

Reporting Pandemic, Engaging Public: The Citizen Participation in LaporCovid-19 Platform During Covid-19 Outbreak in Indonesia

Ingki Rinaldi, Samiaji Bintang Nusantara, Maria Advenita Gita Elmada

Universitas Multimedia Nusantara

Email: ingki.rinaldi@lecturer.umn.ac.id, samiaji.bintang@umn.ac.id,
maria.advenita@umn.ac.id

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Abstract

Credible data and information for handling the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia are relatively minimal. The quality of public policies to deal with diseases classified as emerging non-natural disasters tends to be low, especially during the early stages of handling the Covid-19 pandemic. Several figures from civil society organizations, journalists, public health practitioners, and information technology experts took the initiative to develop an information reporting platform related to the pandemic that involved citizen participation in helping overcome this. The citizen platform was then developed into the practice of citizen journalism. This study describes the application of the concept of citizen reporting, which has developed into citizen journalism as an instrument for collecting data and information on Covid-19 cases in Indonesia. Especially in the case of the "LaporCOVID-19" citizen platform. The research method used in this paper is qualitative. The data collection techniques used are interviews and literature study. We found significance difference between "KawalCOVID19" dan "LaporCovid-19" as the two platforms used as research focus. The data for "KawalCOVID19" comes from open data sources for each local government that can be accessed by the public. Meanwhile, "LaporCovid-19" platform uses the WhatsApp and Telegram messaging applications that utilize chatbot technology, which is a computer program to receive and respond to citizen reports automatically as data sources. We conclude the use of messaging applications with chatbot technology that collects citizen reports to be managed and analyzed on the "LaporCovid-19" platform has contributed to dealing with emerging non-natural disasters, the Covid-19 pandemic. This is done by applying the concept of citizen reporting and citizen journalism in collecting and publishing data and information related to Covid-19 in Indonesia.

Keywords: citizen journalism, citizen reporting, covid-19, Indonesia, pandemic

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic can be classified as a disaster, especially a non-natural disasters. This is stated in Presidential Decree (Keppres) Number 12/2020 concerning the

Determination of Non-Natural Disasters for the Spread of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). As a non-natural disaster that is relatively new (emerging), the Covid-19 pandemic has made handling it challenging. Morens and Fauci (2020) write that Covid-19 combines several characteristics of a virus, which, to their knowledge, has never sustainably infected humans. This, together with the efficiency of the virus in infecting others, results in relatively high morbidity and mortality rates, especially among the elderly and those with comorbidities. This combination makes Covid-19 the perfect storm of emerging infectious diseases.

Because of its novelty, there tends to be confusion and nervousness in dealing with it. The government is no exception regarding the collection and use of data and information related to the Covid-19 pandemic. The nature of the pandemic, which is widespread and tends to only be overcome by restricting mobility, makes the availability of accurate data and information essential.

It is known that in Indonesia, the announcement of two people who were positive for Covid-19 was officially made on March 2, 2020. President Joko Widodo announced the news on Monday, March 2, 2020, at the State Palace. He was accompanied by the then Minister of Health, Terawan Agus Putranto (Kompas.id, 2020).

Since then, there have been several response responses, which then caused several impacts. One of them relates to the relationship between the central and local governments. Zuhro (2020) wrote about "Central-Regional Relations and Corona" on the Kompas.id page, which reminded us that the bureaucracy must be maintained and should not be used as an attraction for interests. Especially in the fight against Covid-19. Whoever leads the bureaucracy must obey government and professional ethics (Kompas.id, 2020).

Research conducted by Aziz et al (2021) stated that another problem that required collaboration between the center and the regions related to data synchronization arose after central and regional relations were nervous at the beginning of the pandemic. There are discrepancies in the data on Covid-19 cases submitted by the central government and local governments via the websites of each province. This data relates to positive patients and victims of Covid-19 deaths.

Lecturer of statistical modeling of health at the Faculty of Public Health, University of Indonesia, Iwan Ariawan, as quoted from Aziz et al (2021), said that several factors influenced the discrepancy between central and local government data. This includes differences in the definition of patient sampling methods and stagnating power flows from the local to the central government. Still quoted from Aziz et al (2021), the asynchronous data from the central and regional governments is considered to have an impact on handling the Covid-19 problem in Indonesia.

The things mentioned above are added to by the spread of various unverified information regarding Covid-19. Some of this is content that falls into the misinformation and even

disinformation category. Based on data quoted from the Ministry of Communication and Information, as quoted in Rubyasih *et.al.* (2023), from January 2020 to June 2021 there were 1,600 hoaxes related to Covid-19. Research by Rubyasih *et.al.* (2023), who analyzed 1,970 hoaxes data related to Covid-19 during 2019-2021 published by the Ministry of Communication and Information, found there were 1.001 issues related to misinformation and 5 disinformation.

Meanwhile in the context of distribution on social media platforms, Facebook was known to be the most used, followed by WhatsApp in second place. Meanwhile, the issues raised in connection with Covid-19 are divided into content categories related to foreign countries, domestic issues, and questions that are neutral and refer to science without information about origins. (Rubyasih *et.al.*, 2023).

This impact then triggered several elements of society to respond to the situation. One of them occurs in collaboration when information is shared and formulated through information and communication technology (ICT) in times of crisis. Alexander (2014) in Batard et al (2019) state that ICT and social media drastically change the information shared and structured in times of crisis.

This is in line with the understanding that in certain situations, such as in crises and disasters, certain adjustments are made to deal with them. Crises represent relatively fast movements and dynamic events that increase the need for adaptation, adjustment, and innovation in collaborative contexts (Parker et al, 2020).

In the context of Indonesia, several initiatives have emerged which are collaborations of several elements of society. The goal is to fix the problems surrounding the relative lack of data credibility and information related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Among these initiatives are the "LaporCovid19" platform at the laporcovid.org website address and "KawalCOVID19" on the kawalcovid19.id page, which both began be formed in March 2020.

Following developments regarding the practice of updating data and information contained on the two platforms mentioned above, this paper will focus research on the "LaporCovid-19" platform. This is because some of the information on the "KawalCOVID19" platform was last updated in October 2021. While on the "LaporCovid-19" platform, the last update was in June 2022. Another reason why focus on "LaporCovid-19" platform is because the "LaporCovid-19" platform practices a new model of Citizen Journalism concept. This happens with the involvement of experts, including journalism practitioners, to add context and depth to the information conveyed by citizens. This is not found in "KawalCOVID19" which tends to only convey and frame in a certain context, various data that were previously available and accessible to the public.

In connection with the involvement of citizens in the "LaporCovid-19" platform, this research will describe the background as an instrument to collect and publish data and

information on Covid-19 cases. In addition, regarding the use of WhatsApp and Telegram messaging applications for handling emerging non-natural disasters, this study will describe the implementation of citizen reporting and citizen journalism in practices related to the collection and publication of data and information on Covid-19 cases in Indonesia.

We use the concept of citizen journalism to analyse the practices carried out by "LaporCovid-19." As quoted from Allan and Hintz in Wahl-Jorgensen and Hanitzsch (eds, 2020), the term "citizen journalism" was related to the immediate aftermath of the South Asian tsunami of December 2004.

Mutsvairo and Salgado (2020) mention that traditional journalists are no longer the only ones gathering and telling stories. With untrained actors (citizens) joining, journalism has entered a new era and transforming newsgathering and content-sharing. (Mutsvairo and Salgado, 2020).

Citizen journalism as a concept, began to be adopted by a number of mass media. Apart from its coverage being wider and faster than traditional journalists, the costs that mass media companies have to incur to obtain related information are relatively less.

Apart from being adopted by mainstream media, citizen journalism by citizen journalists is also practiced, and the resulting information is distributed on platforms that are also initiated by citizens. Apart from that, at certain moments, it is also published in mainstream media.

This is an understanding of citizen journalists conceptualized by Mortensen, Keshelashvili, & Weir (2016), as quoted in Miller (2019), as a participant who has ever produced a photo, video, or writing piece that has been submitted for inclusion by a mainstream or citizen journalism outlet, or that has intentionally or unintentionally been published by a mainstream or citizen journalism outlet.

Referring to this understanding, the "LaporCovid-19" platform can be interpreted as a citizen journalism outlet. Apart from that, it is a forum that involves citizen journalists and publishes the results independently on the "LaporCovid-19" platform and is also published in a number of mainstream media.

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the background for the involvement of citizens under the tagline "Citizens Coalition to LaporCovid-19" as an instrument for collecting and publishing data and information on Covid-19 cases in Indonesia?
2. What is the process of collecting, producing, and publishing information on the "LaporCovid-19" platform that uses the concept of citizen reporting and citizen journalism as instruments for collecting and publishing data and information on Covid-19 cases in Indonesia?

The questions above are important to research to find out what kind of practices citizen journalists carry out on the "LaporCovid-19" platform as a citizen journalism outlet.

The involvement of citizens in reporting massive information and data in the era of big data has recently grown. One of the success stories of citizen involvement in the reporting of vote counting was through the *kawalpemilu.org* platform during the 2014 presidential election (Purwanto, Zuiderwijk, and Jansenn, 2018). Other initiatives involving citizens were also developed in applying the "smart city" concept related to reporting and monitoring of public services organized by the government (Kusumastuti & Rouli, 2021). However, some researchers see that reporting citizens managed by the government is considered less effective due to several factors, such as limited internet access and discontinuous management of the platform (Hidayat et. al., 2021).

Previously, the mass media developed the involvement of citizens in submitting reports in the form of fact-based data and information. Several studies concerning citizen participation in reporting fact-based information in Indonesia are often identified with the practice of citizen journalism. This journalism practice utilizes a medium based on communication and information technology as a channel of information distribution (Wall, 2015). Kurniawan's research (2007), for example, reveals the role and involvement of citizens in conveying information and factual events that occurred in several areas through Radio El Shinta. Dayak indigenous peoples in West Kalimantan use cell phones to report incidents and cases of criminalization against residents to the RuaiTV editor (Suranto & Nusantara, 2015).

However, reporting and citizen journalism using the platform regarding health issues and disease outbreaks is still limited. Several researchers questioned the lack of awareness in participation, limited literacy, and knowledge of citizens regarding techniques and how to report facts related to health issues (Krajewski & Brian Ekdale, 2017; Davis, 2017). In Indonesia, research on reporting practices and citizen journalism related to health issues, especially pandemics, is still limited. This study aims to fill these limitations.

METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this paper is qualitative. According to John W. Creswell (2014), qualitative research is an approach to exploring and understanding the meaning given by individuals or groups to social and human problems. The approach in this research is descriptive. Marshall and Rossman (2016) mention that descriptive studies construct detailed descriptions of complex states that have not been explored in the literature. The purpose of descriptive studies is to document and describe phenomena of interest.

The relative unavailability of sufficient literature regarding the complexity of managing the "LaporCovid-19" platform, which embodies the concept of citizen reporting and citizen journalism, makes a descriptive approach the choice of this research. In addition,

the concept of citizen reporting and citizen journalism in the "LaporCovid-19" platform as an instrument for collecting and publishing data and information on Covid-19 cases in Indonesia is an exciting phenomenon that is important to be well documented and described.

The background for the involvement of citizens under the tagline "Citizens Coalition to LaporCovid-19" as an instrument for collecting and publishing data and information on Covid-19 cases in Indonesia is confusion and non-credibility of data and information regarding Covid-19 in Indonesia and handled by the government.

"LaporCovid-19" Volunteer Amanda Tan of the Citizen Report Advocacy Division stated in a virtual interview conducted in March 2022 that the procedure began with a chatbot responding to citizen reports; all discussions were recorded and displayed on the "LaporCovid-19" dashboard. In order to confirm reports, the "LaporCovid-19" volunteer then got in touch with the reporter directly using a different phone number. The primary purposes of verification are to confirm that the submitted report's visual evidence and 5W1H elements are complete. The report must then be forwarded to the Pikobar or Jaki platform. The citizens' reports are also forwarded by the volunteers via the lapor.go.id portal. The processing procedure goes more quickly if the report is more detailed and explicit. From the beginning, these reports were categorized systematically into areas such as health protocols, general, non-health, and health services, as well as social aid. According to Amanda, some reporting is also frequently done on Instagram using the direct message feature. Following the completion of the preceding procedure, data and information obtained from citizen reports are analyzed and processed by the "LaporCovid-19" platform manager. A citizen journalism technique is used to transform some of the reports into specific narratives. The "LaporCovid-19" platform publishes research papers, studies, policy briefs, and press releases as the process's final information deliverables.

The research design in this paper is a case study. Quoted from Stake (1995) and Yin (2009, 2012), case studies are research designs found in many fields, especially the field of evaluation, where researchers develop an in-depth analysis of cases, often in the form of a program, activity, activity, process or process. one person or more than one person. The cases are limited by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using various data collection procedures over a continuous period (Creswell, 2014).

Data collection techniques use in this research are multiple sources of evidence. We think this technique is important given the formulated research problem.

"No matter how the experience is gained, every case study researcher should be well versed in a variety of data collection techniques, so that a case study can use multiple sources of evidence. Without such multiple sources, an invaluable advantage of case study research will have been lost. Worse, what started out as a case study may turn into something else." (Yin et. al., 2018, p. 174).

Regarding to this research, we collect documentations, archival records, and conduct interviews as a form of evidence that come from multiple sources in study case method. Meanwhile, there are six case study evidence that consists of documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant-observation, and physical artifacts. (Yin et. al., 2018). The in-depth interview process was carried out online using virtual application. The duration of data collection is approximately one week.

The case study was chosen as the research design following the development of an in-depth analysis of activity on the "LaporCovid-19" platform. The scope is limited to the practice of using the "Data," "Publication," and "Program" channels during the period March 2020 to June 2022.

In this research, efforts are made to understand the meaning of the activities of several civil society leaders, journalists, public health practitioners, and information technology experts under the umbrella of the "Citizens Coalition for LaporCovid-19," the platform "LaporCovid-19." The relative lack of credibility of the public data and information presented related to the Covid-19 pandemic is a problem that the managers of the "LaporCovid-19" platform are trying to overcome.

The research questions were answered using an exploratory method, based on answers from in-depth interview sessions which were connected to a number of concepts to provide an understanding of existing conditions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The "KawalCOVID19" platform, which was launched by some KawalPemilu volunteers, is intended as a reliable source of information about the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia. According to kawalcovid19.id page, "This initiative was launched due to concerns about the confusion in information circulating in Indonesia regarding COVID-19." The platform is claimed to be a voluntary initiative of pro-data Indonesian netizens consisting of health practitioners, academics, and professionals. (Kawalcovid19.id)

The focus of the "KawalCOVID19" platform is more likely to present data on Covid-19 cases in Indonesia. It includes data on confirmed patients in treatment, recovered, and died. Quoted from the kompas.com page (Azanella, 2020), the data for "KawalCOVID19" comes from open data sources for each local government that can be accessed by the public. Data is collected from the lowest level, for example, district/city," and so on, to the top-level to obtain case numbers at the national level.

"KawalCOVID19" curates and analyzes the circulating information to break it down into evidence and facts. In addition, in collaboration with the Indonesian Anti-Defamation Society (Mafindo), "KawalCOVID19" also verified information. "KawalCOVID19" also conveys education to the public about things that need to be done in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, recently, the latest information about Covid-19 presented on the "KawalCOVID19" platform and claimed to be one hundred percent factual and from reliable sources was updated on October 5, 2021. This is despite data updates regarding the number of Covid-19 cases in Indonesia. The last time was on June 3, 2022.

Partly because of the above, this research will focus on the "LaporCovid19" platform. Mainly for reasons of data sources and information collected. "KawalCOVID19" is more focused on data and information that comes from open sources and can be accessed by the public and sources called reliable. The "LaporCovid19" platform tends to focus more on data and information coming from citizens.

Initiated and developed by several civil society leaders, journalists, public health practitioners, and information technology experts under the "Citizen Coalition for LaporCovid-19," the "LaporCovid-19" platform uses the concept of citizen reporting, which has evolved into citizen journalism. The practice is carried out with information provided by residents to the manager of the "LaporCovid-19" platform regarding certain conditions related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The initiators and founders are Irma Hidayana (Independent Public Health Consultant), Ahmad Arif (Chief of Indonesian Disaster and Crisis Journalists (JBK) and *Kompas* Daily journalist). (LaporCovid19.org, 2022). There are also academics and legal activist Asfinawati, Budi Setyarso (Tempo journalist), Cholil Mahmud (musician for the Efek Rumah Kaca music group), Eryanto Nugroho (academic and legal activist at Lokataru).

The "LaporCovid-19" platform uses the WhatsApp and Telegram messaging applications that utilize chatbot technology, which is a computer program to receive and respond to citizen reports automatically. Quoted from the laporCovid19.org page, several things that can be reported are violations of health protocols, bad experiences or stigma related to Covid-19, health and non-health services related to Covid-19, and social assistance services during the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, residents can also report stories of family or close people who were infected with Covid-19 and died and stories of anxiety about the Covid-19 vaccine.

On the platform "LaporCovid-19" there is a "Data" channel that contains several report menus related to the use of the citizen reporting concept. Among them are "Report of Community Complaints Channel," "Report of Citizen Complaints Channel Regarding Vaccines," and "Mapstory of Citizen Reports."

In addition, there is also a "Publication" channel, which includes a "Findings" menu. In the "Findings" menu, there is the rubric title "Newsroom LaporCovid-19 Findings" which contains data analysis, information, and citizen reports related to pandemic control in Indonesia, which is a practice of the concept of citizen journalism. In addition, on the same channel, there is a "Press Release" menu which is also the embodiment of the concept of citizen journalism. Similar practices are found in the "Program" channel, in the

"Nakes Advocacy" menu and "Digital Pusara" which is the development of the concept of citizen journalism.

The manager of the "LaporCovid-19" platform also involves scientists from various fields and several interdisciplinary experts. This was done according to the umbrella concept of a "coalition of citizens" rather than public officials, carried out from the start. The technocrats, doctors, epidemiologists, and so on are included in the category of citizens in question. Those who are invited to join, coincidentally, are also considered as individuals who have a highly progressive spirit and relatively dislike normative and bureaucratic policies. They want science to be a significant part of policy-making.

The manager of "LaporCovid-19" considers that the credibility of these people is needed when facing the government as part of providing recommendations for policy-making related to handling the Covid-19 pandemic. The engagement model is carried out using an invitation or solicitation mechanism from the initiator of the "LaporCovid-19" platform. Their involvement is done voluntarily and without any incentives provided. Relatively no registration has occurred independently and on personal initiative. They are Indonesian people. Some live in other countries, such as Australia and Singapore (Virtual interview via Google Meet volunteer of the LaporCovid-19 Citizen Report Advocacy Division, Amanda Tan. March 2022).

Quoted from the document "Indonesian Pandemic Records 2020-2021, LaporCovid-19: Demanding Pandemic Transparency Through Citizen Channels" published in December 2021, LaporCovid-19 also collaborates with independent scientists, epidemiologists, medical doctors, health workers, sociologists, teachers, journalists, activists, independent media, data scientists, psychologists, students, information technology experts, and Covid-19 survivors. In addition, also with many more parties. The goal is to advocate for transparency and accountability in handling Covid-19 in Indonesia.

The "LaporCovid-19" platform, as quoted from the laporcovid19.org page, is used to share information about events related to Covid-19 that were found by residents, but these events have been ignored by the government. Still quoted from the same website, "LaporCovid-19" is a forum to assist the government and other citizens in knowing the distribution and magnitude of Covid-19 in Indonesia. In addition, it is also used as input for the government in formulating policies and handling Covid-19 based on field data. No less than 15 institutions support the "LaporCovid-19" platform. Transparency International, Indonesia Corruption Watch, Indonesian Disaster, and Crisis Journalist, Rujak Center for Urban Studies, U-Inspire, hakasasi.id, Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation, Vision of Integrity, Alliance of Independent Journalists, Center for Indonesian Law and Policy Studies, Kiosk Ojo Keos, Lokataru, UKaid, Kurawal Foundation, and Jabar Digital Service.

In addition, "LaporCovid-19" also cooperates with several other institutions. Especially those related to the issue of protection for health workers. As quoted from the document

"Indonesian Pandemic Records 2020-2021, LaporCovid-19: Demanding Pandemic Transparency Through Citizen Channels" published in December 2021, these institutions are the Indonesian Doctors Association (IDI), Indonesian Midwives Association (IBI), Indonesian National Nurses Association (PPNI), and the Association of Indonesian Medical Laboratory Technologists (PALTEKI), as well as the Eijkman-Oxford Clinical Research Unit (EOCRU).

Every day, "LaporCovid-19" is managed by several volunteers. As of June 2022, there are around 30 volunteers. The number of volunteers tends to fluctuate. This follows the dynamics of joining at one time and retreating at another. They are divided into the Citizen Report Advocacy Division, Social Media Division, Digital Center Division (a page to commemorate health workers who died), Information Technology and Development (IT/Developer) Division, Long Covid Advocacy Division, Division or Virtual People's Health Home Team (services). telehealth which, as of June 2020, became the main program) (Written interview with the former volunteer of the Advocacy Division for Reporting Covid-19 Citizens, Amanda Tan. June 2022).

While quoting from the document "Indonesian Pandemic Records 2020-2021, LaporCovid-19: Demanding Pandemic Transparency Through Citizen Channels" published in December 2021, the divisions of these divisions are respectively: Campaign and Advocacy Against Stigma, Pandemic General Class, Volunteer Area Coordinator LaporData, Social Research, IT/Developer, Graphic Design, Digital Center, Citizen Advocacy & Reports, Social Media, Twitter Sentiment Analysis, News Room, and Expert Collaborators.

In the early days of its formation, community involvement was carried out to conduct data observations in districts/cities. This follows discrepancies with national data related to Covid-19 cases. Later, in April 2020, the concept of citizen reporting began to be applied with a mechanism similar to how complaints handling works. This follows some residents who tend to be afraid to report cases related to Covid-19 through several government channels. The fear of having direct contact with public officials seems to be welcoming the citizen reporting service provided by "LaporCovid-19." (Virtual interview via Google Meet with volunteer of Advocacy Division for "LaporCovid-19" Citizens, Amanda Tan. March 2022).

The convenience of reporting cases related to the handling of the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia to the "LaporCovid-19" platform, which is considered independent, has resulted in a large and varied number of reports—starting from Puskesmas that cannot be reached, violations of health protocols, the cost of hospitalization, and so on. On the other hand, the government tends not to have the instruments to detect these things. (Virtual interview via Google Meet with volunteer of Advocacy Division for "LaporCovid-19" Citizens, Amanda Tan. March 2022).

The use of information technology as a digital platform with several channels and features tends to increase the degree of comfort for the residents involved, especially after using chatbot technology with WhatsApp and Telegram messaging applications as an access door to report cases related to Covid-19. Volunteer in the LaporCovid-19 Report Advocacy Division, who is also LaporCovid-19 Secretary, Windyah Puji Lestari, said the trial of using chatbot technology was carried out in April 2020. Then, data collection began in July 2020. (Written interview with LaporCovid-19 Citizen Report Advocacy Division volunteers, Windyah Puji Lestari. June 2022). The development of various channels on the "LaporCovid-19" platform is also closely related to the needs of the residents. Windyah said the need was in line with the development of several recent issues. For example, when there was a wave of deaths of patients undergoing self-isolation in July 2021, the manager of the "LaporCovid-19" platform added a new menu to the chatbot service.

Citizen Reporting Practices in "LaporCovid-19"

There are five channels on the "LaporCovid-19" platform. Each is "Home," "Data," "Publications," "Programs," and "About Us." The "Home" channel contains critical information such as the main program being implemented, access to share information with fellow citizens, study results, and statistics for Indonesian health workers who died fighting Covid-19. The "Data" channel contains a menu of Citizen Complaints Channel Reports (2022), Citizen Complaints Channel Reports Regarding Vaccines (2022), Health Workers Death Statistics, Resident Report Mapstory, and Isoman Death Statistics. The "Publications" channel contains a menu of All Publications, Press Releases, Findings, Policy Briefs, and Media Reports. The "Program" channel contains menus for All Programs, Studies, Advocacy for Healthcare Workers, Digital Centers, Social Assistance Reports, and Stigma Forums. The "About Us" channel contains information about the identity of "ReportCovid-19" and several parties involved.

Several types of reports related to violations of health protocols, health services, social assistance services, complaints related to stigma following the perception that some people regard Covid-19 patients as carriers of the disease and the originator of the outbreak, and concerns about the Covid-19 vaccine into separate categories in the reporting channel. The Reports are carried out in stages before being followed up by the relevant stakeholders.

"Indonesian Pandemic Records 2020-2021, LaporCovid-19: Demanding Pandemic Transparency Through Citizen Channels" published in December 2021, stated that the service flow for handling citizen reports began with submitting reports via WhatsApp or Telegram chatbots and social media accounts. Then, the report is verified to determine whether it is accepted or rejected. If accepted, the next step is to record the database. Next, the report is followed up by disseminating the report to the public via social media, forwarding the report to the reported local government, and intensive communication

with the complainant. In this regard, communication of the report's status with the residents who reported it was also carried out.

Secretary of LaporCovid-19, Windyah Puji Lestari, in a virtual interview via Google Meet in March 2022, said that initially, "LaporCovid-19" wanted to collect data, analyze data, and then do advocacy based on that data. In the process, the proponents of "LaporCovid-19" introduced the platform to the National Disaster Management Agency and the Presidential Staff Office. In the process, the drivers of "LaporCovid-19" were met with the British Embassy and then linked with the West Java Provincial Government (West Java Provincial Government) and DKI Jakarta Provincial Government (DKI Jakarta Provincial Government). Then cross-platform integration occurs. The British government mediates the process.

The relative challenge occurs when integrating "LaporCovid-19" with a similar platform or channel, namely the West Java Province Information and Coordination Center (Pikobar) in the West Java Provincial Government. This, among other things, follows reports that are written manually, and not all areas are covered. On the other hand, the "LaporCovid-19" logo is affixed to the Pikobar platform. Meanwhile, integration on the Jaki platform (Jakarta Kini) at the DKI Jakarta Provincial Government is relatively smoother following the implementation of technology which tends to be more up-to-date.

"LaporCovid-19" Citizen Report Advocacy Division volunteer Amanda Tan, in a virtual interview in March 2022, said that after the chatbot answered residents' reports, all conversations were recorded on the "LaporCovid-19" dashboard. After that, the "LaporCovid-19" volunteer contacted the reporter manually with a different phone number. Among other things, this is done to verify reports. Verification is mainly carried out to request the completeness of the 5W1H elements and photo evidence of the submitted report. The following process is to forward the report to the Pikobar or Jaki platform.

Ten volunteers oversee the process. They are students, professionals, and students. Each works two days a week. Each day is divided into three shifts. The first shift is from 08.00 - 13.00. The second shift is from 13.00 - 18.00. The third shift is from 18.00 to 22.00 WIB. If the incoming report is outside the scope of Pikobar and Jaki or from outside West Java and DKI Jakarta, the volunteers will forward the incoming report to several complaint handling channels or reports provided by several local governments. The volunteers also use the lapor.go.id platform to forward the residents' reports. If the report is more explicit and more complete, then the handling process is also relatively faster.

These reports have been classified systemically from the start—categories of health protocols, social assistance, health services, non-health services, vaccines, and general. Even though there are also residents who incorrectly identify the category of the report, Amanda explained, there is also a tendency for some reporting to be done via Instagram through the direct message facility.

Citizen Journalism Practices in "LaporCovid-19"

After the citizen reporting process is carried out, the manager of the "LaporCovid-19" platform analyzes and processes data and information derived from citizen reports, some of which are processed into certain narratives using a citizen journalism approach. This is contained in the "Finds" menu in the "Publication" channel, which contains data analysis, information, and citizen reports related to the handling of the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia, under the rubric title "Newsroom LaporCovid-19 Findings." In addition, this practice is also contained in the "Press Release" menu, which is mentioned as a "LaporCovid-19 attitude statement based on data and reports from residents during the Covid-19 pandemic." One example of this practice is a press release document titled "Faskes Collapsed, 265 Isoman Covid-19 Patients Died." The document, last updated on July 23, 2021, is said to have come from the LaporCovid-19 team's search on Twitter social media, online news, and direct reports from residents to the LaporCovid-19 platform.

Regarding the media's response concerning several pieces of information generated with the concept of citizen journalism, Amanda said that publications by the mass media tend to be only done for the information presented in press conference sessions. Only a few journalists from certain media follow up some of the findings by "LaporCovid-19" with advanced journalistic practices for disclosure purposes. The rest tend to just report normatively.

In addition, research was also carried out by the "LaporCovid-19" drivers. The research is incidental. The consideration will depend on a particular phenomenon deemed necessary for research or study (virtual interview of researchers and volunteers in the Advocacy Division for Reporting Citizens Reporting Covid-19, Yemiko Happy Nandatama in March 2022).

The Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia is classified as a disaster situation. This is stated in Presidential Decree (Keppres) Number 12/2020 concerning the Determination of Non-Natural Disasters for the Spread of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Handling it requires the involvement of several parties. The nature of the pandemic, which is widespread and tends to only be overcome by restricting mobility, makes the availability of accurate data and information essential. However, the limitations in coordination between the center and the regions regarding data synchronization have led to less well-targeted policies.

The "LaporCovid-19" platform is an initiative that emerged from citizens to participate and be involved in handling the pandemic. Citizen participation is carried out through reporting data and information regarding events related to Covid-19 that residents find but escape from the government. The data and information reported by residents from the field are then aggregated and processed as input for the government in formulating

policies and handling Covid-19, one of which is through the "Findings", "Press Release," and "Policy Brief" pages.

In the early days of its formation, community involvement was carried out to conduct data observations in districts/cities. However, in April 2020, the concept of citizen reporting began to be applied in a way similar to complain handling.

In mid-2021, the "LaporCovid-19" platform began transforming from a citizen reporting to citizen journalism. In contrast to the previous citizen reporting system, the platform manager provides training and guidance to residents to practice fact-based information-gathering activities in the field to report submission techniques.

Citizens' data and information in the practice of citizen journalism developed by the LaporCovid-19 platform follow government policies in efforts to deal with the pandemic. Such as the involvement of citizens in monitoring and reporting on the implementation of policies related to the distribution of social assistance (bansos) for residents affected by the pandemic.

Citizen involvement and participation is a critical point in the LaporCovid-19 platform. The existence of protection for the confidentiality of the identity of citizens who report cases related to Covid-19 is an advantage of the "LaporCovid-19" platform compared to similar platforms managed and provided by the government during the pandemic.

The independence of the institution that manages the platform is one of the reasons that motivate citizens to join and participate in the "LaporCovid-19" platform. Another important finding that encourages citizen involvement, the platform captures the collaboration of citizens with various occupational backgrounds, professions, and expertise. Starting from students, lecturers, practitioners in the field of information technology (IT), journalists, lawyers, doctors, health workers, scientists, human rights defenders, and so on.

In addition, the managers of the "LaporCovid-19" platform collect and process data with scientific, transparent, and verified methods. This increases the accuracy of data and the credibility of information distributed through platforms, websites, and other information dissemination activities such as press conferences so that the data and information can even be used as comparative data on the data collected and published by the government.

However, from the research findings, citizen initiatives through the platform face several challenges. Even though the data and information obtained from residents in the field have been verified, processed, and presented through platforms and websites, reports on the findings of the "LaporCovid-19" platform are still minimal in media exposure, so the output of information and data from the platform has less impact, especially to policy makers during the pandemic.

In addition, the challenge faced by this platform is the voluntary nature of the involvement and engagement of citizens who act as platform managers. Volunteers involved in management participate out of empathy to help the public. In the long term, for a relatively long period of the pandemic, this voluntary engagement can affect the sustainability of the management of the "LaporCovid-19" platform.

The dynamics of "joining and leaving" among volunteers occur in this context. LaporCovid-19 Citizen Report Advocacy Division volunteer Amanda Tan, when questioned in June 2022, no longer joined "LaporCovid-19." Amanda was still a volunteer when she was interviewed virtually in March 2022. Amanda joined the "LaporCovid-19" volunteer in June 2020. She then became a full-time staff as a project officer from November 2020 to April 2022.

Finally, this finding shows that there's an evolution of the concept of citizen reporting and citizen journalism in collecting and publishing data and information related to Covid-19 in Indonesia. The practice of citizen journalism is that residents make reports, sent to the "LaporCovid-19" platform, then the report is managed and analyzed and then produced into information published by the "citizen coalition" on the "LaporCovid-19" platform. This finding also shows that several citizens with various professional backgrounds and expertise from the field are some of the success points of citizen participation initiatives through during Covid-19 outbreak in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

The use of messaging applications with chatbot technology that collects citizen reports to be managed and analyzed on the "LaporCovid-19" platform has contributed to dealing with emerging non-natural disasters, the Covid-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, several residents participated in providing reports in the form of information about events related to Covid-19 cases from the field. This is done by applying the concept of citizen reporting and citizen journalism in collecting and publishing data and information related to Covid-19 in Indonesia.

However, citizen journalism on the platform is different because it is not a citizen journalist who has consciously carried out reporting from the start to publication. The practice of citizen journalism is that residents make reports, then the reports are sent to the "LaporCovid-19" platform. Furthermore, the report is managed and analyzed and then produced into information published by the "citizen coalition" on the "LaporCovid-19" platform, which consists of various professional backgrounds.

The involvement of several citizens with various professional backgrounds and expertise, institutional independence, and transparency in information collection methods to data processing from the field are some of the success points of citizen participation initiatives through the "LaporCovid-19" platform. However, the mission and sustainability of this

citizen initiative face challenges. The outputs produced by the volunteers must receive wider media exposure to become the policy agenda of the policymakers.

In addition, the challenge faced by this platform is the voluntary nature of the involvement and engagement of citizens who act as platform managers. Institutional transformation to maintain the participation of volunteers can be one of the considerations for the sustainability of the "LaporCovid-19" citizen initiative.

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