



DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC INFORMATION TRANSPARENCY: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE WEBSITE OF THE BIREUEN REGENCY GOVERNMENT

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of digital technology has encouraged local governments to utilize online platforms as tools for development communication and public information dissemination. Government websites serve as strategic spaces for demonstrating accountability, providing development data, and strengthening engagement with citizens. However, the effectiveness of such platforms depends not only on the availability of information but also on the depth, clarity, and transparency of the messages presented. Within this context, this study explores how the Government of Bireuen Regency represents development communication and public information transparency through its official website from May to October 2025. Using qualitative content analysis guided by Krippendorff's framework, the research examines news articles, announcements, opinion pieces, and activity reports collected through systematic observation and documentation. The findings show that the government frequently employs positive, ceremonial, and legitimacy-oriented framing, particularly in topics related to social housing, participatory planning, budget refocusing, and educational revitalization. Although the website structure is well-organized, the transparency offered remains symbolic, with limited quantitative data, progress indicators, and technical details. These results highlight the need to strengthen substantive transparency through open data and participatory mechanisms so that the website can function as an effective instrument of public accountability

Keywords: Development Communication, Public Information Transparency, Content Analysis

1. INTRODUCTION

Instagram The presence of information technology facilitates public access to information across various digital media channels. Information is disseminated through

social media platforms and mass media. Public information transparency has become an important issue in the current era amid increasingly advanced digitalization. The development of technology and information that supports the fulfillment of public information continues to grow. The rapid advancement of digital technology and the emergence of new media have brought many impacts, one of which is the increasing demand for public information openness from the government (Putri et al., 2021).

The public has easier and faster access to information; consequently, they demand higher transparency from governmental institutions (Ismawan and Irma, 2024). This is consistent with the findings of Kaylaputri and Kismartini (2025), which state that one of the characteristics of proper government management is the existence of information openness or the principle of transparency. Information transparency conveyed by the government through digital media, particularly websites, is one of the main characteristics of communication development in the information technology era. Websites function as two-way communication tools that enable the public to access various types of information quickly, widely, and efficiently.

The principle of transparency is part of proper government management or good governance. Optimal public information transparency facilitates public access to information in an easy, open, and comprehensive manner. This aligns with the findings of research conducted by Ricky and Rahimallah (2022), which indicate that a good transparency principle will make the functioning of government systems easier and more trusted by the public.

Public information transparency or information openness, based on Law Number 14 of 2008 concerning Public Information Openness, Article 2 paragraph 1, states that "all public information is open and accessible to every user of public information." This provision is intended to ensure that every authorized public body can provide open access to public information to every citizen who requests such information. Law Number 14 of 2008 also serves as the legal basis for fulfilling citizens' rights to obtain public information. One of the government institutions that provides public information openness services is the Bireuen Regency Government through its official government website.

This website is expected to provide accurate, up-to-date, and easily accessible information to the public (Efendi et al., 2022). For example, the Bireuen Regency Government has made efforts to utilize its official website to meet public information needs. Through the website, various important information is presented, such as work program reports, achievement collaborations, and news related to achievements accomplished by the government. However, despite significant efforts, challenges in implementation remain. One of the main challenges is maintaining consistency and continuity in updating information (Ismawan and Irma, 2024).

The presence of the official Bireuen Government website as a medium for information dissemination is intended to empower the public. On the other hand, information openness conveyed through the government website is part of the Public Information Openness Index (IKIP). IKIP is one of the national priority programs mandated by Law Number 14 of 2008 concerning Public Information Openness (Public Information Openness Law, 2008).

Public information transparency does not merely involve delivering information transparently; it also requires attention to information quality. This includes how information is written in simple language, is easy to understand, clear, and detailed. The



use of simple language and the presentation of data in informative graphical formats can help improve public understanding of the information provided (Ardiansah, Rahmanto, and Amir, 2023). Therefore, the role of website administrators is crucial in understanding every piece of information that is published.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Content Analysis

Content analysis is one of the research methods in communication studies used to systematically examine messages in order to understand the meanings they contain. According to Krippendorff (2004), content analysis is a research technique used to make replicable and valid inferences from texts, or other forms of meaningful material, to the contexts of their use. Krippendorff's perspective indicates that content analysis does not merely focus on counting elements of communication such as words, symbols, or specific themes, but also on understanding and interpreting the social context of the messages. In other words, this method can be applied both quantitatively and qualitatively, depending on the objectives of the research.

Krippendorff emphasizes that every text, image, or form of communication contains meaning that is constructed and understood within a particular social context. Therefore, the meaning of a message is not determined solely by its quantity or frequency of occurrence, but also by how the message is structured, the context in which it is conveyed, and how audiences interpret the communication content.

In the study entitled "Development Communication and Public Information Transparency: A Content Analysis of the Website of the Bireuen Regency Government," Krippendorff's content analysis theory is employed to examine how the government communicates development-related messages and information openness to the public through its official website. This analysis not only considers the amount of development information presented, but also examines how the form, language, and structure of information presentation reflect the principles of transparency and public participation.

Development Communication

Communication plays an important role in supporting development processes by encouraging participatory engagement, facilitating the dissemination of information, and enhancing socio-emotional skills (Irwanto et al., 2025). Development communication emphasizes inclusive participation, enabling communities to express their needs and contribute to decision-making processes (Chowdhury and Gow, 2025).

Effective communication channels, such as mass media, are essential for delivering timely and relevant information, particularly in rural development initiatives (Saif and Kumar, 2023). Challenges in development communication in the era of globalization are diverse, encompassing technological, cultural, and social diversity aspects. The advancement of digital communication simultaneously presents both opportunities and obstacles in intercultural interaction processes. Therefore, understanding these various challenges is key to designing effective communication strategies at the global level.

On the other hand, although globalization offers significant opportunities to enhance communication and collaboration, it also demands a deeper understanding of the

complexities involved in managing technology, culture, and diversity. The ability to address these challenges is a crucial factor in achieving effective development communication in an era of global interconnectedness. Effective development communication strategies in the era of globalization must be able to adapt dynamically to the complexities of digital transformation, cultural diversity, and the need for cross-language communication. This strategic approach is essential for building shared understanding and strengthening international collaboration, enabling communication processes to be effective, inclusive, and sustainable within an increasingly interconnected world order. The emergence of digital technology has revolutionized communication by increasing accessibility and speed (Mialkovska, 2024).

Information and Public Openness

Information is one of the main elements in the administration of modern governance. In the context of development communication, information functions as a primary instrument for bridging the government and the public in the dissemination of development messages, the facilitation of public participation, and data-based decision-making. Accurate, comprehensive, and easily accessible information enables the public to understand the direction, objectives, and outcomes of development policies implemented by the government.

According to Law Number 14 of 2008 concerning Public Information Openness (Undang-Undang on Public Information Openness, 2008), public information is any information that is produced, stored, managed, transmitted, and/or received by public bodies related to the administration of the state and the public interest. The main principle of information openness is to grant the public the right to obtain public information quickly, in a timely manner, at low cost, and through simple procedures.

Public information openness not only serves as a form of governmental accountability but also as an expression of transparency and the democratization of communication between the state and its citizens. Through information openness, the government is expected to build public trust, reduce the potential for abuse of power, and strengthen good governance.

In the context of development communication, public information transparency plays an important role in realizing participatory and equitable development. Development is no longer understood solely as an economic or physical process, but also as a communication process that emphasizes community involvement through access to information. Open development information allows the public to monitor, evaluate, and even contribute to the implementation of government programs.

In the digital era, government websites have become the primary medium for disseminating public information. The existence of a website is not merely a means of data storage, but also a platform for interactive communication between the government and citizens. Government websites that are informative, easily accessible, and regularly updated indicate a high level of openness. Conversely, websites that are inactive, non-transparent, or difficult to access reflect a low commitment to public transparency.

Openness or transparency is a concrete manifestation of good governance, as reflected in the principles of transparency, participation, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, and accountability. Public information transparency relates to all information originating from the government that can be accessed easily, understood clearly, and is



valid. Transparency is implemented to achieve core values associated with democracy and good governance (Alvioni, Darto, and Bonti, 2022).

The implementation of information openness has now followed the development of information and communication technology. The use of internet-based information systems has become the main means of providing direct access to information for the public (Windyaningrum, 2018). Research by Zuiderwijk and Janssen (2014) emphasizes that in designing public information systems, three important dimensions must be considered: information, personal control, and influence, as well as the need for evaluation to ensure alignment with citizens' needs.

The implementation of the principle of information openness in public services not only represents bureaucratic transparency but also constitutes a strategic step toward realizing good governance oriented toward accountability and public participation (Ahmadi and Rachmata, 2019; Wibawa, 2019). Accordingly, the analysis of the Bireuen Regency Government website in this study seeks to examine the extent to which the digital portal functions as a channel for development communication as well as an instrument of public openness.

A content analysis approach is employed to identify how the local government manages and disseminates development information through its official website and to assess the extent to which this reflects the principles of transparency and public participation mandated in national policies on information openness.

3. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative content analysis method as the primary strategy to explore how messages of development communication and public information transparency are represented through the official website of the Bireuen Regency Government. Qualitative content analysis is a systematic technique used to identify patterns and themes within texts. This technique can be applied to various types of texts, including interviews, documents, news articles, or social media content. In content analysis, researchers categorize and count the occurrence of specific words, phrases, or concepts in order to gain an understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The process begins with determining the unit of analysis by selecting words, phrases, or concepts to be analyzed. The second stage involves coding the data based on the occurrence of particular words or concepts. Finally, relevant categories are developed and grouped accordingly (Rianto and Sos, 2024). The object of this study is the official website of the Bireuen Regency Government (<https://www.bireuenkab.go.id/>), which functions as a medium for delivering public information and as a channel for development communication between the government and the public. The units of analysis in this study include news texts, announcements, public information articles, activity reports, and other digital documents uploaded to the website. The researcher focuses on how the principles of public information transparency are represented in each published content and how development messages are communicated to the public through online platforms.

Data collection techniques consist of observation and documentation. Observation is conducted by exploring all sections of the website, recording the types of information presented, the language used, and the supporting visual elements accompanying the

messages. Documentation is carried out by downloading or capturing screenshots of various relevant digital contents for analysis.

The data analysis process is conducted through four main stages: (1) data reduction, by selecting content relevant to the themes of transparency and development communication; (2) coding, which involves categorizing messages based on themes such as information accessibility, public service language, community participation, and government accountability; (3) data presentation, by displaying the coding results in the form of narrative descriptions and thematic tables; and (4) conclusion drawing, by interpreting the patterns and meanings that emerge from the message content within the context of regional development communication.

The scope of the study is limited to analyzing the content of the Bireuen Regency Government website over the most recent six-month period, from May to October 2025. This time frame is selected to ensure that the content analysis reflects current conditions regarding public information transparency practices and development communication implemented by the Bireuen local government. The temporal limitation is considered sufficiently representative, as it encompasses routine cycles of information updates and government activity reporting, allowing the research findings to reflect ongoing communication patterns. Furthermore, the establishment of this temporal boundary is intended to maintain analytical focus so that the data examined remain relevant, directed, and scientifically accountable in accordance with the principles of qualitative content analysis as proposed by Krippendorff.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Language Framing and Development Communication Strategies

The presentation of development information by local governments determines public understanding of development priorities, accountability, and public participation. Bireuen Regency publishes planning documents and statistical publications that serve as primary sources of public development information. According to Krippendorff, qualitative content analysis must be inferential (linking text to its social context), systematic and replicable, context-sensitive, oriented toward interpretive validity, and capable of maintaining category reliability.

Several studies related to public communication and the dissemination of policy information at the local level indicate consistent themes, particularly the delivery of information through official websites to ensure broad public access. On the other hand, development messages packaged in program activities and published on the Bireuen Regency Government website also serve as evidence of ongoing development efforts undertaken by the local government.

Development messages presented on the Bireuen Regency Government website, when analyzed using Krippendorff's content analysis theory, can be examined through several dimensions: emphasized development priority themes, the language and communication style used, the level of information openness and accessibility, and consistency with development planning. Some development messages featured on the website include "The Bireuen Regency Government Together with Villages Completes the Construction of More Than 5,000 Houses for Underprivileged Residents," "Bireuen at 26 Years: Measuring

Achievements, Formulating Hopes," and "Budget Refocusing: The Regent Emphasizes the Importance of Development Proposals." These three development messages are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Categorization of the Content of the Bireuen Regency Government Website

Development Theme	Number of News Items (6 Months)	Example News Headlines	Qualitative Notes / Framing Patterns
Social Housing	3	"The Bireuen Regency Government, Together with Villages, Completes the Construction of More Than 5,000 Houses"	Highly positive framing, the term "completes" symbolizes achievement and emphasizes collaboration between village (gampong) administrations.
Permanent Livable Housing	1	"Laying of the First Stone for the Construction of 53 Housing and Settlement Units"	The "first stone" symbol reflects leadership commitment and highlights the quality of "permanent" construction.
Participation / Musrenbang	2	"The Regent Opens the Musrenbang for the 2026 RPKK," "The Deputy Regent Opens the Musrenbang in Three Subdistricts"	Public participation is emphasized, with the decentralization of development proposals to the subdistrict level.
Education / School Infrastructure	1	"The Head of the Department of Education and Culture and the Head of the District Prosecutor's Office Monitor Education Revitalization"	A focus on the quality of educational infrastructure development and quality oversight.
Budget / Public Policy	1	"Budget Refocusing: Development Proposals Are Considered Essential"	Demonstrates budgetary flexibility and encourages stakeholders to submit development proposals.
Development Strategy / Opinion	2	"Bireuen at 26 Years: Measuring Achievements, Formulating Hopes," "Optimizing Regional Original Revenue (PAD) for Regional Development"	Reflective and strategic narratives, emphasizing long-term development optimism and fiscal strategies (Regional Original Revenue/PAD).

Table 2. Thematic Findings, Language Use, Information Transparency, and Development Consistency on the Bireuen Regency Government Website

Emphasized Development Priority Themes	Communication Language or Messages Conveyed	Information Openness and Accessibility	Consistency with Development Planning
The Bireuen Regency Government communicates the success of housing development for	The language used is pro-development and optimistic. Many news articles employ positive framing, such as	The Bireuen Regency Government website provides a	Programs for livable housing (more than 5,000 units) and the construction of 53 Perkim housing units reflect social and infrastructure program priorities

<p>underprivileged communities through the news article entitled “The Bireuen Regency Government, Together with Villages, Completes the Construction of More Than 5,000 Houses...”</p>	<p>“completes construction,” “initiating development,” and “formulating hopes,” emphasizing development achievements and future expectations.</p>	<p>fairly well-structured news section, with categories such as social affairs, government, and opinion.</p>	<p>that are likely articulated in official development planning documents, such as the RKPK and Renja.</p>
<p>In the opinion piece “Bireuen at 26 Years: Measuring Achievements, Formulating Hopes,” the government highlights past development achievements while outlining future aspirations, providing a reflective and optimistic narrative for local development</p>	<p>Bireuen is portrayed as having experienced significant development over the past 26 years, with this developmental foundation presented as capital for moving forward with optimism.</p>	<p>News articles tend to be formal and informative and generally describe government activities. However, not all articles directly present detailed quantitative data (for example, numerical budget figures for each housing project), which limits the extent to which the public can make detailed inferences based solely on the news texts.</p>	<p>News related to the Musrenbang is consistent with regency-level planning documents, as RKPK and Renja planning processes typically incorporate Musrenbang as part of a participatory planning mechanism (as indicated in the Bireuen Regency Government’s “Development Planning Information” documents).</p>
<p>Budget refocusing emerges as an important theme. In the news article “Budget Refocusing ...,” the Regent emphasizes the importance of development proposals from stakeholders, particularly at the village and subdistrict levels.</p>	<p>Budget transparency is also evident. News related to budget refocusing demonstrates communication from regional leaders to the public and stakeholders, indicating that budget reallocations are being implemented and that development proposals are considered “highly important.”</p>	<p>Public narratives are employed through news and opinion pieces, in which development discourse is directed not only toward technical aspects of development but also toward long-term visions, such as</p>	<p>Budget refocusing signals that the government is responsive to development proposals at the village (gampong) level, indicating alignment between budget planning and local aspirations.</p>



		“formulating hopes.”	
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The pattern of development communication presented by the local government tends to be oriented toward legitimacy, positive image-building, and the affirmation of success across various development sectors. This aligns with McNair's (2017) view that governmental political communication is often designed as image management to minimize criticism and maximize public support (McNair, 2017). Based on the findings presented in the table above, it is evident that the development narratives constructed by the regency government primarily emphasize achievements, optimism, and the continuity of development agendas, while the level of transparency remains largely macro in nature and has not yet reached substantive detail.

The analyzed news articles reveal a pattern in which the Bireuen Regency Government positions social housing development and basic infrastructure as dominant themes. This is clearly reflected in news such as “The Bireuen Regency Government Together with Villages Completes the Construction of More Than 5,000 Houses,” which not only conveys physical achievements but also frames the government as a successful actor in mobilizing cross-level collaboration from the regency government to village (gampong) administrations. The prominent use of the large figure “5,000” houses and the word “completes” indicates a deliberate strategy to construct an impression of massive success. Within Krippendorff's framework, word choices and the emphasis on certain symbols reflect specific communicative intentions (communicator intent) that function as tools for building legitimacy and enhancing public trust, or through symbolic manipulation of statistical data (Krippendorff, 2018).

In addition, other findings indicate that the government website also presents news related to the development of permanent livable housing through the Department of Housing and Settlement (Perkim). Headlines such as “The Laying of the First Stone for 53 Perkim Housing Units Begins...” demonstrate a strong ceremonial framing pattern. The groundbreaking ceremony is selected as the narrative trigger for development, rather than substantive implementation progress. In Krippendorff's analysis, this aspect falls under “pattern recognition,” indicating that symbolic language is employed by the government to emphasize initial commitment to long-term development programs. Critically, however, the use of such ceremonial symbols may divert public attention from substantive issues such as building material quality, completion timelines, or funding sources, which are crucial in the context of development transparency. Such criticism arises because ceremonial symbols can obscure important issues. This is parallel to Tallent's (2020) analysis, which shows that symbolic policies or public ceremonies are often used to signal commitment without disclosing technical details (Tallent, Jan, and Sattelmayer, n.d.).

Regarding public participation, news such as “The Regent Opens the Musrenbang...” and “The Deputy Regent Opens the Musrenbang in Three Subdistricts” reveal a pattern in which the government seeks to demonstrate the existence of participatory mechanisms in regional development. However, the narratives largely focus on the presence of regional officials as the main actors, rather than on the substantive content of community aspirations emerging from these forums. At the inference stage of Krippendorff's analysis, this pattern suggests that the communicated public participation remains largely formalistic. Although Musrenbang is a mandatory planning instrument implemented by every region, reporting that

merely highlights officials opening events indicates that the government still employs a top-down framing approach. This implies that development communication has not yet been fully oriented toward a substantive participatory model that reflects real dynamics, debates, or community aspirations. In fact, public participation in decision-making processes is a fundamental element of democratic governance. Through participation, citizens are able to directly convey their aspirations, needs, and interests to the government (Ndraha et al., 2024).

Another prominent development theme concerns education and the revitalization of school infrastructure. In the news article “The Head of the Education and Culture Office and the District Prosecutor Monitor Education Revitalization,” a communication pattern emphasizing oversight is evident. From a content analysis perspective, the mention of both a technical institution (the Department of Education) and a legal institution (the Prosecutor’s Office) within a single headline not only conveys seriousness but also represents a communication strategy aimed at building public trust by signaling that development processes are supervised by two institutions with different functions. This constitutes a form of authority framing. Nevertheless, the news still fails to provide detailed data such as revitalization progress or indicators of construction quality. This reflects a tendency to frame activities as “formal oversight” without enabling the public to understand the actual quality and impact of development on educational outcomes.

In terms of budgeting and public policy, news such as “Budget Refocusing... Development Proposals Are Important” illustrates a communication pattern intended to demonstrate governmental responsiveness to budgetary dynamics. Within Krippendorff’s approach, this news can be interpreted as an effort by the government to display transparency through public communication. However, a limitation exists in that the article does not disclose numerical details regarding the amount of the refocused budget or which priorities were reduced. As a result, the transparency presented remains normative or merely announces that refocusing has occurred, without providing verifiable data for public scrutiny. In studies of development communication and good governance, such a pattern fulfills only part of the transparency indicators, as detailed fiscal information should be openly accessible.

Another narrative appearing on the website consists of opinion and long-term development reflections, such as in the article “Bireuen at 26 Years: Measuring Achievements, Formulating Hopes.” This article employs reflective and optimistic language, indicating that the government seeks to convey the impression that development undertaken over 26 years constitutes a strong foundation for moving forward. From a content analysis perspective, this narrative pattern signifies the use of an impressive communication strategy, in which the government attempts to link the past, present, and future within a single overarching development framework. However, as with previous findings, this narrative rarely provides concrete quantitative data, rendering it more rhetorical than informative.

Language use constitutes an important category in Krippendorff’s analysis, and the findings of this study reveal a pattern of pro-development and optimistic language. Diction such as “completes,” “convincing,” “formulating hopes,” “enhancing regional fiscal capacity,” and “initiating development” dominates the news content. The language employed is not merely informative but also persuasive, aiming to shape public perception of the government as an effective and progressive development agent. This approach is consistent with persuasive communication strategies, in which messages are designed to positively influence public attitudes and build legitimacy. In the context of governmental communication, the consistent

use of positive framing without providing space for critical or problematic aspects may raise questions regarding information objectivity.

The analysis of information openness indicates that the Bireuen Regency Government website has a relatively well-organized navigation structure, with clear news categories such as social affairs, government, and opinion. This structure facilitates public access to information. However, in terms of substantive transparency, the news content still lacks sufficient factual data. Most articles do not include budget figures, development progress, activity timelines, or performance indicators. Consequently, the website functions more as a narrative-oriented communication medium rather than a comprehensive transparency platform. This tendency indicates a gap between the availability of information structures and the substantive content provided to the public.

Regarding consistency with official development planning documents, the findings indicate that the themes covered in news reporting align with development agendas and priorities commonly found in the RKP, Renja, and other regional development plans. For example, news related to Musrenbang reflects participatory planning processes that are indeed part of the annual planning cycle. The same applies to regional development programs. Within Krippendorff's analysis, the consistency between news themes and official documents suggests that the government uses the website as an instrument to reinforce planning agendas and communicate policies to the public. However, the lack of numerical details and evaluative indicators suggests that the website has not yet been utilized to provide an in-depth understanding of development plan implementation.

Overall, the Bireuen Regency Government website functions as an effective development communication medium in terms of conveying achievements, activities, and regional development visions. The narratives constructed by the government emphasize optimism, commitment, and development continuity as central themes. Nevertheless, there is a strong tendency for reporting to be oriented toward image-building and legitimacy, resulting in substantive transparency aspects—such as budget data, work progress, and program evaluation—not being adequately presented. In the context of modern communication, government websites should serve not only to disseminate success narratives but also to provide space for criticism, evaluation, and broad public engagement. These findings indicate that while development communication has been effective at the narrative level, accountability and information openness still need to be strengthened so that the website can function as a genuine transparency platform and support more participatory, inclusive, and accountable governance.

Representation of Public Information Transparency

The Bireuen Regency Government has fulfilled the basic principle of openness through the provision of diverse information channels. However, when analyzed using Krippendorff's content analysis approach, the representation of public transparency on the website appears to be more symbolic than substantive. Transparency, in the context of public communication, is not only related to the availability of information, but also to the depth of content, the quality of data presentation, and the extent to which the information enables the public to make objective assessments. At this stage, it is found that although the website displays categories such as "Financial Budgeting" and "Transparency," the content does not consistently present detailed data required by the public to comprehensively understand policy processes.

An analysis of news content over the past six months indicates a tendency for development-related information to be presented primarily in the form of generally positive narratives. For example, news concerning the construction of more than 5,000 housing units uses diction such as “completes,” “gampong collaboration,” or “finalizing development,” which conveys a progressive impression. However, these narratives are not accompanied by details regarding budgets, funding sources, timelines, or evaluation parameters. From a content analysis perspective, this reflects information limitations, meaning that the information provided is insufficient to enable public verification and policy assessment. In other words, transparency is present at the surface level but does not fully disclose public decision-making processes.

Krippendorff emphasizes that content analysis should consider not only the text that appears, but also the text that does not appear (Pratama et al., 2021). In this context, the absence of certain information indicates that the government maintains control over development narratives based on what is chosen to be communicated, rather than what the public needs to know. This demonstrates the presence of strong gatekeeping in information management, whereby the government acts as both a filter and a determinant of which messages are deemed suitable for publication.

Furthermore, an examination of the alignment between news headlines and content reveals a pattern of persuasive headline usage. For instance, titles such as “The Bireuen Regency Government Together with Villages Completes the Construction of More Than 5,000 Houses” or “Optimizing Regional Original Revenue (PAD) for Regional Development” create impressions of significant progress. However, the content of these articles often fails to provide quantitative data supporting such claims. In the context of transparency, such headline strategies may be regarded as a form of positive framing that borders on mild clickbait. The primary objective is not to manipulate readers, but to attract attention while reinforcing a positive government image. The positive effect is the enhancement of public trust through success narratives; however, negative consequences may arise when audiences begin to question the gap between rhetoric and data, which can ultimately affect institutional credibility.

These findings carry important implications. In modern governmental communication, transparency is not merely about publishing information, but about enabling the public to gain a comprehensive understanding of policies (Soares, 2025). A website that presents only positive narratives without operational details tends to produce partial transparency. Ideal transparency encompasses data availability, process openness, accessibility, and accountability. These four aspects are only minimally fulfilled on the Bireuen Regency Government website. Accessibility has been addressed through menu provision and navigational structure; data availability exists to some extent but lacks quantitative formats; process openness remains limited; and accountability is not fully evident due to the absence of evaluative reports.

Another aspect that warrants attention is the role of the PPID (Information and Documentation Management Officer) feature in supporting information openness. Although a dedicated PPID menu is available, access to certain information requires users to register. Normatively, this is permissible to maintain administrative order in public information requests. However, from a transparency perspective, such mechanisms can create psychological barriers that render information access more exclusive. Access restrictions may indicate a gap between government and the public in transparency practices (Nurwanda and

Badriah, 2022). If the objective of the website is to strengthen governmental legitimacy through openness, access limitations should ideally be minimized.

The findings presented in the table above indicate that development priorities are consistently displayed. However, this consistency is more prominent in narrative aspects than in data-driven content. In Musrenbang-related news, for instance, the primary focus lies on opening ceremonies, official speeches, and development aspirations, rather than on the substantive deliberations that constitute the core of participatory planning processes. In development participation theory, Musrenbang functions as a deliberative democratic instrument through which communities can contribute to regional development policy formulation. The absence of detailed information on discussion outcomes or community recommendations indicates that the website does not fully represent participatory values.

A similar pattern is observed in news concerning budget refocusing. Although such articles inform the public of budget adjustments, they do not specify which sectors were affected, the percentage of budget changes, or the strategic rationale behind these decisions. In this context, public information transparency functions primarily as general notification rather than as policy documentation that enables public oversight.

Within the framework of development communication, this condition indicates that the Bireuen Regency Government website continues to apply a conventional, top-down communication pattern. The government acts as the primary source of information and determines the narrative to be presented. The public remains largely passive as information recipients, as evidenced by the absence of comments on published news articles. In contrast, contemporary development communication models emphasize participatory communication approaches that allow communities to actively shape development discourse.

Ultimately, the representation of transparency on the Bireuen Regency Government website can be categorized as symbolic transparency. The government conveys an impression of openness, but this is not accompanied by substantive content that supports effective public oversight. To enhance transparency quality, the government should expand the publication of quantitative development data, open two-way interaction channels, and present policy information with adequate technical detail. In doing so, the website can function not only as a tool for governmental legitimacy, but also as an effective democratic instrument that supports transparent, participatory, and accountable governance.

5. CONCLUSION

The development communication pattern constructed by the Bireuen Regency Government tends to be oriented toward positive image-building, legitimacy, and the affirmation of program achievements. Through persuasive news headlines, the government constructs an optimistic narrative that portrays itself as a progressive development agent. However, these narratives do not fully provide detailed descriptions of the technical aspects of development, thereby limiting the public's ability to conduct objective verification of the information presented.

The transparency displayed on the Bireuen Regency Government website remains largely symbolic. Although the website structure is relatively well organized and provides information channels such as the PPID menu, most content is not supported by quantitative data, performance indicators, or detailed descriptions of development processes necessary to

ensure accountability. Development themes are presented through positive narratives, yet they lack evaluative details that would reflect substantive transparency. As a result, the website tends to function more as a medium for representing government success rather than as a space for public participation.

Overall, the Bireuen Regency Government website has served as an effective medium for development communication in terms of narrative dissemination, but it has not yet been optimized as an instrument of transparency and public accountability. To improve the quality of information services, the local government needs to expand the comprehensive disclosure of development data, provide two-way interaction channels, and strengthen data-based and evaluative information presentation. These efforts are essential to ensure that development communication is not only informative, but also inclusive, participatory, and supportive of more open governance.

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