

The Use of Social Media by Bandung City Government in Increasing Public Participation

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Abstract

Social media is a widespread global phenomenon. The existence of social media has become the essential part in everyday life of millions of people in the world, and it is also influencing on how people communicate with each other. In the governmental context, social media accommodates a fast and transparent method of delivering information, which would be able to be designed to provide service involving public participation. Bandung city government high awareness of this matter causing government to create a social media based service, involving public participation, in developing the city of Bandung. Social media becomes a transparency tool toward public for Policies on infrastructure rehabilitation and development of public space, it can be said that social media is creating communication network between government and people of Bandung.

The purpose of this research is to critically analyse social media utilization phenomenon, involving public participation, in Bandung city government. This research uses qualitative method with descriptive design, focusing on literature study. Reality is observed and understood by analysing social media use in administration of Bandung city government. Data collecting technique used is non-participatory observation and qualitative data analysis. The result of this research shows that Bandung city government has developed various programs and innovations through social media in running the government. The effort has created a different perspective from the previously rigid and formal relation between government and the people, into a more connected, which in turn will increase public participation in the development of Bandung city. (246 words)

Keywords: social media, city government, democracy, and public participation.

1. Introduction

Social media is a widespread global phenomenon. The existence of social media has become the essential part in everyday life of millions of people in the world, and it is also influencing on how people communicate with each other

In digital era, every activities and services is gradually available online. In this context, the number of social media participation has increased every single day, as popular social media such as

Facebook, twitter, and You Tube has reach a shocking increase in the number of user. According to Digital Company Stats (Smith, 2016), until April 2016, Facebook, founded in 2004, has monthly active user of 1.71 billion users, and 1.13 billion of daily active users, with average consumption of 20 minutes or more.

Twitter, founded in 2007, enables every individual to create and share thoughts and information freely. Until August 2016, twitter has 313 billion users, which consist of 100 billion daily active users. You Tube, on the other hand, has 1

billion users, and 4 billion viewers until the month of August 2016.

Social media has been utilized formally and informally by most people in the world, including governments and private sectors. According to Organization for Economic Co-operation and development in November 2014 (OECD, 2015:146), 28 out of 34 OECD countries, in each head office (head of state, head of government, or the whole government) have twitter accounts, while 21 out of 34 countries using Facebook. Other than central government, many ministries, institutions, or head of government in regional area, individually, have their own social media accounts.

Indonesia in January 2016, according to Kemp (2016), has 88.1 million Internet users, which correspond to more or less 79 million social media users or 30 % of Indonesian citizen. It is an extraordinary that Indonesia has such a high number of social media users, which is being predicted to have more users in the future. Social media phenomenon, especially in urban area, cannot be separated from its core purpose of communication, and gathering information to increase the individual capability in economic, social, politic, and cultural sectors. This is the characteristic of the third wave of information society, coined by Alvin Toffler (1980).

In the governmental context, social media accommodates a fast and transparent method of delivering information, which would be able to be designed to provide service involving public participation, and the ability to increase positive image of the government. Social media is also involving policy maker, Bertot et.al in Sobaci (2016:4) suggest that social media technology is developed continuously, giving a space for government to increase its transparency and interaction towards public.

In encountering the phenomenon, Bandung city Government, under Ridwan Kamil, whom already familiar with social media before he become elected as Mayor, taking the role and running the administration by utilizing social media to communicate with its public. In communication function, Bandung city Government has tried to deliver socialization on public policies, and also provides some answers on public interests.

Bandung city has an area of 167.7 km², with population of 2.378.627 in 2015 (Disdukcapil, 2016), consists of male population of 1.202.024, and 1.176.603 female population. The minimum Senior High School level education consists of 1.046.492 people or 43% out of total population, spread in 30 districts and 151 villages. Social media has enable Bandung city Government to reach wider public and provide a better chance in an effective administration to gain public trust by increasing public participation through innovation. Various innovations established by Bandung city Government through social media has been done to repair the system, building trust, and closer proximity towards public. Bandung city Government's social media utilization is based on the idea of the fact that Internet has become daily activities for people of Bandung where they connected through social media network.

Based on the facts above, this research tries to critically examine the phenomenon of social media utilization in Bandung city Government, which involving public participation, as one of the attempts by the government to run a better administration and stronger democracy.

1.1. Social Media

It is not an easy task to reach agreement on social media definition, various ideas have been suggested by many experts, from technical factors such as web 2.0 platform, or based on the purpose and practical factors.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010:62-64) identify six classification of social media platform based on its functions;

First, website collaboration project, where users are permitted to change, add, or dispose contents in the website i.e. Wikipedia; Second, blog and microblog, where users are able to have a freedom to utter everything in the particular blog, including feelings, experiences, statements, critics i.e. twitter; Third, content, where users sharing their multimedia contents such as e-book, video, photo, picture, and so on i.e. You Tube; Fourth, social networking sites, where users are permitted to connect to each other sharing private, group, or social information, and can be accessed by other users i.e. Facebook; Fifth, Virtual game world, where

users, through 3D application, would be able to have an avatar according to their wish, and have their interaction towards other avatars like the real world i.e. online games; Six, virtual social world, a virtual world application, providing its users to live and interact in a virtual world.

Kaplan and Haenlein ideas has been around for years, but it becomes a decent construct and useful starting point of social media classification, but as social media rapidly developed, it would require more study for future references. Generally, social media is an online media, where users through Internet based application, would be able to share, participate, and create contents supported by multimedia. Internet, social media, and multimedia technology has become a unity and the ability to create some further forward new inventions.

1.2. Public Participation

Good governance is a required and become a foundation to establish and implement a democratic state policy in this era of globalization. A diverse concept of good governance principal has been suggested by many experts; but there at least some main principles underlying good governance, such as: (1) accountability, (2) transparency, (3) public participation. (Lalolo, 2003:19)

As one of the principal in government administration, public participation is a right for every individual involves in decision making process in each government activity, whether directly or indirectly, in term of reinforcing democracy through increasing quality and effectivity of public service. Lalolo (2003:19) suggests that there are some factors that would be able to be done by the government in term of public participation: a. delivering information accessible to public, b. Organizing consultation process to unearth and gather inputs from stakeholders, including citizen activities, and c. Delegating particular authority towards user of public service, such as planning process and providing guidance for every activity.

2. Method

This research uses qualitative method with descriptive design, describing a detailed picture on particular individual or group occurred in a particular situation and indication (Koentjaraningrat, 1993:89). Book reference, previous research review, and observing news in the media connected to research are among the tools used in this research.

Literature study is the focus of this research, which intended to understand perception and action in a descriptive way by using words and scientific language. Qualitative research uses subjective data, in which reality being observed and understood to be interpreted, in this case the social media utilization by Bandung city Government. Data gathering technique used in this research is non-participatory observation, that means researcher acts merely as a passive observer. Observation was done from 16 September 2013, or since Ridwan Kamil was appointed as Mayor of Bandung. The data analysis method is qualitative analysis. While the social media classified for observation is based on the suggestion that social media is Internet based application, developed in web 2.0 technology, which enables people to participate, share, and cooperate, in creating thought, debate, and building community. This social media act as communication media towards public to fulfil the objective of a democratic governance.

3. Result

Since 16 September 2013, the elected Mayor and Vice Mayor Ridwan Kamil and Oded M. Danial (or known in pair as RIDO) for 2013-2018 period, have created various innovation in government administration for both internal and external public, one of them by optimizing the use of social media.

The social media utilization is suited perfectly for Bandung demographic, which is dominated in number of population, by youngster, at age range of 15-19, 20-24, and 25-29 (BPS Kota Bandung, 2016) as the younger generation who have a close proximity towards technology and social media.

One of the earliest move made by RIDO was to use social media as transparency information media by instructing all SKPD (Satuan Kerja Pemerintahan Daerah or Regional Government Work Unit), also Head of Districts and Villages, to have twitter account. This move was made to revolutionize the way Government communicating towards its public. All government offices as well as private account of the Mayor itself, inform their agenda through social media, creating a direct two ways communication.

The innovation of programs for internal public are being dealt continuously during RIDO leadership. Nevertheless, there was a critic coming from researcher, stated that RIDO never deal with bureaucracy reformation innovation, which promptly triggered response from Ridwan Kamil through his private accounts of Facebook and twitter, answering the critics whilst asked his followers in both social media to disseminate the information, particularly for public in Bandung.

Other than responding to critics, social media is used to delivering information on Bandung city Government programs in bureaucracy reformation. There are some programs of bureaucracy reformation done during 18 months of RIDO pair leadership, which taken from Ridwan Kamil's private account:

- a) Government echelon level 2 open auction of Head of Offices (3 times), supported by selection team from Universitas Padjadjaran, Parahyangan University, Polrestabes (Bandung Area Police Force), and Kodim (Regional Military Command).
- b) Launching of rapport of Head of Districts using 10 indicators. The top ten Head of districts is announced in Januari 2015 and the top ten achievers was awarded a comparative study excursion to South Korea.
- c) Launching of rapport of Head of Villages, with top ten achievers were given incentive in March 2015.
- d) Launching of SIP (Sistem Informasi Pemerintahan or Government Information System), www.sip.bandung.go.id. The system is providing a rapport of public services for Head of Districts and Villages, feeds by public, with red mark or blue mark available for selection.
- e) Launching of Social Assistance online, preventing corruption potential by giving public transparency and monitor of the process. Receiving Innovation Award from the Ministry of State Apparatus Proficiency.
- f) Eliminating the tax collector team, which suspected to have some practice of KKN (Korupsi, Kolusi, dan Nepotisme or Corruption, Collusion, and Nepotism). Eradicating a corruption routine of more than 25 billion Rupiah.
- g) Launching the new students' acceptance online system for junior high school, senior high school, and speciality high school. Erasing the corruption potential of more than 30 billion Rupiah per year.
- h) Establishing TABG (Tim Ahli Bangunan dan Gedung or Construction and Building Expert Team), a group of professional analysing diagram before granting an IMB (ijin Membangun Bangunan or Construction Building Permit). Clearing the KKN out of the permit system.
- i) Re-launch of anti corruption/gratification program in early 2014 to prevent a systematic corruption opportunity at Bandung city Government. Receives 3 award from KPK (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi or Corruption Eradication Commission) in December.
- j) Fixing the rapport of public service by Offices at Bandung city Government. In November 2013 has average red rapport but after reformation, in August 2014 receives an average green rapport and also award from Central Ombudsman for the achievement.
- k) Re-launching of e-musrenbang, e-planning, e-budgeting, e-contract, e-controlling in November 2013 as an effort of reforming internal management of city government in a systematic and transparent way.
- l) Launching of LAPOR, an online system of complaint report via SMS to 1708 or twitter/Facebook.
- m) The first city to require all Offices owning twitter account, in order to communicate towards public virtually without any borders.

- n) Launching a fast reaction unit to fix the middle scale road hole by reporting to DBMP and in 24 hours would be fixed. 6 units for 6 area of Bandung.
- o) Launching of 24 hours Public Health Centre for the poor who could not afford to go to hospital. With free ambulance along with it, as part of better service for the poor reformation.
- p) Launching of resident Public Health Centre for chronic disease as part of better service for the poor.
- q) Increasing the number of product or service through e-catalogue, for quicker access on purchase of product or service.
- r) Changing the queue system at General Hospital of Ujung Berung from conventional to SMS based, so patients do not need to have their physical presence at the hospital when queueing.
- s) Launching of SMARTCITY a change paradigm of public service to become technology based with faster and accurate result.

Environmental problem also received a serious attention from RIDO administration, not only it changes the face of Asia-Afrika street area to be a family tourism destination but also providing 30% of green open area for public, park revitalization, and other environmental friendly action. To tackle this problem RIDO administration transparently delivering the information on planning, developing, and the activity through social media asking for public participation. Some of the programs are:

- a) Gerakan Sejuta Biopori (A Million Biopore Movement)
- b) Gerakan Pungut Sampah (Picking up Rubbish Movement)
- c) Gerakan Peduli Lingkungan (Environmental Friendly Movement)
- d) Urban Farming
- e) One Day No Rice
- f) Cikapundung River Revitalization
- g) Mural
- h) Thematic Park: Vanda, Pustaka Bunga Cilaki, Photography, Jomblo, Film, Music, Elderly, Grand Mosque of Bandung, and Ujung Berung Plaza.

Daily program coming from RIDO is also using social media in disseminating information, such as:

- a) Monday Free Bus Fare for Students
- b) Tuesday without Smoking
- c) Wednesday Nyunda (speaking Sunda language)
- d) Thursday English
- e) Friday Bike day
- f) Saturday Festival: Bandung Culinary Night

Bandung as one of the magnet for business personality and one of the effort by the government to establish synergy with some programs as follow:

- a) Kredit Melati
- b) Little Bandung in Paris
- c) Facebook joint training
- d) GAMPIL apps
- e) Innovation Centre

There are many more programs and innovation coming from Bandung city Government, which always going through social media, such as:

- a) Bandros Bus (Bandung Tour on Bus)
- b) Flag Ceremony Supervisor, every Monday at Elementary School, Junior High School, Senior High School, and Speciality High School in Bandung area.
- c) Literacy Culture
- d) Magrib Mengaji (Quran citing at Magrib prayer time)
- e) Bandung Creative Centre

The implementation of information transparency by Bandung city Government has a purpose of closing the proximity of communicative and aspire relationship between the government and its public. Public would be able to monitor the performance of government staffs, sending complaints, ideas, or reports discrepancy from government staffs or public. RIDO has given a new paradigm in Bandung city Government system through social media. Public opinion on the rigidity of relations between government and public has changed in positive way.

Optimization of social media in creating programs and innovations established by Bandung city Government receives plenty of praise and

awards. Mayor of Bandung, Ridwan Kamil, elected to be one of the best Mayor in the world, along with eleven other Mayors in Young Leader Symposium World Cities Summit in Singapore in 2014, for his effective use of social media to interact with public and government staffs. Commitment to have information openness by Bandung city Government through social media improves its rank of public information openness in Indonesia, from ranked last in 2013 to ranked 17 in 2014, and ranked third in 2016.

Other accountability related award is SAKIP (Sistem Akuntabilitas Kinerja Instansi Pemerintah or Performance Accountability System for Government Institution), ranked C in 2013 and 2014, Bandung city Government received an A in 2015, and is the only city government to receive it in Indonesia (Advertorial detik.com, 2016).

Most recently, Bandung received an award of Indonesia's Attractiveness Award (IAA) 2016 from Tempo Media and Frontier Consulting Group, same award that were received in the previous year. Bandung received five award categories: best in tourism, investment, infrastructure, and above average index in platinum rank as the best city. Not only that, Bandung also received the best city in the corridor of MP3I of Java Island (Indonesia Attractiveness Award, 2016). Communication pattern established by Ridwan Kamil through social media has been well received and liked by most of public in Bandung. Ridwan Kamil's followers reaching 1.677 million in twitter, 2.425.024 likes in his Facebook page, and 4.1 million followers in Instagram with more than 3200 photos (in 12 September 2016 based on Ridwan Kamil's Facebook, twitter, and Instagram).

4. Discussion

Social media could produce a big contribution for democracy. The contribution lies in the shape of universal public space, accessible by anyone, which attributed to easier access for public to deliver their aspiration (Simarmata, 2014). Public opinion will be formed through democratic public space as political resource in controlling the government. An ideal public space should give an equal chance for every citizen to be involved in public deliberation without any pressure.

Furthermore, public participation can be found in public space, in this case social media, allow every individual to participate in a discussion or debate, hopefully a constructive one, to deliver a quick and accurate input to build a better Bandung.

The statements above is in line with social media characteristic as suggested by Antony Mayfield (2007:5):

- (a) Participation: social media promotes contribution and feedback from parties involved,
- (b) Openness: most social media has an open characteristic to vote, feedback, comment, and various information, which rarely has obstacles in access and content use,
- (c) Conversation: social media generates basic conversation and seen as two-way communication tools,
- (d) Community: Social media allows public to form an effective communication on public interests,
- (e) interconnectivity: most social media developed through their interconnectivity, link and merging various media in one place.

Participation is needed in strengthening democracy, also increasing quality and effectivity of public service. Participation is a principle suggesting that every individual has the right to be involved in decision making process of government administration. The involvement in decision making process can be done directly and indirectly (Lalolo, 2003:18). Public participation is inseparable from the development itself, every part of the society would have same rights and power in demanding a fair share from development benefits.

Bandung city Government, through social media, opening up the space for public participation. Various disseminated information by the government (accessible and can be commented on by social media user). Not only the public would be able to comment on the information but also they could play the role as mediator in spreading the information to other member of the public, widening the public participation.

Other than disseminating information, Bandung city Government has frequently through social media asking the public on planning of the program, and encourage public to show their activities in running the program, whether the program from public initiative or the government itself.

Bandung city government has developed various programs and innovations through social media in running the government. The effort has created a different perspective from the previously rigid and formal relation between government and the people, into a more connected one, which in turn will increase public participation in the development of Bandung city.

This fact is in accordance to what Lalolo (2003:19) suggestion that in improving public participation some things that government can be conducted:

(a) delivering information accessible to public, (b) organizing consultation process to dig and gather inputs from stakeholders, including citizen activity in public, (c) delegating particular authority to the user of public services, such as planning process, and providing guidance for public activities and public services.

Public participation in Bandung should be utilize optimally to generate useful policy for Bandung city Government. The quantitatively high public participation should be balanced with the high substantial or quality participation. It is better to avoid a more formalistic participation, so the development will be supported by the public who really feel that they too have their share towards development. It is a disappointment to have Public who does not care and treat public infrastructure, traffic rules, carelessly throwing out waste, and so on, as public does not feel that the development is a collective effort.

There is a need to build a more structured and systematic mechanism of accommodating public participation, to avoid the great ideas lost in vain. On the other hand, public of Bandung should have roles to check, balance, monitor, and supervise on Bandung city Government, and also contribute to other factor such as become a smart and ethical public in using social media.

5. Conclusion

Bandung city Government under RIDO has done some innovations through numerous programs by means of social media as its communication channel. The use of social media by Bandung city Government is an attempt to embodied a good governance with transparency, accountability, and participation as its principals.

Bandung city Government is opening the space for its public participation. Strengthening public participation through social media is made by giving out information towards public, receiving inputs, and together with public carrying out monitoring in running programs. These changes, in turn, would increase the public participation of Bandung as an asset for a democratic government in Bandung.

Public participation of Bandung should be optimally utilized to produce beneficial policies, that reach the conclusion that a structured and systematic mechanism of public participation should be built.

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