



A Comparative Analysis of Public Trust in the Instagram Accounts @abouttng and @lapor_laksa in Accommodating Community Aspirations

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Abstract

Public trust has become an essential factor in determining the effectiveness of digital communication platforms in accommodating community aspirations. This study aims to measure and compare the level of public trust in the Instagram accounts @abouttng, a community-based media platform, and @lapor_laksa, the official Instagram account of the Tangerang City Government, in facilitating public aspirations. The research employed a quantitative approach with a comparative design. Data were collected from 200 respondents, consisting of 100 followers of @abouttng and 100 followers of @lapor_laksa, selected through quota sampling and accidental sampling techniques. Public trust was measured through cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions, while hypothesis testing was conducted using the Independent Samples t-test. The findings revealed a significance value of 0.000, which was lower than the established significance level ($\alpha = 0.10$), indicating that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The results confirm a significant difference in public trust between the two Instagram accounts. Respondents generally perceived @abouttng as more responsive, transparent, interactive, and effective in managing public complaints and disseminating information than @lapor_laksa. These findings suggest that communicative performance plays a more decisive role in shaping public trust than formal institutional status within digital public communication environments.

Keywords: Community Aspirations, Comparative Analysis, Digital Public, Communication Public Trust, Social Media.



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INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of digital communication technologies has fundamentally transformed the mechanisms through which citizens articulate aspirations, monitor public services, and engage with governmental and non-governmental actors, creating an increasingly networked public sphere where social media platforms function not merely as channels of information dissemination but also as arenas of participatory governance and civic interaction. The emergence of digital platforms has altered conventional models of political and social communication by enabling direct, instantaneous, and interactive exchanges between institutions and citizens, thereby reshaping the dynamics of public participation and democratic engagement (Theocharis et al., 2023). Social media has consequently evolved into a strategic instrument for public communication, allowing governments, community organizations, and civil society actors to facilitate dialogue, collect feedback, and accommodate public aspirations in more responsive ways (Kamiawati & Gultom, 2023). Contemporary studies indicate that the effectiveness of digital engagement increasingly depends on the ability of social media platforms to foster meaningful interaction rather than merely distribute information, particularly within contexts where public trust serves as a prerequisite for sustained civic participation (Contri et al., 2025). Public institutions across various countries have consequently intensified their utilization of social media to strengthen transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement within digital governance ecosystems (Nainggolan, 2024). The growing reliance on social media-mediated interactions reflects a broader global shift toward digitally enabled governance models that place citizens at the center of public communication processes. Within this evolving landscape, the relationship between digital communication practices and public trust has emerged as a central concern in contemporary human interaction and social studies scholarship.

Existing literature demonstrates that social media has evolved into an important mechanism for accommodating community aspirations by providing accessible spaces for citizens to express concerns, report public issues, and participate in public discussions. Studies on digital participation indicate that social media platforms facilitate civic engagement by reducing communication barriers and expanding opportunities for interaction between citizens and institutions (Abdad, 2022). Research on governmental social media further reveals that content responsiveness, transparency, and interaction quality significantly influence citizens' willingness to engage with public organizations in online environments (Hussin et al., 2025). Public trust has consequently emerged as a critical factor determining the success of digital governance initiatives because citizens are more likely to participate when they perceive institutions as credible and effective (Hutahaean et al., 2023). Evidence from Instagram-based public communication also suggests that consistent and interactive communication practices contribute to strengthening institutional legitimacy and public confidence (Gita & Fauzi, 2025). Nevertheless, high levels of audience engagement do not necessarily correspond with stronger public trust, indicating that trust formation involves more complex mechanisms than platform popularity alone (Ganiem et al., 2025). The quality of complaint handling and institutional responsiveness remains particularly important because deficiencies in these areas can generate distrust and undermine organizational legitimacy (Lusia Sulastris, 2023). From a public administration perspective, trust encompasses cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions that reflect citizens' evaluations of transparency, emotional attachment, and institutional accountability, suggesting that public trust should be understood as a multidimensional construct rather than a simple measure of user satisfaction.

Although previous studies have generated valuable insights regarding digital participation and public communication, substantial conceptual and empirical limitations remain evident within the existing body of knowledge. Much of the literature focuses predominantly on government-operated platforms and often assumes that institutional legitimacy automatically confers public trust, despite emerging evidence showing that citizens frequently place greater confidence in alternative or community-driven information sources (Rodrigues et al., 2024). Research investigating public communication through social media has tended to analyze governmental and non-governmental actors separately, producing fragmented understandings regarding how citizens evaluate competing channels that perform similar public service functions (Tamba & Kholikin, 2025). Studies on political representation and digital framing further reveal that trust formation is influenced not only by institutional status but also by communicative practices, issue framing, and perceived responsiveness, factors that are often insufficiently incorporated into comparative analyses (Ramadani et al., 2025). Existing scholarship has also paid limited attention to comparative assessments between official government accounts and highly influential community-based media accounts operating within the same local sociopolitical environment. This gap is particularly significant because digital publics increasingly navigate multiple information sources simultaneously when seeking solutions to public concerns. The absence of comparative evidence has consequently restricted theoretical understanding regarding the mechanisms through which trust is constructed across different forms of digital intermediaries. A more nuanced investigation is required to determine whether institutional authority or communicative performance exerts greater influence on public trust in contemporary digital ecosystems.

The urgency of addressing this gap becomes particularly evident within the context of Tangerang City, where the coexistence of community-based and government-operated digital communication channels provides a unique environment for examining trust dynamics in accommodating public aspirations. The development of information technology has encouraged significant transformations in patterns of public interaction and aspiration delivery, leading citizens to increasingly rely on social media as a primary communication medium (Siahaan et al., 2022). In Tangerang, this phenomenon has produced two prominent digital channels frequently utilized by residents to obtain information and communicate public concerns, namely Instagram accounts @abouttng and @lapor_laksa (Uddin et al., 2020). The account @abouttng operates as a community-based cyber media platform established on 12 November 2014 and has accumulated a substantial follower base while actively disseminating information related to local events, public services, community issues, and civic concerns (Prutami, 2022). Its role has expanded beyond information sharing toward functioning as an important node of citizen journalism and local news democratization within Tangerang's digital public sphere (Widianti

et al., 2025). Research has further shown that @abouttng plays a significant role in fulfilling community information needs through continuous information dissemination and audience interaction (Sagiyanto & Nasution, 2022). The prominence of this account raises important questions regarding the extent to which community-based digital actors can cultivate public trust in domains traditionally associated with governmental responsibility.

In contrast, the Tangerang City Government introduced the LAKSA public service initiative as part of its broader e-government strategy, providing citizens with an official mechanism for submitting complaints, reporting public issues, and communicating aspirations through digital channels. The implementation of LAKSA reflects the city government's commitment to integrating technology into public service delivery and citizen engagement processes (Isbandi et al., 2022). As an official governmental platform, @lapor_laksa was expected to function as a central communication bridge between citizens and public institutions while strengthening accountability and responsiveness in local governance (Lim & Chae, 2025). Empirical evaluations indicate that the effectiveness of LAKSA in facilitating communication and responding to public concerns remains an important component of Tangerang's digital governance framework (Satriannisa & Rahmawati, 2025). Despite its formal institutional legitimacy, the account exhibits considerably lower follower engagement and visibility compared with the community-driven @abouttng platform, creating a striking paradox within digital public communication. This disparity challenges conventional assumptions that official status inherently generates stronger public trust and highlights the need for systematic investigation into citizens' perceptions of credibility, responsiveness, and accountability across competing digital channels. More specifically, the unresolved question concerns the comparative pattern of public trust between Instagram accounts @abouttng and @lapor_laksa in accommodating community aspirations within the socio-digital environment of Tangerang City. Despite performing relatively similar functions as channels for public complaints, information dissemination, and citizen interaction, the two platforms exhibit markedly different levels of visibility, engagement, and institutional positioning, raising questions regarding whether these differences translate into distinct levels of public trust. Understanding these contrasting dynamics is essential not only for evaluating local governance practices but also for refining broader theoretical explanations regarding trust formation in digitally mediated public communication.

Against this backdrop, the present study positions itself within the growing body of scholarship on digital governance, social media communication, and public trust by conducting a comparative analysis of public trust in the Instagram accounts @abouttng and @lapor_laksa as platforms for accommodating community aspirations in Tangerang City. Specifically, this research seeks to measure whether significant differences exist in the level of public trust toward the two accounts and to identify and compare the factors that influence citizens' trust in each platform. The study is grounded in the premise that public trust in digital communication channels is shaped not solely by institutional legitimacy or platform popularity but also by perceptions of responsiveness, transparency, accessibility, credibility, and effectiveness in addressing public concerns. By examining two accounts that perform similar public communication functions yet represent fundamentally different organizational characteristics—one as a community-based digital media platform and the other as an official government communication channel—this research provides a unique opportunity to explore how trust is constructed within competing digital environments. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the advancement of public trust and digital participation literature by offering a more nuanced understanding of trust formation in hybrid communication ecosystems. From a methodological perspective, the study introduces a comparative approach for assessing public trust across different categories of social media actors, while practically providing evidence-based insights that may assist both governmental institutions and community-based media organizations in enhancing their capacity to accommodate public aspirations more effectively.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed an empirical quantitative approach using a comparative survey design to examine public trust in the Instagram accounts @abouttng and @lapor_laksa as digital platforms for accommodating community aspirations in Tangerang City. The research population comprised active followers of both Instagram accounts who had interacted with, observed, or utilized information and public complaint services provided through the respective platforms. The sample size was determined

using the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error, resulting in 200 respondents consisting of 100 followers of @abouttng and 100 followers of @lapor_laksa (Isbandi et al., 2022). Respondents were selected through a non-probability sampling technique combining quota sampling and accidental sampling to ensure representation from both follower groups while facilitating access to participants who met the research criteria (Janna & Herianto, 2021). Primary data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms using a five-point Likert scale. The study focused on measuring public trust through cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions, including perceptions of information transparency, interaction quality, responsiveness, accountability, and credibility. The comparative design was adopted to explore variations in trust perceptions between followers of the two accounts and to identify the dominant factors contributing to public trust in each digital communication platform.

The research instrument consisted of structured questionnaire items developed from the multidimensional concept of public trust and adapted to the context of social media-based public communication. Instrument validity was examined using Pearson Product-Moment correlation analysis, whereas reliability was assessed through Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, with values exceeding 0.70 indicating satisfactory internal consistency. Data analysis was conducted in several stages. First, descriptive statistical analysis was employed to examine respondent characteristics and compare mean scores across the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of trust for both Instagram accounts. This descriptive-comparative analysis enabled the identification of differences in public perceptions regarding transparency, engagement, responsiveness, and credibility between @abouttng and @lapor_laksa. Second, prerequisite tests consisting of normality and homogeneity analyses were performed to ensure compliance with parametric assumptions. Finally, an Independent Samples t-test was conducted using IBM SPSS software to determine whether the observed differences in public trust between the two groups were statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level (Syahri, 2014). Ethical considerations were addressed through voluntary participation procedures, informed consent, anonymity protection, and strict confidentiality of respondent data throughout the research process).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Comparative Analysis of Overall Public Trust between @abouttng and @lapor_laksa

The comparative analysis was conducted to determine whether significant differences existed in public trust toward the Instagram accounts @abouttng and @lapor_laksa in accommodating community aspirations. Public trust was measured through cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions that collectively reflected respondents' evaluations of transparency, interaction quality, responsiveness, accountability, and communication effectiveness. The descriptive statistical results indicated that respondents generally assigned higher trust scores to @abouttng than to @lapor_laksa across all measured dimensions. This pattern suggests that followers perceived the community-based account as more capable of facilitating communication between citizens and relevant stakeholders. Differences in trust levels were observable not only in overall evaluations but also in specific perceptions regarding the handling of public complaints and the dissemination of information. Such findings indicate that public trust in digital communication platforms is influenced by the quality of interaction experienced by users rather than merely by the institutional status of the account. The observed tendency provides an important foundation for understanding how citizens evaluate competing channels that perform similar public communication functions.

Table 1. Independent Sample t-Test Results

Variable	Mean @abouttng	Mean @lapor_laksa	Sig. (2-tailed)	α	Decision
Public Trust	4.28	2.31	0.000	0.10	H ₀ Rejected

The hypothesis testing results provide stronger evidence regarding the existence of differences in public trust between the two Instagram accounts. The Independent Samples t-test produced a significance value (2-tailed) of 0.000, which was lower than the established significance level of 0.10.

The statistical outcome indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted, confirming a significant difference in public trust between followers of @abouttnng and followers of @lapor_laksa. The magnitude of the difference reflected a substantial gap in respondents' evaluations of the effectiveness of each account in accommodating community aspirations. Public trust toward @abouttnng was consistently positioned at a higher level than trust toward @lapor_laksa, suggesting that users perceived different levels of service quality and responsiveness. The result supports the argument that trust formation within social media environments is shaped by users' direct experiences and observations of communication practices. Similar observations have been reported in studies emphasizing the role of social media performance in strengthening public confidence toward digital communication actors (Gita & Fauzi, 2025).

A closer examination of the findings reveals that the superiority of @abouttnng cannot be explained solely by the account's popularity or larger follower base. Respondents frequently associated trust with visible evidence of responsiveness, accessibility, and continuous engagement in addressing public concerns. The community-based nature of @abouttnng appears to facilitate a communication climate in which users perceive their voices as being acknowledged and amplified through public interaction. Trust, in this context, emerges from repeated experiences that reinforce expectations regarding the reliability of information and the effectiveness of communication processes. Contemporary studies suggest that citizens are increasingly willing to trust digital actors that demonstrate consistency and responsiveness rather than relying exclusively on formal institutional authority (Rodrigues et al., 2024). The present findings reinforce this perspective by showing that perceptions of practical performance exert a stronger influence on trust than organizational status alone. Public trust consequently functions as a relational construct shaped by continuous interaction between platform administrators and their audiences.

The lower trust level associated with @lapor_laksa presents an important issue within the context of digital governance and public service communication. As an official government-operated platform, @lapor_laksa possesses institutional legitimacy and formal authority to facilitate public complaints. Respondents nevertheless expressed concerns regarding responsiveness, transparency, and the visibility of complaint follow-up processes, which appeared to reduce confidence in the platform. Research on governmental social media has shown that citizens tend to evaluate public institutions based on perceived communication quality and responsiveness rather than on formal authority alone (Hussin et al., 2025). The findings indicate that institutional legitimacy does not automatically generate trust when communication practices fail to meet public expectations. Citizens increasingly expect real-time interaction, clear feedback mechanisms, and transparent service delivery through digital platforms. This expectation has become more pronounced as social media evolves from a one-way information channel into a participatory environment characterized by reciprocal communication and citizen engagement (Theocharis et al., 2023).

The difference identified in this study aligns with previous scholarship concerning the relationship between social media engagement and public trust. Research has consistently demonstrated that active interaction and visible responsiveness contribute significantly to trust formation in digital public communication environments (Hutahaeen et al., 2023). Evidence from public sector communication studies further indicates that citizens develop stronger trust toward platforms that provide opportunities for dialogue and demonstrate accountability in addressing public concerns (Contri et al., 2025). Similar conclusions were reported by Indriasari et al. (2026), who found that Instagram-based public relations activities can strengthen trust when communication is perceived as transparent and responsive. The findings also resonate with studies highlighting the growing role of social media as a medium for civic participation and aspiration delivery among digitally connected communities (Abdad, 2022). The relationship between engagement and trust observed in this research confirms that public trust remains closely associated with communication performance and user experience. Differences in trust therefore reflect broader differences in how each platform manages interaction, responsiveness, and public expectations.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings contribute to ongoing debates regarding trust formation within hybrid digital communication ecosystems. The results demonstrate that public trust is not exclusively attached to governmental institutions but may also develop strongly around community-based media actors that successfully facilitate citizen interaction and information exchange. This observation expands previous discussions regarding the shifting nature of authority in digital public

spaces, where credibility increasingly depends on communicative performance rather than institutional designation. The comparison between @abouttng and @lapor_laksa illustrates how citizens evaluate digital platforms through practical indicators such as responsiveness, transparency, and interaction quality. Such evaluations shape trust perceptions that subsequently influence participation, complaint submission behavior, and engagement with public issues. The findings also suggest that governmental communication strategies require continuous adaptation to evolving citizen expectations within social media environments. Future efforts to strengthen public trust should therefore focus not only on technological infrastructure but also on cultivating communication practices that demonstrate openness, responsiveness, and accountability in everyday interactions with citizens.

Comparative Analysis of Criticism and Suggestion Acceptance

The ability of a digital communication platform to receive criticism and public suggestions represents one of the most important indicators of trust formation in contemporary social media environments. Citizens increasingly expect online platforms not only to disseminate information but also to provide opportunities for reciprocal communication and meaningful participation in public affairs. The survey results indicate substantial differences between @abouttng and @lapor_laksa regarding public perceptions of criticism and suggestion acceptance. Respondents generally perceived @abouttng as more open and accommodating toward public feedback, whereas @lapor_laksa was viewed as less responsive to citizen concerns. Such perceptions are important because trust frequently emerges when citizens feel that their voices are acknowledged and considered in decision-making processes. Public communication scholars have argued that digital participation is strengthened when platforms facilitate interactive engagement rather than merely functioning as information repositories (Theocharis et al., 2023). The findings suggest that citizens evaluate communication channels not only according to their formal role but also according to their willingness to engage with community perspectives.

Table 2. Comparison of Criticism and Suggestion Acceptance

Indicator	@abouttng (%)	@lapor_laksa (%)
Positive Assessment	83	10
Negative Assessment	17	90

The data presented in Table 2 demonstrate a striking contrast between the two accounts. Approximately 83% of respondents agreed that @abouttng actively accommodates criticism and public suggestions, while only a small proportion expressed dissatisfaction with the account's openness. In contrast, nearly 90% of respondents reported negative perceptions regarding the ability of @lapor_laksa to receive and process community complaints. The disparity suggests that citizens associate responsiveness with the visibility of interaction rather than with institutional authority. Users often interpret acknowledgment, reposting, commenting, and direct engagement as indicators that their concerns have been taken seriously. Digital communication research has shown that visible interaction mechanisms significantly influence perceptions of organizational legitimacy and trustworthiness (Hussin et al., 2025). Public trust consequently becomes linked to communicative behavior that can be directly observed by platform users.

The positive perception of @abouttng appears closely connected to its communication strategy, which emphasizes public interaction and rapid amplification of community concerns. Many respondents reported that complaints submitted through the platform frequently receive immediate exposure through Instagram Stories and other interactive features. This practice creates a perception that public concerns are being addressed promptly and publicly. The visibility of such interactions contributes to the construction of trust because citizens can observe the communication process directly. Previous studies have noted that community-based digital media frequently attract public confidence when they successfully function as intermediaries between citizens and relevant institutions (Sagiyanto & Nasution, 2022). Similar findings were identified in research on netizen journalism, which highlights the role of community-driven platforms in democratizing local information and encouraging civic

participation (Widianti et al., 2025). The findings of the present study reinforce the argument that openness and visibility are critical elements in digital trust formation.

The relatively weak performance of @lapor_laksa on this indicator reflects broader challenges commonly faced by government-operated communication platforms. Respondents frequently expressed concerns regarding delayed responses and uncertainty about whether submitted complaints would receive meaningful follow-up. Such perceptions can weaken confidence even when a platform possesses official authority and institutional legitimacy. Research examining government social media consistently indicates that citizens prioritize responsiveness and communication quality over symbolic representations of authority (Nainggolan, 2024). The effectiveness of public service communication increasingly depends on demonstrating tangible engagement rather than simply providing formal complaint mechanisms. Citizens often assess government communication through practical outcomes that are visible in their daily interactions. These expectations have become particularly prominent within digitally connected communities where information circulates rapidly and users compare experiences across multiple platforms.

The findings also illustrate the importance of participatory communication in shaping public trust. Citizens who perceive opportunities to contribute ideas, criticisms, and suggestions are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward a platform. Participation generates a sense of inclusion that strengthens emotional attachment and enhances confidence in communication processes. Studies on social media and political communication have demonstrated that interactive platforms can increase public engagement when users perceive their participation as meaningful and influential (Kamiawati & Gultom, 2023). Similar dynamics appear evident in the case of @abouttng, where users perceive a greater capacity to influence public discussions. The account functions not merely as an information provider but also as a mediator of community aspirations. Such characteristics contribute significantly to the development of trust-based relationships between digital platforms and their audiences.

Another important interpretation concerns the distinction between procedural accessibility and perceived accessibility. Although official platforms often provide structured complaint mechanisms, citizens may not necessarily perceive these procedures as accessible or responsive. Public trust depends not only on the existence of communication channels but also on the quality of user experiences associated with those channels. Research concerning digital public services suggests that citizens frequently evaluate institutions according to perceived responsiveness and communication transparency rather than administrative procedures alone (Satriannisa & Rahmawati, 2025). This distinction helps explain why a community-based account can outperform an official government account in terms of trust and public engagement. The findings indicate that communication effectiveness is fundamentally tied to user perceptions of accessibility and responsiveness. Such perceptions ultimately influence the credibility attributed to a digital communication platform.

The results further support broader theoretical discussions concerning the relationship between social media engagement and public trust. Scholars have increasingly argued that trust is generated through repeated interactions that establish expectations regarding reliability, accountability, and responsiveness (Rodrigues et al., 2024). Citizens who consistently observe positive interactions are more likely to develop confidence in a communication platform. Conversely, perceptions of neglect or delayed responses may gradually erode trust even when the platform possesses formal authority. Studies examining public communication on Instagram similarly emphasize that trust is strengthened when communication practices encourage openness and reciprocal interaction (Indriasari et al., 2026). The observed differences between @abouttng and @lapor_laksa provide empirical support for these theoretical perspectives. Trust emerges not as a static attribute but as an outcome of continuous communicative performance.

The comparison ultimately demonstrates that the acceptance of criticism and suggestions functions as a fundamental determinant of public trust within digital communication ecosystems. The findings indicate that citizens place substantial value on platforms that acknowledge community voices and facilitate visible interaction processes. Trust is consequently influenced by how effectively a platform transforms public feedback into communicative engagement that can be observed by users. Research on digital civic participation has highlighted the growing expectation that social media platforms serve as spaces for dialogue, collaboration, and collective problem-solving rather than one-directional communication channels (Abdad, 2022). Similar conclusions have emerged from studies examining social media engagement within public sector contexts, where responsiveness and

interaction are consistently associated with stronger public confidence (Contri et al., 2025). The evidence from this study suggests that citizens increasingly evaluate communication platforms according to their practical ability to facilitate participation and respond to community concerns. These findings highlight the central role of interactive communication in sustaining public trust within digitally mediated public spheres.

Comparative Analysis of Content Consistency and Information Quality

Content consistency and information quality represent important determinants of public trust in social media-based communication platforms. Citizens generally rely on digital accounts that provide timely, accurate, and continuously updated information regarding issues relevant to their daily lives. Within the context of public communication, consistency signals organizational commitment and demonstrates that a platform remains actively engaged with its audience. Information quality also affects how users evaluate the credibility of a platform because trustworthy communication requires clarity, relevance, and reliability. The survey findings indicate that both @abouttng and @lapor_laksa received positive assessments regarding the availability of informative content. Differences nevertheless emerged in the intensity of content production and the continuity of communication activities. These distinctions provide valuable insight into how communication practices influence public trust formation in digital environments. Previous studies have emphasized that sustained information dissemination contributes significantly to audience engagement and institutional credibility (Siahaan et al., 2022).

Table 3. Comparison of Content Consistency and Informativeness

Indicator	@abouttng (%)	@lapor_laksa (%)
Informative Content	99	80
Content Consistency	Very High	Moderate
Posting Frequency	Multiple Daily Posts	Limited Routine Posts

The data presented in Table 3 reveal that both platforms were generally perceived as capable of providing useful information to the public. Approximately 99% of respondents considered the content published by @abouttng to be informative, whereas 80% expressed similar perceptions toward @lapor_laksa. The relatively high evaluation received by both accounts indicates that information dissemination remains a core strength of their communication strategies. Despite this similarity, respondents consistently identified differences in content volume and posting frequency. Users reported that @abouttng maintained a significantly higher level of daily activity through posts, stories, and community updates. Such visibility contributed to a perception that the platform was more present and engaged within the digital public sphere. Information quality, therefore, appeared to be reinforced by communication intensity and continuity.

One factor that appears to explain the stronger performance of @abouttng is its ability to integrate diverse forms of local information into a single communication ecosystem. Respondents indicated that the account regularly disseminated information related to public services, traffic conditions, community events, missing persons reports, public complaints, and local business activities. The diversity of content increased the account's relevance to a broad range of audiences and encouraged frequent interaction. Users consequently viewed the platform as an important source of local information rather than a specialized communication channel. Research concerning local digital media has highlighted that audience trust tends to increase when information sources consistently address issues that directly affect community life (Prautami, 2022). Similar observations were identified in studies examining the role of @abouttng in fulfilling public information needs within Tangerang communities (Sagiyanto & Nasution, 2022). The present findings suggest that informational diversity contributes significantly to sustaining audience attention and trust.

The comparatively lower evaluation received by @lapor_laksa does not necessarily indicate poor information quality. Respondents generally acknowledged that the account provided accurate and relevant information concerning public services and complaint procedures. The issue identified by many participants concerned the limited frequency of updates and the relatively narrow scope of content

categories. Communication scholars have argued that audiences increasingly expect social media platforms to provide dynamic and continuously evolving content streams that encourage repeated engagement (Hussin et al., 2025). A lower volume of communication may reduce audience exposure and weaken perceptions of platform activity even when the information itself remains reliable. This situation creates challenges for government-operated accounts that often prioritize procedural communication over engagement-oriented content strategies. Citizens consequently may perceive such accounts as less visible and less connected to everyday community discussions.

The findings also highlight the relationship between content consistency and cognitive trust. Cognitive trust develops when users perceive information sources as reliable, transparent, and dependable over time. Frequent updates create a sense of predictability that strengthens confidence in a platform's ability to provide relevant information when needed. In contrast, irregular communication patterns may generate uncertainty regarding the platform's reliability. Research on government communication has demonstrated that transparency and consistency are essential components of trust formation within digital environments (Nainggolan, 2024). The superior performance of @abouttng on this indicator suggests that continuous communication contributes to stronger perceptions of reliability. Citizens appear to interpret sustained content production as evidence of organizational commitment and attentiveness to public concerns. Such interpretations play an important role in shaping overall trust evaluations.

Another notable finding concerns the role of social media affordances in amplifying information quality perceptions. Instagram allows communication actors to combine visual content, text, stories, reels, and interactive features within a single platform. Accounts that effectively utilize these affordances are often perceived as more engaging and accessible by users. Research examining platform affordances has shown that digital participation increases when communication strategies encourage interaction and facilitate information accessibility (Theocharis et al., 2023). Respondents frequently noted that @abouttng actively utilized multiple Instagram features to maintain audience engagement and information visibility. The account's communication style created an impression of immediacy and responsiveness that reinforced trust perceptions. This pattern demonstrates that information quality is not determined solely by content substance but also by the manner in which information is delivered.

The results are also consistent with studies emphasizing the importance of engagement-oriented communication within public sector contexts. Social media has increasingly become a strategic instrument for fostering public participation and strengthening relationships between institutions and citizens. Effective communication requires not only accurate information but also content strategies that encourage interaction and maintain audience interest (Contri et al., 2025). The stronger performance of @abouttng suggests that users value communication approaches that combine informational utility with active engagement. Similar conclusions were reported by Ganiem et al. (2025), who found that public trust is influenced by communication practices that successfully balance informational credibility and audience interaction. The present findings reinforce the argument that trust is shaped through a combination of informational and relational factors. Information quality alone may be insufficient when not accompanied by sustained engagement efforts.

From a broader perspective, the comparison between @abouttng and @lapor_laksa illustrates how content consistency functions as a strategic resource in the construction of public trust. Citizens increasingly evaluate digital communication platforms according to their ability to remain visible, relevant, and responsive within rapidly changing information environments. Frequent communication strengthens familiarity and reinforces perceptions of reliability, while limited activity may reduce opportunities for trust-building interactions. Studies examining social media and public opinion formation have emphasized that consistent exposure to credible information can significantly influence public attitudes toward institutions and communication actors (Tamba & Kholikin, 2025). The findings indicate that communication effectiveness depends not only on the accuracy of information but also on the continuity and accessibility of content delivery. Public trust consequently emerges from a sustained process of information exchange that continually reaffirms the platform's relevance and reliability. The evidence suggests that content consistency should be regarded as a central component of digital trust-building strategies in both governmental and community-based communication contexts.

Comparative Analysis of Transparency and Service Responsiveness

Transparency and responsiveness constitute fundamental dimensions of public trust within digital governance environments because they directly influence citizens' perceptions regarding accountability, service quality, and institutional credibility. Digital communication platforms that provide clear information regarding complaint processing and demonstrate timely responses are generally more capable of maintaining public confidence. The findings of this study reveal substantial differences between @abouttnng and @lapor_laksa regarding both transparency and responsiveness indicators. Respondents consistently associated transparency with the visibility of complaint handling processes and the accessibility of information concerning follow-up actions. Responsiveness was similarly evaluated through perceptions of communication speed, acknowledgment of public concerns, and the extent to which citizens received feedback after submitting complaints. These dimensions are particularly important because public trust often develops when citizens perceive that communication processes are open, understandable, and responsive to their needs. Previous studies have emphasized that transparency and responsiveness remain central determinants of trust in digital public communication systems (Hutahaeen et al., 2023).

Table 4. Comparison of Transparency and Service Responsiveness

Indicator	@abouttnng (%)	@lapor_laksa (%)
Transparency	88	7
Lack of Transparency	12	93
Responsiveness	88	7
Dissatisfaction with Responsiveness	12	93

The results presented in Table 4 indicate a substantial disparity between the two communication platforms. Approximately 88% of respondents evaluated @abouttnng positively regarding transparency, while 93% expressed dissatisfaction with the transparency of @lapor_laksa. Similar patterns emerged in assessments of responsiveness, where positive evaluations of @abouttnng reached 88%, whereas dissatisfaction toward @lapor_laksa again reached 93%. These figures demonstrate that citizens perceive significant differences in the ways each platform communicates and manages public complaints. The magnitude of the gap suggests that trust is strongly influenced by visible communication practices rather than formal institutional status. Respondents frequently reported that they were able to observe complaint-related interactions more clearly through @abouttnng than through the official government account. Such visibility appears to strengthen perceptions of accountability and responsiveness.

One important explanation for the stronger performance of @abouttnng lies in its communication model, which emphasizes public exposure of community concerns. Complaints submitted by users are frequently reposted through Instagram Stories and shared with broader audiences, creating transparency regarding both the existence of the issue and the communication process surrounding it. Citizens consequently gain immediate evidence that their concerns have been acknowledged. This visibility reduces uncertainty and contributes to stronger perceptions of openness. Studies examining digital participation have shown that transparency is often associated with the public availability of information regarding institutional actions and responses (Abdad, 2022). Similar observations emerge in community-driven communication environments where public interaction remains visible and accessible to audiences. Such practices help establish confidence that communication processes are functioning effectively.

The weaker evaluation received by @lapor_laksa appears closely related to citizens' uncertainty regarding complaint follow-up procedures. Many respondents indicated that reports submitted through official channels were not always accompanied by visible updates regarding subsequent actions. Although institutional mechanisms may exist internally, limited public visibility creates perceptions that complaints are ignored or processed slowly. Research concerning e-government services suggests that citizens frequently evaluate service effectiveness according to the transparency of communication processes rather than administrative procedures occurring behind the scenes (Lim & Chae, 2025). The present findings support this argument by demonstrating that perceived transparency exerts a substantial

influence on trust formation. Citizens increasingly expect public institutions to provide accessible and observable communication regarding service outcomes. Failure to satisfy these expectations may reduce confidence even when formal complaint systems remain operational.

Responsiveness emerged as another critical factor differentiating the two platforms. Respondents frequently associated responsiveness with communication speed, direct acknowledgment, and evidence that concerns had been forwarded to relevant stakeholders. The higher evaluation received by @abouttng suggests that citizens perceive the account as more agile in responding to community issues. Such perceptions may be linked to the organizational flexibility commonly found in community-based digital media. Government-operated platforms often face bureaucratic constraints that can slow communication processes and reduce responsiveness. Research on public sector communication has identified similar challenges, particularly when institutions struggle to balance administrative procedures with citizen expectations for rapid digital interaction (Satriannisa & Rahmawati, 2025). The findings indicate that communication speed has become an increasingly important component of trust within social media environments.

The observed relationship between transparency, responsiveness, and trust is consistent with broader theoretical perspectives concerning digital governance. Public trust is often conceptualized as an outcome of repeated interactions through which citizens assess institutional reliability and accountability. When communication platforms consistently demonstrate openness and responsiveness, users develop stronger expectations that future interactions will produce satisfactory outcomes. Studies examining government communication through social media have similarly found that trust increases when institutions actively engage with citizens and provide clear evidence of responsiveness (Indriasari et al., 2026). Research by Rodrigues et al. (2024) also highlights the importance of reducing uncertainty through transparent communication practices. The findings of the present study reinforce these theoretical arguments by demonstrating that citizens reward visible accountability with higher levels of trust. Transparency and responsiveness consequently function as complementary mechanisms in the construction of public confidence.

Another notable implication concerns the changing expectations of digital citizens. Social media users increasingly demand communication practices characterized by immediacy, openness, and reciprocal interaction. Traditional models of public communication that emphasize one-directional information dissemination are becoming less effective within contemporary digital environments. Research on social media engagement suggests that citizens expect institutions to participate actively in dialogue and demonstrate attentiveness to community concerns (Contri et al., 2025). The performance gap identified between @abouttng and @lapor_laksa reflects these evolving expectations. Community-based platforms appear more capable of adapting to participatory communication norms that prioritize interaction and visibility. Government institutions consequently face increasing pressure to redesign communication strategies that align with contemporary patterns of digital engagement.

From a broader analytical perspective, the findings demonstrate that transparency and responsiveness represent dominant determinants of public trust in platforms designed to accommodate community aspirations. Citizens evaluate communication channels according to their practical experiences rather than their formal organizational identity. The comparison between @abouttng and @lapor_laksa illustrates that trust can develop more strongly around communication actors that provide visible, responsive, and transparent interaction processes. This observation supports contemporary scholarship emphasizing the growing importance of communicative performance within digital public spheres (Ganiem et al., 2025). It also strengthens arguments that social media effectiveness should be evaluated through citizen perceptions of accountability and engagement rather than solely through technological functionality (Tamba & Kholikin, 2025). The evidence indicates that successful accommodation of community aspirations requires not only digital infrastructure but also communication practices capable of sustaining transparency, responsiveness, and public confidence over time.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms the existence of a statistically significant difference in public trust between the community-based Instagram account @abouttng and the government-operated Instagram account @lapor_laksa in accommodating community aspirations in Tangerang City. The findings indicate that public trust is not determined solely by institutional legitimacy or access to official information sources

but is strongly influenced by the quality of communication practices experienced by citizens. Across the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of trust, respondents consistently evaluated @abouttnng more positively than @lapor_laksa. The community-based platform was perceived as more transparent, responsive, interactive, and effective in facilitating communication between citizens and relevant stakeholders. In contrast, despite functioning as an official public service communication channel, @lapor_laksa received lower evaluations due to perceived limitations in response speed, transparency of complaint follow-up, and the overall quality of interaction with users. These findings demonstrate that communicative performance plays a more influential role in trust formation than formal institutional authority within contemporary digital communication environments. The study therefore reinforces the argument that trust in social media-based public communication emerges through continuous interaction, visible accountability, and the ability to accommodate community concerns in a timely and meaningful manner.

From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes to the growing literature on digital governance, social media communication, and public trust by demonstrating that trust formation in online public spheres is multidimensional and highly dependent on citizens' perceptions of platform performance. The results support existing scholarship suggesting that transparency, responsiveness, and participatory engagement serve as critical determinants of trust in digitally mediated interactions. The comparative evidence presented in this study also extends previous discussions by highlighting how community-driven media platforms can outperform official governmental channels in fostering public confidence when they provide more accessible and interactive communication practices. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of social media in accommodating public aspirations should not be evaluated solely through technological infrastructure or institutional status but through the quality of citizen-centered engagement facilitated by the platform. The study further illustrates the relevance of cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions in explaining variations in public trust toward different communication actors. Such insights contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how trust is constructed and maintained within hybrid communication ecosystems where governmental and non-governmental actors simultaneously compete for public attention and credibility. Future studies may expand this line of inquiry by incorporating additional variables such as perceived service quality, digital literacy, or citizen satisfaction to provide a broader explanation of trust formation in social media environments.

Based on the findings, several practical recommendations can be proposed. For the Tangerang City Government, particularly the management of @lapor_laksa, efforts should be directed toward reforming digital communication practices through a more citizen-centered approach that prioritizes responsiveness, transparency, and interactive engagement. Communication administrators should improve the speed of response, provide clearer updates regarding complaint handling processes, and enhance public visibility of service outcomes to strengthen accountability and reduce public distrust. Increasing the capacity and professionalism of social media management teams may also contribute to improving the effectiveness of digital public communication. For the administrators of @abouttnng, maintaining the existing strengths of the platform remains essential, particularly in preserving responsiveness and community engagement. At the same time, greater attention should be given to information verification, content moderation, and the protection of public privacy to ensure that the platform continues to operate responsibly and credibly. Sustaining high standards of information accuracy will be crucial for maintaining public trust as the platform's influence continues to expand. Through these improvements, both platforms can contribute more effectively to the accommodation of community aspirations and the development of a more participatory digital public sphere in Tangerang City.

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