



Technology, Power, and Political Participation: A Critical Analysis of the Accessibility of the South Sulawesi General Election Commission (KPU) Website for Blind Voters in the 2024 South Sulawesi Governor Election

Hasbullah Hasbullah¹, Hasbi Marissangan², Rahmat Muhammad³, Ishak Salim⁴, Muhammad Ashar⁵, Muh. Ilham Dhani⁶, M. Ilham⁷, Muhammad Satria Dwi Julianto⁸

¹²³⁶⁷Department of Sociology, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia

⁴Department of Administrative Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia

⁷⁸Department of Communication Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia

Department of English Literature, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia

⁵Postgraduate Megarezky University, Makassar, Indonesia

hazbullah171@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the digital accessibility of the South Sulawesi Provincial Election Commission (KPU) website for visually impaired users. Focus on how the website meets accessibility standards and what barriers blind users face when accessing election information. A qualitative approach is applied through user experience simulation and technical evaluation based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1. The study involved two visually impaired students: Muhammad Satria Dwi Julianto, who is completely blind, and Muhammad Informan MA, who has low vision. Both participants conducted a direct test of the KPU website using screen readers and other auxiliary technologies. The evaluation examined key aspects of accessibility, including alt text, navigation structure, multimedia access, and compatibility with assistive devices. The findings show that although the KPU website includes some accessibility features, the main barriers still limit access for visually impaired users. These barriers include the loss of alt text for images, complicated navigation, and inaccessible video content due to the absence of subtitles and sign language interpretation. These issues limit equal access to election information and undermine the political participation of people with disabilities. The study recommends improving alternative text, simplifying navigation, and improving multimedia accessibility to create a more inclusive election information system. The findings highlight digital accessibility as a fundamental political right and contribute to the development of future policies on inclusive election information services.

Keywords: Digital accessibility, Visual impairment, Technical evaluation, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), Political participation

1. Introduction

Elections are a major pillar of the modern democratic system. Through elections, every citizen has an equal opportunity to determine the political direction and leadership of the nation. Indonesia, as a country that upholds democratic values, places elections as the main means of exercising people's sovereignty, as regulated by the 1945 Constitution [1]. Therefore, the success of elections is measured not only by the implementation of administrative stages, but also by the level of public participation in exercising their voting rights.

The basic principle of elections, as stipulated in Article 22E of the 1945 Constitution [2], emphasizes that its implementation must be direct, public, free, secret, honest, and fair (Luber-Jurdil). This principle is strengthened in Article 3 of Law Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections [3], which adds the principles of openness, professionalism, and accountability as pillars

of election integrity. In the context of the digital era, the principle of openness is not only related to access to information but also the ability of organizing institutions, especially the General Election Commission (KPU), to ensure that all citizens can access election information fairly and without discrimination.

Accessibility is a central issue in ensuring inclusive elections. In this context, the Indonesian General Election Commission (KPU) is not only required to provide transparent information but also ensure that the information is accessible to vulnerable groups, including people with visual impairments. KPU Regulation No. 17 of 2024 [4] emphasizes the importance of the principle of accessibility in all stages of voting and vote counting. This principle is also in line with the global commitment to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) [5], which emphasizes unhindered political participation for every citizen.

This situation prompted the author to directly ask the Indonesian General Election Commission (KPU RI) about the accessibility of his website for the public, especially for people with visual impairments. Based on the reply letter received by the author, KPU stated that their website is equipped with accessibility features for people with disabilities, including keyboard navigation, contrast settings, text size settings, content sorting, zoom functions, and text readers. This is an important and appreciative first step in realizing inclusive elections and guaranteeing the political rights of all citizens, including those with visual impairments.

However, the General Election Commission (KPU) also honestly and responsibly admits that there is no special policy governing the management of digital services to improve accessibility for people with visual impairments, both those with low vision and those who are completely blind. The design process for the South Sulawesi Provincial Election Commission website and the regional KPU website basically uses the Content Management System (CMS) provided by the Indonesian General Election Commission (KPU RI) as the standard CMS to manage the website of each work unit. This statement raises an important question: to what extent are the digital accessibility claims submitted by the KPU really accessible to users with visual impairments? Have these features been designed and implemented in accordance with international standards such as WCAG 2.1 AA [6] and the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)? Does the experience of visually impaired users accessing the KPU website reflect the promised inclusivity?

The accessibility of a website is not only related to the existence of features, but also the extent to which they function effectively for users with various disabilities. Kesswani and Kumar [7] define digital accessibility as the ability of an information system to be used effectively by all individuals without exception. In this context, compliance with international standards such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1) is an important benchmark. However, until now, there is no national regulation that specifically regulates digital accessibility standards for election management bodies.

The issue of digital accessibility cannot be separated from the power relations inherent in the design of technology itself. As Foucault [8] argues, power operates not only through political structures but also through the practice of knowledge and the production of technology. In the context of the South Sulawesi Provincial Election Commission website, power comes in the form of interface design and digital policies that determine who can access information and who is excluded. Non-inclusive websites become a tool to reproduce social exclusion, reinforce the dominance of the majority group, and place voters with disabilities in subordinate positions in the realm of political participation.

In the context of the 2024 South Sulawesi gubernatorial election, this situation is becoming increasingly important to examine, as the political process increasingly relies on information technology. Access to the official website of the South Sulawesi Provincial Election Commission is not

only a technical issue but also concerns citizens' constitutional right to equal access to political information. The limitations of digital accessibility can be interpreted as a new form of disenfranchisement, in which technology tacitly creates a gap between citizens who are technologically “adequate” and those who are “invisible” in the digital system.

Dewi and Rahmaul's research [9] found that 42 percent of accessibility indicators on the websites of public institutions in Indonesia still have problems, including Level A, which indicates a fundamental barrier for users with visual impairments. From an election perspective, this shows a significant gap between claims of digital inclusivity and the actual user experience. Digital design that fails to take into account users with disabilities ultimately widens the gap in access to political information and undermines the quality of democratic participation.

Based on these conditions, an important question arises: to what extent is the South Sulawesi General Election Commission (KPU) website really accessible to blind voters in the 2024 gubernatorial election? This question is not only technical but also political, as access to information determines the ability of citizens to participate meaningfully. When information is inaccessible, constitutionally guaranteed voting rights are diminished. Thus, the issue of digital accessibility cannot be separated from the issue of power and representation in the democratic political system.

To address these issues, this study uses the Critical Disability Studies approach, which places disability not as a medical problem but as a result of non-inclusive social and digital structures. This approach rejects the normative view that accessibility is an additional good, but rather a fundamental political right. Within this framework, the experience of blind users is seen as a legitimate source of knowledge in evaluating the digital policies and practices of state institutions.

The analysis of this research is also based on Michel Foucault's theory of power/knowledge. In the digital context, technology is not only a neutral tool for disseminating information, but also a mechanism of power that shapes subjects, regulates access, and determines who is deemed worthy of being a user. The KPU website, as the state's digital infrastructure, can serve as an instrument of normalization, unconsciously excludes certain groups through its exclusive design. This is where it is very important to read technology as a political practice that is full of power.

This study used a participatory approach, involving two blind users from Hasanuddin University—Muhammad Satria Dwi Julianto (total blind) and Muhammad Informan MA (low vision)—as the main reviewers. Their involvement aims to ensure that the evaluation of the accessibility of the KPU website is carried out by those who have first-hand experience of digital barriers. This approach is also a form of epistemic resistance to research practices that often place people with disabilities as passive objects, rather than subjects of knowledge.

Thus, this research not only focuses on the technical aspects of accessibility but also unravels how power operates through seemingly neutral digital designs. This analysis hopes to uncover hidden power relationships in the electoral technology infrastructure and how those structures affect the political representation of blind individuals. At this point, the issue of accessibility becomes a fundamental issue in political and epistemological justice.

Overall, this study places the accessibility of the South Sulawesi General Election Commission (KPU) website as an area of interaction between technology, power, and political participation. In the context of digital democracy, access to information is not just a matter of technical convenience, but the recognition of the existence of equal citizens. When election websites are inaccessible to people with disabilities, digital exclusion turns into political exclusion. Therefore, this research aims to expand our understanding of how technological design can play a role in strengthening or weakening inclusive democracy.

2. Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach within the framework of Critical Disability Studies, starting from the interpretive paradigm. The main focus of this study is to uncover the experiences of blind users who access the official website of the South Sulawesi General Election Commission during the 2024 gubernatorial election process, as well as examine how the design of digital technology produces a form of power that determines citizens' access to and political participation. Therefore, this research is not only descriptive but also analytically critical, positioning technology as the arena of relations between knowledge and power, as proposed by Michel Foucault.

Foucault's theoretical approach to power/knowledge is used to interpret digital accessibility not just as a technical problem, but as a socio-political practice that reproduces the asymmetrical relationship between persons with disabilities and state structures. This approach helps to understand that website design, public policy, and information governance are not neutral entities, but rather part of a mechanism of power that determines who can be a political subject in the digital space. Therefore, this research method is directed to identify forms of digital disenfranchisement experienced by blind voters.

The main informants for this study were blind voters from Hasanuddin University, namely Muhammad Satria Dwi Julianto (total blind) and Muhammad Informan MA (low vision). Both were chosen deliberately because of their academic credentials and first-hand experience using screen reader technology as well as accessing the KPU's website. The presence of these two informants allowed the study to combine the user's perspective with technical analysis, resulting in a more comprehensive picture of the digital barriers experienced by people with visual impairment in the context of political participation.

Data collection was carried out using two main techniques. First, a user experience simulation was carried out, in which two informants were asked to access the official website of the South Sulawesi General Election Commission using desktop and mobile devices with the help of screen readers (NVDA and TalkBack) [10]. This process is recorded and described in detail to identify navigation difficulties, text interpretation challenges, and responses to visual elements. Second, the technical evaluation was carried out based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 standard using the Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool (WAVE) [11]. This analysis aims to verify the website's compliance with the principles of perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust.

The data analysis was carried out using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman [12], which included three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Each simulation and technical evaluation result is thematically coded and then linked to theoretical categories of power, exclusion, and digital representation. Data validity is maintained through triangulation of sources and methods, combining technical findings, user experience narratives, and a review of the public policy literature.

In addition, the interpretation of the data is not only directed to assess the extent to which the KPU website meets accessibility standards, but also to critically examine digital political practices that affect the participation rights of citizens with disabilities. Therefore, this research method is reflective and critical, placing the experience of users with disabilities as a valid source of knowledge to assess Indonesia's digital democracy. This approach is expected to shift the research paradigm from mere technical measurement to a social understanding of technology and political access justice.

3. Research Results

3.1 Description of the Experience of Blind Users in Accessing the South Sulawesi General Election Commission (KPU) Website

MA (Low Vision) Informant Experience

The Supreme Court informant, a user with low vision, conducted an accessibility test on the South Sulawesi Provincial General Election Commission (KPU) website [13], specifically for content related to the stages of the 2024 Simultaneous Regional Elections (Simultaneous Regional Elections) (Regional Elections). This test was assisted by two volunteers from the Disability Center of Hasanuddin University, namely Nabila and Habil.

The test was conducted using screen reader and live recording technology, where the MA Informant simulated the experience of users with disabilities accessing digital content. This test mainly focuses on two groups of disabilities: users with visual impairments and users who are deaf, especially in accessing text, images, and video content related to the stages of the Regional Elections. The standard used in this test is WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines), with four main principles known as POUR: Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, and Robust.

The results of the first principle test on perceivable. The informant pointed out that all the images that appeared in news reports at the election stage did not have alternative texts. As a result, screen reader users cannot understand the visual content of the images. Videos depicting important stages such as candidate registration and campaigns do not provide subtitles or sign language interpreter (JBI). This makes the spoken information in the video inaccessible to deaf users. Furthermore, the content of the news text, especially news articles that explain the stages of preparation such as program planning and the formation of the Election Committee (PPK/PPS), are easy to read by screen readers.

The second principle is that it can be operated. The MA informant found many links that were deemed irrelevant or unimportant by screen readers. This distracts and slows down navigation, as well as reducing the efficiency of the keyboard. The third principle is understandable. No major problems were found in this aspect. The language and navigation structure are consistent and easy for users to understand. The fourth principle is Robust. The text content on the KPU website is compatible with screen reader technology. However, because many non-text elements do not have alt text, assistive technology cannot fully interpret their content.

The informant then compared it to the Accessible Website: The MA informant compared the KPU website with two more accessible examples: UDC Unhas.ac.id: This website provides alternative text for each image in its news publication with a video Apple's iPhone 16 launch on YouTube: Provides subtitles and a sign language translator in ASL (American Sign Language). This comparison shows that the KPU website lags behind in providing visual and audiovisual accessibility, which directly impacts users with disabilities. Overall, the KPU website does not meet WCAG accessibility standards, especially for users with visual and hearing disabilities.

SD (Total Blind) Informant Experience

The results of the second test test on the experience of blind users in accessing the South Sulawesi General Election Commission (KPU) website by Informan SD, a student who is totally blind, conducted an accessibility test on the KPU website in South Sulawesi. The first is on the Luwu Regency General Election Commission (KPU) website [16]. The test was carried out directly using a laptop equipped with NVDA (NonVisual Desktop Access) screen reader technology. SD informants assessed two main aspects in this test: Website appearance, including the availability of accessibility features, the presence of alt text (alt text) on images, and button labels. And User experience, i.e. comfort and ease of navigation when accessing website content.

a. South Sulawesi Provincial General Election Commission (KPU)

The website has provided several accessibility features, such as keyboard navigation, color contrast settings, text size, and zoom. However, some images and buttons still lack alt text and labels, making it difficult for screen reader users to understand the content. Some of the main links, such as “About,” “News,” and “Publications,” simply redirect to the same page without providing clear feedback to screen readers, potentially confusing users. The content of the article is generally easy to read using the title and link feature in NVDA.

b. Makassar City General Election Commission (KPU)

This website provides accessibility features similar to the South Sulawesi Provincial KPU. However, the same problem is still found: many images and buttons lack alt text and labels. Main content such as “About,” “News,” and “Publications” are almost identical to the Provincial KPU, with only one feature pointing to an external page. The articles on this site are still readable by screen readers.

c. Bone Regency General Election Commission (KPU)

A much more worrying condition was found on the Bone Regency KPU website which has no accessibility features at all. Images and buttons are still found without alt text and labels. Although the layout is similar to other KPU sites, the absence of accessibility features significantly complicates the experience of blind users.

d. Luwu Regency General Election Commission (KPU)

This website has accessibility features such as the Provincial KPU and the Makassar KPU. However, the same problem remains repeated: images and buttons are not yet equipped with alt text and labels. All the main content points to the same page, causing confusion for screen reader users as no response is generated when the link is clicked. The site provides additional content such as the “trending” feature and information filters through the tab controls, but there is no significant difference in terms of article readability.

3.2 Informant Recommendations

From the description above, each informant recommends website improvement. The MA informant gave three main recommendations: implement alt text for all images that serve as important information, provide subtitles and JBI for all videos of the election stage, simplify the navigation structure, by eliminating irrelevant links so that screen readers can work more efficiently.

Furthermore, Informant SD noted that the layout of the four websites is relatively uniform, which actually makes it easier to navigate because users are already familiar with the same structure. A feature to block motion animations is also considered to improve surfing comfort. However, the lack of alt text and button labels remains a major obstacle to comprehensive content understanding.

Therefore, SD Informant provides two main recommendations: first, add alt text and labels to all images and buttons so that they can be recognized by screen readers; second, providing accessibility features consistently across all KPU sites, including district-level sites such as Bone which currently do not have such features.

From testing four KPU websites, Satria concluded that although the South Sulawesi Provincial KPU has shown initial progress in supporting accessibility, all websites still lack visual elements with alt text and labels. The uniform layout throughout the website does make navigation easy, but it is not enough to guarantee full accessibility for visually impaired users.

User Experience Comparison Table 1

Aspects	MA Reported (Low Vision)	SD Informant (Total Blind)
Web-sites Tested	South Sulawesi Provincial KPU, Makassar City KPU, Bone Regency KPU, Luwu Regency KPU	South Sulawesi Provincial KPU, Makassar City KPU, Bone Regency KPU, Luwu Regency KPU
Test Method	Screen reader technology and live recording method	Laptops with NVDA (<i>NonVisual Desktop Access</i>)
Testing Focus	Text, image, and video content from the Pilkada stage	Website appearance and user experience
Test Results	- Viewable: Image without alt text, video without subtitles/JBI, news text reads well- Operable: Lots of irrelevant links interfere with navigation- Understandable: Consistent navigation language and structure- Robust: Text content compatible, non-text elements without alt text	- Viewable: Images and buttons without alt text and labels, the body of the article is easy to read- Operable: Some main links do not provide feedback- Understandable: Navigation structure is relatively uniform- Robust: Text content compatible, non-text elements without alt text
Comparison	Compared to Unhas.ac.id UDC and Apple iPhone 16 video (with alt text and subtitles)	There is no explicit comparison, but pay attention to the uniformity of the layout
Recommendations	1. Apply alt text to images 2. Set up subtitles and JBI for videos 3. Simplification of navigation structure	1. Add alt text and labels to images and buttons 2. Provide accessibility features consistently

3.3 Accessibility Testing of the South Sulawesi General Election Commission (KPU) Website using the WAVE engine

Accessibility testing on the South Sulawesi General Election Commission (KPU) website was conducted using the WAVE engine to evaluate various aspects that affect the user experience, especially for people with disabilities. The test results reveal several issues that need to be addressed to make the website more user-friendly for all users.

The test detects 20 errors covering a wide range of issues. One of the main problems is the lack of alt text for image links. Alt text (alt text) is very important because it helps screen reader users understand the content of the image. In addition, there are blank buttons and links that do not have labels or clear information, making it difficult for users to understand the function of these elements.

In addition to errors, this test also identifies contrast problems. There are 15 contrast errors, where some texts have very low contrast against the background. This makes the text difficult to read, especially for users with visual impairments.

There are also 38 warnings that indicate potential issues to look out for. One important caveat is the absence of a first-level title on the page. Headings serve as a guide for content structure, and if they don't exist, users may have trouble understanding the flow of information. In addition, some links to PDF documents do not have adequate explanations.

The test also includes 25 features that reflect the elements on the website. Some images have alt text, but many don't. In addition, the language used on the page must be clearly defined so

that it can be understood by all users.

The structural elements of the website, including titles, lists, tables, and navigation, are also evaluated. Fifty-two structural elements were detected, indicating that the content structure of this website is quite complex. The proper use of headings is essential for easy navigation, and some headings are still unorganized today. Finally, issues related to Accessible Rich Internet Applications (ARIAs) [18] were identified. ARIA is a specification that helps improve the accessibility of dynamic web content. Fifty-four ARIA issues were identified, indicating that some elements were not implemented correctly, such as missing or non-compliant labels.

The test results show that the South Sulawesi General Election Commission (KPU) website has many accessibility issues that need to be addressed. To improve the user experience, especially for people with disabilities, it is recommended to:

1. Add alt text to all images and links.
2. Make sure all buttons are clearly labeled.
3. Increase the contrast between text and background for better readability.
4. Improve the heading structure to ensure consistency and ease of navigation.
5. Apply subtitles and descriptions to your videos to make them more inclusive.
6. Use ARIA appropriately to support dynamic content accessibility.

Table 2 WAVE Assessment Results

Assessment Variables (WCAG Indicator - POUR)	WAVE Assessment Results	MA Assessment Results	Elementary School Assessment Results
Perceivable	20 errors detected, including images without alt text (alt text).	Many images and buttons don't have alt text, making it difficult to understand their content.	Many images and buttons don't have alt text, making it difficult to understand their content.
	Blank links with no obvious labels interfere with navigation.	Empty links make navigation difficult.	Empty links make navigation difficult.
Operable	Some interactive elements don't have appropriate labels.	The absence of labels on the buttons makes the user experience more difficult.	The absence of labels on the buttons makes the user experience more difficult.
Understandable	15 contrast errors were found; Some text elements have low contrast.	The heading structure is inconsistent, making navigation difficult.	The heading structure is inconsistent, making navigation difficult.

Robust	38 warnings regarding structural elements, such as improper use of tables.	The content of the article is readable, but the ambiguity in the use of the title makes navigation more difficult.	The content of the article is readable, but the use of inconsistent headings interferes with navigation.
---------------	--	--	--

Table 2 compares the results of the accessibility assessment based on the WCAG (POUR) indicator with the results of the WAVE tool and the real experience of users with disabilities, MA Informants and Satria. This highlights the importance of improving accessibility on the KPU website to meet the needs of all users.

4 Discussion

A report on the accessibility testing of the South Sulawesi General Election Commission (KPU) website by two visually impaired users; MA Informants (low vision) and SD Informants (total blind)—provide important empirical data to understand how digital electoral spaces are accessed and experienced by groups traditionally on the fringes of public information systems.

The Supreme Court's informant, in his examination of the content of the 2024 regional elections (Pilkada), found that although the text of news articles can be read using a screen reader, there is a serious violation of the principles of Perceivable and Operable in the WCAG. The images accompanying the news have no alt text (alt text), and the selection stage video does not have subtitles or sign language interpreters. This deprives blind and deaf users of access to visual and audio information that should be an integral part of understanding the election process.

Satria, who tested four KPU websites (province, Makassar city, Bone district, and Luwu district), found that only a few websites provided basic accessibility features such as keyboard navigation and contrast settings. However, all websites still contain images and buttons without labels or alt text, as well as internal links that don't provide feedback to screen readers. The Bone KPU website doesn't even have accessibility features at all, highlighting structural inequalities in the provision of digital services in different regions.

4.1 Critical Analysis: Digital Power and Electoral Marginalization

The findings of these two reports reinforce the main thesis of the Critical Disability Studies approach: digital disabilities are not just technical shortcomings, but rather a manifestation of deeper socio-political marginalization. The Election Commission (KPU) website [19], as the state's digital infrastructure, not only conveys information but also defines who is considered a “normal” user and who is not. When the design of a website fails to meet the needs of blind users, it actively excludes them from the electoral public sphere.

In the framework of Michel Foucault's theory of power/knowledge, the KPU website can be read as a space for knowledge production that also functions as a tool for power distribution. The visual and audiovisual presentation of election information without alternative access for users with disabilities shows that political knowledge is built to be seen and heard by those with special sensory abilities. Blind voters, in this case, are positioned as subjects who are not fully recognized in the state's digital representation systems.

In addition, the difference in accessibility features across KPU sites in South Sulawesi shows that digital power is not evenly distributed. The South Sulawesi and Makassar KPU websites provide basic features, while Bone and Luwu are lagging behind. This difference is not only a matter

of technical capacity, but also of political priorities: who is considered important to serve, and who must face obstacles.

4.2 Epistemology of Disability: The User as the Subject of Knowledge

One of the important contributions of the Critical Disability Studies approach is its emphasis on the experience of users with disabilities as a legitimate source of knowledge. In the report Informan MA and Satria, we look at how blind users not only identify problems but also offer experience-based solutions. Because, for example, it points out that links pointing to the same page don't provide feedback to screen readers and suggests that the link be labeled or redirected to new content clearly. The MA informant emphasized the importance of providing subtitles and sign language interpreters in the regional election stage videos to ensure that information is accessible to deaf users.

These experiences show that users with disabilities are not only recipients of services, but also epistemological actors who are able to challenge and reshape digital designs. In the context of the General Election Commission's (KPU) website, their votes should be central to the evaluation process and improve accessibility. Without listening to the user experience, digital design will continue to reproduce exclusion and inequality.

4.3 Accessibility as a Political Right, Not an Optional Feature

This discussion emphasized that digital accessibility in the context of elections is not an optional feature, but rather an integral part of citizens' political rights. When the Election Commission's (KPU) website is inaccessible to blind voters, their rights to obtain information, understand the electoral process, and participate in democracy are threatened.

Although the number of voters with disabilities increased from 15,287 in 2018 to 46,342 in 2024 [20], voter participation actually declined. This decline is closely related to the digital barriers that are constantly faced by voters with disabilities. The inaccessible KPU website is a major obstacle to equal and dignified political participation.

5 Conclusion

The research shows that although the Election Commission (KPU) has taken the initial steps in providing accessibility features on its website, there are still many obstacles to overcome to ensure true accessibility for the visually impaired. Testing by two blind users, Muhammad Informan MA and Muhammad Satria Dwi Julianto, revealed that many key elements of the KPU website still do not meet the expected accessibility standards.

From this analysis, it can be concluded that digital accessibility should be seen as a fundamental political right, not just an optional feature. The KPU should implement the recommendations proposed by the examiners, including the application of alt text to all images, the provision of subtitles and sign language translators for videos, and the simplification of navigation structures. By making these improvements, the KPU can contribute to the establishment of a more inclusive and fair election information system, in accordance with the mandate of national and international law regarding the rights of persons with disabilities.

Author's Contribution

Hasbullah **Hasbullah** conceptualized the research idea, designed the overall study framework, and supervised the entire research process. He also contributed to the theoretical interpretation of technology and power using Foucault's framework. **Hasbi Marissangan** coordinates data collection and analysis, develops qualita-

tive methodologies, and ensures consistency between empirical data and theoretical arguments in the manuscript. **Rahmat Muhammad** contributes to the development of sociological frameworks, particularly in connecting issues of social inclusion, digital inequality, and participatory democracy. **Ishak Salim & Muhammad Ashar** provides important insights on the dimensions of accessibility policy and assists in discussions of Indonesia's election regulations and institutional accountability. **Muh. Ilham Dhani** participated in data triangulation, coding, and thematic interpretation of user experience narratives based on interviews and simulation results. **Muh. Ilham** (low vision informants) provide experience data through direct testing of the KPU website using screen reader technology, and provide detailed records of user accessibility barriers. **Muhammad Satria Dwi Julianto** (fully blind informant) provided experience data through direct evaluation of various KPU sites in South Sulawesi, enriching the study's comparative analysis of the level of accessibility. All authors discuss the results, contribute to the writing of the manuscript, and approve the final version to be submitted.

Appreciations

The authors would like to express their deepest gratitude to the General Election Commission (KPU) of the Republic of Indonesia and the South Sulawesi Provincial KPU Office for their openness and cooperation during the data collection process. Special appreciation was given to informan SD and Informan MA from Hasanuddin University, whose sharp participation as blind users became the core empirical basis of this research. Their willingness to share personal experiences and conduct detailed accessibility testing was invaluable in shaping the critical analysis presented in this study. The authors also acknowledge the support of the Hasanuddin University Disability Centre (UDC) in facilitating research coordination and providing technical assistance during user testing simulations. Gratitude must be given to Nabila and Habil, who contributed as volunteers during the accessibility evaluation session. This research benefits from constructive discussions at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP) at Hasanuddin University, particularly in the Department of Sociology, whose interdisciplinary perspective strengthens the theoretical and methodological foundations of this study.

References

- [1] Halalia. (2017). Fulfillment of the Political Rights of Persons with Disabilities in accordance with Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities by the General Election Commission (KPU) of Yogyakarta City. *Rule of Law: Journal of Legal Studies*.
- [2] Republic of Indonesia. (1945). Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945.
- [3] General Election Commission of the Republic of Indonesia. (2024a). General Election Commission Regulation Number 17 of 2024 concerning voting and vote counting in the election of governors and deputy governors, regents and deputy regents, as well as mayors and deputy mayors. General Election Commission of the Republic of Indonesia.
- [4] Republic of Indonesia. (2017). Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 7 of 2017 concerning General Elections. Statute Book of the Republic of Indonesia Year 2017 Number 182.
- [5] United Nations. (2006). Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. United Nations. <https://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>
- [6] World Wide Web Consortium. (2018). Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1. <https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/>
- [7] Kesswani, N., & Kumar, S. (2016). Evaluate the web accessibility of government portals in India. *Journal of Disability and the Information Society*, 12(3), 97–111.
- [8] Foucault, M. (1980). *Powers/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. Pantheon Books.
- [9] Dewi, R., & Rahmatul, N. (2023). Evaluation of the website accessibility of public institutions in Indonesia based on the WCAG 2.1 standard. *Journal of Information and Communication Technology*, 9(1), 45–58.
- [10] Access NV. (no date). NVDA screen reader. Retrieved on July 5, 2026, from <https://www.nvaccess.org/>
- [11] WebAIM. (no date). WAVE Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool. Retrieved July 5, 2026, from <https://wave.webaim.org/>
- [12] Sugiyono. (2016). Qualitative, quantitative, and R&D research methods. Bandung: Alfabeta.

- [13] South Sulawesi Provincial General Election Commission. (n.d.). The official website of the South Sulawesi Provincial KPU. Retrieved July 5, 2026, from <https://sulsel.kpu.go.id/>
- [14] Makassar City General Election Commission. (n.d.). The official website of the Makassar City KPU. Retrieved July 5, 2026
- [15] Bone County Election Commission. (n.d.). The official website of the Bone Regency KPU. Retrieved July 5, 2026
- [16] Luwu Regency General Election Commission. (n.d.). Luwu Regency KPU official website. Retrieved July 5, 2026
- [17] Hasanuddin University Disability Center Unit. (no date). Home. Retrieved 5 July 2026
- [18] World Wide Web Consortium. (2023). Accessible Rich Internet Applications (WAI-ARIA) 1.2. <https://www.w3.org/TR/wai-aria-1.2/>
- [19] General Election Commission of the Republic of Indonesia. (2024b). Reply letter related to the accessibility of the KPU website for people with disabilities
- [20] South Sulawesi Provincial General Election Commission. (2024). Data on voters with disabilities in the 2018 and 2024 South Sulawesi Governor Elections

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

