

EXPLORING THE UTILIZATION OF GOVERNMENT SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN INFORMATION SOURCE

Niken Febrina Ernungtyas¹, Irwansyah², Rino Febrianno Boer³, Sabrina Sofi Qadrifa⁴

^{1,2}Universitas Indonesia

Gedung Komunikasi Lt 2 FISIP, Depok, Indonesia

^{3,4}Institut Komunikasi dan Bisnis LSPR

Sudirman Park Campus Jl. K.H. Mas Mansyur Kav 35, Jakarta Pusat, Indonesia

nikenfebrina@ui.ac.id; irwansyah09@ui.ac.id rino.fb@lspr.edu; sabrinasofiqadrifa@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Developments in digital transformation and information technology have led to the transformation of society into an information society. The government needs to leverage government social media, which utilizes information and communication technologies (ICT), to disseminate effective, affordable, and up-to-date public information to the public. As a result, the purpose of this research is to explore the use of government social media as an information source. A survey of 263 respondents was collected through questionnaires. The research analysis employed in this study was descriptive statistics. The findings illustrate that Instagram is the most frequently used social media platform by citizens to search for public information. It was found that in the last four years, the number of new followers on the government's Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube accounts has increased, with most of the new followers coming in the last 1-2 years. Most respondents who follow the government's Instagram and Twitter mentioned general information and education/scholarship information as their reasons for following. The government's Facebook followers mostly chose general and health/pandemic information. Meanwhile, government YouTube followers do so for education/scholarship information and health/pandemic information.

Keywords: *government, social media, information source, public information.*

ABSTRAK

Perkembangan transformasi digital dan teknologi informasi telah membawa transformasi masyarakat menjadi masyarakat informasi. Pemerintah perlu memanfaatkan media sosial pemerintah yang memanfaatkan teknologi informasi dan komunikasi (TIK) untuk menyebarkan informasi publik yang efektif, terjangkau, dan terkini kepada masyarakat. Oleh karena itu, tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengeksplorasi penggunaan media sosial pemerintah sebagai sumber informasi. Data dari 263 responden dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner, dan statistik deskriptif digunakan untuk analisis data. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa Instagram merupakan platform media sosial yang paling sering digunakan masyarakat untuk mencari informasi publik. Diketahui bahwa dalam empat tahun terakhir, jumlah pengikut baru di akun Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, dan YouTube milik pemerintah mengalami peningkatan, dengan sebagian besar pengikut baru datang dalam 1-2 tahun terakhir. Mayoritas responden yang mengikuti Instagram dan Twitter pemerintah menyebutkan informasi umum dan informasi pendidikan/beasiswa sebagai alasan mereka mengikuti. Pengikut Facebook pemerintah sebagian besar memilih informasi umum dan informasi kesehatan/pandemi. Sementara itu, pengikut YouTube pemerintah mengikuti untuk mendapatkan informasi pendidikan/beasiswa dan informasi kesehatan/pandemi.

Kata Kunci: pemerintah, media sosial, sumber informasi.

1. INTRODUCTION

Developments in digital transformation and information technology have led to the transformation of society into an information society that has a high need for information. The daily life and quality of life of an information society are influenced by the quality and utilization of information and the use of modern information technology (Guo, Zhang, Sun, Jiang, & Wu, 2021); Martin, 1995). The more people rely on information and communication technology (ICT) for social interaction, the more it will influence how society utilizes digital communication methods (Nguyen et al., 2020). Nowadays, the introduction of digital communication has

transformed people's communication habits, so that two-way communication is getting better, making giving feedback easier and allowing people to get information and insights at any time and from anywhere (Kovaité et al., 2020). Digital communication provides new ways to communicate and maintain social interaction even when face-to-face meetings are not possible by utilizing information and communication technology (Nguyen et al., 2022). Therefore, these matters compel the government to engage in digital transformation and information and communication technologies (ICT) to disseminate effective, affordable, reliable, and up-to-date public information to the public (Yuan et al., 2023a).

The use of information and communication technologies (ICT) by the government to convey public information and serve the public is known as electronic government or e-government (Kementerian Sekretariat Negara, 2018). E-government enables the public to dialogue, participate, and be involved in the process of making public policies (Kementerian Sekretariat Negara, 2018). Thus, through the development of e-government, the government can explore public aspirations more effectively and accurately. E-government can build strong relationships between the government and the public, business people, and among government agencies (Haro-de-Rosario et al., 2018).

Indonesia is a country committed to optimally utilizing e-government systems. As a survey conducted by the United Nations (UN) in 2022 shows that Indonesia's ranking for the development and implementation of e-government has increased from 107th in 2018, 88th in 2020, to 77th in 2022 (United Nations, 2022). There are three models of delivery of e-government systems, including Government-to-Citizen (G2C), Government-to-Business (G2B), and Government-to-Government (G2G) (Diskominfo, 2017). The application of e-government with the Government-to-Citizen (G2C) model by the Indonesian government is by employing government official websites and social media, and the availability of integrated services with online systems (Kementerian Sekretariat Negara, 2018).

Information sources are media that can influence a person's attitudes and actions (Nurhadiyah et al., 2020). More recently, various alternative sources of information not only provide information limited to text but also in multimedia forms such as video, audio, and visual video (Makmur, 2019). Currently, people are becoming more responsible in making decisions regarding online information sources, especially in terms of credibility (Westerman et al., 2014). The internet has become a potential and powerful main platform for accessing news and information (Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika, 2015). One source of information that can be easily accessed and is most popular on the internet is websites and social media.

A previous study showed that the government only used official websites for e-government in Indonesia, but it turned out that only using official websites was not optimal because there were still many citizens who had not received information about the government (Muqoffa, Mawar, & Serikandi, 2022). In 2015, the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration stated that government policy information could not be fully conveyed to the Indonesian people, and only reached 40 percent of Indonesia's territory (Kementerian Desa Pembangunan Daerah Tertinggal dan Transmigrasi, 2015). (Nangameka & Amir, 2023) tested the quality of four government official websites using GTMetrix. The results of this research found that for 10 days the overall GTMetrix grade of the four government official websites was grade D, E, and F (Nangameka & Amir, 2023). This means that the government needs to improve the quality and performance of government official websites since the GTMetrix grade of several government official websites has not yet reached grade A or B (Nangameka & Amir, 2023). Porumbescu (2016) discovered that citizens could be more responsive, positive, and satisfied if the e-government delivers less detailed information such as e-government social media rather than detailed

information such as e-government websites. The use of social media by the government can engage more citizens, and deliver more effective and efficient public services due to two-way communication between citizens and the government (Muqoffa et al., 2022). Government social media account innovates the way the government interacts with the public and the way the government bureaucracy operates internally (Criado, Sandoval-Almazan, & Gil-Garcia, 2013).

Tang, Miller, Zhou, and Warkentin (2021) describe government social media accounts as online profiles on social media that are created and managed by government agencies to provide information and services and build strong relationships with citizens. Social media as part of the government administrative tools innovation influences government agencies and government bureaucracies around the world to utilize social media as follows: (1) improve government performance by reaching more citizens and assisting in data analysis, (2) restoration trust in the government that has fallen due to hoaxes, (3) prevention and preparation plans to deal with challenges and crises in the future, and (4) communication tool during crises and natural disasters (DJKN Kementerian Keuangan, 2020). The need for innovative government bureaucracy and the growing expectations of citizens have made social media an essential medium for addressing the need for information and service among citizens.

In Indonesia, the number of internet users who have active social media accounts is 167 million people, which is 60.4 % of the total population (Clinten, 2023). Facebook is the most used social media platform by Indonesian users with 41.6%, followed by Instagram in second place with 29.2%, and YouTube with 8.9% in third place (Statista, 2023). Meanwhile, Twitter came in seventh place with 1% (Statista, 2023). Social networks such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube have become prominent social media platforms that are widely used by Indonesian citizens (Statista, 2023). Therefore, the government's social media observed in this study are Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter.

Yuan et al. (2023) found that the government leverages social media to improve public services and promote public goals because social media accounts can be easily accessed by government agencies, are affordable, and can be used for different purposes. The large number of Indonesian citizens who use social media to find and share government-related information also makes social media integrated as part of e-government (Yuan et al., 2023). Social media is also increasingly used during a crisis. This is due to the ability of social media to reach citizens more quickly, keep citizens informed about the issue, prevent the spread of hoaxes, monitor situations during a crisis, and gather feedback from citizens (Kaewkitipong, Chen, & Ractham, 2016). The findings of Porumbescu (2016) on South Korean citizens show that the use of public social media can significantly and positively lead to satisfaction and trust in the government. On the other hand, Vakeel, and Panigrahi (2018) highlighted that e-participation mediates the relationship between social media usage and e-government development. It shows that the use of social media can lead to e-government development if citizens can contribute to formulating policies and generating ideas about government issues.

Previous literature has reported that social media can develop e-government, foster public transparency, and strengthen relations between government, citizens, and other relevant stakeholders (Yuan et al., 2023b). Vakeel and Panigrahi (2018) found that in terms of the government's social media presence, the government needs to build citizen motivation to participate, provide feedback, and establish two-way communication with the government via social media. However, there is still a lack of understanding of what kind of information or knowledge citizens expect to get from following the government's social media. From the citizen's side, the user's expectation of social media's general purpose is strongly related to maintaining social relationships (Lee, 2017). On the other side, during the COVID-19 pandemic, citizens

followed government social media accounts to update information immediately (Islm et al., 2021). Moreover, in China, citizens give comments on the government's social media Sina Weibo that related to personal concerns (Feng & Jiang, 2019). Therefore, in Indonesia's context, there is a research gap from a citizen's perspective on following government social media accounts. To build citizen motivation to participate, provide feedback, and establish two-way communication on government social media, this is essential to understand what kind of information or knowledge citizens expect to get from following certain government social media. Therefore, the objective of this study is to explore the utilization of Indonesian government social media as an information source.

2. METHODS

In Indonesia, the number of internet users who have active social media accounts is 167 million people, which is 60.4 % of the total population (Clinten, 2023). Facebook is the most used social media platform by Indonesian users with 41.6%, followed by Instagram in second place with 29.2%, and YouTube with 8.9% in third place (Statista, 2023). Meanwhile, Twitter came in seventh place with 1% (Statista, 2023). Social networks such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube have become prominent social media platforms that are widely used by Indonesian citizens (Statista, 2023). Therefore, the government's social media observed in this study are (1) Instagram, (2) Twitter, (3) Facebook, and (4) YouTube. This study employed a quantitative approach and a self-administered online survey data collection method. The respondents were Indonesian citizens who followed the Indonesian government's social media accounts either on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, or YouTube. All respondents were identified using non-probability sampling, particularly purposive sampling. According to (Rai & Thapa, 2019), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that relies on the judgment of the researcher and focuses on certain characteristics of the population studied. The online questionnaire was distributed through personal networks and social media during May-August 2022. There were 263 respondents who participated in this study. In the data collection stage, researchers posed screening questions to identify whether respondents have social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, or YouTube. The questionnaire consisted of two parts; (1) demographic, and (2) government social media accounts. Demographic questions are related to gender, age, religion, education, and current occupation. Gender, age, and education were used as close-ended questions, meanwhile, age and current occupation were used as open-ended questions. For government social media accounts, all questions were open-ended related to following or not following, government institution, the length of follow, and the reason for following the government institution on each social media platform. All responses from open-ended questions were coded and categorized based on similar responses.

The research analysis employed in this study is descriptive. Descriptive statistics are also used to analyze the demographic properties of the respondents. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), descriptive statistics include means, standard deviations, ranges of scores, and identifying missing data for research variables. Further, Kurniawan and Puspitaningtyas (2016) found that descriptive statistics refers to calculations of measurements such as mean, median, mode, and variance, as well as the presentation and interpretation of data using tables, graphs, or diagrams. According to Yusuf (2014), descriptive analysis has several main characteristics, which are as follows: (1) the research object under study should exist/occur in the present, be actual, and be meaningful, (2) this analysis is intended to describe variables systematically, factually, and accurately, not to examine the relationship between variables. According to Kaushik and Mathur (2014), descriptive statistics has the following advantages: (1) summarizing vast amounts of data in a manageable and presentable manner, (2) processing and presenting data is carried out

straightforwardly by translating data into frequency distribution tables, percent, and overall averages, (3) a standard deviation can be generated, (4) it can be an alternative when complex research models are not wanted, (5) analysis can be done on immediate data or single variables, (6) it can develop further ideas for research, (7) it is a good start to learning about statistical analysis, (8) it underlies more complex statistical analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic characteristics data includes detailed data on gender, age, religion, education, and occupation of the respondents pictured on Table 1. The results of the research using descriptive analysis of the government's social media is also be presented in this section.

Table 1. Respondents' demographic profile (Source: Research Data (2022))

Categories		Frequency (f) (n=263)	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	97	36.9%
	Female	166	63.1%
Age	17 - 22	139	52.9%
	23 - 28	63	24.0%
	29 - 34	33	12.5%
	35 - 40	13	4.9%
	41 - 46	8	3.0%
	47 - 52	3	1.1%
	53 - 58	4	1.5%
Religion	Buddhism	6	2.3%
	Hinduism	2	0.8%
	Islam	189	71.9%
	Confucianism	2	0.8%
	Catholicism	15	5.7%
	Christianity	46	17.5%
	Other	3	1.1%
Education	Junior High School	1	0.3%
	High School	132	50.2%
	Bachelor Degree	123	46.8%
	Master Degree	7	2.7%
Occupation	State Civil Apparatus	5	1.9%
	Job Seekers	17	6.5%
	Employees of BUMN	2	0.8%
	Teacher/Lecturer	9	3.4%
	Freelancer	8	3.0%
	Housewife	14	5.3%
	Private employees	47	17.9%
	Student	123	46.8%
	Police/Army	1	0.4%
	Healthcare workers	2	0.8%
	Entrepreneur	35	13.3%

Females are the majority of respondents in this study. There were 63,1% female respondents among the 263 respondents who took part in this survey. Meanwhile, the rest of the respondents were male.

The respondents in this study were categorized into seven groups based on their age. The youngest respondent is 17 years old, and the oldest respondent is 58 years old. This age group is divided into 17-22 years old, 23-28 years old, 29-34 years old, 35-40 years old, 41-46 years old, 47-52 years old, and 53-58 years old. The majority of respondents (52.9%) are between the ages of 17 and 22. The age groups of 23-28 years old had 24%, 29-34 years old had 12.5%, 35-40 years old had 4.9%, and 41-46 years old had 3%. The age groups with the fewest respondents were 53-58 years old (1.5%), and 47-52 years old (1.1%).

Table 1 also shows that the respondents in this study were dominated by people who adhered to Islam (71.9%). Respondents who adhered to Christianity were 17.5%, respondents who adhered to Catholicism were 5.7%, respondents who adhered to Buddhism were 2.3%, and respondents who adhered to Hinduism were 0.8%. Meanwhile, 1.1% of respondents practice other religions.

Most of the respondents graduated from senior high school (50.2%). Followed by respondents who have a bachelor's degree with a percentage of 46.8% and a master's degree with a percentage of 2.7%. Meanwhile, 0.4% of the respondents were graduates of junior high school.

The majority of respondents in this study (46.8%) were students. Followed by 17.9% of respondents who work as private employees, 13.3% of entrepreneurs, and 6.5% of job seekers. Only 0.8% of respondents were employees of state-owned enterprises (BUMN) and Healthcare workers, and 0.4% were Police or Army personnel.

Table 2. Respondents who follow and do not follow government social media (Source: Research Data (2022))

	Following		Not Following		Total
	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)	
Instagram	167	63.5%	96	36.5%	263
Twitter	51	19.4%	212	80.6%	263
Facebook	34	12.9%	229	87.1%	263
Youtube	55	20.9%	208	79.1%	263

The distribution of the following government social media accounts based on platform is portrayed on Table 2. Instagram is the most followed social media platform, meanwhile Facebook is the least followed. Table 2 shows that of the 263 respondents, 167 respondents (63.5%) follow government Instagram accounts, whereas 96 respondents (36.5%) do not follow official Instagram accounts. There are 51 respondents (19.4%) who follow government Twitter accounts, compared to 212 respondents (80.6%) who do not. There are 34 respondents (12.9%) who follow the government on Facebook, while 229 respondents (87.1%) do not. Moreover, 55 respondents (20.9%) follow government YouTube channels, whereas 208 respondents (79.1%) do not follow government YouTube channels. In this case, one respondent may follow more than one government social media platform.

This study divides government social media into seven categories based on the type of government institution (see Table 3). These seven categories include Ministry, Local Government, Police Organization, Presidential Office, Non-ministerial government department, State auxiliary agency, and State-Owned enterprise. The ministry category encompasses all government ministries of the Republic of Indonesia and ministry programs. This category includes *Kementerian Kesehatan, Kementerian Ketenagakerjaan, Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan*

Teknologi, Kementerian Luar Negeri, prakerja, indonesiabaik.id, badanbahasakemendikbud, etc. The Local Government category comprises local government and local legislative institutions (DPRD). The local government category includes *Pemerintah Kota, Pemerintah Kabupaten, Pemerintah Provinsi, laporgub, etc.* The Police Organization category includes *TMC Polda Metro Jaya, Bidhumas Polda, Puspen TNI AD, Polres, Polri, etc.* The Presidential Office category encompasses *Jokowi, Sekretariat Kabinet, Kantor Staf Presiden, etc.* Non-ministerial government departments are central government agencies appointed to carry out certain governmental tasks by the President (JDIH Kementerian Keuangan, 2001). The category of non-ministerial government departments includes *Badan Kepegawaian Negara (BKN), Badan Narkotika Nasional (BNN), Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana (BNPB), Badan Meteorologi, Klimatologi, dan Geofisika (BMKG), Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana (BNPB), Lembaga Penerbangan Antariksa Nasional (LAPAN), etc.* The State-Owned enterprise category includes *PT. Jasa Marga (Persero) Tbk, PT. PLN (Persero), etc.* The State auxiliary agency category comprises *Komnas HAM, KPK, Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia (KPI), Ombudsman Republik Indonesia, DPR RI, etc.*

Table 3. Number of government social media followers by category (Source: Research Data (2022))

Category	Instagram		Twitter		Facebook		Youtube	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Ministry	93	55.7%	24	47.1%	12	35.3%	47	85.5%
Local Government	37	22.2%	5	9.8%	9	26.5%	3	5.5%
Police Organization	8	4.8%	2	3.9%	2	5.9%	2	3.6%
Presidential office	6	3.6%	6	11.8%	3	8.8%	0	0.0%
Non-ministerial government department	19	11.4%	12	23.5%	5	14.7%	3	5.5%
State auxiliary agency	2	1.2%	1	2.0%	3	8.8%	0	0.0%
State-Owned enterprise	2	1.2%	1	2.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	167	100%	51	100%	34	100%	55	100%

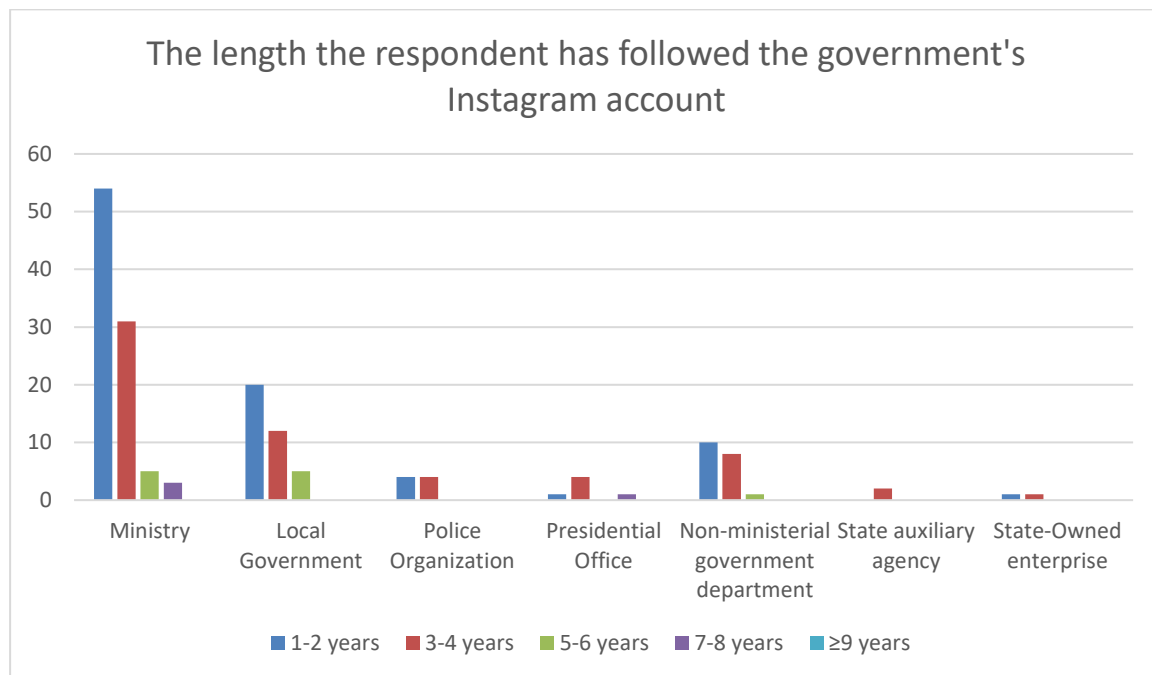
For Instagram, the Ministry category has the most followers, with 93 respondents (55.7%) of the 167 respondents who follow the government's account. Respondents who follow government Instagram in the Local Government category came in second with 37 respondents (22.2%). Non-ministerial government departments came in third with 19 respondents (11.4%). The Police Organization category has 8 respondents (4.8%), and the Presidential Office has 6 respondents (3.6%). Meanwhile, the number of respondents who follow government Instagram accounts in the categories of State auxiliary agency and State-Owned enterprise each has 2 respondents (1.2%).

Of the 51 respondents who followed the government's Twitter, there were 24 respondents (47.1%) who followed the Ministry category. The category of non-ministerial government departments acquired 12 respondents (23.5%), while the Presidential Office had 6 respondents (11.8%). There are 5 respondents (9.8%) who follow Government Twitter in the Local Government category. Meanwhile, each of the categories of State auxiliary agency and State-Owned enterprise has one respondent (2%).

There are 34 respondents who follow the government on Facebook, with 12 respondents (35.3%) following the government on Facebook in the Ministry category. The Local Government category has 9 respondents (26.5%), while the non-ministerial government department has 5 respondents (14.7%). The Presidential Office and State auxiliary agency categories each have three respondents (8.8%). There were 2 respondents who followed the government's Facebook in the

Police Organization category and no respondents who followed the State-Owned Enterprise category.

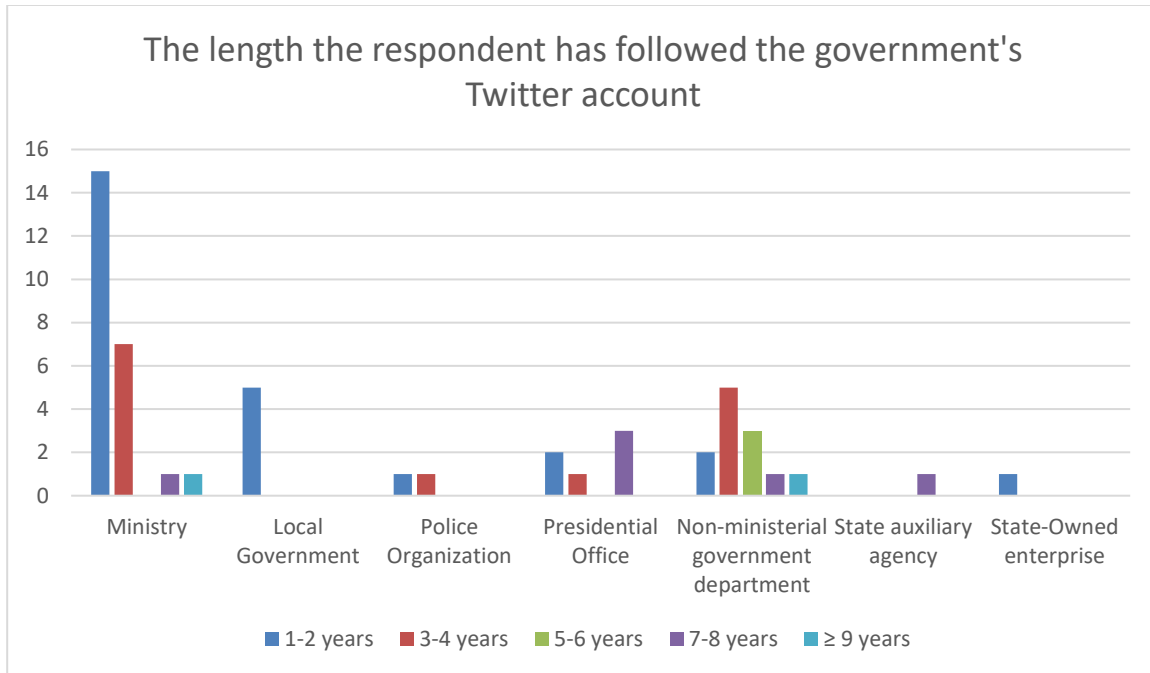
There were 55 respondents in this research who followed the government's YouTube channel. As many as 47 respondents (85.5%) followed the government's YouTube channel in the Ministry category. The Local Government and Non-ministerial Government Department categories were followed by 3 respondents (5.5%), respectively. Meanwhile, respondents in this study did not follow the Presidential Office, State auxiliary agency, and State-Owned enterprise categories.



Source: Research Data (2022)

Picture 1. The length the respondent has followed the government's Instagram account

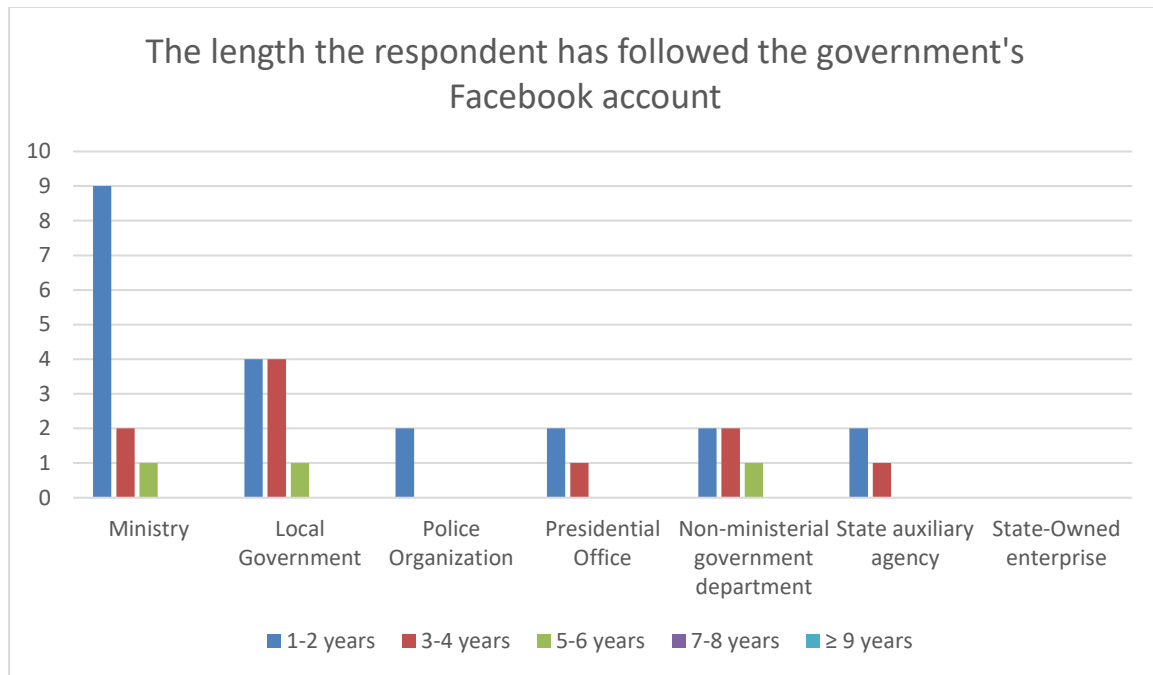
The number of new followers on the government's Instagram accounts in the Ministry category has climbed considerably during the last four years. The majority of respondents (54 respondents) have followed government Instagram in the Ministry category in the previous 1-2 years, followed by 31 respondents who have followed in the last 3-4 years. In the Local Government category, 20 respondents have been following for the past 1-2 years, 12 have been following for the last 3-4 years, and 5 have been following for the last 5-6 years. Respondents began following government Instagram with the Police Organization category in the last four years, with four respondents following since the last 1-2 years and four others following during the last 3-4 years. Six respondents followed the Presidential category, with three following for the previous 3-4 years, one following for the last 7-8 years, and one following for the last 1-2 years. With 10 respondents, the newest followers were added to the non-ministerial government department category in the last 1-2 years, followed by 8 respondents who have followed since 3-4 years ago and 1 respondent who has followed since 5-6 years ago. The State auxiliary agency category only has two respondents who have followed in the last 3-4 years. The State-Owned Enterprise category was followed by 2 respondents, of which 1 respondent followed 3-4 years ago, while 1 other respondent followed 3-4 years ago. Based on Table 4, the growth in followers of government Instagram accounts has started to be seen in the last 5-6 years. Moreover, most of the respondents followed government Instagram accounts in the last 1-2 years.



Source: Research Data (2022)

Picture 2. The length the respondent has followed the government's Twitter account

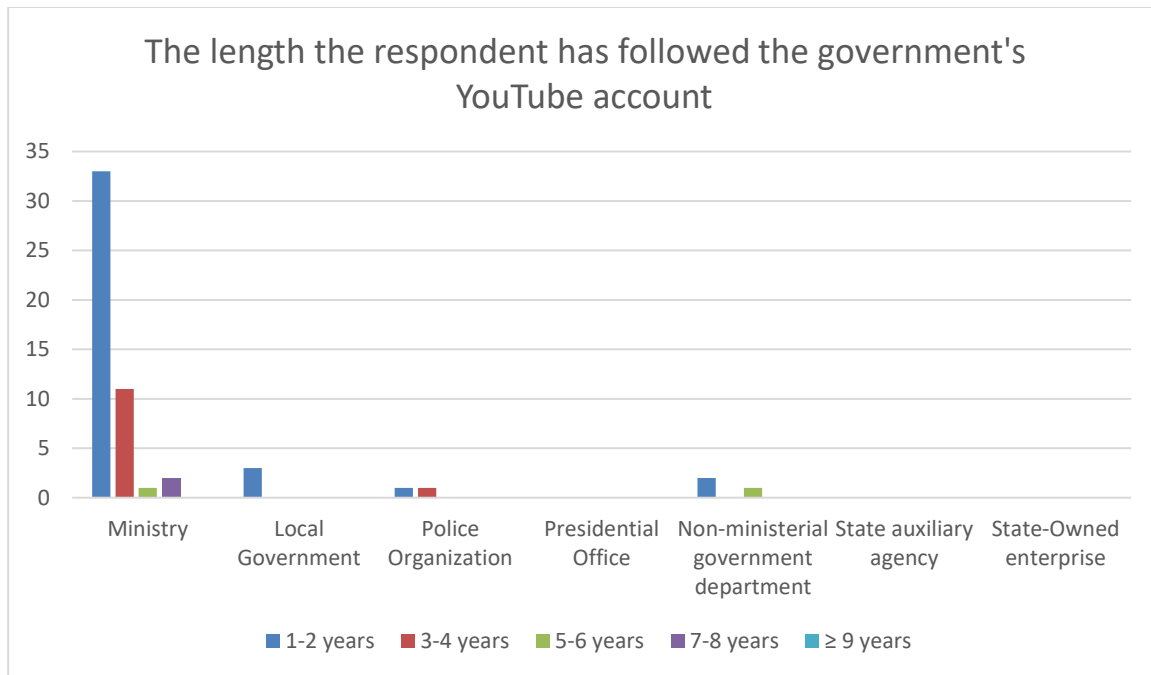
Picture 2 shows that 24 respondents followed government Twitter accounts in the Ministry category. Of these, 15 respondents have been following for 1-2 years, 7 respondents for 3-4 years, 1 respondent for 7-8 years, and 1 respondent for 11-12 years. Government Twitter in the Local Government category is followed by 5 respondents and all of them have been following for 1-2 years. One respondent has followed the Police Organization category since 1-2 years ago, and one other respondent has followed since 3-4 years ago. The Presidential Office category was followed by 6 individuals, 3 of whom had been following for 7-8 years, 2 had just been following for 1-2 years, and 1 had been following for 3-4 years. The majority of respondents who followed the non-ministerial government department category (5 respondents) had done so for 3-4 years. Meanwhile, 3 respondents have been following this category for 5-6 years, while 2 have been following for 1-2 years. One respondent who follows the government's Twitter under the state auxiliary agency category has been following for the last 7-8 years. The State-Owned Enterprise category was followed by 1 respondent for the previous 1-2 years. In the previous four years, the number of followers on government Twitter has increased significantly. In terms of new followers, the recent 1-2 years have the most, with 26 respondents; the previous 3-4 years have the second most, with 14 respondents; and the last 7-8 years have the third most, with 6 respondents.



Source: Research Data (2022)

Picture 3. The length the respondent has followed the government's Facebook account

In Picture 3, 9 respondents followed the ministry category for 1-2 years, 2 respondents followed for 3–4 years, and 1 respondent followed for 5–6 years. Four respondents have followed for the last 1-2 years, four respondents who have followed for the last 3–4 years, and one respondent who has followed for the last 5–6 years in the Local Government category. Two respondents followed the Police Organization category 1-2 years ago. The Presidential Office category was followed by 2 respondents 1-2 years ago and 1 respondent 3–4 years ago. Two respondents followed the non-ministerial government department category 1-2 years ago, 2 respondents followed 3-4 years ago, and 1 respondent followed 5-6 years ago. The State auxiliary agency category was followed by 2 respondents for 1-2 years and 1 respondent for 3–4 years. Meanwhile, there were no respondents who followed government Facebook accounts that were included in the State-Owned Enterprise category. There has been significant growth in the number of government Twitter followers during the previous 3–4 years, with most of the new followers coming in the last 1-2 years. Table 6 also depicts that respondents started following the government's Twitter within the last 5–6 years.



Source: Research Data (2021)

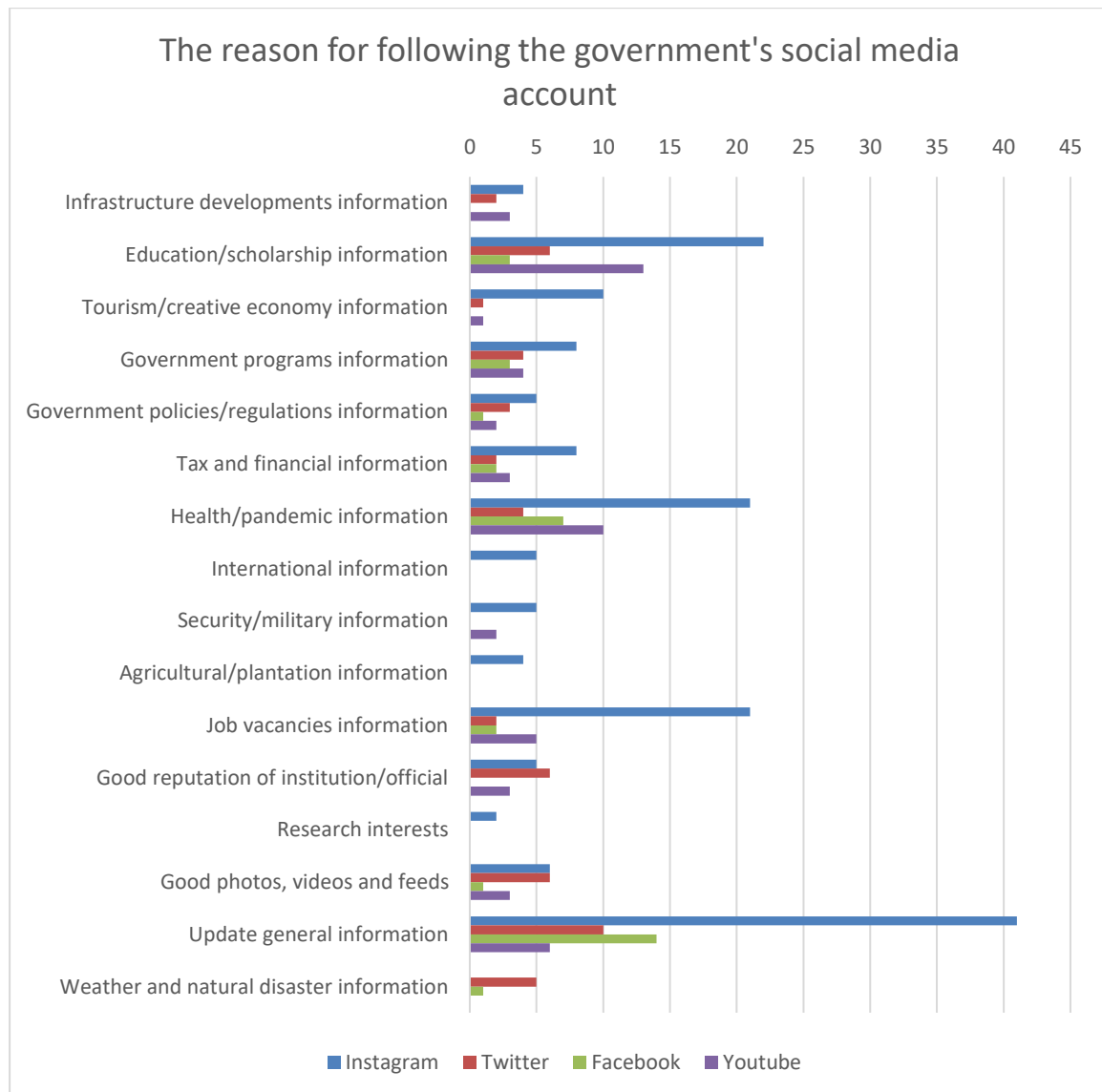
Picture 4. The length the respondent has followed the government's Facebook account

As indicated in Picture 4, 33 respondents followed government YouTube in the Ministry category in the last 1-2 years, followed by 11 respondents who followed in the last 3–4 years. Three respondents followed the Local Government category 1-2 years ago. The Police Organization has 1 respondent who has followed for the last 1-2 years and 1 respondent who has followed for the last 3-4 years. In the Non-ministerial government department category, 3 respondents responded that they followed this category. Two of them have been following for 1-2 years, and one has been following for 5–6 years. Meanwhile, there were no respondents in this study who followed government Twitter accounts in the categories of Presidential Office, State auxiliary agency, and State-Owned enterprise. In the last three or four years, the number of respondents who follow government YouTube channels has grown significantly. Further, most of the respondents have followed the government's YouTube channel in the last 1-2 years. Since the survey was taken in 2022, it shows that respondents started following government social media accounts during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2022. Dependency on information during the pandemic was high amid the uncertain situation and the changing government regulations. Thus, the number of followers on government social media accounts has risen significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic (Salman, 2021).

The reasons for following government social media were categorized from open-question responses. The responses to this question were classified into 19 answer groups, with each group assigned a code ranging from 1 to 19. Here is a list of possible replies, along with the code:

- 1: Infrastructure development information
- 2: Education/scholarship information
- 3: Tourism/creative economy information
- 4: Government program information
- 5: Government policies/regulations information
- 6: Tax and financial information
- 7: Health/pandemic information
- 8: International information

- 9: Security/military information
- 10: Agricultural/plantation information
- 11: Job vacancies information
- 12: Good reputation of institution/official
- 13: Research interests
- 14: Good photos, videos and feeds
- 15: Update general information
- 17: Weather and natural disaster information



Source: Research Data (2022)

Picture 5. The reason for following the government's social media account

According to Picture 5, the most common reason for following the government’s Instagram account is to be updated with general information. The following reason is to get information about education and scholarships in the second place. In third place are health/pandemic information and job vacancy information as the reasons the respondent following government’s Instagram account generally. Moreover, the top reason respondents follow Twitter is also related to be updated with general information. Other reasons for following Twitter are educational and scholarship

information, the good reputation of government institutions, and good photo, video or feed from the government's account.

Picture 5 also shows that the respondent's main reason for following the government's Facebook account is to be updated with general information. The following most common reason is related to health and pandemic information. Meanwhile, respondent's reason for following government's account on Youtube is slightly different from Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. The highest reason for following YouTube is related to education and scholarship information, followed by health and pandemic information. The data illustrate that the most common reason for the government's social media account are to update general information, education and scholarship information, as well as health and pandemic information.

Particularly, respondents have different reasons for following several categories of government institution's social media accounts and types of platforms. For specific on Instagram account, the government ministerial is followed because the information about education and scholarships, information regarding job vacancies, health/pandemic information, and updated general information. In the non-ministerial government, most of the respondents followed this account because they were searching for information on government policies/regulations. For the state-owned enterprise category, respondent reasons are related to tourism/creative economy information and tax/financial information.

Moreover, based on Twitter's government account shows that the ministry's accounts were followed to get information regarding tax/finance such as the Directorate of Tax, Ministry of Finance's account that has more than two hundred thousand followers (@DitjenPajakRI). For the non-ministerial government department's accounts were followed by the reasons related to weather and natural disaster information such as @infoBMKG which has more than eight million followers. The respondent's reason for following the government's account Facebook is similar to Instagram and Twitter. For respondents who follow State auxiliary agency's Facebook accounts, purposively information on government programs, information on government policies/regulations, and general information. Moreover, for Youtube's ministerial account is mostly subscribed because to look for education/scholarship information such as the Directorate of Higher Education (DIKTI) which has more than one hundred thousand subscribers. Moreover, health/pandemic information also the main reason of respondents subscribe Ministry of Health Youtube's account which has more than three hundred thousand subscriber particularly to update pandemic information. Interestingly, respondents who follow Local Government accounts have the intention to get more information on infrastructure developments.

Discussion

This study explores the utilization of Indonesian government social media as an information source. A survey shows from 263 respondents who participated in this study, there were 167 respondents (63.5%) who followed the government's Instagram, 51 respondents (19.4%) who followed the government's Twitter, 34 respondents (12.9%) who followed the government's Facebook, and 55 respondents (20.9%) who followed the government's YouTube. According to the findings of this study, among government social media platforms, Instagram is the social media site most frequently accessed by Indonesian citizens to get information. YouTube comes in second. Then, there are Twitter and Facebook. Facebook is the least followed social media platform by respondents.

According to Nugraha, Sjoraida, Erdinaya, and Komariah (2020), the type of communication used on government Instagram tends to be more interactive, creative, and circular, allowing Instagram to have more followers than other social media platforms. A study by Permatasari,

Nurmandi, and Wijaya (2021) investigated the quality of public information on the Twitter accounts of the local governments of D.I. Yogyakarta and DKI Jakarta. Permatasari et al. (2021) suggested that the quality of public information from the two government Twitter accounts met the aspects of transparency, accountability, trust, participation, and capacity. This study supports research from Permatasari et al. (2021) that shows that the number of new followers on government Twitter accounts has gradually increased in recent years. This latest study also supports the findings of Izzati, Pratama, Aristamy, Najwa, and Rakhmawati (2018), which conclude that the level of popularity of Facebook fan pages in Indonesia is relatively low. Izzati et al. (2018) mentioned that interaction and participation between citizens and the government on government Facebook are still limited, as seen by the low number of likes and comments on Facebook accounts compared to other social media platforms. Herlina (2022) explained that the government has made the best use of its Instagram and YouTube accounts. This is indicated by the two accounts managed by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Pesona Indonesia and Wonderful Indonesia), which had high engagement rates and reach on Instagram and YouTube in March 2020–June 2021, along with an increase in visitors to paid media content between 2020 and 2021 (Herlina, 2022). The study by Herlina (2022) is in line with the results of this study, which found that Instagram and YouTube are the most popular social media platforms among respondents.

Instagram accounts within the Ministry category are the most followed by respondents on government Instagram. Then, the Local Government category is in second place, and the non-ministerial government department category is in third place. As a result, to optimize the use of government Instagram as an information source, the government needs to emphasize the Ministry, Local Government, and Non-ministerial government department categories. Furthermore, the majority of respondents said that they follow the government's Instagram for general information, education/scholarship information, health/pandemic information, and job vacancy information. The growth in followers of government Instagram accounts has started to be seen in the last 5–6 years. Moreover, most of the respondents followed government Instagram accounts in the last 1-2 years.

The most followed government Twitter accounts are those in the Ministry category. The category of non-ministerial government departments on Twitter is the second most followed, and the Presidential Office category is the third most followed. In the previous four years, the number of followers on government Twitter has increased significantly. In terms of new followers, the recent 1-2 years have the most, with 26 respondents; the previous 3–4 years have the second most, with 14 respondents; and the last 7-8 years have the third most, with 6 respondents. Most of the respondents chose general information, education/scholarship information, a good institutional/official reputation, as well as good photos, videos, and feeds, as their reasons for following the government's Twitter.

The Ministry category is the most followed government category on Facebook by respondents. Local Government is a government Facebook category that is in second place as the category most followed by respondents, while in third place is the non-ministerial government department. There has been significant growth in the number of government Twitter followers during the previous 3–4 years, with most of the new followers coming in the recent 1-2 years. The findings of the study also suggested that respondents started following the government's Twitter within the last 5–6 years. Most of the respondents confirmed that their reason for following the government's Facebook page was to update general information, health/pandemic information, education/scholarship information, and information on government programs.

The results of this study also indicated that up to 85.5% of all respondents who followed government YouTube accounts chose to follow the Ministry category. In the last three or four years, the number of respondents who follow government YouTube channels has grown

significantly. Most of the respondents have followed the government's YouTube channel in the last 1-2 years. Most respondents search for education/scholarship information, health/pandemic information, and general information on government YouTube.

This study concludes that the number of followers on the government's Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube accounts has increased in recent years. This indicates that government social media is an effective and powerful tool for disseminating public information. Susilo, Tresnawati, Kresnowiati, and Listiani (2022) evaluated the effectiveness of the socialization of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka program through the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia's Instagram. Susilo et al. (2022) concluded that the socialization of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka program through Instagram by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia was effective. The conclusions of the current study conform to the findings of Susilo et al. (2022) because this study concluded that education/scholarship information is the main reason for most respondents to access and follow government social media. Indonesia experienced a COVID-19 pandemic at the beginning of 2020. According to the findings of this study, health/pandemic information has been one of the most sought-after topics on government social media in the last 1-2 years. This is because many citizens seek information about the COVID-19 pandemic. The government leveraged social media during the COVID-19 pandemic as a credible, responsive, and integrated medium to communicate with the public during a crisis. This research result aligns with the previous research of (Kaewkitipong et al., 2016). Kaewkitipong et al. (2016) argued that social media can be highly useful during a crisis because of its ability to reach citizens more quickly, keep citizens informed about the issue, prevent the spread of hoaxes, monitor situations during a crisis, and gather feedback from citizens.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this study is to explore the utilization of Indonesian government social media as an information source. According to the findings of this research, among government social media platforms, Instagram is the one most frequently used by Indonesian citizens for gathering information. YouTube comes in second, followed by Twitter and Facebook. This study also found that the number of government Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube followers has climbed considerably over the last four years, peaking in the last 1-2 years. Most respondents mentioned that they follow the government's Instagram for general information, education/scholarship information, health/pandemic information, and job vacancy information. General information, education/scholarship information, a good institutional/official reputation, and good photos, videos, and feeds are the reasons for most respondents to follow the government's Twitter. The main reason most respondents follow the government on Facebook is to stay up-to-date on general information, health/pandemic information, education/scholarship information, and government program information. Meanwhile, the most popular contents on government YouTube are education/scholarship information, health/pandemic information, and general information.

This study also has some limitations. As this study uses non-probability sampling, to enhance the generalizability of the data, further research may apply probability sampling. This study was limited to exploring the government's Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Therefore, it would be useful if further studies could discuss other government social media platforms, such as TikTok. Meanwhile, government social media authorities are advised to create content that aligns with the objectives and reasons for their followers to follow the government's social media so that engagement can increase.

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