

TRUST IN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS: AN INSIGHT FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE PRACTICES IN COVID-19 MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

Various countries from almost all corners of the world and international organizations involved in providing development assistance have actively implemented and encouraged a paradigm shift in governance and development based on good governance. This study examines public trust in implementing good governance in terms of accountability, responsiveness, transparency, and information technology of the Samarinda City government in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. The research method used in this research is qualitative. Data collection in this study prioritized in-depth interviews with twenty questions posed to six informants from the general public and six from the Samarinda City Government. The data analysis approach in this study uses the Nvivo 12 Plus software, and the processing uses the Crosstab Query Analysis functionality. The results of this study indicate that the practice of accountability, responsiveness, transparency, and information technology of the Samarinda City government varies greatly. In terms of responsibility, very good. Then, information technology in Samarinda City is quite good. Meanwhile, in terms of responsiveness and transparency, it still does not provide maximum results. Public trust in the government in handling COVID-19 has various perspectives based on findings from the implementation of good governance.

Keywords: COVID-19; Local Government; Samarinda City; Social Responsibility

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INTRODUCTION

This study aims to explore and learn more about public trust in good governance practices based on an in-depth review of accountability, responsiveness, transparency, and the use of information technology affected by policy revisions in handling COVID-19 in Samarinda City. The people of East Kalimantan responded to the COVID-19 handling policy with a positive response rate of 21.43 percent and a negative response of 78.57 percent (Surya et al., 2021). Certain Good Governance principles still have not been running well, so applying these principles needs to be further improved (Orlando & Jamiah, 2022).

In terms of public information disclosure, for example, if done properly, it will impact increasing the level of service provided to the community, ensuring the predictability of public services for the community, and realizing ease of service for the community. This hope will eventually lead to an increase in public trust (HMP, 2022).

Political trust refers to people's trust in the government and the extent to which the government is trustworthy, credible, fair, and competent. In recent years, trust in government has eroded in many developing and industrialized countries, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic (Suriyanrattakorn & Chang, 2021).

Nonpartisan government performance or recent policy decisions can still judge that the government is acting competently or ethically even though it does not agree with the policy decision (Citrin & Stoker, 2018). Trust in government can be considered as an aspect of legitimacy or influence on granting legitimacy, which according to Max Weber's definition, provides authority as a moral basis for obedience (Citrin & Stoker, 2018). Interest in political trust largely lies in beliefs about its consequences for government effectiveness and democratic stability. Policy dissatisfaction reduces one's trust in the government (Hetherington, 2015). The evaluative attitude that citizens have toward a political system or group, with several components that contribute to the overall evaluation, especially technical competence or success, ethical behavior, and fairness with perceived congruence with citizens' best interests (Davies et al., 2021).

The government's role is to actively participate by placing the government to make political decisions in the form of policies that are in accordance with the interests of the community (Sarip et al., 2020). The forward-thinking mindset explains the government's thinking capacity to formulate policies for implementing the new normal or new normal, which will have an impact on the regions in the government's openness to policies that have been implemented previously (Mayarni, 2020). The public's lack of trust and skepticism about the government regarding the handling of COVID-19 in Indonesia, which is considered inconsistent, and general discomfort about how people's behavior develops, have begun to disrespect existing health procedures (Kurniawan et al., 2020).

The way to build public trust in overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic is openness in the disclosure of information on handling COVID-19 in the community (Sri Mulyani, 2020). Good governance is considered one of the most effective

methods, according to (Mufti et al., 2020), which involves community involvement as political participation. If trust in government is high, political participation will be active. Political participation will be passive or apathetic if government trust is low. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the principles of good governance during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, this research's benefits become a reference in policy formulation during the health crisis due to Corona Virus Disease 2019 by prioritizing good governance.

However, there is a relationship between good governance methods and public trust in local government, although there are significant differences of opinion on this matter. According to the local government is the main implementer of policy decisions and the main producer of the results of these decisions about the overall governance process. Local governments are close to their citizens and other stakeholders. As such, they must be readily available and responsive to their needs. As it serves as a focal point for public engagement and ensures that people's rights are democratically protected, local government is essential.

Trust is critical to democracy, as it strengthens the legitimacy of government by connecting citizens, their institutions, and elected officials (Godefroidt et al., 2017). However, trust is widely regarded as an important component of good governance (Wu et al., 2017). On the other hand, this lack of trust undermines the government's legitimacy. It makes it difficult for citizens to agree on public policies, which is a major problem during times of crisis. These concerns the decline in social and political trust, citizens' trust in their political leaders and government institutions, and trust in democratic norms and values (Choi & Woo, 2016). Perception is critical in determining how regulated bodies and society interact. Individuals who value the accessibility of information are

more likely to trust local governments (Mabillard, 2021).

Accountability is primarily implemented by establishing and maintaining personal relationships between service club members and key external stakeholders (Yates et al., 2021). Citizens feel more satisfied and trusting because their government values their opinion on health care reform (He & Ma, 2021). There is a direct and indirect relationship between good governance practices and public trust in the government, which is mediated by the perception of the government's response to COVID-19 (PGRC). Similarly, the Provision of Quality Information on Social Media (GQS) of Government Agencies interacts with public perceptions of the government's response to COVID-19 (PGRC) and builds public trust in the government (Mansoor, 2021). In general, structural openness is associated with increased trust. Moreover, the effect of openness on public trust is partly mediated by individuals' perceptions of meaningful political participation opportunities (Schmidhuber et al., 2021).

According to (Zhao & Hu, 2017), defines transparency as a strategic responsibility needed to foster a relationship of trust (Wasike, 2016; Bauhr & Grimes, 2014). In addition, openness helps to create an environment of trust among the general public. Promoting an open environment that allows citizens to exercise control over institutions and participate in decision-making encourages them to place a higher value on government.

Transparency and quality of city services impact self-confidence (Estrada & Bastida, 2020; Park & Blenkinsopp, 2011). Due to regional and national transparency policies, the legal situation is better than before. However, there is still considerable room for improvement, especially in information on the administration of economic resources, such as budgets, wages, and recruitment and subsidies (Simelio et al., 2020). Transparency and

data synchronization is very important to increase public trust in the government, especially considering the volume of data on the development of the coronavirus. In addition, with accurate data, the government can determine which areas require special priority or access to provide medical equipment, personal protective equipment, and other necessary equipment (Endraria, 2020). In Hong Kong, mistrust of government is strongly influenced by perceptions of the significant difference in values between government and the public. Lack of transparency, participation in decision-making processes, and an inability to connect emotionally with the public all contribute to mistrust (Chan, 2021).

In addition, responsiveness substantially affects public confidence in city administration. Consequently, to maintain legitimacy, competitiveness, and public trust, the government must play an active role in addressing the needs of its population effectively (Beshi & Kaur, 2020). In technology-based governance, it is equally important to manage people's expectations and provide them with information. In addition, responding to the wider population separated by distance as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic can be simpler.

Enabling easy and unrestricted access to information, information technology, and freedom of information laws is essential in increasing transparency among local governments. Simultaneously, local governance transparency has become the norm, and the rest of the world is no exception. Local governments increasingly rely on information technology, such as websites and social media platforms, to meet transparency requirements by posting information and, in some cases, engaging with citizens. There is a positive correlation between using information technology to encourage transparency, citizen participation, and trust in local governments (Krah & Mertens, 2020).

During the early stages of COVID-19, the substance of information provided by state governments and health authorities (for example, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) builds public trust, which has a beneficial effect on community perceived risk, behavioral control, and subjective assessment. Norm assessment (Lee & Li, 2021). Many studies have concluded that improving performance is seen as rebuilding public trust. The following four good governance practices were selected as indicators of the effectiveness of democratic governance to determine the extent to which these practices impact public trust in local governments in supporting this research (Beshi & Kaur, 2020).

METHODS

This study uses a phenomenological approach. The research examines social life by describing the social environment from people's point of view or interpretation (informants). Data collection in this research is by in-depth interviews. Qualitative research tries to understand how a person perceives, understands, or defines his social environment. It is a product of social contact between people. The essence of qualitative research is the ability to understand.

As a result, this investigation was carried out through interviews with the community and representatives from the local government of Samarinda City. Data will be collected through in-depth interviews with random sampling. Twenty questions will be asked to six informants from the general public and six from the Samarinda City government regarding governance practices in dealing with the pandemic in Samarinda City.

The Nvivo 12 Plus software was used for data analysis in this study, and the Crosstab Query Analysis capability was used in the processing. Crosstab Query is a program that allows entering code (manual, automatic), text data, and numeric data into variables and pattern data (Wahyuni & Qodir, 2021). For data analysis, the Crosstab Query function automatically creates primary statistical tests that match the required comparisons and analyze indirect variables (Zamawe, 2015). The research was conducted in several stages, with the first stage being primary research data collection. The analysis uses the Nvivo 12 Plus program to analyze the text, identify information related to other data, identify related items, and search for relevant meanings, phrases and scenarios. To conclude, summarize the information that has been collected and assessed. Nvivo 12 Plus is a software program used to process qualitative data to be more professional (AlYahmady & Al Abri, 2013; Dwi et al., 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Accountability in Handling COVID-19

Through the availability of public services and the interaction of citizens in the city of Samarinda (see Figure 1), with a value (= 6), in point (1A), it becomes part of the government's accountability in responding to the community. Public services are normal, and the community has understood the government-provided provisions based on the time limit given. Residents have started to become accustomed to new habits in the service sector. People constantly adjust the policies provided by the government in service by looking at different conditions.

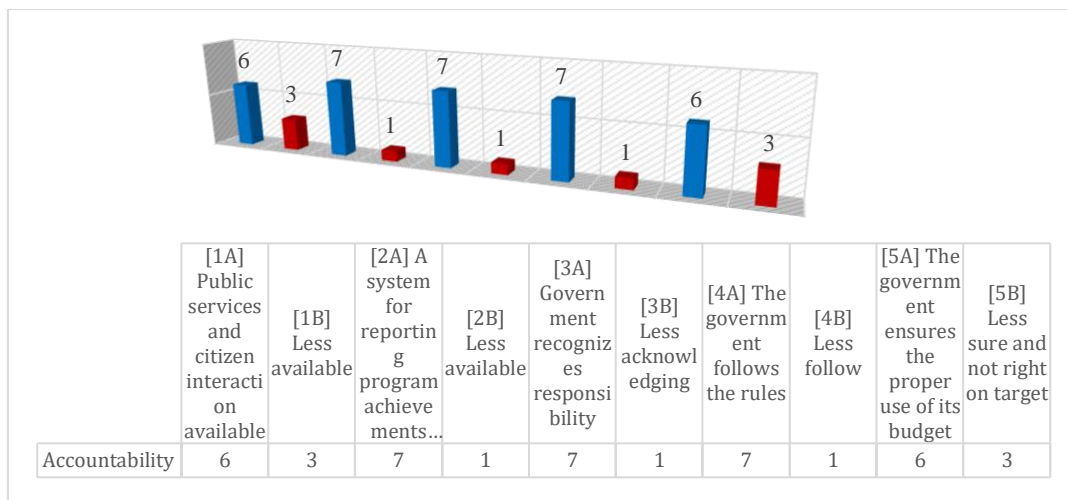


Figure 1. Accountability
Source: processed by the author

Because of the availability of public services, the community continues to conduct its business as usual, despite the imposition of restrictions (such as those that were previously imposed by reducing the number of security personnel assigned to monitor the community) that are aimed at micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (UMKM). Of course, despite public service being established, the general population is still required to adhere to the health regimen.

The availability of a structure allowing the government to report on program successes and results is also a sign of government accountability. A reporting system for program successes and outcomes is shown in the illustration above with (= 7) in point (2A), demonstrating the existence of such a system in the Samarinda City administration. In general, the government report is reasonably excellent, partly because it is easily accessible by the public and updated regularly. One of the government's program reports is on using large quantities of vaccinations. It is also possible that this is a less-than-the-optimal response on the part of the community. According to locals, this

is because the government does not pick up its inhabitants in detail and at regular intervals (tracing) and is still waiting for reports from hospitals or health facilities.

Unlike in Bangladesh, the district health information software, version 2 (DHIS2), can help ensure the accuracy and timeliness of reporting data. Significant government commitment, broad donor support, and a good attitude towards technology among personnel are cited as contributing factors. Quality checks and feedback loops at various data collection stages help reduce data errors. By including the dashboard, district health information software, version 2 (DHIS2) becomes a suitable monitoring tool. As well as of course, the barriers to efficient district health information software, the installation of version 2 (DHIS2) included a lack of human resources, slow Internet access, frequent updates to the district health information software, version 2 (DHIS2), and manual system maintenance and electronics (Begum et al., 2020).

The government acknowledges responsibilities as the authority holder and service in an area. The value (= 7) in point (3A) indicates that the government has

been responsible in the form of implementing the policy of implementing restrictions on community activities (PPKM). The government also had sufficient transparency in reporting victims of the impact of COVID-19 and fulfilled its responsibilities as a government. The government has also followed the pre-determined rules regarding handling COVID-19 (see Figure 1), with point (4A) indicating that the government has adjusted, dividing tasks among several stakeholders in the sub-district/village. The government's response is also fast in implementing restrictions on applying community activities (PPKM). The government ensures the use of its budget (see Point 5A) with (= 6). The accountability of the Samarinda City government in dealing with COVID-19 is already very good, based on the principles of good governance.

People should see real advantages resulting from this process, which should be led by public actors and supported by suitable instruments to manage interactions, improve coordination, increase democratic legitimacy and accountability, and assure visible benefits for citizens (Nesti, 2020). Understanding goes hand in

hand with increasing responsibility, openness, security, and trust. A more integrated approach between government, industry stakeholders, and academia is essential. Equally important is the development of an applied multidisciplinary framework, supported by an anticipatory perspective and public engagement exercises, which can address the often redundant technical debates currently taking place (Vesnic-Alujevic et al., 2020).

Responsive in Handling COVID-19

With this level of reactivity (as seen in Figure 2), the city administration is worried about the ramifications of dealing with COVID-19 through good governance. In this area of responsiveness, we discovered statistically significant findings in several additional measures. The first clue is whether or not the government is responsive to public opinion in its dealings with the media (society). There is a change in a substance that departs from the public's attention to the policy that does not prioritize or is not pro to society. Take note of point (1A) with (= 5) in the image above, which indicates the City of Samarinda is evaluating or directly moving toward revising a new policy with a new policy.

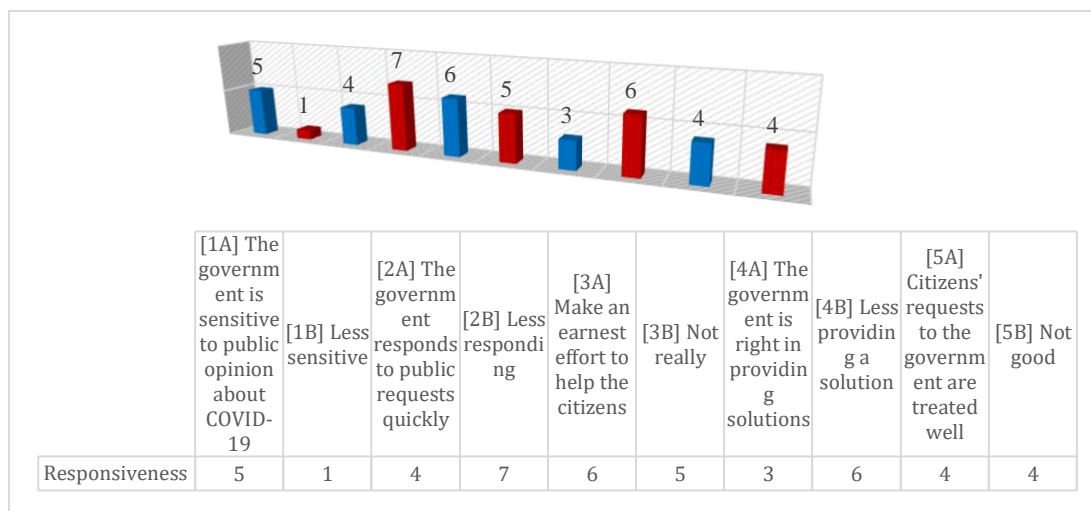


Figure 2. Responsiveness
Source: processed by the author

However, in contrast to the response from the government to the community, this finding creates (= 7) see point (2B), which contains the lack of government response. The government does not respond to public requests by providing services related to COVID-19, the handling is also often slow, and the government lacks tactical action. The government has also not responded quickly to the needs of people affected by COVID-19. People are still waiting a very long time to feel the results of the government's assistance to the community. The government's very minimal response also greatly affects people's trust. Oxygen is something important at this time of COVID-19. However, the service for oxygen, which the government prioritizes for the community, is still slow to distribute.

The chronology maps activities against international health regulatory responsibilities (IHR). It identifies areas where efficiency and accountability can be improved at local, national, and international levels to warn and manage future health hazards quickly. These improvements include significant changes to international legislation and governance governing pandemic preparedness and response, such as global health regulations (IHR) and prospective framework agreements on pandemic preparedness and response (Singh et al., 2021). Many countries, most of which have prior experience with comparable epidemics, responded promptly, even faster than the World Health Organization (WHO) warning, and were initially more effective at suppressing the virus.

The administration is serious about assisting those impacted by COVID-19; this is also one of the markers of responsiveness of the Samarinda City government to foster public confidence in the government. In addition, emphasizing this sincere desire to assist the community has value (= 6), as seen in point (3A). This letter was written to ensure that the government genuinely attempts to deal with

COVID-19. Nevertheless, even with this earnestness, it is impossible to detach it from reality on the ground. First, the government identified the case of the COVID-19 surge, and then it followed up on the case. However, given the absence of actual executions, the government has not been as aggressive as it might have been. The government's commitment to dealing with COVID-19 in Samarinda City should be backed up by implementing the most effective remedies. However, the solution provided by the Samarinda City government cannot be said to be optimal and has not been able to satisfy the community in general. (See Figure 2) with point (4B) indicating that the government has not maximally provided the existing solutions by assessing (= 6). The government does not yet have the right solution for small entrepreneurs. However, the solutions provided by the government are not appropriate for society in general. Substantially in a government policy, there are still overlapping policies. Moreover, the government still relies on volunteers in Samarinda City.

The solutions provided by the government can increase public trust, support a government, and set an example for governments in other regions. Despite the situation's complexity, local governments have found methods to put important measures to reduce adverse impacts on residents and communities (Kavan, 2021). Remote COVID-19 screening, quick digital contact tracing, and remote patient observation are just a few examples (Alsaed et al., 2021). Currency Services responded to COVID-19 by advocating for local solutions to ensure safety in Yarrabah. Four main tactics are applied: health care operations management, alignment of services, education and community assistance, and collaboration between organizations (McCalman et al., 2021).

Transparency in Handling COVID-19

While dealing with the COVID-19 epidemic in Samarinda City, transparency has also played a significant role in determining the route of good governance in the city. (In figure 3), many supporting indications for increasing existing transparency are described. Public concern for transparent government services is also expressed in this way. According to the findings, the Samarinda City administration

is less open in various ways, with point (1B) demonstrating that this is the case. As a concept of good governance, openness is lacking in this instance, as shown by the value (= 22). At this time, there is no evidence of transparency in the management of COVID-19 in Samarinda. As a result, the government will better understand the timeframe for the following year to implement any plans.

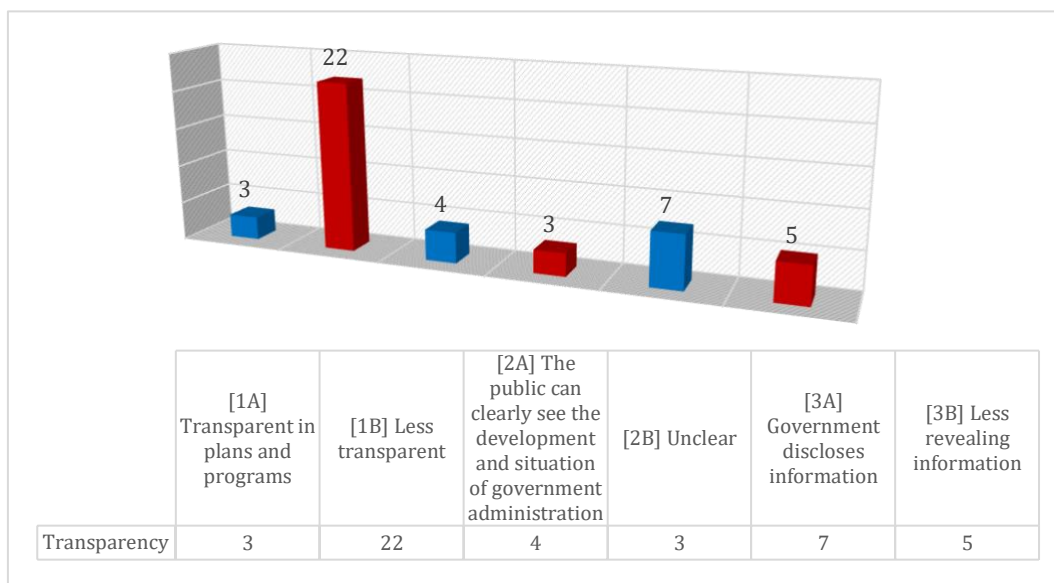


Figure 3. Transparency
Source: processed by the author

It is not related to publications that will be overall activities in any institution. Moreover, the government is not, in principle, transparent. Aid funds or budgets are not conveyed to the public. Transparency seeks to protect citizens' right to know. As in Vietnam, growing citizen participation within local government necessitates greater transparency in the local administration. Of course, certain social circumstances must exist for something to be done efficiently (Binh & Gai, 2021). Interactive disaster governance, decentralized disaster

management, and adherence to good governance principles and national policy guidelines by local-level agencies may significantly reduce disaster losses and damage. Local governments often fail to respect norms of good governance. Triangulation data reveals that the region is beset by systemic corruption. Political favouritism, lack of transparency, accountability, and lack of participation of local people in decision-making. Each is a significant obstacle to implementing national disaster management policies (Uddin et al., 2021).

The public may view the progress made by the Samarinda City administration through point (2A) with a value (= 4) shown on the sign. The development implemented prioritises the service sector, a fairly straightforward concept. The development is also inextricably linked to how the community perceives it, as seen by the cleanliness of various areas, including ultimate disposal sites that have been developed (TPA). Several improvements have been made to the walkways around the city, and the reflexing areas are excellent. The government also discloses information (see Point 3A). With a frequency of 7, the Samarinda City administration distributes quite a considerable amount of information to the public. However, the information made available to the public is still backed by various digital media approaches. It is because certain people are still unable to use technology.

Use of Information Technology in Handling COVID-19

Before the pandemic, the government used various media to communicate messages and policies to the general public. The government effectively uses the mainstream media through the deployment of press agents. For example, in a central government environment at the Presidential Palace, the goals and plans for administering the government depend on widespread coverage in the mass media. As a result, building a positive working relationship with the media is essential. In addition, the government has established a public relations department to oversee publications to the press and the general public, which are carried out through press releases. Some ministries or agencies even

have their public relations departments, which produce press releases and other materials through state-owned media or transmit to the general public (Goeritman, 2021). Samarinda City's administration uses various channels to disseminate information to the general public. Including social media platforms ensures that government communication continues to run as efficiently as possible (see Figure 4).

This news and information material comes from the Samarinda City Government's social media channels. It is connected to the COVID-19 response, with findings that yield a value (= 11) and several people that responded to the COVID-19 response (1A). The government delivers technology-based material connected to services provided between the government and the general public. Information is spread through social media. However, the elderly are less adept at using technology than younger individuals. Instagram and Facebook are two social media platforms via which the government distributes information on people exposed to COVID-19. Furthermore, the findings have a numerical value (= 5) in terms of the accuracy with which the government provides information on social media (2A).

Citizens' intention to use government social media services is significantly correlated with their level of trust. Information quality, structural assurance, perceived security, perceived privacy, and perceived ease of use are all found. As a result, it can assist government organizations and policymakers in making decisions to increase public engagement. Increase trust in e-government social media-based services, thereby increasing citizen participation (Khan et al., 2021).

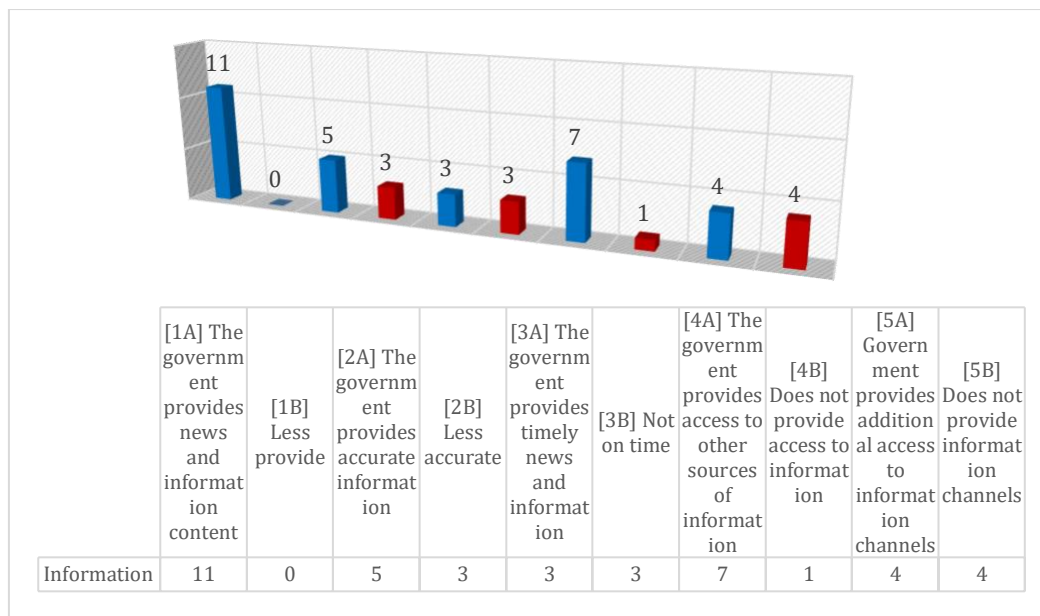


Figure 4. Information Technology
Source: processed by the author

Third, the score (= 3), at point (3A), indicates that the government provides timely news to the public. However, some people did not know the news on time, with the same score (= 3), on point (3B). He continued that the government has provided access to other sources of information, with a value of (= 7) in point (4A), which are also part of the stakeholders in services related to COVID-19. Finally, the government provides additional access to information channels, with (= 4) at point (5A). However, some communities (see Point 5B) still have not yet received access to additional information channels from the government. Information and communication with social media can support the dissemination of existing information. The Twitter social media platform carried out by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia and the National Disaster Management Agency of the Republic of Indonesia has a significant interaction in disseminating information (Setiawan et al., 2021; Saputra et al., 2020). That way, it must be supported by

technological sophistication in implementing information and communication technology (Priyadi et al., 2021) or by using the Twitter platform belonging to the local government.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Public trust in the government in handling COVID-19 has various perspectives based on findings from the implementation of good governance. We seek public trust through the sectors of accountability, responsiveness, transparency, and information technology in dealing with the pandemic. Although the government rated it good on several criteria, other findings indicated that the government had not yet reacted to the needs of the people. Have not provided the right solution and have not been transparent in dealing with COVID-19.

In responding to COVID-19, this study examines public trust in implementing good governance (accountability, responsiveness, transparency, and information technology). Therefore, the

findings should be viewed in light of the research objectives. Research time is one of the limitations of this study. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct further research on public trust in implementing good governance with a survey approach and by looking deeper into public trust by using the principles of good governance more effectively.

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