

Construction of The Social Reality of Idealism Digital Era Journalists in Banten

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ABSTRACT

Keywords

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In Banten Province, news portals or online media are growing rapidly. There are hundreds of active online media, including: Mainstream media such as the Jawa Pos Group, Radar Banten, Banten Raya Pos, and Kompas, namely the Tribune Network. The research approach was carried out qualitatively, with descriptive analysis techniques. The data was obtained from in-depth interviews with informants who are online journalism practitioners in Pandeglang Regency, Lebak Regency, Serang City and Tangerang City, Banten Province. To convince the fact from the interview, the researcher conducted a literature study related to the locus of problems in this study. In addition, this study applied the elaboration of theory from Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann through their book entitled *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in The Sociology of Knowledge* (1996). The results of this study highlighted the condition of mass media companies which must be able to adapt to developing technology, including the working pattern of journalists. Online journalism demands Human Resources (HR) that are in accordance with the internet operating system because apart from journalism-based online media there is also social media whose operating system grafts onto conventional journalism. Journalists in Banten Province still adhere to the Basic Press Law Number 40 of 1999 and cyber media guidelines in their work. In addition, journalists in Banten still uphold professionalism by prioritizing idealism based on Akhlakul Karimah (good behaviour) when working.

1. Introduction

The rapid development of digital technology has triggered the growth of digital media in Indonesia instantly. This information technology revolution has made news distribution change rapidly, so that it can be received by the audience quickly. Communication technology through the internet has been able to send news to any places, including remote areas, as long as it has an internet connection.

Nowadays, the concept of conventional journalism added with elements involving the function of internet-based communication technology. The use of communication technology via the internet, news distribution can be done swiftly and quickly, even it is possible to conduct real time communication by audiences in online media. Additionally, the concept of news starts to change this day. The definition of news, which reports on events that have occurred, has now changed its meaning to reports (Haryanto, 2014).

Similar with the conventional media in general, online media tries to make best use of information or events to attract audiences or readers and invite advertisers eventually. This is in line with what was stated by Waziz (2012) that information is the soul in the world of journalism and various kinds of original, unique, actual, controversial, close, interesting, dramatic, character and exclusive information will always be on the news presented to the public delivered with a variety of interesting

constructions, so that the audiences finally reduced their overthinking and become addicted to find more of information.

Rulli Nasrullah's study in his book "Theory and Research of Cyber Media (Cybermedia)", highlighted that basically the mention of media does not only refer to technology but also to social, political, economic, cultural aspects, and so on (Nasrullah, 2016). In the scope of internet-based media, it is famous for journalism-based media and digital media products of information technology companies such as Google, Facebook, Microsoft, and Amazon which identified as "mass media". In the practice, this company takes the biggest advantage in the process of media ecological evolution that is currently sweeping the world (Sudibyo, 2019).

In Banten Province, the development of news portals or online media considered as a fast-growing industry. It is estimated that in Banten Province there are hundreds of online media that actively report information about Banten Province. However, based on data from the Press Council (<https://dewanpers.or.id/company>) as of 1 January 2023, only 21 press companies with online media types in Banten Province have been administratively and factually verified.

On the other hand, the growth of online media companies will definitely grow the need for human resources managing the media companies. The ease of setting up an online media company that is considered requires a small amount of capital has encouraged people in remote villages to establish online media companies. This condition causes the level of competition in obtaining revenue in online media companies to become higher. So that managers of online media companies are required to be more creative in finding sources of company income.

In many cases online media in regions, such as in Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province, is nothing more than a mouthpiece for the local government in spreading press releases or news releases. Apart from the difficulty of increasing the income of online media companies in the area, it is also difficult to find qualified human resources in journalism and marketing. So pragmatically, the majority only see two sources of income, which is local government and Google AdSense. Even so, it is a rough situation for online media that have just started. They are not networked and have inexperienced human resources in producing high quality news, revenue from Google AdSense will be very small because it depends on how many viewers and other things which influence the number of viewers.

The number of visitors, the unique visitors (visitors who visit and watch more than once), and pageviews (number of pages opened) are very dependent on the content presented in the online media. If online media content is often searched for through the Google search engine, of course visitors will often come.

2. Method

Researchers used a qualitative descriptive method. Where the method has the aim of obtaining a deeper picture and holistic or comprehensive understanding, based on a natural setting of the phenomenon to be studied, and the researchers themselves acts as a key instrument to obtain the required data (Yusanto, 2019). The problem approach is carried out qualitatively, with descriptive analysis techniques. The data source is from the results of in-depth interviews with informants who are online journalism practitioners in Pandeglang Regency, Serang City, Tangerang City and Lebak Regency, Banten Province and literature related to the locus of problems in this article. It is hoped that this paper, from a qualitative perspective, can strengthen facts regarding the shift in the meaning of journalism in the online media era which is also an opportunity to develop on an internet basis. The systematics of writing relates to editorial policies, media institutions, media management, human resources, and the target audience of online media in Banten Province. In qualitative research, the level of naturalness is the main thing, the researcher immerses in the problems and conditions that occur in the context of the researcher. Moreover, Researchers are in the field on various sides of events that occur during the observation process (Yusanto, 2019).

In this study, data collection was carried out in natural settings (natural conditions), primary data sources and data collection techniques involved more participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation (Sugiono, 2017). In-depth interviews were conducted with journalists in Tangerang City, Lebak Regency, Pandeglang Regency and Serang City. There were four informants. These four participants were chosen because they met the criteria set by the researcher. The criteria set by the researcher were that all informants were senior journalists in their area and worked for

mainstream online media. The selection of these informants used qualitative research techniques based on opinion (Sugiono, 2015) the samples in qualitative research were not called respondents, but as informants. Informants are used to provide information about the research situation and background conditions. (Moleong, 2006). There are two informants, namely key informants, and ordinary informants 1). Key informants are those who provide clear and reliable information related to the information to be obtained. 2). Ordinary informants are people who can provide in-depth information about the problems that will be studied, but limited to certain matters.

3. Result and Discussion

To answer research problems based on research themes that focus on the Construction of Social Reality Idealism of Journalists in the Digital Age in Banten. Researchers determine two data sources, namely primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data sources researchers get directly from interviews with informants about the main problems. While secondary data in the form of data in the form of written notes.

3.1. The Reality of Journalism in Digita Age

In the current digital era, it is not only journalists who are experiencing a dilemma, but also media companies. The mass media owned by the company must have material strength and solid management as well as human resources that have competencies other than journalists such as the field of Information Technology (IT). Currently, traditional mass media in Indonesia, both national and local, have morphed into online media based on digitalization. Opinion from Mitfahul Adib, who is a research informant engaged in the digital media industry in Tangerang City: "The current development of digital media creates challenges for journalists and media companies. We have been told a lot that the national scale media were closed, which were previously published as print media. Now, only a few are still struggling with printed daily newspapers. An inevitable fact for print media that will not wait long to be hit by the extraordinary digital era where media companies switch from print media to online media with e-paper."

According to national survey data from the Political Indicators survey institute for 2022, regarding media access and digital behavior. Today's society has begun to change, from reading newspapers to the internet by reading online media. The survey results found that 55.3% of respondents accessed the internet most often than other media. Only 1.1% of respondents still read printed newspapers. Meanwhile, those who read printed magazines were 0.1%. This figure shows that now the print media is starting to be abandoned by the people of Indonesia. In the survey, Internet users reached 55.3%.

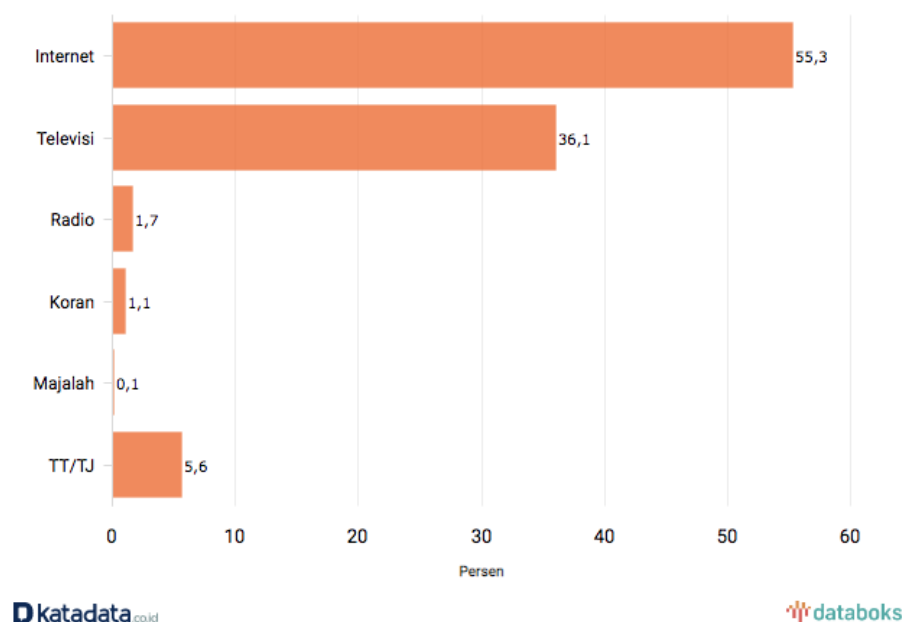


Fig. 1. Media Users in 2022, Souce: National Survey (2022).

Miftahul Adib, explained that, "But again, the segmentation is still there. Previously it was printed paper, but now the model is e-paper, we have presented many of them. The segmentation does exist. Even though e-paper is a necessity through the touch screen of a cell phone or tablet, segmentation can still be separated, this is a challenge to be able to compete with modernization, the printed version of e-paper."

Ca Imin, a Senior Journalist for Local Media in Pandeglang, revealed that problems in the digital era had an impact on the mass media climate in Pandeglang Regency, Banten. The following is the statement of him; "There are challenges in being a journalist in today's digital era. The public is still often confused by the many information channels, not to mention the lack of public literacy skills. Professional journalists and fashion journalists oftentimes get generalized by the public and underestimated. Disaggregated between journalists who are clearly in a mainstream media and media that are not. Online media created for certain purposes only

Online media in areas such as Pandeglang Regency is a problem because it is so easy to create online media with a brand that you like, whether created by individuals or groups. Ca Imin further gave an explanation: "The shift from print to digital media is a global phenomenon that journalists really feel, including the local media Pandeglang. In Pandeglang, there are now many online media companies and journalists operating in the conventional media business. The impact is that there is competition in the shift to digital where this phenomenon also tends to ignore the principles of journalism because several boundaries are often hit for the sake of traffic and pageviews. The large number of online media also causes information chaos because online media is intertwined with social media that implements user-generated content."

Journalists in the traditional and digital era in post-reformation Indonesia work based on the Press Law No. 40 of 1999. In addition, there is a Journalistic Code of Ethics issued by the Press Council in Jakarta, October 29, 2008. Ca Imin explained about the behavior of journalists about the habits of local media journalists who publish a less important news or even less valuable. "Like most fashion journalists who are easily attracted to and easily down, I see fashion style being practiced by local online journalists by exploring trivial news that is easily accessible and easily forgotten by the public. For example, quoting statements or attitudes of public figures that are considered to trigger public comments."

Controversial statements make the news interesting. Even so, this has an impact on society, where it only aims to generate a response in the form of public clamour. Thus, readers comment directly on online news in real time on social media. On the marketing side, print media has been heavily impacted by this digital transformation. Because, in this digital era, people are increasingly reluctant to read newspapers, they prefer to read news from online media or social media.

3.2. The Journalist in the Age of Online Media

In the Appendix to the Press Council regulation Number 1/Regulation-DP/III/2012 concerning Guidelines for reporting on Cyber media. Freedom of opinion, freedom of expression, and freedom of the press are human rights protected by the Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The existence of cyber media in Indonesia is also part of freedom of opinion, freedom of expression, and freedom of the press. Cyber Media has a special character which requires guidelines so that its management can be carried out professionally, fulfilling its functions, rights, and obligations according to Law Number 40 of 1999 concerning the Press and the Journalistic Code of Ethics (Nugroho and Samsuri, 2013).

Aditya, Senior Journalist for Radar Banten, revealed that the Online Media Era in Banten experienced its peak in 2020 until now. The following is Aditya's narrative: "There are many online media. In journalistic work there is a shift in work patterns, where the habits of print journalists writing news change. Today's print journalists are 'forced' to write news in an online style."

As a journalist in online media, strictly speaking, the ethics of writing news must still be carried out properly. If the online media that has been exposed to the Hoax virus is not coordinated by the behaviour of online media journalists who uphold journalistic ethics, then it will result in public trust fading in online media. The following is Aditya's narrative: "The ethics of news writing must be clear. Give space and respect the rights of informants, and do not write fake news. Turn back hoax."

Yusuf Permana, Radar Banten journalist in Lebak, gave his explanation: "Being a journalist in this era of digital transformation is certainly a challenge. There are many pluses and minuses. Plus, our work is getting easier with this era of information disclosure, with just a handful of cell phones we can search and get as much information as possible. It's different from before, where we had to directly meet the interviewees who were somewhere else."

In the era of digitalization, the role of journalists is not as strong and authoritative as during the golden era of print media. Journalists in this era compete with individuals who claim to be citizen journalists. Citizen journalists often have the same role as journalists in several events that are conveyed through social media. Even in the digital era, news from citizen journalists has become a reference for mainstream media journalists in hunting for news. Sometimes tweets on Twitter or posts on Facebook or Instagram make headlines in mainstream media.

Yusuf conveyed his anxiety as a journalist in today's digital era: "However, the downside is that because of today's openness of information, the role of journalists is also increasingly eroded. Because, everyone can be a journalist. Through social media they can become journalists who report certain situations or news. Even though there is a difference, namely the validity or facts in the news from social media, the truth is still doubtful. So that is the reason for the rise in hoax news today."

The challenge for local journalists is to have responsibility as members of the press who must fight hoaxes. The following is Joseph's explanation: "Of course, this is a challenge, where journalists must professionally present valid and accurate news to eradicate hoaxes." Apart from that, the main thing for journalists in online media is idealism in their work. Idealism is the main thing that must be firmly adhered to by today's journalists. Because the journalist's main wealth is idealism as a journalist himself. "I think it depends on principles, I myself will continue to maintain my principles of being a professional journalist who does not lose idealism. I believe, I and my working group friends will continue to be aware of issues circulating in society. In fact, sometimes we take more angles in society on certain issues."

According to Ca Imin, if journalists work according to their aspirations, they will become a trustworthy press, a press that upholds truth rather than clickbait. The following is Ca Imin's statement: "There are standards for journalists in their work starting from the Basic Press Law, journalists' code of ethics, cyber media guidelines to positive law which are quite capable of maintaining professionalism and idealism."

3.3. Presenting the Results

Digital media is one of the developments in social life within the scope of journalism. This is a reality that occurs and cannot be avoided in today's modern life. Banten Province is one of the areas that has experienced rapid development in various fields of life, one of which is the mass media. The growth of the mass media in Banten has been quite rapid since the reform era until now. Many local press publications are published in Banten, from the Pikiran Rakyat group with the Pikiran Rakyat Media Network (PRMN) network to the Jawa Pos Group, through the Jawa Pos News Network (JPNN) and even the Kompas Group with the Media Tribune network.

As time goes by, technology also advances the press industry. So now in Banten, the era of digitalization of media has taken place. Newspapers and magazines decreased in circulation and online media still grew significantly every year instead of during a political year. New online media suddenly appeared with various owners.

For journalists at the Conceptual Reality level of Journalists in the Digital Age, it is a challenge for them at this time to change their way of working to become more technologically literate. Today's journalists are different from journalists in the 2000s, where the routine of news production was carried out after reporting was in the editorial office. But now in the digital era, news production can be done anywhere and at any time without considering distance and time.

The problem is now that online media is popping up at the sub-district level and even in remote villages, because internet access has now entered the deepest areas. Online media that comes with limited management capabilities and qualified journalistic professional standards. Online media created for momentary political interests or the interests of a handful of parties is not intended as the basis of the Mass Communication concept, which is to provide information, educate, entertain, and influence. This is the reality of today's mass media.

Peter. L Berger and Thomas Luckmann through their book entitled *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in The Sociology of Knowledge* (1996). where social processes are described through their actions and interactions, in which individuals create a reality that is subjectively owned and experienced together (Wirawan, 2012). The Social Reality Construction Theory argues that messages in the form of news conveyed by journalists through mass media channels, are something that can be built and shaped by the media for specific purposes. There are motives in every message such as values that want to be instilled in the minds of the audience. Humans basically have the ability to internalize messages cognitively. Cognitive changes in an individual's mind can influence changes in attitudes and behavior in viewing and understanding messages or information.

Journalists in Banten experience internalization in themselves, in which they adjust themselves to the sociocultural world as a human product. In the digital era, journalists in Banten do not necessarily maintain their existence as print media journalists, but are starting to switch to how the digital era works. Journalists no longer use the editorial office as a place to compile word for word so that later it becomes a journalistic product and is conveyed to the public through newspapers. But now work can be done anywhere, regardless of the dead line, every time there is news, journalists immediately produce news and broadcast it as quickly as possible to the general public through online media.

A conceptualization of journalists in the era of online media is that journalists are individuals who have the ability to think and act according to experience based on their knowledge. Journalists also have the freedom to socialize and join journalist communities and build networks in online media journalist working groups. In this case the externalization of journalists in Banten in their work is not only within the scope of the media where they work but also in social life in society as well, by way of association or assembling with colleagues in the profession within organizational ties. In Banten Province, each regional level has a working group of journalists, both at the provincial, city or district levels.

At the level of objectivation, today's journalists in the digital era work independently and are responsible for themselves and their place of work proportionally and maintain the dignity of professionalism along with responsibility as a journalist. Journalists in Banten have the idealism of being journalists by demonstrating work behavior that complies with the Press Law No. 40, works according to the journalistic code of ethics, and complies with the Cyber Media Guidelines issued by the Press Council.

At the Internalization stage, journalists for online media in Banten have a sense of pride as journalists for the mainstream media, because in their work they act as part of conveying the truth and work based on journalistic values. Journalists in Banten at this level are part of "worship" and work as an identity. Where the job as a journalist is to deliver the news. Idealism is maintained in the news production process, starting from planning, seeking information to the news production process. Social control on journalists can be seen in the thoughts of journalists that the journalist's job is to convey the truth who must present things that are objective and in accordance with the facts on the ground, not the other way around by conveying fake news or hoaxes. Social responsibility as a journalist fosters a sense of idealism in the journalists themselves. In addition to idealism, religious values, namely Akhlakul Karimah (having good behavior) are upheld in a journalist, in this case a journalist is responsible for his work, to himself, to the wider community, to the online media where he works and to God Almighty.

3.4. Create Discussion

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4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion, general conclusions can be drawn that the development of internet-based mass media, also known as online media or digital media, is a necessity. This information technology revolution has made news distribution change rapidly and knows no distance and time. The rapid development of this information technology has changed the concept of journalism. Mass media companies must now be able to adapt to developing technology, including the working pattern of journalists. Online journalism requires human resources who understand internet operating systems.

The phenomenon of digitizing information through online media has become a global case and the mass media in Banten Province, especially Pandeglang and Lebak Regencies, are also practicing an internet-based work system. The largest conventional media companies in Banten, Radar Banten and Banten Raya, which are part of the Jawa Pos Group, are also transforming into digital media, although they have not completely abandoned print media. The results of this research show that conventional media journalists are required to be able to adjust to advances in information technology. Journalists in Banten Province in their work still adhere to the Basic Press Law Number 40 of 1999, the journalistic code of ethics, and cyber media guidelines. In addition, journalists in Banten still uphold professionalism by prioritizing ideaslime.

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