Government interactions with citizens on YouTube to solve government transparency problems

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GOVERNMENT INTERACTIONS WITH CITIZENS ON YOUTUBE TO SOLVE GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY PROBLEMS

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Abstract

This article investigates how government can harness the socio-political power of social media networks for advancing and communicating government transparency:

1. What is social media-enabled government transparency and its determinants?
2. How can government harness the socio-political power of social media networks to advance and communicate government transparency?
3. Whether and how can reform-oriented YouTube video contents be distinguished from non-reform-oriented ones?

Jakarta’s newly elected government adopted government’s YouTube channel to address the long-standing government bureaucracy and corruption. Using content analysis, 495 YouTube videos are examined whether or not government-generated YouTube videos dominantly communicate reform-oriented government transparency.

The findings indicate that the government swiftly adopted YouTube for strategic leverage; advancing institutional reform within government, communicating government transparency to net-savvy citizens, and hence encouraging them to socially and politically interact on government’s official YouTube channel.

Logistic regression analysis was then applied to further explain YouTube-enabled government transparency. While the YouTube content sharing platform enables the visualization of otherwise complex and murky institutional reform process, the logit model indicates the importance of dynamic capabilities of government leadership and citizen-centric e-governance as the determinants of YouTube-enabled government transparency.

We propose a theoretical framework for political efficacy, citizen-centric e-governance and social media-enabled government transparency.

Keywords: Government transparency, YouTube, Government leadership, Citizen-centric e-governance.