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Digital Public Communication Innovation SHOLAWAT BRO: The Use of WhatsApp Broadcasting to Overcome Service Disinformation at UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City

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Abstract. *Disinformation in public services is a systemic problem that hampers bureaucratic efficiency and directly harms citizens, particularly in motor vehicle administration units with dynamic procedures and frequently changing regulations. This study aims to analyze the SHOLAWAT BRO (Sosialisasi Lewat Whatsapp Broadcasting) innovation as a WhatsApp Broadcasting-based digital public communication system developed by UPT SAMSAT Malang Utara and Batu Kota to address service disinformation. The analysis was conducted using two theoretical frameworks: Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory (2003) through five innovation attributes and Cangara's Digital Public Communication Model (2016) through six communication elements. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques consisting of in-depth interviews with seven informants, non-participatory observation, and documentation study, analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) with data validity established through source and method triangulation. The findings indicate that SHOLAWAT BRO fulfills all innovation diffusion attributes and public communication elements synergistically, resulting in a decrease in document rejection rates from 8.5 percent to 1.7 percent, an 88.35 percent reduction in disinformation complaints, an increase in the Community Satisfaction Index on the information aspect from 2.61 to 3.71 on a four-point scale, and a 734.8 percent growth in registered contacts over three years of implementation. This study concludes that SHOLAWAT BRO represents an effective, inclusive, and highly replicable anti-disinformation digital public communication model for other public service agencies in Indonesia within the framework of bureaucratic digital transformation.*

Keywords: *Communication; Digital Public; Public; Service Innovation; WhatsApp Broadcasting.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Fourth Industrial Revolution has driven a fundamental transformation in governance across the world. The concept of digital governance has now become a new paradigm in public administration, in which information and communication technology is used extensively to improve the quality, efficiency, and accessibility of public services for all citizens (Hidayat, 2026). The World Economic Forum (2023) reported that more than 80 countries have issued national strategies for digital government transformation in response to demands for bureaucratic efficiency, transparency in the exercise of public authority, and inclusive service accessibility. This development indicates that digitalization is no longer merely a technological trend but a structural requirement in modern bureaucratic reform.

In the Indonesian context, commitment to digital government transformation is reinforced through a clear regulatory foundation. Presidential Regulation Number 95 of 2018 concerning the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE) requires all government agencies to integrate digital technology into bureaucratic processes and public service delivery.

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In addition, Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services affirms that the state is obliged to provide services that are fast, easy, transparent, and accessible to all people without discrimination. Within this normative framework, digital-based public service innovation is no longer an option but a strategic necessity for high-quality and modern Indonesian governance. Various innovation programs have therefore emerged at both central and regional levels as concrete bureaucratic responses to these demands for change.

Behind the rapid wave of digital transformation, a serious challenge has emerged that threatens the integrity and quality of public services, namely the phenomenon of disinformation. (Puteri, 2026) defines disinformation as the dissemination of inaccurate, misleading, or unofficial information that clearly affects public behavior and decision-making. In the public service sector, disinformation appears in the form of unofficial information about procedures, document requirements, service fees, and operating schedules that circulates freely through various digital channels, especially social media and instant messaging applications. The Ministry of Communication and Informatics of the Republic of Indonesia (2023) recorded thousands of disinformation contents related to government services identified each year, indicating the massive and serious impact of this phenomenon on public trust. People exposed to service disinformation tend to experience confusion, document rejection, and even vulnerability to parties that exploit information uncertainty for personal gain (Eka Putra dkk., 2025).

In Indonesia's digital communication landscape, WhatsApp has become the most dominant, widely used, and demographically pervasive instant messaging platform. We Are Social (2024) revealed that Indonesia ranks among the countries with the largest number of WhatsApp users in the world, with penetration reaching more than 90 percent of the national active internet user population. The advantages of WhatsApp, including its simple interface, broad network reach, broadcast feature, and accessibility for all community segments, including older adults and groups with limited digital literacy, make it a public communication instrument that government agencies cannot ignore (Sutrisno dkk., 2018). Various local governments in Indonesia have also begun adopting WhatsApp Business as an official communication channel to respond to public information needs in real time and efficiently (Ritan dkk., 2025). This strategic potential opens opportunities for government to optimize WhatsApp as a proactive, structured, and verified public communication instrument.

Within the public service structure directly related to motor vehicle ownership and administration, the Technical Implementation Unit (UPT) SAMSAT (One-Stop Integrated Administration System) occupies a strategic position as the front line of bureaucracy. UPT

SAMSAT provides services for Motor Vehicle Registration Certificates (STNK), Motor Vehicle Tax (PKB) payments, and Motor Vehicle Title Transfer Fees (BBNKB), which affect millions of taxpayers throughout Indonesia. As a service that routinely interacts directly with the wider public, SAMSAT faces complex communication challenges: rapid regulatory changes, diverse requirements across service types, and high daily visitor volumes create conditions vulnerable to the circulation of inaccurate information (Angelica Timbu Lebu dkk., 2025). These conditions often result in rejected documents, unproductive queues caused by incorrect document preparation, public dissatisfaction, and opportunities for brokerage practices that exploit information confusion as a commodity.

UPT SAMSAT North Malang and UPT SAMSAT Batu City are two service units serving motor vehicle taxpayers in the northern area of Malang City and Batu City, with significant daily service volumes. Both units face similar problems: members of the public often arrive with incomplete documents because they follow unofficial information circulating in community WhatsApp groups, informal social media, or unverified word-of-mouth information (Anifah Apriani, 2023). This condition creates a recurring cycle of inefficiency: people who cannot be served must return on another day, queues increase, and public satisfaction declines. These problems underscore the need for a public communication breakthrough that is proactive, standardized, accurate, and capable of reaching people before they arrive at the service counter.

As an innovative response to these challenges, UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City developed a digital public communication innovation called SHOLAWAT BRO. This innovation is a WhatsApp Broadcasting-based communication system designed to deliver official service information to the public on a mass, scheduled, and verified basis directly from the institution's authoritative source. Through the SHOLAWAT BRO mechanism, the public can receive information on document requirements, procedural flows, estimated fees, operating schedules, and the latest regulatory updates directly on their mobile phones, long before visiting the SAMSAT office. Conceptually, this innovation represents an intelligent adaptation of popular communication technology into the context of public service bureaucracy, with a strategic role as a breaker of the disinformation chain that has long hindered service quality.

Field data from the two service units showed a concerning situation before the launch of the SHOLAWAT BRO innovation. In 2021, when the communication system was still conventional and reactive, UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City recorded a document rejection rate due to incomplete requirements of 8.5 percent of total transactions, with 412 complaints related to inaccurate or misleading information in one year. This condition placed

citizens in a disadvantaged position: time, effort, and transportation costs were wasted because document preparation was based on unofficial information. On the other hand, service officers were also burdened by an increase in unproductive queues, producing a continuing cycle of inefficiency and negatively affecting the institution's image.

Entering the implementation phase of the SHOLAWAT BRO innovation in 2022, significant changes gradually began to appear. The number of contacts registered in the SHOLAWAT BRO WhatsApp Broadcasting system reached 1,245 contacts in the first year of launch, then increased sharply to 3,780 contacts in 2023 and 5,178 contacts in 2024. The growth in recipients of official information broadcasts was inversely related to document rejection and disinformation complaint trends: document rejection rates declined sharply from 8.5 percent (2021) to 6.6 percent (2022), 3.8 percent (2023), and 1.7 percent (2024). Complaints related to information disinformation also decreased sharply from 412 cases (2021) to only 48 cases (2024), equivalent to an 88.35 percent decline over three years of implementation. These developments are presented in detail in Table 1 and Figure 1 below:

Table 1. Development of Key Indicators of the SHOLAWAT BRO Innovation and Its Impact on Service Quality at UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City (2021-2024).

Indicator	2021 (Pre-Innovation)	2022	2023	2024
Registered SHOLAWAT BRO Contacts (persons)	-	1,245	3,780	5,278
Incomplete Document Rejections (%)	8.5%	6.6%	3.8%	1.7%
Service Disinformation Complaints (cases/year)	412	287	134	48%
Official Information Broadcasts Sent (times/month)	-	8	14	22
Community Satisfaction Index - Information (4-point scale)	2.61	2.94	3.32	3.71

Source: Processed Researcher Data, UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City (2025).

The downward trend in document rejections and disinformation complaints above, which is inversely related to the growth of registered SHOLAWAT BRO contacts, provides a strong indication that this digital communication innovation has a positive correlation with improvements in the quality of information received by the public. The visualization of this growth is presented in Figure 1 below:

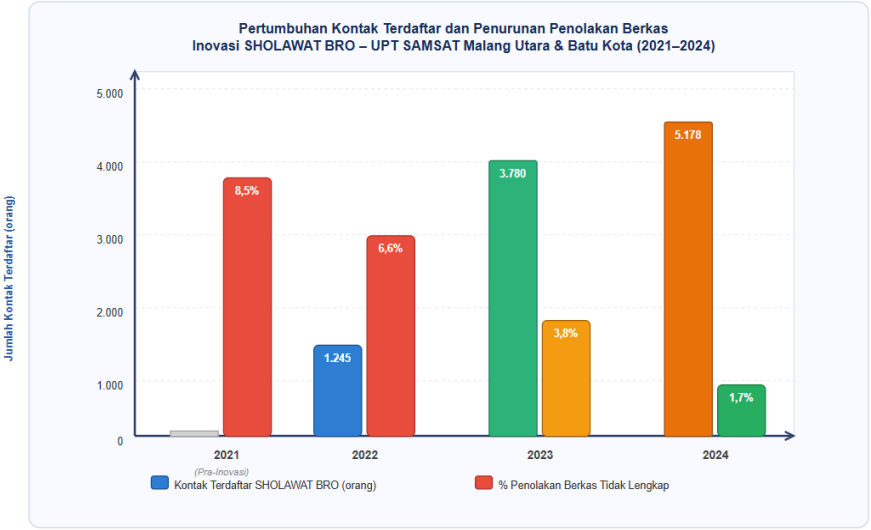

Figure 1. Growth of Registered Contacts and Decline in Document Rejections in the SHOLAWAT BRO Innovation at UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City (2021-2024).

Although studies on digital-based public service innovation have developed significantly in the Indonesian public administration literature (Ernawati dkk., 2025), research that specifically examines the use of WhatsApp Broadcasting as a digital public communication instrument in the context of preventing service disinformation remains very limited. Most available studies focus on the technical aspects of e-government implementation or general measurements of public satisfaction, without examining in depth the dimension of public information management through instant messaging platforms as an innovative anti-disinformation strategy. Therefore, a knowledge gap must be addressed: how can WhatsApp Broadcasting-based digital innovation function as an effective public communication strategy in a complex bureaucratic service ecosystem?

Based on the foregoing explanation, this study has strong academic and practical urgency. Academically, this study contributes to the development of digital public service innovation studies within the perspective of public administration, particularly in the dimensions of public communication and disinformation management in bureaucratic environments. Practically, the findings are expected to serve as empirical references for other government agencies in designing and implementing responsive, inclusive, and community-close technology-based digital public communication strategies.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Public Service Innovation

According to Everett M. Rogers (2003) in the study by (Prabowo dkk., 2022), public service innovation refers to an idea, practice, or object perceived as new by an individual or

another adoption unit in order to improve the quality of services to society. Innovation does not have to be entirely new; it only needs to be perceived as new by the adopting party. Rogers identifies five innovation characteristics that influence successful adoption. First, relative advantage refers to the perception that an innovation is better than previous practices in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and service quality. Second, compatibility refers to the consistency of an innovation with values, past experiences, and adopters' needs. Third, complexity refers to the level of difficulty in understanding and using the innovation. Fourth, trialability refers to the possibility of experimenting with the innovation on a limited scale before full implementation. Fifth, observability refers to the extent to which the results of an innovation can be seen and communicated to others. Rogers also explains five stages of the innovation adoption process: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation. Understanding these characteristics and stages is important for designing effective and sustainable public service innovations.

Digital Public Communication Model

According to (Emerson dkk., 2012), public communication is the process of sending messages from one source to many recipients simultaneously through certain media, with the aim of shaping understanding, awareness, and changes in the attitudes or behavior of target audiences. In the government context, public communication requires the delivery of information that is accurate, timely, easy to understand, and easy to access, because failure in these aspects opens space for the growth of disinformation in society. An effective public communication process involves six interdependent elements: the communicator as the message source who must possess credibility and authority; the message, which includes accuracy, relevance, completeness, and comprehensibility; the channel or media selected according to audience characteristics; the communicant as the message recipient whose characteristics must be understood; effects in the form of cognitive, affective, and conative changes among recipients; and feedback as the communicant's response, which becomes the basis for evaluating and dynamically adjusting the communication strategy (Voorberg dkk., 2015).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach, namely an approach aimed at understanding, describing, and analyzing phenomena in depth based on data obtained directly from the natural context of the research object (Creswell, 2014). The selection of a qualitative approach is based on the characteristics of the problem under study, namely the SHOLAWAT BRO innovation

as a digital public communication practice that requires holistic and contextual understanding, not merely numerical measurement, of the implementation process, field dynamics, public perceptions, and real impacts produced. Data were collected through three main techniques: in-depth interviews with key informants consisting of the heads of UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City, SHOLAWAT BRO operators, and motor vehicle taxpayers registered as broadcast recipients; non-participatory observation of service processes and information dissemination mechanisms through the WhatsApp Broadcasting system; and documentation study of broadcast archives, service reports, and document rejection statistics available at the two units. Data analysis referred to the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which includes three continuous stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. To ensure the validity of the findings, this study applied source and method triangulation by comparing and cross-verifying data obtained from various informants and data collection techniques, thereby producing findings that are credible, transferable, and academically accountable.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General Overview of the Study

General Overview of UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City

UPT SAMSAT North Malang is a technical implementation unit under the coordination of the Regional Revenue Agency (Bapenda) of East Java Province that provides motor vehicle administration services in the northern area of Malang City, including Blimbing District, Lowokwaru District, and part of Kedungkandang District. Meanwhile, UPT SAMSAT Batu City serves the entire administrative area of Batu City, covering three districts: Batu, Junrejo, and Bumiaji. Both units provide three main types of services, namely extension of Motor Vehicle Registration Certificates (STNK), Motor Vehicle Tax (PKB) payments, and processing of Motor Vehicle Title Transfer Fees (BBNKB). The accumulated volume of visits in the two units reaches an average of 350-450 people per working day, with peak visits occurring in the months approaching the end of the year and at the beginning of the semester period.

General Overview of the SHOLAWAT BRO Innovation

SHOLAWAT BRO is an acronym for Samsat Holiday On Line Asyncronous WhatsApp Terintegrasi Broadcasting, a digital public communication system independently developed by UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City as a response to increasingly massive service disinformation problems. This innovation was officially launched in early 2022 and operates through the WhatsApp Business platform by utilizing the Broadcast List

feature to disseminate official service information, including document requirements, procedures, fees, operating schedules, and special announcements, on a mass basis to all registered contacts. Information is broadcast on a scheduled basis every two to three days, with increased frequency before peak service periods. The system is managed by a team of operators who have received special training on public communication content standards, ensuring that every message distributed is sourced from official and verified data.

Analysis of the SHOLAWAT BRO Innovation from the Perspective of Diffusion of Innovation (Rogers, 2003)

The analysis in this section examines the five attributes of innovation diffusion proposed by Rogers (2003) as a framework for measuring the successful adoption of the SHOLAWAT BRO innovation. Each attribute is analyzed based on field data obtained through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation.

Relative Advantage

Relative advantage refers to the extent to which the SHOLAWAT BRO innovation is considered more superior and more beneficial than the previous service communication system. Before this innovation existed, the available communication channels consisted only of notice boards at the office, static leaflets that were not updated regularly, and an official website that was not actively accessed by the public. This condition created an information vacuum that was quickly filled by unofficial sources. The Head of UPT SAMSAT North Malang stated:

> *"Before SHOLAWAT BRO, almost every day people came with incomplete documents. They said they had asked neighbors or obtained information from neighborhood WhatsApp groups. The information was not entirely wrong, but it was not entirely correct either; it mixed old and new regulations. Since official broadcasts from us have existed, such incidents have declined drastically."*

In line with this, Mr. Slamet Riyadi, a taxpayer registered in the SHOLAWAT BRO system, stated:

> *"I was once rejected because it turned out that two copies of the ID card were required, while people said one copy was enough. Now, before going to SAMSAT, I first read the message from SAMSAT on WhatsApp. It is more reassuring, and I no longer have to guess."*

Based on the responses of the two informants above, it can be understood that the SHOLAWAT BRO innovation provides a very clear relative advantage compared with the previous communication system. This advantage is not only felt institutionally by SAMSAT

through a decrease in document rejection rates, but also personally by the public in the form of certainty and reassurance before visiting the service office. This finding is consistent with Rogers (2003), who emphasizes that relative advantage is the strongest predictor of the speed of innovation adoption.

Compatibility

Compatibility measures the extent to which the SHOLAWAT BRO innovation aligns with the habits, values, and real needs of its users. This aspect is crucial because even a technically superior innovation may fail to be adopted if it conflicts with people's daily behavior patterns. The SHOLAWAT BRO operator explained:

> *"We chose WhatsApp because almost everyone already uses it. From PKK mothers to retired fathers, everyone has WhatsApp. There is no need to download a new application or create a new account. People only need to register their number, and the information comes in directly."*

Mrs. Nur Hidayati, a taxpayer and active SHOLAWAT BRO user, added:

> *"What I like is that the message comes in like an ordinary message. It is not complicated, and I do not need to open a website that is sometimes difficult to find. This is very suitable for people like me who are not very technologically literate."*

Based on the interview responses above, it is clear that the decision of the SHOLAWAT BRO developers to use WhatsApp as the main platform was highly compatible with the realities of digital behavior among Indonesian society. This is consistent with We Are Social (2024), which confirms that WhatsApp is the instant messaging application with the highest penetration in Indonesia. This high compatibility directly reduces adoption barriers because the public does not need to go through a long learning curve to benefit from the innovation.

Complexity

Complexity measures the level of difficulty in understanding and operating an innovation, both from the perspective of the public as beneficiaries and from that of officials as system managers. The lower the level of complexity, the faster and wider the adoption of the innovation.

Mr. Fajar Eko Santoso, a service counter officer at UPT SAMSAT Batu City, stated:

> *"From our side as officers, the method is easy. We only need to type the message using the existing template and send it to the broadcast list. It takes at most five minutes. No special IT expertise is required. What matters is that the message content is correct and in accordance with the applicable regulations."*

Mrs. Dewi Rahayu, as the main system administrator, added:

"For the public, the registration method is also easy. They save the SAMSAT WhatsApp number, then send a request to join. That is all. There are no forms, no queues, and no fees. Even some elderly taxpayers can do it themselves after receiving one explanation from the counter officer."

The statements of these informants indicate that the complexity level of SHOLAWAT BRO is very low, both from the perspective of operators and end users. This condition is a significant accelerator of the growth in registered contacts. In line with Rogers (2003), innovations perceived as having low complexity diffuse more rapidly within a social system because the psychological barriers to trying and adopting them become much smaller.

Trialability

Trialability refers to the ease with which the public can try the SHOLAWAT BRO innovation without first making a full adoption commitment. Innovations that can be tried in advance tend to have higher adoption rates because initial uncertainty can be reduced through direct experience. The Head of UPT SAMSAT Batu City stated:

"We intentionally did not create a binding mechanism. Anyone can register, and anyone can leave at any time. There are no sanctions and no obligations. That freedom is precisely what makes people willing to try. After experiencing the benefits, they do not want to leave."

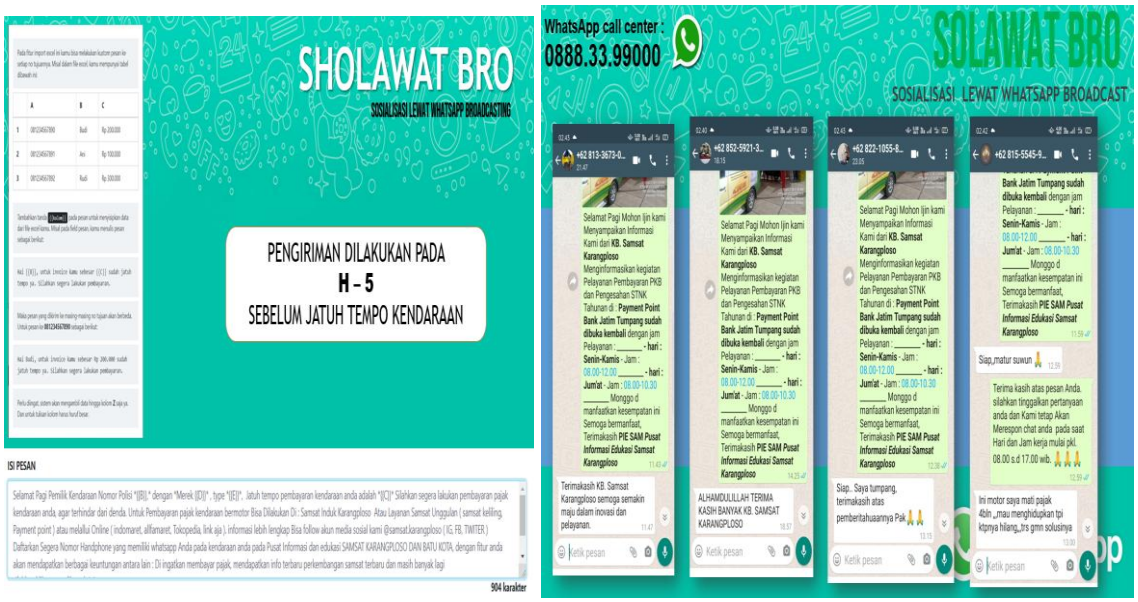

Figure 2. Trial Delivery of WhatsApp Broadcasting.
Source: UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City.

Mr. Ahmad Fauzi, a taxpayer who at the time of the interview was not yet registered but expressed interest in joining, stated:

"I heard from a neighbor that there is a WhatsApp broadcast from SAMSAT. The neighbor said it was useful and not spam. If it can be tried first, why not? There is nothing to lose. If it does not suit me, I can simply leave."

Based on the interview responses above, it can be seen that the SHOLAWAT BRO mechanism, which is freely opt-in and opt-out, provides ideal trialability. The design of this system intelligently removes the psychological risk that commonly inhibits the adoption of new innovations. This finding also confirms the diffusion pattern described by Rogers (2003), in which the ability to try an innovation on a limited basis accelerates adoption decisions among community groups that previously appeared apathetic or hesitant toward innovation.

Observability

Observability measures the extent to which the positive results of the SHOLAWAT BRO innovation can be seen, felt, and communicated by adopters to people around them. Visibility of results is the driving force of organic diffusion that encourages the growth of new participants without active marketing efforts from SAMSAT.

The development data for SHOLAWAT BRO innovation achievements from semester to semester, as presented in Table 1, provide an empirical picture of consistent and measurable growth since the program was launched:

Table 2. Development of SHOLAWAT BRO Innovation Achievements by Semester (2022-2024).

Period	Registered Contacts	Broadcasts Sent	Document Rejections	Disinformation Complaints
Semester I 2022	620	32 Times	7.4%	168 Cases
Semester II 2022	1,245	48 Times	6.6%	119 Cases
Semester I 2023	2,310	84 Times	4.8%	87 Cases
Semester II 2023	3,780	96 Times	3.8%	47 Cases
Semester I 2024	4,521	110 Times	2.5%	32 Cases
Semester II 2024	5,178	132 Times	1.7%	16 Cases

Source: Processed Researcher Data, UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City (2025).

Drs. Agus Widodo, M.Si., conveyed his observation regarding the participant growth pattern:

"We almost never conduct large-scale promotions. Participant growth mostly comes from word-of-mouth recommendations. Registered residents tell their neighbors and relatives. They say, 'just register, so before going to SAMSAT you already know what to bring.' That is the most effective way."

Based on the data in Table 2 and the informant's response above, it can be concluded that the observability of SHOLAWAT BRO is high and has become a significant catalyst for organic growth. The consistent increase in registered contacts from 620 contacts in Semester I

2022 to 5,178 contacts in Semester II 2024, or a 734.8 percent increase over three years, is empirical evidence that the benefits of this innovation are easily observed and communicated by its users. This condition is consistent with Rogers' (2003) proposition that innovations with a high level of observability will diffuse faster and more widely through interpersonal communication mechanisms in social networks.

Analysis of the Effectiveness of SHOLAWAT BRO Digital Public Communication from the Perspective of the Communication Model

The analysis in this section assesses the effectiveness of the SHOLAWAT BRO innovation as a digital public communication system using the six elements of Cangara's (2016) communication model. These six elements—communicator, message, channel, communicant, effect, and feedback—are analyzed sequentially to produce a comprehensive understanding of how SHOLAWAT BRO functions as an anti-disinformation mechanism in services.

Communicator

The communicator refers to the institution or party that acts as the source and sender of official information in the SHOLAWAT BRO system, namely UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City. Communicator credibility is the main foundation of successful public communication; messages from untrusted sources will not produce the expected behavioral changes, regardless of how accurate the content is. Mr. Rudi Handoko, S.STP., M.M., emphasized:

> *"We ensure that every message sent from the SHOLAWAT BRO account has an official marker in its content, including the unit name, official number, and official logo of Bapenda East Java. The purpose is for people to know that this is not a message from brokers or third parties. It comes directly from SAMSAT."*

Drs. Agus Widodo, M.Si., added:

> *"Public trust is built through consistency. We never disseminate information that is not yet certain. If there is a regulatory change still waiting for an official decree, we wait until the decree is issued. Only then do we broadcast it. It is better to be one day late than to disseminate information that later has to be corrected."*

Based on the interview responses above, it can be understood that UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City have built their position as credible and responsible communicators in the digital information ecosystem. The principle of caution in information broadcasting, namely waiting for regulatory legality before dissemination, is a public information governance practice consistent with good government communication standards. This reinforces Cangara's

(2016) finding that communicator credibility is the most determining variable in shaping communicants' trust in the messages delivered.

Message

The message element includes the quality of information content broadcast through SHOLAWAT BRO, covering the dimensions of accuracy, relevance, completeness, and comprehensibility. Message quality directly determines whether the public obtains correct and adequate understanding to prepare themselves before visiting the SAMSAT office. Mrs. Dewi Rahayu, A.Md., explained the process of preparing SHOLAWAT BRO message content:

> *"Every message we send has gone through a two-stage checking process. First by me as the operator, and second by the head of the service section. We adjust the language so it is easy to understand and not too technical. If there are complicated legal terms, we include a simple explanation."*
>
> Mrs. Nur Hidayati confirmed from the perspective of message reception by the public: *"The messages are clear and not long-winded. They go straight to the point: what documents to bring, how much the fee is, and what time the office opens. There is no unnecessary small talk. That is what I like—short but complete."*

Based on the interview responses above, it is evident that the quality of SHOLAWAT BRO messages meets effective public communication standards as formulated by Cangara (2016): accurate, relevant, complete, and easy to understand. The layered verification mechanism before broadcasting ensures that no incorrect information is disseminated, while the simplification of technical language ensures message accessibility for all community segments. This message quality directly closes the gaps that unofficial information sources have previously used to circulate among the public.

Channel/Media

The communication channel refers to the platform and mechanism used to deliver messages from SAMSAT to the public. WhatsApp Broadcasting was selected as the main channel for SHOLAWAT BRO based on various strategic considerations related to reach, convenience, and efficiency. The comparison of document rejection rates by service type before and after the implementation of SHOLAWAT BRO, which indirectly reflects the effectiveness of the communication channel, is presented in Figure 1 below:

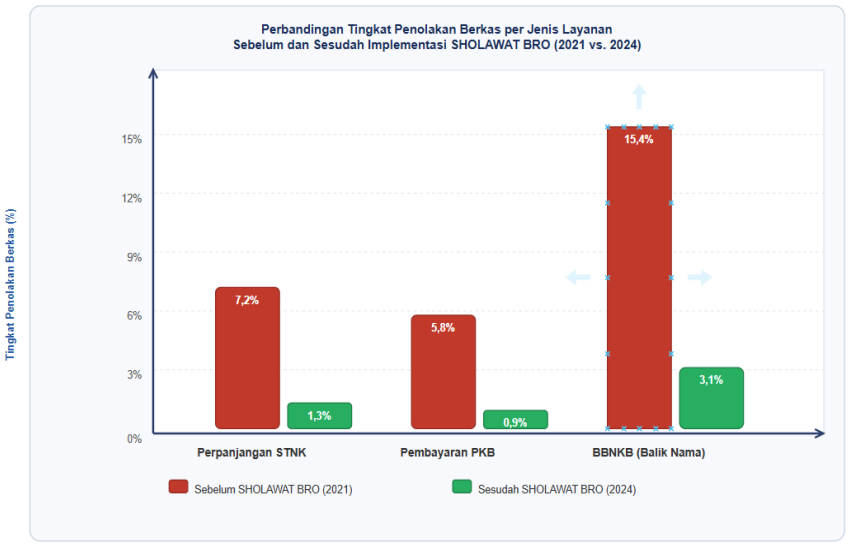

Figure 3. Comparison of Document Rejection Rates by Service Type Before and After the Implementation of SHOLAWAT BRO.
Source: Processed Researcher Data, UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City.

Mr. Fajar Eko Santoso observed the impact of channel selection on communication effectiveness from the service counter perspective:

> *"The difference has been very noticeable since the WhatsApp broadcasts began. Previously, we often had to explain at length at the counter because people did not know what was required. Now most already know before they arrive. The queue runs more smoothly, and people are less stressed."*

Mr. Slamet Riyadi added from the user's perspective:

> *"WhatsApp is the first thing I open every morning. So if there is a message from SAMSAT, I will definitely read it. It is not like a website where I first have to open a browser and search. This comes to me, rather than me having to go to the information."*

Based on the data in Figure 1 and the responses of the informants, it is evident that selecting WhatsApp as the SHOLAWAT BRO communication channel was a strategic and appropriate decision. The very significant reduction in document rejections for BBNKB services from 15.4 percent (2021) to 3.1 percent (2024) is the strongest indicator that WhatsApp Broadcasting-based communication successfully reaches the public effectively, even for the most procedurally complex services. This confirms Cangara's (2016) view that selecting a channel aligned with communicants' habits and accessibility is an absolute prerequisite for effective public communication.

Communicant

The communicant refers to motor vehicle taxpayers who are the target recipients of SHOLAWAT BRO information. Understanding communicant characteristics, including those

not yet registered, is important for evaluating the extent to which this innovation reaches all community segments that need SAMSAT services. Mr. Rudi Handoko, S.STP., M.M., described the profile of SHOLAWAT BRO communicants:

> *"Our participants are diverse. Some are young, some are older. Some are active on social media, while others use WhatsApp only for family chats. However, all can be served well because the message format is designed for all groups."*

Mr. Ahmad Fauzi, a taxpayer who was not yet registered, explained his reason:

> *"Honestly, I did not know this service existed. I only found out when a neighbor told me. If I had known from the beginning, I might have registered last year. There may still be many people like me who do not know, not because they do not want to."*

Based on the interview responses above, it can be seen that the main challenge in the communicant dimension does not lie in public unwillingness to join, but in the limited reach of innovation socialization itself. There are still potential communicant segments that do not know about SHOLAWAT BRO, an information gap that, if not addressed, will limit the impact of this innovation. This finding is relevant to Hartini et al. (2021), who state that the success of digital public communication depends not only on system quality but also on the effectiveness of socialization strategies for prospective communicants who have not yet been reached.

Effect

The effect element measures real changes that occur among communicants as a result of exposure to SHOLAWAT BRO communication at the cognitive level (knowledge), affective level (attitudes), and conative level (behavior). These communication effects most directly reflect the success of this innovation in overcoming service disinformation. Drs. Agus Widodo, M.Si., described the observed changes in public behavior:

> *"What is most noticeable is that people now come with more confidence and better preparation. Previously, many arrived looking unsure and repeatedly asked questions at the counter. Now they already know. They have read our broadcasts. The process is faster and more efficient."*

Mr. Slamet Riyadi added:

> *"I once received information from a neighborhood WhatsApp group saying there was a certain additional fee. After I checked the official broadcast, that fee did not exist. So I trust broadcasts from SAMSAT more than information from other groups."*

Based on the three informant responses above, it is clear that SHOLAWAT BRO has successfully produced positive and multidimensional communication effects. At the cognitive level, people have more accurate knowledge about service procedures and requirements. At the

affective level, trust in official information sources has grown above trust in unofficial sources. At the conative level, real behavioral change occurs in the form of more thorough document preparation before visiting the SAMSAT office. Together, these three layers of effect create conditions conducive to eliminating service disinformation, confirming Cangara's (2016) proposition that the most impactful effect is the conative effect that changes real behavior.

Feedback

Feedback is the communicant's response to the message received, functioning as a mechanism for evaluation and continuous improvement by the communicator. In the SHOLAWAT BRO system, feedback becomes an important data source for identifying unmet information needs and detecting the emergence of new disinformation that must be addressed immediately. Mrs. Dewi Rahayu, A.Md., explained the feedback mechanism in operation:

> *"After we send a broadcast, some members of the public usually reply with follow-up questions. Some ask about special cases, such as inherited vehicles or vehicles with plates from outside the city. These questions actually help us identify what information is still unclear and needs to be added to the next broadcast."*

Mr. Fajar Eko Santoso conveyed the perspective from the service counter:

> *"If there is hoax information circulating outside—for example, someone says the requirements have changed when they have not—we usually receive reports from the public through WhatsApp SHOLAWAT BRO. We can immediately clarify and send a corrective broadcast on the same day. This is much faster than the old method."*

Based on the interview responses above, it can be concluded that SHOLAWAT BRO functions not only as a one-way communication system but has also developed into a responsive and interactive public communication ecosystem. The feedback mechanism that naturally occurs through WhatsApp conversations enables SAMSAT to respond to the dynamics of disinformation in real time, a capability that conventional communication systems do not have. This finding strengthens Cangara's (2016) view that effective public communication is not a one-way linear process but a cycle that continuously turns and is improved through feedback from communicants.

Discussion

Based on the overall analysis conducted on the SHOLAWAT BRO innovation using two main theoretical frameworks, namely Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovation Theory and Cangara's (2016) Digital Public Communication Model, a comprehensive and coherent picture is obtained of how an instant messaging technology-based communication innovation can

become an effective, sustainable, and impactful solution to disinformation problems in bureaucratic public services.

From the perspective of innovation diffusion, the field findings consistently affirm that SHOLAWAT BRO fulfills the five attributes proposed by Rogers (2003) as prerequisites for successful innovation adoption. The relative advantage of this innovation is proven not only in technical-administrative terms but also in socio-psychological dimensions: people not only obtain more accurate information, but also gain a sense of security and certainty that had long been absent from their interactions with the SAMSAT bureaucracy. Compatibility with people's digital habits of using WhatsApp in daily life means that this innovation requires no significant adaptation investment from users, a strategic advantage often overlooked in the design of digital public service innovations in Indonesia. Its low complexity encourages accelerated adoption both among officials and the public, while the free opt-in and opt-out mechanism creates a psychologically conducive environment for experimentation without burden. The high observability of the innovation's results, reflected in organic participant growth of up to 734.8 percent over three years without large-scale promotion, shows that the benefits of SHOLAWAT BRO are not merely felt privately by individuals but are actively communicated within social networks and become positive references for new adopters.

From the perspective of public communication, the findings provide empirical confirmation of the core propositions formulated by Cangara (2016) regarding the requirements for effective public communication. The position of UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City as credible communicators, built through information consistency, adherence to regulatory legality before broadcasting, and regular broadcast schedules, has proven to be the foundation that determines public trust in the messages received. This trust becomes valuable social capital in the fight against disinformation: when the public has an official and trusted information source in their hands, unofficial narratives circulating among them are automatically confronted with a higher verification standard. This phenomenon is explicitly illustrated in Mr. Slamet Riyadi's statement that he checks official SHOLAWAT BRO broadcasts as a verification standard when receiving information from other sources, a cognitive behavioral change that represents one of the highest achievements of any public communication effort.

The quality of messages maintained through layered verification mechanisms before broadcasting, combined with the use of simple language relevant to all community segments, strengthens the effectiveness of every SHOLAWAT BRO broadcast as a proactive disinformation prevention agent. In this context, SHOLAWAT BRO does not merely react to disinformation that has already circulated; it strategically precedes the emergence of

information vacuums that have long served as a medium for the growth of unofficial narratives. This proactive-preventive approach distinguishes SHOLAWAT BRO from conventional government communication mechanisms, which generally remain reactive by responding only to questions or complaints that have already been submitted rather than anticipating information needs before questions arise. This understanding is consistent with Dwiyanto's (2011) argument that the most impactful public service innovations are those born from deep understanding of the root causes of problems, not merely surface responses to visible symptoms.

The communication effect dimension recorded in this study is the most substantive and policy-relevant finding. The decrease in document rejection rates from an average of 8.5 percent in 2021 to only 1.7 percent in 2024, along with the reduction in disinformation-related complaints from 412 cases to 16 cases per semester, is not merely a set of statistics. These figures represent thousands of citizens who no longer have to bear losses of time, energy, and transportation costs due to misleading information, a dimension of public service justice that has often escaped bureaucratic performance measurement. Meanwhile, the increase in the Community Satisfaction Index for the information aspect from 2.61 to 3.71 on a four-point scale shows that the transformation of public satisfaction occurs not only in technical service aspects but also in the overall quality of the information experience, an achievement that confirms the argument of Rahmawati and Purnomo (2022) that structured digital communication has a strong positive correlation with public satisfaction with government services.

Overall, the findings of this study position SHOLAWAT BRO not merely as a situational local technical innovation, but as an anti-disinformation digital public communication model with high replication value. The strength of this model lies in its simplicity in utilizing an existing and familiar platform, as well as in its intelligence in understanding the root of disinformation as a failure of institutional communication that must be addressed through proactive, standardized, and inclusive communication solutions. In the context of Indonesia's ongoing bureaucratic digital transformation, innovations such as SHOLAWAT BRO offer an important lesson: success does not always require sophisticated and expensive technology, but rather a proper understanding of public needs, commitment to information quality, and the courage to move beyond passive and unresponsive bureaucratic communication patterns.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, the SHOLAWAT BRO innovation has proven effective in overcoming disinformation in motor vehicle administration services at UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City, with participant growth of 734.8 percent over three years, document rejections declining from 8.5 percent to 1.7 percent, disinformation complaints decreasing by 88.35 percent, and the Community Satisfaction Index for the information aspect increasing from 2.61 to 3.71. These achievements make it not merely a local technical innovation but a mature digital public communication model worthy of becoming a national reference. In the future, UPT SAMSAT North Malang and Batu City need to expand socialization through village and neighborhood networks and develop an editorial calendar based on annual regulatory cycles to strengthen broadcast consistency. The East Java Provincial Bapenda should replicate and standardize this program across all UPT SAMSAT units in East Java through uniform content guidelines, verification protocols, and reporting mechanisms. Future researchers should conduct comparative studies across UPT SAMSAT units with different demographic characteristics and conduct deeper analyses of vulnerable groups, such as older adults and communities with limited digital literacy, to enrich academic dimensions that have not been fully addressed in this study.

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