



Community Complaint Management Strategies through Information Technology to Realize Open Government in the Makassar City Government

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Article Info

Article History:

Received 12 November 2020

Revised 10 December 2020

Accepted: 17 December 2020

Keywords:

Community Complaint Management, Information Technology, Open Government.

Abstract

The rapid advancement of information technology has transformed the way governments interact with citizens and deliver public services. One important manifestation of this transformation is the implementation of technology-based complaint management systems aimed at improving transparency, accountability, and citizen participation. This study examines the strategies employed by the Makassar City Government in managing community complaints through information technology and analyzes their contribution to the realization of Open Government. The study adopts a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation involving government officials, complaint management administrators, relevant local government agencies, and community members. The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model of data analysis consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the Makassar City Government has implemented several strategic measures in managing community complaints, including the utilization of digital complaint platforms, the establishment of standardized complaint-handling procedures, inter-agency coordination, transparency mechanisms, public participation initiatives, and continuous monitoring and evaluation processes. These strategies have contributed to strengthening the principles of Open Government by enhancing transparency through accessible complaint information, encouraging citizen participation in governance processes, and improving accountability through systematic complaint resolution. The study also identifies several supporting factors, such as technological infrastructure, leadership commitment, human resource capacity, regulatory support, and community participation. However, challenges remain, including limited digital literacy, technical system constraints, inter-agency coordination issues, and delays in complaint resolution. Overall, the study concludes that technology-based complaint management serves as an effective governance instrument for fostering a more transparent, participatory, and accountable government in Makassar.

Introduction

The rapid development of information and communication technology (ICT) has significantly transformed the way governments deliver public services and interact with citizens (Liu et al., 2015). In the digital era, governments are increasingly expected to provide transparent, accountable, and responsive services that accommodate the needs and aspirations of the public. The adoption of ICT in public administration has become a crucial instrument for enhancing government performance and fostering citizen engagement. Through digital platforms, governments can improve communication with citizens, facilitate public participation, and strengthen democratic governance.

Consequently, the implementation of ICT-based public services has become an essential component of modern governance and administrative reform (Oliveira et al., 2020).

One of the most important applications of ICT in public administration is the management of community complaints. Public complaints serve as a valuable source of information regarding the quality of government services, public infrastructure, and administrative performance (Homaïdi et al., 2019). Community complaint systems provide citizens with channels to express concerns, report problems, and evaluate government actions. According to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, citizen feedback mechanisms contribute to improving public service delivery by enabling governments to identify service gaps and respond more effectively to public needs. Therefore, an effective complaint management system is not only a tool for problem-solving but also a mechanism for strengthening trust between citizens and government institutions (Hassan, 2015).

The increasing demand for transparency and accountability has encouraged governments worldwide to develop digital complaint management systems. ICT-based complaint management enables citizens to submit complaints through various channels, such as websites, mobile applications, social media platforms, and integrated public service portals (Agustina et al., 2020). These systems facilitate real-time communication between citizens and government agencies, allowing complaints to be processed more efficiently and transparently. Digital government initiatives have the potential to transform public institutions by enhancing information accessibility, improving service efficiency, and promoting citizen participation in governance processes (Sarker et al., 2018). Thus, the integration of technology into complaint management represents an important step toward achieving more open and citizen-centered governance.

The concept of Open Government has gained considerable attention among scholars, policymakers, and international organizations over the past two decades. Open Government refers to a governance approach that emphasizes transparency, participation, collaboration, and accountability in public administration. Open Government is defined as a culture of governance that promotes the principles of transparency, integrity, accountability, and stakeholder participation in support of democracy and inclusive growth (Matasick, 2017). The implementation of Open Government encourages governments to provide accessible information, engage citizens in decision-making processes, and ensure accountability for public policies and services.

Community complaint management systems play a strategic role in realizing Open Government because they facilitate direct interaction between citizens and government institutions (Millard, 2018). Through these systems, citizens can actively participate in monitoring public services and expressing their concerns regarding government performance. In addition, complaint management systems contribute to transparency by providing information about complaint handling processes and government responses. They also strengthen accountability by requiring government agencies to address complaints and report the outcomes of their actions. Therefore, the effective management of public complaints through ICT can be viewed as an important indicator of Open Government implementation (Sousa, 2018).

In the Indonesian context, the government has promoted digital governance initiatives as part of broader bureaucratic reform efforts. The implementation of e-government has been encouraged through various national regulations and programs aimed at improving

public service delivery and increasing citizen participation (Aritonang, 2017). One notable initiative is the development of integrated public complaint management systems that allow citizens to communicate directly with government institutions. These systems reflect the government's commitment to improving responsiveness, transparency, and accountability in public administration. Digital governance initiatives can enhance public trust and government legitimacy when they are designed to promote citizen engagement and service responsiveness (Kumagai et al., 2020).

As one of the largest metropolitan cities in Indonesia, Makassar has actively adopted information technology to improve public services and strengthen communication with citizens (Wulandari et al., 2020). The city government has implemented various digital platforms to facilitate public participation, including systems for reporting complaints and community concerns. These initiatives are aligned with the city's vision of becoming a smart city that leverages technology to enhance governance effectiveness and service quality. Through digital complaint management systems, citizens are provided with opportunities to report issues related to infrastructure, environmental management, public services, and other government functions (Engin et al., 2019).

Despite these efforts, several challenges remain in the implementation of ICT-based complaint management. Issues such as limited public awareness, varying levels of digital literacy, inadequate coordination among government agencies, and delays in complaint resolution may affect the effectiveness of complaint management systems (Aziz, 2016). In some cases, complaints submitted by citizens may not receive timely responses, reducing public trust in government institutions. Furthermore, technological infrastructure and human resource capacity continue to be important factors influencing the success of digital governance initiatives. These challenges indicate that the existence of digital platforms alone is insufficient; effective strategies are needed to ensure that complaint management systems operate efficiently and contribute meaningfully to Open Government objectives (Falco et al., 2018).

Given the strategic importance of complaint management in promoting transparency, participation, and accountability, it is necessary to examine how the Makassar City Government manages community complaints through information technology. Understanding the strategies employed by the government can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of digital governance initiatives and their contribution to Open Government. Furthermore, identifying the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting complaint management implementation can help policymakers improve public service delivery and strengthen citizen-government relations (Kimutai, 2018).

Method

Research Approach

This study employs a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is appropriate for this study because it seeks to explore and understand the strategies implemented by the Makassar City Government in managing community complaints through information technology. The qualitative approach allows the researcher to investigate social phenomena in depth and to obtain comprehensive insights into the experiences, perceptions, and practices of the actors involved in complaint management. Furthermore, this approach enables the researcher to examine how information

technology supports public participation, transparency, and accountability as essential components of Open Government.

Research Design

This research adopts a descriptive case study design. A case study design is utilized because the study focuses on a specific case, namely the implementation of community complaint management strategies through information technology within the Makassar City Government. The descriptive nature of the study aims to provide a detailed and systematic description of the processes, mechanisms, and strategies employed by the government in handling public complaints. Through the case study approach, the researcher can gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon within its real-life context.

Research Location

The research was conducted within the Makassar City Government, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The study focuses on government institutions responsible for managing public complaints and implementing information technology-based public services. Makassar was selected as the research location because it is one of Indonesia's leading cities in adopting digital governance initiatives and developing platforms that facilitate communication between citizens and government agencies. The city's commitment to improving public service delivery through technology makes it an appropriate setting for investigating complaint management strategies in support of Open Government.

Research Informants

The informants in this study were selected using purposive sampling. This technique allows the researcher to choose individuals who possess relevant knowledge, experience, and responsibilities related to the management of community complaints. The informants consist of government officials responsible for public complaint management, administrators of digital complaint systems, representatives of local government agencies involved in complaint handling, and members of the community who have utilized complaint management platforms. These informants are expected to provide rich and detailed information regarding the implementation of complaint management strategies and their contribution to Open Government practices.

Data Sources

The study utilizes both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were obtained directly from informants through interviews and observations. These data provide firsthand information regarding the implementation of complaint management systems, strategic planning, operational procedures, and challenges encountered in practice. Secondary data were collected from official government documents, annual reports, policy regulations, standard operating procedures, statistical records, previous studies, and other relevant publications. The combination of primary and secondary data contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection in this study was conducted through interviews, observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with selected informants to obtain detailed information regarding community complaint management strategies, the utilization of information technology, institutional coordination, and efforts to promote

Open Government. Semi-structured interview guidelines were used to ensure consistency while allowing flexibility for participants to express their views and experiences comprehensively.

Observation was carried out to examine the actual implementation of complaint management processes within the Makassar City Government. Through observation, the researcher directly observed how complaints are received, processed, monitored, and resolved through information technology platforms. This technique enabled the researcher to gain contextual understanding and verify information obtained from interviews. Documentation was used to collect and review various records related to complaint management and Open Government initiatives. Relevant documents included policy regulations, organizational reports, complaint statistics, standard operating procedures, strategic plans, official publications, and other supporting materials. Documentation serves as an important source of evidence to support and validate the research findings.

The focus of this study is the strategy of community complaint management through information technology implemented by the Makassar City Government in realizing Open Government. The research specifically examines strategic planning, implementation processes, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, as well as supporting and inhibiting factors affecting complaint management. Additionally, the study analyzes the contribution of complaint management systems to the principles of transparency, participation, and accountability. The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman. The analysis consists of three interrelated stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

Data reduction involves selecting, organizing, and simplifying the collected data to focus on information relevant to the research objectives. Data display refers to the process of presenting data systematically in the form of narratives, matrices, tables, or thematic categories to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification involve identifying patterns, relationships, and meanings from the data to answer the research questions and develop valid conclusions. These analytical activities were conducted continuously throughout the research process.

Results

Implementation of Community Complaint Management through Information Technology

The implementation of community complaint management through information technology in the Makassar City Government represents an important effort to improve public service delivery and strengthen citizen engagement in governance processes. The use of digital platforms enables citizens to submit complaints, suggestions, and reports regarding public services more efficiently and transparently. Through technology-based complaint management systems, the government can receive, process, monitor, and respond to public complaints in a more systematic manner. This mechanism not only facilitates communication between citizens and government institutions but also supports the principles of transparency, participation, and accountability that characterize Open Government.

The complaint management process begins with the submission of complaints through various digital channels provided by the government. Citizens can report issues related

to infrastructure, environmental sanitation, public services, transportation, and other community concerns through websites, mobile applications, social media, or integrated complaint management platforms. The availability of multiple reporting channels increases accessibility and allows citizens to communicate their concerns without the limitations of time and location. As explained by one government official:

“The utilization of information technology has significantly expanded public access to complaint services. Citizens can now submit complaints through online platforms at any time, making the reporting process more efficient and convenient.”

After a complaint is submitted, the system records and verifies the information before forwarding it to the relevant government agency. Verification is an essential stage to ensure that the complaint contains sufficient information and falls within the authority of the concerned institution. The use of digital technology facilitates this process by enabling automatic categorization and tracking of complaints. Consequently, complaint handling becomes more organized and transparent. According to a system administrator:

“Every complaint received through the platform is first verified to determine its category and responsible agency. This process helps ensure that complaints are directed to the appropriate department for follow-up action.”

Following verification, the complaint is forwarded to the responsible department or local government agency for further action. Information technology plays a significant role in facilitating coordination among government institutions. Digital platforms enable agencies to receive notifications, monitor complaint status, and update the progress of complaint resolution. This integrated system reduces delays in communication and improves institutional responsiveness. A representative from a local government agency stated:

“The digital complaint system enables us to receive reports immediately and coordinate with relevant units more effectively. As a result, the response process becomes faster and more structured.”

Monitoring and evaluation constitute another important aspect of technology-based complaint management. Through digital platforms, both government officials and citizens can track the status of complaints from submission to resolution. This feature promotes transparency by allowing citizens to observe how their complaints are being handled. Furthermore, it enhances accountability because government agencies are required to provide updates and report the outcomes of their actions. One government official explained:

“The monitoring feature allows citizens to see the progress of their complaints. This transparency encourages government agencies to respond more responsibly and complete complaint resolution within the expected timeframe.”

The implementation of information technology in complaint management has also encouraged greater public participation. Citizens are more willing to submit complaints when they perceive the reporting process as accessible, simple, and responsive. Digital platforms provide opportunities for community members to participate actively in identifying public service issues and contributing to governance improvement. A community member who had utilized the complaint management system commented:

“The online complaint platform is easy to use and helps citizens communicate directly with the government. I received information about the status of my complaint, which increased my confidence in the system.”

Despite these positive developments, several challenges remain in the implementation of technology-based complaint management. These challenges include varying levels of digital literacy among citizens, technical issues affecting system performance, and differences in responsiveness among government agencies. Additionally, some complaints require coordination across multiple institutions, which can delay resolution. Nevertheless, the Makassar City Government continues to improve system functionality, strengthen institutional coordination, and enhance human resource capacity to address these challenges. As one official noted:

“Technology has greatly improved complaint management, but continuous improvements are still needed, particularly in inter-agency coordination and public awareness regarding the use of digital complaint services.”

The implementation of community complaint management through information technology has significantly improved communication between citizens and the Makassar City Government. The adoption of digital platforms has enhanced accessibility, efficiency, transparency, and accountability in complaint handling processes. These improvements demonstrate the important role of information technology in supporting Open Government by facilitating citizen participation and promoting responsive governance. Through continuous innovation and institutional commitment, technology-based complaint management is expected to further strengthen public trust and improve the quality of local government services.

Community Complaint Management Strategies

Community complaint management is a strategic mechanism that enables governments to identify public concerns, improve service quality, and strengthen public trust. In the context of the Makassar City Government, complaint management strategies are implemented through the integration of information technology, institutional coordination, and citizen engagement. These strategies are designed to ensure that complaints submitted by the community are processed efficiently, transparently, and accountably. Effective complaint management not only addresses citizens' concerns but also supports the realization of Open Government principles by promoting transparency, participation, and responsiveness in public administration.

One of the primary strategies adopted by the Makassar City Government is the development and utilization of technology-based complaint management platforms. The government provides various digital channels that enable citizens to submit complaints, suggestions, and reports regarding public services. These platforms facilitate communication between citizens and government agencies while reducing bureaucratic barriers in the complaint submission process. By utilizing digital technology, the government can improve the speed of complaint handling and ensure that information is accessible to both citizens and administrators.

A government official explained:

“The use of digital complaint platforms has become a strategic tool for improving communication with citizens. Through these platforms, complaints can be submitted and processed more quickly compared to conventional methods.”

Another important strategy involves establishing clear procedures and standard operating mechanisms for complaint handling. The Makassar City Government has developed procedures that regulate complaint reception, verification, categorization, follow-up actions, and monitoring processes. These procedures ensure consistency in complaint management and provide clear responsibilities for each government agency involved. Standardized procedures also contribute to greater transparency because citizens can understand how their complaints are being processed and what actions are being taken by the government.

According to a public service administrator:

“Every complaint follows a standardized process, starting from verification until resolution. This system helps maintain consistency and accountability across all government agencies responsible for handling complaints.”

Institutional coordination is another critical component of the complaint management strategy. Since public complaints often involve multiple sectors and government agencies, effective coordination is necessary to ensure timely responses and problem resolution. Information technology supports this strategy by enabling agencies to share information, monitor complaint progress, and coordinate actions through integrated digital systems. Such coordination reduces duplication of work and facilitates faster decision-making processes.

A representative from a local government agency stated:

“Many complaints require cooperation among different departments. The integrated digital system helps us coordinate more effectively and ensures that each agency can monitor its responsibilities in resolving complaints.”

Furthermore, the Makassar City Government emphasizes transparency as a key strategy in complaint management. Citizens are provided with access to information regarding the status of their complaints, allowing them to track the progress of complaint resolution. This transparency strengthens public confidence in government institutions and encourages accountability among public officials. Through digital monitoring systems, citizens can observe whether their complaints are being addressed appropriately and within the established timeframe.

One government officer explained:

“Transparency is very important in complaint management. Citizens can track their complaints online, which increases trust because they can see that their reports are being processed and followed up by the responsible agencies.”

Another strategic approach is the promotion of public participation through accessible and user-friendly complaint channels. The government continuously encourages citizens to utilize digital platforms to report public service issues and provide feedback. By expanding participation opportunities, the government can obtain valuable information regarding community needs and service deficiencies. Public participation also strengthens democratic governance because citizens become active contributors to policy implementation and service improvement.

A community member expressed:

"The online complaint system allows citizens to voice their concerns directly to the government. It is easier than visiting government offices, and it makes people feel that their opinions matter."

In addition to promoting participation, the government has implemented monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of complaint management strategies. Regular evaluations are conducted to measure response times, complaint resolution rates, citizen satisfaction, and system performance. The findings from these evaluations are used to improve operational procedures and identify areas requiring further development. Continuous monitoring helps ensure that complaint management remains responsive to public expectations and organizational objectives.

A senior government official noted:

"Monitoring and evaluation are essential because they help us identify weaknesses in the complaint management process. The results are used to improve service quality and strengthen our responsiveness to public concerns."

Despite the progress achieved, the implementation of complaint management strategies still faces several challenges. These include varying levels of digital literacy among citizens, technical issues within information systems, and occasional delays in inter-agency coordination. To address these challenges, the Makassar City Government continues to enhance technological infrastructure, provide staff training, and conduct public awareness campaigns regarding the use of digital complaint platforms.

As explained by one informant:

"Technology provides many advantages, but successful complaint management also depends on human resources, public awareness, and effective coordination among agencies. These aspects require continuous improvement."

The community complaint management strategies implemented by the Makassar City Government demonstrate a commitment to improving public service delivery through information technology. The integration of digital platforms, standardized procedures, institutional coordination, transparency mechanisms, public participation initiatives, and continuous evaluation has contributed to more effective complaint handling. These strategies not only enhance government responsiveness but also support the broader goal of realizing Open Government through greater transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement.

Contribution of Community Complaint Management to Open Government

Community complaint management plays a significant role in supporting the implementation of Open Government within the Makassar City Government. Open Government emphasizes transparency, public participation, and accountability in governance processes. Through technology-based complaint management systems, citizens are provided with opportunities to communicate directly with government institutions, report public service issues, and monitor government responses. As a result, complaint management functions not only as a public service mechanism but also as an instrument for strengthening democratic governance and fostering collaboration between the government and the community.

One of the most important contributions of complaint management to Open Government is the enhancement of transparency. Through digital complaint platforms, citizens can access information regarding complaint submission procedures, complaint status, follow-up actions, and resolution outcomes. This transparency reduces information asymmetry between the government and citizens while increasing public confidence in government institutions. By providing access to information about complaint handling processes, the government demonstrates its commitment to openness and responsiveness.

A government official explained:

"The complaint management platform allows citizens to monitor the progress of their reports. This transparency helps the public understand how the government responds to community concerns and ensures that the process is visible to everyone"

In addition to promoting transparency, community complaint management contributes significantly to citizen participation. Open Government encourages citizens to become active participants in governance rather than passive recipients of public services. Through complaint management systems, citizens are empowered to express concerns, report problems, and provide suggestions regarding government programs and services. The availability of digital reporting channels increases accessibility and encourages broader participation from different segments of society.

A community member stated:

"The online complaint system gives citizens a direct channel to communicate with the government. We can report problems in our neighborhoods and provide suggestions without having to visit government offices."

The participation generated through complaint management systems also provides valuable information for government decision-making. Public complaints often reflect real issues experienced by citizens in their daily lives. By analyzing complaints and feedback, government agencies can identify service deficiencies, prioritize community needs, and formulate more effective policies. Consequently, complaint management serves as a mechanism for integrating citizen perspectives into governance processes.

According to a local government representative:

"Complaints submitted by citizens help us understand the actual problems faced by the community. This information is important for improving public services and developing policies that address citizens' needs."

Another important contribution of complaint management to Open Government is the strengthening of accountability. Accountability refers to the obligation of government institutions to explain and justify their actions to the public. Through digital complaint systems, government agencies are required to respond to complaints, provide updates on complaint resolution, and demonstrate their commitment to addressing public concerns. This process encourages public officials to perform their duties more responsibly and transparently.

One complaint management administrator explained:

"Every complaint received must be followed up and documented in the system. This requirement encourages government agencies to be more accountable because citizens can see whether their complaints have been addressed."

The implementation of complaint management systems also promotes institutional responsiveness, which is a fundamental element of Open Government. Citizens expect governments to respond promptly and effectively to public concerns. By utilizing information technology, the Makassar City Government has improved its ability to receive complaints, coordinate among agencies, and provide timely responses. Increased responsiveness contributes to greater public satisfaction and strengthens trust in government institutions.

A senior government official stated:

"The use of technology has improved our response time significantly. Citizens expect quick action, and digital platforms help us respond more efficiently while maintaining service quality."

Furthermore, technology-based complaint management fosters collaboration between government institutions and citizens. Open Government is built upon the principle that public problems can be addressed more effectively through cooperative efforts involving multiple stakeholders. Complaint management systems create opportunities for continuous interaction between citizens and government agencies, encouraging shared responsibility for identifying and solving community issues.

A government officer noted:

"Complaint management is not only about receiving reports; it is also about building cooperation with citizens. Community feedback helps us improve services and develop solutions that better reflect public needs."

Despite these positive contributions, several challenges continue to affect the effectiveness of complaint management in supporting Open Government. Limited digital literacy, unequal access to technology, and variations in institutional responsiveness may reduce public participation and trust. Nevertheless, the Makassar City Government continues to improve its complaint management system through technological innovation, capacity-building programs, and efforts to strengthen coordination among government agencies.

As expressed by one informant:

"The complaint management system has contributed significantly to transparency and participation, but continuous improvement is necessary to ensure that all citizens can benefit from the system and that complaints are resolved effectively."

The implementation of community complaint management through information technology has made a substantial contribution to the realization of Open Government in the Makassar City Government. By enhancing transparency, encouraging citizen participation, strengthening accountability, improving responsiveness, and promoting collaboration, complaint management systems have become an important instrument for fostering open, inclusive, and citizen-centered governance. These contributions

demonstrate how digital governance initiatives can support democratic values while improving the quality and effectiveness of public service delivery.

Supporting Factors

The successful implementation of community complaint management through information technology in the Makassar City Government is influenced by several supporting factors. These factors play a crucial role in ensuring that complaint management systems operate effectively, efficiently, and in accordance with the principles of Open Government. Based on the findings of this study, the main supporting factors include technological infrastructure, government commitment, human resource capacity, regulatory support, inter-agency coordination, and community participation. Together, these factors contribute to the improvement of transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in public service delivery.

One of the primary supporting factors is the availability of adequate technological infrastructure. The existence of digital platforms, internet connectivity, data management systems, and supporting hardware enables government institutions to receive, process, and monitor public complaints efficiently. Information technology facilitates real-time communication between citizens and government agencies, thereby improving the speed and quality of complaint handling. The integration of digital systems also allows government institutions to coordinate more effectively in responding to public concerns.

A system administrator explained:

"The availability of digital infrastructure has greatly supported complaint management activities. Through integrated systems, complaints can be received, monitored, and forwarded to the responsible agencies more efficiently."

Another important supporting factor is the commitment of government leadership. Strong support from policymakers and senior officials encourages the implementation of complaint management systems and promotes a culture of responsiveness within government institutions. Leadership commitment is reflected in the allocation of resources, formulation of policies, and continuous efforts to improve the quality of public services. When leaders prioritize public complaint management, government agencies are more likely to respond actively to citizen concerns and maintain service standards.

A senior government official stated:

"Leadership commitment is essential because the success of complaint management depends on institutional support. Our leaders continuously encourage government agencies to respond quickly and provide the best service to the community."

Human resource capacity also serves as a significant supporting factor. Competent personnel are required to manage complaint systems, verify reports, coordinate follow-up actions, and communicate with citizens. Employees who possess technical skills and a strong understanding of public service principles contribute to more effective complaint management. In addition, regular training programs help improve staff competencies and ensure that personnel can adapt to technological developments.

According to a complaint management officer:

"Training programs have helped employees improve their technical skills and understanding of digital complaint systems. As a result, complaint handling has become more effective and responsive."

Regulatory support represents another factor contributing to the success of complaint management implementation. Government regulations, policies, and standard operating procedures provide legal and administrative frameworks that guide complaint handling activities. These regulations establish clear responsibilities, service standards, and mechanisms for complaint resolution. Regulatory support also strengthens accountability by ensuring that government agencies follow established procedures in responding to public complaints.

A public service administrator explained:

"The existence of clear regulations and standard operating procedures provides guidance for all agencies involved in complaint management. This helps maintain consistency and accountability throughout the process."

Furthermore, effective coordination among government agencies significantly supports the implementation of complaint management systems. Many public complaints involve issues that require collaboration between different departments and institutions. Information technology facilitates this coordination by enabling agencies to share information, monitor complaint status, and coordinate actions through integrated platforms. Strong inter-agency cooperation helps ensure that complaints are addressed comprehensively and within a reasonable timeframe.

A representative from a local government agency stated:

"Many complaints involve more than one agency. Effective coordination supported by digital systems enables us to work together more efficiently in resolving community issues."

Community participation is also a vital supporting factor in complaint management. The effectiveness of a complaint management system depends largely on citizens' willingness to utilize available reporting channels. Public awareness of digital complaint platforms and trust in government responsiveness encourage citizens to participate actively in reporting issues and providing feedback. This participation provides valuable information that helps government institutions identify problems and improve service delivery.

A community member noted:

"The complaint platform makes it easier for citizens to communicate with the government. Because the process is simple and accessible, more people are willing to submit complaints and suggestions."

In addition, the increasing adoption of digital technology among the population has further supported the implementation of technology-based complaint management. The widespread use of smartphones, internet services, and social media platforms has enabled citizens to access complaint systems more conveniently. This technological readiness among the community contributes to higher utilization rates and strengthens the effectiveness of digital governance initiatives.

One informant explained:

"Today, most citizens are familiar with smartphones and online applications. This situation supports the implementation of digital complaint services because people can easily access the system whenever they need it."

The implementation of community complaint management through information technology in the Makassar City Government is supported by a combination of technological, institutional, human, regulatory, and social factors. Adequate infrastructure, strong leadership commitment, competent human resources, supportive regulations, effective inter-agency coordination, and active community participation collectively contribute to the successful operation of complaint management systems. These supporting factors have enabled the government to improve transparency, accountability, and responsiveness, thereby advancing the realization of Open Government at the local level.

Inhibiting Factors

Despite the progress achieved in implementing community complaint management through information technology, several inhibiting factors continue to affect the effectiveness of the system within the Makassar City Government. These obstacles influence the efficiency of complaint handling, the quality of public services, and the achievement of Open Government principles. Based on the findings of this study, the major inhibiting factors include limited digital literacy among citizens, technical system constraints, inadequate human resource capacity, weak inter-agency coordination, low public awareness, and delays in complaint resolution. Addressing these challenges is essential to ensure that technology-based complaint management can function optimally and meet public expectations.

One of the primary obstacles is the varying level of digital literacy among community members. Although the use of information technology has increased significantly, not all citizens possess the necessary skills to access and utilize digital complaint platforms effectively. Some individuals, particularly elderly citizens and those living in areas with limited technological exposure, experience difficulties in navigating online systems. As a result, they may be unable to submit complaints or monitor the status of their reports independently.

A complaint management officer explained:

"Not all citizens are familiar with digital platforms. Some community members still face difficulties in accessing online complaint systems, which limits their participation in the complaint management process."

Another significant challenge is related to technical issues within the information technology system itself. System errors, server disruptions, internet connectivity problems, and maintenance activities may occasionally interfere with complaint submission and processing. These technical constraints can reduce the efficiency of complaint management and negatively affect public perceptions of government responsiveness. When digital platforms are not functioning properly, citizens may become reluctant to use them and lose confidence in the effectiveness of the system.

A system administrator stated:

"Technical disruptions occasionally occur, particularly during periods of high system usage. These issues can affect the speed of complaint processing and require immediate attention from technical staff."

Human resource limitations also constitute an important inhibiting factor. Effective complaint management requires personnel who possess both technical expertise and an understanding of public service principles. In some cases, government agencies may face shortages of trained staff or encounter difficulties in adapting to new technologies. Limited personnel capacity can slow down complaint verification, coordination, and follow-up activities, thereby affecting overall service performance.

According to a public service administrator:

"The effectiveness of complaint management depends heavily on the competence of staff members. When there is a shortage of trained personnel, the complaint handling process may take longer than expected."

Inter-agency coordination presents another challenge in complaint management implementation. Many public complaints involve issues that require collaboration among multiple government departments. Differences in organizational priorities, communication gaps, and bureaucratic procedures can delay the resolution of complaints. Although digital systems facilitate information sharing, successful complaint handling still depends on the commitment and responsiveness of each agency involved.

A representative from a local government agency explained:

"Some complaints require cooperation among several departments. Delays may occur when coordination is not carried out effectively or when responsibilities are not clearly communicated."

Low public awareness regarding the existence and benefits of digital complaint platforms is another factor that hinders effective implementation. While the government has introduced various technology-based complaint channels, some citizens remain unaware of these services or do not fully understand how to utilize them. Limited public awareness reduces participation rates and prevents the government from obtaining comprehensive feedback from the community.

A community member stated:

"Many people still do not know that complaint services are available online. Greater public outreach is needed so that more citizens can take advantage of these facilities."

Furthermore, delays in complaint resolution continue to be a concern for both citizens and government institutions. Certain complaints require extensive investigation, field verification, budget allocation, or coordination among multiple stakeholders before solutions can be implemented. These procedural requirements may extend the time needed to resolve complaints, leading to dissatisfaction among citizens who expect immediate responses.

A senior government official noted:

"Some complaints can be resolved quickly, while others require coordination, field inspections, and policy considerations. These processes sometimes result in longer resolution periods than citizens expect."

In addition, resistance to organizational change may hinder the adoption of technology-based complaint management systems. The transition from conventional administrative procedures to digital systems requires adjustments in work practices, organizational culture, and employee attitudes. Some personnel may initially be reluctant to embrace new technologies, which can slow implementation efforts and reduce operational effectiveness.

A complaint management coordinator explained:

"The introduction of new technologies often requires significant adjustments. Some employees need additional time and training to fully adapt to digital work processes and service innovations."

Another challenge relates to unequal access to internet services and digital devices. Although urban areas generally have better technological infrastructure, certain segments of the population may still experience limited access to reliable internet connections or suitable devices. This digital divide can create barriers to participation and reduce the inclusiveness of technology-based complaint management systems.

One informant stated:

"Internet access is generally available in urban areas, but some citizens still experience connectivity issues or lack the devices needed to access online services effectively."

The implementation of community complaint management through information technology in the Makassar City Government faces several inhibiting factors that influence its effectiveness and sustainability. Challenges related to digital literacy, technical infrastructure, human resource capacity, inter-agency coordination, public awareness, complaint resolution delays, organizational adaptation, and unequal technological access continue to affect system performance. Nevertheless, the government has demonstrated efforts to address these obstacles through system improvements, staff training, public education campaigns, and enhanced institutional coordination. Addressing these inhibiting factors is crucial for strengthening transparency, accountability, participation, and responsiveness as key elements of Open Government.

Discussion

Community Complaint Management Strategies as a Governance Transformation Mechanism

The findings of this study indicate that the Makassar City Government has adopted a comprehensive strategy for managing community complaints through information technology. The strategy encompasses digital platform utilization, standardized complaint-handling procedures, inter-agency coordination, transparency mechanisms, public participation initiatives, and continuous monitoring and evaluation (Basri, 2019). These findings suggest that complaint management is no longer merely an administrative

function designed to address citizen grievances; rather, it has evolved into a strategic governance instrument that facilitates interaction between government institutions and citizens.

From a strategic management perspective, the findings support the argument that public sector strategies are increasingly oriented toward collaborative and citizen-centered governance (Aschhoff, 2018). Traditional bureaucratic models often emphasize hierarchical control and internal administrative procedures. In contrast, the complaint management strategy observed in Makassar demonstrates characteristics of network governance, where government agencies, technological systems, and citizens interact within an integrated ecosystem. The use of information technology transforms complaint management from a reactive mechanism into a proactive governance tool capable of generating real-time information regarding public needs and service deficiencies (Atobatele et al., 2019).

This finding extends existing discussions on digital governance by illustrating that technological innovation alone does not guarantee effective public service delivery. Instead, technology must be embedded within organizational structures, institutional processes, and governance strategies. The effectiveness of complaint management in Makassar appears to result not only from the existence of digital platforms but also from the government's ability to integrate technological resources with administrative procedures and inter-organizational collaboration (Laksmana, 2020).

Digital Complaint Management and the Realization of Open Government

A significant contribution of this study is the identification of the relationship between complaint management strategies and the realization of Open Government principles (Wirtz et al., 2019). The findings demonstrate that technology-based complaint management strengthens transparency by enabling citizens to monitor complaint status, track government responses, and access information regarding complaint resolution processes. This level of transparency reduces information asymmetry between government institutions and citizens, which has historically been one of the major barriers to effective public administration.

The findings also reveal that complaint management serves as an important mechanism for enhancing citizen participation. Through digital platforms, citizens are no longer passive recipients of public services but become active participants in governance processes. The ability to submit complaints, provide feedback, and monitor government performance reflects a shift toward participatory governance models in which citizens contribute directly to service improvement and policy implementation (Fung, 2015).

Moreover, the study highlights the role of complaint management in strengthening accountability. The requirement for government agencies to document, respond to, and resolve complaints creates institutional pressure for greater responsiveness and performance. In this regard, complaint management systems function as accountability infrastructures that enable citizens to evaluate government actions and demand explanations for administrative decisions (Peixoto et al., 2016).

These findings support contemporary Open Government literature, which argues that transparency, participation, and accountability are mutually reinforcing dimensions rather than isolated governance objectives. The complaint management system in Makassar demonstrates how digital technologies can simultaneously support all three

dimensions, thereby contributing to a more open and democratic governance environment.

Strategic Implications for Public Sector Innovation

An important implication of this study is that community complaint management should be viewed as a strategic innovation rather than merely a public service application. In many developing countries, digital governance initiatives often focus on technological deployment while neglecting organizational transformation. The Makassar case demonstrates that successful digital governance requires strategic alignment between technological infrastructure, institutional commitment, human resource capacity, and citizen engagement (Salim et al., 2020).

The findings suggest that complaint management systems can serve as valuable sources of policy intelligence. Complaints submitted by citizens provide real-time information regarding service gaps, infrastructure problems, and community priorities. Consequently, governments can utilize complaint data not only for service recovery but also for policy formulation, performance evaluation, and strategic planning. This perspective expands the conventional understanding of complaint management by positioning citizen complaints as strategic assets for evidence-based governance (Parkhurst, 2016).

Furthermore, the study indicates that the integration of complaint data into decision-making processes can enhance governmental adaptability. In increasingly complex urban environments, governments require mechanisms that enable them to respond quickly to emerging societal issues. Digital complaint management systems provide such mechanisms by creating continuous feedback loops between citizens and government institutions.

Institutional Challenges and Governance Capacity

Despite its positive contributions, the study identifies several challenges that may limit the effectiveness of complaint management strategies. These include disparities in digital literacy, technical infrastructure limitations, organizational resistance to change, and coordination challenges among government agencies. These findings suggest that the realization of Open Government depends not only on technological availability but also on institutional capacity (Zhang et al., 2015).

The persistence of these challenges highlights the importance of governance readiness in digital transformation initiatives. Technology can facilitate communication and information exchange; however, without adequate organizational capabilities, its transformative potential remains constrained. This observation aligns with institutional theories that emphasize the role of organizational norms, structures, and capacities in shaping policy outcomes.

The findings further suggest that digital governance initiatives should incorporate capacity-building programs aimed at enhancing both employee competencies and citizen digital literacy. Failure to address these dimensions may result in unequal participation opportunities and potentially reinforce existing governance inequalities (Sharma et al., 2016).

Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to the growing literature on digital governance and Open Government by demonstrating that community complaint management functions as a bridging mechanism between technological innovation and democratic governance outcomes. Existing studies often examine e-government implementation from a technological perspective, focusing on system adoption and service efficiency (Al et al., 2016). This study extends the discussion by emphasizing the governance implications of digital complaint management.

The findings support the proposition that information technology acts as an enabling factor rather than an independent determinant of governance transformation. The realization of transparency, participation, and accountability depends on how technology is strategically embedded within organizational processes and governance structures. Therefore, future conceptualizations of Open Government should move beyond technology-centric approaches and consider the broader institutional arrangements that shape citizen-government interactions (Graeff, 2018).

Practical Implications

Practically, the findings suggest that local governments seeking to strengthen Open Government should prioritize the development of integrated complaint management systems that combine technological innovation with institutional reform. Investment in digital infrastructure should be accompanied by efforts to improve inter-agency coordination, establish clear operational procedures, strengthen accountability mechanisms, and enhance citizen awareness (Jenkins, 2019).

For the Makassar City Government, continuous system improvement, enhanced data analytics capabilities, and greater utilization of complaint data for policymaking could further strengthen governance effectiveness. Additionally, expanding digital literacy programs and increasing public awareness regarding complaint services would contribute to broader citizen participation and more inclusive governance outcomes.

Concluding Reflection

This study demonstrates that community complaint management through information technology represents a strategic pathway toward the realization of Open Government. The Makassar City Government's approach illustrates how digital technologies can transform traditional administrative functions into mechanisms for transparency, participation, and accountability. However, the sustainability of these outcomes depends on the government's ability to address institutional challenges, strengthen governance capacities, and continuously adapt to evolving citizen expectations. Consequently, the success of digital complaint management should not be measured solely by technological sophistication but by its capacity to foster meaningful citizen engagement and create more responsive, transparent, and accountable governance systems (Peixoto et al., 2016).

Conclusion

This study concludes that the Makassar City Government has implemented community complaint management strategies through information technology by integrating digital complaint platforms, standardized operational procedures, inter-agency coordination mechanisms, transparency practices, public participation initiatives, and monitoring and

evaluation systems. These strategies have contributed significantly to the realization of Open Government by enhancing transparency through accessible complaint information, encouraging citizen participation in governance processes, and strengthening government accountability in responding to public concerns. The findings further reveal that the effectiveness of technology-based complaint management is supported by adequate technological infrastructure, strong leadership commitment, competent human resources, supportive regulatory frameworks, effective institutional coordination, and active community participation. However, several challenges remain, including disparities in digital literacy, technical system limitations, coordination constraints, and delays in complaint resolution. Overall, the study demonstrates that community complaint management through information technology functions not only as a public service mechanism but also as a strategic governance instrument that promotes more transparent, participatory, and accountable local government administration, thereby supporting the broader objectives of Open Government in the Makassar City Government.

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