

Public Participation, Transparency – The Utilisation of Social Media: Bandung City

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyse how Facebook can create transparency in a governmental institution and become one of the means for public engagement in Bandung City, West Java, Indonesia. This study found that the Mayor of Bandung has made a great improvement in his government through social media. This research uses both quantitative and qualitative content analysis methods. The data consist of 264 facebook posts from January 2016 to June 2016. They are categorised accordingly as: information sharing, government activity, decision impacts, accountability, and personal posts. The result showed that the Mayor's facebook page could become an alternative venue for two-way interactions between the public and governmental spheres. This will therefore lead to effective communication. In terms of transparency, Facebook can provide information that is accessible to Bandung people. This research also found that the selection of issues and language style of the posts have significant impacts on the level of public engagement and transparency. In addition, it highlighted the potential use of social media to promote individuals and corporation branding, including government. However, this research only analysed one kind of social media. Hence, it may not be easily applied to other social media platforms.

Keywords: transparency, public engagement, social media, effective communication

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana Facebook dapat menciptakan transparansi di lembaga pemerintah dan menjadi salah satu sarana untuk keterlibatan publik di kota Bandung, Jawa Barat, Indonesia. Studi ini menemukan bahwa Walikota Bandung telah membuat kemajuan besar dalam pemerintahannya melalui media sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode analisis isi kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Data ini terdiri dari 264 posting Facebook dari Januari 2016 hingga Juni 2016. Mereka dikategorikan sesuai sebagai: berbagi informasi, kegiatan pemerintah, dampak keputusan, akuntabilitas, dan posting pribadi. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa halaman Facebook Walikota dapat menjadi tempat alternatif untuk interaksi dua arah antara ruang publik dan pemerintah. Ini karena itu akan mengarah ke komunikasi yang efektif. Dalam hal transparansi, Facebook dapat memberikan informasi yang dapat diakses oleh orang-orang

Bandung. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa pemilihan masalah dan gaya bahasa dari posting memiliki dampak yang signifikan terhadap tingkat keterlibatan publik dan transparansi. Selain itu, ia menyoroti potensi penggunaan media sosial untuk mempromosikan merek individu dan korporasi, termasuk pemerintah. Namun, penelitian ini hanya menganalisis satu jenis media sosial. Oleh karena itu, itu mungkin tidak mudah diterapkan ke platform media sosial lainnya.

Kata kunci: transparansi, keterlibatan publik, media sosial, komunikasi yang efektif

1. INTRODUCTION

The utilisation of social media in governmental activities has risen. Obama, for instance, had used social media for his campaign and won the USA election. This trend goes global and expand to other governmental aspects. It is not only for campaign but also for improving government performance. Just like the case in Bandung, West Java Province, Indonesia where social media was applied too. It is believed that the Mayor of Bandung, Ridwan Kamil, has reformed his government steering towards a City with an exceptional performance in Indonesia. Bandung faces similar problems to other local governments which are incapacity of local administrations, increasing inequalities between rich and poor regions, and worsening corruption and money politics ([Aspinall and Fealy, 2003](#)). Even, the Indonesian corruption perception index in 2014 was 34, in 2013 was 32, and in 2012 was 32 (0 = highly corrupt, 100 = very clean) (Transparency International, 2014). In 2014, around 60% local government leaders were under investigation for corruption (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2014). Indonesia has serious problems in both local and national government.

Under the leadership of Mayor Ridwan Kamil (since June 2013), Bandung was awarded “the most accountable city” in Indonesia in 2016, by the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform. It jumped from number 400, before Ridwan Kamil, to number one in the country ([Richards, 2016](#)). During the Asian Development Bank’s Annual Meeting panel session, Ridwan Kamil reveals how he transformed the city’s bureaucracy and saved US\$ 20 million. He digitalised governmental processes, encouraged all departments to have social media

accounts and developed what is called e-democracy or asking people to oversee the government ([Richards, 2016](#)). The utilization of social media in Bandung, not only implemented by the mayor but all the departments has established a transparent atmosphere, built a connection with citizens, and raised trust in government ([Dixon, 2014](#)).

This phenomenon encouraged the researchers to find out in what ways the Mayor incorporated social media account which is Facebook to facilitate transparency and public participation, and how it could also assist in promoting transparency and public participation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Social Media in Government

The digital revolution, supported by a rapid advancement of technology, is growing rapidly since the last decade ([Global Pulse, 2013](#)). Global internet users have increased 900.4% from 2000-2016 ([Internet World Stats, 2016](#)). This development has brought opportunities for commerce, sociability, and study, and also brought negative impacts, such as criminality, surveillance and offensive content ([Coleman and Blumler, 2009](#)). Using the internet, individuals or social groups could interact and keep in touch with friends, relatives, preferred organisations and the workplace through social media.

The advantage of social media use has implications to government practice as well. It is undeniable that the development of ‘new information and communication technologies, information retrieval, dispersion and archiving’ that is facilitated by internet ‘at levels unprecedented in the history of human civilisation’ has been changing the contemporary information landscape ([Bailard, 2014, p. 4](#)). Citizens can receive and contribute information quickly and effortlessly. It is what Bailard called “the decentralisation of information” ([Bailard, 2014](#)). In this regard, Diamond

noted that ‘with recent technological revolutions, the ability to generate information and opinion has been radically decentralized’ ([Diamond, 2008, p. 99](#)). As a result, citizens can evaluate their own governments and express their satisfaction.

Bailard states that the internet influences individuals’ evaluation and satisfaction in two ways which are called “mirror-holding” and “window-opening” ([Bailard, 2014](#)).

Through mirror-holding, the internet provides a larger and more diverse array of political information ... enabling users to better discern and reflect on how democracy – and governance more generally – actually functions in their own country ... according to window-opening, the global nature of internet also open a larger window for individuals to better view how governments function in other countries, particularly the advanced democracies that are most visible on the internet ([Bailard, 2014, p. 5](#)).

For the government, internet can change the cost-benefit calculus of political behaviour by reducing the costs of organisations’ communication costs, but on the other hand it can change this calculus as well by providing information that increases citizens’ dissatisfaction towards government performance ([Bimber, 2003](#)). Another concern of the negative impact of the internet is that States cannot control information flow as they did in the traditional media broadcast era ([Bailard, 2014](#)). States must be aware of these consequences of internet use especially when making decisions and taking actions such as during the “Arab Spring” phenomenon. There is a growth of online civil society actors because the internet’s infrastructure is independent. [Howard and Hussein \(2013\)](#) propose the importance of the internet for contemporary Arab civil society actors can be attributed to two reasons. Firstly, other political communi-

cation platforms were inaccessible and secondly, the internet made it possible for ‘content to be hosted on servers beyond the control of states censors and afforded anonymity to those who advanced political criticism’ ([Howard & Hussein, 2013, p. 5](#)).

Regardless of that reality, social media can be used to manage routines (traffic, weather crises) or critical situations (flooding, earthquake, air crash, tsunami) (see [Kavanaugh et al, 2012](#); [Graham, Avery & Park, 2015](#); [Husain et al, 2014](#); [Cathfield, Scholl, & Brajawidagda, 2013](#)). Furthermore, in a governance context, there are a lot of researches concerning the relationship between the use of social media and public engagement and transparency (see [Katz & Halpern, 2013](#); [Hong, 2013](#); [LaMarre, & Suzuki-Lambrecht, 2013](#); [Park, 2013](#); [Zhang & Chan, 2013](#)).

2.2. Social Media for Transparency and Public Participation

Several researches about the utilisation of social media for transparency and public participation have been undertaken. Social media can be a powerful tool to enhance public participation as it can establish the relationship base on dialogue and interactions ([Lovejoy, Waters, & Saxton, 2012](#)). Therefore, social media is an excellent tool to gather citizens’ ideas. Social media in this case can be government websites or other platforms such as twitter, facebook, and youtube.

A meta-analysis research on the effects of different new media technologies on participation, shows most of the studies stated that it had positive impacts ([Boulianne, 2015](#)). Agostino in his research claims the social media has contributed to public engagement in Italian municipalities ([Agostino, 2013](#)). However, it depends on the objective of the engagement, either communication or participation ([Agostino, 2013](#)).

Furthermore, in terms of public engagement, Agostino

and [Arnaboldi \(2015\)](#) assessed it based on the number of comments, posts and followers, specifically in Facebook pages. They divide the level of public engagement into two measurement dimensions which are “popularity” and “commitment” ([Agostino & Arnaboldi, 2015](#)). For Facebook, popularity is determined by ‘the ratio between ‘total likes’ per post and number of fans on a Facebook page’ ([Agostino & Arnaboldi, 2015, p. 9](#)). ‘Commitment measures whether social media are capable of both supporting dialogue and interaction between the local government and the public, and encouraging feedback from the public, which can be used to inform the public decision-making process’ ([Agostino & Arnaboldi, 2015, p. 10-11](#)).

Besides participation, social media also has impact on transparency. Bertot *et al.* state social media technologies can increase a government’s transparency and facilitate the interaction with its citizens ([Bertot, et al., 2010](#)). Moreover, Bertot *et al.* argues social media can create democratic participation and engagement, crowdsourced solutions, transparency and accountability ([Bertot et al., 2010](#)).

[Bonson et al. \(2012\)](#) also assert that the potential contribution of the internet is that it can enhance the interactivity, transparency and openness of public sector and promote accountability. Social media enables public agencies to disseminate information easily by creating accounts or channels ([Gunawong, 2015](#)). Information that is related to transparency is the one that ‘allows the other actors to monitor the workings or performance of the first actor’ ([Meijer, 2013, p. 430](#)). In addition, Gunawong’s study of Facebook’ utilisation in the Thailand government shows that Facebook contributes to promote transparency, in terms of providing information for the citizen ([Gunawong, 2015](#)). Another research conducted by Song and Lee conclude that ‘citizens’ use of social media services is positively and significantly associated with their perceived effects of

social media in terms of government transparency, which, in turn, is positively and significantly associated with their trust in government' ([Song & Lee, 2016, p.445](#)).

3. METHODOLOGY

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This research employs a mixed qualitative and quantitative content analysis to answer research questions. The research focus is social media, and the data are 264 posts from January 2016 to June 2016. This selection considers the Mayor's activity on his personal Facebook page on which he posted between 1 and 3 posts per day. The selection of data in this research uses a purposive sampling. Even though using purposive sampling has disadvantages which make it difficult for reader to judge the trustworthiness, it already considers the features of text in content analysis approach which are:

- a) Text has no objective - no reader-independent – qualities. There is nothing inherent in text; the meaning of text is always defined by someone.
- b) Text does not have single meanings. One text can be read in numerous perspectives.
- c) The meanings invoked by texts need not be shared. Content analysis is in trouble only when expert interpretations fail to acknowledge the multiplicity of uses of texts by designated populations of readers or actors.
- d) Meanings (contents) speaks to something other than the given texts.
- e) Texts have meanings relative to particular contexts, discourse, or purposes.
- f) The nature of text demands that content analyst draws specific inferences from a body of texts to their chosen context ([Krippendorff, 2013, p. 28-31](#)).

In terms of a quantitative approach, the researcher will apply an approach proposed by DiStaso and Bortree for analyzing level of transparency and by Agostino and Arnaboldi (2015)

for measuring public participation. The first step in quantitative content analysis is categorising all posts from a selected time into several categories. This categorisation is adopted from the approach of [DiStaso & Bortree \(2012\)](#), which are:

- a) Information sharing: which provides information that is useful for others to make informed decision;
- b) Government activity: which communicates what the organisation does and why;
- c) Decision impacts: communicates how decisions affect others
- d) Accountability: are accountable for actions.

As the data collected from the personal Facebook page of Bandung’s Mayor, the researcher constructed an additional category which is personal posts which refers to the posts of daily talk or thoughts of the mayor. Hence, the researcher decides to classify all data of from the Mayor’s Facebook into five categories: *information sharing, government activity, decision impacts, accountability, and personal posts*. The researcher calculates the percentage of posts of those categories. Moreover, the researcher employs measurement proposed by [Agostino and Arnaboldi \(2015\)](#).

TABLE 1. METRICS OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Level of public engagement	Measurement dimension	Calculation
Public communication	Popularity	$[(\text{total no. of "likes"}/\text{total no. of posts})/\text{no. of fans}] \times 1,000$
Public participation	Commitment	$[(\text{total comments}/\text{total no. of posts})/\text{no. of fans}] \times 1,000$

Comparing total “likes” with number of followers can be used to make several deductions. Whereas, the commitment measurement is used to analyse whether social media is capable to support two ways interactions and dialog. Both of measurement is multiplied by 1000 to avoid near-zero values.

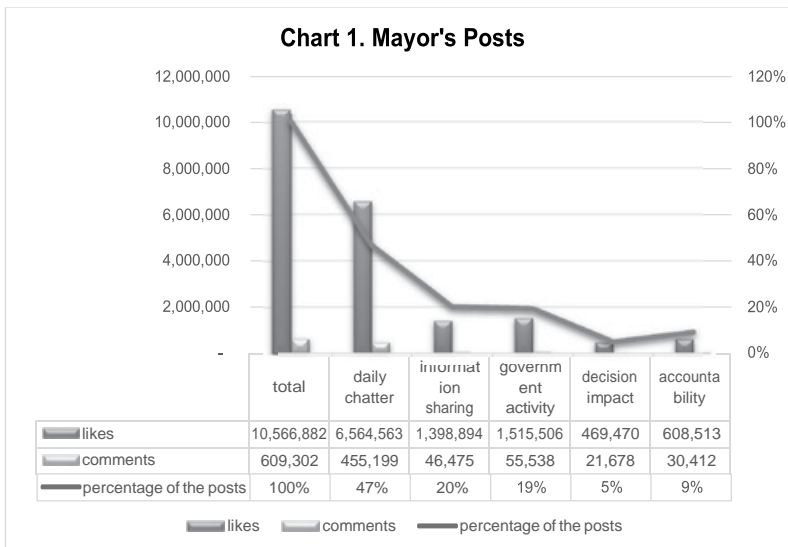
To deepen the understanding of how Facebook posts assist the promotion of transparency and public participation, researcher adopts a qualitative content analysis approach. Qualitative content analysis is employed to analyse text data and ‘de-

defined as a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of the text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns' (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). Furthermore, qualitative descriptive approaches is suitable for the low level of interpretation research ([Vaismoradi, Turunen, Bondas, 2013](#)). Many researchers believe that the descriptive approach also entails interpretation, even though the interpretative elements is covered in discussion of its wider narrative and exploration ([Sandelowski, 2010](#)).

4. FINDING

The analysis of the data, 264 Facebook posts of the Mayor, starts with categorising the posts into five categories. In each category, researchers analyse its content. The finding can be seen from chart below:

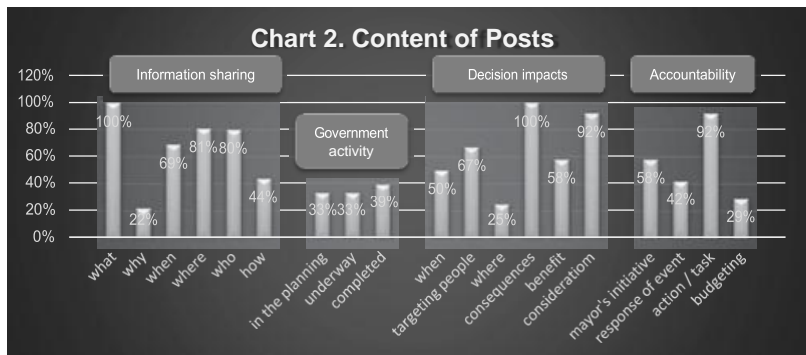
Figure 1: Mayor's Posts



Initially, apart from *the personal posts* category, which almost half of total posts (47%), *information sharing* is the most significant sector during the 6 months. It is one fifth of the total posts.

Government activity is in next place with 1% difference which is 19%. It is followed by *accountability* category in third place with 9% then the last is *decision impacts* with only 5% of total. Even though *personal posts* has the highest percentage, it does not mean that the mayor more often uses the Facebook for his personal purpose. Indeed, when the total *personal posts* is compared to each category, it has big differences in number. However, it has to be understood as well that the dimension of transparency still has more posts in total with 53%.

Figure 2. Contents of Posts



The first category analysed is *information sharing*. In this category, researcher analyses the content of the information. The analysis shows that 100% of the posts have clear content of what does the Mayor intend to inform. Initially, it is what the followers expect by following the Facebook page, having clear information from the government. The mayor also mentions exact dates with respect to that information that will be useful for the follower (69%). The content of information explaining the place and for who that information addressed also have high percentage (81% and 80% respectively). However, the message of the posts that including how and why it posted have low percentage (44% and 22% respectively). However, this fact does not explain that the Mayor has failed providing the good information. The Mayor has provided good information. Generally, followers can grasp information that is accessible, it mentions what it is, the

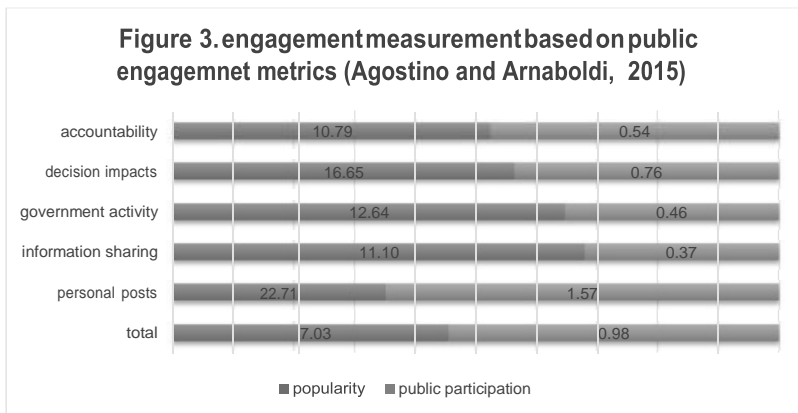
exact time and place. Furthermore, the information has been addressed to specific people, therefore, netizens can comprehend whether the information is useful for them or not.

In *government activity*, the researcher finds that the mayor mentions three kinds of activities which are still *in the planning stages, underway, completed*. Interestingly, the mayor, during the period, posted almost similar amounts of those categories. *In the planning* and *underway* activities share similar percentage with 33% of total post. While *completed* activities have higher number of posts which is 20 of 54 (39%). The mayor presents the posts in this category by explaining the details of the activities (82%). For instance, he explains *underway* programs' progress. Even though it is not all of those activities, but 82% of the *underway* activities posts include its progress. Indeed, this number shows that not all the activities are given details. However, the posts are also accompanied by with photos and videos as an evidence of the activities. There are 65% of the posts contain photos and videos. Those attachments to attract the followers' attention and engagement.

In general, the mayor's posts categorised in *decision impacts* include the time the decision is made and then implemented, who will be affected by the decision, the place of the implementation, consequences and benefits of the decision, and consideration as to why the decision was made. All the posts in this category mention the consequences of the decision itself. Only half tell exact time and only quarter explain the place of the implementation of the decision. However, 92% of those decisions include the reason and consideration behind the decision making process. Furthermore, the mayor explains the benefits of the decision (58%) and informs the people who are affected because of the decision (67%). It provides people with clarity about decision and the ability to take actions and prepare according to the information provided.

In the last dimension of transparency, *accountability*, the researcher analyses where government initiatives originate, and

who is accountable, it relates to the action, task and functions of the government or about the budgeting issue. The finding shows that the posts that indicate original government initiatives and public initiatives have little differences (58% and 42% respectively). The second category explains that the mayor has commitment to respond the public desire on having deeper understanding in particular issue which is sometimes not available in public as well. In *accountability* category, the majority of the posts are related to the action, task and function of the government. The calculation show that 92% of the total posts refers to *accountability* category. Whereas, only 29% relate to the budgeting issue. This number indicates that some posts concern about government action, task, and function and budgeting issue at the same time.



Similar with case in transparency issue, in term of popularity, *personal posts* has the highest score with 22.71. *Decision impacts* is in the second place with 16.65 points followed by *government activity* (12.64). Whereas *accountability* is the lowest in term of popularity among the others with only 10.79 points. *Information sharing* has little higher points with 11.10. Considering the total posts, it is surprising that with the smallest number of total posts, *decision impacts* can gain the second place in term of popularity. The total posts do not guarantee people will be

interested in those issues. It seems that followers gave *likes* depending on the content of the posts.

For commitment measurement, the highest result is 1.57, which is *personal posts*. The rests have less than 1 point. *Decision impacts* has only 0.76 point, *accountability* has 0.54. Whereas, *government activity* and *information sharing* have lower amounts than the others (0.46 and 0.37 respectively). This phenomena shows that the followers prefer to give *likes* instead of comments. It is understandable that clicking the *likes* button is more convenient to show interest on the mayor's posts. The followers' preference to give *likes* also determines that they select to not pursue further participation. They tend to watch what happen in the social media and react towards it in the easiest and simplest way. However, giving *likes* sometimes does not always mean that they are interested in the topic posted. People merely desire to be recognised in social life, in this case through the digital world.

By measuring the level of engagement, we found that amount of posts do not guarantee that it will gain much attention of digital citizen. The engagement level varies depending on several aspects. The researchers found that there are at least two factors that influence the level. They are "the selection of issues" and "the selection of works and linguistic style". Those aspects are believed to improve the effectivity of social media as a channel for participation and transparency.

a. The selection of issues

The first finding in this research shows the issues raised by the Mayor which influences the level of public participation. There are distinctive issues in each category of transparency dimension. Every issue has received a different reaction from the followers. For instance,

*Lovely Bandung citizens, shortly the projects of user-friendly footpath development will be executed in 10 streets which are:
1. 10.... Thank you (government activity, 68,901 likes,
3829 comments) (Picture 1.)*

Bandung citizens, this week we are going to plant the unmanaged cables underground. The starting point is Braga - Naripan road. One day there will be no unmanaged cable in Bandung's streets. Thank you. (government activity, 69,237 likes, 2,794 comments) (figure 2.)

These two posts have similar issue which are environment and urban planning. Both contain significant problems faced by the Bandung city. According to Kompas, the Bandung Government had been struggling in solving the problem of sanitation, green area and user-friendly footpaths ([Kompas, 2014](#)). Other posts showing the importance of the content of posts can be seen from the *decision impact* posts. The posts which are related to the religion and corruption topics become the most popular and gain most comments.

Since next week, Bandung's government will begin the program "evening praying" in around 2000 mosques. It will be assisted by volunteer religion teachers. The purpose of this program is to prevent youngsters, especially Moslems, spending their time in bad activities. Besides, it can deepen their knowledge of religion. Thankyou (91,038likes, 3,976comments) (Picture 3.)

The Mayor and all civil servants of Bandung's government are prohibited to receive any parcel. If it happens, it will be reported to the KPK (corruption eradication commission) via e-gratification. For the last, I apologies and thank you. (66,307 likes, 2,653 comments) (Picture 3.)

The first post concerns the decision about issue of religion. It is quiet sensitive and will easily put people on discussion even dispute. The Director of Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS) UGM, Dr Siti Samsiatun, argues religion has a big influence on politics in Indonesia since the Reformation Era which has started in 1998

([Keswara, 2013](#)). It is understandable that when the Mayor proposes a program and refers to the religion, it becomes popular. Moreover, unsurprisingly this post gains a lot of comments, considering that the vast majority of Bandung citizens are Moslems ([Department of Population and Civil Registration Bandung, 2014](#)).

The latter post refers to the corruption issue. As stated in the introduction, Indonesia has been struggling eradicate the corruption, in both national and local level. However, the Mayor ask apology regarding his policy. It considers timing of the post which “Eid”, a celebration day of Moslems after the fasting month. It is what O’Neill calls an “ethic of communication” ([O’Neill, 2006](#)). Although the government is becoming more transparent, it should also consider the ethical issue that are raised here. O’Neill argues that ethic of communication is essential in order to achieve good communication in sensitive audience ([O’Neill, 2006](#)). The Mayor’s intention is to avoid a bad implication while posting. The most reasonable explanation is that Indonesian people during “Eid” will give their relatives and colleagues some parcels or presents.

The issue of religion is drawing more attention than the issues that attracts global attention such as terrorism and drug trafficking.

To eradicate terrorism and drugs, Bandung’s government will prepare a program called “social index report card”. Every chief of family will be given report card which relates to their activity in society. People who rarely participate in community affairs will get a red report card (meaning bad). Thank you. (decision impacts, 18,307 likes, 757 comments) (Picture 5.)

It is quite surprising that this post gained far less attention compared to the issues discussed above. Terrorism is a hot topic in the international level. Even, the Indonesian

Indicator says terrorism, among other topics, is broadcasted in 1,230 media online both national (Indonesia) and international during last three months of 2015. Furthermore, international terrorism has been broadcasted 104,061 times which is 78.2% of the topic of international crime ([Kompas, 2015](#)). It seems the media do not successfully influence and alter the public perspective towards those two issues.

In addition, the report card policy indicates the desire to socially control the population. It is defined 'as the ability of social groups or institutions to make norms or rules effective ([Reiss, 1951, p. 196 cited in Meier, 1982](#)). The report card is a reaction towards illicit citizens' social activity. It is what Radcliffe-Brown calls 'sanctions' ([Radcliffe-Brown, 1993 cited in Meier, 1982](#)). On one hand, the social control can be used by the Mayor to reduce the deviance. However, in social control theory, individuals tend to be deviant ([Hirschi, 1969](#)). Therefore, the existence of social control probably influences the degree of followers' participation. As a result, only few people engaged in posts related to terrorism.

Another finding in this section is the result of the posts related to the issue which is intensively reported by media is contradictive with the previous post when it is without social control. It can be seen from the post below.

This morning I visited an elephant called Yani who is in agony. In fact, this evening she is dead. The Zoo is not managed by the city government, but by a private organization who leases the land from the city. The condition is poor, and it has been a year without veterinary support. They have been reproached many times to improve the management of the zoo. The Bandung government is trying to use legal resources to force the zoo's management to fix this problem. Hopefully, we will find a solution. Thank you (11 May 2016, 51,880 likes, 3,523 comments)

This issue is broadcasted by media in both local and national such as BBC Indonesia, Kompas, Liputan6, VOAINdonesia, Tempo, Detik.com. Even though this issue is not as substantial as terrorism or drug trafficking, however, it has gained much more attention. However, it has no elements that bring consequences to the followers. They feel no obligation towards those issue as it is has no direct implication to them. Moreover, it indicates a growth of concern regarding animal rights in Indonesia. It also shows that the media successfully create the perspective of the people on the animal rights. Scheufele argues mass media actively set the frames of reference the readers or viewers use to interpret and discuss events ([Tuchman, 1978 cited in Scheufele, 1999, p. 105](#)). It has implication on the government obligation to respond people' demand of solution of this problem in Bandung Zoo. As a result, the Mayor gives statement through Facebook to avoid misunderstanding towards this case and losing trust from the people.

b. The selection of words and linguistic style

The finding in this part focuses on the Mayor's style of communication. Analysing the language style can help the understanding of the Mayor's personality as it is associated to the personality ([Sandell, 1977](#)). 'An individual's personality is his unique pattern of traits', while 'traits are any distinguishable, relatively enduring way in which one individual differs from others' ([Guilford, 1959, p. 5,6](#) cited in [Sandell, 1977, p. 15](#)). The first thing that is clearly shown from the Mayor posts is that he always ends the posts with "*hatur nuhun*" which means thank you. This word appears in almost all of the posts analysed. This word, indeed, can be associated with politeness. However, the interesting point is that this word comes from local language. It creates an image showing the Mayor is respect their heritage. The use of local language is also beneficial in making the follow-

ers feel connected to the Mayor. As a result people will be encouraged to engage with the Mayor through Facebook.

The researcher finds that the post with a simple message but packaged with some jokes or using informal language encouraged more people participate as well.

For people who have children under five years old, let join the polio immunization on 8-15 March 2016. People who have not yet had a baby, have it as soon as possible. Who have not married, marry immediately. That is all for the quick information. (Information sharing, 87,099 likes, 2,857 comments)

*According to the data, the population of Bandung is 2.378 million people. It has 32 thousand more men than women. *I have to apology that it is not possible to do polygamy at the moment. *the wife are clapping. *for the women from outside Bandung, it is recommended to find men from Bandung. They are cool, humourist, and kind-hearted. Thank you (Information sharing, 67,433 likes, 6,021 comments)*

The first one contains information about an event and the latter is about population. The mayor provides those information in interesting way. He mentions “marry”, “polygamy”, and “relationship”. Those words and topics are very popular in Indonesian society, especially for people under 40 years old. In both posts, the mayor uses informal language. Another significant impact of language is found by comparing the next two posts.

To all the petition requesters, you probably “kurang piknik” (need more vacation), whereas we have built two artificial beach in Bandung. There are at: 1. Elephant village Cihideung. 2. Swimming pool Trans Hotel. Please enjoy vacation. Do not forget to wear shorts. (9 January 2016, Accountability, 57,189 likes, 2,878 comments)

A right to reply from Bandung's government with respect to the environmental issues. According to the data, environmental management of Bandung city is getting better. The Adipura trophy (award for environmental achievement) which has tens of indicators, is one of the parameter. Thank you (Accountability, 7,888 likes, 219 comments)

These two posts are categorised as *accountability*. Both are about environmental issues but received a distinctive reaction. The words “*kurang piknik*” is famous jargon from one of advertisements in Indonesia. In fact, the former post refers to the petition in social media about the development of an artificial beach in Bandung. Since the 2nd January 2016, the website change.org started a petition of the Mayor to build the artificial beach in the city. According to Tempo, on 6 January, the petition gained more than 10,000 supporters (Tempo, 2016). Their target was 100,000 supporters. The Mayor posted the encounter statement of the petition on 9 January 2016. Interestingly, Okezonene news, on 11 January 2016, stated that the petition only gained 12,778 people ([Okezonene news, 2016](http://okezonene.com)). It was far from the target they had set.

Nevertheless, the post altered the perspective of the people towards the issue of an artificial beach. As stated by Prince, Tewskbury and Power, the ability of framing and presentation of moments and news in mass media has impacts on the recipients understanding of the events ([Prince, Tewskbury and Power, 1995 cited in Scheufele, 1999](#)). It seems that the Mayor presented the post in such way to gain attention of the followers then can affect the followers' perspective. As the petition emerges in social media, the Mayor encountered that problem through social media as well.

5. DISCUSSION

In terms of transparency, Facebook can provide information that is accessible for the people in this case are the Mayor's followers. Even though not all the posts contain more details information but some of it provide the information where people can get deeper understanding. The followers can freely give comment or post on the Mayor's timeline. The Mayor also uses reply function to respond to what the followers have posted. In addition, it does not only incorporate the transparency from mayor to the people, but also the people can give comments function and post directly to the Mayor's timeline.

Sometimes a post contains information that uses technical words. According to [O'Neill \(2006\)](#), to achieve good communication, the sender should simplify the content of post, therefore it needs no "expert" to interpret the meaning. For instance, in the next post, the Mayor tries to explain about the budget but he used some technical words, such as "Corporate Social Responsibility" which is probably not familiar to all people. As a result, it only got few comments and likes.

In the process of developing Bandung city, besides the Local Government Budget, it is also possible through aid from a third party in form Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The government prefers the aid in as a stuff. . . (7528 likes, 227 comments)

Whereas, in term of participation, it is heavily linked to empowerment. It has been discussed on the literature review that to achieve substantive empowerment requires collaboration between the administrator and participants. The administrator can create a condition for empowerment by 'shaping the venues in which the public participates and by providing information and other critical resources to build participant efficacy' ([Buckwalter, 2014, p. 574](#)). Referring to this explanation, the Mayor of Bandung has both created a venue and provided information by utilising the Facebook page. The followers have a place to

discuss and debate about problems and issues.

Furthermore, the numerous comments reveal that the followers are conscious of their capacity and strength. They can propose opinion and give feedback of what the Mayor has posted. It means they have voices in this process. The mayor sometimes responds to the followers' comments. For instance, below are comments replied to by the Mayor:

1. Adlan Uday: *Sir, how can I join the cleaning project in Bandung? Is there any community of it? But I want to join for the night shift. (posted by Adlan Uday)*

The Mayor: *Usually, they make a group themselves mate.*

2. Anita Theresia Dwtasari: *Sir, please fix the road in front of Bandung Electonic Centre, the footpath is used as street market. There is no place for the walkers. They are forced to walk on the main road. There was a case the walker has nearly crashed by the car. Please bring back the footpath to its function.*

The Mayor: *Those sellers will be relocated next week.*

Those two are only comments replied to by the mayor among 52 top comments. Indeed, there is a responsiveness from the part of the Mayor whose efforts are magnified in getting in touch with the followers. However, the researchers cannot find any evidence whether those ideas are getting heard and followed up by the mayor. In addition, there is only few of comments replied to by the mayor compares to total number of comments.

Furthermore, when it is analysed by the ladder of participation proposed by Arnstein, this kind of participation can be categorised as "nonparticipation". In this level of participation, its 'real objective is not to enable people to participate in planning or conducting programs, but to enable powerholders to "educate" or "cure" the participants' ([Arnstein, 1969, p. 217](#)). Using this theory the followers can participate by commenting and posting on the Mayor's Facebook. Whether their ideas are accepted or followed up is still not known (Roengtam, S., 2017). However, there are evidences of the Mayor's attempt

to encourage public participation by maximising his language style and issues selection.

Another fundamental point is, who are the followers? They cannot be generalised as Bandung citizens. They are not only from Bandung but also outside Bandung and there is no exact number of those. In addition, the literacy in the digital world can be a significant obstacle. It excludes people with no access of internet, people with disabilities, and also people who do not have a Facebook account. As Margetts says, ‘for those who do not use computer or internet, digital government even more mysterious’ ([Margetts, 2006, p. 200](#)). It means digital government can create transparency and become participative only for those with access which is digital society.

Longley and Singleton use term “digital unengagement” ([Longley and Singleton, 2009](#)), while Norris call it “digital divide” (Norris, 2001). Regardless of its terminology, the OECD mentions that the ‘term digital divide refers to the gap between individuals, house-holds, businesses and geographic areas at different socio-economic levels with regards both to their opportunities to access information and communication technologies (ICTs) and to their use of internet for a wide variety of activities’ ([OECD, 2001, p. 5](#)).

When discussing the followers, on one hand, due to the followers come from other region, it is beneficial for them. They will know what actually the mayor of Bandung does and compare that to what their mayors do in their region. It is what Bailard calls “window-opening”. Furthermore, for the Bandung citizen-followers, it can be a “mirror-holding”. They can comprehend what the government does and give suggestions towards issues. They can be referred to as readers of mass media who process the information and can interpret it. Scheufele proposes three dimensions of news processing identified which are active processing, reflective integrators, selective scanners ([Scheufele, 1999](#)).

Based on this explanation, the emerging digital world can

bring very serious problems to digital society. In the digital world, there are numerous information. Every person can write about any topic and write whatever they intend. The news can be provided in real time and it changes the topic quickly. For all three dimensions of news processing, these conditions can lead to confusion, particularly for the first and second type of readers. It can be considered as a side effect of the digital world, or social media as a part of this world.

Apart from the issue of transparency and participation, one essential thing that can be drawn from the Facebook of the Bandung Mayor is the fact that it can be a formidable venue for political purposes.

After two months of attending the invitation and listening to the aspiration of the local/national figures and communities intensively, at this moment I am going to ask the opinion of the citizen of this Facebook page. The question is: Do I need go to Jakarta (the capital city of Indonesia) and contest the Governor election of Jakarta in 2017? Please mention the reason. Thank You (74,410 likes, 57, 280 comments)

I apologise, even though there is an opportunity, but I decided on not going as a candidate of the Governor of Jakarta 2017. I hope Jakarta can choose the best Governor next year. Thank you (268,343 likes, 49,554)

Those two are proof that Facebook can be an excellent tool for the Mayor's political activity. From the number of comments and likes, it shows how the followers have much more concern about it compare to other posts that have been discussed. There is a potential for Facebook to become one of the instruments for the politicians to create a self-image in digital society. It is beneficial as it can be a low-cost campaign. Especially, since the number of people using the internet is increasing.

To sum up, this research reveals the benefits of social media for the government. It can become a tool to promote transpar-

ency and a venue for public participation. Social media is proved to be an excellent media to minimize bureaucracy in public service. Also, the findings revealed that the issue selection and language style influence the degree of public engagement. In addition, along with an increase of internet users, governments and individuals must consider the utilisation of social media in their activities. It could be an effective and efficient approach to get engage with more people. Moreover, it could also be a great venue to share and discuss ideas with people.

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