

Implications Of Locally Managed SNS On E-Government Implementation and Community Building: A Case Study Of Surabaya

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ABSTRACT

The local government of Surabaya builds Social Network Sites (SNSs) in interacting with citizens. In addition, at the sub-local level, social communication institutions located in each urban village manage SNSs as well. This research aims to find the implications of the use of locally managed SNSs in each urban village in Surabaya. The research used a qualitative approach and case study. The data was collected by interviewing 15 informants and observing digital artifacts on local SNSs in several urban villages. This research found that the use of locally managed SNSs in urban villages has implications for strengthening e-government implementation, firstly, to provide a variety of services and public information about the potential and strengths of each urban village; secondly, to activate and increase public capacity in each urban villages in the digitalization. Another implication is on community building by maintaining stakeholder engagement and building 'we feeling' in the public of each urban village. This research provides insight into the management and use of SNSs in sub-local contexts both for the reinforcement of e-government implementation and the maintenance of social capital in a developing country that seeks to maintain democratization stability.

Keywords: e-government; community building; social network sites (SNSs); urban village; Surabaya

ABSTRAK

Pemerintah Kota Surabaya membangun Situs Jaringan Sosial (SNS) dalam berinteraksi dengan warga. Selain itu, di tingkat sub-lokal, lembaga komunikasi sosial yang terletak di setiap kelurahan juga mengelola SNS. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan implikasi penggunaan SNS yang dikelola secara lokal di setiap kelurahan di Surabaya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan studi kasus sebagai metode. Data ini dikumpulkan dengan melakukan wawancara kepada 15 informan serta mengamati artefak digital di SNS lokal di beberapa kelurahan. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa penggunaan SNS yang dikelola secara lokal di kelurahan memiliki implikasi untuk memperkuat implementasi pemerintahan elektronik, pertama, untuk memberikan berbagai layanan dan informasi publik tentang potensi dan kekuatan masing-masing kelurahan; kedua, untuk mengaktifkan dan meningkatkan kapasitas publik di setiap kelurahan di digitalisasi. Implikasi lain adalah pada pembangunan komunitas dengan mempertahankan keterlibatan pemangku kepentingan dan membangun perasaan sebagai satu komunitas di masyarakat setiap kelurahan. Penelitian ini memberikan

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wawasan tentang pengelolaan dan penggunaan SNS dalam konteks sub-lokal baik untuk memperkuat implementasi pemerintahan elektronik dan pemeliharaan modal sosial di negara berkembang yang berusaha mempertahankan stabilitas demokratisasi. Keywords: pemerintahan elektronik; pembangunan komunitas; situs jaringan sosial; kelurahan; Surabaya

INTRODUCTION

In principle, SNSs create networked publics. A networked public is a public that is restructured by networked technology. This means that simultaneously they are (1) a space built through network technology and (2) a collective nature that arises because of the meeting between humans, technology, and behavior. Networked publics have many of the same functions as other types of publics. They enable people to come together for social, cultural, and civic purposes, and they help people connect with the outside world ([Self, 2020](#)).

In the context of government, the use of SNSs is intended to build connectivity and networks between the government and citizens. SNSs have become a part of the government, especially in countries with high technology adoption characteristics. The use of SNSs in local governments as well as a manifestation of democratization in Indonesia. The use of the SNSs is executed in line with the dynamics of e-government implementation in Indonesia which provides quick, transparent, and credible relationships and services for citizens. The participatory and open character of social media and its very high utilization are strong opportunities for the Indonesian government to implement e-government ([Suciska, 2016](#)). In this context, technology must aim to transform government with new leadership and communication styles and new ways of making decisions, transacting business, listening to residents and society, and organizing and conveying information ([Review et al., 2014](#)).

The implementation of e-government in Indonesia has been executed since the issuance of Presidential Instruction No. 6 of 2001 concerning Telematics (Technology, Media, and Informa-

tion) which states that government officials must use technology to support good governance and accelerate the democratic process to support government performance. The implementation of digital government is further strengthened by the existence of the Policy and Strategy for the Implementation of e-government through Presidential Instruction No. 3 of 2003 which forms the basis for all detailed technical policies in the field of e-government.

The essence of e-government is not just the use of ICT but the participation of the public who are in control of the formulation, planning, implementation, and supervision of the development of their respective regions. A country's population influences e-government innovation and implementation to generate public participation. A large population then demands an expansion of the variety of public service provisions; therefore, public participation will be boosted. Public participation is synonymous concept with democracy, involvement, connectedness, transparency, and good governance ([Tejedo-Romero et al., 2022](#)). In this context, e-government is a transformation of government communication in modern governance which provides fast, up-to-date, and interactive access between the government as a service provider and various publics ([Review et al., 2014](#)) ([Coleman, 2008](#)).

The implementation of e-government has been initiated by the local government of Surabaya since 2002. Achievements and recognition in implementing digital government were achieved by the local government of Surabaya in succession, starting with receiving the E-Government Award on March 22, 2009. The 2009 E-government Award was an award given to the best government institutions in implementing information technology (IT) in performing government activities. Followed in 2016, Surabaya became a role model for preventing corruption by granting the city's digital government application to the local government of Surabaya to the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK).

This research aims to further elaborate on the implications of

using locally managed SNSs in each urban village as the smallest administrative area of the Surabaya government. In line with the expansion of digital media, the use of SNSs varies greatly in each urban village both in terms of the consistency of its use and the number of digital platforms used.

LITERATURE REVIEW

E-GOVERNMENT AS A MODERN GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION STYLE

E-Government is a fundamental tool for governments to transform into responsive, transparent, and facilitating access to information, freedom of expression, greater equity, efficiency, productivity, and social inclusion ([Bwalya & Mutula, 2014](#)). Technically understood, digital governance is a way for governments to use innovative information and communication technologies, to improve the quality of services and to provide greater opportunities for institutional participation in democratic processes. E-government was identified as a system that transforms relationships with residents, the private sector, and other government agencies. This system is useful for encouraging community empowerment, improving services, strengthening accountability, increasing transparency, or increasing government efficiency ([Ndou, 2004](#)).

The government can build e-government services that are proactive, not reactive services regarding implementing one-stop integrated services. Proactive e-government is a shift away from the traditional e-government approach-where residents must first know decide, and seek government services. The approach shifts to a push model whereby governments proactively provide timely information and services based on needs, circumstances, personal preferences, preferences, life events, and their location ([Linders et al., 2018](#)) ([Scholta et al., 2019](#)).

As a study conducted in Taiwan, identified three technological supporting factors for proactive e-government services: first, a mature e-government foundation with components such as data-

based consolidation, data standardization, information sharing, and safe user authentication; secondly, mobile technology to reach residents anywhere and anytime; third, the ability to analyse data in social networks to find the needs of residents and adapt government services to their needs. The study found that proactive government services should be residents-centered and data-driven and use IT to support government officials ([Linders et al., 2018](#)). In this context, the implementation of e-government emphasizes the importance of changing the government's paradigm from a regulator to a supplier or service provider. This approach requires a solid understanding of the needs as well as interactions of stakeholders in a proactive e-government service ([Schuppan & Köhl, 2017](#)).

The implementation of e-government is closely related to the motives of local governments in adopting technology ([De Castro & De Castro, 2022](#)). Local governments use more technology for efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency in providing public services ([Hapsara et al., 2017](#)). That technology is constructed to fulfil human needs. The form of e-government which became the initial breakthrough for the local government of Surabaya was to create a Surabaya Single Window (SSW) which is a permit management service needed by residents and integrated online. Throughout 2021-2022, there were 12 applications published including *e-peken*, *WargaKu*, *Sayang Warga*, *Kalimasada*, *Lontong Kupang*, and *Lontong Balap*. All applications are the local government of Surabaya services for some sectors such as business permission, health care, and residents' complaints to mass marriage.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Community building is considered to relate to the notion of social capital, which concentrates on democracy and society. Today's society has experienced a decline in the sense of community. Community building stressed the importance of collaboration, which is people with strong social traditions participating

to form a successful government and economy. This kind of success is due to social networks that generate trust ([Putnam, 2000](#)). As stated, the success of the community is very dependent on horizontal ties in collaboration that occur in long-term relationships. These relationships can generate cohesion that brings social benefits such as lower crime rates, improved health, happiness, and even economic prosperity. Collaboration required a bottom-up approach, what mattered was not just how governments or organizations were managed, but how people generally behaved. In this context, social capital is defined as those traits of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks that can increase the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action.

Social trust, norms of reciprocity, and networks of civic engagement reinforce each other. Effective collaborative institutions require interpersonal skills and trust, as skills and trust are also instilled and strengthened by organized collaboration. Commitment, trust, and collaboration are the main resources for community building. Communities that have various social networks and associations are in their best stand to deal with social problems ([Putnam, 2000](#)). The relationship between factors central to community building, confirms that managing government would be ineffective in community building when a sense of togetherness has vanished ([Kim & Cho, 2019](#)).

SOCIAL NETWORK SITES (SNSS) IN SURABAYA

Social networking sites (SNS) are identified as online platforms, which allow users to build social networks. SNSs have a function in fulfilling the need for interconnectedness between individuals, entertainment value, and social enhancement value as the implications of the social identity that is built in SNSs. The use of SNSs provides social benefits and, on the other hand, also provides social overload. Social benefits increase life satisfaction while social burdens result in decreased life satisfaction ([Raza et al., 2020](#)).

The local government of Surabaya through the Communications and Informatics Service manages SNSs with several digital channels such as the website, namely *Surabaya.go.id*, and social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube in the *Sapa Warga* account. The number of followers of each of these social media is 1,059,000, 39,000, 799,000, and 725,000 (Source: *Sapa Warga* account, 2023). The digital information service informs about the agenda and socialization of programs and policies of the local government of Surabaya so that they are top-down in nature.



Fig. 1. Facebook, Twitter, and Application of WargaKu Surabaya

Apart from the Communications and Informatics Service, Public Relations of the local government of Surabaya also provides SNSs services through the *Bangga Surabaya* account. Followers of the *Bangga Surabaya* account are 152,341 on Facebook, 1,379,000 on Twitter, 407,000 on Instagram, and 316,000 on YouTube. The information distributed on Public Relations' social media reviews more about the history, destinations, and activities that will take place in the city of Surabaya.

In addition to SNSs managed by the local government of Surabaya, 154 urban villages are also encouraged to provide digital services for residents in the form of websites, applications, and social media that contain information about local products, potentials, and improvements possessed by each urban village. The information crafting of the SNSs involves and has been supplied by several stakeholders such as urban village officials, social institutions, medium and micro business actors as well as residents.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used case study as the method, a qualitative approach and data collection was conducted in detail and depth by involving various sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audio-visuals, documents, and reports) and then reporting the case. Informants in this study amounted to 15 people consisting of activists of social communication institutions as managers of SNSs in local areas, residents, and heads of city government level services. Data collection was also obtained from digital artifacts on SNSs managed in each urban village.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on interviews and observations with informants, this study showed SNSs managed by activists of social communication institutions in each urban village are directed by the commitment to involve and boost the development of each urban village as a manifestation of public participation in local development. This study found that the use of locally managed SNSs in each urban village mostly use websites, then YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter as described below:

Table1. Use of SNS's in urban village in Surabaya

Platform	Amount
Website	38
Facebook	11
Instagram	22
Twitter	7
YouTube	23

Source: Data processed by researcher, 2023

The table showed there are few of the 154 urban villages in Surabaya manage and use of SNSs consistently since activists are volunteers and very dependent on available resources. Some content is uploaded periodically to gain external public attention and to increase the ranking of an urban village in search engine optimization (SEO) as it is considered a brand in the local governance context. This study found the implications of managing

and using SNSs in each urban village described in the following sections.

TO PROVIDE VARIOUS INFORMATION ABOUT THE CAPABILITIES OF URBAN VILLAGES

The managed SNSs in each urban village have implications for strengthening e-government implementation through a variety of information and links connected to services provided by the government of Surabaya. The information is available on local SNSs emphasizes and enhances regional publications and branding. Publications regarding the territory's identity and "strengths" are meant to build a favorable image in response to competition or competition with other territories. Decentralization in Indonesia has implications for the development of an identity that was originally oriented towards nationalism and has turned into localism, which gives respect to local wealth and diversity as resources as well as local actors to be the driving force for territory identity development.

The various characteristics of urban villages in Surabaya require certain communication management in constructing branding in SNSs. Branding management for corporations is different from branding for cities, countries, and destinations. The importance of information in shaping branding in cities and destinations. Branding at a destination or city prioritizes how much information can be absorbed and received as well as the visitor's experiences about the place. Branding in this context can be formed by constructing information to guide the desired image. Information services at local SNSs then make a major contribution to marketing the recent development of the urban village ([Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009](#)).

"Jambangan Tourism Village. It is based on environmental, meaning living environment, recycling, like that. Most recently, we are still branding in tradition." (Informant 1, social communication institution activist, Jambangan urban village)

Online services and information as products in e-government require variety, especially in a heterogeneous country both geographically and demographically like Indonesia. SNSs that are managed locally focus on the needs, interests, and resources available in the local area. The territory in Surabaya which is divided into Central, West, East, North, and South have their respective strengths and potentials according to territorial characteristics. The SNSs connect society and allow for the exchange of information regarding specific territories, such as information about a destination, culinary, and products of micro-medium enterprises that are the specialty of that urban village. A pluralistic society in urban areas such as Surabaya requires various of SNSs content. In this case, cultural differences can greatly affect perceptions of the benefits of technology (Haupt et al., 2022). Whether technology is useful for uniting diversity or separating one from another.



Fig. 2. One of the SNSs platforms used by the Medokan Ayu urban village in Surabaya

The SNSs at each urban village thus enrich and strengthen e-government implementation in Surabaya. The locally managed SNSs synergize with the local government of Surabaya's SNSs,

which also allows the exchange of information to create a mutual understanding. This collaboration encourages the stability of e-government implementation because the gap in information and public services has been managed from upstream to downstream.

This study indicates that the use of SNS is not only beneficial in terms of providing connectivity and up-to-date information, but also in terms of influencing knowledge and providing leisure time for the public. In the context of democratization and decentralization, this study demonstrates that SNS handled by social communications agencies also means that public participation and empowerment are critical requirements for the long-term viability and maturity of e-government implementation. Digital governance not only delivers ICT-based governmental services, but it also facilitates more sophisticated public debate and participation in the development of their territory through locally managed SNS.

TO ACTIVATE AND INCREASE PUBLIC CAPACITY IN THE DIGITALIZATION

This research also showed that the locally managed SNSs also had implications for activating and increasing public capacity in the digitalization era. E-government as a manifestation of the modernization of service governance and public administration, has implications for the demand for involvement and participation of society ([Third et al., 2019](#)). Online services encourage residents' participation from passive to active by accomplishing administrative services through self-reliance ([Saputra et al., 2023](#)). In addition, the locally managed SNSs provide information on up-to-date local and government services to encourage public engagement in using public service applications. The active participation of residents in their own area indirectly has supported innovation in public service applications to be more efficient, highly adopted, and user-friendly.



Fig. 3. Application and website services at the urban village in Surabaya

Figure 3 is one best practice of the online services provided in one of the urban villages in Surabaya for residents to apply for a letter of introduction by online. The SW (Residents Letter) application apart from making it easier for residents to obtain administrative services, is also a form of recording the number of residents in the territory.

SNSs are a form of bottom-up communication. In this context, the formation of residents' participation in the urban village as a bottom-up-based communication is important for the process of equalizing the level of public knowledge. An informed public who has an adequate level of knowledge shall contribute to the formation of the same meaning. Thus, the public will be involved and participate without coercion.

“Because on YouTube, you also share... so it is wider, right? When there was a Covid pandemic, it was in full swing. Social communication institutions always share how we can overcome it then the residents respond. Also notify about community service links. So those who did not understand before, understand then”. (Informant 10, a resident of Mojo Sub-district)

Interactivity at the SNSs is an effort to identify the public understanding of certain issues to obtain an overview and projections regarding the next program as a reflection of the public's wishes and needs. Public input can provide information that helps urban village apparatus improve the efficiency of public services as well as managerial efficiency through the information that

leads to improvements in the process of providing public services. Various public programs require some levels of cooperation from residents, in setting goals, increasing program acceptance, and even providing co-production activities with residents in administrative services ([Review et al., 2014](#))([Daneshvar et al., 2018](#)). This is important for formulating shared values, and shaping the experiences and priorities of residents who are contextually different in each territory in implementing public policies.

The SNSs provide benefits for building residents' knowledge and understanding as it has been a process of educating residents to encourage residents' participation. Informed and educated residents shall understand the significance of their involvement and participation in the sustainability of government ([Mina et al., 2023](#)). Conducting education on residents' participation will reduce the occurrence of asymmetric information and contribute to residents' support for government programs and encourage two-way communication between residents and urban village apparatus to improve relations between the two. SNSs that are managed synchronously shall increase residents' trust in local government performance ([Achmad et al., 2022](#)).

The research also suggests that the massive use of SNS at the local level will support digital literacy, those related to the digitization of public services. Public participation and support in e-government is often associated with citizens' digital capabilities and SNS managed by government agencies that are less representative of the needs of citizens in each region from a different demographic and psychographic point of view. In this context, the management of SNS in each region has a contribution in figuring and expressing the needs of citizens specifically in their respective regions.

TO MAINTAIN STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AT THE URBAN VILLAGE

As explained above that the SNSs have an implication in community building. This research showed it arose through stake-

holder engagement in the management of the SNSs in the urban village. The management of SNSs requires a synergistic relationship and exchange of information between stakeholders at the urban village to conceive a dialogical, coordinative, and collaborative information cycle order and provide verified information and qualified services for residents as well.

Stakeholders in each urban village conduct coordination periodically through face-to-face meetings, as well as through online communications. These channels make it easier for social groups to collaborate and coordinate in information exchange and the process of making shared meaning regarding a public policy or event. Citizen participation is an important urban issue and people must be actively engaged as it is one means of decreasing tension, conflict, and poverty over public policy decisions especially in local authorities ([Tanyanyiwa & Mufunda, 2021](#)). Particularly, an educated society shall contribute to creating transformations and overcoming crises in communities ([Powers et al., 2019](#)).

The stakeholders involved in the online and face-to-face conversation include district officials, the urban village chief, and even RW (citizens Association) and RT (neighborhood association) as well as community organizations such as Karang Taruna, PKK (Family Welfare Empowerment), LPMK (Village Community Empowerment Institute) and PSM (Extension Community Social). The group was formed to build an informative social environment as a forum that facilitates dialogue, coordination, and collaboration regarding information that is currently varying in the scope of the region.

“Yes, so we know members of all urban villages and sub-district groups of Surabaya. All contact numbers per sub-district and urban village are already available. Our data is complete...., there is already collaboration, they will have their own agreements depending on the needs.” (Informant 1, social communication organization activist for Jambangan urban village)

The stakeholders create some groups on their cellular phones to share recent information and make shared meaning about certain circumstances. This case shows an engagement is a goal to lead the interaction process between members of groups and intergroup. Intergroup interaction requires communication and the creation of shared meaning. Regarding formulating and constructing shared meaning, a dialogic communication climate is required among stakeholders. Dialogue occurs because of the intentional relationship between stakeholders. In this case, dialogue and community are synergistic, or have a con-substantial relationship ([Johnston & Taylor, 2018](#)). The SNSs encourage collaboration and engagement of apparatus and social actors in the urban village. SNSs allow social groups to perform continuous relations and communication to facilitate coordination, exchange information, strengthen the circle of connectedness between social groups, and provide a context for involvement in collaborative policy-making regarding problems and issues at the territory ([Tiwari et al., 2019](#)).

This study demonstrates that stakeholder engagement in the public sector is motivated by the same desire to contribute to the region. In contrast to a profit-driven corporate sector. The need to contribute to this region is to urge stakeholders in each area to interact, coordinate regularly, and collaborate. Dialogue, cooperation, and collaboration are effective communication tools for identifying and harmonizing regional perceptions of issues. This coordination is an attempt to describe the situation and propose solutions prior to disseminating information via their SNSs. Local SNSs management allows stakeholders in the region to interact and establish identities that are congruent with the region's history, socioeconomic discourse, and local wisdom. Regional identity development in SNSs is thus largely dependent on the peculiarities of such communication in constructing social environment, production and reproduction of social norms and values, and common ethics.

TO BUILD WE FEELING

This study also found that the SNSs have implications for building we feeling or sense of community. SNSs create connect- edness and bonding for the public in each urban village. The SNSs build a positive image for territorial development thus rises a proudness and a sense of belonging among the residents. The available information on SNSs consisting of services, sub-local culture, territorial history, and urban village development is es- sential for the residents to strengthen their collective identity. Positive perceptions of collective identity foster pride, a sense of belonging, and a sense of community in each urban village. In addition, a sense of community needs to be developed as part of urban planning not only for norms building, a sense of mutual trust and communal feelings but also to bring about a circular economy, a collective and innovative small-scale platform economy (Suh et al., 2022).

The SNSs provide opportunities for engagement, and main- taining social features such as norms, values, trust, and public participation. These social features are built through communi- cation features with stakeholders such as dialogue, coordination, and collaboration. This public characteristic-oriented communi- cation approach is significant for building collective values and community development. A solid community contributes to the maintenance and continuity of shared norms which are useful in maintaining the existing social order.

“So, in that conversation, the children from Medokan Ayu were proud of themselves. This is one of the things they are proud of. The first is, what we are looking for on the website, there is already Medokan Ayu. Second, there is an awesome spot there so they are also proud of this”. (Informant 7, activist of social communication institu- tion of the Medokan Ayu urban village)

As a two-way communication, SNSs provide accessibility, quick response, and transparency as capital to gain public support and trust. The SNSs at each urban village provide spheres for ideas

and public discussion about government services and policies. Community support and trust are the essence of community building. Community building thus provides opportunities for residents' empowerment to create collaboration between social groups in the territory.

Community building can utilize modern means of communication such as the SNSs to construct and enhance the sense of community ([Kim et al., 2019](#)). The sense of community formed in each urban village becomes the social capital for the territory's sustainability and development ([Rustinsyah, 2019](#)). Further, community building shall have implications for strengthening the territory to compose a collective contribution to the sustainability of regional and national government programs. Community building ultimately becomes useful social capital for democratization in Indonesia.

This study discovered that the use of SNSs influence community building in a different way. In many studies, social networking sites (SNSs) are used to connect and bring together people with similar geographical backgrounds or interests to form a community. However, community building discovered in this study that locally managed SNS in the region becomes a social identity that fosters a sense of belonging to a single community. The local SNS is a collaborative tool that promotes internal public cohesion. The internal public collaborates and coordinates to provide information about "us" on their SNS. This type of digital service fosters a sense of community among the region's residents. In this context, locally managed SNSs build bonds between generations, also with its territories, thus fostering collective feelings, citizen involvement and community bonds as the essence of a democratic and dynamic governance.

CONCLUSION

This research provides insight and best practices as well in the management and use of SNSs in the urban village that has positive implications for the implementation of e-government in de-

veloping countries such as Indonesia, which has a devotion to stability in democratization. E-government that is managed massively at the sub-local territories will encourage public engagement and reduce the digital divide, especially in areas that have demographic disparities. This research also found that the management of SNSs in the urban village had implications for the establishment and maintenance of communication features such as dialog, coordination, and collaboration between urban village officials, activists of social institutions, residents, and business people at the local level. These communication features are useful for perpetuating social features such as trust, shared norms, and participation which are crucial for community building.

This study found that the management and use of local SNSs involve three stakeholders: firstly, local government officials at the macro level; social institutions at the mid-level, and individuals as the public at the micro level who have a role in optimizing the use of SNSs in the urban village. Even though the government is a regulator, the implementation of e-government requires collaboration with stakeholders in the urban village to encourage innovation and engagement in public governance. SNSs provide potential and opportunities for significant collaboration and engagement for the formation of shared meaning, and collective goals and support social features as energy in preserving democratization, especially in a country with diversity and various demographic circumstances such as Indonesia.

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