

Power Relations between Kesbangpol and Civil Society Organizations in Electoral Monitoring: A Case Study of the 2024 Presidential Election in East Jakarta

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Suggested Citation:

Vanera, A. A., & Nurdin. (2025). Power relations between Kesbangpol and civil society organizations in electoral monitoring: A case study of the 2024 presidential election in East Jakarta. *TEMALI: Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial*, 8(2)–. 10.15575/jt.v8i2.45303

Article's History:

Received January 2025; Revised May 2025; Accepted June 2025.

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Abstract:

This study addresses the urgent issue of democratic governance in Indonesia, particularly the persistent weaknesses in electoral transparency, accountability, and integrity, as evidenced by increasing violations and declining public trust in recent elections. The research aims to examine the patterns of power relations between the National Unity and Politics Agency (*Kesbangpol*) and civil society organizations, specifically Pemuda Pancasila and the Forum Komunikasi Anak Betawi (Forkabi), in monitoring the 2024 Presidential Election in East Jakarta, and to assess their influence on electoral credibility and citizen participation. Adopting a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and literature study, then analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings reveal a shift in power dynamics from a hierarchical model to an egalitarian partnership, consistent with the principles of neo-Tocquevillian liberal democracy. This transformation has significantly strengthened civil society's role as a critical partner of the state in electoral monitoring. The study shows that such collaboration enhances the legitimacy and quality of the election process and serves as a practical model for participatory democratic governance. The practical implication highlights the need for policy development that facilitates cross-sectoral communication, training, and support mechanisms to safeguard electoral integrity and prevent political conflict. The originality of this study lies in its empirical contribution to understanding newly emerging power relations between local government and civil society organizations, shifting away from hegemonic models. By combining field-based evidence, neo-Tocquevillian theory, and a participatory framework, this study offers a novel perspective on the evolving role of civil society in local democratic oversight.

Keywords: Power Relations, Kesbangpol, Civil Society Organizations, Electoral Monitoring, Local Democracy.

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini menyoroti persoalan mendesak dalam tata kelola demokrasi di Indonesia, khususnya lemahnya transparansi, akuntabilitas, dan integritas pemilu, sebagaimana tercermin dari meningkatnya pelanggaran serta menurunnya kepercayaan publik dalam beberapa pemilu terakhir. Tujuan utama dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengkaji pola relasi kekuasaan antara Badan Kesatuan Bangsa dan Politik (*Kesbangpol*) dengan organisasi

masyarakat sipil, khususnya Pemuda Pancasila dan Forum Komunikasi Anak Betawi (Forkabi), dalam pengawasan Pemilihan Presiden 2024 di Jakarta Timur, serta menilai pengaruhnya terhadap kredibilitas pemilu dan partisipasi warga. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi langsung, dan studi kepustakaan, kemudian dianalisis dengan teknik analisis tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya pergeseran pola relasi dari yang bersifat hierarkis menuju kemitraan yang lebih egaliter, sesuai dengan prinsip demokrasi liberal Neo-Tocquevillian. Transformasi ini memperkuat peran organisasi masyarakat sipil sebagai mitra kritis negara dalam pengawasan pemilu. Penelitian ini membuktikan bahwa kolaborasi tersebut mampu meningkatkan legitimasi dan kualitas pemilu, sekaligus menjadi model praktis bagi tata kelola demokrasi yang partisipatif. Implikasi praktis dari temuan ini menunjukkan perlunya perumusan kebijakan fasilitasi, pelatihan, dan komunikasi lintas aktor untuk menjaga integritas pemilu serta mencegah konflik politik. Keaslian penelitian ini terletak pada kontribusi empiris terhadap pemahaman pola relasi kekuasaan baru antara pemerintah daerah dan organisasi masyarakat, yang sebelumnya didominasi oleh model hegemonik. Dengan menggabungkan data lapangan, teori Neo-Tocquevillian, dan pendekatan partisipatoris, penelitian ini menawarkan perspektif baru tentang peran strategis masyarakat sipil dalam pengawasan demokrasi lokal.

Kata Kunci: Relasi Kekuasaan, Kesbangpol, Organisasi Masyarakat, Pengawasan Pemilu, Demokrasi Lokal.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the dynamics of general elections in Indonesia have revealed serious challenges concerning the quality of democratic governance, particularly in terms of transparency, accountability, and the integrity of electoral processes. According to data from the Election Supervisory Body (Bawaslu), the 2019 General Election recorded over 16,000 reports of alleged violations—ranging from vote-buying and manipulation of voter lists to administrative breaches—indicating the continuing weakness of oversight mechanisms at the implementation level (Badan Pengawas Pemilu Republik Indonesia, 2020). The 2022 Indonesian Democracy Index (IDP), released by Statistics Indonesia, showed stagnation at a score of 78.46, with political participation and electoral monitoring ranking below other indicators (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022). Furthermore, a survey by the Indonesian Survey Institute reported that 42% of respondents were dissatisfied with the transparency and honesty of the electoral process (Lembaga Survei Indonesia, 2022).

Figure 1. Trends in Indonesia's Democracy Score, 2006–2024



Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2024.

The chart illustrates the trajectory of Indonesian democracy between 2006 and 2024. Overall, the country's democracy score has fluctuated significantly during this period. Since 2020, the score showed improvement, reaching approximately 6.8 in 2021–2022, possibly linked to reform efforts, enhanced public oversight, and more active civic engagement. However, in 2023–2024, the score declined again, signaling that challenges to democratic consolidation persist—be they institutional, political, or related to public participation.

The decline in public trust in the integrity of the 2024 election process not only affects the legitimacy of the results and national political stability, but also threatens to erode active citizen participation in democratic life. Fraudulent practices, lack of information transparency, and weak monitoring mechanisms have become central concerns, provoking widespread anxiety among academics and the general public (Franklin et al., 2014; Norris,

2017). These conditions underscore the urgent need for more robust and inclusive monitoring to safeguard substantive democratic values and prevent the deterioration of a fair and transparent political system.

Within this context, the power relations between the National Unity and Politics Agency (*Kesbangpol*) and civil society organizations (*ormas*) become critical areas of inquiry—particularly regarding their roles in monitoring the 2024 general election in East Jakarta. Normatively, the empowerment of *ormas* is supported by Law No. 7 of 2017, which affirms public participation as a form of social control. However, in practice, the relationship between *Kesbangpol*, as a regional government institution, and local *ormas* is often marked by competing interests, potential conflicts, and negotiations over roles in the election monitoring process (*Kesbangpol* Kabupaten Mamasa Sulawesi Barat, 2019; *Kesbangpol* Kalsel, 2024; Oxtora, 2024). The East Jakarta case study is relevant for understanding how such power dynamics shape monitoring effectiveness and what challenges and opportunities for collaboration arise in efforts to restore public trust in democratic and inclusive elections.

Previous studies have explored the role of civil society organizations in monitoring and electoral oversight. Agustyati and Junaidi (2015) highlighted how *ormas* could enhance electoral transparency, but failed to examine internal limitations such as resource constraints. Adnan et al. (2023) found that *ormas* helped improve electoral oversight through public education and violation reporting, but their research focused on a single region and lacked depth in analyzing internal obstacles. Meanwhile, Nurkinan (2018) emphasized the importance of *ormas* participation in ensuring democratic elections, although the study was limited in scope and did not thoroughly explore the challenges faced by these organizations.

Despite these contributions, many studies have yet to fully address the role of *ormas* in community-based monitoring. Amin et al. (2018) found that Pemuda Pancasila played an active role in mobilizing political support and negotiating interests with candidates. However, the study only focused on one organization and elite perspectives, neglecting the long-term effects of patronage. Pratama (2017) found that patron-client dynamics significantly influenced political behavior during the Kendari local elections, yet the study only covered one location and period, without delving into the broader implications. Similarly, Puthra (2024) described how the *puri* elite in Gianyar built patron-client relationships with communities and political parties, but the research mainly emphasized elite roles and overlooked grassroots experiences.

Several studies also emphasize public participation and technological tools in electoral processes. Mannayong and Faisal (2024), through a qualitative case study, found that digital transformation via ICT increased civic engagement, although their research was limited to a few areas and did not explore the digital divide in depth. Priharjanto et al. (2022), using quantitative SEM analysis, found that public participation and information technology improved village-owned enterprises' performance, but only within a specific region and without considering external factors such as policy and infrastructure. Meanwhile, Asmuddin (2025) showed that e-government increased citizen participation in urban areas, but did not examine non-technical barriers such as social or cultural factors.

While these three research clusters provide important insights into relational patterns, gaps remain. There is still no clear mapping of effective and sustainable strategies for strengthening *ormas* capacity amid diverse local challenges. The evolving dynamics of patron-client relations between *ormas* and the state, and their effects on democratic quality and public participation within the broader political reform context, are still underexplored. Few studies examine how *ormas* can maintain independence and effectiveness in the face of political pressure, limited resources, or the risk of being co-opted by the state. Therefore, this study is crucial to fill that knowledge gap and formulate strategies for strengthening power relations that foster more effective, transparent, and sustainable electoral oversight.

Specifically, this study aims to investigate the power relations between the National Unity and Politics Agency (*Kesbangpol*) and civil society organizations such as Pemuda Pancasila and the Forum Komunikasi Anak Betawi in monitoring the 2024 presidential election in East Jakarta, and to assess how these relations influence electoral credibility and democratic participation. This research seeks to uncover and analyze how interactions, forms of collaboration, and conflict dynamics between *Kesbangpol* and *ormas* take shape during the election monitoring process. It also explores the extent to which these power relations affect the effectiveness of oversight and electoral integrity at the local level—a topic that has been largely overlooked in current literature. Accordingly, this study aims to contribute empirically and analytically to understanding how synergy—or tension—between *Kesbangpol* and *ormas* can either strengthen or undermine efforts to conduct credible elections in urban areas like East Jakarta.

With a focus on the power dynamics between *Kesbangpol* and *ormas* in the context of credible electoral monitoring in East Jakarta, this study argues that such relationships significantly determine the effectiveness of election oversight. An autonomous and professional relationship is expected to strengthen the role of *ormas* as independent monitors and uphold electoral integrity, whereas a patronage-based relationship may weaken oversight functions and increase the risk of irregularities. This research explicitly hypothesizes that the more professional and autonomous the relationship between *ormas* and local government, the greater their contribution to credible electoral monitoring; conversely, patronage domination will have a negative effect. The findings are expected to offer new insights into the importance of healthy power relations in electoral monitoring.

METHOD

This study focuses its unit of analysis on the power relations between civil society organizations—specifically Pemuda Pancasila and the Forum Komunikasi Anak Betawi (Forkabi)—and the East Jakarta City Government, represented by the National Unity and Politics Agency (*Kesbangpol*), within the context of the 2024 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election in East Jakarta. This unit of analysis was chosen because both organizations are key actors in election monitoring and represent societal groups with significant influence over local and national political dynamics (Neuman, 2014). The study aims to explore the patterns of interaction, forms of collaboration, and models of power relations formed between these organizations and the government during the electoral process (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The research design is descriptive qualitative. A qualitative approach was selected to allow the researcher to deeply explore the meanings, perceptions, and experiences of research subjects regarding the phenomenon of power relations between *ormas* and the government (Creswell, 2018). This design also facilitates contextual and in-depth understanding of the processes, motives, and dynamics underlying cooperation or tension among the actors studied (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Additionally, the descriptive component aims to provide a systematic and factual portrayal of the evolving patterns of power relations in the field (Sugiyono, 2022).

The study uses two types of data sources: primary and secondary. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with key informants, including officials from *Kesbangpol* East Jakarta, administrators of Pemuda Pancasila, and Forkabi leaders directly involved in the 2024 election monitoring process (Creswell, 2018; Ziaul Haq et al., 2023). Secondary data were gathered through literature reviews and documentation, including official government documents, activity archives, photographs, and academic literature relevant to the research theme (Sugiyono, 2022). Combining both primary and secondary data sources aimed to enhance the validity of the findings and provide a more comprehensive perspective.

Data collection techniques included direct observation, in-depth interviews, literature review, and documentation. Direct observation was employed to monitor the activities of *ormas* and government actors during the election period, while semi-structured interviews were used to elicit detailed and guided responses from key informants (Creswell, 2018). The literature review involved examining books, journal articles, and other relevant sources. Documentation in the form of activity photos, official records, and visual archives served as supplementary data and validation tools.

The data analysis process was conducted in several stages, including data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analytical method used was thematic analysis, identifying major themes from interviews, observations, and documents (Braun & Clarke, 2006). All collected data were analyzed to identify patterns, relationships, and tendencies in the power relations between *ormas* and the government. Result validation was carried out through data triangulation from various sources. This approach is expected to produce an in-depth and comprehensive portrayal of the power dynamics that shaped the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential election monitoring process in East Jakarta (Creswell, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Political Participation in the Oversight of the 2024 Presidential Election

Based on the 2024 presidential election results in East Jakarta, candidate pair number 1 received the highest number of votes, totaling 668,118 votes (46.08%), followed by candidate pair number 2 with 551,173 votes (38.02%), and candidate pair number 3 with 230,553 votes (15.90%) out of a total of 1,449,844 valid votes (Komisi Pemilihan Umum Republik Indonesia, 2024). However, the involvement of civil society organizations such as Pemuda Pancasila (PP) and the Forum Komunikasi Kaum Betawi Indonesia (Forkabi) in election monitoring did not succeed in significantly increasing political participation. This is clearly reflected in the comparative data on political participation in the 2019 and 2024 presidential elections in East Jakarta (Komisi Pemilihan Umum Republik

Indonesia, 2020). In the 2019 election, the voter turnout was 82.53% of the final voter list (*Daftar Pemilih Tetap-DPT*), while in 2024 it declined to 81.09% (Komisi Pemilihan Umum Republik Indonesia, 2019). The number of non-voters (*golput*) also rose from 17.46% in 2019 to 18.91% in 2024, as shown in the table below:

Table 1. Comparison of the 2019 and 2024 Presidential Elections in East Jakarta

Presidential Election Year	Political Participation	Registered Voters (DPT)
	Voted	Did Not Vote
2019	1,853,887 (82.53%)	392,392 (17.46%)
2024	1,933,145 (81.09%)	450,827 (18.91%)

Source: Komisi Pemilihan Umum Republik Indonesia, 2024.

The table above shows that the presence and active role of PP and Forkabi in monitoring the 2024 presidential election did not lead to an increase in voter turnout. This is evident from the 1.45% decrease in voter participation compared to the 2019 election (Komisi Pemilihan Umum Republik Indonesia, 2019). Likewise, the percentage of non-voters (*golput*) rose by 1.45% to 18.91% in 2024. Although various efforts were made to increase participation—including outreach activities and direct monitoring—many citizens still chose not to come to the polling stations. This highlights that collaborative and educational strategies between Kesbangpol and civil society organizations still face challenges in mobilizing political participation amid prevailing voter apathy.

Outreach efforts aimed at increasing the participation of civil society organizations (*ormas*) were carried out throughout the 2024 presidential election. Yulianti Hutabarat, Chairwoman of Srikandi Pemuda Pancasila Dewan Pimpinan Cabang East Jakarta, explained that the organization held fewer than five meetings related to election monitoring. These sessions included content on planning election-period activities, the procedures for monitoring at polling stations (*Tempat Pemungutan Suara-TPS*), and how to report suspected violations at the polling site. These activities were part of the organization's internal efforts to strengthen its structure and readiness for the 2024 election. Yulianti also noted that PP monitoring efforts focused on two key subdistricts: Cakung and Jatinegara (Interview, January 21, 2025).

On the other hand, efforts to optimize the role of *ormas* in monitoring activities at polling stations across regions have continued. Lutfi Marzuki, Chairman of Forkabi DPC East Jakarta, explained that his members conducted election monitoring across all polling stations in East Jakarta—totaling 8,812—with one *ormas* member assigned to each polling station. This active involvement proved effective, making East Jakarta one of the regions with the most comprehensive election oversight in the capital. However, there has been no official data or public announcement confirming whether higher participation rates in specific areas can be directly attributed to the presence of *ormas*. Forkabi also designated several subdistricts as priority monitoring areas, including Cipayung and Kramat Jati, due to their high population density and vulnerability to conflict. The presence of *ormas* in these areas was considered effective in diffusing potential tension and encouraging residents to participate peacefully in the election (Interview, April 18, 2025).

The presence of *ormas* at polling stations made a significant contribution to creating a secure and comfortable environment for voters, especially in areas prone to conflict. Nurecha, a member of Pemuda Pancasila, stated that the presence of *ormas* increased public confidence in coming to the polling stations and exercising their right to vote. Based on her monitoring experience near her neighborhood's polling station, she found that when *ormas* members did not wear official attributes, it was easier to engage with residents. This created a friendly environment in which voters felt comfortable asking questions about the voting process and sharing election-related information. She also routinely reminded voters to avoid fraud or intimidation, emphasizing that such actions harm not only others but also oneself (Interview, June 17, 2025).

From the data presented, several patterns emerge. First, although collaboration between the government (Kesbangpol) and *ormas* has intensified, it has not directly translated into increased voter turnout. Second, the consistent decline in voter participation and the rise in *golput* rates over two consecutive presidential elections indicate unresolved issues related to trust, the effectiveness of outreach, or voter motivation. Third, *ormas* involvement in election oversight must be evaluated not only by the number of activities conducted but also by their

actual impact on voter behavior. Formal collaboration alone is insufficient without more relevant and innovative participation strategies (Franklin et al., 2014).

The findings above reflect a critical paradox in election oversight efforts: while institutional collaboration between Kesbangpol and civil society organizations (*ormas*) has structurally improved, this has not translated into a substantial increase in political participation. This suggests that voter engagement is not merely a function of security or oversight presence, but is deeply embedded in political trust, civic literacy, and perceived efficacy of voting. The persistent decline in turnout and rise in *golput* indicate a form of democratic fatigue or disillusionment, especially in urban contexts like East Jakarta. These patterns expand our understanding of participatory democracy by emphasizing that institutional presence alone is insufficient—what is equally needed are affective, dialogical, and culturally grounded strategies that can reawaken civic enthusiasm and public trust in democratic processes.

Implementation of Neo-Tocquevillian Power Relations Between Civil Society Organizations and Kesbangpol

Kesbangpol has established a power relationship with the civil society organization Pemuda Pancasila. This relationship was formed with the goal of increasing political participation among civil society actors in overseeing the 2024 general election in East Jakarta. A concrete example of this participation is shown in the image below.

Figure 2. Pemuda Pancasila Monitoring at a Polling Station in Cakung




Source: Author's Data, 2025.

The image illustrates the active presence of Pemuda Pancasila members at polling stations during the 2024 election in East Jakarta. This visual evidence is supported by Yulianti Hutabarat, who stated that Srikandi Pemuda Pancasila monitored polling stations, assisted local election supervisors (Panitia Pengawas Pemilu-Panwaslu), and educated voters on-site to maintain a peaceful and safe environment while preventing provocation. This confirms that the presence of civil society organizations (CSOs) was not merely ceremonial, but played a key role in election monitoring—bridging the government (Kesbangpol) and citizens in safeguarding democratic quality (Interview, January 21, 2025).

Figure 3. Voter Violation Complaint Form

- 1 -



BAWASLU
BADAN PENGAWAS PEMILU LURUH

FORMULIR MODEL B.1

FORMULIR LAPORAN
Nomor: *

1. Identitas Pelapor:

a. Nama	:	.....
b. Tempat/Tgl Lahir	:	.....
c. Jenis Kelamin	:	.....
d. Pekerjaan	:	.....
e. Kewarganegaraan	:	.....
f. Alamat	:	.....
g. No.Telp/HP	:	.....
h. E-Mail**	:	.....
2. Identitas Terlapor

a. Nama	:	.....
b. Alamat**	:	.....
c. No.Telp/HP***	:	.....
3. Peristiwa yang dilaporkan:

a. Peristiwa	:	.....
b. Tempat Kejadian	:	.....
c. Hari dan Tanggal Kejadian	:	.....
d. Hari dan Tanggal diketahui	:	.....
4. Saksi -saksi:***

1) Nama	:	.....
Alamat	:	.....
No.Telp/HP	:	.....
2) Nama	:	.....
Alamat	:	.....
No.Telp/HP	:	.....
5. Bukti-Bukti:

a.	:	.....
b.	:	.....
c. dst	:	.....
6. Uraian kejadian:
(diuraikan secara kronologis peristiwa apa yang dianggap sebagai dugaan pelanggaran pemilu, di mana, kapan, dan bagaimana peristiwa tersebut terjadi)

Dilaporkan di :
Hari dan Tanggal :
Pukul :

Source: *Sigaplapor App*, 2024.

Pemuda Pancasila demonstrated a strong commitment to ensuring a safe, peaceful, and transparent democratic process. Nurecha emphasized that the organization remained neutral and professional in fulfilling its duties. Any electoral violation occurring at polling stations could be directly reported to Badan Pengawas Pemilu-Bawaslu (Election Supervisory Body) through the *Sigaplapor* application by completing a form like the one shown above. This form was particularly useful in situations requiring immediate documentation of violations. Although no significant violations were reported at her station in Cakung, Nurecha noted that the availability of this form provided a practical safeguard. Even in instances where Pemuda Pancasila leaders personally endorsed a presidential candidate, members retained full autonomy in their voting decisions. No pressure or coercion was exerted on members to align with the leader's preferences. All members of Pemuda Pancasila worked in synergy with the government and Kesbangpol to ensure election security and efficiency (Interview, June 17, 2025).

Figure 4. Forkabi Members at a Polling Station in Kramat Jati



Source: Author's Data, 2025.

Documentation from the 2024 general election in East Jakarta also captured the active participation of Forum Komunikasi Anak Betawi (Forkabi) at polling stations. In the image, Forkabi members are seen monitoring the voting process and guiding voters during ballot submission, while ensuring the overall process remained orderly and transparent. This is supported by an interview with Dadang, a Forkabi member from East Jakarta, who affirmed the organization's dedication to protecting the political rights and dignity of the Betawi people through their active involvement in election monitoring. He stated that the monitoring at his assigned polling station proceeded smoothly, with no indications of voter fraud or electoral violations. As a sociopolitical group, Forkabi remained committed to neutrality and ensured that all members had the freedom to vote according to their own conscience. This neutrality was upheld despite open support from Forkabi's leadership for a specific presidential candidate, with no imposition or pressure placed on members (Interview, June 17, 2025).

Table 2. Patterns of Election Monitoring Collaboration Between CSOs and Kesbangpol East Jakarta

No.	Form of Collaboration	Performance Indicators	Challenges Faced	Effectiveness Evaluation
1	Outreach & Education	Number of participants, increased public awareness	Limited public participation, time & budget constraints	Effective in raising awareness, but outreach scope needs expansion
2	Monitoring Training for CSOs	Number of trained CSO members, improved monitoring competence	Not all members could attend, limited human resources	Effective for attendees, but impact uneven
3	CSO-Government Coordination Forums	Frequency of meetings, number of agreements achieved	Infrequent communication, overlapping roles	Coordination needs improvement; effectiveness remains moderate
4	Establishment of Joint Monitoring Posts	Number of active posts, volume of public complaints	Limited facilities and funding, uneven post distribution	Effective in strategic locations; reinforcement needed in other areas
5	Electoral Case Advocacy & Mediation	Number of cases addressed/resolved	Process and responses remain slow	Effective in field-level cases, but needs faster resolution mechanisms

Source: Author's Data, 2025.

The table above outlines the forms of collaboration between civil society organizations, such as Pemuda Pancasila and Forkabi, and local government institutions—specifically Kesbangpol East Jakarta—in conducting election monitoring and oversight. According to Ari Budi Yuswanto, Head of the Subdivision for Ideological and Political Development (*Idewasbangpol*) in East Jakarta, both parties played complementary roles. Civil society organizations actively conducted outreach, education, training, and reporting activities, while Kesbangpol served as a facilitator by providing access to data, organizing meetings, and following up on reported violations. Despite several ongoing challenges, this collaborative effort successfully minimized electoral violations in East Jakarta during the 2024 election (Interview, January 23, 2025). The collaboration went beyond task delegation and represented an egalitarian model in which both government and civil society actors held strategic roles in upholding electoral integrity (Nugraha et al., 2024).

This relationship aligns with the principles of Neo-Tocquevillian liberal democracy, where civil society and the state engage in equal partnership based on participation, autonomy, and checks and balances. The government no longer acts as the sole controller of political processes but instead opens participatory spaces for civil actors to be involved in monitoring, oversight, and the expression of political aspirations. In this model, civil society organizations are not merely supplementary but function as independent actors who contribute insights, report findings, and participate in advocacy, while the government plays a supporting, protective, and neutral role (Cheema, 2010).

This collaborative model establishes a more balanced and democratic power relation. Through consultation forums, joint monitoring, and government facilitation of CSO activities, a cooperative environment is cultivated that strengthens electoral oversight and increases civic engagement. Taufik Hidayatullah, a member of Bawaslu's division on public participation and outreach, stated that the relationships developed between Kesbangpol and civil society had a positive impact on the 2024 election—reducing fraud and increasing participation in several areas of

East Jakarta (Interview, April 29, 2025). This reflects the Neo-Tocquevillian ideal in which civil society organizations are viewed as equal partners in promoting democratic quality—not as subordinates or tools of political power. The result was more effective, transparent, and credible election monitoring in East Jakarta, fostering a healthy and participatory democratic environment (Tocqueville, 2000).

The data presented highlights the practical collaboration between Kesbangpol and civil society organizations such as Pemuda Pancasila and Forkabi in the oversight of the 2024 general election in East Jakarta. This cooperation included the deployment of CSO members at polling stations, the use of digital tools like the *Sigaplapor* app to report violations, the organization of joint training and outreach programs, and the establishment of coordination forums. The government's role, particularly through Kesbangpol, was to support and facilitate these initiatives, while CSOs executed the outreach, monitoring, and mediation tasks on the ground. Despite resource limitations and sporadic communication challenges, both sides maintained an equal and coordinated partnership to improve electoral integrity.

From the data, four key patterns emerge. First, CSOs were not passive participants but took on active roles in monitoring and reporting electoral misconduct, indicating increased political agency. Second, neutrality remained a core principle in both organizations, with no formal coercion from leadership despite political endorsements—this reinforces the independent character of the CSOs. Third, formal collaboration with Kesbangpol was not limited to task delegation but extended to forums for shared decision-making and mutual feedback, showcasing a two-way communication structure. Fourth, although coordination and training were impactful, their effectiveness was uneven due to unequal resource distribution and limited attendance capacity. These trends suggest that while civil society engagement has matured, structural improvements are still needed for inclusive and equitable participation across organizations.

These findings contribute significantly to our understanding of how liberal democratic ideals—particularly those rooted in Neo-Tocquevillian theory—manifest in local governance practices (Tocqueville, 2000). The collaborative model between Kesbangpol and CSOs demonstrates a functioning mechanism of checks and balances, where state institutions do not monopolize political control but instead act as facilitators. This elevates civil society from being mere observers to empowered partners in electoral processes. Moreover, the evidence supports the argument that electoral integrity is more effectively safeguarded when monitoring involves actors who are embedded within the social fabric of the community. This not only increases credibility but also fosters a democratic culture grounded in mutual trust, responsibility, and institutional accountability.

The Influence of Social Interaction Between Civil Society Organizations and Kesbangpol

The relationship between *Kesbangpol* and civil society organizations (*ormas*) was initiated through outreach programs. These programs were jointly organized by *Kesbangpol* and election management bodies during the 2024 election cycle. This interaction is illustrated in the image below:

Figure 5. 2024 Election Outreach Session by *Kesbangpol*



Source: Kesbangpol, 2024.

The image captures a dialogue event on the 2024 general election organized by *Kesbangpol*, involving representatives from various *ormas*, government officials, and local community leaders in East Jakarta. The event drew more than 100 participants, with each *ormas* sending up to seven representatives, including both members and administrators. Ari Budi Yuswanto confirmed that the dialogue served as a tangible effort to increase the role of *ormas* in supporting the implementation of the 2024 elections in East Jakarta. The active participation of these organizations served as a key indicator of strengthened synergy between citizens and the government in realizing a fair and transparent election. The presence of *ormas* in this initiative—facilitated by *Kesbangpol*—was intended to reinforce their oversight function throughout the electoral process (Interview, January 23, 2025).

Figure 6. Dialogue Session on Election Outreach Activities



Source: Kesbangpol, 2024.

This photo features Mr. Arifin, a representative of Forkabi, offering an argument during a Q&A session in the 2024 election outreach program hosted by *Kesbangpol* on January 28, 2024. Nurecha, one of the dialogue participants, remarked that *Kesbangpol*'s presence among civil society groups aimed to guide *ormas* in conducting electoral monitoring with honesty and professionalism. Dialogues like these are considered crucial because they allow civil society organizations to convey their inputs and opinions directly to the government through *Kesbangpol*. These inputs serve as constructive suggestions that contribute to credible electoral monitoring. Furthermore, the forum provides a platform for expressing real grievances and aspirations, ensuring that the roles of *ormas* receive greater recognition from public institutions (Interview, June 17, 2025). This effort also functions as a preventive and educational measure in guiding democratic procedures, particularly in reinforcing the importance of police neutrality as impartial enforcers of security, public order, and social stability during elections (Asikin et al., 2018).

Handoko Murhestriarso, Head of *Kesbangpol* East Jakarta, emphasized that the outreach activities conducted by *Kesbangpol* were not merely symbolic. Instead, they were designed as genuine dialogue platforms aimed at promoting shared goals in election oversight. He affirmed that every argument, proposal, and suggestion raised by *ormas* during the Q&A sessions was carefully considered and collaboratively addressed. Handoko also stressed that the stronger the collaboration between *Kesbangpol* and civil society organizations, the more effective the electoral oversight would be in ensuring a credible 2024 election in East Jakarta. The relationship is reciprocal—registered and active *ormas* are encouraged to express their aspirations and receive facilitation in all relevant programs. These aspirations and recommendations from *ormas* are then factored into the policymaking process for electoral oversight, contributing to a secure and participatory electoral environment. He also highlighted the importance of maintaining the political neutrality of *ormas*, urging them to refrain from involvement in practical politics and to prioritize democratic integrity (Interview, January 23, 2025).

Interview data from Ari Budi Yuswanto, Head of the Subdivision for Ideological and Political Development (*Idewasbangpol*) East Jakarta, also indicated that the success of election oversight in East Jakarta could be measured through concrete indicators—such as the absence of disputes brought before the Constitutional Court and the lack of repeat voting sessions. The partnership model fostered by *Kesbangpol* consistently emphasized effective communication, equitable treatment of all *ormas*, and the support of the local government. *Kesbangpol* facilitated all *ormas* fairly and maintained active communication forums to ensure that no organization felt marginalized or overly favored. This relationship was based on mutualism and inclusivity, ensuring that collective interests were protected and that all stakeholders felt they had a meaningful role in maintaining regional stability (Interview, January 23, 2025).

These findings validate and enhance the visualization of cross-sector collaboration between *Kesbangpol* and civil society organizations. The relationship model developed in East Jakarta's 2024 election oversight aligns with Alexis de Tocqueville's concept of neo-Tocquevillian liberal democracy, wherein the state functions as a facilitator without infringing upon the autonomy of civil society. The active involvement of *ormas*, the provision of dialogue forums, and the inclusion of their input and aspirations all demonstrate a relationship that broadens civic space and strengthens the social control function of *ormas* in democratic governance. The dialogue forums initiated by *Kesbangpol* were not mechanisms of co-optation, but rather platforms for equal exchange of ideas and collaborative problem-solving, thereby avoiding a top-down power dynamic between the state and civil society.

In this context, the mutualistic symbiosis that has emerged not only enriches civic participation in electoral oversight but also ensures that each actor retains independent space for expression and strategic contributions. This proves that such collaboration maintains a balance of power, as envisioned by neo-Tocquevillian theory, affirming that civil society organizations continue to serve as vital actors in safeguarding local democratic quality.

DISCUSSION

This study focused on analyzing the power relations between the National Unity and Politics Agency (*Kesbangpol*) and two prominent civil society organizations—Pemuda Pancasila and Forkabi—during the 2024 presidential election in East Jakarta. The selection of these two *ormas* was based on their active involvement in political processes and electoral oversight, as well as their formal registration under *Kesbangpol*. The findings indicate that both organizations played substantial roles in monitoring the election, engaging in outreach programs, public education, polling station surveillance, and electoral dialogue. Their presence not only enhanced the visibility of civic participation but also served as a mediating bridge between the state and the public. The study revealed that *Kesbangpol* functioned as a facilitator, not merely as a controller, and allowed civil society to contribute substantially to ensuring electoral transparency and credibility.

The emergence of this power-sharing model can be explained by the mutual need for legitimacy and capacity. On the one hand, *Kesbangpol* sought to maintain social stability and public trust amidst growing political apathy and electoral skepticism. Involving well-networked and socially rooted *ormas* allowed the government to demonstrate an inclusive, participatory image while strengthening informal monitoring networks. On the other hand, *ormas* perceived this cooperation as an opportunity to institutionalize their political presence, expand access to decision-making forums, and secure recognition for their community-rooted work. Thus, the dynamic reflects a reciprocal exchange: the state gains legitimacy and grassroots access, while civil society strengthens its political foothold.

In comparison with previous studies, this research affirms and advances the existing literature on civil society–state engagement in Indonesia. Studies in Depok (Anggara, 2017) and Bogor (Andani & Pratidina, 2025) showed that while *ormas* involvement in electoral monitoring has increased, bureaucratic dominance and limited space for dialogue have hindered effective cooperation. In Tangerang (Megantoro & Perdana, 2024), despite the existence of monitoring forums, collaboration tended to be administrative and lacked the autonomy necessary for independent oversight. National-level analyses (Aspinall, 2020; Mietzner & Muhtadi, 2018) noted an evolving trend of participatory governance post-Reformasi but found that implementation remains uneven. Against this backdrop, the findings from East Jakarta offer a novel perspective: the emergence of a more balanced, dialogical, and trust-based power relationship in electoral oversight. This case illustrates that with proper facilitation and intentional inclusivity, civil society can indeed function as an equal partner in strengthening democratic governance.

The broader implication of these findings is ideological and structural. Drawing from neo-Tocquevillian theory, the East Jakarta case demonstrates that liberal democratic values—participation, autonomy, and checks and balances—can be operationalized in local political contexts. *Kesbangpol*'s engagement model provided civic space for critical feedback and policy input, not merely symbolic consultation. The facilitation of open forums, monitoring training, and data access allowed *ormas* to act not only as election observers but also as independent contributors to electoral governance. This decentralized democratic participation challenges the perception of civil society as subordinate or co-opted and instead recognizes them as essential actors in safeguarding electoral integrity.

However, the findings also reveal systemic dysfunctions that warrant critical reflection. Resource inequality among *ormas* emerged as a major issue, with larger or more government-aligned organizations enjoying greater access to training, funding, and logistical support (Aspinall, 2005). Smaller or more critical groups were often sidelined, creating an uneven playing field and undermining the very inclusivity the collaboration sought to promote (Siahaan & Tampubolon, 2021). Furthermore, cross-*ormas* coordination sometimes generated inter-group competition and polarization, particularly when influence, legitimacy, or access to *Kesbangpol* resources became contested (Mahyudin et al., 2020). These tensions, if unaddressed, risk weakening the collective civic oversight function and fragmenting the democratic coalition necessary for effective monitoring.

In light of these findings, several policy actions are recommended. First, *Kesbangpol*, together with *Bawaslu*, DPRD, and local stakeholders, must design an inclusive capacity-building program for all electoral monitoring *ormas*, including smaller, independent groups. This initiative should include training, mentorship, and equal access to information and resources, targeting at least 80% of registered *ormas* for direct involvement by the 2029 election. Second, a quarterly evaluation mechanism should be instituted to assess participation, coordination outcomes, and the inclusivity of implementation. Third, funding should be allocated from regional government budgets (*APBD*) and supported through inter-agency partnerships to ensure program sustainability and effectiveness. Without such structured intervention, the risks of declining electoral legitimacy, civic apathy, and social polarization will intensify, potentially undermining the quality of democratic governance at the local level.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the broader discourse on democratic consolidation by offering empirical evidence that localized, dialogical partnerships between state actors and civil society organizations can effectively safeguard electoral integrity. East Jakarta's model of electoral oversight not only affirms the viability of neo-Tocquevillian democracy in Indonesia but also presents a replicable template for other urban regions facing similar challenges.

CONCLUSION

This study found that the power relations between *Kesbangpol* and civil society organizations (*ormas*) in East Jakarta's 2024 election monitoring have evolved toward a more egalitarian and participatory partnership. The key insight drawn from these findings is the importance of fostering a collaborative model rooted in autonomy, mutual trust, and open communication. In such a model, *ormas* are not mere formal accessories but active actors capable of safeguarding the credibility, transparency, and integrity of the electoral process. The active involvement of organizations such as Pemuda Pancasila and Forkabi, alongside local government institutions like *Kesbangpol*, has contributed to more credible election monitoring, enhanced political stability, and the advancement of a more inclusive local democracy.

The main scholarly contribution of this research lies in its articulation of a neo-Tocquevillian power relation model—emphasizing horizontal partnership and collective oversight between civil society and the state. This study provides new empirical data on the dynamics of collaboration between *Kesbangpol* and *ormas* within the urban Indonesian context and enriches the academic discourse on democratic strengthening and electoral governance. The concepts explored and the variables developed herein offer a valuable reference for future studies, particularly those examining state–civil society relations in electoral oversight.

Nevertheless, this study has limitations. These include its geographic focus on a single city and its reliance on a limited number of informants, primarily from major civil society organizations. Moreover, it does not comprehensively explore the role of political interventions from external actors nor does it compare power dynamics across different regions or electoral cycles. Future research should expand the scope by incorporating multiple regions, engaging a broader array of stakeholders, and adopting comparative approaches to provide deeper insights and more robust generalizations on power relations in Indonesia's electoral monitoring landscape.

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