

Media Literacy in Information Chaos Era: Qualitative Study Bandung Literacy Activist

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Abstract: *Media must get control in order that the practice is not authoritative. In the context, when it is in an individualist form, it tends to produce information without considering the norm. In the individualist characteristic, all the information flow spread massively with the tendency for thick interest. The research arranged to find out literacy activities in this chaotic era, using qualitative descriptive methods to uncover the minds of literacy activists in the information chaos era. The aim is to find out the form of literacy in accordance with the chaotic conditions of information and literacy activities in growing public awareness in information management. The results showed that literacy forms carried out through the introduction of media (media knowledge) concerning the credibility of the media and recognizing the nature of mainstream and non-mainstream media. Another platform is digital literacy and management of public information. Meanwhile, to raise public awareness is done by producing digital content in anticipation of hoax news, making fact check content, media practices through radio broadcasts and websites, introduction to news construction.*

Keywords: *media, literacy, chaos information*

INTRODUCTION

Conventional media is on the verge of collapse. Replace the variety of internet-based media. Recent discoveries in the communications technology sector, replacing the public information base that for centuries served the mainstream media (print and electronic). The media must change the platform into the internet to continue to take part in providing information services. According to Muhtadi (2016), through online media, an information revolution is taking place.

According to Andoko in Kusuma (2016), the threat of the internet to print media, is indeed real. As paper prices become expensive and the print media industry becomes increasingly not easy to survive, the choice for print

media inevitably has to transform itself to master the development of digital technology that has, is, and will happen. Television managers also experienced a similar threat. According to Wishnutama, online media is both a threat and an opportunity. Television can exploit the potential of digital online or internet-based broadcasting as an opportunity. (Kusumaningrum, economic news on October, 11th, 2017, downloaded Saturday 30 May 2020, at 11:25 WIB) the transformation process into the form of the internet requires various adjustments, given the internet medium has a distinctive character. According to Karman (2017), the characteristics of internet-based media are digital, convergence, manipulable, networkable, and demassification.

This radical change at the media level happened because of the era of disruption. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), the term disruption has uprooted from its roots. The disruption era delivered by the development of industrialization phase 4.0, brought a revolution in communication technology that converged media into digital platforms by integrating text, images, sound, graphics into a platform. According to Jenkins in Rhamdani (2008), media convergence is the flow of content (information, images, audio, video, at so on.) to various media platforms. Collaboration between several media industries, as well as the behavior of the audience who uses different media to consume content.

The development of communication technology weakens the function of mass media. According to Lasswell in Little John and Foss (2011), the utility of the media provides information about the environment, observation (surveillance), provides options to solve problems, relationships (correlation), and socialization and education known as transmission (transmission) that can not be carried out. The role of delivering information is lost. Strict selection through internal mechanisms by presenting the role of a gatekeeper, according to Manca (1999), illustrates the function of an agent that facilitates the information process in society replaced by amateur hands who prioritize their narcissistic ego. It shows that now information is no longer owned by journalists or is media monopoly. But it is divided into individual internet account holders.

Individual participation in the production and sharing of information accommodated by new media groups consisting of blogs, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, twitter, youtube, and other application systems. According to McQuail (2010), new media have

the main elements of digitalization and convergence. The internet is proof of convergence because it combines several other media functions such as audio, video, and text. According to Nurudin, internet-based applications allow everyone to interact and explore throughout the world by sharing various events they see in a short time to different network application systems. The ease of use of social media eliminates the mechanism that becomes an information management procedure. According to Mandbergh in Nasrullah (2015), social media is a medium that facilitates cooperation between users that produce content (user-generated content).

On the one hand, it is advantageous because the information can receive in real-time, and on the other hand, it is detrimental because of the construction of events that presented without regard to the norm. According to Berger and Luckmann in Bungin (2008), the social construction of mass media is on the rapid and extensive circulation of information so that social construction takes place very quickly and should be equitable. The constructed reality also forms mass opinion means the audience tends to be a priori at the mass opinions and tend to be cynical.

The picture of the new media power has become the hallmark of the information society. According to Fukuyama (1999), the information society is a society that is conditioned by the power of information tends to respect the values that held in high regard in democracy, namely freedom (freedom) and equality (equality). Such community characteristics emphasize the new civilization, one of which is marked by the chaotic situation of information. According to Fitzgerald (2014), information chaos regarding information storage. Chaotic situations also occur because information values are controversial and contain an element of bias. According to Al-Zastrouw in

Sobur (2015), the degree of media bias influenced by three things: the capacity and quality of media managers, the strong interests that are playing in social reality, and the critical level of society. Based on his understanding, according to Schramm in Rakhmat (2018), information as everything that reduces uncertainty or reduces the number of possible alternatives in a situation. It is in line with the notion of literacy that aims to make light of information. Although according to Iriantara (2017), literacy means the ability to read and write. If applied to understand the news, it will provide guidance. When you get inaccurate information, it will be ignored. According to Rachmiatie and Suryadi (2009), media literacy is a term used as an answer to the rise of people views about the effects and impacts arising from the contents of mass media that tend to be negative and unexpected.

METHOD

This research uses descriptive method with qualitative procedures. According to Mulyana (2010), research methods are specific techniques in research. Meanwhile, according to Creswell (2017), the qualitative process still relies on data in the form of text and images, has some peculiar steps in the analysis of the data, and are sourced from different research strategies. To uncover the phenomenon that is studied, this research uses a type of case study research conducted on a unified system in the form of programs, activities, events, or groups of individuals engaged in literacy.

The selection of informants was carried out intentionally, in other words, the researchers established informants consisting of activists both engaged in community organizations and the government, in this case, the West Java Provincial Government and the Bandung City Government that were attached to

their duties and obligations as information controllers. The interviews were conducted directly with the informants by face to face and supported by the use of Whatsapp application facilities, if the data obtained still requires further deepening. The data obtained from the informants has thought to based on an organized program of media literacy activities that systematically scheduled.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Media literacy activities directed as an effort to foster competence in entering the information ecosystem that is already in a chaotic situation. Information in the form of text, sound, images, and graphics moves circularly from one information channel to another with relatively fast and numerous frequency of occurrence. Information that spread is full of various contents and values that are truth, hoax, or slander. The information source also varied to accommodate personal aspirations to the organized ones. The facts in the form of data from observations and interviews based on questions asked to informants. The question raised consists of literacy forms that are appropriate to the information chaos situation and literacy activities in fostering public awareness in information management.

Forms of Literacy in the Information Chaos Era

The information situation that is at a chaotic level occurs because of bursts of news from various media platforms. Diverse content, from the objective to the dimension of slander, are integrated into one information channel. Without being able to be prevented, the information entered the entire media space. Information sources consist of channels owned by individuals, institutions, organizations, or media that managed in the form of corporate, and media that relate to certain interests.

When the loss of the gatekeeper's role becomes the situation now, information, or news spread without going through a strict selection. Likewise, without competence, at least every member of the public who has a media account, is free to oppose and share their opinions. As a result, the face of the media is increasingly chaotic by increasingly biased elements of value. Recognizing this reality, fostering awareness among groups, organizations, and governments to create an immune system for the public is not easily affected by issues that scattered across various media channels. This system manifested in the form of literacy that aims to provide education in the hope of increasing ability and create a competitive environment for the media. These forms of literacies are packaged in a directed movement to give community preparedness to face information chaos situations. According to literacy activists who are members of the Metrum Foundation, Ahmad Nada, the form of literacy that he developed is media knowledge by emphasizing the credibility of the media.

“Media knowledge is directed as the main form of literacy activities held at the Metrum Foundation. We think that media knowledge is a basic knowledge and must be mastered by the public so that it can not be influenced easily by the news and information received from the media. With the media knowledge, it will become the resilience of the community, so that when they exposed to information or news, the first thing to do is to find the source of the disseminator, or the media. If the media is not credible, they will ignore it.”

This form of literacy leads to public knowledge of the media. It is in line with the method used. In his work, Ahmad Nada explained the media on various platforms. Next, direct the knowledge of

literacy participants to the credibility of the media. This credibility correlates with the quality and capacity of the manager. Credible media managed by editorial crews who have adequate quality and competence, have a knowledge base on science, principle, and journalistic ethics. The basis of this competency used in compiling, producing and disseminating news, so that the media does not cause information chaos. Ahmad Nada provides a simple guide to distinguish credible and non-credible media.

First, refer to the Press Council verification. While quoting data released by the Press Council, around 47,000 media outlets were circulating and scattered in all media spaces. Of these, the verified media only numbered about 2000, it remaining 45,000 were still unverified. According to him, all print media verified by the council as well as electronic media. While not all internet media. Verified internet media The verification process carried out by the Press Council is mandated by Law 40 of 1999 concerning the Press article 15 paragraph 2 (e).

Second is the practical fact that the media are mainstream and non-mainstream. The mainstream media has a long culture of going through various stages in news management and taking a strict internal mechanism before publishing news to the public. In the mainstream media, there is a management structure that emphasizes their respective duties, from journalists, editors to editors-in-chief. The task carried out as a structure is as a gatekeeper whose function is to select the news from the feasibility and spread. Unlike the case with non-mainstream media that has no structure and does not recognize the stages of coverage. Ahmad Nada continues:

“This is one of my literacy materials with the Metrum team, that the objective is how people can

live during increasingly crowded information. In my opinion, literacy is not just the ability to read about the texts presented in the media. It is more than that is how the public understands the character of the media, the nature of the media, and more specifically is who is behind the media. After understanding, it finally becomes understood and becomes a system of information security in facing this chaotic era.”

The next form of literacy is digital literacy. As the name implies, the target is online media. Activists who carry out digital literacy activities assume that online-based media include social media are the source of the emergence of false news or information or hoaxes. Literacy is carried out every day, with the production of content following developing issues to open public knowledge of this internet-based media. At the time when information of the pandemic Covid-19 milling about fills the media space, the content directed not only to strengthen the right view of the attitude that must be carried out, as well as the production of content that aims to counter misleading information.

Educational content is information that can guide the public in dealing with symptoms that arise. This form of digital literacy is a product of the West Java Provincial Government (Pemprov), through Diskominfo with the specific unit named Jabar Saber (Clean Sweep) Hoax (JSH) (FIGURE 1). This unit formed with a structured organization, headed by a coordinator, in charge of 1 facilitator, and ten staff. All of these staff divided into social media data administration staff, fact-checking, strategic content, and graphic and video design teams. JSH Coordinator, Retha Aquila Rahadian explained:

“This is the scope of JSH’s activities, both in online and offline

formats. For online targets targeting people who have become social media followers of JSH. While the offline focuses on activities of fostered information volunteers such as RTIK (Information and Communication Technology Volunteers) and KIM (Community Information Group), students, and students. Especially for the target students and students are packaged through the Anti Hoax Ambassador and Literacy Ambassador programs with a target of 27 Regencies/Cities in West Java.”

Retha continues the agenda of digital literacy was related to efforts to strengthen the resilience of rural communities by rolling out the Anti Hoax Village program plan with the pattern of providing skills through the ToT (trainer on trainee). The ToT provided media knowledge and information to rural youth leaders. Through these young leaders, she hoped that they be able to assist the public in examining news that is not true and invalid. Thus, villagers are not exposed to hoax news easily. When carrying out its task of titrating the public about digital media, JSH socializes its function and presence in the community of West Java. Last year the socialization involved district/city Diskominfo, formed

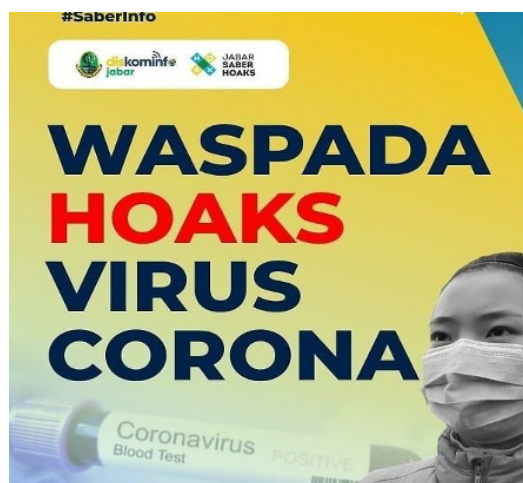


FIGURE 1. JSH products remind the public about the corona virus hoax

local ICT and KIM volunteers, this year focusing attention on students. Besides, collaboration with journalists as a partner checking deals with outstanding issues.

“Another mission that is designed by JSH is to move to counter negative content with positive content. For this step, it will collaborate with content creators in West Java, and build a belief that positive media content will produce interesting material if packaged creatively. Then is the preparation of JSH in the face of simultaneous local elections that will be held in 8 cities and regencies in West Java, one of which is collaborating with West Java KPU to socialize Hoax Free Election.”

A similar form was carried out by the City Government (Pemkot) of Bandung. Viewing that digital media can be a source of problems, the Bandung City Government under the Information and Information Control Section of the Office of Communication and Information (Diskominfo) of Bandung City has shifted the focus of activities towards media literacy. Literacy activities that began in 2017, together with the increasingly chaotic world of information. The form of its activities is through counseling to control information and provide knowledge about information circulating in the media. The knowledge provided is about making news construction, news sources, to the direction and tendency of the news.

According to the Head of Information and Information Dissemination and Control Section of Bandung City, Tany Rosada, the current information situation is different from the previous period. When the media is increasingly converging will indirectly change the role and position of society. Previously it was only as a consumer, so now it has turned into a producer.

Nowadays, people can produce news or information through social media. It causes more information chaos.

From its identification, this chaotic information can have the consequences for vulnerable groups. These are school students or students. So with the establishment of this circle, literacy is directed at students. Furthermore, to strengthen the student information base, literacy is also directed at students' parents. It is the role of parents as a controller and control of information. If parents already understand about the media, especially social media, it's easy to control their children's media activities. Parents also become a means of consulting findings that are not understood by the child.

“The parents are expected to be able to provide information about the benefits as well as the dangers of using gadgets. Targeting school students and their parents will at least be the first safety in the family. Thus the literation children are at a minimum about the benefits as well as the dangers of gadgets, and parents can control children's media activities.”

Tanny continued, if students' media activities are for good purposes, it will provide great benefits. Conversely, if it use for unfavorable purposes, it will have other consequences. To anticipate the bad impact, according to Tanny, literacy also emphasizes the use of gadgets to be used in things that are more useful and can increase the ability of school students, for example making a video or short film and then competing. Another benefit of the gadget can be used to create a vlog that is included in the race.

On the other hand, activists of the Bandung City Student Literacy Movement develop a form of literacy by collaborating with journalists in delivering information and media knowledge. The benefit of this movement is considered

appropriate in peeling the media from the side of the media actors. The public can know the techniques, methods, and ways of the media system in formulating and compiling news. Thus the audience can understand the direction and tendencies of the media.

“This form, in my opinion, will be immediately understood by the public because we explain it directly. For example, how news arranged, made, and distributed to the public. By understanding the initial process of making the information, it will comprehend the direction and dealing with the media,” said journalist and literacy activist who is always invited by the Student Literacy Movement, Asep Awaludin

Literacy Activities in Fostering Public Awareness

Literacy activities intended ultimately to raise public awareness about danger, ignorance of information, or sharing information that is not filtered first. At this level of awareness, literacy must touch the aspects of people’s cognition by highlighting the source that is the cause of the chaos of people’s thinking. In this realm, JSH establishes the major source of digital media literacy, so its activities produce educational content for digital platforms. The production content is not only intended as an educational tool, but also counter hoax content and fake news in the form of digital displays with the Instagram application format containing fact checks for the publication of misguided information. JSH Coordinator, Retha Aquila Rahadian explained:

“We do more literacy in social media with the production of educational content. This literacy is what we call digital literacy. So we still have many activities on social media (online) compared to offline. As for the literacy format, we try through workshops by inviting students, media,

and communication volunteers. From the results of the workshop, we get input and evaluation, the results we refer to the digital literacy strategy going forward.”

While the public awareness activities carried out by the City of Bandung Diskominfo, through face to face with the participants. The production of media content, such as rules, and effects that would be derived from the use of the media were presented in the meeting. This knowledge is about posting posts and sharing information to stay following applicable norms.

“These students are usually among those actively using social media. They must be equipped with an understanding of the value of information. It should also be explained that the posts received by one of them, for example, containing news that has value, and then spread through the groups that he follows. Of course, this will get an unfavorable response from members of the group. If, for example, the news disseminator does not accept criticism or suggestions submitted by other members, it will eventually lead to an argument even further that may violate the ITE Law. It is what we must anticipate. Including certain content that can be misleading and contains pornography. “

Tanny realizes that school students are usually reluctant to take part in literacy activities that packaged in the form of counseling. To that end, to get a positive response from all participants, straitening strategy through a thematic approach. In other words, themes made as interesting and as close as possible to the target. For example, in 2017, the theme for the activity is Incapap or utilization of the internet in a creative, intelligent, and productive manner, and in 2020, which is an activity from 2019, the theme is

Preparing for the Tough Generation in the Digital Age.

The literacy activities is creating public awareness that was initiated by Ahmad Nada by conducting direct practice to participants with direct meetings through literacy classes. After the participants understand the media, then they are directed to practice the media. This media practice aims to have the participants have the skills to write news and spread it through the Metrum website and so that the participants feel when they are announcers on Metrum radio. This media practice gives participants an understanding of how to treat news or information.

“To keep the literacy process from having a positive effect, I limit the number of participants. But from here, I always emphasize to participants who have participated in literacy at our foundation, can spread their knowledge to others. Besides, the activities in our foundation are quite long, participants will take part in a whole series of literacy activities for three months. The participants will be trained by mentors who are prepared by journalists.”

With this knowledge and the increasing number of people, this will encourage managers and media owners to improve their ability to manage information. In a situation when the community has a high level of media literacy, then media managers will also increase the values of information that was disseminated.

The statements of the informants are answers to questions raised through the research guidelines. The information is the data of research results. Then these data are analyzed based on the steps and procedures established by carrying out the reduction, display data, and conclusions. Meanwhile, documentation analysis used

as a compliment and comparison of data collected as secondary data from various sources, both print and electronic.

CONCLUSION

The presence of new media changes the order of public information. At first, the information that took place in one direction, now widely shared in individualistic forms. The changes in the platform and pattern of media production, changing information from the grip of the industrialists into the hands of individuals. As a result, the appearance and appearance of the media become chaotic due to the mixing of various values of information, between the valid and the hoaxes, which have news value and nuances of subjective opinion.

This information chaos harms the public, thus inspiring activists to create a media literacy movement. Activists believe that people must understand the media correctly so as not to be fooled by the information it receives. However, the forms of literacy activities carried out by each activist are different. Activists who are members of the Metrum Foundation emphasize literacy forms on media knowledge so that they can further understand the media's credibility. While JSH emphasizes the form of digital literacy following its social media goals, Diskominfo of Bandung City has the management and control of public information to introduce gadgets and their benefits. The Literacy Movement Community Students form their literacy movements by directly targeting their goals, the media. In literacy activities to create public awareness, activists raise awareness about the media by producing digital content in anticipation of hoax news, countering fake news with the fact check content, practicing pause through radio broadcasts and websites, and activities to provide understanding regarding news construction by making

news.

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