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## THE ROLE OF LOCAL POLITICS AND SOCIAL BIO-POWER IN PUBLIC INFORMATION DISCLOSURE IN WONOGIRI REGENCY

Slamet Sumarto<sup>1</sup>, Wahyu Beny Mukti Setiyawan<sup>2</sup>, Yulius Willy Ciptadi Angkoso<sup>3</sup>, Muhammad Wildan Khunaefi<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

<sup>4</sup>Asosiasi Antropologi Indonesia Pengurus Daerah Jawa Tengah, Indonesia

Email: met\_pkn@mail.unnes.ac.id

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### Abstract

This study aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the role of local politics and socio-cultural forces in public information disclosure and offer both theoretical and practical contributions to corruption prevention efforts in Indonesia. This study employs Michel Foucault's concept of biopower as a framework to analyze and assess the political and sociocultural forces at play in Sendang village's relationship with public information transparency. The results show that the village government can serve as an important model in the implementation of transparency and accountability, as well as increasing community participation in the decision-making process. In addition, the results of this analysis show that, when properly implemented, public disclosure can be an important mechanism to facilitate more responsive and participatory governance. The contribution of this study lies in providing new insights into how local governments can be integrated into village government structures and how communities can be empowered through access to information.

Keywords: Biopower, Public Information Disclosure, Local Governance, Transparency, Community Participation

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### INTRODUCTION

Facing the dynamics of the complexity of handling corruption in Indonesia, an integrated comprehensive solution is needed in Indonesia. This becomes even more urgent when the position of Indonesia's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) drops from 2020 to 2023. Precisely in the 2022/2023 period, Indonesia occupies the CPI position of 110 out of 180 countries. This fact then made the International of Indonesia (TII) issue a recommendation from their annual report analysis. "The government is able to guarantee civil liberties and public aspirations in the formation of regulations to the implementation of corruption prevention development", is the suggestion shown to the Indonesian government in order to improve the position of the Indonesian CPI.

Reviewing TII's input to the Indonesian government, it seems that it can be understood that Indonesia is expected to be able to have a public information disclosure program as a manifestation of transparency in efforts to prevent corruption. In order to realize this program, Indonesia must be able to combine an interdisciplinary approach in responding to corruption, namely political, socio-cultural and legal. Understanding this, a combination of top-down and bottom-up policies must be applied to achieve effective and efficient handling of corruption in Indonesia (Aspiranti et al., 2023; Engkun & Khalid, 2015; Paranata, 2022; Pranadji et al., 2021; Sreirejeki, 2022). Thus, the most appropriate way to respond to corruption in Indonesia from this line of thinking is to make each local government a check point that carries out public information disclosure.

Studies on public information disclosure itself have been carried out by several researchers before. However, most of the studies only dwell on the abstract level, rules, and central government (Febriananingsih, 2012; Rahimallah & Ricky, 2023). Only a few studies on public information disclosure are in the realm of local government. One of them is a study

by Luluk (2022). However, looking closely, this article again ends up in the discourse of public information disclosure as a new tool in reforming the bioarchy of local governments.

In contrast to previous studies, this research focuses on local village governments, specifically examining the case of Sendang village, to explore the concept of local governments serving as the frontline in promoting public information disclosure as a tool to combat corruption. The aim of this study is to uncover the influence of local politics and socio-cultural dynamics on the process of public information disclosure. To achieve this, the study employs Michel Foucault's concept of biopower as a framework to analyze and assess the political and socio-cultural forces at play in Sendang village's relationship with public information transparency.

This study contributes to the literature by offering a unique analysis of how local governments, specifically at the village level, can act as agents of public information disclosure, positioning them as key players in the fight against corruption. It extends the understanding of the socio-political and cultural factors that influence transparency efforts in rural settings. Additionally, the use of Foucault's biopower framework provides a novel theoretical lens through which the intersections of power, governance, and information disclosure can be understood, particularly within the context of local governance in Indonesia. This approach broadens the application of biopower to public administration studies, making a valuable theoretical and practical contribution to the field.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study used a qualitative method with a case study approach to examine the role of local politics and socio-cultural forces in public information disclosure in Sendang Village, Wonogiri Regency. This approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon of public information disclosure in Sendang Village, chosen for its recognition as the village with the best public information disclosure in Indonesia in 2021. The application of Michel Foucault's concept of biopower is analyzed within the local context.

Data collection was conducted through several techniques, including in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with stakeholders such as village government officials, community leaders, and residents to gather their perceptions of public information disclosure and its political and socio-cultural influences. Direct field observations were used to understand the dynamics between actors and observe the practical implementation of public information disclosure. Additionally, official documents such as village financial statements and regulations were collected to provide supporting data and historical context.

The data was analyzed using thematic analysis to identify and interpret patterns within the data. Foucault's biopower framework was applied to explore how power structures influence public information disclosure, examining how local power is constructed and practiced, the role of socio-cultural dynamics, and the interaction between political actors and communities in implementing information disclosure policies.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, data triangulation was applied by comparing information from interviews, observations, and documentation. Peer debriefing and member checking were also conducted to ensure the accuracy of data interpretation. This research aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the role of local politics and socio-cultural forces in public information disclosure and offer both theoretical and practical contributions to corruption prevention efforts in Indonesia.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Implementation of Public Information Disclosure in Sendang Village** ***Public Information Disclosure Policy and Practice in Sendang Village***

Sendang Village has been an exemplary example in the implementation of public information disclosure policies in Indonesia, reflecting a strong commitment to transparency and accountability. In this case, the village has implemented clear and structured regulations, which underlie the implementation of public information disclosure. Village regulations related to information disclosure establish the rights and obligations of citizens in accessing public information, providing a legal framework for requests for information related to activities, programs, and the use of village funds. This policy is in line with Law Number 14 of 2008 concerning Public Information Disclosure, which requires all levels of government to provide open and easily accessible information.

In addition, the information delivery mechanism in Sendang Village has been designed to ensure maximum accessibility and transparency. Village bulletin boards and digital media such as village websites and social media platforms are used to disseminate information related to budgets, development activities, and other important decisions. This allows residents to monitor and actively participate in the village decision-making process. In addition, regular meetings between village officials and residents serve as a forum to share information directly, strengthening communication between the government and the community.

Transparency in public administration is also seen in the management of the open village budget in Sendang Village. The village's financial statements are published periodically, including details on the source and use of funds. Thus, residents can monitor the use of village funds and ensure that the funds are used in accordance with the agreed plan. This practice not only increases the accountability of the village government but also builds public trust in the management of public funds. However, despite the existing regulations and mechanisms that support information disclosure, some challenges remain. For example, there is still a lack of awareness and limitations among the public regarding their right to access information, which can reduce the effectiveness of information disclosure. In addition, the limitations of technological infrastructure can be an obstacle to the effective dissemination of information. Therefore, it is important for Sendang Village to continue to increase socialization efforts and strengthen supporting infrastructure so that access to information is more equitable and efficient.

Overall, the policies and practices of public information disclosure in Sendang Village show how the village government can serve as a model in the implementation of transparency and accountability. The good implementation of these policies not only provides direct benefits to citizens but also contributes to national efforts to strengthen good governance and eradicate corruption at the local level. With this approach, Sendang Village is an example of how information disclosure can be an important tool in creating a responsive and participatory government. This success shows great potential for other regions to implement similar practices in an effort to build a more transparent and accountable government.

### ***Achievements and Challenges in the Development and Implementation of Village Public Information Disclosure.***

Sendang Village has achieved extraordinary achievements by winning the title of the village with the best public information disclosure in Indonesia in 2021. This recognition reflects the success of the village in implementing information disclosure policies effectively, including transparency in administration and active community participation. This award improves the reputation of the village and shows the village government's strong commitment to the principles of *good governance*. This achievement is proof that, with the right policy

support and consistent implementation, information disclosure can be realized even at the village level. However, this success is inseparable from the various challenges faced during the implementation process. One of the main challenges is the burden of programs from various ministries that must be managed by village governments. This causes the village government to have to handle many tasks at once, which can shift the focus from the implementation of public information disclosure policies. The limited quantity and quality of village apparatus adds to the complexity of this challenge, as the lack of adequate human resources hinders the efficiency and effectiveness of the management of various programs.

The public's full awareness of their right to access information has also not been fully present. Even though information disclosure regulations already exist, many villagers still do not fully understand or utilize these rights. This lack of awareness reduces public participation in the monitoring and decision-making process, thereby hindering the desired level of transparency. More intensive education and socialization are needed to increase public understanding of the importance of information disclosure.

In addition, technology and information devices in Sendang Village still need to be further developed. These limitations include uneven internet access and a lack of adequate digital platforms to support the effective dissemination of information. These technological challenges hinder the full implementation of public information disclosure, given the importance of digital infrastructure in facilitating access to information. To address these challenges, further investment in technology and training, as well as support from the central government and others is needed to strengthen the capacity of villages to provide better information disclosure.

### **The Role of Local Politics in Encouraging Public Information Disclosure**

#### ***The Influence and Strategy of Village Leadership in Public Information Disclosure***

Leadership in Sendang Village plays a crucial role in promoting and implementing public information disclosure policies. The village head, as the main leader, has shown a strong commitment to transparency by implementing various initiatives that support information disclosure. One of the strategies used is active involvement in conveying information directly to the public, both through regular meetings and through digital media. The village head also encouraged the village apparatus to be more proactive in providing access to information to residents, so that the community feels involved in the decision-making process.

This leadership role is not only limited to the village head but also includes all village officials who work together to facilitate information disclosure. Village officials, such as village secretaries and treasurers, also play a role in administrative transparency, for example by publishing financial reports on a regular basis. These measures help create a transparent environment where information about the use of village funds is accessible to the public. In addition, village officials also play a role in educating the community about their right to access information, increasing public awareness and participation.

Another strategy adopted by the village leadership is to strengthen communication with the community. This is done through the use of information technology, such as village websites and social media platforms, to disseminate information widely and quickly. The use of this technology makes it easier for residents to access important information, such as village development plans, budgets, and government programs. Thus, information technology becomes an effective tool to increase transparency and strengthen the relationship between the village government and the community.

In addition, village leadership also seeks to build public trust through openness and honesty. Village heads are often bridges between the government and residents, addressing community complaints and aspirations in a transparent and responsive manner. This helps

build the credibility and trust of the community in the village government. With transparent and participatory leadership, Sendang Village has succeeded in creating an environment that supports public information disclosure, which in turn encourages wider community participation and increases the accountability of village governments.

### ***Patronage, Dynamics of Power Structures and the Role of Local Political Actors***

The local power structure in Sendang Village plays an important role in the implementation of public information disclosure. This village has a government structure consisting of the village head, village officials, and the Village Consultative Body (BPD), all of which play a role in decision-making and supervision. The village head, as a central figure, is responsible for setting the direction of policies and ensuring that public information is provided transparently. In this case, the village head works with the village apparatus to implement information disclosure policies, such as budget transparency and development programs.

Other local political actors, such as members of the BPD, also play an important role in this process. The BPD functions as a supervisory body that ensures that village policies, including information disclosure, are properly implemented. They have the authority to evaluate the performance of village heads and village officials, as well as ensure that decisions are taken in accordance with the interests of the community. This supervisory role is vital in maintaining the accountability of the village government and keeping the transparency process running.

While patronage is often a problem in local politics, in Sendang Village, its influence is limited and insignificant on the implementation of public information disclosure. The power structure in this village prioritizes the principles of transparency and accountability, focusing on the interests of the community collectively rather than the interests of certain individuals or groups. This can be seen from the commitment of village officials and BPD to support programs that encourage public participation and wider access to information.

The power dynamics in Sendang Village are also influenced by the interaction between the village government and the community. Village governments seek to build open and inclusive relationships, where communities are involved in the decision-making process. This is realized through various public forums, such as village deliberations, where residents have the opportunity to express their views and get information directly from the village government. Thus, the local power structure in Sendang Village tends to support the implementation of public information disclosure by creating a transparent, participatory, and accountable government system.

### **Socio-Cultural Forces and Their Influence on Public Information Disclosure**

#### ***Local Social and Cultural Values***

Local social and cultural values in Sendang Village play an important role in supporting or hindering public information disclosure. Social values such as mutual cooperation and transparency that have long been part of village culture support the implementation of information disclosure policies. A culture of cooperation and mutual support in village communities encourages citizen involvement in decision-making and monitoring processes. With these values, village communities tend to be more open to the principles of transparency and accountability applied by the village government. However, there are also cultural aspects and social norms that can hinder information disclosure. Local customs often emphasize the importance of maintaining harmony and avoiding conflict, which can make some individuals or groups reluctant to express their dissatisfaction or ask for information openly. These values can create barriers to accessing information, especially if the

information is considered sensitive or potentially strain-inducing. Therefore, understanding these social norms is important to overcome potential resistance to transparency.

Local culture in Sendang Village also includes various customs and traditions that affect people's attitudes towards information disclosure. For example, the tradition of customary meetings and village deliberations is often used as a forum for sharing information and making decisions together. This tradition supports information disclosure because it provides opportunities for residents to be involved in the decision-making process and get information directly from the village government. However, the implementation of information disclosure needs to adjust to customs so as not to conflict with existing local cultural values.

Overall, the local social and cultural values in Sendang Village contribute to the formation of people's attitudes and behaviors towards transparency and accountability. Positive values such as mutual cooperation and openness support the implementation of public information disclosure, while more conservative social norms and customs can create challenges. Understanding these cultural dynamics is important for designing effective strategies for improving public information disclosure and ensuring that policies are implemented in line with local values.

### ***Community Engagement Factors***

The level of community participation in Sendang Village in the decision-making process and access to public information shows significant variations. Community participation is seen in various forums, such as village deliberations and public meetings, where residents are invited to express their opinions and access information on village policies. However, this level of involvement still depends on several important factors, including education, awareness of the right to information, and the level of trust in the village government. Higher participation is usually seen in citizens who have a better understanding of the importance of information disclosure and their right to access it.

One of the factors that affects community involvement is the level of education. Citizens with higher education tend to have a better understanding of government processes and their rights to access public information. They are more likely to be actively involved in village forums and use the information available to oversee village policies and budgets. In contrast, citizens with lower levels of education are often less informed about their rights and their role in decision-making, which can reduce their participation in the process.

Awareness of the right to information is also a key factor influencing community engagement. Although regulations on information disclosure have been disseminated, not all citizens are fully aware or understand their right to access public information. This low level of awareness can limit their ability to request and use the information provided by the village government. Therefore, more intensive socialization and education efforts are needed to increase public awareness of their rights.

Trust in the village government also plays an important role in determining the level of community participation. The research data shows an interesting pattern, namely "When people have high confidence in the integrity and accountability of village governments, they tend to participate more in the decision-making process and be more active in accessing public information. On the other hand, if there is distrust of the government, citizens may feel reluctant to get involved or doubt the honesty of the information provided" (Primary Data Processing, May 2024)

Reading this pattern, it can be understood that building and maintaining public trust through transparency and accountability of the village government is the key to increasing public participation in Sendang Village. Meanwhile, the general public perception of the Sendang Village government regarding transparency and accountability is good. Thus, at a

minimum, the Sendang Village government needs to maintain this good perception so that positive community involvement remains on a progressive path.

### **Application of the Biopower Concept in Local Context**

#### ***Power and Practice of Public Information Regulation***

Biopower in this context, refers to the way the village government manages and regulates people's lives through information and data. Village governments use public information disclosure policies as a tool to control and direct community behavior, by facilitating access to relevant information. This creates a gentle but effective form of power, in which control is not exercised directly, but through the regulation of access and distribution of information.

In practice, village governments use information and data arrangements to supervise and monitor community activities. For example, through the publication of financial statements and development programs, village governments can monitor community participation and ensure that citizens' actions are in accordance with established policies. This transparency also allows village governments to manage public perception and build trust, which is an important component of biopower. By providing access to information, village governments can encourage citizens to participate in the decision-making process and strengthen the legitimacy of the policies implemented.

In addition, public information disclosure is used as a tool to discipline the community and village officials. Through the public monitoring mechanism, the village government can monitor and evaluate the performance of village officials and ensure that they work in accordance with the established rules. The public publication of information also serves as a means to prevent corruption and abuse of authority, as transparency increases the likelihood that unethical actions will be exposed and acted upon. Thus, information disclosure serves as a social control mechanism that ensures that all parties act in accordance with existing norms and rules.

On the other hand, the regulation of information and data can create complex power dynamics in society. Although information disclosure aims to empower citizens, in practice, village governments have an important role in determining the type of information conveyed and how it is delivered. As such, it is possible that the information chosen to share may better reflect specific priorities and perspectives. This allows the village government to guide the narrative and shape public perception, which can indirectly affect the balance of power in the community. Biopower analysis in this context shows that while transparency is an important tool for accountability, its use needs to be judiciously regulated to truly reflect the principles of openness and fairness.

#### ***Population Management and Government Surveillance***

Public information disclosure in Sendang Village functions as an effective monitoring mechanism for the population, especially through population data management and public services. Transparent management of population data allows village governments to monitor demographic changes and community needs more accurately. Data obtained from local censuses and population registration are used to plan and implement programs that are in accordance with the conditions and needs of residents. With open access to this data, communities can also verify the information provided by the village government, which increases public accountability and trust.

In addition, information disclosure in public services allows residents to access important information about various services provided by the village government. For example, information about administrative procedures, budget allocations, and social assistance programs is openly disseminated to the public. This not only makes it easier for

residents to take advantage of these services, but also gives them the opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of the services provided. Transparency in public services also serves as an internal oversight tool, as village officials know that their performance can be monitored by the public.

Interaction between the village government and the community is also regulated through an information disclosure mechanism. Public forums and village deliberations are often used to convey information and discuss important issues with residents. Through this involvement, village governments can obtain feedback from the community and adjust their policies according to the aspirations and needs of the residents. This process also allows residents to actively participate in decision-making, which in turn strengthens a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for village decisions.

Overall, public information disclosure in Sendang Village serves as a supervisory mechanism that not only facilitates transparency in data management and public services, but also strengthens the relationship between the government and the community. By providing easy and open access to information, village governments can manage the population more effectively and responsively to the needs of the community. This creates an environment where information and data become essential tools for social surveillance and control, while also empowering the public to actively engage in public life.

### ***The Role of Local Politics in Public Information Disclosure***

The role of local politics in public information disclosure has a profound impact on social dynamics and community development (Garrido-Rodríguez et al., 2022; Nicolò et al., 2024; Tejedo-Romero & Ferraz Esteves Araújo, 2023; Tejedo-Romero & Ferraz Esteves Araujo, 2023; Tjoetra et al., 2022). Local leaders, as an extension of the interests of the community in the realm of government, have a central role in shaping an environment that supports transparency and accountability (J. H. Armstrong, 2022; Ferry & Sandford, 2022; Gil-Garcia et al., 2020; Osborne et al., 2021; Rijal, 2023). In this context, public information disclosure is not only about providing public data and policies, but also about creating strong connections between governments and their citizens (Kassen, 2022; Matheus & Janssen, 2020; Moon, 2020; Žuffová, 2020).

The importance of responsive and open local politics is reflected in development decisions, resource allocation, and public policy (Leckel et al., 2020; Weible et al., 2020). Leaders who support information disclosure not only open the door to access information, but also build participatory bridges that allow the community to be involved in policy formulation (Bennett et al., 2022; Cvitanovic et al., 2021). This creates a two-way channel where leaders can respond to the needs and aspirations of the community, while the community can understand and support the policies taken.

The importance of local politics in public information disclosure is not only at the level of fulfillment of the right to information, but also in the formation of a participatory culture that builds mutual trust and understanding between the government and citizens (Mikhaylovskaya & Rouméas, 2024; Ricciardelli, 2022; Robinson, 2020; Šaparnienė et al., 2021; Vítališová et al., 2021). Thus, the strong role of local politics in supporting information disclosure is the key to forming an inclusive, democratic, and sustainable development community.

### ***Social Bio-power in Public Information Disclosure***

Social biopower in the context of public information disclosure highlights the role of society in regulating and shaping the flow of information in a community (P. Armstrong, 1994; Gervassis, 2021). Society, through social interaction and the dynamics of daily life, has the ability to control and shape the narrative of information that is scattered. In the digital era



and increasing connectivity, social biopower is crucial in shaping collective perceptions of access to information and public policies (Harracá et al., 2023; Karakayali & Alpertan, 2021).

In this context, social biopower includes the work of the community together in managing and directing the flow of information. Social groups and community networks play a role in defining information needs, filtering data, and even influencing opinion formation. The sustainability of public information disclosure does not only depend on the government's efforts, but also on the active participation of the public in managing and distributing information.

Social biopower in information openness creates the potential for greater transparency and democratization of the information process. However, this also presents challenges in ensuring the diversity and accuracy of information disseminated by the public. Therefore, the role of social biopower is important in forming a healthy public information ecosystem, where public participation and social control over information are the foundation for positive social change and sustainable openness.

## CONCLUSION

The study reveals that public information disclosure in Sendang Village has proven effective in increasing transparency and accountability of local governments, as well as fostering community participation in decision-making processes. It uses Michel Foucault's biopower framework to examine how information and data are used as tools of social surveillance and control. The study also highlights the importance of public information disclosure in strengthening the relationship between the government and the public, a concept that has been underemphasized in previous research. It provides new insights into how public information disclosure can be integrated into village government structures and how communities can be empowered through access to information.

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