

# The Rationality of Legislative Election 2019 Voters in Bengkulu City In the Post-Truth era

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**Abstract.** The Post-truth era affects the rationality of the voters in determining the quality of democracy. There are two types of influencing factors, external and internal. Internal factors include social aspects, intellectual level, economic level, intensity of internet use, and demographic conditions. In contrast, aspects as hoaxes, vote-buying, candidate buying, intimidation, personal branding, political education, the simultaneous electoral system that produces a coattail effect, and the role of institutions/researchers are among the external factors. This study aimed to determine the extent to which awareness of public rationality in the Bengkulu city legislative election contestation in the post-truth era. This research was expected to produce the best of good quality representatives or *primus inter pares*. The research was conducted in the city of Bengkulu. The target population was the voting community in Bengkulu city, while the reachable population is 3 sub-districts in the electoral area of one city. The research used a cluster sampling by using a proportional stratified random sampling technique with a descriptive qualitative approach with steps using the theory of Miles and Huberman.

**Keywords:** rationality, legislative election, post-truth

## 1 Introduction

Election success is not only marked by the level of voter participation administratively but also by the spirit of voter rationality. The election is expected to produce leadership legitimacy following adequate quality competencies or *primus inter pares*, the best of best. Voters' rational decisions can help to set a community leadership, law, and policy. In fact, many voters are not rational. This is evidenced by the fact that there are still many winners of the legislative elections outperforming other candidates whose competency calculations are far superior on paper. Aspects of competence include conceptual abilities, knowledge of political systems and culture, public intellectuality, vision, political rationality, organizational experience, track record, and other indicators. (Evsa, 2018)

In the context of legislative elections, the factors that affect the rationality of voters. There are two types of influencing factors, external and internal Internal factors include social aspects, intellectual level, economic level, intensity of internet use, and demographic conditions.

In contrast, aspects as hoaxes, vote-buying, candidate buying, intimidation, personal branding, political education, the simultaneous electoral system that produces a coattail effect, and the role of institutions/researchers are among the external factors. The loss of public rationality in the political context is also influenced by the conditions of the post-truth era. The post-truth pattern tries to control the public's mind by shifting the rational paradigm to be irrational through the spread of hoaxes, fake news, hate speech, wrong news both through social media and conversations in public spaces. Meanwhile, the current condition of society is in a world based on digital information technology. According to Lorente (2017), the term post-truth refers to socio-political conditions in which objectivity and rationality give way to emotions, or to a willingness to uphold beliefs even though the facts show otherwise. Researchers will examine how the rationality in the post-truth era conditions in the context of legislative elections.

**Table 1. Voter Rationality Indicators**

NO.	RATIONALITY FACTORS	INDICATOR
1.	<b>Internal factors</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social aspects: ethnicity, religion and kinship.</li> <li>2. Intellectual level.</li> <li>3. Economic level.</li> <li>4. Political interest.</li> <li>5. Pragmatism.</li> <li>6. Intensity of Internet Use</li> <li>7. Demographic conditions.</li> </ol>
2.	<b>External Factors</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hoax / news false (post truth effect)</li> <li>2. Vote Buying</li> <li>3. Intimidation,</li> <li>4. Candidate Personal Branding</li> <li>5. Socialization /political education</li> <li>6. Concurrent Elections</li> <li>7. Candidate buying.</li> <li>8. The Role of Institutions</li> </ol>

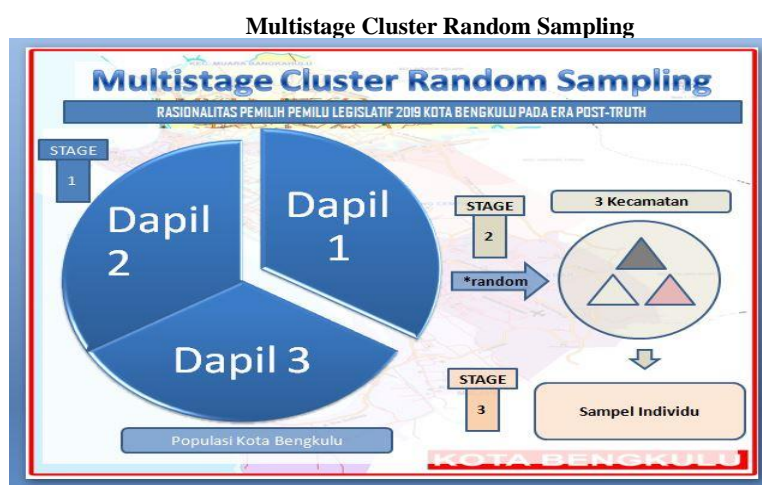
## 2 Methodology

The design of this study was qualitative research with a descriptive approach. According to Sugiyono (2017: 50) "Methods based on the philosophy of postpositivism, are

used to examine the conditions of natural objects, (as opposed to experiments) where the researcher is the key instrument, the data collection technique is triangulation (combined), the analysis can be done. can be inductive/qualitative, and the results of qualitative research emphasize meaning rather than generalization. The location of this research was Sungai Serut District, Sungai Serut District, and Muara Bangkahulu District.

**Population and Sample**

The sampling technique in this research used a multi-stage cluster random sampling technique, it could be seen in the following figure:



According to Sugiyono (2017: 81), the sample is part of the number and characteristics possessed by the population. Researchers took a representative sample (can represent) in measuring the rationality of voters in the legislative elections in 3 sub-districts of choice 1, namely beginner voters and non-beginner voters (adult voters), divided into highly educated voters and low-educated voters. The number of samples was 150 people divided in each district to 50 people/district.

**Table 2. The Sample of Research**

NO.	DISTRICT NAME	VOTERS	TOTAL SAMPLES
1.	Sungai Serut	15,953	50
2.	Teluk Segara	16,674	50
3.	Muara Bangkahulu	25,450	50
Amount		58,077	150

\*\* DPT source: KPU Bengkulu City

\*\* DPT (Permanent Voters List)

This research collected the data through observation, documentation and interviews of informants, and resource persons. Retrieval of informants and resource persons used purposive technique, namely the procedure of selecting informants according to the specifications required in the study. Researchers had considered the competence and credibility of resource persons related to the research contexts. The data of resource persons in this study could be seen in the following

Table 3. Key Informants Interview

NO	NAME	POSITION
1.	Parsadaan Harahap, M.Si	Chairman of the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), Bengkulu Province
2.	Apriyanto kurniawan, SIP.,M.Si	Head of the supervision and public relations section, Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), Bengkulu Province
3.	Anggi Stephensent, S.Pd.	Commissioner of the General Election Commission (KPU), Bengkulu City
4.	DR. Rahimandani	Academics, Cyber Media Observers, Founder of Media rmool.com

The supporting data in the form of documents that researchers obtained from informants are as follows:

Table 4. Research Documents

NO	SOURCE OF DOCUMENT	NAME OF DOCUMENT
1.	General Election Commission (KPU), Bengkulu City	Socialization Strategy, General Election Commission (KPU) Bengkulu City
2.	General Election Commission (KPU), Bengkulu City	Bengkulu City Voters List
3.	Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), Bengkulu Province	Bawaslu Political Education Program
4.	Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu), Bengkulu City	Comprehensive Report on Supervision Results, Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu)

NO	SOURCE OF DOCUMENTS	DOCUMENT NAME
1.	Bengkulu City KPU	The socialization strategy of Bengkulu City KPU
2.	Bengkulu City KPU	Bengkulu City Voters List
3.	Provincial <i>Bawaslu</i>	<i>Bawaslu</i> political education program
4.	<i>Bawaslu</i> Bengkulu City	Comprehensive report on the results of <i>Bawaslu</i> supervision

The data analysis of this study uses the theory of Miles and Huberman, quoted by Sugiyono (2009: 89) There are four techniques to determine the validity of data, namely data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification.

a. Data reduction

Data reduction is all of the data that have been collected are processed to know between the relevant and the irrelevant. The study of data reduction refers to the measurement process the rationality of voters in the post-truth era. The first process is to describe the conditions of voter rationality as measured by the determinants of rationality.

b. Data display.

Data display is the relevant data found in this study. After analyzing all the data obtained from voters, this study presents the results of the analysis by making a description of the rationality of the voters, and explaining based on the factors that influence rationality (external and internal).

c. Conclusion.

Conclusion is a place where research looks for conclusions to answer the problem formulation. In this step the conclusions are drawn by double checking the data reduction and data display. The steps in this research are data display by compiling a collection of information regarding the current state of voter rationality, then displaying the results of the analysis by making a description of the rationality of voters based on the determinants of rationality factors and indicators. conclusions are drawn by double checking the data reduction and data display so as not to deviate from the analyzed data, even if the final research is reached.

### 3 Finding And Discussion

#### **Voter Rationality**

Basically, the rational decisions of voters could help to set the leadership, law, and policy of the society. Based on research (Fishbein and Coombs, 1974; Baker and Walter, 1975), integrating the important elements of rationality in two ways, namely; objective rationality (the candidate's ability) and subjective rationality (intention to vote).

Human rationality generally refers to the ability to realize one's expected goals (i.e., optimal choice; Tsebelis, 1990), although the criteria that should be used to evaluate rationality

are debatable (Shapiro, 1969; Baker and Walter, 1975). Regarding the rationality measurement tool, Anggi F, the commissioner of the KPU Bengkulu City, in a research interview said: "There is no definite measure of rationality, except for measuring participatory quality, but not in the substantive quality of voter rationality."

Although there is no definite measure of rationality, based on journals and previous research, observations by researchers, researchers compile aspects that could be used as a reference for voter rationality as follows:

Table 5. Rationality Result Mapping

NO	INDICATORS	THE ELECTORAL DISTRICT 1											
		T.S				S.S				M.B			
		PP		PNP		PP		PNP		PP		PNP	
		A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
1.	<b>Internal Factors</b>												
	-Social Aspects	T	S	T	T	S	T	S	T	S	S	R	S
	-Intellectual level	T	R	T	S	R	S	S	R	T	S	T	S
	-Economic Level	S	R	T	S	S	R	S	S	S	R	T	R
	-Intensity of Internet Use. -Demographic Conditions	T	S	S	R	S	S	S	R	T	S	T	S
		S	R	R	R	S	S	S	S	S	R	S	T
2.	<b>External Factors</b>												
	-Hoax Attact	S	T	S	T	S	T	R	T	S	T	R	T
	-Vote Buying	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	R	T
	-Candidate Buying	S	T	S	S	S	T	S	S	S	T	R	S
	-Personal Branding	S	S	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T
	-Political Education	S	R	R	R	S	R	S	R	S	S	S	R
	-Concurrent Election	S	T	T	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T
	-The Role of Institutions	S	R	R	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R
<b>Amount</b>	<b>50</b>				<b>50</b>				<b>50</b>				
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>												

**Captions :**

1. S.S : Sungai Serut
2. T.L : Teluk Segara
3. M.B : Muara Bangkahulu

4. PP : Beginner Voters
5. PNP : Non-Beginner voters (Adults)
6. A : highly educated voters B : Less educated voters
7. T : high S : Fair R : low

From the result mapping table of interviews with research subjects, researchers also combined primary data and secondary data in the form of documents, literacies, researches journals, books and the web.

Based on the results of observations by researchers on 150 research samples, it shows that voters with low educational and economic levels have a low level of rationality as well. The following is a detailed and structured explanation of the results of measuring the rationality of voters based on what has been mapped in the table above:

### **1. Internal factors**

Internal factors are factors that influence the rational decisions of voters that come from within the voter.

Social Aspects.

In the journal, it is stated that the sociological theory contained in the book “The People's Choice”, written by Paul Lazarsfeld and his friends at Columbia University, has a close relationship between voter behavior and social aspects of a person such as an ethnicity, religion, race and region. live and so on. Based on observations and interviews, the social aspect influenced political decision-makers. Even rational people such as educators, students, civil servants still consider social aspects.

### **Intellectual Level**

The Informants in this category are divided into two, namely novice and non-novice voters with low education and high education. Rocky Gerung (JP, 2018) said that post-truth is a political issue. This problem does not just arise as a result of the post-truth condition. The problem arises when there is a lack of knowledge community. The results of the research still reflect many failures in using objective rationality, especially for uneducated, novice and non-novice voters. Failure to reduce the news properly causes voters to take shortcuts to select candidates spontaneously and "arbitrarily".

### **Economy Level**

Based on sources from the BPS Bengkulu website, the sub-districts in the first choice region were still dominated by the middle to lower levels. Voters at the middle to lower economic levels had difficulty accessing information relating to legislative elections. They are more concerned with family economic matters than political matters, rarely visit political education outreach activities organized by the government and general election organizers, had low interest in politics, did not trust the quality of democratic results and accept whatever the results of legislative elections were.

### **Demographic Conditions**

Voters who were in remote areas with low economic levels and low political understanding are less affected by the socialization of political education and are easily

consumed by hoax issues that are spread verbally. Besides, there were only a few campaign props installed around the settlement. One voter who lives in remote settlement said in interview, *"We hope the government can reach out to our area to do political socialization."*

## **2. External Factors**

External factors are factors that influence the rational decisions of voters that come from outside the voters Hoaxes.

Hoax has a political orientation, in (Alwi, 2017), which is the dissemination of information that is oriented towards political values. Based on interviews with research samples, the category of people with low levels of political education, and low general education are the majority of voters in the middle to lower economic levels, and who are mostly influenced by hoax issues, obtained from both the internet and direct information so that they affect the results of political vote decisions in legislative elections. Another participant voter said *"I have a tendency to trust whatever information is on the media, especially social media because I don't have enough knowledge and reasoning about politics"*

### **Vote Buying**

The rise of money politics is caused by weak supervision, difficulty in proving bribery cases, the character of the community with a culture of being easily bribed, people who are ignorant and do not want to report or are afraid to report, economic level, lack of political education and low moral level. The recruitment process is not based on individual competence, but based on closeness to political party administrators, so Vote buying will be a pragmatic strategy for candidates (Suri, 2021). The commissioner of the Bengkulu City KPU, Anggi F said that *"The KPU had made maximum efforts in disseminating money politics to the public"* and The Head of Bengkulu Province Bawaslu, Parsadaan Harahap said *"Bawaslu was quite active in providing appeals through the media and carrying out campaign supervision activities."* One voter in the sample spoke in the interview: *"I know money politics is not allowed, but because I need money and it is difficult to prove that they see the practice of money politics, many voters in the area where I live also accept bribes."*

### **Candidate Buying**

Political parties are still open to the candidate buying system, where the candidates who are promoted are those who have lobbied politics with a large amount of cost. The figures that emerge from the results of party selection are not the real needs of the community. Political parties are still not ideal in the candidate recruitment process. In Evisa Wulan Suri's research, the professionalism of members of DPRD Bengkulu in carrying out its main duties and functions, that all aspects of competence, integrity, credibility and accountability are the indicators of professionalism that needs to be achieved, while the function of regenerating political parties is still not fully implemented. Then, the recruitment of party members as candidates were described by the chairman of the Provincial Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) in interview transcript: *"The open proportional system opened up opportunities for the birth of untested representatives of the people, even most of them were not the best party cadres so they took pragmatic action, namely the money politics approach."*

### **Intimidation**

With respect to intimidation, the researcher found the facts in the field that in every sub-district in the choice area there were cases of intimidation in making choices. This form of

intimidation was carried out by families, company leaders, associations, communities, verbally or non-verbally, either directly or indirectly. The factor of intimidation in this case was different from the social aspect, but more on coercion from outside parties. The attitude of forcing voters to vote for certain candidates could be punished by law.

### **Candidate personal branding**

Personal branding is a strategy chosen by candidates in shaping an image to gain sympathizers in influencing the rationality of society. In (Silih Agung Wasesa, 2001) it is said that voter behavior can also be influenced by personal branding, positioning and public relations to gain big votes or support. Almost all voters consider the candidate the result of the campaign team's strategy in shaping the candidate's positive attitude. Almost all voters consider the candidate the result of the campaign team's strategy in shaping the candidate's positive love regardless of whether it was true or false.

### **Political Education**

Political education is one of the vital roles in supporting voter ratio. The following was the data both in the form of documents and from the interview process that researchers have obtained from Bengkulu City KPU (General Elections Commission) and Provincial Bawaslu (Election Supervisory Agency)

Table 6. Types of Socialization and Political Education of KPU

NO	POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION AND POLITICAL EDUCATION
1.	Voter Education and Socialization for Women
2.	Voter Education and Socialization for Disabilities
3.	Voter Education and Socialization for Special Needs Base
4.	Voter Education and Socialization for Beginner Voter Base
5.	Voter Education and Socialization for Community
6.	Voter Education and Socialization for Family
7.	Voter Education and Socialization for Marginalized
8.	Voter Education and Socialization for Religion

NO.	THEMES OF SOCIALIZATION IN MASS MEDIA (RADIO) AND ADVERTISING
1.	Voting Day Socialization
2.	Socialization of ballots for legislative and presidential elections
3.	Socialization moved choose
4.	Socialization of voting procedures
5.	Campaign stage socialization

**Table 8. Political education program by BAWASLU**

NO.	BAWASLU POLITICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM
1.	The coordination of the election stages, stakeholders. Guidance for handling violations
2.	Anti Money Politics Village or APO
3.	New school supervision standard in 2018
4.	The journalist alliance cares about elections.
5.	Beginner voter socialization.
6.	Participatory Corner.

According to The Chairman of the Election Supervisory, Parsadaan Harahap, political education was the main task of political parties said *“However, political education must also be implemented by the government, media, institutions, election organizers and all stakeholders”*. Anggi Stephensent, S.Pd, a commissioner of KPU says that political education was also the responsibility of an institution because novice voters are students who must be given education about general elections. The results showed that political education was not yet fully implemented regularly and effectively. There were still people who are not interested in

socialization and political education so that political education had not been evenly applied to the voting community.

### **Concurrent Elections**

Concurrent elections are combining the implementation of legislative and executive elections (pilpres) at the same time. In Shugart's thesis (Wijayanti & Purwaningsih, 2015: 44), that if the timing of the presidential election is synchronized (simultaneously) with the legislative election, it will cause a coattail effect, namely the (result) of the presidential election will affect the (result) of the legislative general election. Cottaile Effect shows that when the executive and legislative elections are held simultaneously, they can influence each other. Many voters found it difficult to make choices because of the large number of legislative candidates, information gaps between candidates, they were more focused on the presidential election and choosing candidates who came from the same party as the chosen presidential candidate.

### **Role of Institution / Researcher**

College is one of the main pillars or main institutions that are expected to be able to produce rational voters. Apart from political education from several agencies and institutions, political parties, media, government, institutions are also institutions for political intellectual education and sharpening rationality. Young voters or first-time voters are voters who also cast potential and strategic votes in the 2019 elections. There are still student informants who have pragmatic attitudes such as accepting bribes or voting based on equality of ethnicity, religion, community and difficulties in interpreting information whether a hoax or not. According to Dr. Aleksander Hasyim, M.Si, an academic lecturer at the faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Prof. Dr. Hazairin SH said in interview *"...that parochial and traditional political culture is characterized by voter behavior patterns that are oriented towards emotional ties, mobilized, transactional, and gender-oriented etc. Subjective rationality as a form of transformation from a traditional system to a rationality system still emphasizes the logic of appropriateness rather than the logic of consequences."*

Other higher education strategies can be through activities of the academic community which are designed to maximize goals. The Bengkulu City KPU in particular provided information that there were still schools or universities that not yet responsive to invitations and political education programs offered by the KPU or Bawaslu. The Head of Provincial Bawaslu, Parsadaan Harahap, conveyed his view of the role of the world of education in increasing voter rationality, one of which is the creation of courses on rationality and the results of policy evaluation can be concretized in scientific works by students as well as researchers and lecturers.

### **B Voter Rationality in the Post Truth Era.**

The post truth pattern tries to control the public's mind by shifting the rational paradigm to being irrational through the spread of hoaxes, fake news, hate speech, false news both through social media and directly in the discussion room. The diverse conditions of society, especially the lack of knowledge from people who are unable to sort information, affect intellectual resilience.

Based on the theory and explanation regarding the post truth study, the researcher would connect the rationality in the post-truth era conditions in the context of the legislative election. Some of the most likely aspects in influencing the rationality of voters in the post-truth era are: (1) The role of the press in the post-truth era, (2) The intensity of the use of social media and news portals is influenced by aspects of economic level, type of work and mastery of technology and (3) intellectual level (education)

### **The role of the press in the post-truth era**

The press is one of the pillars of democracy. All parties, including the press in the election contestation, can convey what the rights and obligations of society as citizens are, especially in politics. Dr. Rahimandani in the interview says, unlike social media, anyone can become a "journalist" but its accuracy and accuracy cannot be guaranteed. The media must comply with the journalistic code of ethics, while social media does not. Therefore, all news is considered by the general public as truth. So the media must be more factual and balanced. Every news that is obtained must be verified first.

### **The intensity of voters in using the internet.**

Factors that influence voter rationality through the intensity of internet use activities are economic level, type of work, and mastery of technology. For voters with low economic levels who do not have smart devices such as cellphones, they also have a big chance of being exposed to hoaxes from the black campaign agenda or data manipulation from society because they are unable to check the truth on the site or media news portals. *"I don't have a smart phone and rarely watch television. I only get information from conversations conducted by residents, whether it is true or not depending on how I analyze it."* Meanwhile, voters who master technology and are active in accessing social media also have the same chance of being exposed to hoaxes.

### **Intellectual level (education)**

Post-truth is a symptom that comes with Hoax. KBBI Definition Hoax is fake news. Hoax as information can be conveyed to the public space, either through social media or online media. Hoaxes can attack all levels of age, economy, and intellectuals, especially those accepted by voters who will vote in the Bengkulu city legislative elections. Educated beginner voters and educated adult voters still encounter failures in using objective rationality, moreover non-educated voters. Failure to reduce the news properly causes voters to take shortcuts in choosing candidates spontaneously and 'arbitrarily'. One of the voters who is a student in the interview said, *"I often believe hoaxes are caused by difficulties in sorting out right and wrong information, students need in-depth learning about the electoral system specifically in a subject, as well as media politics in the post-truth era"*

## **4 Conclusion**

The rationality of the 2019 legislative election voters in Bengkulu in the post-truth era is still low. This is due to external and internal influences that shape people's rationality so that the quality of democracy is not comparable to the quality of participation. In the post-truth era, the power of media information greatly affects the rationality of voters in producing voting rights. If the direct election system is still applied, voter rationality is the most important aspect in producing superior quality of democracy, considering that Indonesia is a plural society consisting of various social, cultural, educational, economic and other aspects of society that affect it, then in one-man one-vote, each vote should be qualified and rational. All stakeholders ranging from the General Election Commission, Election Supervisory Board, Political Parties, Institutions, Researchers, Media, Government, Non-Governmental Organizations and also the Community must work together so that the direct election system is successful, both on a participatory and substantive quality. So in the end, voters can choose qualified and rational candidates to sit in parliamentary seats.

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