
Interpersonal Communication of the Election Commission as a Strategy in Efforts to Improve the Political Efficiency of the Fisherman Community in Manggar District, Belitung Timur Regency

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ABSTRACT: The KPU's communication target in general elections is to increase voter participation by giving them their voting rights in elections. Preliminary studies show that around 69.8% of 40 fishermen in Manggar District, East Belitung Regency, are still apathetic towards political processes such as elections and feel that their involvement in politics will have no impact. Therefore, the KPU then implemented an interpersonal communication strategy in an effort to increase the political efficacy of the fishing community in Manggar District. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with data collection techniques of interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which consisted of the stages of data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study found that the East Belitung KPU, together with members of the Manggar District Election Committee (PPK), held face-to-face meetings and discussions with fishermen groups as part of the KPU's outreach activities to the public. KPU has been open and honest in conveying any information related to the election, understanding the problems felt by fishermen, and providing support in the form of providing election education and knowledge to fishermen. In addition, KPU has also tried to build an atmosphere and interaction with fishermen to foster equality, as well as a communication approach that considers fishermen important. External factors such as the social environment or friends in the community and the candidate's vision and mission that can prosper the fishermen are factors that also influence the fishermen's perceptions and evaluations of elections and the political system in Indonesia.

Keywords: Strategy, Interpersonal Communication, Political Efficacy, KPU, Fishermen



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INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Indonesia is an archipelago country with various geographical locations, such as differences in the height and low of a community's residence. In addition, differences in natural factors can affect different climates and weather, which result in different livelihoods for Indonesian people, such as farmers, fishermen, plantation workers, and so on. Many people who make their living as fishermen live in rural areas along the coast. This coastal community is

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generally known as a fishing community because the majority of the people work as fishermen. According to the Director General of Fisheries cited in ([Parlee et al., 2021](#); [Utete et al., 2022](#)), fishermen are people who actively carry out work in operations catching seawater animals or plants with some or all of the results being sold, while people who make boats, porters, and nets are not categorized as fishermen, but cooks and mechanics who are on fishing boats are categorized as fishermen. Many fishermen are found in rural communities who still rely on nature to run their businesses and survive.

In the political realm, the participation of fishing communities in general elections is usually still low due to several social, economic, educational, occupational, and so on factors. For example, if the general elections are held when fishermen go to sea, they will be more concerned with going out to earn a living than delaying going to sea to vote in elections ([Damsar, 2010](#)). Economic factors are one of the reasons that make people prioritize work rather than dealing with political issues, and the lack of public education also influences people to participate ([Chekirova, 2022](#); [Putri & Eka, 2017](#); [Sabourin, 2022](#)). started to increase. Unlike before, now coastal communities are also starting to realize the importance of participating in elections in determining their future leaders ([Fauzie, 2014](#); [Sari & Laras., 2020](#)). Gradually, knowledge about the importance of voting in elections is increasing. Although not many people understand who they voted for, But they did not immediately renounce their right to vote as citizens.

([Dyck & Lascher, 2009](#)) defines the concept of political participation as the voluntary activity of the community taking part in a process of electing rulers who directly or indirectly participate in the process of making it. The country's political system is said to be successful if more and more citizens participate, but it will be said that the political system is not good if the political participation of its citizens is low ([Greiner & Lee, 2021](#); [Maschab & Mashuri, 2014](#)). Community participation is needed in a democratic country because it is a measure of the success of its political system. Paige in ([Akhvani & Faizah., 2018](#)) said that what determines the level of one's political participation is political awareness and trust in the government or political system. The results of studies that have been conducted ([Anderson, 2010](#); [Rahman & Rahaman, 2022](#)) show that there are three factors that can influence political participation, including internal political efficacy, personal trust, and a *sense of community*, where internal political efficacy and personal trust play a direct role in political participation. Thus, political trust and political efficacy are variables that have a relationship with political participation.

One of the important factors that must be owned by the community in political participation is political efficacy. In a democracy, society is critical in instilling trust in the democratic system. This is supported by research in China on the *political efficacy* of society towards the trust of police institutions. ([Hu et al., 2015](#)) explained in their research that the *external efficacy* of the general public is positively related to trust in the police, while *internal efficacy* and legitimate resistance are negatively related to trust. Where the purpose of political efficacy is the belief that one can have a strong and meaningful impact on public and political affairs,

Citizens with low *political efficacy* tend to have little or no trust in the government and believe that their actions do not have much impact on the political system. In contrast, people who have high *political efficacy* tend to believe that their government is doing what is best for them and that their

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actions can make a difference in politics. High political *efficacy* provides stability for democracy because a strong sense of empowerment reduces apathy and political alienation and fosters political legitimacy and support.

Communication plays an important role in every aspect of life for individuals, groups, and organizations. Government communication is carried out to convey development messages and policies to the public in order for the public to understand and participate in the success of each implemented program. KPU communication in general elections aims to convey the message of the election, namely the entire process and stages of the election, to the public. The public has the right to know about the ongoing election process. Law No. 7 of 2017 Concerning General Elections states that one of the obligations of the Provincial General Election Commission is to convey all information on the administration of elections to the public.

The KPU's communication target in general elections is voter participation in exercising their voting rights in elections. Increasing or decreasing voter participation in elections cannot be separated from the roles of all stakeholders; however, as an election management body, the KPU must be able to maximize its role by actively communicating at every stage of the process so that the public can understand the importance of an election and with self-awareness participate. The indicator for the success of interpersonal communication carried out by the KPU is the percentage of voter turnout in accordance with the set targets.

Preliminary studies conducted by researchers on 40 fishermen in Manggar District, East Belitung Regency, showed that around 73.53 percent of the fishermen felt that their involvement in politics would not have any impact on political conditions, so they were reluctant to get involved in the political process (apathy). This can happen due to the disinterest of the fishing community in seeking political information, their innate interest in political information, and their exposure to political news that is considered negative, making the fishing community feel pessimistic about being involved in the political process. In fact, the benchmark for the success of a democratic system is the involvement of the community in political participation to determine state decisions.

East Belitung Regency in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province is one of the coastal areas where in fact the community is dominated by fishermen. In fact, fishing communities tend to prioritize their work at sea, but if they are already at sea, fishing communities tend to find it more difficult to schedule their activities on land, including in this case when voting or participating in voting in elections, so that participation in elections for people who work as fishermen can be said to be low, especially in the East Belitung region. in terms of socialization for voters among fishing communities, especially more on non-formal socialization such as holding casual talks at coffee shops.

The implementation of the 2020 Pilkada in the midst of a pandemic is a first for Indonesia. Likewise for the East Belitung Regency KPU, this situation must be handled carefully. The holding of the 2020 Pilkada must consider aspects of public safety and health above any other interests. In practice, this is clearly a challenge for all KPUs in Indonesia, including the East

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Belitung Regency. To make the 2020 Simultaneous Regional Elections successful, it takes hard work in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially to provide understanding and confidence to the public so that they want to participate without fear of the risk of transmission of COVID-19 while implementing the health protocol. To combat voter concerns, election organizers are required to be able to make new innovations in socializing the election stages without neglecting the health of voters. The level of voter participation in the 2020 East Belitung Regency Regent and Deputy Regent Elections is expected to equal or exceed the target set nationally, which is 77.5 percent. The East Belitung Regency Election Commission admits that this participation rate is a challenge in itself to achieve. To achieve this target, the East Belitung Regency KPU needs to work hard at implementing various strategies for outreach activities. Based on data from the East Belitung Regency KPU, the percentage of people's participation in regional head elections (pilkada) is different from that since 2005. A comparison of the percentage of people's participation in East Belitung Regency in the 2015 and 2020 local elections can be seen in the table below.

Relevant previous research has been conducted by ([Cassia & Magno, 2021](#); [Prabowo, 2020](#)), which explains that there are 2 factors that influence community participation in the 2015 Pilkada in Pasaman Regency, namely internal factors and external factors. The internal factor affecting the decline in community participation is the people's opinion that it is pointless to participate in the 2015 Pilkada in Pasaman Regency. The values instilled in the community become ingrained in its culture for generations. While the external factor is the loss of public trust in government performance, people are traumatized enough to not participate in the 2015 Pilkada in Pasaman Regency.

According to other relevant research conducted by ([Haryono, 2019](#)), the KPU's strategy in increasing voter participation in the 2015 Samarinda Mayor and Deputy Mayor Elections is through institutional strengthening, political socialization, and beginner voter education. Next is research conducted by ([Putra & Fauzi, 2020](#)), which explains that there were several reasons for the occurrence of abstentions in the 2018 Pilkada, namely: 1) internal factors, such as technical and employment factors; and 2) external factors, which include administrative and political factors. There are also solutions to reduce the number of abstentions in the next election by loosening the rules for voters to be able to vote, improving the voter registration and data collection system so that it has a fresher outlook (which requires adequate personnel and budget support), and turning the right to vote into the obligation to vote. The electoral system should be highly understandable to voters (e.g., easy voting procedures, simple ballot design). For this solution, it is necessary to involve strategic groups, such as first-time voters, religious people, women, people with disabilities, and marginalized groups.

METHOD

The type of research used in this research is descriptive-qualitative. According to ([Moleong & J., 2014](#)), qualitative research intends to understand phenomena about what is experienced by

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research subjects, such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, actions, etc., holistically and by means of descriptions in the form of words and language, in a special natural context, and by utilizing various natural methods. Qualitative research has procedures that produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken statements from various attitudes of people or used as research objects that can be observed, while data analysis uses inductive data analysis, with data collection related more directly to informants and researchers as key instruments.

Research with qualitative methods aims to explain the phenomenon in depth through data collection. Some of the assumptions in the qualitative approach are that researchers pay more attention to processes than results. Therefore, qualitative research data is not only in the form of the behavioral conditions studied but also the conditions and situations of the surrounding environment. Researchers are also the main tool in collecting data and doing data analysis, and researchers must go into the field to make observations. Researchers conducted research with a descriptive study because it was in accordance with the nature of the problem and the goals they wanted to obtain and not to test hypotheses but to get a real picture of the KPU strategy in Manggar District.

The research location is the place where research data is obtained and carried out in accordance with the topic of the problems that exist in that place. This research was conducted in Manggar District, Belitung Timur Regency carried out in accordance with the topic of the problems that exist in that place. This research was conducted in Manggar District, Belitung Timur Regency. The reason for choosing the location of this research is because Manggar District in East Belitung is famous for its 1001 coffee shops, and it is in this place that fishermen often communicate with various groups. Therefore, the researcher chose Manggar as the survey location for collecting data and because the coffee shop itself is considered an icon of East Belitung. This research was carried out for more than 3 months, starting in mid-June 2022 and ending in August 2022. The research was carried out starting from the process of preparing research proposals, collecting data, analyzing it, and presenting the results in research reports.

The data source referred to in this study is the subject from which the data can be obtained. The data sources used in this study are primary and secondary data sources. In this case, the primary data source was obtained by the researcher during the data collection process using interview and observation techniques related to the research focus. As for the primary data source in this study, it is data from research informants. Secondary data is a source of written data used as supporting information in the primary analysis. Secondary data sources serve as supporting primary data. In this case, for example, researchers obtained information through written and online documents as well as related journals regarding the KPU's interpersonal communication strategy in Manggar District. As for the researchers in this study, they were willing to be involved and able to describe their experiences. In addition to this, they are willing to be interviewed and recorded, really know about the KPU's interpersonal communication strategy for increasing the political efficacy of the fishing community in the Manggar District, and then relate to and experience first-hand the results of the KPU's interpersonal communication strategy in the Manggar District.

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Based on the criteria above, the informants used in the study and according to the criteria for potential informants above included: *Key informants*: Chairperson of the East Belitung Regency KPU and Members of the District Election Committee (PPK) in the Election of the Regent and Deputy Regent of Belitung Regency Timur in 2020 as the Election/Election organizing committee in Manggar District, Main informants: Fishermen who are members of the Fisherman Community and community leaders in the Manggar District.

In collecting research data using interview techniques, guidelines for interviews in the form of written questions related to KPU's interpersonal communication strategy in increasing the political efficacy of fishing communities in Manggar District were developed. Interviews were conducted using a list of *open-ended questions* and were used to connect informants by giving room to expand on certain topics. The questions were designed to maximize the description of the informants' telling their experiences. The researcher added several additional questions besides those listed in the list of interview questions, which were still related to the answers of each informant. If the informant's answer is too difficult to understand, the researcher seeks clarification through other questions that reflect the explanation back to the informant in order to obtain accuracy. All informants were asked the same questions according to the list of interview questions.

After that, the researcher made observations, namely, making observations and recording them systematically on the object or subject of research. Observation in qualitative research is important to obtain *information* on activities, behaviors, objects, events, or incidents objectively. The researcher's observation activities were carried out to provide and convey a realistic description of data presentation regarding the KPU's interpersonal communication strategy in the Manggar District. The observations made in this study were participatory observations made by directly observing the informants regarding the research's focus. Observation guidelines are intended to monitor and guard against mistakes in collecting data. In addition, observations were made in order to obtain complete data related to speech contexts that could not be reached by a recording device during the observation. This technique was chosen because the researcher wanted to know how the KPU's interpersonal communication strategy was being implemented in order to increase the political efficacy of fishing communities in Manggar District. The next stage is documentation, which is a record of events that have passed. Research results will be more credible and trustworthy if they are supported by accurate data. Documentation is done when the observation takes place and serves as supporting data to corroborate the results of the observation report. The recording also serves to prevent researchers from being negligent in recording events in the field. The documents collected in this study are in the form of an overview of Manggar District, East Belitung Regency, profiles of the East Belitung Regency Election Commission and Manggar District election organizers, the number of fishermen who are members of the Manggar fishing community, a list of fishermen who have been registered as DPT, and other related documents. research focus.

In analyzing the data, researchers used techniques from Miles and Huberman, namely, *collecting data*. The process of collecting data from the field using research instruments such as interviews,

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observation, and documentation Data collection was carried out by going directly to the field and conducting interviews with informants regarding the focus of the problem, namely the KPU's interpersonal communication strategy in increasing the political efficacy of the fishing community in Manggar District. Data collection was supported by interview guides and other documentation tools, such as voice recorders. Data condensation is a substitute for data reduction in Miles and Huberman's theory. The difference between data reduction and data condensation lies only in the emphasis that data condensation, when processing and classifying the meaning (interpretation) of data, should not only take from one informant but must simultaneously be seen from the primary data of all informants. Reducing data is an activity that involves collecting written data and focusing on the research theme. Condensation is done by filtering the results of data collection, both from interviews and documentation. The researcher discarded interview results from informants who were considered out of topic and not in accordance with the structure of the theme, especially with regard to the KPU's interpersonal communication strategy. The theme framework is formed based on the theory found in the literature review and incorporates and classifies the reduction results into themes and explains them.

Presentation of data is an activity to collect information about relationships and activities during research. Presenting the data has the goal of making the reader understand what happened, analyzing the data that has been collected, and discussing it according to their understanding. (Sugiyono, 2020, 2017) states that what is most often used to present data in qualitative research is narrative text. In this step, the researcher compares the results of research findings that have been grouped according to themes that are in accordance with the focus of the research and then linked with theory. The results of this display will determine whether the findings are in accordance with the existing theory or whether there are new findings that are outside the theory.

The next activity is to draw conclusions from the first set of research data by collecting data, conducting qualitative analysis by looking for different meanings, making notes in arranging cause and effect, and drawing conclusions according to the results of the research. The final conclusions are that there is no final data collection, so it depends on the size of the collection in making notes in the field, providing codes, storing and searching again in the previous research. Conclusions are drawn in order to answer the formulation of the problem that has been described in the first chapter. Drawing conclusions is the end result of the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study focuses on KPU interpersonal communication as a strategy in an effort to increase the political efficacy of fishing communities in Manggar District, East Belitung Regency. Basically, communication activities do not just convey informational messages but also contain persuasive elements so that other people are willing to accept an understanding and make suggestions, orders, seductions, and so on. An institution, particularly a government institution,

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must have an appropriate strategy for achieving effective communication and persuading message recipients, in this case the community. One strategy that can be applied is an interpersonal communication approach to build close relationships with the community. For example, the KPU of East Belitung Regency conducted interpersonal communication in order to increase community participation, particularly among the Fisherman community in the Manggar District.

This data collection was carried out in the Manggar District, East Belitung Regency, and the East Belitung Regency KPU Office, which is located in the Manggarawan Integrated Office Complex, Jalan Raya Manggar Belitung Timur, as well as the Manggar PPK Office. Data collection was also carried out *online*, *offline*, or directly by meeting informants and making direct observations in the field. The researcher obtained the main data from interviews with informants regarding the research focus.

In this study, there were 5 informants, of which 3 were key informants and 2 were supporting informants. The key informants in this study were informants who were directly related to and knew various information about the object of research, which in this case was the Chairperson of the East Belitung Regency KPU and the Chairperson and Members of the District Election Committee (PPK) as the election organizing committee for the Regent and Deputy Regent Elections in the East Belitung Regency in 2020 in Manggar District. While the supporting informants in this study were informants who were used to support statements submitted by key informants and clarify the data obtained, the key informants in this study were fishermen who are members of the Fisherman Community and Community Leaders in the Manggar District. The following is information from the five informants who served as the primary data source for this study.

Table 4.3 Informant Data

| No | Name | Gender | Position / Occupation | Age | Information |
|----|-------------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Rizal, ST | L | Chairman of the East Belitung Regency KPU | 45 years | Key Informants |
| 2 | Suzartriandi | L | Chairperson of the Manggar District Election Committee (PPK) in the 2020 Pilkada | 44 years | Key Informants |
| 3 | Wira Sudharma | L | Member of the District Election Committee in the 2020 Pilkada | 34 years | Key Informants |
| 4 | Muchaedi Machwari | L | Entrepreneur (Manggar Community Leader) | 58 years | Supporting Informants |
| 5 | Darmawi | L | Fisherman | 47 years | Supporting Informants |

After analyzing the data from interviews and direct observation at the research location, the author categorizes the data according to the topic and presents it according to the focus of this

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research. Based on the reduced data, KPU interpersonal communication as a strategy to increase the political efficacy of the fishing community in the Manggar District is divided into two categories, namely the KPU interpersonal communication strategy in the Manggar District and the political efficacy of the fishing community in the Manggar District. The following is a presentation of the research results on KPU interpersonal communication as a strategy in an effort to increase the political efficacy of fishing communities in Manggar District, East Belitung Regency.

In its efforts to reach out to the community, especially the fishing community in the Manggar District, the KPU of East Belitung Regency has carried out various strategies and approaches in an effort to increase the participation and political efficacy of fishermen in the general election. This is because the fishing community is one of the largest communities in Manggar. One of the efforts carried out by the KPU is a communication strategy. The results of the data that have been received show that the East Belitung KPU together with members of the Manggar District Election Committee (PPK) held joint meetings and discussions with the Manggar Fishermen's Group as part of the KPU's outreach activities to the community. During face-to-face outreach, KPU uses an interpersonal communication approach that adheres to the principle of openness, emphasizes empathy, provides support, shows a positive attitude, and upholds equality.

Interpersonal communication basically includes several aspects of message content and relationship quality, meaning that the process of interpersonal communication does not only involve the exchange of message content. However, it also relates to the nature of the relationship in the sense of who the communicator's communication partner is and how the relationship is between the communicator and the communicant as the recipient of the message. As a result, the impact of this interpersonal communication is a cognitive effect because the message conveyed by the KPU provides new information for the community, particularly the fishing group in Manggar, and it is hoped that the community's political efficacy will increase, allowing them to participate in political contestations such as general elections. Political efficacy in a person can be understood in two forms, namely, internal and external political efficacy. Internal political efficacy refers to one's view of one's own abilities in democratic politics and the extent to which the individual is sufficiently informed to participate in politics. In this case, the fishermen in Manggar sub-district themselves are still experiencing difficulties understanding the rules for holding elections and giving their voting rights to regional head candidates.

Based on the results of the data that have been obtained, fishermen in Manggar District have a fairly good level of political efficacy. Because even though these fishermen do not understand the implementation of elections and do not know the candidate leaders they choose, they know the importance of giving voting rights in elections and also have sufficient qualifications and knowledge to participate in elections. In addition, external factors such as the social environment or friends in the community and the candidate's vision and mission that can prosper fishermen are factors that also influence fishermen's perceptions and evaluations of elections and the political system in Indonesia. The communication strategy is an arrangement of planning and management that will produce a structured activity or plan. The KPU's communication strategy

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for the community, particularly the Manggar Fishermen group in the 2020 Pilkada in East Belitung Regency, consists of five main strategies. Based on the results of interviews with the Head of the East Belitung Regency KPU, the KPU's strategy includes face-to-face communication, through print and electronic mass media, socialization tools and materials, image creation media such as murals, and with the help of demonstration volunteers. In implementing these various strategies, a personal approach and discussions were carried out directly with a number of fishing communities in the Manggar District.

Communication is a very important thing in human life because humans in their lives must communicate, meaning they need other people, need groups, or need communities to interact with each other. Communication is a basic human activity. By communicating, humans can relate to each other in daily life, whether in the household, at work, in the market, in society, or wherever humans are. There is no human being who will not be involved in communication. Communication is a key variable that allows one to build relationships within a group as well as interact and share information. In other words, communication is a way for members of a group or organization to understand each other and coordinate their activities to maintain a better relationship. In order to achieve effective communication, it is necessary to have an efficient communication strategy. The communication strategy should include everything that is needed, which will later be used to communicate with the public or target audiences. According to Effendy (2012), communication strategy is a mix of communication *planning* and *communication management* to achieve the goals that have been set. The communication strategy must be able to show how it is practically operational, in the sense that the approach can vary depending on the condition and situation. Communities will benefit from a wider and more effective viewpoint and target. Likewise, in the implementation of socialization carried out by government agencies in the community, appropriate communication strategies are needed so that the delivery of messages carried out can be received effectively by the community as the target audience. One of the institutions in the government that also uses a communication strategy to reach the public is the Kenyan Election Commission (KPU). To increase public participation, the KPU conducts outreach to the local community to make them aware that participating in the election is needed to determine the best candidate for the position of leader. This means that the socialization that is often carried out by the KPU is for the sake of common welfare. However, many people do not want to take part in the election. Therefore, socialization requires good communication with the community to increase people's participation in elections.

According to Law No. 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections and Government Regulation No. 2 of 2020 concerning the Third Amendment to Law No. 1 of 2015 concerning Stipulation of Government Regulations in Lieu of Law No. 1 of 2014 concerning Election of Governors, Regents, and Mayors to Become Laws-Law (jdih.kpu.go.id), community participation aims to provide electoral information and increase knowledge, understanding, and public awareness in elections. Departing from these three objectives, KPU focuses on socialization efforts and increasing community participation (Parmas) into three main tasks, namely: 1. providing information in accordance with statutory provisions; 2. providing equal opportunity to everyone or any party to participate in elections; and 3. encouraging community participation. As

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mandated by law, every KPU in various regions carries out socialization by carrying out various strategies, including an appropriate communication strategy. One of the strategies implemented is an interpersonal communication approach to build a close relationship with the community. For example, the KPU of East Belitung Regency conducted interpersonal communication in order to increase community participation, particularly among the Fisherman community in the Manggar District.

Based on the results of the research previously described, it can be seen that the East Belitung KPU, together with members of the Manggar District Election Committee (PPK), held joint meetings and discussions with the Manggar Fishermen's Group as part of the KPU's outreach activities to the community. During face-to-face outreach, KPU uses an interpersonal communication approach that adheres to the principle of openness, emphasizes empathy, provides support, shows a positive attitude, and upholds equality. On the principle of openness, the KPU strives to always be open with any information provided, shows honesty, and is willing to voice their thoughts directly to the fishermen's group community when receiving questions. In addition, KPU members also immediately responded quickly and responsively to questions, suggestions, and criticisms submitted by fishermen, both during face-to-face meetings and outside the discussion room. Furthermore, on the principle of emphasizing empathy, KPU always tries to put itself in the position of fishermen and understand the problems that many fishermen experience. The principle of providing support has been carried out by the KPU by providing support and finding solutions together to overcome the problems of these fishermen. In principle, showing a positive attitude is demonstrated by providing support in the form of election education and knowledge to fishermen in Manggar. The material is delivered in an interesting way and in a language that fishermen can easily understand. Furthermore, on the principle of upholding equality, the KPU carried out outreach with the listeners, namely the public, and also attempted face-to-face meetings between the East Belitung KPU and the Mangga Fishermen. Fishermen do not feel neglected.

Interpersonal communication can be said to be face-to-face communication between people, which allows each participant to capture the reactions of other people directly, both verbally and nonverbally. Interpersonal communication is not only communication from the sender to the recipient of the message and vice versa, but reciprocal communication between the sender and recipient of the message ([Mulyana, 2011, 2014](#)). Interpersonal communication also plays a role in mutually changing and developing through interaction in communication, requiring the parties involved to provide inspiration, enthusiasm, and encouragement in order to be able to change thoughts, feelings, and attitudes according to the topic being studied together. In order for interpersonal communication to be carried out effectively and cooperation to be improved, the communicator needs to be open, trusting, supportive, and show an openness that encourages the emergence of the most understanding, appreciative, and mutual qualities. The importance of interpersonal communication takes place in a dialogical manner, which shows the occurrence of interaction; a person involved in this form of communication has a dual function, each being a speaker and listener in turn ([Muhammad, 2010](#)).

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Interpersonal communication, compared to other forms of communication, is considered the most effective in changing the attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and behaviors of the communicant. The reason is because this communication takes place face-to-face, and with that communication comes *personal contact*. When conveying a message, feedback occurs immediately (immediate feedback), and the communicant's response to the message delivered in facial expressions and speech style is known at that time (Ismail, 2016; Suranto & A.W., 2011). With the tendency to change attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and behavior of the communicant, forms of interpersonal communication are often used to convey persuasive communication, namely a psychologically humane communication technique that is smooth and flexible in the form of solicitation, persuasion, or seduction (Cangara, 2008). Thus, every communicator will take four actions: forming, conveying, receiving, and processing messages. These four actions usually take place sequentially, and forming messages is defined as creating ideas or ideas with a specific purpose.

Self-efficacy is very important in the regional head election process for people who participate in the regional head election contestation because self-confidence can influence the community so that the community believes in the vision and mission with the potential they have. Individuals who have low self-expectations will influence low behavior, but when their self-expectations are high, the end result is optimal and satisfying. The KPU's goal is to increase public trust in holding regional head elections so that the number of people participating can grow in the future. Each regional KPU then conducts outreach and approaches reaching out to the community through various strategies that are expected to increase the community's political efficacy, such as what the East Belitung KPU did for the Fisherman community in the Manggar District. Based on the results of the research previously described, it can be seen that fishermen in Manggar District have a fairly good level of political efficacy. Because even though these fishermen do not understand the implementation of elections and do not know the candidate leaders they choose, they know the importance of giving voting rights in elections and also have sufficient qualifications and knowledge to participate in elections. Political efficacy in the study of politics has long been considered one of several antecedents to participation in institutional politics (Verba et al., 2005). Political efficacy can be interpreted as a person's perception of himself and the ability to influence politics in certain situations (Ramdhani, 2008). Dalton explains that politics and the characteristics of citizens who take part in political activities have changed over the years. This is what makes the process of transforming political practices and democratization happen, in which citizens participate. Dalton's study combined seven variables to represent three factors, namely: 1) education, 2) age, 3) gender, 4) political efficacy, 5) left-right political attitudes, 6) political party affiliation, and 7) union membership or groups. There are two types of political efficacy: external and internal efficacy. Internal efficacy is the belief that one can understand politics and thereby participate in politics, and external efficacy is the belief that the government will respond to one's demands. Feelings of being able to act effectively have been extensively documented by previous research as one of the main psychological variables capable of explaining citizen participation (Niemi et al., 2001). External political efficacy is more influenced by individual interactions with their environment, while internal political efficacy is more influenced by one's perception of one's abilities.

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In addition, it was found that external factors such as the social environment or friends in the community and the candidate's vision and mission that can prosper fishermen are factors that also influence fishermen's perceptions and evaluations of elections and the political system in Indonesia. The results of this study are in line with the opinion of (Dalton, 2008) that there are three reasons that can be stated as the three main factors that influence participation, namely: 1) personal resources to participate; 2) political attitudes that motivate participation; and 3) community groups that motivate participation. High political efficacy in society is always seen as a necessity for democratic stability. People who definitely have political efficacy will become supporters of the democratic system.

CONCLUSION

KPU of East Belitung Regency, together with members of the Manggar District Election Committee (PPK), held joint meetings and discussions with the Manggar Fishermen's Group as part of the KPU's outreach activities to the public. During face-to-face outreach, KPU uses an interpersonal communication approach that adheres to the principle of openness, emphasizes empathy, provides support, shows a positive attitude, and upholds equality. In the aspect of openness, the KPU has been open and honest in conveying all information related to the election to fishermen and has immediately responded quickly to questions as well as suggestions and criticisms submitted by fishermen. In the aspect of empathy, KPU always tries to put itself in the position of fishermen and understands the problems felt by fishermen regarding the holding of elections. In providing support, KPU does this in the form of providing election education and knowledge to fishermen in Manggar. In addition, the KPU and the members of the Election Organizing Committee have tried to build an atmosphere and interaction with fishermen to achieve equality or form equality between speakers and fishermen as listeners, as well as adopt a communication approach that considers fishermen equally important.

On the other hand, fishermen in Manggar District have a fairly good level of political efficacy. Because even though these fishermen do not understand the implementation of elections and do not know the candidate leaders they choose, they know the importance of giving voting rights in elections and also have sufficient qualifications and knowledge to participate in elections. In addition, external factors such as the social environment or friends in the community and the candidate's vision and mission that can prosper fishermen are factors that also influence fishermen's perceptions and evaluations of elections and the political system in Indonesia.

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