International Journal of Education, Vocational and Social Science
https://e-journal.citakonsultindo.or.id/index.php/IJEVSS
E-ISSN : 2963 4954
IJEVSS

Local Government Responsiveness To Public Complaints Via Social Media: An Integrative Literature Review And Its Implications For The City Of Palembang

Arika Nafisa
Sriwijaya University, Indonesia
Sena Putra Prabujaya
Sriwijaya University, Indonesia
Atrika Iriani
Sriwijaya University, Indonesia
Raniasa Putra
Sriwijaya University, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: arikanafisa12@gmail.com

Abstract

Local government social media has shifted from a publication channel to a channel for citizen complaints, yet government responses on this channel are often inconsistent. This article synthesizes empirical evidence on government responsiveness to citizen complaints submitted through social media and digital channels, and draws implications for the Palembang City Government. Using an integrative literature review of 15 studies published between 2013 and 2026 from international and Indonesian contexts, the findings were analyzed along four dimensions of responsiveness synthesized from Saltzstein, Mosher, Rourke, Vigoda, Bryer, and Liao: speed and accuracy of response, transparency and accessibility, collaborative interaction, and follow-up and resolution. The synthesis reveals four patterns. First, social media accelerates initial responses, but speed does not guarantee substantive resolution. Second, responsiveness is higher when complaints enter institutionalized mechanisms with procedures, deadlines, and supervisory oversight. Third, two-way interaction and collective citizen input speed up resolution. Fourth, follow-up tends to be selective, shaped by complaint content, public pressure, and the brokering role of regional heads. The article proposes a typology of digital responsiveness (substantive, symbolic, selective, and non-responsive) and four propositions for further research.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

For Palembang, which already has Mayor Regulation No. 27 of 2014 yet receives many complaints through social media comment sections, the findings underline the need for an institutional bridge between informal channels and the formal complaint system.

Keywords: ***government responsiveness; citizen complaints; government social media; digital public service; integrative literature review.***

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary public administration evaluates the quality of service not merely through procedural compliance, but through the government's capacity to address the needs of its citizens. The "New Public Service" paradigm positions citizens as rights-holders entitled to service, rather than as mere customers (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015). In Indonesia, this commitment is reinforced by Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services, which mandates that all service providers manage public complaints.

Digital transformation has altered how citizens submit complaints. Presidential Regulation Number 95 of 2018 on Electronic-Based Government Systems encourages local governments to leverage technology to foster more transparent services. Official government social media accounts serve as the most tangible manifestation of this shift. Unlike websites, which are typically one-way, social media facilitates open, two-way communication (Mergel, 2013; Criado & Villodre, 2021) and creates opportunities for citizens to act as partners to the government in improving services (Linders, 2012).

Consequently, comment sections—originally intended as spaces for feedback or appreciation—have evolved into forums for lodging complaints. Greater citizen participation on these channels brings increased pressure on the government to provide adequate responses. However, studies in Indonesia indicate that these expectations remain largely unmet: only 10.71% of official municipal government social media accounts within a national sample were found to respond to citizen complaints or service requests (Soantahon, 2023).

The Phenomenon in the City of Palembang

The city of Palembang clearly illustrates this phenomenon. Preliminary observations conducted by the author in May 2026 regarding the official Instagram account @protokol.palembang revealed that citizens frequently use the comment section to lodge

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

complaints concerning civil registration services, drainage, damaged roads, public street lighting, and the impacts of traffic policies. Residents also lodge complaints on social media posts unrelated to the substance of their grievances, and some repeat the same complaint across different posts—for instance, reports regarding a river flow on Jalan Sei Itam that has been blocked by a wall.

This pattern mirrors recurring service issues within the city. The Governor of South Sumatra has highlighted clogged drainage systems and damaged roads as primary triggers for flooding in Palembang (detikSumbagsel, 2026), while the manner in which city officials responded to criticism regarding the flooding drew public backlash (Kompas.id, 2026). Conversely, the Mayor has, on occasion, personally followed up on reports of damaged roads submitted by residents via social media (detikSumbagsel, 2025). This contrast points to an inconsistent level of responsiveness.

Such inconsistency persists despite the existence of an established institutional framework. Palembang Mayor Regulation Number 27 of 2014 established a Public Complaint Service Unit; the Regional Secretary once instructed all regional government agencies (OPD) to monitor resident complaints on social media (ANTARA News Sumsel, 2019); and the official SP4N-LAPOR! channel is also available. The issue is not a lack of channels or regulations, but rather how complaints raised through informal channels are actually addressed. Existing studies on this city government have largely focused on the quality of social media-based services from the perspective of the service providers (Jumroh et al., 2024), rather than from the perspective of responsiveness to resident complaints.

Conceptual Framework: Four Aspects of Responsiveness

Bureaucratic responsiveness is a concept with many competing definitions (Saltzstein, 1992). Consequently, this article does not rely on a single theory; instead, it synthesizes six different perspectives into four analytical aspects. Vigoda (2000) defines responsiveness in terms of the speed and accuracy with which the public sector reacts to the demands of its citizens. Mosher (1968) and Rourke (1969) emphasized that responsiveness must be aligned with bureaucratic professionalism and measured by the extent to which actions correspond to public demands. Bryer (2007) expanded this concept into "collaborative responsiveness," which positions citizens as partners. Liao (2018) proposed a pragmatic model that balances the demands of citizens with the professional judgment of administrators.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Tabel 1. Empat Aspek Responsivitas dan Pertanyaan Sintesis

Aspect	Theoretical basis	Questions posed to the literature
Speed and accuracy of response	Vigoda (2000); Saltzstein (1992); Rourke (1969)	Do digital channels accelerate responses, and are those responses aligned with the substance of the complaints?
Transparency and accessibility	Vigoda (2000); Saltzstein (1992)	How do the transparency of status and the design of the channels influence the response?
Collaborative interaction	Bryer (2007)	Do dialogue and citizen engagement alter the likelihood and speed of resolution?
Follow-up and resolution	Mosher (1968); Rourke (1969); Liao (2018)	What types of complaints are acted upon, and what factors determine this selection process?

Source: Processed by the author (2026).

Research Gap

The literature on digital responsiveness is growing rapidly, yet it remains divided into two streams that rarely intersect. The first stream examines institutionalized complaint platforms, such as online petition systems in China (Wang et al., 2025), SeeClickFix in the United States (Schiff, 2025), and water-related complaint systems in Mumbai (Kumar, 2025). The second stream investigates social media as a channel for interaction, such as Twitter in Seoul (Eom et al., 2018) and Central Java (Purwadi et al., 2025), or Instagram in Makassar and Bandung (Hendrarso et al., 2024; Atnan et al., 2024). Studies in Indonesia generally consist of single-case analyses using disparate frameworks, making their findings difficult to compare. There is a lack of reviews that synthesize these two streams through a multidimensional framework of responsiveness—particularly one applied to the context of city governments that receive complaints via informal channels.

Novelty

This article offers three contributions. First, it synthesizes evidence from both institutionalized channels and social media platforms into a unified, four-aspect framework of responsiveness. Second, it develops a typology of digital responsiveness (substantive, symbolic,

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

selective, and non-responsive), accompanied by four propositions that can be tested through empirical research. Third, it translates these synthesized findings into specific policy implications for the City of Palembang.

Research Objective

This article aims to synthesize research findings on government responsiveness to citizen complaints—submitted via social media and other digital channels—based on a four-aspect framework, and to formulate the implications of these findings for the Palembang City Government. It addresses the following questions: what patterns of responsiveness does the literature reveal when governments receive complaints through digital channels, and what are the implications for city governments that receive complaints in the comment sections of social media platforms?

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Approach and Type

This study employs a qualitative approach using an integrative literature review method. This method was selected for its capacity to synthesize studies with diverse designs—quantitative, qualitative, and conceptual—to develop a new framework or perspective on a given topic (Torraco, 2005; Whittemore & Knafl, 2005). An integrative review is also well-suited for topics where the existing literature has evolved from several disparate streams that have yet to be brought together (Snyder, 2019).

Research Setting and Context

As a literature review, this study does not involve a physical field site. The context for applying the synthesized findings is the Palembang City Government, examined through regulations, media reports, prior studies, and the author's preliminary observations of the city government's official Instagram account. This contextual data is used to derive implications rather than to measure the actual responsiveness of the Palembang City Government.

Research Focus

The research focuses on findings from previous studies regarding how governments respond to citizen complaints or service requests submitted via social media and digital channels.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

These findings are analyzed through the lens of the four aspects of responsiveness presented in Table 1.

Literature Sources and Selection Criteria

A literature search was conducted using Scopus (via the *Publish or Perish* software), Google Scholar, and the Garuda portal (for Indonesian-language literature). The search utilized combinations of the following keywords: "government responsiveness," "citizen complaint," "complaint handling," "government social media," "online request," "responsivitas pemerintah" (government responsiveness), and "pengaduan masyarakat" (public complaints).

Inclusion criteria:

1. The study addresses government responses to citizen complaints, reports, or service requests submitted via social media or digital channels.
2. The source must be an article from a reputable or accredited journal, or a widely cited conceptual review.
3. The work must have been published between 2013 and 2026, in either English or Indonesian.
4. Contains findings that can be mapped to at least one of the four aspects of responsiveness.

Exclusion criteria: studies on e-government adoption that lack an analysis of responses to complaints, studies on complaint handling in the private sector, and opinion pieces devoid of data or a conceptual framework.

Selection was conducted purposively to ensure a diversity of contexts (developed countries, developing countries, and Indonesia) as well as a variety of channel types (institutionalized platforms and social media). This process yielded 15 studies for analysis, consisting of 9 international studies and 6 studies from Indonesia.

Data Collection Techniques

Data from each study were extracted into a worksheet containing the author(s) and year, context, type of channel, methodology and data, key findings, and relevant aspects of responsiveness. A summary of the extracted data is presented in Table 2.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Data Analysis Techniques

The analysis was carried out in three stages, following Whittemore and Knafl (2005). First, data reduction: findings from each study were deductively coded according to the four aspects of responsiveness. Second, data display and comparison: findings within the same aspect were compared across different contexts to identify patterns, similarities, and contradictions. Third, drawing conclusions: patterns across the various aspects were synthesized into a typology of digital responsiveness and research propositions, which were then applied to the context of the City of Palembang.

Data Validity

The validity of the synthesis was maintained through four steps: (1) cross-referencing the summary of findings with the abstracts and conclusion sections of the original articles; (2) retaining the extraction worksheets as an audit trail; (3) discussing the coding and interpretations with a supervisor (acting as a peer debriefing); and (4) explicitly stating the limitations of the corpus in the Discussion section.

RESEARCH RESULT

The fifteen studies indicate that digital channels accelerate government response; however, substantive resolution depends on the institutionalization of these channels, interaction with citizens, and the content of the complaints. Table 2 summarizes the corpus, followed by a synthesis presented according to each aspect of responsiveness.

Overview of the Corpus

Table 2. Summary of Studies in the Corpus

No.	Study	Context and channel	Method and data	Key findings	Aspect
1	Panagiotopoulos et al. (2013)	UK; Food Standards Agency social media	Case study	Social media serves as an additional channel that accelerates responses to citizens' inquiries.	1

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

No.	Study	Context and channel	Method and data	Key findings	Aspect
2	Peixoto & Fox (2016)	Global South; 23 ICT platforms	Comparative review	ICT platforms enhance the capacity of policymakers to respond, though they have largely yet to influence the willingness to do so.	2, 4
3	Reddick et al. (2017)	Local governments; Facebook	Case study, text analysis	Citizen comments can be processed into feedback for organizational learning and service improvement.	3, 4
4	Eom et al. (2018)	Seoul, South Korea; Twitter	Social network analysis, case study	Mayors act as liaisons between citizens and officials; network structures support responsiveness.	1, 4
5	Haro-de-Rosario et al. (2018)	Spanish local governments; Facebook and Twitter	Quantitative analysis of engagement	Citizens prefer Facebook over Twitter for participation; the openness of information and the interactivity of the channels influence engagement.	3
6	Grossman & Slough (2022)	Developing countries	Literature review	Responsiveness is shaped by interactions among citizens, politicians, and bureaucrats, as well as the capacity of the state.	4

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

No.	Study	Context and channel	Method and data	Key findings	Aspect
7	Soantahon (2023)	Municipal governments in Indonesia; official social media channels	Mixed methods, cluster sampling	Only 10.71% of official accounts respond to citizen complaints or service requests.	1
8	Hendrarso et al. (2024)	Makassar; citizen reporter Instagram account	Analysis of responses over one year	Reports made via private citizen accounts receive faster responses than direct complaints, driven by social pressure and the potential for going viral.	1, 4
9	Atnan et al. (2024)	Bandung; Instagram and X	Case study	Interactions with and responses to public comments remain inconsistent; citizen engagement is low.	1, 3
10	Jumroh et al. (2024)	Palembang; social media-based services	In-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGD)	City government social media services are perceived as user-oriented and open on the part of the providers.	2
11	Wang et al. (2025)	China; national online petition platform and Wuhan	Analysis of 238,835 and 793,119 citizen claims	Complaints elicit higher response rates than non-complaint comments, driven by oversight from superiors and the desire of bureaucrats to avoid sanctions.	2, 4

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

No.	Study	Context and channel	Method and data	Key findings	Aspect
12	Kumar (2025)	Mumbai; water sector grievance system	Analysis of approximately 20,000 complaints and interviews	44% of complaints are addressed; priorities are determined by the content of the complaint and available capacity, which may perpetuate inequalities.	4
13	Schiff (2025)	100 US cities; SeeClickFix	Quantitative analysis of service requests	Comments and "follows" from citizens double the likelihood of a complaint being resolved; collaborative complaints are resolved up to five days faster.	3
14	Purwadi et al. (2025)	Central Java; Twitter and LaporGub!	Qualitative; interviews and analysis of 10,000 tweets	Governors act as intermediaries that accelerate responses; obstacles include incomplete complaints and challenges in cross-sectoral coordination.	1, 3, 4
15	Lenggani & Santoso (2026)	BBPJN (National Road Implementation Agency) for Central Java–DIY; LaporGub! portal	Descriptive qualitative	Responsiveness remains administrative in nature and has yet to focus on substantive resolution.	1, 4

Aspect descriptions: 1 = speed and precision; 2 = transparency and accessibility; 3 = collaborative interaction; 4 = follow-up and resolution. Source: Processed by the author (2026).

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

The corpus is dominated by studies on local government (11 out of 15). Regarding channels, 9 studies examine social media, 5 investigate institutionalized complaint platforms or ICT-based systems, and 1 provides a general overview. Only two studies focus on Instagram, both of which are set in Indonesia.

Aspect 1: Speed and Accuracy of Response

The literature concurs that social media accelerates initial responses. It serves as an additional channel, enabling government agencies to address citizens' inquiries more rapidly (Panagiotopoulos et al., 2013). In Makassar, reports submitted via citizens' social media accounts receive faster responses than those filed through direct complaint channels (Hendrarso et al., 2024), while in Central Java, citizens favor Twitter, perceiving it as the quickest way to cut through bureaucracy (Purwadi et al., 2025).

However, speed does not equate to accuracy. The handling of complaints via the *LaporGub!* platform by the BBPJN (National Road Implementation Agency) is considered primarily administrative, failing to reach substantive resolution (Lenggani & Santoso, 2026). In Bandung, responses to public comments on Instagram and X are inconsistent (Atnan et al., 2024). At the national level, many municipal government accounts provide no response at all (Soantahon, 2023). Thus, the dimensions of speed and accuracy—as framed by Vigoda (2000)—can be decoupled: a response may be prompt without addressing the actual substance of an issue.

Aspect 2: Transparency and Accessibility

While digital channels offer high accessibility, such access does not guarantee a response. Peixoto and Fox (2016), who analyzed 23 ICT-based platforms across countries in the Global South, found that while these platforms enhance the capacity of policymakers to respond, they have largely failed to alter their willingness to do so. The findings of Wang et al. (2025) reinforces this point: on institutionalized platforms, complaints tend to receive a higher response rate, as superiors anticipate negative feedback and bureaucrats seek to avoid sanctions.

When channels are institutionalized, the status of complaints can be monitored. Purwadi et al. (2025) note that Central Java has Governor's Regulation Number 13 of 2018, which provides the legal basis for managing complaints via electronic media—ensuring, for instance, that complaints posted on Twitter are forwarded to the *LaporGub!* system. In contrast, a study in

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Palembang evaluates social media-based services primarily from the perspective of the service providers (Jumroh et al., 2024); consequently, there is no evidence regarding the transparency of complaint-handling status from the citizens' perspective.

Aspect 3: Collaborative Interaction

Two-way interaction has been shown to improve the resolution of complaints. Schiff's (2025) analysis of service requests across 100 cities reveals that comments and "follows" from other citizens double the likelihood of a complaint being closed, with collaborative complaints being resolved up to five days faster. Collective input serves as a signal that an issue is both real and urgent.

Dialogue is also necessary because complaints are often incomplete. Purwadi et al. (2025) found that many complaints fail to specify a location or provide details about the issue, requiring officials to seek clarification. Furthermore, citizen comments can be utilized for organizational learning (Reddick et al., 2017). However, citizen engagement is influenced by the choice of platform, the openness of information, and the interactivity of the channel (Haro-de-Rosario et al., 2018); in Bandung, for example, citizen engagement on official accounts remains low (Atnan et al., 2024). Thus, collaborative interaction—as defined by Bryer (2007)—has yet to become a common practice.

Aspect 4: Follow-up and Resolution

Follow-up tends to be selective. In Mumbai, only 44% of the approximately 20,000 complaints related to the water sector are addressed, with bureaucrats prioritizing complaints based on their content and available capacity (Kumar, 2025). More complex complaints—which frequently originate from groups receiving the poorest service—are less likely to be resolved. In Makassar, the response is accelerated by emergency events, public priorities, and social pressure stemming from reports that go viral (Hendrarso et al., 2024).

The role of the head of a local government emerges as a decisive factor. The Mayor of Seoul (Eom et al., 2018) and the Governor of Central Java (Purwadi et al., 2025) act as intermediaries who push the bureaucracy to follow up on complaints. Recurring obstacles include cross-sectoral coordination and budgetary requirements (Purwadi et al., 2025). Grossman and Slough (2022) assert that responsiveness is ultimately shaped by bureaucratic incentives and capacity, rather than by the communication channels alone.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Cross-Aspect Patterns

Table 3. Cross-Aspect Patterns Derived from the Synthesis

Aspect	Dominant pattern	Conditions that strengthen	Conditions that weaken
Speed and accuracy	Quick at the start, but not necessarily substantive	Real-time channels, leadership attention	Administrative response; no standard for the content of the reply
Transparency and accessibility	Easily accessible, yet its status is rarely visible	Institutionalization of channels, regulations, supervisory oversight	Informal channels with no connection to official systems
Collaborative interaction	Useful, but seldom put into practice	Collective input from citizens, clarifying dialogue	Incomplete complaints; low level of engagement
Follow-up and resolution	Selective	Urgent or viral issues, with the head of the local government acting as a liaison	Complex complaints; cross-sectoral coordination; budgetary requirements

Source: Compiled by the author from a synthesis of literature (2026).

DISCUSSION

This synthesis suggests that the core issue regarding digital responsiveness lies not in the presence or absence of communication channels, but rather in the gap between providing a response and achieving a resolution. This section formalizes that gap into a typology, derives propositions, and subsequently applies them to the context of the City of Palembang.

A Typology of Digital Responsiveness

Combining these four aspects yields four patterns of responsiveness, as presented in Table 4. This typology expands upon the framework proposed by Vigoda (2000)—which emphasizes speed and accuracy—by incorporating dimensions related to the transparency of status and the implementation of follow-up actions, as highlighted by Rourke (1969) and Liao (2018).

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Table 4. Typology of Digital Responsiveness

Pattern	Characteristic	Example in literature
Responsive-substantive	Responded to, addressing the core of the complaint; the status remains open, with visible follow-up action	Institutionalized channels with supervisory oversight (Wang et al., 2025); collaborative complaints resolved more quickly (Schiff, 2025)
Responsive-symbolic	Responded to promptly, but with a template or procedural reply that offers no actual resolution	Administrative responsiveness on the LaporGub! BBPJN platform (Lenggani & Santoso, 2026)
Responsive-selective	Only certain complaints are followed up on—for example, those that go viral, are urgent, are easy to handle, or are highlighted by leadership	Citizen accounts in Makassar (Hendrarso et al., 2024); prioritization based on complaint content in Mumbai (Kumar, 2025)
Non-responsive	No response and no follow-up action taken	Majority of city government accounts within a national sample (Soantahon, 2023)

Source: Compiled by the author from a synthesis of literature (2026).

Symbolic and selective patterns warrant special attention. Both may appear responsive on the surface, making them easy to overlook in evaluations that rely solely on counting the number of responses. In reality, selective patterns risk exacerbating inequalities, as citizens who lack the means to make their complaints go viral—or whose complaints are the most difficult to address—are often the least likely to receive service (Kumar, 2025).

Propositions for Further Research

Based on these cross-dimensional patterns, this article puts forward four propositions that can be empirically tested.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

1. P1 (institutionalization): The clearer the link between complaints made on social media and official complaint systems—for instance, through regulations, ticket numbers, and deadlines—the greater the likelihood of a substantive response. This proposition draws on Peixoto and Fox (2016), Wang et al. (2025), and Purwadi et al. (2025).
2. P2 (speed without standards): In the absence of standards for the content of replies, the pressure for speed on social media tends to result in symbolic responsiveness (Lenggani & Santoso, 2026; Atnan et al., 2024).
3. P3 (collective signals): Publicly visible citizen input, such as follow-up comments or repeated complaints, increases the chances of follow-up action, but simultaneously raises the risk of selective responsiveness (Schiff, 2025; Hendrarso et al., 2024; Epstein et al., 2023).
4. P4 (bridging figures): Local government leaders who act as intermediaries facilitate faster short-term responses; however, without institutionalization, the consistency of such responsiveness remains dependent on the individual in question (Eom et al., 2018; Purwadi et al., 2025).

Implications for the Context of Palembang City

The situation in Palembang City most closely resembles that of an informal channel—lacking a clear pathway into the formal system. While a regulatory framework exists—specifically Mayor's Regulation (Perwali) Number 27 of 2014—and the SP4N-LAPOR! platform is available, the documents reviewed do not reveal any provisions that explicitly link complaints made in social media comment sections to formal complaint-handling units. This contrasts with the approach in Central Java, which issued Governor's Regulation (Pergub) Number 13 of 2018 specifically to address complaints submitted via electronic communication channels (Purwadi et al., 2025).

There are also indications of a selective pattern. The Mayor's direct follow-up on reports of damaged roads (detikSumbagsel, 2025) aligns with the "P4" framework: rapid responses occur when complaints reach top leadership. Conversely, the recurring complaints observed during the author's preliminary research suggest that some citizens have yet to receive a definitive resolution. As this observation cannot yet be generalized, it requires further empirical investigation—for instance, through content analysis of complaint threads and interviews with account administrators and relevant regional government agencies (OPD).

For Palembang, this synthesis points to a single priority: building an institutional bridge between social media comment sections and the formal complaint-handling system. Without

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

such a bridge, merely increasing the speed of replies risks amounting to nothing more than symbolic responsiveness.

Theoretical Contribution

This article demonstrates that, in a digital context, responsiveness should be understood as a multi-layered concept: being present (replying), understanding (addressing the substance), being transparent (communicating status), and ensuring resolution (demonstrating follow-up actions). The synthesis of work by Saltzstein, Mosher, Rourke, Vigoda, Bryer, and Liao can effectively be translated into a typology that distinguishes these various layers of responsiveness. The findings also enrich Bryer's (2007) formulation: collaboration occurs not only between the government and those who report issues, but also among citizens, whose collective signals influence bureaucratic priorities (Schiff, 2025).

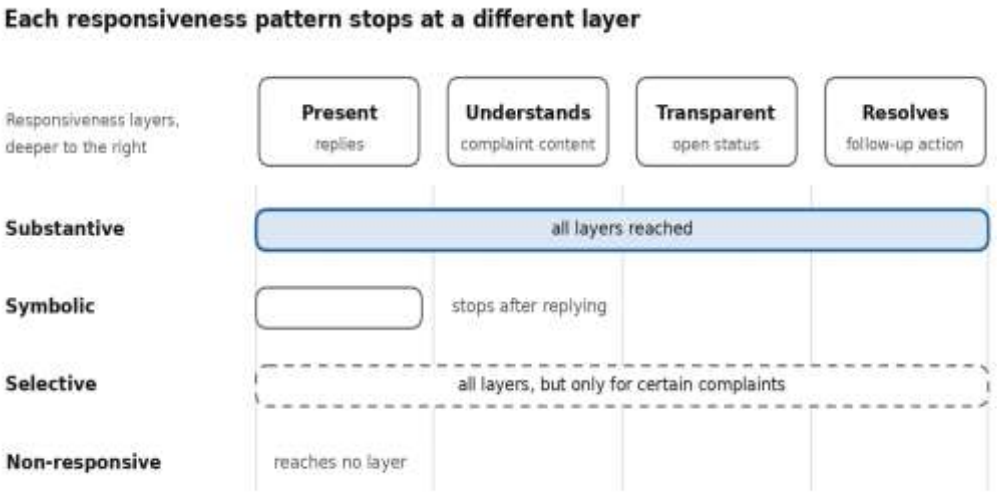


Figure 1. A layered model of digital responsiveness. Substantive patterns reach all four layers; symbolic patterns stop after an initial response; selective patterns reach all layers only for specific types of complaints; non-responsive patterns do not reach any layer.
Source: Developed by the author based on a synthesis of the literature (2026).

Limitations

This review has three limitations. First, the corpus consists of 15 purposively selected studies, and therefore does not encompass the entire body of literature. Second, most of the

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

studies on Indonesia are single-case analyses employing diverse methodologies; consequently, comparisons are made thematically rather than quantitatively. Third, the implications for the City of Palembang are derived from secondary evidence and preliminary observations, rather than from direct measurements of the city government's responsiveness.

CONCLUSION

The literature indicates that digital channels, including social media, accelerate the government's initial response, though they do not, by themselves, guarantee a resolution. Regarding speed and accuracy, rapid responses are often merely administrative in nature. In terms of transparency and accessibility, while these channels are easy to access, the status of a complaint's resolution is only visible if the channel is formally institutionalized. As for collaborative interaction, dialogue and collective input from citizens have been shown to expedite resolutions, yet this remains far from common practice. Regarding follow-up, the resolution process tends to be selective—influenced by the content of the complaint, public pressure, and the role of the local government head.

This article summarizes these patterns into a typology of digital responsiveness (substantive, symbolic, selective, and non-responsive) and proposes four key elements: institutionalization, standardized response protocols, the use of collective signals, and the role of a connecting figure. For the city of Palembang—which receives a high volume of complaints via social media comment sections—these findings underscore that enhancing responsiveness requires building an institutional bridge between informal channels and official complaint-handling systems, rather than simply accelerating the speed of replies.

Implications and Recommendations

Practical recommendations for the Palembang City Government:

1. **Regulation of communication channels**: Develop regulations or standard operating procedures (SOPs) requiring that complaints received via official social media accounts be forwarded to the Complaint Service Unit or the SP4N-LAPOR! system, drawing on the practice established by Central Java Governor Regulation No. 13 of 2018.
2. **Standardized response content**: Replace template-based replies with a format that includes the complaint status—such as whether it has been received, which regional

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

government agency (OPD) it has been forwarded to, the estimated timeframe for resolution, and how the complainant can track the progress.

3. **Complaint guidelines for citizens**: Provide a brief guide on official social media accounts outlining the minimum information required for a complaint—such as location, photographs, and the time of the incident—to reduce the number of complaints that cannot be acted upon.
4. **Institutionalizing leadership roles**: Transition from direct follow-ups by the Mayor to a formalized, routine mechanism, such as periodic evaluation meetings to address unresolved complaints received via social media.
5. **Performance indicators and public reporting**: Establish performance indicators—specifically response rates and resolution rates for social media-based complaints—for account administrators and relevant regional government agencies (OPDs), and publish periodic summaries of these metrics.

Theoretical implications: The typology of digital responsiveness serves as a more precise evaluation tool than simply counting the number of replies, as it distinguishes between symbolic or selective responses and substantive ones.

Future research agenda: Test the four proposed propositions through content analysis of complaint threads on the Palembang City Government's official social media accounts; conduct interviews with account administrators and regional government agencies (OPDs) to identify supporting and hindering factors; and carry out comparative studies between local governments that have institutionalized social media-based complaint handling and those that have not.

REFERENCES

ANTARA News Sumsel. (2019, 28 Desember). *Sekda Kota Palembang minta OPD pantau keluhan warga di media sosial*. https://sumsel.antaranews.com

Atnan, N., Prajarto, N., & Kurnia, N. (2024). Social media management in local government: A case study of Bandung City Government's Instagram and Twitter (X), Indonesia. Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication, 40(2), 465–481.

Bryer, T. A. (2007). Toward a relevant agenda for a responsive public administration. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 17(3), 479–500. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mul010

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Criado, J. I., & Villodre, J. (2021). Delivering public services through social media in European local governments: An interpretative framework using semantic algorithms. Local Government Studies, 47(2), 253–275. https://doi.org/10.1080/03003930.2020.1729750

Denhardt, J. V., & Denhardt, R. B. (2015). The new public service: Serving, not steering (4th ed.). Routledge.

detikSumbagsel. (2025, 10 Oktober). Respons cepat laporan warga, Ratu Dewa cek jalan rusak di Palembang. detikcom. https://www.detik.com/sumbagsel/berita/d-8154279/respons-cepat-laporan-warga-ratu-dewa-cek-jalan-rusak-di-palembang

detikSumbagsel. (2026, 4 Mei). Gubernur Sumsel soroti drainase tersumbat-jalan rusak picu banjir di Palembang. detikcom. https://www.detik.com/sumbagsel/berita/d-8474475/gubernur-sumsel-soroti-drainase-tersumbat-jalan-rusak-picu-banjir-di-palembang

Eom, S.-J., Hwang, H., & Kim, J. H. (2018). Can social media increase government responsiveness? A case study of Seoul, Korea. Government Information Quarterly, 35(1), 109–122. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2017.10.002

Epstein, B., Bode, L., & Connolly, J. M. (2023). Do squeaky wheels get the grease? Understanding when and how municipalities respond to online requests. New Media & Society, 25(11), 3002–3027. https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448211031249

Grossman, G., & Slough, T. (2022). Government responsiveness in developing countries. Annual Review of Political Science, 25, 131–153.

Haro-de-Rosario, A., Sáez-Martín, A., & Caba-Pérez, M. C. (2018). Using social media to enhance citizen engagement with local government: Twitter or Facebook? New Media & Society, 20(1), 29–49. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816645652

Hendrarso, P., Handoko, P., Solihin, I., Kurnia, N., & Tania, R. (2024). Unveiling urban voices: Citizen reporter impact on public services responsiveness in Makassar City. Jurnal Manajemen Pelayanan Publik, 8(2). https://jurnal.unpad.ac.id/jmpp/article/view/55594

Jumroh, J., Antoni, D., Mustain, A., & Pratama, M. Y. J. (2024). Exploring the impact of social media technology on public service efficiency: A case study of Indonesian local government. Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development, 8(8), 5181. https://doi.org/10.24294/jipd.v8i8.5181

Kompas.id. (2026). Dampak panjang banjir berulang Palembang, cara komunikasi pejabat tuai kecaman publik. https://www.kompas.id

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Kumar, T. (2025). How the content of digital complaints shapes bureaucratic responsiveness in Mumbai. Governance. https://doi.org/10.1111/gove.12889

Lenggani, R. T., & Santoso, R. S. (2026). Responsive governance dalam penanganan aduan masyarakat melalui portal LaporGub Balai Besar Pelaksanaan Jalan Nasional (BBPJN) Jawa Tengah–Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta. Journal of Public Policy and Management Review, 15(2), 154–166. https://doi.org/10.14710/jmpp.v15i2.56795

Liao, Y. (2018). Toward a pragmatic model of public responsiveness: Implications for enhancing public administrators' responsiveness to citizen demands. International Journal of Public Administration, 41(2), 159–169.

Linders, D. (2012). From e-government to we-government: Defining a typology for citizen coproduction in the age of social media. Government Information Quarterly, 29(4), 446–454. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2012.06.003

Mergel, I. (2013). Social media adoption and resulting tactics in the U.S. federal government. Government Information Quarterly, 30(2), 123–130. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2012.12.004

Mosher, F. C. (1968). Democracy and the public service. Oxford University Press.

Panagiotopoulos, P., Barnett, J., & Brooks, L. (2013). Social media and government responsiveness: The case of the UK Food Standards Agency. Dalam Electronic Government: EGOV 2013 (Lecture Notes in Computer Science, Vol. 8074, hlm. 310–321). Springer.

Peixoto, T., & Fox, J. (2016). When does ICT-enabled citizen voice lead to government responsiveness? IDS Bulletin, 47(1), 23–40. https://doi.org/10.19088/1968-2016.104

Pemerintah Kota Palembang. (2014). Peraturan Wali Kota Palembang Nomor 27 Tahun 2014 tentang Pembentukan Unit Layanan Pengaduan Masyarakat Pemerintah Kota Palembang.

Purwadi, A., Kumala, S. A., & Fitriani, L. (2025). Responsive governance pada era digital: Analisis aduan warga di Twitter Pemerintah Provinsi Jawa Tengah. Journal of Public Administration and Local Governance, 9(1), 165–180. https://doi.org/10.31002/jpalg.v9i1.2652

Reddick, C. G., Chatfield, A. T., & Ojo, A. (2017). A social media text analytics framework for double-loop learning for citizen-centric public services: A case study of a local government Facebook use. Government Information Quarterly, 34(1), 110–125. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2016.11.001

Republik Indonesia. (2009). Undang-Undang Nomor 25 Tahun 2009 tentang Pelayanan Publik.

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Republik Indonesia. (2018). Peraturan Presiden Nomor 95 Tahun 2018 tentang Sistem Pemerintahan Berbasis Elektronik.

Rourke, F. E. (1969). Bureaucracy, politics, and public policy. Little, Brown and Company.

Saltzstein, G. H. (1992). Bureaucratic responsiveness: Conceptual issues and current research. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 2(1), 63–88.

Schiff, K. J. (2025). Does collective citizen input impact government service provision? Evidence from SeeClickFix requests. Public Administration Review, 85(1), 32–45. https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13747

Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. Journal of Business Research, 104, 333–339. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039

Soantahon, S. M. (2023). Analysis of the level of responsiveness of local government public services through social media. Integration: Journal of Social Sciences and Culture, 1(1), 30–37.

Torraco, R. J. (2005). Writing integrative literature reviews: Guidelines and examples. Human Resource Development Review, 4(3), 356–367. https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484305278283

Vigoda, E. (2000). Are you being served? The responsiveness of public administration to citizens' demands: An empirical examination in Israel. Public Administration, 78(1), 165–191.

Wang, H. H., Cheng, E. W., Chen, X., & Liang, H. (2025). How institutionalized feedback works: Online citizen complaints and local government responsiveness in China. Governance, 38(2), e12907. https://doi.org/10.1111/gove.12907

Whittemore, R., & Knafl, K. (2005). The integrative review: Updated methodology. Journal of Advanced Nursing, 52(5), 546–553. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2005.03621.x

Copyright at authors some right reserved this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License