal culture that is still influenced by political pressure or certain institutional interests can also weaken the independence of the Gakkumdu. Thus, strengthening the legal culture with integrity is an absolute requirement to realize truly democratic elections.

Another obstacle that should be considered is the existence of multiple interpretations in the enforcement of legal norms, especially in cases of election crimes that are technical and require strong evidence. For example, proving a money politics case requires not only proof of transactions, but also witnesses who dare to speak out. Many cases stop in the middle of the road because witnesses are reluctant to give information due to intimidation or social fear. This shows that the legal rules written in the Election Law are often not in line with the reality on the ground. As a result, many election crimes were not resolved completely, which in turn caused a negative perception of the performance of the Gakkumdu.

In addition, the effectiveness of election law enforcement through Gakkumdu is also greatly influenced by the availability of human resources and budgets. Handling election crimes requires speed, precision, and adequate legal expertise. However, facts in the field show that individuals who are members of the Gakkumdu do not always have equal competence in terms of handling election cases. Budget limitations are also an obstacle in itself, especially in supporting Gakkumdu operations in remote areas. This imbalance between ideal needs and real conditions results in the effectiveness of law enforcement often not matching expectations.

In the end, the role of the Gakkumdu in upholding electoral justice must be seen as a process that still needs a lot of improvement. In terms of legal substance, there needs to be a clearer, more detailed, and consistent improvement of the rules to avoid multiple interpretations. In terms of legal structure, a stronger coordination mechanism is needed and free from sectoral egos between institutions. In terms of legal culture, increasing public legal awareness and the integrity of law enforcement officials are the main key. Without improving these three aspects, the goal of honest, fair, and democratic elections will be difficult to achieve. Therefore, research on the effectiveness of Gakkumdu is very important as a basis for formulating improvement strategies for election law enforcement in the future.

3.1.3. The Effectiveness of the Gakkumdu Center Reviewed from the Aspect of Legal Culture

Legal culture concerns legal culture which is the attitude of human beings (including the legal culture of law enforcement apparatus) towards the law and the legal system. As no matter how well the legal structure is structured to carry out the established legal rules and no matter how good the quality of the legal substance is formed without the support of the legal culture by the people involved in the system and society, law enforcement cannot run effectively. This perspective refers more to independence and integrity for each of these law enforcers. The existence of external factors that are full of interests makes independence and integrity for every law enforcer somewhat prone to being torn apart or cold.

Legal culture in the context of Gakkumdu refers to the values, norms, and attitudes of society towards election law. A positive legal culture will support effective law compliance and enforcement. However, in practice, the legal culture in Indonesia still faces various challenges. One of the main challenges is the lack of public understanding of election law. Many people are not fully aware of their rights and obligations in elections, as well as the consequences of violating election laws (Razak 2023) This can lead to unlawful behavior, such as money politics, the spread of fake news, and the use of other people's suffrage.

To improve the legal culture, intensive education and socialization efforts are needed to the community. Education about election law must begin early, including in schools and colleges. Socialization about rights and obligations in elections, as well as the consequences of violations of the law, must be carried out continuously through various media, such as mass media, social media, and community activities. In addition, public participation in election supervision also needs to be improved. The public must be encouraged to actively report election violations, provide accurate information, and support election law enforcement. Active community involvement will strengthen election law enforcement and create more honest and fair elections.

Legal culture reflects the attitudes and values embraced by the community and law enforcement officials towards the legal system. However, no matter how strong the legal structure is and no matter how clear the legal substance is formed, without a strong legal culture from system actors and society, the effectiveness of law enforcement will be very limited. In the context of Gakkumdu, the independence and integrity of law enforcement are particularly vulnerable to being disturbed by various external pressures, such as political interests or institutional sectoral egos. The legal culture within the framework of the Gakkumdu is not only an administrative guide, but also a mirror of the values and norms that develop in society. As long as the legal culture is low, characterized by permissive views on practices such as money politics, the spread of hoaxes, and the use of other parties' voting rights, law enforcement will face serious challenges. The phenomenon of money politics is a clear illustration of the widespread problem of legal culture. In the 2019 election, data showed that between 19.4% and 33.1% of voters were involved in the practice of money politics, a figure that indicates a high threshold of social tolerance for behavior that is actually unlawful (Lati praja delmana 2020) In fact, LIPi said that 47.4% of respondents understood this practice(Lati praja delmana 2020) Other data shows that in the 2024 election, 35% of respondents stated that they voted for money, as well as a minor decrease in the number of people who actively reject money politics (from 9.8% to 8%) (Riandi 2024) This shows a structural problem in forming a legal culture that is critical of democratic violations.

Table 1. Legal Culture and Its Implications for the Effectiveness of Gakkumdu in Election Law Enforcement

Aspect of Legal Culture	Description / Phenomenon	Empirical Data	Implications for Gakkumdu Effectiveness
Legal awareness of society	Public attitudes toward election law violations remain permissive, particularly regarding money politics, hoaxes, and misuse of voting rights.	In the 2019 election, 19.4%–33.1% of voters were involved in money politics; 47.4% of respondents understood the practice (Lati Praja Delmana, 2020).	High social tolerance weakens deterrence and reduces public support for strict law enforcement.

Attitudes toward money politics	Money politics is perceived as a common and acceptable electoral practice rather than a criminal offense.	In the 2024 election, 35% of respondents admitted voting for money; rejection of money politics declined from 9.8% to 8% (Riandi, 2024).	Normalization of violations undermines the moral authority of Gakkumdu and complicates evidence gathering.
Integrity of law enforcement officials	Law enforcement independence within Gakkumdu is vulnerable to political pressure and sectoral institutional interests.	Qualitative indications of external intervention and institutional ego within law enforcement bodies.	Weak integrity compromises coordination and consistency in handling election crime cases.
Legal culture of system actors	Legal culture among Gakkumdu actors functions not only administratively but also reflects prevailing social and political values.	Persistent procedural compromise and selective enforcement practices.	Strong legal structure and substance become ineffective without supportive legal culture.
Critical democratic values	Limited public resistance to democratic violations indicates weak internalization of electoral ethics.	Declining proportion of voters actively rejecting money politics (Riandi, 2024).	Structural obstacles to building a law-abiding electoral culture and sustainable electoral justice.

Source: Delmana, L. P. (2020). *Money politics and voter behavior in the 2019 Indonesian general election*. Jakarta: Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI).

To reverse these negative trends, a systematic and comprehensive approach to legal education and socialization is needed. Programs such as the Anti Money Politics Village (KAMP) in Magelang Regency have shown positive results. Research shows that the implementation of KAMP in Sawangan Hamlet has succeeded in reducing the practice of money politics and increasing public awareness to reject it and report it (Suparyanto dan Rosad 2020) It provides empirical evidence that local community-based interventions and contextual approaches are capable of improving legal culture at the community level. However, building a legal culture is not only about public education. The main law enforcement officers of the Gakkumdu must also be an example of integrity. This example is very important so that the public feels confident that violations will be acted upon indiscriminately. In addition, protection for witnesses and whistleblowers of election violations is also a crucial aspect. Without guarantees of security and trust in the legal process, active public participation in election oversight will be difficult to build. Unfortunately, research shows that there is still a gap in legal protection for reporting witnesses in Bawaslu. Although the 1945 Constitution Article 28G paragraph 1 guarantees the right to protection, and laws such as Law No. 31 of 2014 deal with the protection of witnesses and victims, the discourse of special protection in the context of elections is still not sufficiently facilitated. Bawaslu Regulation Number 9 of 2022 adds a procedural framework, but comprehensive legal protection is not yet fully in place (Suryani et al. 2024) Building a legal culture in the context of Gakkumdu is a multi-stakeholder and multi-layered process. There is a need for synergy between legal education for the community, the example of law enforcement officials who are free from political pressure, and a trusted legal protection system for whistleblowers and witnesses. Strategies such as the implementation of the KAMP program can serve as a model for replication in other regions and become tangible evidence that changing the legal culture can start from the community. Thus, a strong legal culture will be a strong foundation for the enforcement of election laws that are fair, effective, and reflect the sovereignty of the people.

3.2. Normative and Practical Obstacles Faced by the Gakkumdu Center

Gakkumdu as a center for election law enforcement faces various obstacles both normatively and practically that have a direct effect on the effectiveness of the implementation of its duties. Normative obstacles mainly arise from the laws and regulations that are the legal basis of the Gakkumdu in dealing with election crimes. Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, for example, still leaves weaknesses in terms of clarity of norms. Some of the articles in it are considered multi-interpreted, often causing differences in interpretation among law enforcement officials who are members of the Gakkumdu. This condition can cause inconsistencies in the handling of cases and

reduce legal certainty. In addition, the relatively short time limit in handling election crimes as stipulated in the law also poses its own problems. The process of proving a criminal act requires the collection of evidence and in-depth examination of witnesses, but time constraints make case handling often not optimal. The weak regulation regarding the authority and procedures for handling cases in the Gakkumdu also aggravates this condition, as it provides room for procedural uncertainty and potential differences in treatment between cases.

In addition to normative constraints, Gakkumdu also faces practical challenges in the field. One of the biggest obstacles is coordination between institutions that are members of the Gakkumdu, namely Bawaslu, the Police, and the Prosecutor's Office, which has not been running optimally. Differences in procedures and institutional interests, coupled with ineffective communication, often hinder the process of handling cases. As a result, many cases of election crimes cannot be resolved properly, or even stop in the middle of the road due to the lack of understanding between institutions. This shows that the aspect of institutional synergy is still a big homework for Gakkumdu. In addition to coordination issues, the quality of human resources involved in Gakkumdu also greatly determines the effectiveness of election law enforcement. The knowledge, experience, and integrity of the apparatus that are members of the Gakkumdu are still uneven. In some areas, limited training and lack of capacity building for officials have led to weak ability to identify and prove election crimes. This is exacerbated by the limitations of the facilities and infrastructure owned. The lack of budget, limited office facilities, and law enforcement support equipment are significant inhibiting factors in smoothing the Gakkumdu's duties. Without adequate logistical support and resources, it is impossible for the Gakkumdu to be able to work effectively and professionally.

Another problem that often arises in practice is related to the presence of witnesses in the clarification process. Many cases of election crimes are hampered because the witnesses needed cannot be present, either for technical or non-technical reasons. The absence of witnesses in the clarification process has major implications for the quality of case evidence, because in the criminal justice system, witness testimony is one of the important evidence. When witnesses are not present, the evidence becomes weak and has the potential to cause the case to be stopped. This not only reduces the effectiveness of handling cases, but can also reduce public trust in Gakkumdu as an election law enforcement institution.

Thus, the normative and practical obstacles faced by the Gakkumdu are interconnected and worsen the effectiveness of election law enforcement. On the one hand, the weak regulations and existing legal norms cause uncertainty in handling cases. On the other hand, practical limitations in the form of coordination, quality of human resources, infrastructure, and obstacles in presenting witnesses further reduce the ability of the Gakkumdu to realize electoral justice. Therefore, comprehensive improvement steps are needed both in terms of regulation and institutional and technical operational aspects. Reform in terms of structuring legal norms, increasing the capacity of the apparatus, and providing supporting facilities are absolute prerequisites for improving the performance of the Gakkumdu in the future.

Table 2. Gakkumdu's Obstacles in Handling Election Crimes

Types of Constraints	Description	Implication
Differences in Legal Interpretation	Differences in understanding of articles in the Election Law.	Inconsistent case handling, legal uncertainty, and potential abuse of authority.
Handling Time Limitations	Short time limit in handling cases.	Difficulties in collecting evidence and witnesses, slowing down the legal process, and potential cases cannot be handled optimally.
Coordination That Is Not Optimal	Lack of communication, cooperation, and synergy between institutions in Gakkumdu.	Slow case handling, overlapping authority, and potential conflicts between institutions.
Quality of Human Resources	Lack of knowledge, experience, and integrity of personnel in Gakkumdu.	Unprofessional case handling, improper decisions, and the potential for legal errors.
Limited Facilities and Infrastructure	Lack of budget, office, and supporting equipment.	Slow case handling, lack of efficiency, and potential for legal process to be hampered.

3.3. Efforts to Improve Regulations to Strengthen the Role of Gakkumdu

The Integrated Law Enforcement Center (Gakkumdu) is an ad hoc institution formed to deal with election criminal violations involving three main institutions, namely the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia, and the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Indonesia. The existence of the Gakkumdu Center is regulated in Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections, especially Article 486 which affirms the function of coordination, supervision, and handling of election criminal cases. This center was established to avoid overlapping authority between institutions and to ensure that there is an acceleration in handling cases, considering that election violations are often casuistic and have a direct impact on the legitimacy of the democratic process (Election Law No. 7 of 2017).

In practice, the Gakkumdu Center is a collaboration space that integrates the perspectives of supervision, law enforcement, and case proof. Data from Bawaslu RI shows that in the 2019 election there were 554 alleged election crimes processed at the Gakkumdu Center, of which around 307 of them were forwarded to the investigation stage, while the rest were stopped because they did not meet the elements of criminal acts (Bawaslu RI, 2019 Performance Report). This figure shows the important role of the Gakkumdu as a filter as well as a controller in ensuring that only cases that are worthy of legal process are continued, so that there is no political criminalization or neglect of serious violations.

However, the effectiveness of the Gakkumdu Center often faces criticism. One of them is related to the limited time for handling election crimes which are regulated in just a matter of days. This causes many cases to not be handled completely, especially those that require complex evidence. The Constitutional Court Decision No. 31/PUU-XI/2013 affirms the importance of legal certainty in the election process, but the reality on the ground shows that there is an insynchronization between the rule of law and the ability of institutions to carry out law enforcement functions fairly. As a result, some cases of violations that are considered serious by the public, such as money politics and misuse of state facilities, cannot be followed up because of the constraints of formal procedures.

In addition, research conducted by Fitriani (2020) in *the Constitutional Journal* stated that coordination between institutions in the Gakkumdu Center has not been running optimally, due to sectoral egos and differences in legal interpretations between police investigators, prosecutors, and election supervisors. This condition creates inconsistencies in decision-making, which can ultimately weaken public trust in the electoral law enforcement mechanism. Thus, although Gakkumdu is designed as an integrative solution, practice on the ground still presents major challenges in realizing the principles of justice, legal certainty, and usefulness as the main goal of the law.

Therefore, in the future, it is necessary to strengthen the regulations and institutions of the Gakkumdu Center, including through the revision of the Election Law and the preparation of more detailed operational standards of procedures related to the coordination flow. In addition, increasing the capacity of human resources in the Gakkumdu, both from the technical aspects of the investigation and the understanding of the substance of election law, is a crucial factor. The enforcement of election laws is not only aimed at punishing violators, but also maintaining the integrity of democracy and ensuring that elections are truly a means of people's sovereignty as mandated in Article 1 paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution. By strengthening the role of the Gakkumdu, it is hoped that the implementation of elections in Indonesia can run more honestly, fairly, and democratically.

Efforts to Improve Regulations to Strengthen the Role of Gakkumdu:

1. Strengthening the Legal Basis of Gakkumdu

It is necessary to revise the regulations governing Gakkumdu, both in the Election Law and the Bawaslu Regulation, in order to provide clarity on the authority, procedures, and standard operational standards in handling election crimes.

2. Harmonization of Inter-Institutional Regulations

Synchronize legal rules related to the role of Bawaslu, the Police, and the Prosecutor's Office so that there is no overlap of authority and different legal interpretations in case resolution.

3. Simplifying the Violation Handling Process
Regulations need to improve procedures for handling election crimes so that they are simpler, clearer, and have realistic deadlines so as not to hinder the electoral justice process.
4. Strengthening Sanctions for Election Violations
Provide stricter regulations related to criminal and administrative sanctions in order to provide a deterrent effect and prevent repeated violations.
5. Transparency and Accountability in Regulation
Regulations need to contain a transparent mechanism for handling cases in Gakkumdu as well as an accountable reporting system to maintain public trust.
6. Improved Professionalism Standards
Regulations need to regulate joint training obligations for Gakkumdu officials so that they have the same understanding of election crimes.
7. Strengthening Investigative Authority
8. It is necessary to regulate more strictly the authority of integrated investigation between the Police and the Prosecutor's Office in the Gakkumdu so that it does not give rise to dualism of roles.
9. Setting up a Quick Dispute Resolution Mechanism
Regulations must contain a mechanism for resolving election disputes that are fast, efficient, and in accordance with the principle of legal certainty.

4. Conclusion

This study finds that the effectiveness of the Integrated Law Enforcement Center (Gakkumdu) in handling election crimes has not yet been optimal. The main problems lie in overlapping authority among Bawaslu, the Police, and the Prosecutor's Office, as well as the absence of clear procedural boundaries in Law Number 7 of 2017. These conditions lead to differences in legal interpretation, weak coordination, and delays in case handling, which ultimately undermine legal certainty and electoral justice. From a regulatory perspective, weaknesses are also evident in the technical regulations governing Gakkumdu, particularly Bawaslu Regulations and Joint Regulations, which lack uniform standards regarding case-handling deadlines and procedures across regions. In addition, limited institutional capacity, insufficient human resource development, and weak mechanisms of transparency and accountability further reduce Gakkumdu's effectiveness in addressing complex election crimes such as money politics and abuse of power. Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of election law enforcement studies by applying Lawrence M. Friedman's legal system theory to comprehensively assess Gakkumdu from the perspectives of legal structure, substance, and legal culture. Practically, this study provides normative input for policymakers and election law enforcement institutions by offering concrete directions for regulatory reform aimed at strengthening coordination, authority, and institutional capacity in election crime enforcement.

This study is limited to a normative juridical analysis and does not incorporate empirical field data or stakeholder interviews. Future research is therefore encouraged to adopt empirical or mixed-method approaches to examine the actual implementation of Gakkumdu regulations at the regional level, as well as to assess public perceptions and the impact of regulatory reforms on electoral integrity, particularly in post-2024 simultaneous regional elections.

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