

Analysis Of Information Disclosure Practices In The Cheap Market Program (East Red Market) In Medan City

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Abstract

The Low-Cost Market Program is a local government policy aimed at maintaining the stability of basic necessities prices and increasing the purchasing power of low-income communities. The success of this program is determined not only by the availability and price of goods, but also by the transparency and effectiveness of information delivery to the target community. This study aims to analyze the practices of information disclosure and dissemination in the implementation of the Low-Cost Market Program in Pasar Merah Timur Village, Medan City. This study used a descriptive-qualitative approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with village officials and the community, non-participant observation, and analysis of official documents related to program implementation. Data were analyzed thematically to identify patterns of information delivery and obstacles encountered. The results showed that village officials disseminated information through various channels, such as bulletin boards, social media, banners, and communication through neighborhood heads. However, information dissemination was not uniform and still relied on informal communication networks, resulting in differences in community perceptions regarding the clarity and accessibility of information. The main obstacles identified included limited communication facilities, delays in distribution of goods, and the lack of an easily accessible formal complaint mechanism. This study concludes that information transparency in the Low-Cost Market Program has been implemented, but is not yet optimal, so it is necessary to strengthen official information channels and increase public participation to support more accountable public services.

Keywords: Information Transparency, Public Information Dissemination, Low-Cost Market Program, Public Service Delivery, Public Perception

INTRODUCTION

The Affordable Market Program is a local government policy designed to help low-income communities meet their basic needs at more affordable prices, particularly during certain periods such as leading up to religious holidays. This program serves as a government intervention to maintain the stability of staple food prices while strengthening people's purchasing power. In the local economic context, food price fluctuations often have a significant impact on vulnerable groups, making this program a strategic instrument in social protection policies. This policy plays a crucial role in suppressing price increases for basic necessities while protecting the purchasing power of poor households from excessive market fluctuations (Kholif 2025). The success of public programs is greatly influenced by public perception of local government performance, where transparency and openness of information are key factors in shaping public trust (Sari et al., 2025). In the context of the Affordable Market Program, program success is determined not only by the availability of goods and the prices offered, but also by the extent to which information about the program is accessible equitably and transparently to the target community. Fair access to information is key to optimally benefiting from the program and achieving social equity. Therefore, the focus of this research is directed at analyzing the practice of disclosing

information and the distribution mechanism of the Cheap Market Program in Pasar Merah Timur Village, while also evaluating public perceptions of the transparency implemented.

Information transparency is a crucial element in ensuring the fair distribution of benefits from public programs and increasing public trust in the government. Information transparency is closely related to the principle of public accountability and is an integral part of efforts to achieve good governance. Governments that are able to provide accurate, clear, and easily accessible information tend to gain stronger legitimacy in the eyes of the public. In Indonesia, the obligation to provide public information is regulated by Law Number 14 of 2008 concerning Public Information Disclosure, which stipulates that public bodies are required to provide information that is accurate, not misleading, and accessible to the public. In the implementation of the Low-Cost Market program, information transparency plays a crucial role in ensuring that all eligible community groups have equal access to the program.

Current conditions indicate that information transparency practices at the local government level, particularly in sub-districts, still face various challenges. Initial observations and preliminary interviews in the Pasar Merah Timur sub-district of Medan City indicate that although the Low-Cost Market Program is routinely implemented, information regarding the schedule, location, and implementation mechanisms has not fully reached the entire community. Sub-district officials have utilized various media, such as bulletin boards, banners, social media, loudspeakers, and communication through neighborhood heads. However, time constraints, the number of officials, and low participation by some communities mean that information is not always disseminated evenly. In practice, information distribution still relies heavily on informal communication networks, which can potentially lead to differences in access and perceptions among residents. This phenomenon reflects a current issue in public services at the level of government closest to the community, where formal information transparency is not yet fully effective.

Conceptually, public information transparency relates not only to the availability of information, but also to ease of access and the public's ability to understand information provided by the government. Information that is readily available but difficult to understand or not disseminated effectively still has the potential to create unequal access. Several international studies have shown that increased transparency accompanied by public involvement tends to increase public trust in government. Public participation acts as a mediator, strengthening perceptions of information transparency and the legitimacy of public policy (Erten & Ural Uslan, 2025). In addition, in the context of e-government, the combination of transparency, accountability, and digital literacy among the public has been shown to contribute to increasing public trust in government institutions (AbdulKareem & Oladimeji, 2024) These findings confirm that information transparency is a key factor in building constructive relationships between government and citizens.

At the local government level, particularly at sub-districts, program transparency is realized through the practice of disclosing information that is clear, open, and easily accessible to the community as beneficiaries (Zain et al., 2025). However, most previous research has focused on public policy transparency at the central or regional government level, while empirical studies examining transparency practices at the sub-district level are relatively limited. This is despite the fact that sub-districts are the government units closest to the community and play a strategic role in ensuring policy implementation adheres to the principles of openness and

fairness. The limited research at this level indicates a research gap that needs to be filled, particularly in the context of social programs that directly address the community's basic needs. A number of previous studies have emphasized that adequate disclosure of information has an important role in strengthening the empirical contribution of a study, while also helping to fill in the limitations that still exist in previous studies and providing direction for the development of future studies (Oktaviani, 2025). Based on the description, this study is directed to examine in more depth the practice of disclosure and delivery of information in the implementation of the Cheap Market Program in Pasar Merah Timur Village, Medan City. This study aims to analyze the forms and channels of communication used by village officials in conveying program information, describe public perceptions of the level of openness, clarity, and accuracy of the information received, and identify obstacles faced in the process of disseminating information. Thus, this study is expected to provide empirical contributions to the development of public information transparency studies at the local government level and provide input for efforts to improve the quality of public services that are more transparent, accountable, and equitable.

RESEARCH METHODS

A descriptive qualitative approach is widely applied in public policy research because it can provide a comprehensive picture of the program implementation process and its accompanying practices (Indraswari et al., 2024). This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods to examine in-depth the practices of information disclosure and delivery in the implementation of the Low-Cost Market Program in Pasar Merah Timur Village, Medan City. This approach was chosen because the study aims to understand the process, meaning, and dynamics of public information transparency as experienced and perceived by village officials and the community as the program's targets. The focus of the research is not directed at quantitatively testing cause-and-effect relationships, but rather on efforts to describe the actual conditions of program implementation and information disclosure practices at the village government level.

The research design was designed to illustrate how information transparency is realized in the implementation of the Low-Cost Market Program, from the information delivery stage to the information's reception by the public. The research variables were not formulated separately, but were implicitly reflected in the study's focus: information transparency practices, program information delivery mechanisms, and public perceptions of the openness and clarity of information conveyed by the sub-district. Thus, this study seeks to capture the relationship between information disclosure practices and public perceptions as program beneficiaries.

The research targets included the Pasar Merah Timur Village apparatus and the community targeted by the Low-Cost Market Program. The research population was all residents of the Pasar Merah Timur Village area and had the potential to benefit from the implementation of the Low-Cost Market Program. Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, selecting informants who were deemed to have knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in the implementation and receipt of program information. The main informants consisted of village apparatus involved in the program implementation, neighborhood heads as intermediaries for information delivery, and community members who had participated in or should have known about the implementation of the Low-Cost Market Program.

Data collection techniques were conducted through in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation studies. In-depth interviews were used to obtain information regarding the program's information delivery mechanisms, the communication channels used, and the views of officials and the public regarding the level of transparency and clarity of information. Observations were conducted to directly observe the implementation process of the Low-Cost Market Program and information dissemination practices in the field. Meanwhile, documentation included the collection of official documents, such as announcements, banners, social media posts, and archives of activities related to program implementation. The use of various data collection techniques aimed to obtain a comprehensive understanding and strengthen the validity of the findings through data triangulation (Sumiyati et al., 2025).

In its implementation, the Low-Cost Market Program not only focuses on providing basic necessities at affordable prices, but also involves community participation in the program's implementation and evaluation process. This participation is reflected in the community's involvement as both beneficiaries and as a source of feedback on program implementation in the field. Information dissemination to the community also includes information related to commodity price developments and availability, sourced from price monitoring results in various regions. Therefore, the information disseminated is expected to be up-to-date, accurate, and relevant. These aspects of participation and openness are crucial in developing research to assess the alignment between transparency policies and practices at the village level.

The research model used is descriptive-analytical, where the data obtained is analyzed to describe the actual conditions of information transparency practices in the Low-Cost Market Program. Research development was conducted by linking field findings with the concepts of public information transparency and public services, thus identifying gaps between established policies and their implementation at the sub-district level. This approach allows researchers to understand the local context and the factors that influence the effectiveness of information delivery to the public.

Data analysis techniques were carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. In the data reduction stage, the collected data were selected, coded, and grouped according to the research focus. Next, the data were presented in descriptive narrative form to facilitate understanding and interpretation. The final stage, drawing conclusions, was carried out by systematically interpreting the data to answer the research objectives. The research hypothesis was not formulated explicitly, but was implicitly reflected in the direction of the analysis, which assumed that the level of transparency and effectiveness of information delivery influenced public perceptions of the implementation of the Low-Cost Market Program.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This results and discussion section presents research findings obtained from in-depth interviews with village officials and the community regarding the implementation of the Low-Cost Market Program in Pasar Merah Timur Village. The findings are organized based on the research problem formulation, which includes information disclosure practices, community perceptions of transparency, and obstacles in information delivery and program implementation. For ease of understanding, the research results are presented in tabular form that summarizes

informant responses and the main categories of findings. The subsequent discussion focuses on interpreting these findings in the context of information transparency and public services at the village level.

Practices of Disclosure and Delivery of Information on the Low-Cost Market Program (Problem Formulation 1)

Table 1. Interview Data Related to Problem Formulation 1

No	Interview Questions	Answer Summary	Category RM 1
1.	How does the sub-district convey information about cheap markets?	Through bulletin boards, banners, circulars, and sub-district social media.	Information delivery mechanism
2.	Where did you first find out about cheap markets?	From the Head of the Environment (land plot owner)	Resources
3.	Is the information easily accessible?	Yes, because there is distribution of brochures to the community.	Access to information
4.	Is the information accurate?	Yes, according to schedule, location, price and field facts	Accuracy of information
5.	Is there any difference in information?	No, price and implementation are according to initial information.	Consistency of information

Discussion of Problem Formulation 1

Disclosure and Information Delivery Practices for the Low-Cost Market Program

Research findings indicate that information disclosure regarding the Low-Cost Market Program in Pasar Merah Timur Village was conducted through a combination of formal and informal communication channels. The presence of bulletin boards, banners, circulars, and social media reflects the village administration's efforts to comply with the principle of public information transparency. However, the role of neighborhood heads as the primary source of information for the community confirms that local social networks remain the most effective communication channel at the village level.

This situation indicates that the effectiveness of information transparency depends not only on the availability of formal media, but also on the social relations and closeness of officials to the community. Information conveyed through trusted local actors tends to be more easily accepted and understood by the public. This finding demonstrates that information transparency is contextual and heavily influenced by local social structures.

The alignment between published information and program implementation on the ground demonstrates consistency. This consistency strengthens public perception of the credibility of village officials and serves as an important foundation for public trust. Therefore, the practice of disclosing information in the Low-Cost Market Program serves not only to fulfill administrative obligations but also as a mechanism for building policy legitimacy at the village level.

Public Perception of Transparency of Information on the Low-Cost Market Program (Problem Formulation 2)

Table 2. Interview Data Related to Problem Formulation 2

No	Interview Questions	Answer Summary	Category RM 2
1.	How is public confidence in the program?	High level of trust because the information is in accordance with the implementation.	Public Response & Trust
2.	Is the information accurate?	The information is correct because the letter of instruction was posted directly on the sub-district bulletin board.	Transparency & Accuracy of information
3.	Is the distribution of coupons fair and cooperative?	Yes, the distribution process is fair and cooperative.	Perception of justice
4.	How is the transparency value of the sub-district?	Transparent because information is conveyed openly and uniformly.	Transparency Assessment
5.	Were there any complaints during the implementation?	There aren't any, because the public feels there are no price markups and the procedures are clear.	Service Evaluation

Discussion of Problem Formulation 2

Public Perception of Transparency of Information on the Low-Cost Market Program

Public perception of the transparency of information regarding the Low-Cost Market Program is generally positive. The alignment between the information received and the reality of program implementation creates a relatively high level of trust in the village government. Clarity regarding prices, schedules, and purchasing mechanisms plays a crucial role in reducing uncertainty and potential misunderstandings among the community.

Perceptions of fairness in coupon distribution and purchase restrictions per Family Card are understood as forms of distributive justice. These findings indicate that information transparency not only impacts trust but also influences public perceptions of the fairness and integrity of program implementation. The absence of complaints during implementation can be interpreted as an indication that the procedures and information provided have been understood and accepted by the public.

These results confirm that consistent and communicative information transparency contributes to increasing the legitimacy of government programs and the quality of public services at the sub-district level. Transparency, positively perceived by the public, strengthens the relationship between government and citizens, while increasing the acceptance of public policies.

Obstacles in Information Delivery and Implementation of the Low-Cost Market Program (Problem Formulation 3)

Table 3. Interview Data Related to Problem Formulation 3

No	Interview Questions	Answer Summary	Category RM 3
1.	What are the obstacles to implementation in the field?	The problem is the fairly long queue and limited stock.	Technical Constraints
2.	How About Product Packaging?	Sugar must be repackaged from large sacks	Operational Constraints
3.	Are there any complaints?	There is nothing because everything is running well and orderly.	Service Barriers

4.	Suggestions for program improvement?	There aren't any, because the people are already satisfied.	Service improvement proposals
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Discussion of Problem Formulation 3

Obstacles in Information Delivery and Implementation of the Low-Cost Market Program

Although information disclosure practices were deemed quite good, this study identified several technical and operational challenges in the implementation of the Low-Cost Market Program. Long queues and limited stock were key challenges that potentially impacted service effectiveness. Furthermore, the repackaging of staple foods increased the workload of officials and impacted the smoothness of distribution.

These findings demonstrate that information transparency must be balanced with adequate logistical preparedness and operational management. Accurate information regarding stock availability and service times is crucial for realistically managing public expectations. Although no formal complaints were found, the existence of technical challenges remains an important consideration for future program quality improvement efforts.

Thus, the results of this study indicate that successful information transparency cannot be separated from technical and operational aspects. Effective transparency requires synergy between clear information delivery and readiness for program implementation in the field.

Overall, the disclosure and dissemination practices of information on the Affordable Market Program in Pasar Merah Timur Village demonstrate an effective combination of formal mechanisms and local communication networks, influencing public perceptions of the program's transparency and fairness. This finding aligns with previous studies that emphasize that public information transparency enhances policy legitimacy and citizen trust (Indriani, 2024). The implementation of the Affordable Market Program at the local level demonstrates that it not only serves as a government mechanism to maintain price stability and protect low-income communities, but also significantly determines the program's sustainability (Rahmah et al., 2025). The affordable market assistance program has proven to be a strategic instrument in reducing economic inequality and increasing community access to basic necessities, while simultaneously strengthening the legitimacy of government policies. These findings emphasize that logistical readiness and operational management are crucial factors in ensuring the effective delivery of information and distribution of program benefits. Therefore, the success of information transparency cannot be separated from the social, technical, and institutional context at the village level.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the disclosure and delivery of information about the Low-Cost Market Program in Pasar Merah Timur Village has generally been carried out transparently and has supported the accessibility of information for the target community. Village officials utilized various formal and informal communication channels to convey program information, which was deemed accurate and consistent with implementation in the field, thus building public trust in the program. The implementation of a purchase restriction mechanism was also perceived as an effort to ensure fair distribution of benefits. However, this study identified technical and

operational obstacles, such as limited stock and long queues, which could potentially impact program effectiveness if not managed optimally. These findings provide an empirical contribution to understanding information transparency practices at the village government level and emphasize that successful transparency depends not only on information disclosure but also on technical readiness and coordination of program implementation as part of improving the quality of public services.

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