



## Optimizing the Function of the House of Representatives in Overseeing the Government in the Digital Government Era

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### ABSTRACT

The shift towards digital governance has triggered major transformations in public administration, particularly in how oversight is conducted by the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR). The era of digital government is characterized by the adoption of the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE), which enables electronic data storage, processing, and dissemination. This digital infrastructure offers a significant opportunity for the DPR to enhance its supervisory role through faster, more transparent, and traceable access to government data. However, several challenges persist, including limited access to internal government data, risks of digital information manipulation, and the relatively low level of digital literacy among some legislative members. This study employs a qualitative-descriptive approach to explore these dynamics, with a focus on the DPR's oversight of digital education funding during the Covid-19 pandemic. The findings reveal that effective parliamentary oversight requires not only open data systems and improved digital competencies among legislators but also active collaboration with civil society. The case of monitoring internet quota assistance and digital infrastructure in underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost (3T) regions illustrates the importance of data-driven and adaptive oversight in formulating responsive public policies. In conclusion, as bureaucracy undergoes digital transformation, strengthening the DPR's oversight capacity is essential to uphold government transparency and accountability.

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## INTRODUCTION

The House of Representatives (DPR) of Indonesia plays a pivotal role within the nation's constitutional system, particularly in upholding the principles of checks and balances. In the context of a modern democratic state, the DPR is not merely a formal component of governance, but an institution endowed with legislative, budgetary, and oversight functions, as outlined in Article 20A paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. These three roles are interdependent and form the foundation of a transparent, accountable, and democratic government system (Sihotang & Yudi, 2024). As a supervisory body, the DPR bears the responsibility to ensure that government policies and actions align with legal norms, justice, and the broader public interest.

The DPR's oversight function is critical to maintaining constitutional order in government operations. This is executed through mechanisms such as the right of interpellation, inquiry, and expression of opinion, in addition to working meetings with ministries and other government bodies. The DPR also exercises control over the implementation of the state budget (APBN) and public expenditure (Antari, 2020). In this regard, the DPR functions not only as an administrative monitor, but also as a guardian of governmental ethics and a representative of public aspirations.

However, with the rapid advancement of information and communication technologies, conventional oversight practices relying on physical documentation and written reports are increasingly inadequate. The Indonesian government has embraced digital transformation, integrating public services, budgeting processes, and program implementation into systems such as e-government and the Electronic-Based

Government System (SPBE). Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2018 on SPBE outlines a national policy direction for this digital shift (Soetarto & Yuliastina, 2022), marking a significant move from manual bureaucracy to a digitally enabled governance ecosystem.

Digital governance presents numerous advantages: streamlined bureaucracy, faster service delivery, reduced corruption through greater transparency, and enhanced citizen participation. Activities that were once slow and convoluted can now be expedited through digital solutions. Nevertheless, this transformation also introduces new challenges, particularly in the realm of oversight. The vast amount of data now managed digitally requires the DPR to adapt both institutionally and in terms of human resources. Beyond understanding regulatory frameworks, DPR members must also develop technical competencies in data systems, cross-agency integration, and the algorithms underlying public data processing. Without substantial internal reform, the DPR risks falling behind in its supervisory role amid the rapid digitalization of executive functions (Jelly & Prihana, 2025).

Moreover, the increasing use of big data and artificial intelligence (AI) in public decision making further expands the scope of legislative oversight. Governments are increasingly utilizing data-driven decision support systems to formulate public policies ranging from social assistance programs to national development planning. In such a context, the DPR must be capable of assessing how algorithms function, how data is collected and analyzed, and identifying potential biases or manipulations in closed digital systems. The legislature must evaluate whether these systems comply with principles of social justice, inclusivity, and human rights protection (Fahlevvi et al., 2025).

Additionally, the digital transition introduces new risks that are not yet fully addressed by existing regulations such as data privacy breaches, misuse of algorithmic systems in policymaking, and statistical data manipulation for political gain. These issues underscore the importance of the DPR's supervisory role in ensuring that digital reforms adhere to legal standards, public ethics, and the principles of good governance. Oversight must extend beyond technical efficiency to include safeguarding civil rights in the digital era (Rahman, 2021).

Another pressing concern is the relatively low level of digital literacy among some DPR members, which hinders effective use of digital oversight tools. To address this, the DPR must invest in internal capacity building through digital literacy training, recruitment of IT experts, and the development of open data oversight systems. Without adequate institutional infrastructure, the legislative branch will struggle to keep pace with the technological advances implemented by the executive.

At the same time, public demands for transparency and participation are growing. The digital era has empowered citizens to access data and monitor public officials more directly through platforms such as LAPOR!, public audit websites, and social media. In response, the DPR must adopt more inclusive and participatory oversight mechanisms such as e-parliament initiatives, civil society involvement in digital audits, and real-time public complaint systems. Collaboration between the DPR and civil society actors is essential in building a democratic, transparent, and responsive oversight ecosystem (Sasmita & Rahaju, 2023).

Various studies have shown that successful legislative oversight in the digital age depends heavily on technological adaptability and political will for institutional reform. Countries like Estonia and South Korea have demonstrated how digital parliaments can enhance oversight through open data and online reporting systems. Their parliaments have implemented digital dashboards to monitor policy execution and budget expenditures in real-time, enabling both lawmakers and citizens to track government performance. These models offer valuable insights for strengthening DPR's oversight capacity in Indonesia (Septiana et al., 2024).

Against this backdrop, this paper seeks to examine the extent to which the DPR has leveraged digital tools to optimize its oversight role during the transition toward digital governance. Key research questions explore the DPR's institutional readiness to face the digital era, the potential application of technology in legislative oversight mechanisms, and the normative and structural challenges involved. This study also compares digital oversight models from other countries to draw policy lessons and recommendations. Using a multidisciplinary approach combining perspectives from constitutional law, public administration, and information technology this paper aims to contribute to enhancing the DPR's position as a responsive, modern, and effective supervisory institution in an increasingly digital world.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach by integrating both normative juridical and empirical juridical methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of how the House of Representatives (DPR) can optimize its oversight function within a digital governance framework. The normative juridical approach is applied to examine the existing legal framework governing DPR's oversight role, particularly the provisions of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia specifically Article 20A, which outlines the DPR's legislative, budgetary, and supervisory functions. The analysis also covers Law No. 17 of 2014 concerning the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR), the DPR, the Regional Representative Council (DPD), and the

Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) commonly known as the MD3 Law as well as derivative regulations such as Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2018 on the Electronic-Based Government System (SPBE), and other procedural rules related to DPR's oversight mechanisms. This normative framework aims to assess how far the current legal system supports the DPR's ability to monitor the digital transformation of government administration.

On the other hand, the empirical juridical approach is used to observe real-world practices of DPR's oversight in the context of digital governance. Empirical data were collected through documentation analysis of DPR session transcripts, official records of commission meetings with ministries/agencies, audit reports issued by the Audit Board of Indonesia (BPK), and indirect observations of DPR's digital platforms such as the official e-Parliament website and DPR RI's YouTube channel. These sources provided insight into how DPR has exercised its oversight function over digital initiatives such as education technology programs, budget transparency via electronic systems, and monitoring of government digital platforms (Basri & Rohim, 2025).

The data utilized in this study consist of both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data were obtained through literature reviews involving academic journals, legal and public administration textbooks, media articles, and official annual reports from DPR and BPK. Primary data were drawn from observational insights into DPR's responses to key digital government policies, especially the SPBE program, as well as public statements and commentaries from DPR members, legal scholars, and policy analysts featured in national media.

The data collection techniques included documentary analysis and non-participant observation, while the data analysis was conducted using a qualitative-descriptive method. This approach enabled thematic interpretation of the data to identify patterns and trends in DPR's oversight practices in response to digital bureaucracy challenges. Furthermore, the study compares the empirical findings with existing legal norms to identify gaps or inconsistencies that may inform future policy recommendations. Through this integrated methodology, the research aims to offer practical insights into enhancing DPR's oversight capacity in the era of digital governance.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Oversight Function of the House of Representatives in Indonesia's Constitutional System

Within Indonesia's constitutional framework, the oversight function held by the House of Representatives (DPR) plays a vital role in ensuring the establishment of a democratic and accountable government. This function is firmly grounded in Article 20A paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution, which outlines three primary roles of the DPR: legislative, budgetary, and supervisory functions. These responsibilities are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. Among them, the oversight function carries a particularly strategic value as it serves as a direct mechanism for scrutinizing government actions and policies, ensuring they remain aligned with constitutional mandates and the public interest.

The implementation of this function is further regulated through Law No. 17 of 2014 concerning the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR), DPR, Regional Representative Council (DPD), and Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) commonly referred to as the MD3 Law. The DPR exercises oversight through several formal mechanisms, including the right of interpellation (to request clarification from the government on significant policies), the right of inquiry (to investigate government actions suspected of deviation), and the right to express opinions (a formal stance by the DPR on major national issues). Oversight is also routinely carried out through commission meetings with ministries and agencies, field visits, as well as the examination and evaluation of the implementation of the national budget (APBN). In addition, the DPR collaborates with other institutions such as the Audit Board of Indonesia (BPK) and the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) to supervise public spending and government policies (Antari, 2020).

Nevertheless, the practical execution of DPR's oversight duties continues to face various challenges and criticisms. Observers and scholars often argue that DPR's supervision tends to be elitist, disconnected from grassroots concerns, and largely procedural in nature. Many oversight processes are conducted in a routine manner, without meaningful follow-up or impactful recommendations. One of the core issues undermining effective oversight is the limited integration of digital monitoring systems that could provide real-time access to government data and activities. Moreover, the current oversight practices remain fragmented and sectoral due to the absence of interconnected databases and cross institutional coordination mechanisms (Sulistriani, & Aprizon Putra, 2024).

The technical capacity of some legislators is another major constraint, especially as digital governance demands a working knowledge of information technology, data analysis, and electronic management systems. According to the DPR Secretariat General's annual evaluation report, many commissions have not yet fully utilized digital oversight platforms and continue to rely heavily on written reports submitted by government counterparts, often without independent verification through digital tools (Setjen DPR RI, 2022). This highlights an urgent need for institutional reform and human resource development within the DPR to

ensure that oversight functions are carried out in a more responsive, adaptive, and technologically relevant manner.

### **The Shift Towards Digital Governance**

The transition to digital governance is an inevitable step in addressing the challenges of modern public administration, which demands greater transparency, efficiency, and accountability. Digital governance, or e-government, refers to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to accelerate public service delivery, enhance governmental management, and foster citizen engagement in policy-making processes. A concrete manifestation of this transition is the implementation of the Electronic-Based Government System (Sistem Pemerintahan Berbasis Elektronik/SPBE), as stipulated in Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2018. This initiative aims to build an integrated, efficient, and transparent digital bureaucracy that facilitates performance monitoring across government institutions.

In the context of parliamentary oversight, digital transformation presents strategic opportunities for the House of Representatives (DPR RI) to perform its supervisory functions more effectively. The availability of digital data and performance reports allows faster and more transparent access to crucial government information. For instance, financial audits conducted by the Audit Board of Indonesia (BPK) can now be accessed through interactive online systems. These advancements enable DPR to strengthen executive accountability and encourage public involvement through digital complaint platforms and online discussion forums that support participatory oversight (Rusdy & Flambonita, 2023).

Nevertheless, this transformation also brings significant challenges. Not all government data is made publicly accessible particularly those involving sensitive national strategic projects or state expenditure. This often limits DPR's ability to conduct comprehensive supervision. Furthermore, technical barriers such as limited digital literacy among legislators, unequal technological capacity across DPR commissions, and weak system integration among ministries and agencies hinder the full realization of digital oversight. Another pressing issue is the potential for data manipulation or engineering by the executive branch, especially when technology is used without sufficient transparency or accountability (Judijanto, 2025).

Given these complexities, there is a pressing need to strengthen DPR's institutional capacity. Enhancing its oversight role requires more than just regulatory reforms; it demands robust investment in digital infrastructure, the upskilling of parliamentary human resources, and tighter collaboration with oversight bodies such as BPK, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), and the Ombudsman in utilizing big data. Practical steps such as developing an APBN (state budget) oversight dashboard, offering digital literacy training to legislators, and establishing a dedicated data analytics unit within the DPR Secretariat must be prioritized. These efforts are essential to ensure that parliamentary oversight in the digital era moves beyond rhetoric and achieves real, measurable impact.

### **Optimizing the DPR's Oversight Role in the Digital Era**

Enhancing the oversight function of Indonesia's House of Representatives (DPR) in the digital age requires a profound and sustained internal transformation. A crucial step in this direction is strengthening the digital competence of legislators and their expert staff. Digital literacy has become an essential requirement no longer optional enabling members of parliament to interpret and evaluate big data and integrated electronic government systems. Technical training in digital data management, cybersecurity, and the analysis of electronic reports is indispensable to ensure that parliamentary oversight moves beyond administrative formalities and is grounded in substantive, data-driven understanding (Setyawan et al., 2023).

Moreover, the DPR must take initiative in establishing an integrated digital oversight system. Developing an open data based supervision platform aligned with the Electronic Based Government System (SPBE) can significantly enhance monitoring efficiency of government programs and budget implementation. This platform should operate in real-time and enable rapid, accurate performance auditing of ministries and government agencies. According to the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), adopting digital auditing in legislative processes will improve operational effectiveness and reduce reliance on conventional, procedural oversight methods (Arrosyid, 2024).

Equally important is the need for stronger collaboration between the DPR and external supervisory bodies such as the Audit Board of Indonesia (BPK), the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), and the Ombudsman. Such partnerships help prevent overlapping mandates and broaden access to inter-agency data, which often becomes a major barrier in cross-sector oversight. A study conducted by the Indonesian Center for Law and Policy Studies (PSHK) indicates that institutional coordination is key to achieving a more integrated and holistic approach to legislative supervision (Aithan & Syamsir, 2024).

Public involvement must also serve as a foundational element of digital democracy. Implementing the concept of an e-parliament through digital oversight forums, online reporting systems, and interactive platforms would allow citizens to actively report policy irregularities and provide constructive feedback. Transparency in this regard transforms parliamentary oversight into a participatory process, where civil society becomes a vital accountability actor. Ensuring access to public information and upholding citizens'

rights to monitor legislative procedures is essential to building a government that is transparent, accountable, and responsive.

### Case Study: Parliamentary Oversight of Education Digitalization Budget

A notable example of the DPR's optimized oversight function in the digital governance era can be observed in its monitoring of the education digitalization budget during the Covid-19 pandemic. At the height of the crisis, the government allocated substantial funds to support remote learning, including the provision of online learning devices and internet data subsidies for students and teachers. However, the implementation phase was fraught with challenges such as inaccurate targeting of beneficiaries, delayed distribution, and uneven digital infrastructure, particularly in remote, outermost, and underdeveloped regions (3T areas).

Commission X of the Indonesian House of Representatives actively conducted working meetings with the Ministry of Education and Culture to assess the effectiveness of the budget implementation. These discussions led to calls for improved distribution mechanisms and strengthened cross-sector coordination to accelerate digital infrastructure development in the most underserved areas (DPR RI, 2021).

In addition, the DPR advocated for greater transparency by proposing that data on digital education aid recipients be made publicly accessible. This recommendation reflects a commitment to open data governance and encourages broader public participation in oversight. As a result, the following fiscal year saw measurable improvements in the accuracy of aid distribution and expanded access to digital education services (Zalukhu & Nurhascaryani, 2024). This case underscores how leveraging information technology and promoting data transparency can significantly enhance the DPR's supervisory role, especially in vital sectors like education.

### CONCLUSION

In the era of digital governance, the oversight function of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR) faces both new challenges and opportunities that require adaptation to rapid technological advancements. The integration of digital technologies into government operations provides avenues for more transparent, data-driven, and efficient oversight. As a legislative institution, the DPR holds a pivotal role in ensuring that the government's digital transformation aligns with principles of accountability and serves the public interest. However, effective oversight can only be achieved if the DPR itself embraces digital tools, enhances the digital literacy of its members, and actively collaborates with civil society actors to reinforce the checks and balances mechanism.

The case study of budget oversight for educational digitalization during the COVID-19 pandemic illustrates how responsive, data-informed, and participatory supervision can lead to tangible benefits for society. Therefore, enhancing the DPR's oversight role in the context of digital governance is not only about internal capacity building, but also about creating an adaptive, collaborative, and inclusive monitoring framework. In doing so, the DPR can continue to act as a relevant democratic watchdog amid the rapidly evolving digital age.

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