



Utilization of Social Media in Government Transformation in the Digital Era

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Abstract

Digital transformation in governance has become a global trend that disrupts various aspects of life, including government management. Social media has emerged as a crucial innovation tool in this transformation, enabling direct interaction between the government and the public, as well as the rapid and widespread dissemination of information. This study aims to explore how social media is utilized to support government transformation in the digital era. We employed a literature review method to analyze and synthesize information from various credible sources. Our findings indicate that social media plays a significant role in enhancing transparency, public participation, and communication between the government and society. Additionally, social media can be used as a tool to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government services. However, this research also identifies several challenges associated with the use of social media in governance, such as the risk of misinformation, data misuse, and ineffective communication management. Therefore, appropriate strategies are needed to optimize the use of social media as an integral part of digital transformation in governance. By understanding the role of social media in this context, it is hoped that more strategic and effective models for utilizing social media can be developed to enhance government performance and strengthen relationships with the public. This study also aims to contribute to the development of theories and practices related to digital transformation in governance.

Keywords: Digital Transformation, Social Media, Communication, E-Governance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation is a fundamental change in the way an organization operates by leveraging digital technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness. In Indonesia, the government is committed to accelerating digital transformation through infrastructure development and human resource development. Digital transformation has become a global trend that disrupts various aspects of life, including . Digitalization creates great opportunities to improve efficiency, transparency, and accountability in public services. Modern government no longer relies solely on conventional methods, but has also begun to adopt digital technology to support decision-making, information distribution, and communication with the public. This is an important key in creating a government that is responsive and adaptive to the needs of the digital era (Yopi Nugraha et al., 2023).



One important aspect digital transformation is the use of social media as an innovation tool. Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and similar platforms, have evolved from mere social interaction spaces to strategic tools utilized by governments to expand communication reach, build public participation, and deliver real-time information (Avianto et al., 2023). With its fast, interactive and broad characteristics, social media allows the government to build closer relationships with the public. Social media becomes an important innovation tool in this transformation, enabling direct interaction between the government and the public, as well as the rapid and widespread dissemination of information. The use of social media helps increase transparency and accountability in government, and encourages public participation.

Furthermore, social media offers various advantages that traditional communication channels do not. The government can use social media to mobilize public opinion, detect crucial issues, and involve the public in the policy formulation process. The use of social media also opens up opportunities for transparency, as the public can directly access information and provide feedback on government performance. However, the adoption of social media in government also presents challenges, such as the risk of misinformation, misuse of data, and ineffective communication management. Therefore, an appropriate strategy needed so that social media can be optimally utilized as an integral part of digital transformation in government.

However, the adoption of social media in government also presents challenges, such as the risk of misinformation, misuse of data, and ineffective communication management. On the other hand, the government's capacity to manage and utilize social media professionally is a key factor in the success of this transformation. The government needs to build a competent team, implement a measurable communication strategy, and utilize data analytics to understand the trends and needs of the community. With the increasingly complex demands of the digital era, social media is not only a supporting tool, but also an essential component in government transformation. This research aims to explore how social media is used to support government transformation in the digital era. By understanding the role of social media in this context, it is hoped that a more strategic and effective social media utilization model can be found to improve government performance and strengthen relations with the community.

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2. METHOD

This research was conducted using the literature study method, which focuses on analyzing and synthesizing information from various reliable sources. The study utilized scientific journal articles, official reports published by relevant institutions, and relevant secondary data to support an in- depth understanding of the topics discussed. This method was chosen to explore various perspectives and enrich the analysis based on available evidence, resulting in reliable and in-depth findings. According to Rosyidhana quoted by (Rusmawan, 2019) Literature study is a data collection method carried out by searching and reading various written sources, such as books or literature, which discuss the theoretical basis. This method also includes extracting knowledge or information from various related sources, such as papers, articles, journals, and other sources relevant to the object of research.



3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Concept of Digital Transformation

In the digital transformation of government, the use of digital technology to improve the efficiency, transparency, and quality of public services includes the use of digital tools such as social media to aid communication, decision-making, and administrative activities. Social media is an important component of digital transformation as it serves as a platform to bring government closer to the people and improve public services. The term transformation refers to a change in an organization that has a major impact on the structure of the organization itself. Digital transformation can be defined as the use of digital technologies that can radically improve and achieve organizational performance and goals. It can also be defined as a process that aims to improve the performance of an organization by triggering major changes to its properties through the adoption of information, computing, communication, and connectivity technologies.

Digital transformation in government can be defined as the process by which governments adopt digital technologies to improve public services, enhance internal processes, and increase citizen engagement. Digital transformation in government includes the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to improve the quality of public services and strengthen the relationship between government and society. This transformation includes not only the use of technology but also changes in organizational culture, work structure, and data management. Social media is one of the key components because of its role in delivering information, building relationships with citizens, and creating active participation in public decision-making. According to Westerman et al. (2014), digital transformation is "the use of digital technologies to significantly improve an organization's performance or reach." In the context of government, this means integrating technology into administrative processes to improve interactions between government and citizens. The scope of Social Media Utilization in Government Transformation includes.

1. **Direct Communication and Interaction.** Social media allows governments to communicate directly with citizens, hear complaints, and respond quickly to their needs. It creates a more open and transparent communication channel. Through platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, governments can deliver information, announce policies, and answer public questions in real-time (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010).
2. **Public Participation.** Social media can also help the public become more involved in decision-making. Governments can use social media to conduct surveys, gather public input, and hold open discussions.
3. **Transparency and Accountability.** Governments can increase transparency and accountability by using social media. Information about government policies, budgets, and operations is disseminated quickly, making it easier for the public to obtain relevant information (Linders, 2012).
4. **Information Management.** In certain situations, social media has evolved into an important tool for the dissemination of accurate and up-to-date information. Governments can use social media to address misinformation and provide updates and instructions to the public (Graham, 2015).

Social media has become an important tool for communication and interaction between the government and others. Governments use various social media platforms to increase transparency, public participation, and deliver information. Governments in different countries use different social media platforms based on the unique characteristics, audiences and features



of each platform. Here are some of the types of social media platforms most commonly used by governments:

1. Twitter. As a microblog, Twitter allows the government to communicate directly with the public and provide quick updates. This helps the government deliver up-to-date information, especially in crisis or disaster situations. Twitter is also often used because it allows citizens to interact directly such as asking questions or providing feedback to government officials, thereby increasing public engagement.
2. Instagram. Instagram, which focuses on visual content, is used by many government agencies to capture public attention through images and videos. Around 79% of social media users in Indonesia use it, making it a useful platform for visual and educational campaigns. Through the Stories feature, governments can share important moments and daily activities related to public services, creating a narrative that is closer to the people (Graham, 2015).
3. YouTube. YouTube is a video-sharing platform that is very popular among Indonesian social media users (88% of the total population). The Indonesian government uses this platform to document activities, provide educational information, and spread important messages through videos. In this platform, the government can create educational videos about policies, programs and other public services. YouTube also provides a live broadcast feature, allowing the public to access and join government events online in real time.
4. TikTok. In today's modern era, TikTok is becoming more popular as a social media platform among the younger generation, and some government agencies are starting to use it to reach their young audiences with creative and engaging content. TikTok helps the government deliver important messages in an engaging way. It can be delivered more effectively and easily understood by the public with short videos. The app can also be used to conduct awareness campaigns on big issues such as education, health and the environment. This will make it more appealing to the younger generation. It can also contribute to e-democracy by allowing people to participate in discussions and provide input on public policies through videos.
5. LinkedIn. LinkedIn is a professional platform that focuses more on business and career networking. In the context of government, LinkedIn can be used for networking where government can connect with professionals and industry leaders for collaboration, strengthening the relationship between the public and private sectors (Linders, 2012). As well as information dissemination, where government officials can share policy-related articles and information relevant to the industry sector, raising awareness and understanding among professionals.

As each social media platform has different advantages and disadvantages, governments should choose the one that best suits their audience and their communication objectives. By effectively utilizing social media platforms, governments can increase public interaction, transparency and participation in the decision-making process. Of course, while social media offers many conveniences and benefits, its use in government also faces some challenges that social media presents that need to be considered, including:

1. Misinformation and Disinformation: The dissemination of misinformation can be a misleading tool that can damage the government's reputation and create confusion among the public (Graham, 2015).
2. Limited Access and Digital Divide: Not all people have equal access to social media, which can create gaps in public participation (Bertot et al., 2010). Some of the older people often lack understanding of social media (gadget) so they can only see it from television or word of mouth. Platforms such as TikTok and Instagram are more popular among the younger generation although some older generations also use them. Usually older generations are



more comfortable using platforms like Facebook or Twitter, creating challenges in reaching all age groups.

3. **Privacy and Security:** The government's use of social media can raise concerns about data privacy and the security of people's personal information. The government must also face the risk of cyber-attacks that threaten the integrity of information delivered through social media.

Several relevant theories on communication and public participation in the context of social media use in government can be used to understand the dynamics of interaction between government and society. These theories include theories of public communication, e-governance, and community participation. Each of these theories provides a framework for understanding how government interacts with citizens through digital platforms.

1. **Political Communication Theory.** This theory explains the process by which messages are communicated between the public and the government and vice versa. Public communication in government builds trust, increases community engagement, and creates a positive image of the government. Public communication is the process of conveying messages to a larger audience with the aim of influencing or persuading them. In the context of government, this theory explains the importance of effective communication between government and citizens. Effective public communication, according to Grunig and Hunt (1984), should be two-way in nature where the government should convey information and listen to what the public has to say. This is important to build trust and credibility of the government. There are four models of public communication proposed by Grunig, these models are the persuasive model, the two-way information model, the participation model, and the dialog model. All of these models suggest that active interaction between the government and the public is necessary for effective communication (Grunig, 1992). Some important elements required in public communication include:

- **Sender:** The party delivering the message, such as a government official or agency.
- **Message:** Information conveyed, which can be in the form of government policies or programs.
- **Media:** Channels used to convey messages, including social media.
- **Reception:** The audience that receives the message.
- **Feedback:** The response of the audience to the message received.

2. **E-Governance Theory.** According to Canel and Sanders, E-Governance includes the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government services. This includes the digital management of data and services, interaction between government and citizens, and the dissemination of public information. This theory emphasizes the importance of technology in improving transparency, accountability, and public participation. Transparency, Information about government policies and programs is available to the public. Accessibility, through digital platforms, citizens can more easily gain access to government services and information. Public Participation, Through online platforms, citizens can be involved in the decision-making process. E-governance has the potential to increase public access to government information, which in turn can increase public participation in decision-making, as stated by Heeks. In addition, e-governance allows the government to deliver information in a more effective and efficient manner. E-governance can also create better interactions between the government and the public, as well as allow citizens to engage in government processes through digital platforms.



3. **Community Participation Theory.** The theory of community participation is essential for citizens to actively participate in the governance process. Arnstein states that public participation can be measured from manipulation to full involvement in decision-making. This theory makes sense in the context of social media as digital platforms give people the opportunity to express their opinions. Arnstein developed a participation model that shows the levels of public participation, ranging from manipulation to full participation in decision-making. The model shows that increased public participation can increase the legitimacy and effectiveness of public policies.

There are several forms of community participation through social media, including :

- **Public Discussion:** This allows citizens to participate in policy discussions on online comments or forums.
- **Surveys and Polls:** Governments can use social media to gather public input on certain policies.
- **Awareness Campaign:** Social media is used to promote government programs that require public support.

Active community participation increases the legitimacy of policies and helps the government create programs that are more in line with community needs.

The Role of Social Media in Government

As we know, social media has now become an integral part of government, serving as an important tool for communication, transparency, and enhancing public participation. Through social media platforms, governments can deliver information quickly and directly to the public, transcending the time and space limitations often found in traditional communication channels. The speed and accessibility of information provided by social media allows the government to reach more people (Supriyanto et al., 2024).

One of the main functions of social media is of course to support government openness. This public information disclosure is used by the government to encourage wider community participation in regional progress and support for various development policies. And not only that, the government can use social media to publish data and information about policies, budget use, and the results of various government programs. This provides an opportunity for the public to evaluate government performance directly, increasing transparency and accountability in the government process.

Social media also has a role in strengthening government accountability. These platforms provide a space for the public to provide feedback on government policies and actions. Interactions that occur through social media allow people to provide suggestions or criticisms, which encourage changes or improvements in the policies being implemented, so that the government can be more accountable for its actions. In , social media provides an opportunity to increase public participation. The government can use social media to invite the public to participate in decision-making through polls, opinion polls, or discussion forums. In this way, the resulting policy will better reflect the wants and needs of the community, thereby increasing public acceptance of the policy.

Not that, social media also allows governments to respond quickly in crisis situations. In emergency conditions such as natural disasters or pandemics, social media becomes the main channel for the government to provide information needed by the public directly. This allows people to get the right information and avoid the spread of misinformation or hoaxes, which can worsen the situation (Muzahid Akbar Hayat et al. 2021). However, people who rely on social media as their main source of information are vulnerable to misinformation or hoaxes. This is because information can spread quickly, sometimes without adequate verification, which can



cause confusion in the community, damage the government's reputation, and even make things worse.

In addition, the role of social media in government is also influenced by political and social challenges. Social media is often the venue for intense political debates, where government policies are often criticized (Zempi, Kuswanti, and Maryam 2023). While criticism is important in a democratic context, unconstructive or inaccurate information can worsen the situation and add to polarization. Emotional or provocative criticism, which is not based clear facts, can create greater social tension, and this affects public perception of the government. So while social media provides many benefits, it also poses challenges. Therefore, it is important for the government to ensure that information conveyed through social media is valid and trustworthy.

Benefits of Social Media Utilization.

The utilization of social media by the government has become very important as digital technology continues to advance. Social media is not only used to disseminate information, but also to increase public engagement, manage public opinion, and strengthen communication between the government and the public. One of the biggest benefits of social media is the efficiency of communication that can connect the government with the public in a short time and at low cost. The government utilizes social media to deliver important information to the public quickly and effectively. This includes new policy announcements, information related to public services, or updates on ongoing government programs. With its wide reach, the information delivered can be immediately received by the public without having to wait longer through other media channels. In addition, social media allows the government to deliver information in greater detail and can be monitored by the public.

More than just an information channel, social media is also used by governments to increase public participation in policy-making. With interactive features such as polls or online discussions, the public can be more involved in providing input on policies being developed. This allows the government to better understand people's aspirations and formulate more targeted policies (Hikmat 2018). In addition, social media allows the government to build a positive image in the eyes of the public. By sharing information about the government's successes or achievements, social media can be used to strengthen public trust in the government. This more open and transparent relationship also helps people feel closer to the government. There are major challenges in utilizing social media, one of which is the potential for information leakage or data misuse (Solihin 2021). In using social media, it is important for the government to maintain the security of personal data processed or collected through these platforms. Social media management also requires special skills, and not all government officials have these abilities. Therefore, training and debriefing on effective social media management is needed.

So it can be seen that the use of social media by the Indonesian government to date has shown significant progress, although there are still some challenges that must be overcome so that this progress can continue and be maximized. In general, the Indonesian government has successfully used social media for various purposes, such as increasing transparency, strengthening public engagement, disseminating information about policies, and accelerating public services. Social media has become a key tool for the government to interact with the public, deliver updates quickly, and build two-way communication channels that allow the public to provide feedback.

Despite this progress, there are still a number of challenges that can be considered as obstacles to the utilization of social media by the Indonesian government. One of them is the inequality of access to technology and social media in different parts of Indonesia. While social media can reach many people, there are still many areas, especially remote and rural areas, that do not have adequate internet access. This situation causes an information gap between those who are connected to the digital world and those who cannot access it (Oktavia 2015). To maximize its utilization, the government needs to develop a planned communication strategy. This strategy



includes determining the type of information that needs to be conveyed, the audience to reach, and how to respond appropriately to interactions from the public. With a careful and planned approach, social media utilization can be a very useful tool in creating a more responsive and transparent government.

Case Study: Central and Local Government Social Media Accounts

The utilization of social media accounts by the central and local governments is one form of strategic adaptation in facing the development of the digital era. At the central level, the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo) actively uses various social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram to convey important information to the public. One of the main focuses is the digital literacy campaign that involves disseminating information about digital security, eradicating hoaxes, and promoting government programs (Nurlatun, 2021). Interactive campaigns conducted through specific hashtags demonstrate the effectiveness of social media as a fast, broad and participatory communication tool.

At the local level, the Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta through official social media accounts such as @layananjakarta on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook, has created communication patterns that facilitate public access to information on licensing and investment services. Research shows that this use of social media not only increases transparency, but also boosts public trust in local government performance. The quick response to public inquiries and complaints on these platforms shows that social media can be an efficient communication bridge between the government and the public (Simanjuntak, 2023).

Currently, agencies at various levels of government are competing to implement digitalization in governance, one of which is by creating official social media accounts for various purposes. However, the effectiveness of social media as a means of government communication cannot be separated from various challenges. One of the main challenges is the lack of consistency in the management of social media accounts in various agencies, both central and local. Some local government accounts show a low level of responsiveness to public aspirations, which can reduce the effectiveness of public interaction.

Challenges and Constraints

The government's use of social media, despite its many advantages, is also faced with a number of significant challenges and constraints. These challenges affect the effectiveness of communication between the government and the public and the sustainability of using social media as an official communication platform (Prasetyo, 2018).

1. **Lack of Digital Literacy in the Community.** One of the main obstacles is the low level of digital literacy in some areas, especially in rural areas. Many people do not understand how to utilize social media to effectively access information on government services. This creates a digital divide that limits interactions between government and citizens. Low digital literacy also means that some citizens are more easily influenced by false information (hoaxes), which further exacerbates the situation.
2. **Spread of false information (hoaxes).** Social media, with its fast and widespread nature, is often used as a means of spreading false information that can damage the government's reputation and lower public trust. The government often has to allocate resources to counteract these hoaxes, as the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology has done through anti-hoax education campaigns. However, this requires a sustained effort to make people more critical of the information they receive.
3. **Data Privacy and Security.** Another challenge is the issue of data privacy and security. Interactions that occur through government social media accounts often involve people's personal data, which is vulnerable to misuse or leakage. The lack of strict regulations regarding digital data protection is also a concern in ensuring information security.



4. Consistency and Professionalism in Social Media Account Management. The performance of government social media accounts often depends on the quality of their management. Not all government agencies have sufficiently trained teams to manage social media accounts professionally. As a result, there are inconsistencies in the responsiveness and quality of information delivered, both at the central and local levels. This can lead to an uneven public experience in accessing services or information.
5. Limited Responsiveness to Public Criticism. Some government social media accounts tend to be less responsive to public complaints or criticism, which should be an important element in building trust and accountability. In some cases, unaddressed criticism can lead to negative perceptions of the government.

These challenges indicate the need for a more holistic strategy in the utilization of social media by the government. Digital literacy training, strengthening data privacy regulations, and increasing the professionalism of social media account management are important steps to overcome these obstacles and ensure social media can be an effective and inclusive means of communication (Siregar, 2024). Despite the obstacles, the government's use of social media shows great potential in strengthening interactions between the government and the public. With the right strategy, social media can be an important instrument to increase transparency, accountability and public participation in policy making. This makes social media an important element in the transformation of digital-based government in Indonesia..

4. CONCLUSION

Social media has proven to be an important component in the digital transformation of government in Indonesia, serving as a strategic tool to improve communication, transparency, and public participation. Through platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, the government can interact directly with the public, deliver real-time information, and engage the public in the decision-making process. As such, social media not only accelerates the dissemination of information, but also creates more open and responsive communication channels, allowing the government to hear and respond to the needs of the people more effectively.

However, the challenges faced in utilizing social media, such as the spread of hoaxes, limited digital access, and privacy issues, indicate the need for a more holistic strategy in its management. To optimize the potential of social media, the government must improve management capacity, ensure data security, and develop digital literacy among the public. With the right approach, social media can be an invaluable instrument in strengthening interactions between government and society, as well as increasing transparency and accountability in government in the digital era.

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