EXPLAINING HIGH ELECTORAL ACCEPTANCE AMID INTERNATIONAL INTEGRITY CONCERNS IN INDONESIA'S 2024 ELECTION

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Abstrak: Salah satu isu di dalam diskursus demokrasi partisipatori antara lain berkaitan dengan bagaimana publik mempersepsi integritas Pemilu dan menerima hasil elektoral. Melalui agenda Pemilu Presiden dan Wakil Presiden Indonesia 2024, penelitian ini ingin menguji adanya dampak retrospeksi dari kinerja rezim (pemerintahan) dan persepsi tentang profesionalisme penyelenggara Pemilu pada kepercayaan dan penerimaan hasil Pemilu. Desain metodologi yang digunakan ialah kuantitatif-eksplanatif, melibatkan 250 responden dan teknik analisis Partial-Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Temuan menunjukkan bahwa retrospeksi pada kinerja pemerintahan—terutama ekonomi—berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kepercayaan dan penerimaan hasil Pemilu. Adapun profesionalisme birokrasi Pemilu terbukti meningkatkan kepercayaan Pemilu akan tetapi tidak secara langsung mempengaruhi penerimaan hasil. Kontribusi teoritik penelitian ini memperkuat model sistem politik Easton dalam konteks elektoral dan mendukung model integritas Pemilu Norris, di mana kinerja pemerintah dan profesionalisme birokrasi andil mengkonstruksi legitimasi hasil Pemilu melalui kepercayaan sistemik.

Kata Kunci: Integritas Pemilu, Kepercayaan Pemilih, Penerimaan Hasil Pemilu, Kinerja Pemerintahan, Penyelenggara Pemilu

Abstract: One of the central issues in participatory democracy discourse concerns how the public perceives electoral integrity and accepts election outcomes. This study investigates the retrospective impact of regime performance and perceptions of electoral bureaucratic professionalism on trust and acceptance of the 2024 Indonesian presidential election results. Employing a quantitative-explanatory design with 250 respondents, data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Findings reveal that retrospective

evaluations of government performance—particularly economic—positively and significantly influence both electoral trust and acceptance on result. Meanwhile, bureaucratic professionalism enhances electoral trust but does not directly affect acceptance. Theoretically, this study reinforces Easton's political system model within an electoral framework and supports Norris's electoral integrity model, suggesting that both regime performance and bureaucratic professionalism contribute to legitimizing election outcomes through the cultivation of systemic trust.

Keywords: Electoral Integrity, Electoral Trust, Electoral Outcome Acceptance, Government Performance, Electoral Management Body

INTRODUCTION

Public acceptance of electoral outcomes is a crucial factor in establishing the political legitimacy of the elected government and, more broadly, in sustaining a democratic system. In the absence of such acceptance, government legitimacy becomes fragile, potentially triggering political instability in the form of protests, boycotts, or other forms of negative participation. This condition is believed to hinder democratic consolidation and may open the door to incompetent governance practices. Public acceptance of election results is thought to be influenced by several key factors: trust in the electoral process, the perceived legitimacy of the government in the eyes of the public, and the professionalism of the electoral management bodies. Studies conducted in various developing democracies have illustrated the urgency of these issues, offering insight into why public responses to elections often vary significantly.

The first relevant aspect concerns the conduct of elections. For instance, in Southern African countries such as Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Malawi, a study by Siachiwena and Saunders reveals that trust in the administration of elections significantly influences electoral legitimacy and political stability.[1] In a similar context, Cheeseman's research on Kenya highlights that the absence of procedural clarity and legitimacy during the 2007

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[1] Siachiwena & Saunders, "Elections, Legitimacy, and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Africa Lessons from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi", *Journal of African Elections*, 20(1), 67–89, (2021).

election triggered widespread ethnic violence and a prolonged political crisis.[2]

Second, another key factor supporting the democratization of electoral outcome acceptance is the role of electoral management bodies (EMBs) in fostering public trust through the development of transparent and fair electoral regulations. For example, the study by Langford and colleagues across Southeast Asia, East Asia, and South Asia underscores the central role of EMBs in enhancing electoral legitimacy through the design, implementation, and enforcement of rules governing candidate nomination, voting procedures, and vote tabulation.[3]

Third, the acceptance of electoral outcomes is also shaped by public trust in the ruling government. Cameron's study in Australia found that poor governmental performance tends to produce the perception that elections fail to deliver competent and stable governance.[4] This suggests that preserving governmental stability enhances both trust and public acceptance of elections and democracy. Similar findings appear in Zhai's study on China, which demonstrates that government performance in the social sector significantly determines public trust.[5] Thus, public trust emerges as a critical factor in determining whether democracy functions effectively and serves as a tangible evaluation of the elected government.

The pertinent question, then, is whether the 2024 Presidential Election in Indonesia was conducted with integrity. The answer depends on the level of analytical inquiry. Following Charles Stewart's study, he distinguishes this context in two dimensions: *trustworthiness* and *trust*.[6] *Trustworthiness* refers to procedural integrity and the legal validity of the electoral process. This concept encompasses mechanisms such as post-election audits, the

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[2] Cheeseman, "The Kenyan Elections of 2007: An Introduction", *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 2(2), 166–184, 2008.

[3] Langford, et. al., "The Rise of Electoral Management Bodies: Diffusion and Effects", *Asian Journal of Comparative Law*, 16(1), S60–S84, 2021.

[4] Cameron, "Government performance and dissatisfaction with democracy in Australia", *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 55(2), 170–190, 2020.

[5] Zhai, "Popular democratic perception matters for political trust in authoritarian regimes", *Politics*, 39(4), 411–429, 2019.

[6] Charles Stewart, "Trust in Elections", *Daedalus*, 151(4), 234-253, 2022.

neutrality of electoral management bodies (e.g., the General Elections Commission/KPU), and adherence to legal standards through objective assessment. In terms of *trustworthiness*, several monitoring organizations have assessed the 2024 election as lacking integrity. The international observer group ANFREL (2024) reported that the KPU failed to adequately address complaints and identified three systemic problems: (1) the Constitutional Court's ruling on the age requirement for presidential and vice-presidential candidates, which created unequal conditions; (2) the misuse of state resources to support specific candidates; and (3) the KPU's financial dependence on the government, which threatens its institutional independence. On the technical side, the Association for Elections and Democracy (*Perludem*) in 2024, highlighted significant problems with the KPU's *Sirekap* system, including restricted access (to the point of requiring Google Drive), data inconsistencies, and the removal of preliminary results visualizations—actions that ultimately reduced transparency. The KPU's slow response and lack of adequate explanation risk eroding public confidence in the integrity of the electoral process as a whole.

In contrast, *trust*—defined as the public's subjective psychological confidence in electoral integrity—is influenced by factors beyond objective technical procedures.[7] These factors include direct personal experiences (such as the smoothness of the voting process), information disseminated by media and political elites, and cognitive biases such as motivated reasoning. A survey conducted by LSI Denny JA (2024) indicates that the majority of Indonesians (89.9 percent) accepted the election results as officially declared by the KPU. In a similar vein, a poll conducted by Indikator (2024) found that 79.3 percent of respondents rated the administration of the 2024 General Election as moderately to highly free and fair (*Jurdil*). According to these discussion, this study places greater emphasis on *trust* as a psychological perception. In contrast, much of the existing research—particularly that developed by American scholars—

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[7] *Ibid*, Stewart.

tends to focus on the technical aspects and objective integrity of elections, using international standards as benchmarks to assess electoral trust.[8]

Trust in electoral integrity—which has significant implications for the public's acceptance of election outcomes—cannot be understood in isolation. It must be situated within the broader political context. As Charles Stewart notes, confidence in elections is closely linked to overall trust in political institutions and political leadership. In the specific context of general elections, the institutions that become the focus of public trust analysis are electoral bodies such as the General Elections Commission (KPU) and the Election Supervisory Board (*Bawaslu*). On the other side, the integrity of electoral management bodies (EMBs) is critical, particularly in performing technical tasks such as updating voter registries—an area that demands precision, independence from political interference, and adherence to ethical standards.[9] EMBs that possess higher levels of autonomy and institutional capacity are generally associated with greater electoral legitimacy and lower levels of electoral violence.[10] The absence of either of these two elements—technical competence or integrity—can have far-reaching consequences. Even initially administrative errors may be leveraged to shape public perceptions of systematic electoral fraud. Study by Nicholas Kerr and Anna Lührmann in 2017 demonstrates that the autonomy of the election institutions, when accompanied by media freedom, plays a significant role in shaping public trust in the conduct of elections.

Beyond the bureaucratic aspects, electoral trust is often closely linked to the performance of political leadership and broader economic

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[8] Paul Gronke, The Measure of American Elections: Voter Confidence as a Metric of Election Performance (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

[9] Niko Aristian Pangihutan Girsang, et. al., "Integritas Penyelenggara Pemilu (Study Tentang Pemutakhiran Data Pemilih Di Kabupaten Simalungun Pada Pemilu Tahun 2019)." Jurnal Ilmiah Muqoddimah: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Politik dan Hummanioramaniora 5(1): 125., (2021).

[10] Malcolm Langford, et. al., "The Rise of Electoral Management Bodies: Diffusion and Effects." Asian Journal of Comparative Law 16(1): S60–84, (2021).

conditions.[11][12] For instance, governments with a strong reputation—particularly in terms of transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to public needs—tend to foster a political environment conducive to the successful administration of elections, thereby increasing public acceptance of electoral outcomes. Conversely, administrations perceived as corrupt or unresponsive can diminish public confidence in both the electoral process and its results. As Pippa Norris argues that government's poor reputation may undermine electoral integrity, as the public is more likely to be skeptical of processes managed by authorities they do not trust.

This study offers an integrated conceptual model that synthesizes various previous studies, which have tended to examine the factors influencing public trust and acceptance of electoral outcomes—or democratic political processes more broadly—in a fragmented manner. For instance, the works of Cameron and Zhai have focused on regime performance, while studies by Langford and colleagues, as well as by Kerr and Lührmann, have emphasized the role of bureaucratic professionalism, while other studies have explored the impact of electoral outcomes on voter perceptions.[13][14][15]

This study integrates the key dimensions influencing electoral outcome acceptance (EAC), namely, regime performance (REP) and bureaucratic professionalism (BPO), with electoral trust as the mediating variable (ELT). Accordingly, the study proposes the following research questions: (1) Does regime performance and the professionalism of electoral management bodies influence trust in the 2024 election in Indonesia?; (2) Do regime performance and bureaucratic professionalism affect public

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[11] Yida Zhai, "Popular Democratic Perception Matters for Political Trust in Authoritarian Regimes." Politics 39(4): 411–29, (2019).

[12] Sarah Cameron, "Government Performance and Dissatisfaction with Democracy in Australia." Australian Journal of Political Science 55(2): 170–90, (2020).

[13] Christoper J. Anderson & Andrew J. LoTempio, "Winning, Losing and Political Trust in America." *British Journal of Political Science* 32(2): 335–51, (2002).

[14] Cassidy Reller, et. al., "Are Elite Cues Necessary to Drive the 'Winner Effect' on Trust in Elections?" *Electoral Studies,* 80 (September): 102541, (2022).

[15] André Blais, "Election Outcomes, Legislative Representation, and Satisfaction with Democracy." *Party Politics* 23(2): 85–95, (2017).

acceptance of the 2024 election results?; (3) Does trust in electoral integrity influence public acceptance of the results?; and (4) Does trust in electoral integrity mediate the relationship between regime performance and bureaucratic professionalism and the public's acceptance of the 2024 election results?.
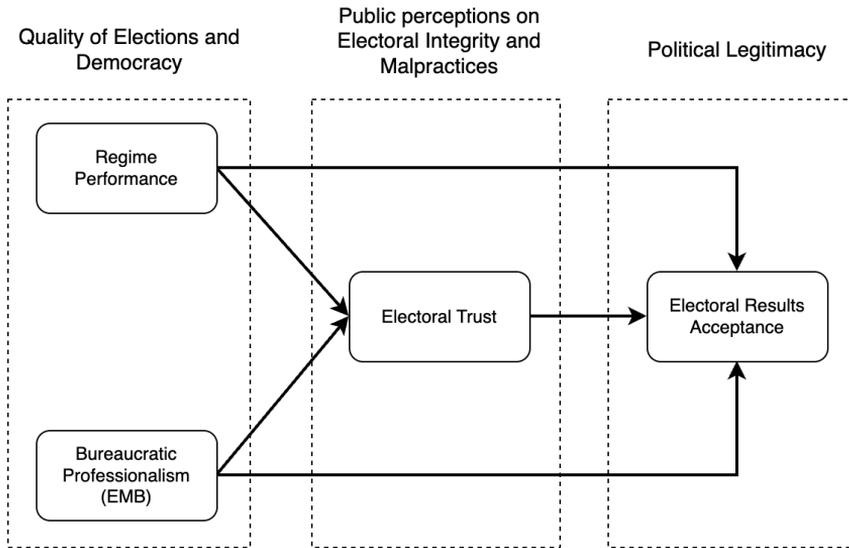
Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Based on the preceding discussions and the formulation of research problems as illustrated in the conceptual model (Figure 1.), this study contributes to the literature on democracy and political legitimacy by emphasizing the critical role of public perceptions regarding government performance, bureaucratic professionalism, and the integrity of electoral management in shaping public acceptance of election outcomes (political legitimacy), specifically regarding the results of 2024 presidential election. Furthermore, this study reinforces theories of legitimacy by demonstrating that public trust in elections is not solely contingent upon empirically fair procedures, but also on the extent to which such fairness is perceived and accepted by the broader public.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research design with an explanatory approach with the primary data source based on survey administered to 250 respondents. The measurement scale for the dependent variable, Electoral Outcome Acceptance adapted from the Perception of Political Legitimacy scale[16] and the *Losers' Consent* framework[17]. The mediating variable, Electoral Trust (Z), is measured using items from the World Values Survey.[18] The independent variable, Regime Performance (X1), is adapted from studies by Cameron (2020) and Zhai (2019), while the measurement of Bureaucratic Professionalism is based on the V-DEM Codebook.[19] Data analysis is conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), following a two-step procedure: evaluation of the outer model (including tests of convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability), followed by assessment of the inner model (using R^2 coefficients and path coefficients).[20]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents Characteristics

This section presents the characteristics of the respondents involved in the study, comprising a total of 250 individuals whose data were successfully processed. The descriptive analysis aims to illustrate the representativeness of the sample prior to presenting the results of the inferential data analysis.

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[16] *Op.Cit*, Norris.

[17] Christopher L. Anderson, et. al., Losers' Consent: Elections and Democratic Legitimacy. Oxford: Oxford University Press, (2005).

[18] World Values Survey, "2024-2026 World Values Survey Wave 8 Master Survey Questionnaire", (2024).

[19] V-Dem Institute, "V-Dem Codebook V13: Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project", (2024).

[20] Joseph H. Hair, et. al., A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)-Third Edition. London: Taylor & Francis, (2021).

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	67	26.8	26.8	26.8
Female	183	73.2	73.2	100.0

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics Based on Gender (Source: Authors)

In terms of gender, the respondents were predominantly female, totaling 183 individuals (73.2%), while the number of male participants was 67 (26.8%).

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Jawa Barat	52	20.8	20.8	20.8
Jawa Tengah	49	19.6	19.6	40.4
Jawa Timur	42	16.8	16.8	57.2
DKI Jakarta	22	8.8	8.8	66.0
Banten	11	4.4	4.4	70.4
Sumatera Utara	10	4.0	4.0	74.4
Sulawesi Selatan	8	3.2	3.2	77.6
Kalimantan Selatan	5	2.0	2.0	79.6
Sumatera Barat	5	2.0	2.0	81.6
Aceh	5	2.0	2.0	83.6
Bali	5	2.0	2.0	85.6
Lampung	4	1.6	1.6	87.2
Riau	4	1.6	1.6	88.8
DI Yogyakarta	3	1.2	1.2	90.0
Kepulauan Riau	3	1.2	1.2	91.2
Sumatera Selatan	3	1.2	1.2	92.4
Bengkulu	2	0.8	0.8	93.2
Kalimantan Barat	2	0.8	0.8	94.0
Sulawesi Tengah	2	0.8	0.8	94.8
Sulawesi Utara	2	0.8	0.8	95.6
Kalimantan Tengah	2	0.8	0.8	96.4
Nusa Tenggara Timur	2	0.8	0.8	97.2
Bangka Belitung	1	0.4	0.4	97.6
Kalimantan Utara	1	0.4	0.4	98.0
Papua	1	0.4	0.4	98.4
Kalimantan Timur	1	0.4	0.4	98.8
Sulawesi Tenggara	1	0.4	0.4	99.2
Papua Barat	1	0.4	0.4	99.6
Nusa Tenggara Barat	1	0.4	0.4	100.0

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics by Province (Source: Authors)

Geographically, the respondents were distributed across the 27 provinces throughout Indonesia, with the majority originating from the island of Java. West Java contributed the highest number of respondents (52 individuals or 20.8%), followed by Central Java (49 individuals or 19.6%), East Java (42 individuals or 16.8%), DKI Jakarta (22 individuals or 8.8%), and Banten (11 individuals or 4.4%). Among provinces outside Java, significant participation was recorded from North Sumatra (10 individuals or 4%) and South Sulawesi (8 individuals or 3.2%).

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Generation Z (17-28 y.o)	138	55.2	55.2	55.2
Millenials (29-44 y.o)	100	40.0	40.0	95.2
Generation X (45-60)	12	4.8	4.8	100.0

Table 3. Respondent Characteristics by Age (Source: Authors)

Based on age distribution across generational cohorts, Generation Z (ages 17–28) comprised the majority of respondents, totaling 138 individuals (55.2%). This was followed by Millennials (ages 29–44) with 100 respondents (40%), and Generation X (ages 45–60), who accounted for 12 participants (4.8%). This composition reflects the study's focus on the productive-age population.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Anies-Muhaimin	45	18.0	18.0	18.0
Prabowo-Gibran	166	66.4	66.4	84.4
Ganjar-Mahfud	17	6.8	6.8	91.2
No Response	22	8.8	8.8	100.0

Table 4. 2024 Presidential Election (Source: Authors)

Regarding preferences in the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential election, the pair Prabowo Subianto–Gibran Rakabuming Raka received the highest level of support among respondents, with 166 individuals (66.4%) indicating their preference. Anies Baswedan–Muhaimin Iskandar were

chosen by 45 respondents (18.0%), while Ganjar Pranowo–Mahfud MD received 17 votes (6.8%). A total of 22 respondents (8.8%) reported either not voting or chose not to disclose their preference.

Descriptive Analysis of Measurement Scales

The statistical description of the research variables presented in this section serves to illustrate the respondents' assessment levels or perceptions for each indicator or item within all examined variables.

Interval Mean	Criteria
1 – 1.8	Very Bad / Very Low / Strongly Disagree
1.81 – 2.6	Bad / Low / Disagree
2.61 – 3.4	Moderate / Fairly Disagree
3.41 – 4.2	Good / High / Agree
4.21 – 5.0	Very Good / Very High / Strongly Agree

Table 5. Measurement Scale Criteria

The interval range is calculated using the formula: (Maximum Score – Minimum Score) / Number of Classes = (5 – 1) / 5 = 0.8. Subsequently, the mean scores of each indicator and construct (variable) will be evaluated by comparing them to the resulting interval range, as outlined in the following assessment criteria table.

Code	Statements	Mean	Criteria
REP1	Every citizen is treated equally by the government without discrimination, regardless of their social, economic, or political background.	4.13	High / Good
REP2	The Jokowi–Ma'ruf administration successfully ensured the fulfillment of citizens' basic needs—such as food, clothing, housing, and healthcare services—throughout their term in office.	3.62	High / Good
REP3	The economic conditions during the Jokowi era were significantly better compared to those under previous presidential administrations.	3.44	High / Good
REP4	Under the Jokowi administration, law enforcement agencies consistently took firm action against perpetrators of corruption or other	3.11	Moderate

crimes, including high-ranking officials and influential individuals.			
Total Mean		3.57	High / Good

Table 6. Descriptive Analysis of Regime Performance Scale

Based on the descriptive analysis, the social performance indicator (REP1) achieved a score of 4.13, categorized as High/Good. This was followed by the economic performance indicators measured through two statements: the fulfillment of basic needs (REP2), which received a score of 3.62 (High/Good), and the perceived economic conditions during the current administration (REP3), which scored 3.44 (High/Good). However, the political and legal performance indicator—measured by the government's commitment to law enforcement and consistency in combating corruption (REP4)—received a comparatively lower score of 3.11, categorized as Moderate/Fairly Disagree. Overall, the average score for variable X1 (respondents' assessment of government performance) was 3.57, placing it in the High/Good criteria.

Code	Statements	Mean	Criteria
BPO1	The General Elections Commission (KPU) operates independently from government or political party interference in formulating and implementing electoral laws in an impartial manner.	3.75	High / Good
BPO2	The General Elections Commission (KPU) possesses adequate staff and resources to effectively administer national elections.	3.91	High / Good
Total Mean		3.83	High / Good

Table 7. Descriptive Analysis of Bureaucratic Professionalism Scale

The variable KPU Bureaucratic Professionalism (BPO) demonstrated high scores in both institutional autonomy (BPO1: 3.75) and institutional capacity (BPO2: 3.91), each falling within the High/ Good criteria. The aggregate mean score for this variable was 3.83, also classified as High/ Good.

Code	Statements	Mean	Criteria
ELT1	Votes were counted honestly and fairly in the 2024 Presidential Election.	3.91	High / Good
ELT2	Opposition candidates were given equal opportunities and were not unfairly hindered in competing in the 2024 Presidential Election.	3.98	High / Good
ELT3	There were no instances of voter bribery in the 2024 Presidential Election.	3.37	Moderate
ELT4	The mass media provided balanced coverage of the 2024 Presidential Election.	3.84	High / Good
ELT5	Election officials acted neutrally and professionally during the 2024 Presidential Election.	3.88	High / Good
ELT6	The results of the 2024 Presidential Election were not influenced by the power of money (money politics).	3.60	High / Good
ELT7	No voter intimidation or threats occurred at polling stations during the 2024 Presidential Election.	3.96	High / Good
ELT8	The alternative presidential and vice-presidential candidate pairs in the 2024 Election offered diverse and adequate options to represent the aspirations of the Indonesian people.	3.96	High / Good
Total Mean		3.81	High / Good

Table 8. Descriptive Analysis of Electoral Trust Scale

The variable Electoral Trust (ELT) recorded the highest score in the perception that opposition candidates were given the opportunity to compete in the presidential election (ELT2: 3.98), followed by perceptions of low levels of voter intimidation (ELT7: 3.96) and the availability of diverse and representative candidate choices (ELT8: 3.96). The honesty of vote counting (ELT1: 3.91), media balance (ELT4: 3.84), and neutrality of election officials (ELT5: 3.88) also received relatively high scores. However, respondents' assessment regarding the absence of voter bribery in the 2024 Presidential Election (ELT3: 3.37) fell into the Moderate/ Fairly Disagree criteria. Overall, variable Z achieved an average score of 3.81, categorized as High/Good.

Code	Statements	Mean	Criteria
EAC1	I accept Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka as the duly elected President and Vice President resulting from the 2024 Presidential Election conducted through a democratic process.	4.12	High / Good
EAC2	Regardless of my political preference, I believe that the overall process of the 2024 Presidential Election in Indonesia was conducted fairly.	3.93	High / Good
EAC3	Candidates who lost in the 2024 Presidential Election should refrain from filing legal challenges (e.g., through the Constitutional Court) against the election results.	3.78	High / Good
Total Mean		3.94	High / Good

Table 9. Descriptive Analysis of Election Outcome Acceptance Scale

The variable Electoral Outcome Acceptance (EAC) showed consistently high scores across all indicators, including acceptance of the elected candidate pair (EAC1: 4.12), perceived fairness of the electoral process (EAC2: 3.93), and disapproval of legal challenges to the election results (EAC3: 3.78). The overall mean score for variable Y was 3.94, which falls into the High/Good category.

Evvaluation of Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The measurement model evaluation in Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) is conducted to ensure the validity and reliability of indicators in representing latent constructs prior to structural analysis. In the initial evaluation, the researcher identified issues within the outer model, particularly concerning convergent and discriminant validity. First, indicators REP1 (loading = 0.358) and ELT8 (loading = 0.635) failed to meet the recommended threshold of 0.70.[21] The second issue emerged in the assessment of discriminant validity, where ELT1 and ELT2 exhibited concerning cross-loadings onto other constructs—0.695 on EAC and 0.766 on ELT, respectively. Moreover, the HTMT value between these two

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[21] *Ibid*, Hair

constructs reached 0.915, significantly exceeding the threshold of 0.90. These findings suggest empirical overlap between the variables measuring trust in the electoral process and acceptance of election outcomes, which is plausible given the conceptual proximity between the two constructs.

Based on the evaluations previously presented, five indicators were removed from the model: REP1 due to its low outer loading; ELT1 and ELT8 to improve the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and reduce overlap with the EAC construct; EAC2 as a source of imbalance within the primary construct; and ELT7 to further enhance convergent validity. These modifications resulted in substantial improvements, and following the removal of the five indicators, all remaining outer loadings now exceed the threshold of 0.70 (Table 10).

Construct	Indicators	Outer Loadings	Construct Reliability and Validity			
			CA	CR (rho_a)	CR (rho_c)	AVE
REP	REP2	0.851	0.790	0.797	0.877	0.704
	REP3	0.858				
	REP4	0.807				
BPO	BPO1	0.838	0.704	0.745	0.869	0.768
	BPO2	0.913				
EAC	EAC1	0.876	0.661	0.664	0.855	0.747
	EAC3	0.852				
ELT	ELT2	0.748	0.851	0.851	0.893	0.627
	ELT3	0.821				
	ELT4	0.819				
	ELT5	0.757				
	ELT6	0.811				

CA (Cronbach's Alpha); CR (Composite Reliability); AVE (Average Variance Extracted)

Table 10. Model Quality Criteria

Similarly, the AVE (Average Variance Extracted) values for all variables now meet the minimum threshold above 0.50 (Table 10). Electoral Trust (ELT) reached 0.627 (an increase from 0.572), Government Performance (REP) recorded 0.704, Electoral Outcome Acceptance (EAC) reached 0.747, and Bureaucratic Professionalism (BPO2) obtained 0.768. The composite reliability (ρc) values for all constructs also exceeded the 0.70

threshold, confirming strong internal consistency. Although the Cronbach's alpha for Electoral Outcome Acceptance (EAC) was relatively low at 0.661, this is attributed to the fact that only two indicators remained after the revision.

	ELT	REP	EAC	BPO
ELT				
REP	0.757			
EAC	0.891	0.786		
BPO	0.671	0.683	0.521	

Table 11. Discriminant Validity (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio)

With regard to discriminant validity test, the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) values for all construct pairs were below the threshold of 0.90, including the relationship between Electoral Trust and Electoral Outcome Acceptance, which recorded a value of 0.891 (Table 11). These values statistically fulfill the criteria for discriminant validity. Having satisfied all measurement model requirements, the analysis proceeded to the evaluation of the inner model using the SEM-PLS algorithm and bootstrapping procedures to assess the significance of the relationships among variables.

R-Squared (R^2)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) measures the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the model in a multivariate analysis. In this context, R^2 serves as an indicator of the predictive power of the structural model with respect to endogenous variables. An R^2 value of ≥ 0.75 indicates a substantial level of explanatory power, a value of 0.50 is considered moderate, and a value of 0.25 is classified as weak.[22]

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[22] *Ibid*, Hair.

	R-Squared	R-Squared Adjusted
Election Trust (ELT)	0.424	0.419
Electoral Outcome Acceptance (EAC)	0.493	0.487

Table 12. Coefficient Determination (R-Squared)

For the variable Electoral Trust (ELT), the R^2 value was 0.424, indicating that 42.4% of the variance in electoral trust is explained by its predictors—Regime Performance and Bureaucratic Professionalism. This suggests that the remaining 57.6% is influenced by other variables not included in the model. Meanwhile, for Electoral Outcome Acceptance (EAC), an R^2 of 0.493 implies that nearly half (49.3%) of the variance in outcome acceptance is explained by the model (Regime Performance, Bureaucratic Professionalism, and Electoral Trust), with the remainder influenced by external factors. According to the criteria proposed by Joseph H. Hair, R^2 values ranging from 0.25 to 0.50 are considered moderate, indicating that both models possess an adequate level of explanatory power.

Hypothesis Test Results
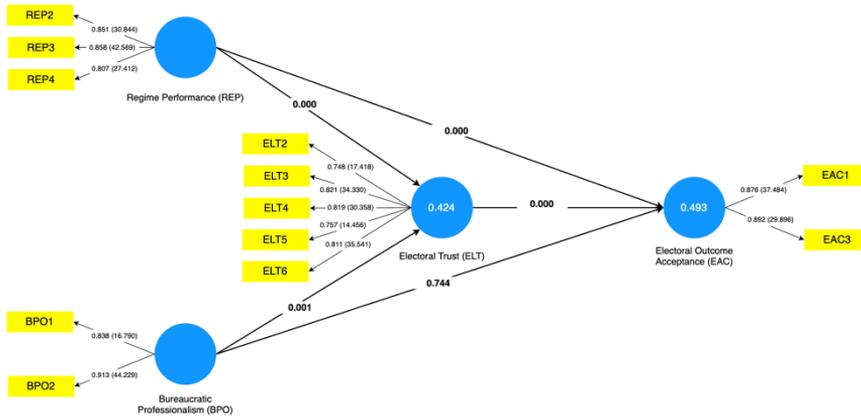
Figure 2. Structural Model

Hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping method with 5,000 subsamples generated through resampling from the original sample.

To evaluate the causal relationships among constructs—particularly between exogenous and endogenous variables—statistical significance was assessed using two criteria: a T-statistic ≥ 1.96 (at a 5% significance level, α = 0.05) or a p-value < 0.05, both of which provide sufficient evidence to support the acceptance of a hypothesis. Conversely, a T-statistic < 1.96 or a p-value > 0.05 indicates a statistically insignificant effect, thereby leading to the rejection of the hypothesis.

Hypothesis	Path	T-Statistics	Sig.	Results
H1	REP → ELT	8.504	0.001	Accepted
H2	BPO → ELT	3.180	0.000	Accepted
H3	REP → EAC	3.887	0.000	Accepted
H4	BPO → EAC	0.327	0.744	Rejected
H5	ELT → EAC	7.516	0.001	Accepted

Table 13. Hypothesis Test for Direct Effect

Based on the results of the SEM-PLS analysis, the Table 13 presents the outcomes of the direct effect hypothesis testing conducted in this study. In this context, therefore, the hypothesis test results for direct effect can be interpreted as follows:

1. Hypothesis 1: Regime Performance (REP) affects Electoral Trust (ELT). Based on the test results, the T-statistic value was 8.504 with a p-value of 0.000. As the T-statistic significantly exceeds the threshold of 1.96 and the p-value is below 0.05, Hypothesis H1 is accepted. This finding indicates that Government Performance has a positive and significant effect on Electoral Trust, confirming that improvements in regime performance are directly associated with increased public trust in the electoral process.

2. Hypothesis 2: Bureaucratic Professionalism/ Election Management (BPO) affects Electoral Trust. The hypothesis test for H2 yielded a T-statistic of 3.180 and a p-value of 0.001. These values meet the criteria for statistical significance (T-statistic > 1.96 and p-value < 0.05), leading to the acceptance of Hypothesis H2. This finding demonstrates that KPU Bureaucratic Professionalism contributes positively to the development of Electoral Trust.

3. Hypothesis 3: Regime/ Government Performance (REP) affects Electoral Outcome Acceptance (EAC). The analysis produced a T-statistic of 3.887 with a p-value of 0.000. Accordingly, Hypothesis H3 is accepted as it satisfies the criteria for statistical significance. This implies that Government Performance not only exerts an indirect influence on Electoral Trust, but also has a direct impact on public Electoral Outcome Acceptance.

4. Hypothesis 4: Bureaucratic Professionalism/ (BPO) negatively affects Election Outcome Acceptance (EAC). The hypothesis test for H4 resulted in a T-statistic of 0.327 and a p-value of 0.744. As the T-statistic falls below 1.96 and the p-value exceeds 0.05, Hypothesis H4 is rejected. This indicates that there is no statistical evidence to support the direct effect between the Bureaucratic Professionalism (KPU) on Electoral Outcome Acceptance.

5. Hypothesis 5: Electoral Trust (ELT) affects the Electoral Outcome Acceptance (EAC). This is supported by the high T-statistic value (7.516) and a p-value below 0.001, leading to the acceptance of Hypothesis H5. The result confirms that Electoral Trust is a strong predictor of Electoral Outcome Acceptance. The higher the public's trust in the electoral process, the greater the likelihood of public acceptance of the results. This finding underscores the central role of trust as a critical bridge between the electoral process and the acceptance of its outcomes.

In addition to examining the direct effects among variables in the research model, hypothesis testing was also conducted to assess indirect effects (mediation analysis) based on the paths specified in the model, with the results presented as follows:

Hypothesis	Path	T-Statistics	Sig.	Results
H6	REP → ELT → EAC	5.293	0.000	Accepted
H7	BPO → ELT → EAC	2.291	0.003	Accepted

Table 14. Hypothesis Test for Indirect Effect

Based on the results of the hypothesis testing, the relationships among variables along the mediation pathways can be interpreted as follows:

6. Hypothesis 6 (H6): Electoral Trust positively mediated the affects of Regime/ the Government Performance and public Electoral Outcome Acceptance. This is evidenced by a T-statistic value of 5.293 and a p-value of 0.000, which confirm the significance of the mediating effect, thereby supporting the acceptance of Hypothesis H6.

7. Hypothesis 7: Electoral Trust positively mediated the affects of the Bureaucratic Professionalism and Electoral Outcome Acceptance. The test results yielded a T-statistic of 2.291 and a p-value of 0.003, leading to the acceptance of Hypothesis H7. Although Bureaucratic Professionalism did not have a direct effect on Electoral Outcome Acceptance (as Hypothesis H4 was rejected), its indirect effect— mediated through the increased Electoral Trust—was found to be statistically significant.

According to the classification by Joseph H. Hair, the mediation mechanisms in this study reveal two distinct patterns of relationships.[23] For the variable Regime Performance (REP), a pattern of complementary mediation was identified, as evidenced by the simultaneous significance of both the direct effect (H3) and the indirect effect through Electoral Trust (H6). This indicates that electoral trust functions as a partial mediator that complements and reinforces the direct influence of regime performance on electoral outcome acceptance. In contrast, the variable Bureaucratic Professionalism (BPO) demonstrates an indirect-only mediation pattern, wherein the direct effect was not significant (H4), but the indirect effect through the mediator was statistically significant (H7). These findings highlight that the professionalism of the KPU contributes to electoral outcome acceptance indirectly, by first building public trust in the electoral process.

Discussion

The first hypothesis (H1), which posits that Regime Performance (REP) influences Electoral Trust (ELT), is statistically supported. Regime

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[23] *Ibid*, Hair.

performance—reflected primarily in economic outcomes, according to the findings of this study—produced outputs perceived by the public as legitimate and responsive. The descriptive statistics indicate that the statement "The Jokowi–Ma'ruf administration successfully ensured the fulfillment of citizens' basic needs—such as food, clothing, housing, and healthcare services—throughout their term in office" received an average score of 3.62, which falls within the High/Good criteria. Although the aspect of law enforcement—particularly in taking firm action against corruption or crimes involving high-ranking or influential individuals—received a lower average score of 3.11 (Moderate/Fairly Disagree), the overall assessment of the Jokowi administration's performance was classified as High/Good from the public's perspective. As a consequence, the public developed trust not only in the regime itself but also in the associated political institutions, including the electoral process.

These findings are consistent with the theoretical framework of David Easton's political system theory, in which trust in elections is understood as a form of diffuse support for the political system. Such support is constructed through the cumulative satisfaction of the public with the regime's performance in meeting societal expectations.[24] Similarly, Pippa Norris's Electoral Integrity Model emphasizes that perceptions of electoral integrity are not solely dependent on technical procedures, but also on the regime's responsiveness to public demands.[25] Therefore, within a systemic framework, regime performance constitutes an input (support) into the next political cycle, wherein elections serve as the conversion mechanism whose legitimacy is shaped by accumulated satisfaction with prior governance. This finding aligns with previous empirical studies. For example, Marlene Mauk found that poor regime performance often leads to electoral defeat

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[24] David Easton, The Political System: An Inquiry into the State of Political Science. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953). Other supporting literature from Easton including: David Easton, A Framework for Political Analysis, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1965a); David Easton, Systems Analysis of Political Life, (New York: John Wiley, 1965b); David Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support", *British Journal of Political Science*, 5(4), 435-457, (1975).
[25] *Op.Cit*, Norris.

being perceived as manipulated, thereby exacerbating distrust.[26] In the context of China, the study from Yida Zhai also underscores that political trust is determined by public perceptions of regime performance across social, economic, and political dimensions.[27]

Meanwhile, the second hypothesis (H2), which posits that Bureaucratic Professionalism (BPO) positively affects the Electoral Trust (ELT), is statistically supported. Theoretically, the finding confirms that bureaucratic professionalism—measured through Electoral Management Body (EMB) Autonomy and EMB Capacity—positively contributes to public trust in the integrity of the electoral process. The result also supports Norris's Electoral Integrity Model, which asserts that the bureaucratic professionalism—including neutrality, procedural compliance, and technical competence—is a critical pillar throughout the entire electoral cycle, from voter registration and vote counting to the transparency of election results. When electoral administrators are perceived as capable of executing their technical functions in a fair and efficient manner, the public is more likely to develop a positive perception of electoral integrity.[28] This finding is consistent with prior empirical research, such as that by Kerr and Lührmann, which demonstrates that the autonomy of electoral management bodies (EMBs) enhances public trust—particularly in countries with high levels of media freedom—because bureaucratic neutrality is subject to public scrutiny. Additionally, Langford and colleagues argue that highly capable EMBs reduce electoral violence and foster trust by ensuring procedural accuracy. These insights further reinforce the notion that direct interaction with competent election officials plays a significant role in shaping voter confidence.[29]

The third hypothesis (H3), which posits that Regime Performance (REP) influences Electoral Outcome Acceptance (EAC), is statistically supported.

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[26] Marlene Mauk, "Electoral Integrity Matters: How Electoral Process Conditions the Relationship between Political Losing and Political Trust." *Quality and Quantity*, 56(3): 1709–28, (2022).
[27] *Op.Cit*, Zhai.
[28] *Op.Cit*, Norris.
[29] *Op.Cit*, Gronke

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This finding confirms that the government's capacity to implement policies not only fosters electoral trust, as previously discussed, but also directly contributes to public acceptance of electoral outcomes—regardless of individual political preferences. This result aligns with Ridge's research, which also confirms that electoral outcome disparities or representational deficits are more likely to be accepted when the regime is perceived as competent, as the public views the system as still capable of delivering fair and effective policy outcomes.[30] However, The fourth hypothesis (H4), which posits that Bureaucratic Professionalism (BPO) influences Electoral Outcome Acceptance (EAC), was rejected. This finding indicates that the technical competence and neutrality of electoral management bodies—such as the General Elections Commission (KPU)—do not directly determine public acceptance of electoral outcomes.

Electoral outcome acceptance is a complex aspect of public perception. While bureaucratic professionalism plays a crucial role in the conversion phase that generates trust in the electoral process, the acceptance of electoral outcomes (as outputs) is not solely dependent on bureaucratic professionalism. Rather, it is more strongly influenced by regime legitimacy, which is constructed through policy, as previously discussed. Norris's Electoral Integrity Model acknowledges that public trust in electoral outcomes is indeed shaped by the quality of electoral administration, wherein the bureaucratic (Electoral Managamenet Body) competence is central to the procedural execution. However, bureaucratic professionalism does not automatically serve as a direct determinant of electoral outcome acceptance. In this regards, Craig's study confirms that procedural fairness—which closely parallels the notion of bureaucratic professionalism—functions primarily as a moderator of the effect of electoral defeat, thereby preventing distrust from escalating among voters

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[30] Hannah M. Ridge, "Fair Elections, Representation, and the Win-Loss Satisfaction with Democracy Gap." Representation: 1–17. doi:10.1080/00344893.2024.2313764, (2024).

whose preferred candidates lose.[31] Similarly, Marlene Mauk explains that electoral integrity mitigates the negative impact of losing on political trust. Fair electoral procedures reduce skepticism among the losing side. In other words, bureaucratic professionalism alone is not the primary determinant of electoral outcome acceptance. Instead, such acceptance is more strongly influenced by public perceptions of regime performance.

The fifth hypothesis (H5), which posits that the Electoral Trust (ELT) influences Electoral Outcome Acceptance (EAC), is strongly supported. This finding confirms that public trust in the electoral process is a dominant predictor in determining the acceptance of election results. The greater the public's confidence in the procedural integrity of elections (Electoral Trust), the higher the likelihood that the results will be accepted as legitimate and binding. Furthermore, this result substantiates Norris's Electoral Integrity Model, which posits that electoral trust functions as outcome trust—the belief that the election results reflect a legitimate and collectively sanctioned will. In her electoral cycle framework, perceptions of integrity—shaped by technical experiences such as the neutrality of officials or the transparency of vote counting—directly influence political legitimacy, including the willingness of losing parties to accept the outcome. This finding aligns with empirical research by Anderson, who introduced the concept of losers' consent, demonstrating that the voluntary acceptance of electoral outcomes by the losing side is only possible when the process is perceived as fair.[32] This evidence reinforces the notion that procedural trust in elections is not merely a supplementary element, but a critical link that transforms the technical output of an election into enduring political legitimacy.

The sixth hypothesis (H6), which states that Electoral Trust (ELT) mediates the effect of Regime Performance (REP) on Electoral Outcome Acceptance (EAC), is empirically supported. This finding also confirms that public

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[31] Stephen C. Craig, et. al., "Winners, Losers , and Perceived Mandate : Voter Explanations of the 1998 Gubernatorial and 2000 Presidential Elections in Florida." Political Research Quarterly 59(December): 579–92, (2006).
[32] *Op.Cit*, Anderson

perceptions of electoral integrity serve as a critical mechanism through which evaluations of government translate into acceptance of electoral outcomes. The identified mediation path is one of complementary mediation, wherein both the direct effect of Regime Performance on Electoral Outcome Acceptance (H3) and the indirect effect through Electoral Trust (H6) are statistically significant. This indicates that Electoral Trust does not function merely as a singular intermediary, but rather as a partial mediator that reinforces and complements the direct influence of regime performance. Meanwhile, The seventh hypothesis (H7), which posits that Electoral Trust (ELT) mediates the effect of Bureaucratic Professionalism (BPO) on Electoral Outcome Acceptance (EAC), is supported by statistical evidence. The findings reveal a pattern of indirect-only mediation. This indicates that although the direct effect of Bureaucratic Professionalism on Electoral Outcome Acceptance is not significant (as H4 was rejected), the full effect operates through the enhancement of Electoral Trust. In other words, the technical capacity and neutrality of electoral administrators contribute to electoral outcome acceptance only when they successfully foster public trust in the integrity of the electoral process.

Overall, this study identifies two key findings. First, Regime Performance influences Electoral Outcome Acceptance through both direct and indirect pathways, with the latter mediated by the formation of Electoral Trust. This finding offers an empirical contribution to Easton's systems theory by operationalizing the feedback loop mechanism within the electoral system—demonstrating that public responses to the performance of the political system are clearly reflected in the degree of acceptance or rejection of election results. Second, the role of Bureaucratic Professionalism is more nuanced. Although it does not exert a direct impact on electoral outcome acceptance (as H4 was rejected), it must first enhance Electoral Trust in order to foster acceptance of election results (as supported by H7). This finding supports Norris's Electoral Integrity Model by illustrating that bureaucratic professionalism can only contribute to political legitimacy effectively if it succeeds in building public trust in the integrity of the electoral process.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that Regime Performance has a significant and positive effect on Electoral Trust (H1), with particularly through retrospective views on economic state of the country. We also highlighted that the Bureaucratic Professionalism—reflected in institutional neutrality and capacity—also significantly enhances Electoral Trust (H2). Furthermore, regime performance exerts a direct influence on Electoral Outcome Acceptance (H3), as citizens who are satisfied with government tend to perceive election results as a legitimate expression of the system. However, Bureaucratic Professionalism does not directly affect Electoral Outcome Acceptance (H4). Acceptance of results is more strongly influenced by regime legitimacy than by technical procedures, although professionalism contributes to building trust in the electoral process. Electoral Trust emerges as the primary predictor of Electoral Outcome Acceptance (H5); confidence in procedural integrity significantly strengthens public perceptions of electoral legitimacy. Additionally, Electoral Trust serves as a partial mediator explaining the relationship between the regime performance and electoral outcome acceptance (H6). In contrast, Bureaucratic Professionalism influences electoral outcome acceptance only through indirect-only mediation, meaning that technical capacity and neutrality must first foster trust in the process for electoral outcomes to be accepted. Finally, this research contributes to the broader discourse on participatory democracy by highlighting that public trust in electoral processes is shaped by how systemic elements of integrity, professionalism, and fairness intersect within the broader political system. Electoral outcome acceptance, in this regard, serves as a democratic report card—revealing whether a political system is functioning effectively or falling short.

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