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ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION IN THE DIGITAL ERA: AN EVALUATIVE STUDY OF POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICES

Fachriza Ariyadi *
Universitas Islam Negeri Datokarama Palu
fachrizaariyadi@uindatokarama.ac.id

Syamsuri
Universitas Islam Negeri Datokarama Palu
syamsuri@uindatokarama.ac.id

Iskandar
Universitas Islam Negeri Datokarama Palu
iskandar@uindatokarama.ac.id

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to investigate the role of digital technology in promoting transparency, accountability, and public participation through the disclosure of information. The form of this research is descriptive, analytical, and critical. Therefore, the author can comprehensively explain how Public Information Access in the Digital Era: An Evaluative Study of Policies and Implementation Practices. In this study, the author optimally utilized two data sources related to the research, namely primary and secondary data sources. The results of this study show that the Public information access policy has progressed normatively, characterized by the presence of regulations such as the Public Information Disclosure Law (Law No. 14 of 2008) and various derivative rules that support the public's right to information. The use of digital technology by public institutions is increasingly widespread, primarily through official websites, social media, and digital services (e-government). However, the quality and consistency of implementation vary significantly between institutions and regions. The level of public information disclosure remains uneven, with some institutions tending to be passive or unproactive in delivering information periodically or in response to public requests. The main obstacles in the implementation of digital information disclosure include a lack of human resource capacity, weak digital infrastructure, and low digital awareness and literacy among officials and the public. Public participation has increased significantly in the digital age; however, it has not been matched by a prompt and accurate response from public institutions to public requests or criticisms. The mechanism for addressing complaints and resolving information disputes remains suboptimal, particularly at the regional level, resulting in the public's right to information often being partially fulfilled. Digital technology has great potential to support the democratization of information. Still, it requires a political commitment, institutional capacity building, and public education to ensure that access to information is genuinely practical, inclusive, and participatory.

***Keywords**: Access to Information, Public in the Digital Era, Evaluative Studies, Policy and Practice*

Introdaktions

An evaluative study on access to public information in the digital era focuses on analyzing policies and practices for implementing the provision of public information by the government. Its primary objective is to assess the effectiveness of information disclosure policies, identify challenges in their implementation, and offer recommendations for improvement.(Zheng & Yang, 2023) This study underscores the significance of easy, accurate, and timely access to information for individuals in the digital age. Policy and Regulation Review: Law Number 14 of 2008 concerning Public Information Disclosure. This Law is the primary legal basis for guaranteeing the public's right to information. This study will assess the effectiveness of the law's implementation in various government agencies. Implementing Regulations: There are derivative regulations that regulate the technical implementation of information disclosure. The study will look at how these regulations are implemented, including in a digital context.(Tarantang et al., 2019)

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) will be assessed for their effectiveness in managing and providing public information, including on digital platforms. Practice of Implementing Public Information Access: A public information portal assessment will be carried out to evaluate the availability, ease of access, completeness of information, and responsiveness of public information portals provided by various agencies.(Khairi, 2021) (Bisri et al., 2019) Social Media and Digital Platforms: The use of social media and other digital platforms to disseminate information and interact with the community will be evaluated. E-Government: The study will examine how e-government systems facilitate access to public information, including the use of online applications and services. (Bisri et al., 2019)

Information Security, Data security, and public information in digital systems will also be evaluated, including protection against the spread of inaccurate information or hoaxes. Challenges and Constraints: Digital Infrastructure - Limited digital infrastructure, especially in remote areas, can be an obstacle to accessing information. Digital Literacy - The low level of digital literacy among the community can hinder their ability to search and understand available information.(Bastian, 2016) Limited Resources: Some agencies may face obstacles in providing public information due to limited human resources and budget constraints. Personal Data Protection: The dissemination of public information must prioritize the protection of personal data in accordance with applicable regulations.

An evaluative study on public information access in the digital age highlights several key problems. Challenges include digital divides, infrastructure limitations, data security, disinformation, and data fragmentation. Additionally, there are challenges in managing the country's digital assets and adapting outdated information systems to new technologies. Here are some points to consider: Digital Divide and Infrastructure Limitations. (Sasikirana et al., 2024)Uneven internet access in various areas, particularly in remote locations, is a significant obstacle. The high cost of technology investment is also

a barrier to implementing equitable access to public information. The lack of an integrated data center can lead to delays in information processing. Data Security and Privacy, The threat of cyberattacks and data leaks is increasing in the digital age, demanding better protection of personal and sensitive information. The government needs to strike a balance between access to public information and data protection. (Suganda, 2023)

Disinformation and Hoaxes: The rapid and uncontrolled spread of information on social media can lead to the dissemination of misinformation and hoaxes, which have the potential to divide society. It is essential to ensure that the information available to the public is accurate and accountable. Data Fragmentation, Data spread across multiple locations, both physical and digital, makes it challenging to integrate and manage effectively. The government needs to strive for data integration to improve efficiency and data-driven decision-making.(Lestari & Saidah, 2023)

Adaptation of Old Information Systems: Outdated information systems often struggle to adapt to new technologies, hindering the digitization process and efforts to enhance efficiency. It is essential to modernize the information system so that it can be well integrated and support better access to public information. Public Information Disclosure is a necessary element in creating a transparent and accountable government. The government needs to ensure that public information is easily accessible to the public. Still, it also needs to be discerning in determining what information is private—the Role of Digital Media. Digital media has great potential to disseminate information widely and quickly; however, it also needs to be appropriately managed to prevent the spread of misinformation. The government and the public must collaborate to optimize the role of digital media in the public interest. Evaluative studies on public information access in the digital era are necessary to identify new challenges and develop appropriate solutions continuously. The government and all stakeholders must collaborate to achieve effective, transparent, and secure access to public information in this digital era.

An evaluative study of the policies and practices of implementing public access to information in the digital era requires comprehensive solutions that include infrastructure improvements, digital literacy, and supportive regulations. These solutions must take into account the digital divide, ensure accessibility for all levels of society, and protect the right to privacy and data security. Solutions to Public Information Access Problems in the Digital Era: Improving Digital Infrastructure, Providing affordable and equitable internet access: Collaborating with telecommunication service providers to expand coverage and reduce the cost of internet access, especially in remote areas. Development of decentralized digital infrastructure, giving more authority to local governments to manage digital projects, as well as providing the necessary funds and technical support. Development of user-friendly digital platforms, ensuring that public information platforms are easily accessible and used by all groups, including people with disabilities.(Rukayat, 2017)

Previous research on Access to Public Information in the Digital Era, especially evaluative studies on policies and implementation practices, can cover a variety of

aspects. Some of the research focuses may be on the effectiveness of existing regulations, such as the Public Information Disclosure Law (UU KIP), in guaranteeing the public's right to access information. In addition, the research can also evaluate the implementation of these policies by various public bodies, including the obstacles they face, such as limited budgets, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient human resources. This study can also examine the impact of public access to information on public participation, transparency, and government accountability, as well as how easy and fast access to information can support the eradication of corruption and abuse of authority. Possible Research Focus: The Effectiveness of the KIP Law, Assessing the extent to which the KIP Law has succeeded in achieving its goals in opening access to public information. Evaluation of Implementation, Examining how various public bodies implement the policies of the KIP Law at multiple levels (central, regional, etc.) Community Participation: Analyzing the role of public information access in increasing public participation in the decision-making process. Transparency and Accountability: Examines whether public access to information contributes to increasing government transparency and accountability in financial management and public policy, as well as corruption Prevention, by examining how public information can be used to prevent corrupt practices and abuse of authority. The Role of Social Media examines the impact of social media on the dissemination of public information and its effect on information access and public participation. Digital Infrastructure, Examining the availability and quality of digital infrastructure that supports access to public information, such as internet connections and digital platforms used by public bodies. The Role of Digital Literacy, Researching the level of digital literacy of the community in utilizing available public information. Comparison, comparing public information access practices in different regions or countries to identify best practices. Social Impact, Analyzing the social impact of access to public information, such as increasing public trust in the government and increasing community participation in development. Digital Policy examines how digital policy in general affects access to public information, including digital communication regulations, network security, and infrastructure-related issues.

These studies can employ a qualitative approach (e.g., interviews, case studies), a quantitative approach (e.g., surveys, secondary data analysis), or a combination of both. The results of this study are expected to provide recommendations for enhancing public information access policies and practices, ensuring that the information required by the public is readily available, timely, and accurate.

Research Methods

This research method is a type of literature research, meaning that the information materials used come from library sources, such as books, encyclopedias, magazines, journals, newspapers, and others. (Sutrisno Hadi, 1987) The form of this research is descriptive, analytical, and critical. Therefore, the author can comprehensively explain how Public Information Access in the Digital Era: An Evaluative Study of Policies and

Implementation Practices. In this study, the author optimally utilized two data sources related to the research, namely primary and secondary data sources. The main sources of this research are books and scientific journals on Public Information in the Digital Era. At the same time, this research is supported (secondary) by other works of thought related to the research results on Policy and Practice.

Results and Discussion

Digitization of Public Services

Digitization of public services refers to the process of transforming conventional public services into digital-based services. The goal is to enhance efficiency, transparency, and public access to government services.(Rosari et al., 2022) It involves the use of various digital platforms, applications, and systems to simplify the processes of administration, licensing, information sharing, and interaction between the government and the public. Benefits of Digitizing Public Services: Improving Efficiency, Processes that used to take a long time can now be completed digitally, reducing bureaucracy and waiting times. Increase Transparency, Public Service Data and Information become more accessible to the public, reducing the potential for corruption and abuse of authority. Increasing Ease of Access, people can access services anytime and anywhere through various digital devices, such as smartphones and computers. Digitalization enables broader community participation in the decision-making process and the delivery of feedback. Reducing Costs, Digitalization can reduce operational and administrative costs for both the government and the community.

Public Digital Infrastructure (*DPI or Digital Public Goods*)

Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) or Digital Public Goods (DPG) is a fundamental digital system that enables public and private services to operate effectively and efficiently, while also providing economic opportunities and social services to everyone. DPI can be compared to a highway that connects people and goods, allowing access to a wide range of services and opportunities. Definition and Concept: DPI or DPG refers to a series of digital systems that form the backbone of modern society, facilitating safe and seamless interaction among people, businesses, and governments. The purpose of DPI or DPG is to create a dynamic economy, build trust between the government and citizens, and provide essential services and economic opportunities in various sectors.(Millatina et al., 2019)

Examples of DPI or DPG include digital identity systems, digital payment systems, and data exchange systems. Importance of DPI or DPG: Improving financial inclusion by enabling access to banking, credit, and payment services. Supports rapid response to emergencies and crises. Encourage innovation and economic growth. Building digital resilience and trust between the government and citizens. Accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Role of DPI or DPG in Development: Creating a Dynamic Economy: DPI or DPG enables economic growth by facilitating digital transactions, opening access to new markets, and supporting business growth.

Improved Access to Public Services: DPI or DPG facilitates access to healthcare, education, finance, and other public services through an efficient digital identity and digital payment system. Supporting Better Governance: DPI or DPG can enhance transparency and accountability in government, as well as strengthen the relationship between the government and its citizens. Encourages Innovation: DPI or DPG, built on open-source technology, can drive innovation and collaboration across various sectors. Implementation Example: Aadhaar (India): A unique digital identity system for over one billion Indian citizens, facilitating access to a wide range of public and financial services. Unified Payments Interface (UPI) (India): A digital payment system that enables instant and secure transactions. X-Road (Estonia): An open-source government data exchange system that allows various government agencies to share data securely.

Challenges and Risks

Challenges and risks are two distinct concepts, but they are often intertwined in various contexts, including business, projects, and personal life. A challenge is an obstacle that needs to be overcome to achieve a goal, while risk is a potential event that can have a negative (or positive) impact on that goal. Key Difference: Challenge: More of an obstacle or obstacle that must be overcome.(Suganda et al., 2023) For example, achieving high sales targets can be challenging because it requires an effective strategy, hard work, and a certain level of risk, considering the potential for unforeseen events that may impact the goal. For example, unexpected market fluctuations are risks that can affect investment performance. Examples include challenges such as finding the right resources for a project, coping with changes in government regulations, or adapting to new technologies. Risks include natural disasters that can damage the company's assets, currency exchange rate fluctuations, or the failure of innovative projects.

The Importance of Risk Management. In a dynamic business environment, it is crucial to manage risk effectively to mitigate negative impacts and enhance the chances of success. Risk management involves identifying, analyzing, evaluating, and controlling risks. Challenges in Risk Management: Difficulty in identifying abstract risks. Uncertainty in a changing business environment. Resistance to change in the organization. Limited resources, both financial and human. Case Study: In the creative industry, challenges include resource limitations, demands for constant innovation, and risks associated with technology, such as data security and privacy concerns. By understanding the distinction between challenges and risks and implementing effective risk management, organizations and individuals can be better equipped to address situations and achieve their objectives.

Success Factors

Success factors are the various key elements that contribute to achieving goals, both in personal and professional contexts. These factors can be skills, knowledge, individual characteristics, attitudes, and supportive external conditions. Here are some commonly identified success factors.(Prawita, 2022) Internal Factors (Self-Advantages):

Skills and Knowledge: Have relevant expertise and a deep understanding of the field they are engaged in. Positive Attitude: Optimism, perseverance, and the ability to learn from mistakes. Motivation: A strong internal drive to achieve goals. Adaptability: The ability to remain flexible in the face of change and challenges. Leadership: The ability to inspire and lead others. Creativity and Innovation: The ability to generate new ideas and creative solutions. Time Management: The ability to manage time and resources effectively. Decision Making: The ability to make informed and quick decisions. Communication: The ability to convey ideas and information clearly and effectively. Networking: Build strong and supportive relationships.

The Role of Technology and Democracy in Encouraging Public Administration Towards Transparency and Openness: Technology as a Driver of Transparency, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has become the primary driver of public transparency. Online platforms, open data portals, and social media allow people to access budgets, policies, statistics, and public services in real-time and interactively. In Indonesia, Minister of Communication and Informatics Johnny G. Plate called public information disclosure an essential capital for digital government to support the transformation of e-government to be "more optimal, effective, and efficient. Public Interaction & Digital Participation, Digital access makes government-citizen relations "two-way interactive" through eMonov portals, digital forums, and even social media, which facilitates public participation in policy-making and evaluation. A global study (Reykjavik) shows that deliberative online tools facilitate democratic deliberation, provided they are managed proportionally to ensure that citizen input is effectively incorporated into policy.

Technology as an Affirmation of Democratic Rights, the KIP Law (Law No. 14/2008) lays the legal basis for the assertion that access to information is a democratic right. ICT only accelerates and expands that access, from physical documents to real-time online portals. According to Vice President Ma'ruf Amin, the digitization of information is key to public openness, not only a matter of speed, but also a matter of citizens' right to know, so that democratic governance can function effectively.

Challenges in Practice: The digital divide - not all citizens have access to the tools or skills necessary to use digital systems, which can undermine the goal of democratic inclusivity. Security and privacy: As data becomes more open, the protection of personal data and cybersecurity has become a crucial issue. Credibility of information: Although digital information spreads faster, it can also spread hoaxes, thus demanding verification and public literacy.

Conclusion

This evaluative study concludes that the transformation of public information access policies and practices in the digital era can increase transparency, accountability, and service efficiency. However, success depends not only on technology but also on strong regulations, an open bureaucratic culture, reliable public digital infrastructure, and community inclusion efforts. The digitization of access to information promises significant

advances in transparency, accountability, and public participation. However, its success is greatly influenced by regulatory readiness, infrastructure, bureaucratic culture, and public literacy. Therefore, evaluative studies are essential for identifying real barriers and developing targeted policy recommendations. Digital infrastructure is crucial for sustainable development. By building a safe, inclusive, and interoperable DPI or DPG, countries can create a dynamic economy, improve access to public services, and strengthen governance. DPI or DPG also plays a vital role in building digital resilience and driving innovation.

Recommendation: Improving Digital Infrastructure. The Government needs to improve digital infrastructure, especially in underdeveloped areas, to ensure equitable access. Enhancing Digital Literacy, digital literacy programs need to be improved to equip the community with the ability to access and understand information. To increase human resources capacity, government agencies need to enhance their human resources' ability to manage public information effectively. Policy Improvement: It is necessary to conduct periodic evaluations of policies and regulations related to public information disclosure to ensure their relevance to technological developments and community needs. Increased Collaboration, Collaboration between agencies and stakeholders needs to be improved to ensure the availability of accurate, reliable, and easily accessible information. This evaluative study is expected to contribute to the improvement of policies and practices for implementing public access to information in the digital era, thereby enhancing government transparency and accountability, and increasing public participation in the development process.

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