



Inconsistency of Information of Indonesian Government Officials through the Media on Public Concern in Preventing the Spread of Covid-19

Chontina Siahaan; Siti Komsiah

Universitas Kristen Indonesia, Indonesia

<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v7i8.1892>

Abstract

The aim of the research is to reveal the influence of official disinformation through the media on public concern in preventing the spread of Covid-19. The theory used in this research is Carl I. Hovland's Credibility Source theory. A sample of 100 people from various walks of life in Jakarta. The results showed that the inconsistency of information from government officials had a positive and significant effect on community concern in preventing Covid-19. The positive influence shows that the inconsistency of information from Indonesian government officials is responded positively by the concern of the public in preventing Covid-19. the level of public awareness of disinformation, providing official information through the media. The ability to overcome turbulence situations is to display consistency, defined as a unity of motion, between thoughts, speech and actions, in order to arrive at a common goal.

Keywords: *Disinformation; Covid-19; Caring*

Introduction

Public openness is actually a form of transparency which has implications for the government's ability to realize good governance (Doorley & Garcia, 2020; Ferraris, Santoro & Pellicelli, 2020; Kent, & Li, 2020). For example, the government can provide information about the rules of the game as well as details on the form of public service activities or information about events that occur in the country clearly so that the public can be involved and supervise these government activities directly (Özdemir, 2020; Reddi, 2019; Schünemann, et al 2020). In addition, the existence of public openness and transparency can form a check and balance and make it easier for the public to know rational actions as social control by comparing existing value systems (Sedikides & Green, 2004; Sutherland, Freberg, Driver & Khattab, 2020).

Transparency in public services shows that service delivery is open so that the public can know the service process easily and clearly. There are three indicators in measuring the transparency of public services. First, the level of openness in the public organizing process. Second, transparency in service regulations and procedures that are easy for users to understand. Third, transparency of services through the ease of obtaining information on various aspects of public service delivery. Through these three indicators, a measurement can be made of the extent to which Indonesia applies transparency in public

services. These measurements can be used as an evaluation material for the transparency of public services. The transparency of public information relating to the handling of the Covid-19 virus outbreak raises many big questions about the professionalism and seriousness of the government in handling the Covid-19 problem, for example the government chose not to reveal the track record of positive victims of Covid 19 on the grounds of protecting the victim from alienation. Social (Covid, & Team, 2020; Dong & Gardner, 2020, rasmita et al, 2020).

Yet if we look closely, telling a track record of travel is different from announcing an identity. Because basically travel records are needed to minimize the spread, as well as an appeal for the public to be more aware and alert. inconsistency of government policies in minimizing the risk of transmission of the new coronavirus (Covid-19). With policy inconsistencies, people abandon compliance.

WHO has designated the corona virus outbreak as a global pandemic, including in Indonesia as one of the most exposed countries, where the number of victims continues to increase with the spread and transmission that is increasingly rapid and widespread. The government has designated COVID-19 as a non-natural national disaster and formed a Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling which establishes an appeal policy on social restrictions, and involves various other response efforts. The government informs through the media how the public is dealing with the spread of Covid-19, among others, using a mask, washing clean hands with sanitizers and spraying the environment with disinfectants. Not long ago, the minister of health through the television media said that only sick people wear masks while healthy ones don't need to wear masks. According to Junaedi's explanation in the book *Crisis Communications in the Covid-19 Pandemic*, page 19 explains, among other things, that media exposure can affect health. . In fact, exposure to negative news, in this case disinformation, can increase public anxiety. Therefore, correct reporting is needed so that the public does not lose their immune system due to anxiety and panic over hearing disinformation.

Ideally, the government is consistent with what is being informed through the media about preventing the spread of Covid-19 (Raharusun & Hanoatubun, 2020). There is a single door of information related to Covid-19 so that people are not confused, let alone panic, with disinformation conveyed through the media. The public should be enlightened to better understand and understand by starting from ourselves in taking precautions against Covid-19. Ideally, the community complies with all government calls to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

The explanation given by the government is often wrong in providing information about Covid-19. The government's panic in providing information continuously confuses the public because it does not match what is conveyed with the reality on the ground. In addition, the coordination between government ranks is less synergistic in efforts to deal with the corona virus pandemic, one example of a statement made by the Mayor of Surakarta F.X. Hadi Rudyatmo, published by *Tempo* magazine for the 14 March 2020 edition, namely the obstruction of data distribution from the center made regional heads create their own creation to overcome the spread of corona in their respective areas. In addition, Hadi Rudyatmo, the regional head has never been invited to speak by the central government regarding the handling of Covid-19 (Ernis 2020).

Until the time this research was written, there had not been any significant changes in information coordination between the central and local governments. If the coordination between the central and regional governments is not good enough, it is not surprising that in fact, the community does not care about various government appeals such as Work From Home (WFH), the community continues to work outside the home because there are still many offices open so employees must work so as not to be laid off or laid off.

This research is useful academically to contribute to Symbolic Interaction theory which can still be used when a country is facing a critical situation because of its global nature. In practical terms, it should enlighten the public to understand that despite disinformation from the government, the community can show something that is right at the community level. The methodology is to apply a mix of methodologies in order to know whether the public cares about disinformation and qualitatively the real reasons can be found from the community. Social benefits are aimed at all people so that together with the government think about a way out or way out in preventing the spread of Covid 19. Thus the uniqueness of this research is that at the government level it is not yet in tune with the words and actions that they are in the forefront of providing information to the public, however, at the government level, the information conveyed to the public is messy. The community was even more confused.

Method

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method that aims to explain a phenomenon whose results can be generalized. (Kryantono, 2008) researchers took a sample from the population and used a survey to measure the variables between disinformation and public concern.

This research method uses a survey that distributes questionnaires to 100 representatives of the Jakarta community. In order for the sample to represent the representative population of the people of Jakarta, the sampling technique using convenience sampling is sampling based on the availability of elements and the ease of obtaining them. This sampling technique is carried out with the consideration that it will draw data in the wider community using google form. The population of this study is the people of Jakarta who know the inconsistency of official information through the media in preventing the spread of Covid-19. The independent variable in this study is the inconsistency of government officials while the dependent variable is the concern of the community.

Questionnaires will be distributed via google form and then distributed to 100 samples who meet the criteria to represent the people of Jakarta. The results of the questionnaire were processed using SPSS 26.

Results and Discussion

This study succeeded in obtaining responses from approximately 100 respondents, who generally had met various backgrounds of age, gender, and occupation. Therefore, the data of this study can be said to be able to represent the response of the Jakarta community as a whole, which in fact consists of various backgrounds, age, gender, and occupation.

This research data was collected through a questionnaire distributed through google form media consisting of 33 question points with descriptions, three questions regarding the background of the respondents (gender, age, and occupation), and 30 questions were descriptions of statements to answer research questions.

Based on research data obtained through questionnaires, it can be seen that the questions that test the respondent's understanding of the pandemic and the health protocols that need to be carried out during a pandemic have quite high points. The high points in this aspect of the question can be understood as a sign that in fact most of the elements of society represented through this questionnaire have understood the information about this pandemic and the health protocols that must be carried out in order to prevent transmission of the Covid-19 virus.

In addition, different aspects of the questionnaire about government recommendations were found which had not too high points, which means that most elements of society from various backgrounds represented by respondents in this study did not make recommendations informed by the government. The suggestions referred to in the questionnaire questions include, among others, doing WFH by not leaving the house, but with the responses received by the average community whose jobs do not allow them to work from home, such as traders who clearly will not carry out this recommendation. In other points of recommendation such as improving a clean lifestyle and social distancing, most elements of society are not doing it, if you reflect on the results of this questionnaire, because there are still many people, especially those over 40 years of age who do not fully understand the limits recommended by the government, with The assumption of this age group is that there is very little information pathway, because of the limited ability to use technology to obtain correct and complete information.

Furthermore, on the point regarding the government's appeal regarding going home as well, most people still do that because through several question points asked through a questionnaire it is clear that the government's appeal regarding going home and implementing lockdown has not been fully understood by the community. It is at this point that the government's inconsistency is actually responded to by the community, because the people represented by the respondents of this study also know the appeals for homecoming from two different sources, therefore it can be understood that the community is very likely to experience confusion to trust government information sources from institutions. or which party.

Then on the next question points that try to find out the community's obedience to the appeal given by the government, some still get small points. The assumption is that the small number of points is in line with the small presentation of the people who care about appeals from the government, which is due to differences in information submitted by several government agencies.

This correlation coefficient test was conducted to determine the strength of the positive relationship between variable X (information inconsistency) and variable Y (Public Concern in Covid-19 Prevention). To test the correlation coefficient, the researcher used the Pearson Product Moment correlation technique using the help of the SPSS version 26 program. In this study, the results of the correlation coefficient were as follows:

Table 1. calculation of the correlation results between variables

| R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| .852 ^a | .725 | .722 | 7.25547 |

Based on the table above, the results of the correlation analysis with a sample size of 100 are obtained, namely the coefficient value of variable X and variable Y is 0.852. In accordance with the decision making guidelines for the correlation coefficient according to Sugiyono (2017: 184), if the correlation coefficient value is between 0.40 - 0.599 then the relationship between the two variables is high. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a strong relationship between variable X, namely the inconsistency of information from government officials and variable Y, namely Public Concern in Prevention of Covid-19.

Based on the table above, it can be explained that the value of the correlation or relationship (R) is 0.852 and the percentage of the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable in the table of the coefficient of determination, namely R Square of 0.752 or 75.6%, this number indicates an inconsistency effect. information from government officials on public concern in response to messages was 75.2%, while 24.8% was influenced by other factors.

Table 2 regression coefficients

| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 11.322 | 3.779 | | 2.996 | .003 |
| Inkonsistensi | .894 | .055 | .852 | 16.322 | .000 |

In processing the results of the questionnaire, this study uses the practice of linear regression equations with the help of SPSS and reads through a simple linear regression equation, namely $Y = a + bX$. This number a is a constant number which means that if there is no Government inconsistency (X) then the consistent value of public concern for the health protocol appeal (Y) is 11,322. At the value of the regression coefficient on variable X is 0.894, which means that every 1% of government inconsistency, the constant value will increase by 0.894. Because the regression coefficient is positive (+), which is 0.984, it can be understood that variable X is related to variable Y , because if variable X increases, the same change or increase occurs in Variable Y .

If the hypothesis is tested in this study, namely, H_0 : There is no influence between government inconsistency (Y) on public concern with health protocols (X), and H_a : Government inconsistency (Y) affects public awareness of health protocols. (X) Then H_a is proven through the results of the regression test above. Based on the results of the analysis, it proves that there is an effect of inconsistency in information from government officials on the concern of the community in preventing Covid-19, this shows that people sometimes do not look at the information conveyed, but rather who convey the information. As in credibility Source theory, it is explained that a person will be more easily persuaded if the sources of persuasion are credible enough.

Government officials in this case are a source of information that is considered credible by the public in the dissemination of information related to Covid-19 even though in fact they do not provide consistent information, where the information provided will sometimes be different under certain conditions but the public still believes it. Public trust in government officials where government officials are considered to have high ability and credibility because they have trust, expertise and attractiveness to the community, so that any information conveyed is in fact accepted by the community. As proof that the community receives this information even though the information is inconsistent, is that there is an attitude of concern for the community in preventing Covid-19. This proves that in delivering information, a person who has high credibility is needed which is shown by the existence of trust, expertise and attractiveness and all of these are owned by government officials.

Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis in the previous discussion, it can be concluded that the inconsistency of information from government officials has a positive and significant effect on public concern in preventing Covid-19. The positive influence shows that the inconsistency of information from Indonesian government officials is responded positively by the concern of the public in preventing Covid-19. The results of the calculation of the coefficient of determination or the R square value obtained is 0.752. This means that 75.2% of public concern in preventing Covid-19 is influenced by the inconsistency of information from Indonesian government officials. While the remaining 24.8% is influenced by other factors.

Reference

- Azwar S. 2011. *Sikap Manusia: Teori dan Pengukurannya*. Jakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Covid, C. D. C., & Team, R. (2020). Severe outcomes among patients with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)—United States, February 12–March 16, 2020. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep*, 69(12), 343-346.
- Dong, E., Du, H., & Gardner, L. (2020). An interactive web-based dashboard to track COVID-19 in real time. *The Lancet infectious diseases*, 20(5), 533-534.
- Doorley, J., & Garcia, H. F. (2020). *Reputation management: The key to successful public relations and corporate communication*. Routledge.
- Ferraris, A., Santoro, G., & Pellicelli, A. C. (2020). “Openness” of public governments in smart cities: removing the barriers for innovation and entrepreneurship. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 1-22.
- Hanoatubun, S. (2020). Dampak Covid–19 terhadap Prekonomian Indonesia. *EduPsyCouns: Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling*, 2(1), 146-153.
- Hovland, Carl I. 2007. *Definisi Komunikasi*. PT. Raja Grafindo Persada, Jakarta.
- Kent, M. L., & Li, C. (2020). Toward a normative social media theory for public relations. *Public Relations Review*, 46(1), 101857.
- Machmud, R. (2013). Peranan penerapan sistem informasi manajemen terhadap efektivitas kerja pegawai lembaga pasyarakatan narkoba (lapastika) bollangi kabupaten gowa. *Jurnal Capacity STIE AMKOP Makassar*, 9(3), 409-421.
- Kriyantono, R., & Sos, S. (2014). *Teknik praktis riset komunikasi*. Prenada Media.
- Özdemir, A. R. (2020). The Effects of International Openness on the Public Sector Growth: An Evidence From OECD Countries. In *Open Government: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 1103-1122). IGI Global.
- Raharusun, P., Priambada, S., Budiarti, C., Agung, E., & Budi, C. (2020). Patterns of COVID-19 mortality and vitamin D: An Indonesian study. *Available at SSRN*, 3585561.
- Rasmitadila, Aliyyah, R. R., Rachmadtullah, R., Samsudin, A., Syaodih, E., Nurtanto, M., & Tambunan, A. R. S. (2020). The Perceptions of Primary School Teachers of Online Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic Period: A Case Study in Indonesia. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 7(2), 90-109.
- Reddi, C. N. (2019). *Effective public relations and media strategy*. PHI Learning Pvt. Ltd.
- Schünemann, H. J., Mustafa, R. A., Brozek, J., Steingart, K. R., Leeftang, M., Murad, M. H., ... & Meerpohl, J. (2020). GRADE guidelines: 21 part 2. Test accuracy: inconsistency, imprecision, publication bias, and other domains for rating the certainty of evidence and presenting it in evidence profiles and summary of findings tables. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, 122, 142-152.

- Sedikides, C., & Green, J. D. (2004). What I don't recall can't hurt me: Information negativity versus information inconsistency as determinants of memorial self-defense. *Social cognition*, 22(1: Special issue), 4-29.
- Sihombing. (2015). Hubungan perilaku martarombo dengan kepedulian suku batak toba terhadap sesama suku batak toba (online). (<http://repository.usu.ac.id>)
- Sutherland, K., Freberg, K., Driver, C., & Khattab, U. (2020). Public relations and customer service: Employer perspectives of social media proficiency. *Public Relations Review*, 46(4), 101954.
- Venus, A. (2009), Manajemen Kampanye, Bandung, Simbiosis Rekatama Media.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).