YouTube Adoption: Promoting Local Government Transparency?

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Abstract

Youtube is a social media platform for the exchange of videos where the public can demonstrate their engagement by watching, sharing and commenting. Local governments have gradually adopted it, in particular for transparency purposes. Unfortunately, there has been not much research explored the use of this platform, especially to investigate whether it was able to promote transparency which was previously enquired by the public. A dataset of 304 video profiles was analyzed to find local governments' use of YouTube. The results showed found that in terms of transparency, the government utilizes social media to share video meetings where the public could watch the dynamics of policy formulation and budget allocation. Unfortunately, we also find that YouTube is used to publicize the governor's activities excessively, so we prefer to call YouTube as a medium of branding rather than as a medium of transparency. We also find other benefits of YouTube as an effective media to promote and socialize government programs.

Keywords:
local government, social media, YouTube, transparency

Introduction

Social media emerges amid communication barriers experienced by the government, offers open and dialogical communication channels (Bonsón, Torres, Royo, & Flores, 2012). Social media facilitates a two-way flow of information which encourages democracy, enables greater citizen participation, knowledge of government activities, and allows more room for participation (Avery & Graham, 2013). As the government promises to be more transparent, they increasingly increase their intensity to utilize social media (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010). The increasing use of social media has changed government and public

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communication practices encouraged the government to adjust its communication strategy and included social media as one of the communication channels to promote transparency.

Government transparency in social media may occur for two reasons. First, the government is indeed committed to being more transparent. This may happen due to social media has recently been integrated into e-government initiatives to promote government transparency (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2012). Second, there is strong public pressure to encourage the creation of a transparent government. The use of social media increases the public ability to interact with government. Social media facilitates new types of participatory communication, provides two-way interaction between individuals and groups, and the formation and development of participatory groups which cross spatial and social boundaries (Sharif, Troshani, & Davidson, 2015). This will be beneficial for local governments because local public directly feels the impact of government policies, so that the public may directly provide feedback to the government (Sáez Martín, Haro de Rosario, & Caba Pérez, 2015). Moreover, at the local level, perceptions of transparency and openness in the eyes of the community are related to traditional attitudes towards the meaning of good governance (Waheduzzaman & Miah, 2015).

Although evidence of the impact of social media on transparency is still a topic being discussed at the moment, there are a number of indications that social media can promote transparency through providing information on government regulations and citizens' rights, information about government policies and actions, promoting monitoring of government actions and spending, production of information about government performance, disclosure of government data such as taxes, disclosure of assets and investment of elected officials (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2012; Bonsón, Torres, Royo, & Flores, 2012; Gunawong, 2015). Social media offers governments increased transparency, but there is little study to prove that transparency driven by social media exists. Therefore, analyzing how governments use social media to increase transparency deserves to be investigated. This study focuses on the use of YouTube which has recently been adopted by the government. This study contributes to the understanding of the unique characteristics of each social media and how the government uses these unique characteristics to promote transparency.

The following section in this paper contains a literature review on the development of the ICT use to promote transparency, starting with government websites and moving

towards social media. We also explain YouTube's characteristics to provide a basic understanding of its main characteristics which can promote transparency. The next section is a research method which contains the stages of data collection and data analysis. The findings will be written in the following section and continued in the discussion section. The last part of this paper is the conclusion which contains the conclusions, implications of the results of research and limitations, as well as recommendations for future research.

ICT and Government Transparency

Transparency is a big goal in a democracy because of its role to encourage governments in sharing information with the public as part of the public's right to know how the resources they provide are used (Fairbanks, Plowman, & Rawlins, 2007; Guillamón, Bastida, & Benito, 2011). Transparency and accessibility of public information is currently the main focus of the government (Gandía, Marrahí, & Huguet, 2016). Transparency is an important element of the government's strategy to encourage openness and reduce corruption (Bertot, Jaeger, & Hansen, 2012). Transparency can be seen through three perspectives which are as a public value determined by society to fight corruption and related to accountability, as a synonym of an open decision by the government, related to the ease of access and use of government information, and as an instrument to realize good governance (Ball, 2009).

Although there is no single definition of transparency, it has three basic characteristics which are the need for timely availability of information, the quality of published information (precise and relevant), and the accessibility of information (Detlor, Hupfer, Ruhi, & Zhao, 2013). The non-transparent government will prevent the responsible use of budgets and in the public interest, instil and legalize control over resources, limit the government's ability to select partners effectively and efficiently, obstruct public trust and development (Dawes, 2010; Detlor, Hupfer, Ruhi, & Zhao, 2013). Corruption has long been seen as a barrier to socio-economic development (Bertot, Jaeger, & Hansen, 2012). This is especially true for governments in developing countries where political elites often have control over a variety of resources (Kolstad & Wiig, 2009).

Transparency involves the use of mechanisms which are appropriate for ensuring information is shared with the public. the basic characteristics of the internet which have a broad reach, faster and cheaper, is a more effective communication media compared to

traditional media (Ebbers, Pieterson, & Noordman, 2008). Therefore, ICTs play an important role in achieving efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector by promoting transparency, accountability and public involvement (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010; Ebbers, Pieterson, & Noordman, 2008; Vicente & Novo, 2014). ICTs provide governments with a new approach to creating transparency by integrating direct public involvement and participation in e-government initiatives (Hughes, 2011). ICTs have been claimed by countries in America, Asia, and Europe as part of success in reducing corruption (Shim & Eom, 2008). Tax transparency is one form of successful oversight of government activities (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010).

ICTs have been widely used to modernize government by enabling public participation, promoting transparency and providing wider access to information (Gandía, Marrahí, & Huguet, 2016). ICT is believed to be able to promote efficiency and transparency (Von Haldenwang, 2004). In terms of transparency, ICTs increase the effectiveness of government internal and managerial controls by promoting government accountability and transparency (Shim & Eom, 2008). Implementing e-government significantly reduce corruption by controlling every suspected action (Valle-Cruz, Sandoval-Almazan, & Gil-Garcia, 2016). ICTs provide the government with a new approach to create transparency. Governments in various parts of the world pass transparency laws which encourage transparency through the use of various platforms such as e-government (Relly & Sabharwal, 2009).

ICTs help to collect, distribute and access government information at lower costs (Roberts, 2006). In recent years, the use of e-government has opened great access to information and promoted transparency and accountability (Cuillier & Piotrowski, 2009). ICTs promote good governance, strengthen initiatives oriented to bureaucratic reform, enable the public to oversee government activities and control the behavior of government employees (Shim & Eom, 2008). One of the main goals of transparency is to reduce corruption which can be achieved by moving away from increasing access to information and ensuring regulations which encourage transparency towards building capacity to monitor government policies and behavior (Bhatnagar, 2003).

The successful application of ICT depends on the acceptance of ICT. Although the government has a strong desire to provide public services through ICT on the grounds of

cost efficiency, the community still chooses to interact directly or on a telephone basis with government employees (Ebbers, Pieterson, & Noordman, 2008). Acceptance of e-government as a means to provide public services is very dependant on social networking which is the user's positive perception of e-government (Axford & Huggins, 2003). Another factor to consider is trust and risk from the use of e-government. Every user must be guaranteed security, especially data security in using public services (Hussein, Mohamed, Rahman Ahlan, & Mahmud, 2011). The responsiveness of the government to build public trust in e-government is the next factor to consider (Gauld, Gray, & McComb, 2009; Mossberger, Wu, & Crawford, 2013).

The application of ICTs to increase transparency also often encounters problems such as technological literacy, adequacy of technological infrastructure, trust in institutions which provide services, availability of computers and internet access (Jaeger & Thompson, 2003; Singh & Sahu, 2008). Something which makes the situation worse is that many civil servants are ambivalent towards community participation in the process (Heaselgrave & Simmons, 2016). Finally, Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes (2012) assert that if e-government is truly a platform which enables the transformation of government, citizen participation and involvement must be central in its development and implementation.

Promoting Transparency in Social Media

ICT enters a new phase by offering a new platform for openness by providing access to social media through content creation and dialogic communication so that the government becomes more accessible. Social media allows governments and communities to jointly produce content (Linders, 2012). It is important because the need for transparency is increasing and on the other hand, communication and information transmission has changed drastically, mainly due to the emergence of social media. Nowadays, social media is widely adopted because it provides features which allow for social interaction. This enables user empowerment to communicate, interact, and share content in public spaces (Tepper & Michele, 2003).

The adoption of ICT by the governments to increase transparency raises other problems related to the resources owned by them. Larger and richer governments own financial, technical, and human resources capacities which are better equipped to support ICT initiatives. Moreover, these initiatives also depend on managerial leadership and

political support (Ho & Ni, 2004). These problems can be overcome because social media users can produce and share information cheaply and effectively.

Social media has four main potential strengths which are collaboration, participation, empowerment, and efficiency (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010). Social media can create collaboration and participation because of interactions between users, providing users with the ability to connect and forming online communities to socialize and share information. Differ from traditional media designed to facilitate one-way interaction with the public, social media allows users to interact with many-to-many pattern (Fuchs, 2014). This allows users to interact with each other then boosts the level of participation and information sharing.

In terms of community empowerment, social media is a platform which provides everyone with the same opportunity to voice their interests. Social media users produce and share information cheaply and effectively. Social media also allows users to produce and receive information in real-time. Social media has an important role in developing Web 1.0, strengthening the visibility of information provided on official government websites by distributing its content on social media and promoting interactive communication between government and society (Gandía, Marrahí, & Huguet, 2016).

Social media has radically increased the speed, scope, and transparency of information. However, the power of social media in government to facilitate and increase transparency has not been thoroughly investigated (Chatfield & Brajawidagda, 2013). The presence of the government on social media has a positive impact on community support to create a transparent government, and community participation is positively related to the level of transparency of the local government and people's trust in the government (Cuillier & Piotrowski, 2009). Although the practice of increasing government transparency continues to increase, there are only a few studies which explore how the government increases and communicates transparency to the public in depth (Chatfield & Brajawidagda, 2013).

Regarding government transparency which is more likely to be realized due to social media adoption, research on social media adoption and its relationship to government transparency is relatively new. Social media has been integrated into e-government initiatives to facilitate government transparency (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2012). The maturity of government transparency mediated by social media is still at an early stage

(Bonson, Royo, & Ratkai, 2014; Bonsón, Torres, Royo, & Flores, 2012) because there are institutional obstacles to implementing transparent governance. Therefore, political and leadership abilities must be mobilized to overcome these challenges (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010). Moreover, a strong political will of a leader to realize transparency encourages the presence of the government in social media in increasing and communicating transparency dynamically to get support from the public (Chatfield & Brajawidagda, 2013). Because social media has an important role in increasing transparency, in-depth studies on the use of social media are needed to increase transparency.

Methods

This research is a case study research to understand the complex and contemporary phenomena associated with efforts to increase transparency conducted by the Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta, one of the most active provinces on YouTube. The reason we chose DKI Jakarta as a single case is because of its position as a leading province which has been using YouTube for a long time, as well as the number of its subscribers and likes.

This research utilizes an automatic approach to collect data from YouTube. As suggested by Lewis, Zamith, & Hermida (2013), to avoid being trapped in analytical difficulties because of the large data size, this study limits the number of YouTube videos from 1 May to 31 August 2019. Data were collected on 15 September 2019. An automated approach is used to collect data and a manual approach is used to encode data. We utilize Netvizz to help collect data which allows us to archive the YouTube activities. A total of 304 video profiles were successfully taken for content analysis. The data about the DKI Jakarta YouTube profile which we collect are in the form of a video title and description, duration, views, likes, dislikes, and the number of comments.

Coding and analysis are conducted by importing data into Microsoft Excel. As stated previously, this study will contribute to building a more complete understanding of the use of YouTube to promote theory, so this study utilizes the method of generalizing analysis (Yin, 2014). Specifically, we use a qualitative interpretative content analysis approach, mainly to group data in certain categories (Krippendorff, 2013). Coding is conducted through two stages. First, author one and author two conduct the coding and analysis separately. We separately build certain categories of data which are read without having an

initial category first. The second stage, we discuss to find a series of categories which we agreed on.

YouTube and DKI Jakarta Provincial Government's YouTube Channel

Youtube is a social media platform which provides space to share videos where the public can show their involvement by watching, sharing, and commenting. Initially, YouTube was a platform which aimed to eliminate technical obstacles in sharing the online video widely (Burgess & Green, 2009). YouTube provides an integrated and very simple interface which allows users to upload and publish streaming video easily without having to have high technical knowledge. YouTube with the jargon 'more than television' is a dynamic object of study, marked by the diversity of its content. It is a distribution platform which can produce commercial media products becoming very popular, challenging the reach of promotions which are usually expensive because of using mass media. Like other social media, YouTube allows participation from ordinary people who make it an alternative media space. Unregistered users on YouTube can view videos, while registered users can upload, view, comment and share video contents (Chatfield & Brajawidagda, 2013).

The Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta created a YouTube account on 31 October 2011 under the name of "PEMPROV DKI JAKARTA". This account is managed by the Media Relations Services Section, a section under the Office of Informatics Communication and Statistics. After 8 years, this YouTube channel has 138,800 subscribers. A total of 4,268 videos have been uploaded by this account and those videos have been watched by 29,230,638 times. More detailed information can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.
The Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta's Youtube Account Profile

No.	Criteria	Description
1	Title	PEMPROV DKI JAKARTA
2	Date of Creation	31 Oktober 2011
3	View	2,9230,638
4	Subscribers	138,800
5	Uploaded Videos	4268
6	Administrator	Media Relations Services Section, the Office of Informatics Communication and Statistics

Source: processed data, 2019

Results and Discussion

This study has found 12 categories of YouTube usage by the Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta as presented in Table 2. These categories can be grouped into three main themes such as governor's activities, marketing programs, and transparency. On the theme of governor's activities, the Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta shares videos containing the activities such as welcoming visitors and visiting guests, attending forums held by the community, attending meetings, field trips, inaugurating government programs, press conference, and governor's responses to events.

Table 2.
Information Categories and Video Descriptions

| No.	Catagories	Video Descriptions	Tittle Video
1.	Congratulatory message	Greetings on religious holidays and national important days	Selamat Hari Kemerdekaan ke-74 Indonesia! (Happy 74th Indonesian Independence Day!)
2.	Public campaign	Campaign to encourage the community to change their behavior	Beralih ke Transportasi Publik #7DaysChallenge (Switch to Public Transportation #7DaysChallenge)
3.	welcoming guests and visits	The governor welcomes guests and visits	22 Jul 2019 Gub Anies Baswedan Menerima kunjungan kehormatan Duta Besar Palestina (22 July 2019 the Governor Anies Baswedan Welcomed an Honorary Visit from the Palestinian Ambassador)
4.	Attending public forum	The governor goes to a forum organized by the public, associations, and so on.	21 Jul 2019 Gub Anies Baswedan menghadiri Lebaran Betawi 2019 (21 July 2019 the Governor Anies Baswedan Attended the Lebaran Betawi 2019)
5.	Meeting attendance	The Governor attends a meeting	22 Ags 2019 Gub Anies Baswedan Menghadiri Rapat Paripurna DPRD (22 August 2019 Governor Anies Baswedan Attended a Plenary Session of the Regional House of Representatives)
6.	Governor's visit	The governor conducts field visits to review certain situations	07 Jul 2019 Gub Anies Baswedan Peninjauan Wilayah Terdampak Kebakaran di Kel. Cipinang Besar Selatan (07 July 2019 Governor Anies Baswedan

			Reviewed of Fire Affected Areas in Kel. Cipinang Besar Selatan)
7.	Inaugurating government program	The governor inaugurates a government program	13 Ags 2019 Gub Anies Baswedan meresmikan peluncuran peta transportasi publik Jakarta terintegrasi (13 August 2019 Governor Anies Baswedan Inaugurated the Launch of the Integrated Jakarta Public Transportation Map)
8.	Press conference	The governor attends a press conference and delivers his perspective	13 Ags 2019 Gub Anies Baswedan Konferensi Press terkait Ancol 9th Jakarta Melayu Festival (13 August 2019 Governor Anies Baswedan in a Press Conference Related to Ancol 9th Jakarta Melayu Festival)
9.	Promoting and socialising programs	Promotion and socialization of government programs to gain more public involvement	7 Inisiatif Udara Bersih Jakarta (7 Jakarta Clean Air Initiatives)
10.	Government meeting video	Videos which illustrate the real situation of a meeting	04 Jul 2019 Rapat pimpinan terkait Strategi Penanggulangan Pencemaran Udara di DKI Jakarta (4 July 2019 Leadership meeting related to the Air Pollution Prevention Strategy in DKI Jakarta)
11.	Public speech	Governor's speech in a forum	04 Mei 2019 Gub Anies Baswedan Memberikan sambutan pada acara Apresiasi #Bacajakarta (04 May 2019 Governor Anies Baswedan Delivered a Speech at the Appreciation Event #BacaJakarta)
12.	Governor's response	Governor's response to an event	07 Ags 2019 Gub Anies Baswedan terkait listrik Padam, sosialisasi Ganjil Genap, & Pulau Reklamasi (07 August 2019 Governor Anies Baswedan related to a power outage, Odd-Even Socialization & Reclamation Island)

Source: processed data, 2019

The following theme is marketing which consists of a public campaign to try to increase public awareness of an issue. Other categories in this theme are the promotion and socialization of programs to increase public understanding of government programs and public involvement in a program organized by the government. The last theme is transparency. The Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta presents meeting videos uploaded to YouTube as an effort to promote transparency.

Figure 1 illustrates the number of videos by category. We found that the videos which were uploaded the most were videos containing the activities of the governor attending forums held by the public. There are 68 videos in this category. In the second place is about the situation and conditions of the meetings. A total of 58 videos were found in this category. There are 38 videos included in the category of program promotion and socialization.

Figure 1.
Number of Videos by Category
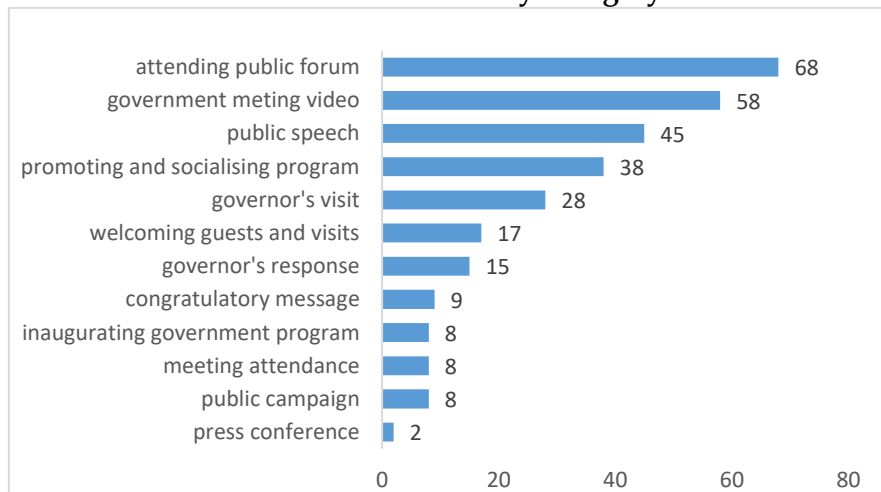
Source: processed data, 2019

The governor's visit to a location ranks fourth with a total of 28 videos. This study also found 17 videos included in the category of governor's activity in welcoming guests and visits. A bit below is the governor's response category with 15 videos. Meanwhile, 9 videos contain greetings of religious holidays and national holidays. The category of the inauguration of government programs, governor's attendance in a meeting, and public campaigns contain 8 videos for each category. The last is the category of press conferences which only contains 2 videos in it.

Table 3.
Profile of each Video Category

No.	Video Category	Average duration	Average view	Average like	Average dislike	Average comment
1.	Meeting attendance	**2253,63**	**225,13**	**10,38**	**0,25**	**0,75**
2.	Public speech	**2144,60**	512,24	25,22	**0,49**	4,27
3.	Government meeting video	**2068,38**	**293,67**	**13,03**	0,72	**2,43**
4.	Welcoming guests and visits	1903,24	393,59	21,41	**0,41**	**2,41**
5.	Attending public forum	1709,25	**2220,99**	39,88	2,10	9,43
6.	Inaugurating government program	1656,25	**3213,38**	**132,88**	**2,50**	**32,63**
7.	Governor's visit	1203,86	1869,07	**76,00**	**2,68**	**18,18**
8.	Governor's response	1144,80	1130,67	46,00	1,87	10,07
9.	Press conference	909,50	**344,00**	**14,00**	1,50	2,50
10.	Public campaign	**355,13**	1034,00	50,88	**4,00**	9,25
11.	Promoting and socialising program	**249,89**	**2531,87**	**83,29**	1,89	**15,45**
12.	Congratulatory message	**107,11**	586,78	59,56	2,11	10,00

Source: processed data, 2019

Table 3 illustrates the statistical profiles of each video category to shos the level of popularity of the video. Judging from its duration, the video with the longest duration is a video with the category of meeting attendance, public speech, and government meeting video. Whereas videos with the shortest duration are videos in the category of a public campaign, promoting and socializing programs, and congratulatory messages. Next is the view-based category. We found that the videos with the highest views are inaugurating government programs, promoting and socializing programs, and attending public forums. Videos with the lowest view are videos with category of press conferences, government meeting videos, and meeting attendance.

Based on the number of likes and dislikes, the most liked videos are videos about inaugurating government program, promoting and socializing program, and governor's visit. Videos with the highest dislike are videos in the category of meeting attendance, welcoming guests and visits, and public speech. Last is based on the average number of public comments. The most commented videos are videos in the category of inaugurating government programs, governor's visits, and promoting and socializing programs. Moreover, the videos with the least comments are in the category of government meeting, welcoming guests and visits, and meeting attendance.

Several trends which can be drawn from Table 3 are the videos with the longest duration are videos with least viewers, least likes, and least comments, for example, videos in the category of meeting attendance. Furthermore, the video category with the shortest duration receives large views and likes and gets lots of comments.

Discussion

This study aims to explore the adoption of YouTube by local governments, especially whether such adoption may encourage transparency. Social media is a means to promote transparency through the creation of various content (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2012). Moreover, transparency can be achieved by disseminating information to the public through various social media platforms (Mergel, 2013). In general, we found that the governor's activities are mostly published by the government on its YouTube account. Furthermore, most local governments utilize social media to disseminate the governor's activities rather than as a medium of transparency, so social media functions more as a branding medium. Therefore, sophisticated communication technology is not used to change the government to be more attractive and transparent. This is in line with findings from other platforms such as Facebook and Twitter which are also used in similar ways.

The government utilizes YouTube to share meeting videos so that the public monitor how the programs and budgets are formulated. The government publishes a video which contains the actual conditions of a meeting in which there are dynamics of policy formulation and budget allocation. The public can directly monitor the proceedings of the meeting and comment on the contents of the meeting. Publishing content which contains transparency may increase public confidence in the government. Therefore, the public must also be given space to demand public transparency.

We also found that the government utilizes YouTube for marketing programs. This is line with the use of other platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram which are used to market various products and services by both government and public sectors (Bonson, Royo, & Ratkai, 2014; Bonsón, Royo, & Ratkai, 2015; Bonsón, Torres, Royo, & Flores, 2012; Graham & Avery, 2013; Martín, de Rosario, & Caba Pérez, 2015). Using social media is a cheap and effective promotion strategy because it does not require expensive costs and it can reach a wider public than conventional promotional strategies. Moreover, related to

program marketing on Facebook, the government utilizes this platform to market events both inside and outside the city (Bellström, Magnusson, Pettersson, & Sören, 2016). Meanwhile, our research found that the government is marketing and socializing government programs on YouTube.

This research found that although YouTube promises a more transparent government, the government instead utilizes YouTube as a medium for the governor's branding. Moreover, various social media features which are used properly may provide great benefits for organizations, including public organizations. Unfortunately, the benefits of adopting social media cannot be obtained because the organizations tend to use it for information dissemination (Chun, Shulman, Sandoval, & Hovy, 2010; Marpaung & Santoso, 2019). Omar, Stockdale, & Scheepers (2014) find reasons behind the government's reluctance to use various social media features because of concerns about value, distrust, and lack of resources. Furthermore, the information asymmetry which occurs between the government and the community is caused by the government which in some cases is reluctant to give authority to the community to control its activities. Another explanation is the limited ability of human resources to master social media features (Heaselgrave & Simmons, 2016). Inadequate staffs to manage social media strategically will make it difficult for local governments to meet citizens' expectations of government's social media and social media cannot operate as they should be.

Conclusions

The government can be more transparent by utilizing various social media features. We try to explore the characteristics of YouTube as one of the media which promotes transparency because there are still not many studies which prove that promise. Our research found that in terms of transparency, the government utilizes social media to share video meetings where the public could watch the dynamics of policy formulation and budget allocation. Unfortunately, we also find that YouTube is used to publicize the governor's activities excessively, so we prefer to call YouTube as a medium of branding rather than as a medium of transparency. We also find other benefits of YouTube as an effective media to promote and socialize government programs.

This study has various liabilities which can guide future studies. First, we do not take into account the contents of public comments on the video. Future research could consider people's responses to the government's presence on YouTube. We also only observe a government YouTube account without enriching the data by conducting interviews so that future research may use interview techniques to gain perspective from YouTube account administrator. Moreover, future research may also explore the management of a government-owned YouTube account to obtain certain characteristics inherent in YouTube. This study has academic and practical implications. Academically, this study learns the characteristics of YouTube as a social media which is believed to be able to promote a transparent government image. The results of this study may also be practically utilized as a reference for managing a YouTube account, especially by looking at variations in the content produced by an account.

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