

## Utilization of Social Media in Supporting the Role of Government Public Relations in Sigi Regency

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Keyword:</p> <p>Social media; Policy information; Government programs; Community participation; Transparency</p>	<p>This research aims to analyze the role of the Prokopim Regional Secretariat in utilizing social media, Facebook and Instagram, to support the activities of the Sigi Regency Government. The urgency of this research lies in the importance of effective communication between government and society in the digital era, where social media has become the leading platform for disseminating information and public interaction. The research method used is a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and document analysis and analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The main findings show that Prokopim is significant in conveying information on government policies and programs via social media. Prokopim of the Regional Secretariat of Sigi Regency has four main tasks: communication, relations, management, helping each other with public relations tasks, and maintaining the image of the Sigi Regency Government. The implications of the four main tasks of the Sigi Regency Regional Secretariat Prokopim are increasing the effectiveness of government communications, strengthening relations with the community, ensuring the smooth running of public relations tasks, and maintaining and improving the positive image of the regional government. To optimize this role, improving the quality of human resources, paradigm changes, adequate facilities and infrastructure, and commitment from regional leaders are very important for optimizing the role of Prokopim. The findings of this research can be applied in the context of other regional governments that wish to increase transparency and public participation through social media, as well as contribute to the literature on government communication and the use of social media in bureaucratic contexts.</p>

### INTRODUCTION

The use of social media in government has become increasingly important in this digital era (Hunter, 2023; Lovari & Bowen, 2020; Sobkowicz et al., 2012). The government uses social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to communicate directly with the public (Baharuddin, Jubba, et al., 2022; Idrus et al., 2024; Reddick et al., 2017). Through social media, the government can convey information quickly and effectively, such as policy announcements, public services, and crises (Baharuddin et al., 2021; Lestanata, 2024; Yahya et al., 2024). Additionally, social media allows governments to collect feedback from the public, which can be used to improve the quality of services and policies. This more direct interaction

also helps increase government transparency and accountability (Baharuddin, Sairin, et al., 2022; van Dijck & Alinejad, 2020).

On the other hand, social media also provides space for the public to participate actively in government processes (Cao & Kang, 2024; DePaula et al., 2018; Luth et al., 2023). Citizens can openly voice their opinions, ask questions, and criticize government policies. This participation not only strengthens democracy but also encourages the government to be more responsive to the needs and aspirations of society (Barati, 2023; Pflughoeft & Schneider, 2020; Reddick et al., 2017). However, using social media in government also presents challenges, such as spreading inaccurate information or fake news, which can cause public confusion and distrust (Ahdan et al., 2024). Therefore, the government must manage social media wisely and responsibly to maximize its benefits for the government and society (Obi-Ani et al., 2020; Rahayu & Sensusiyati, 2021; Saputra, 2020).

Facebook and Instagram are popular social media platforms with complementary functions but different focuses and features. Facebook offers features such as status updates, photo and video sharing, groups, and pages for organizations and individuals. The platform supports various types of content and interactions, including comments, likes, and shares, and has powerful features for advertising and promotions that can be tailored to specific audiences. Facebook also facilitates community group interaction that allows users to join discussions on specific topics or share more focused information (Alhabash & Ma, 2017; Belanche et al., 2019; Valenzuela et al., 2014).

Meanwhile, Instagram, launched in 2010, focuses more on sharing photos and videos with an emphasis on attractive visuals. Instagram is famous for its Stories and Reels features that allow users to share temporary content or short videos with creative elements such as filters and effects. The platform also supports various marketing tools, such as paid advertising and collaboration with influencers, effectively reaching a younger audience. Instagram has a more straightforward and more visual interface, making it ideal for branding and promotions that leverage the power of visuals to attract attention and interact with users more dynamically (Baulch & Pramiyanti, 2018; Meisyaroh & Surya, 2022; Telyčėnaitė, 2023).

In practice, government public relations also uses social media as the primary tool to build a positive image and maintain effective communication with the public. Public relations actively manages official accounts on various social media platforms to convey information related to government policies, programs, and activities transparently and in real time (Mizanie & Irwansyah, 2019). They also monitor public conversations on social media to respond to developing issues and handle complaints or questions from the public (Nugraha & Irwansyah, 2022). Public relations can increase community participation and involvement via interactive features like live streaming, polls, and question-and-answer sessions. This approach strengthens the relationship between government and society and helps build public trust in government.

Since 2020, there have been significant structural changes in public relations activities in government based on the Republic of Indonesia Ministry of Home Affairs regulation Number 56 of 2019 concerning Guidelines for Nomenclature and Work Units of Provincial and Regency/City Regional Secretariats (Izki Fikriani Amir & Muhammad Idris, 2023). Public Relations has now been replaced by the Leadership Protocol and Communications Section (Prokopim). Prokopim is one of the prominent supporters of the Regional Secretariat function, focusing on protocol and public relations services. Even though the name has changed, Prokopim's roles and responsibilities differ significantly from the previous Public Relations & Protocol. Prokopim acts as the eyes and ears of regional leaders, as spokespersons for regional heads, with a problematic, strategic, and challenging task (Izki Fikriani Amir & Muhammad Idris, 2023).

Sigi Regency Leadership Protocol and Communication (Prokopim) is one of the government institutions that implements digital public relations to facilitate communication with the community. The Facebook and Instagram accounts @Prokopim Sigi Regency are a publication platform to disseminate information about Sigi Regency Government programs and improve public services. The use of social media makes it easier for Prokopim to receive responses, comments, criticism, and suggestions from the public, which in turn helps improve the image and performance of the Sigi Regency Government. Like the relationship between public relations and

the community in other areas, the Prokopim of the Sigi Regency Regional Secretariat is expected to be able to adapt to the environment and express itself to the community to create positive public opinion and image. The Sigi Regency Government is aware of Prokopim's important role in instilling mutual understanding, providing good services, and building trust and respect from the community. Therefore, Prokopim is responsible for preparing facilities and infrastructure that enable the public to access information directly through Prokopim's pages and social media accounts.

Taking advantage of Facebook and Instagram, Prokopim of the Sigi Regency Regional Secretariat is trying to bring communication closer to the community. It is hoped that conveying information via social media can reach the public widely and quickly, both in the Sigi Regency and outside the region. Apart from conveying information, social media also functions as a means of channeling community aspirations and suggestions to the Sigi Regency Government. Research into this phenomenon is interesting because digital public relations management in local government institutions can build and maintain good communication between institutions and the public. Public relations using social media is considered more effective in creating close relationships with the public, allowing faster communication than other mass media.

The research gap lies in the lack of in-depth studies regarding the implementation of digital public relations by regional government institutions, especially in the context of structural changes from Public Relations to Leadership Protocol and Communication (Prokopim) based on Ministry of Home Affairs regulation Number 56 of 2019. Although there is research regarding the use of media social media by the government, there is still little focus on how this structural transition affects the effectiveness of communication and relationships between local government and society. In addition, existing studies have not explored the impact of using social media such as Facebook and Instagram in increasing public participation, conveying information quickly, and managing community responses locally, as is the case in Sigi Regency. This research aims to fill this gap by analyzing Prokopim's role in utilizing digital public relations to support effective and transparent communication between government and society.

This research analyzes how the Leadership Protocol and Communication Section (Prokopim) utilizes social media, especially Facebook and Instagram, in carrying out public relations functions in the Sigi Regency Government. This research aims to understand the effectiveness of using social media in disseminating information, increasing public participation, and building a positive image of the government. Apart from that, this research will also evaluate the extent to which social media is used as a two-way communication tool that can bridge communication between government and society and identify the challenges and opportunities faced in this process. The findings from this research can provide insight into the effectiveness of social media in increasing transparency and public participation at the local government level. In addition, the results of this research can be a basis for government agencies to develop more effective communication strategies in social media.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The study method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative study, which aims to describe and understand phenomena in depth without using statistics. In this approach, data is collected through observation, interviews, and documentation and then analyzed to obtain a detailed interpretation of the research object. Descriptive qualitative study focuses on understanding the meaning and context of the phenomenon under study, emphasizing depth of information rather than quantity of data. This approach allows researchers to dive into actual conditions and describe the study subject comprehensively.

Researchers chose informants from various backgrounds to ensure that the information obtained in this study was comprehensive and included various perspectives regarding the use of social media by the Sigi Regency Prokopim. Internal informants consist of ASN and non-ASN staff who manage Prokopim's Facebook and Instagram social media accounts and are expected to provide in-depth insight into the operations and daily challenges in managing social media. Meanwhile, the selected external informants, namely a DPRD politician, youth leader, and

academic from the Communication Science Study Program at Tadulako University, provide different perspectives as active users of social media as well as political practitioners and academics, which can add a dimension of criticism and suggestions, which is helpful. Perspectives from internal and external informants will help analyze the effectiveness and impact of Prokopim's use of social media and provide constructive recommendations for improving communication strategies and public engagement.

The data analysis tool used in this study is NVivo 12 Plus, which is maximized for managing and analyzing qualitative data in depth. NVivo 12 Plus provides features enabling researchers to organize, categorize, and interpret data, such as interviews and documentation. With its ability to handle various types of data and provide comprehensive analysis tools, NVivo 12 Plus helps identify patterns, themes, and relationships in data and supports a systematic coding process. NVivo 12 Plus ensures that data analysis is carried out in a structured and thorough manner, providing accurate and in-depth insight into the phenomenon under study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *The Role of Prokopim Regional Secretariat through Social Media Facebook and Instagram in Supporting Sigi Regency Government Activities*

The role of the Prokopim Regional Secretariat in managing social media, Facebook, and Instagram, is vital in supporting the activities of the Sigi Regency Government. Prokopim ensures that messages and information are conveyed effectively to the public. Through Prokopim's social media accounts, information regarding the activities of the Regent and Deputy Regent is presented in the form of photos, videos, and infographics, accompanied by captions or releases to provide a clear explanation. Using various media formats helps reach a wider audience and ensures that the public receives the message well.

In addition, Prokopim is committed to conveying factual and reliable information, which maintains credibility and prevents the spread of hoaxes. Through Instagram, Prokopim actively responds to comments and questions from the public and corrects incorrect or misunderstood information. This approach strengthens the relationship between government and society and shows responsiveness and transparency in public communications. In this way, Prokopim plays a role in strengthening the image of local government and increasing public trust in government activities and policies. Sample posts from the Facebook and Instagram accounts of the Prokopim Regional Secretariat are as follows:



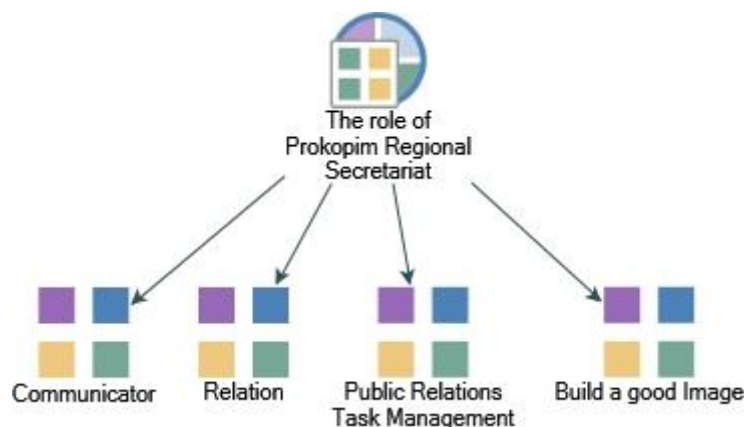
**Figure 1.** Facebook account by Prokompim Sigi Regency  
*Source: Author documentation, 2024*

Figure 1 shows the appearance of the Sigi Regency Prokopim Facebook account, which is designed to communicate the latest activities and information related to local government. This account displays various important updates, news, and announcements regarding government programs, as well as the daily activities of regional leaders. With a professional design and easy navigation, this account aims to ensure that information conveyed to the public can be accessed efficiently and provides a clear picture of the policies and achievements of the Sigi Regency government. Interaction with the community is also facilitated through comments and messages, supporting effective two-way communication.



**Figure 2.** Instagram account by Prokompim Sigi Regency  
*Source: Author documentation, 2024*

Figure 2 displays the Sigi Regency Prokopim Instagram account, which is designed to present information and visuals related to local government activities and policies. With an attractive and aesthetic layout, this account uses high-quality photos and informative graphics to promote various government programs and important events. Instagram functions as a visual platform to reach a wider audience, increase community engagement through dynamic and interactive content, and provide fast and easily accessible updates on the latest developments in Sigi Regency. The role of Prokopim Regional Secretariat through social media Facebook and Instagram in supporting the activities of the Sigi Regency government is described as follows:



**Figure 3.** The main role of Prokopim Regional Secretariat is through social media  
*Source: Processed using Nvivo 12 Plus, 2024*

As a communicator, the Prokopim Regional Secretariat has a strategic role in bridging communication between Regional Heads and deputy Regional Heads and the community via social media. Using Facebook and Instagram, Prokopim effectively conveys information regarding Sigi Regency's development activities and programs. Prokopim not only manages the delivery of news and updates but also monitors public reactions to the information conveyed. This allows Prokopim to assess whether communication objectives have been achieved and make necessary adjustments in its strategy to increase public engagement and transparency.

Prokopim Regional Secretariat also plays an important role in providing managerial support by analyzing data obtained from interactions on social media. They study how the public responds to published news and information and determine appropriate message directions and targets to support government work programs. This evaluation helps Prokopim identify strengths and weaknesses in their communication strategy and make improvements in future work planning to be more effective in achieving national activity socialization goals.

In his capacity as spokesperson, Prokopim Regional Secretariat provides insight into leadership policies and regional development strategies to the community. Through social media, they can facilitate two-way communication that allows the public to provide input and ask questions regarding government policies and programs. The information conveyed by Prokopim helps the community make decisions and solutions and better understand the development steps being implemented, thereby increasing community participation in the regional development process.

On the other hand, the Prokopim Regional Secretariat plays a crucial role in building and maintaining good relationships with various parties through social media. As a liaison between the government and the community, Prokopim ensures that communication runs in not only one direction but also two directions. This is done by establishing productive relationships with the media and the public, managing the delivery of information effectively, and responding to feedback from the public. Through this approach, Prokopim can increase public involvement, improve inter-agency relations, and facilitate constructive exchange of information.

Furthermore, Prokopim's social media accounts reduce uncertainty and increase the accuracy of information the public receives. By managing content carefully and ensuring the correctness of information, Prokopim helps regional leaders make better decisions. These social media accounts not only facilitate communication and interaction with the public but also strengthen the image of local government by eliminating the potential for bias and error in the information disseminated.

Prokopim Regional Secretariat's role in managing mutual assistance in public relations tasks is vital in ensuring the smooth implementation of regional leadership policies and activities. Prokopim coordinates with other regional apparatus, handling various protocol, communication, and documentation tasks to ensure the leadership's agenda can run smoothly. Social media as a publication tool, including Facebook and Instagram, functions to disseminate information and maintain good relations with the community. Even though there are challenges, such as limited press release materials and networks in remote areas, Prokopim remains committed to managing and disseminating information effectively.

Prokopim implements a strict management system for managing social media accounts, limiting access to only authorized admins to maintain the security and privacy of the information in the account. Admins are responsible for posting, publishing, and replying to messages and ensuring that Prokopim's social media accounts are safe and well-managed. This access restriction aims to maintain the integrity and confidentiality of data and ensure that only authorized parties can manage the social media account.

Prokopim's role in maintaining the image of the Sigi Regency Government is vital in the current digital era. As public relations, Prokopim conveys information and functions as a guardian of the government's reputation by ensuring that all news and information disseminated via social media such as Facebook and Instagram is accurate, balanced, and by the facts. Prokopim actively packages developing information, straightens out slanted news, and manages communications so that the public does not negatively perceive the government. With this proactive approach,

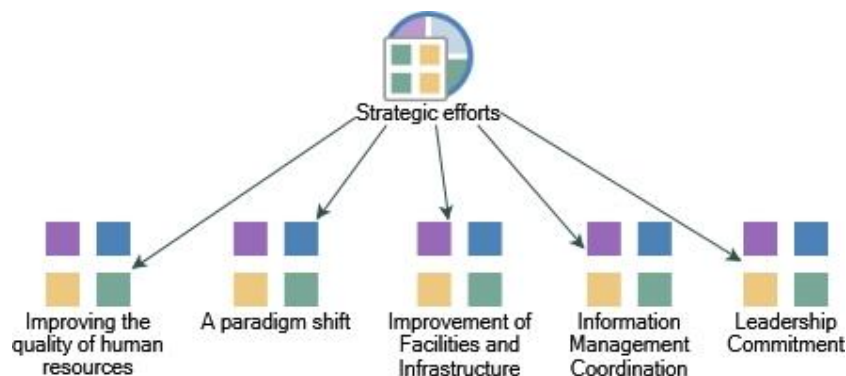
Prokopim helps build public trust and ensures that the government’s image remains positive in the eyes of the public.

In maintaining a good image, Prokopim must also ensure that all social media interactions are carried out professionally and in a friendly manner. Using polite and responsive language in responding to public comments plays an important role in building a positive image of the government. Prokopim relies on technical skills and communications expertise to present high-quality information and ensure that all information services meet standards of accuracy and trustworthiness. In this way, Prokopim acts as an image guardian who manages communications and strengthens the government’s reputation through consistent and trustworthy actions and behavior.

Overall, the Prokopim Regional Secretariat plays a crucial role in communication and information management for the Sigi Regency Government. As the primary communicator, Prokopim connects Regional Heads, Deputy Regional Heads, and the community via social media, ensuring that the information conveyed is accurate and relevant. They also function as effective liaisons, maintaining good relations with various parties and strengthening the government’s image. By managing social media accounts professionally, Prokopim not only disseminates information but also builds public trust and ensures that the government’s image remains positive and transparent. Management helps each other with public relations tasks and strict information security, strengthening Prokopim’s role in supporting the success of government programs and maintaining constructive relationships with the community.

**Realizing Prokopim as the ideal public relations officer**

To realize Prokopim as ideal public relations and improve the image of the Sigi Regency Government, several strategic steps need to be taken:



**Figure 4.** Strategic efforts that need to be taken

*Source: Processed using Nvivo 12 Plus, 2024*

The quality of human resources at Prokopim must be improved through training that fits needs, such as journalism and public relations training. Position rotation is also important to avoid burnout and ensure employees have skills relevant to task demands. This training will improve your ability to create news releases and effectively manage communications. Improving the quality of human resources (HR) in government is crucial because quality HR is the key to the effectiveness and efficiency of public services. According to human resource management theory, developing employee competencies through training and education improves organizational performance. In the government context, skilled and trained human resources can perform tasks better, make more informed decisions, and deliver public services more effectively (Astrama et al., 2024; Dumalang, 2021). This improves service quality and strengthens government accountability and transparency, increasing public trust and supporting the optimal achievement of regional development goals.

Apart from that, Prokopim must also be recognized as more than just covering activities or preparing news releases. Their actual role includes bridging the bureaucracy with the community,

providing information about government policies, and receiving feedback from the community. All parties must understand that Prokopim functions as a vital information bridge between the government and the public so that communication is not considered to ignore other parties. The importance of a paradigm shift in the role of Prokopim lies in understanding that their function is not limited to just covering activities or preparing news releases. As an information bridge between the bureaucracy and the community, Prokopim must be recognized as a vital entity in conveying government policies and receiving and managing community feedback. Understanding Prokopim's role as a mediator who unites information from the government with the needs and aspirations of the public ensures that the communication carried out is not considered neglect but a strategic effort to increase community involvement and government transparency.

In addition, Prokopim's facilities and infrastructure need to be improved to support the effectiveness of their duties. Fast and stable internet facilities are essential to access and disseminate information quickly, ensuring that news and updates can be delivered efficiently to the public. Apart from that, good coordination with work units and related agencies is essential to ensure that the information conveyed is high quality and on target. Each work unit needs to notify Prokopim regarding its activities and policies so that Prokopim can convey accurate and up-to-date information to the public. It also involves gathering input and criticism from the public to improve public services.

Support and commitment from leadership are crucial to the success of Prokopim. Leadership must provide sufficient space for Prokopim to carry out their duties and ensure they can access and convey information transparently. Leaders must also understand the importance of conveying honest information regarding existing challenges and shortcomings to build public trust and support regional progress. With these steps, Prokopim can enhance its role as an effective public relations officer, support the positive image of the Sigi Regency Government, and ensure transparent and accurate communication with the community.

## **CONCLUSION**

The role of the Prokopim Regional Secretariat in managing social media, Facebook, and Instagram is vital in supporting the activities of the Sigi Regency Government. Through these accounts, Prokopim conveys factual and reliable information about government activities and policies in various media formats, such as photos and videos, which ensures that messages are well conveyed to the public. These accounts also serve as a platform to interact with the public, respond to questions, and correct misinformation, thereby improving transparency, trust, and relations between the government and the public. The professional design and easy navigation of the Facebook account, as well as the aesthetic appearance and dynamic content of the Instagram account, help reach a wider audience and ensure effective communication.

Prokopim of the Sigi Regency Regional Secretariat has four main tasks supporting government activities through social media. First, strategic communicators bridge communication between the government and the community, conveying information related to development activities and programs effectively and transparently. Second, in building and maintaining relationships, Prokopim ensures productive two-way communication with the media and the public and responds quickly to feedback. Third, Prokopim helps each other with public relations tasks, coordinating with other regional apparatus to handle protocol, communication, and documentation tasks to ensure the smooth implementation of regional leadership policies and activities. Fourth, they maintain the government's image by ensuring that all information disseminated via social media is accurate, balanced, and by the facts, as well as carrying out professional and friendly interactions to build a positive image of the government in the eyes of the public.

To realize Prokopim as ideal public relations and improve the image of the Sigi Regency Government, strategic steps include improving the quality of human resources through journalistic and public relations training, as well as rotating positions to prevent burnout and ensure relevant skills. Prokopim must be recognized as more than just covering activities; it must act as an information bridge between the bureaucracy and the community, convey government

policies, and receive feedback. Infrastructure facilities like fast internet must be improved to support task effectiveness. Leadership support and commitment are critical, ensuring that Prokopim can carry out its duties transparently and build public trust. Through these steps, Prokopim can support the government's positive image and ensure transparent communication with the public.

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