

The Effect of Public Trust on Information of the Spread of Novel Coronavirus Outbreak 2019 (Covid-19)

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ABSTRACT

Public trust in information to maintain health in tackling the spread of the COVID-19 virus outbreak (coronavirus disease 2019) is very important, because someone needs to learn about the disease and take action according to the information. The study was conducted in 7 villages, Enrekang Regency, Cendana District, South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. The majority of these areas are farmers and are areas affected by the corona virus outbreak with a fairly high increase in cases. The research method was carried out by interviewing several informants, documentation and literature related to research, with the aim of finding out how people trust various sources of information and share information on COVID-19. The results of the study show that people are indifferent, do not care about health protocols and even there are many people who do not believe in the covid-19 virus, with misleading information to overcome this, socialization is carried out in a more persuasive way, the role and coordination of opinion leaders, strategic placement of information media. The role of government agencies, health professionals, information media and community participation is very important, as they are a trusted source of information and share information from these sources because they think it will increase awareness about disease outbreaks and promote disease prevention. This suggests that overall, a better understanding of the different psychological mechanisms underlying the sharing of health information from multiple sources could help contribute to the provision of more effective information about COVID-19 prevention.

Keywords: COVID-19, Disease Outbreak, Public Trust, Prevention

1. INTRODUCTION

Public trust is important in complying with government policies and an important determinant for citizens to comply with public policies and interventions, especially in times of crisis. Public trust in government encourages citizens to comply with government policies [1–7]. When the government is considered trustworthy, citizens tend to comply with regulations [3,5,6]. In addition, empirical studies also suggest that public trust promotes policy compliance and facilitates policy implementation [8,9]. Most importantly, trust in the government is also conducive for citizens to comply with policy programs voluntarily [4]. On the other hand, a low level of trust in the government can reduce support for government policies [7]. This can also damage the legitimacy of policies and their implementation and lead to lower levels of compliance [10]. In times of uncertainty, trust can be explained as a factor that stems from salient values and past performance that generates confidence and ultimately leads to cooperation [11], such cooperation will ultimately lead to successful policy implementation and yield satisfactory results. However, during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak, it has been proven that countries with high and low public confidence alike respond effectively to epidemic prevention and control. Therefore, there is a relationship to public trust and its effect on policy compliance and implementation. Traditionally, the high level of public trust in the government has significantly influenced citizens to comply with policy interventions.

The Covid-19 virus, which has become a global problem with the faster spread of information through communication media, especially on social media, has caused the flow of information exchange to occur in seconds, one of which is through innovation in social interaction, namely social media. Social media today is not only for communicating and establishing relationships with new people but also as a means of disseminating information [12].

The development of Covid-19 cases is increasing every day. This case is almost evenly distributed throughout the world, including in Indonesia. The impact of this virus is almost all sectors, not only health and the economy, the restrictions on activities in the community also affect all businesses and activities that are usually carried out by the community, thus disrupting the movement and dissemination of health information about COVID-19 in the community.

The spread of COVID-19 information continues to be carried out in various countries, including the Indonesian government. All components and government and private institutions disseminate information about this virus, transmission, prevention information to victims due to COVID-19. In order to prevent the spread of Covid-19, the government has carried out socialization and appeals to the public to implement clean and healthy living behavior through 3M, namely getting used to wearing masks, always washing hands with soap, and keeping a distance. But not a few villagers who ignore the appeal. Many village communities generally think that the corona virus is not a

threat, there is low public awareness in implementing health protocols such as the use of masks and social distancing and the lack of personal protective equipment owned by the community [13].

Covid-19 brings many social changes and communication patterns in life. Establishing the habit of interacting with social distancing is a very significant change in communication patterns. From what was originally direct communication to become the main communication in everyday life, now it has shifted drastically towards communication using the media. This is because of the rules for implementing social distancing. In order to minimize the transmission rate in Indonesia. Individual habits in communicating and interacting with each other by meeting physically are no longer a priority during a pandemic, it becomes a motivation to communicate with the media [14]

The regulation, which is a government policy in terms of preventing and tackling the COVID-19 outbreak, is the formation of the Covid-19 Task Force (Covid-19 Task Force). One of the tasks of the Covid-19 Handling Task Force is to increase readiness and ability to prevent, detect, and respond to Covid-19. This policy is implemented in all regions in Indonesia [15].

The COVID-19 pandemic is one of the many global problems that affect the lives of citizens [16]. Various policies issued by the Indonesian government in its handling. However, various facts show that the policies issued have not been able to build some citizens' awareness of the COVID-19 virus.

Positive cases of the corona virus in Indonesia are increasing even though the government has tried various ways to handle it, this is due to a lack of understanding and knowledge of the corona virus pandemic and the lack of public awareness in handling and preventing the Covid-19 virus which is very important. Due to the increasing transmission of the Covid-19 virus in Indonesia, the potential for spread and transmission is still ongoing. Policies and programs have been issued by the central government in handling and overcoming the Covid-19 pandemic.

The current outbreak of the corona virus really requires government action and efforts to deal with cases of widespread transmission of the virus. One of the benchmarks for the government in dealing with cases that occur is to carry out comprehensive communication efforts (dissemination of information) publicly. The government should inform the public in accordance with the understanding of society in general. Information to the public is carried out by inviting and urging the public to break the chain of the spread of the virus, in addition, the government also provides education to the public related to preventing the spread of the Covid-19 virus. The information provided by the government is the same as providing information and appeals to the public. Public communication during the important COVID-19 pandemic, also provides information to the public regarding the development of the spread of the corona virus as well as educational information in preventing transmission and breaking the chain of spread of the corona virus in the

community by complying with and implementing Health protocols.

At the time of the outbreak, the public really needed information about the impact caused by the Covid-19 virus in increasing awareness of the dangers faced when ignoring the Covid-19 virus. Many adults with comorbid conditions lack critical knowledge about COVID-19 and, despite concerns, have not changed their routines. So that there is a gap that shows that public health efforts are needed to mobilize the most vulnerable people, the use of content on various media, plays a very important role during the pandemic. This is done to increase public awareness optimally [17].

The important role of the government in conveying information to the public and mass media has a strategic role in educating the public about the dangers of Covid-19 [18]. Therefore, special planning is needed by the government through social media which is different from the delivery of information through conventional media. In a pandemic crisis, the approach taken by Public Relations has a major impact on the effectiveness of the information received by the public, namely the application of health protocols, educational information that can be followed by the community and the goal of preventing the spread can be achieved. true and don't get caught up in misleading information [19]

The Indonesian government in carrying out prevention and handling programs to eradicate the spread of covid-19, seeks to convey information in various media (both social media and television) to expand information related to the prevention of covid-19. The communication carried out by the government in the media during the COVID-19 pandemic is very important. Government communication in the media becomes effective and efficient during the Covid-19 pandemic when the conditions are met, namely the source of information obtained is trustworthy (credible), information disclosure, and consistency and there is a goal of persuading the public to take action that can reduce the danger of contracting the Covid-19 virus. The impact given by social media is one clear evidence of the development of communication technology. Social media is a place to represent oneself in the virtual world (internet). Currently, the government has issued a policy for the Enforcement of Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) where everything is done at home. Social media can also create virtual social relationships as an online facilitator that strengthens relationships between users as well as a social bond [20].

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The research was conducted in Enrekang Regency, Cendana District, with seven villages and the majority of the community earning from agricultural products. This type of research is descriptive qualitative research, research that seeks to describe the current problem solving based on social reality by using data. The research approach is a qualitative descriptive research. According to Bogdan and Taylor [21] qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior.

In addition, qualitative data was obtained by means of documentation and online research. Document-based data collection is done by reading, studying, researching, reviewing, and reviewing the literature in the form of books, journals, papers and all archival documents and then processed to become material in research. Online research, namely by searching online-based data or information, the information and data obtained can support research and expand references [22]

Informants in the study were people who could provide information, including the COVID-19 task force, community leaders, in this case the village head of 7 villages, namely the head of Karrang village, the head of the Taulan village, the village head of Pundilemo, the head of the village of Malalin, the head of the village of Cendana, Pinang village head and Lebang village head. As well as religious leaders, youth leaders, communities, RT and RW in every village in Cendana District.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The COVID-19 pandemic is the deadliest threat facing humanity in the modern world while vaccines are for the most part not yet available, and one of the most effective ways to reduce the COVID-19 outbreak is to protect oneself and adhere to control policies for collective safety. The results of the study based on interviews with representatives of Respondents in Cendana District found that most adopted the newly introduced personal protection measures and a large proportion of the community indicated that they had never adopted these guidelines during the early phase of the pandemic. This is in accordance with the results of interviews with respondents who showed that respondents did not change their social behavior even before the implementation of government policies were issued, because they assumed that they would not have the impact of covid because on average they have jobs as farmers who will do outdoor activities and will sweat. so that they will not be affected by the virus, and some people are not willing to be vaccinated.

This study contributes to the growing literature on public trust and policy compliance in several ways. Public trust is positively related to respondents' compliance with personal protection measures and reaffirms that public trust in government determines policy compliance tendencies [1-7, 23]. After the government established a COVID-19 task force as a special task force for pandemic response when a strict lockdown policy was implemented, a lockdown policy and vulnerable groups were also implemented. The next important thing is that the mediating effect of trust in health professionals and local government which fully mediates the relationship between public trust in government and the implementation of personal protective measures is very important in this area.

The public's trust in the government is enhanced by the existence of a high level of trust in health professionals which has encouraged the general public to comply with safety measures. As found in this study, professional trust has a dual positive effect on health policy compliance, namely a direct effect and a mediating effect on the relationship between trust in government and policy

compliance. During a crisis, professional trust serves as an additional mechanism, empowering governments to increase the likelihood of citizens adopting personal protective measures. It can be seen that the results of interviews with village heads in 7 villages in Cendana District show that some people are indifferent, do not care about health protocols and even many people do not believe in the covid-19 virus, with misleading information and to overcome In this case, socialization in a more persuasive way continues, and the importance of the role and coordination of opinion leaders, the placement of information media is very strategic. The role of government agencies, health professionals, information media and community participation is very important, as they are a trusted source of information and share information from these sources because they think it will increase awareness about disease outbreaks and promote disease prevention. This suggests that overall, a better understanding of the different psychological mechanisms underlying the sharing of health information from multiple sources could help contribute to the provision of more effective information about COVID-19 prevention. The role of health professionals and local officials is to always remind the general public to wear masks, wash hands frequently, avoid risk areas, and practice social distancing. As citizens place their trust in health professionals and officers who are tackling the spread of COVID-19, people assume they have knowledge and listen to their advice and tend to adopt more personal protective measures and ultimately contribute to the success of pandemic prevention and control efforts. Knowledge, concern and involvement of the professional community are key to promoting epidemic prevention and overcoming [24–27]. However, healthcare professionals must be careful not to influence policy but to rely on their professional advice and fulfill their fiduciary commitments; otherwise, their trust cannot be maintained [28].

The COVID-19 pandemic is a global crisis that is closely related to all countries, shared experiences between countries are considered important. Through an assessment of the results of various countries in responding to public health crises, it can be seen the important role of public trust in government and professional trust. When the level of trust in government is low, trust in health professionals, government agencies in this case the role and coordination of opinion leaders and information media used as a means of prevention, is an important thing to encourage the adoption of personal protective measures and ultimately produce the desired results. , the pandemic is relatively under control.

4. CONCLUSION

Public trust is positively related to the general public's adherence to adopt personal protective measures during the public health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. More importantly, trust in health professionals, government agencies i.e. the role and coordination of opinion leaders, and the information media have an important role in responding to crises and promoting policy compliance because the public really needs to know how to protect themselves accurately from trusted sources. In normal

situations, professional trust plays a supporting role but in times of crisis it plays a more prominent role, and more persuasive socialization is very important to overcome the indifferent nature of society and do not believe in the danger of COVID-19. The public health crisis that has affected millions of lives with the COVID-19 outbreak, shows that knowledge and trust in health professional officers, the role of the closest institutions and information media, are much more relevant, besides that the general public must also have a high level of awareness and want to trust and follow the intervention guidelines.

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization, F.D and A.A; methodology, F.D and A.A; formal analysis, F.D and A.U; investigation, F.D.; source of funds, F.D; data curation, F.D.; writing—preparation of original draft, F.D; writing—reviews and editing, all authors; visualization, F.D and A.U; supervision, A.A and A.U.; administration of research activities, F.D; All authors have read and approved the published version of the manuscript.

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