

# Urgency Of Digital Literation in the Central Segregation Of Viral Journalism Versus Data Journalism

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**Abstract**— Based on statistical data, in 2018 the number of online media in Indonesia reached 43,000 and only around 2,400 have been successfully verified by the Press Council. The proliferation of online media in this digital era has created segregation or gaps that have given rise to new challenges in the world of journalism, namely the struggle for the existence of data journalism and viral journalism in Indonesia. "Euphoria of viral journalism is represented by the collective inability to distinguish between informative and speculative; between proportional and excessive; between those containing lies and those that are worth considering," said Tom Nicholas in *The Death of Expertise* (2017). [1] In the midst of the intense battles of the two new schools of journalism, the public especially millennial generation needs to be equipped with sufficient media literacy education to avoid the biased information presented by viral journalism which among its features and characteristics is to prioritize aspects of speed over accuracy, sensationalism and often twisting issues. This study portrays digital literacy education efforts carried out by the Office of Communication and Information (Diskominfo) of Bandung City under the direction of the Mayor of Bandung Oded M Danial. Using qualitative methods, the authors maximize primary and secondary data and conduct in-depth observations and interviews with a number of informants such as the Mayor of Bandung, the Head of the Office of Communication and Information Technology, and several education participants.

**Keywords**— *Segregation, Viral Journalism, Data Journalism, Media Literacy*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Entering the digital era 4.0 marked by robotic dominance, artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things has changed all aspects of life in the world. Not only does it change lives, it even reaches the point of threatening existing living systems with its disruptive character. The era of disruption is a period where various lines can experience changes and movements very quickly. The Big Indonesian Dictionary explains that the term disruption has the meaning of being uprooted from its roots or of a fundamental change.

This theory was first popularized by Harvard Professor Clayton M Cristensen when researching the disk drive industry and more popularized in his book titled the *Innovator's Dilemma* published in 1997. This theory explains the phenomenon where an innovation can change things by introducing simplicity, comfort, accessibility and affordability.

Disruption has eroded all lines of life, ranging from the most trivial things to the most complicated things in life, including the problem of media and journalism. Digital technology now allows anyone to play any role. Now every community member with his citizen journalism can 'do' journalistic work. Cover and preach everything he wants, so that this virtual world is not only flooded with information but also 'news'. But of course, because the news is not made by experts, what happens is the process of preparing news that ignores the principles, rules, code of ethics and journalism professionalism standards. So mushrooming journalists are mushrooming who degrade journalists who have earned professional certification with difficulty.

All the conveniences, freedoms and independence promised by the "internet of things" have distorted the public's understanding of the definition and meaning of journalistic professionalism. Thanks to the technological innovation of the device, various news can be accessed anytime and anywhere for 24 hours without stopping by all levels of society. Newspapers and magazines and even television news are now on their way to total extinction, because everything that lies behind the presence of these media, is increasingly available in cyberspace in a way that is far easier, cheaper and more comfortable in accordance with their personal preferences. The availability of internet of things and gadget users are like supply and demand that need each other.

The two supply-demands are then brought together in the almost unlimited 'hyper market' in cyberspace. So conventional media which maintain their idealism and their bitterness despite being talkative about converting themselves to the digital world, are still losing interest. [2]

But in the midst of loneliness enthusiasts, adherents of professional journalism continue to strive to maintain its existence by developing data journalism. In Indonesia alone Data Journalism was only introduced in 2016. Rooted in the investigative journalism model, in 2016 the Tempo investigation team, which is also an ICIJ (The International Consortium for Investigative Journalist) partner, started the data journalism approach in the 'Panama Papers' case (Panama Papers). A total of 11.5 million confidential documents were made by service providers from Panama, Mossack Fonseca. The 2.6 terabytes document was given by an anonymous source to a German newspaper, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in August 2015 at ICIJ. These leaked documents were then

distributed to and analyzed by approximately 400 journalists in 107 media organizations in more than 80 countries. In Indonesia, the Tempo investigation team is the only media organization partner involved in disclosing this case. [3]

This data journalism system was introduced to the public in response to the rise of false journalism, known as viral journalism, as a result of the dominance of the internet of things in the world of journalism. Viral journalism is journalism created by citizens, one of which is the priority of the aspect of speed rather than accuracy, sensationalism and often twisting issues. The climax is the spread of hoaxes among gadget users.

This condition is made worse by the publication of 43,000 online media and only around 2,400 media have been successfully verified by the Press Council, while the remaining 40,600 online media circulate online and consumed by around 150 million gadget users, the majority of which are millennial generation.

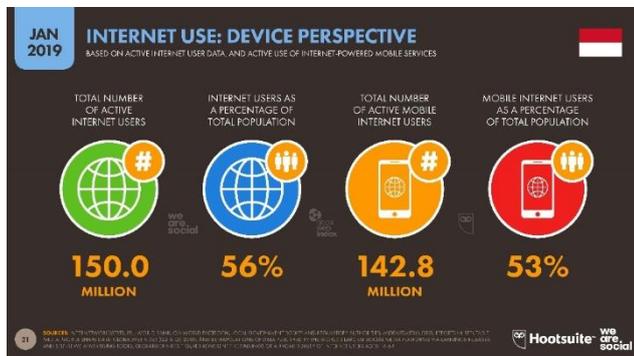


Fig. 1. Device internet uses in Indonesia

The presence of online media seems to take advantage of the lack of legal regulation in online media. This was justified by Law Minister Yasona Laoly, who said "indeed the legal vacuum in online media inevitably has to be immediately filled properly. I agree that this should immediately be discussed with the Ministry of Communication and Information. The regulation governing cyber media in Indonesia according to Yasona, is a very important thing. Because regulations are needed to ensure the principle of fairness, the principle of accountability for journalistic and business products, and provide legal certainty," Yasona said.

In addition to the Press Law, there is currently an ITE (Information and Electronic Transaction) Act that touches the world of cyber media. However, the ITE Law is not a legal product that specifically regulates cyber media.

This condition creates a very extraordinary gap between the idealism of data journalism on the one hand and the pragmatism of viral journalism on the other. How strong data journalists can survive in the midst of the onslaught of viral journalism that gets so much advertising support and the support of millions of fans. Only history will prove it.

This is also a concern for academics and media observers about the future of our mass media and also how to protect readers from exposure to hoax news and bad news. Not finished homework to protect the public from the negative exposure to television media, now new jobs are emerging how to fortify them from exposure to tens of thousands of online media that are potential to spread hoax news.

Therefore, the academic community is now echoing the urgency of the digital media literacy movement for the internet user community, especially the millennial generation who are very vulnerable to the influence of the internet. This research records and analyzes the movement of digital media literacy conducted by the Office of Communication and Information of the Bandung City Government in order to educate internet users in several circles. [4]

**II. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study used qualitative research methods. This method is used because the case under study requires in-depth analysis related to the planning and steps of digital literacy education carried out by the Office of Communication and Information of Bandung City Government. This research uses a Case Study approach. The case studies method is very appropriate to be used to understand certain phenomena in a certain place and at a certain time. [5]

For data collection, the writer uses a depth interview technique which is a rechecking tool or proof of information or information obtained previously. In addition to using in-depth interview techniques are also optimized observation in the environment of the Office of Communications and Information Technology Bandung City Government.

**III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Before discussing the gap between data journalism and viral journalism, it is necessary to discuss thoroughly what are the differences between the two. Data journalism is indeed new in Indonesia. In accordance with developments and technological advancements, journalism has also undergone a rapid transformation from the era of press machine technology, broadcast journalism to online journalism. In the digital age, there is an explosion of information and data in the form of text, images, sounds and videos that are very diverse.

The concept of big data basically refers to the availability of data sets in such large quantities that it is not possible to manage them without using certain applications. Special technology applications are needed to access, manipulate, analyze and present data. The influence of the phenomenon of big data on the practice of journalism is quite significant. In the world of media, the development of big data also influences the development of new variants of journalism that are based on data. This new journalistic practice uses data as a tool to report events that occur in the community, raise important issues, and control efforts against the ruling government.

Today, internet users are very spoiled by the ease of accessing information through search engines. In 2017 alone, the data search engine, Google processes more than 3 trillion data per day and more than 195,000 data sets are available at data.gov.

The term data journalism itself was first used by a software developer (software developer) in the Washinton Post newspaper, Adrian Holovaty in 2006 which revealed how the data is organized and organized by the media. Furthermore, the use of the term data journalism began to expand and became the main discourse in 2014 with the emergence of online news media that carried data journalism formats such as QZ.com from Atlantic Media Group and Graphic from the Washington Post etc.

Data journalism is defined as journalism based on big data sets. According to Sculsze, data journalism is an activity for collecting, analyzing and preparing digital information for journalistic publication purposes.

In Indonesia, there are already many media that use data journalism approaches such as Tempo.co, Kompas.co, independant.id, beritagar.id, tirto.id, katadata.co.id, alinea.id etc. All of them launch infographic channels and visual data that are more varied such as pie diagram, hexagonal, graph etc. Developing data journalism is indeed not simple and requires special skills and requires an in-depth analysis process that relatively requires a relatively long time. While in online media speed is sometimes needed instantaneously. Moreover, in our country there is still minimal access to official data from the government. Although given the ease of accessing data, usually there are still obstacles in the quality of data.

So data journalism places more emphasis on the process of preparing media content that is more accountable rather than on media distribution. The media is the same as using online, but the contents are more weighty, structured and uphold journalistic principles. And this is what distinguishes it from viral journalism that is carried by pragmatic online media whose numbers are increasingly mushrooming.

Viral journalism is a new term to describe how the impact of the speed and breadth of information dissemination can overcome the true dominance of journalism. So that is where the segregation arises (gap) that is very high between the two. The segregation also created a battleground by placing viral journalism as opposed to living through the process of commodification of information. Viral journalism fights for public sympathy and advertising potential in a media capitalization climate so that it can grow rapidly in a relatively short period of time.

Viral journalism is characterized by several characters; First, prioritizing speed over accuracy. In order to fulfill the curiosity of the public, viral journalism is demanded to appear faster even though it has to sacrifice the principle of accuracy. Second, truth in the making in the journalistic process. Third, the tendency to highlight the element of sensationality as the main menu. Fourth, the news often prioritizes centrality in a particular area. Fifth, often practice the workings of public relations by twisting an issue. Sixth, the reporting of viral journalism often ignores the values set out in the Journalistic Code of Ethics (KEJ).

Thus viral journalism is no different than hearsay journalism with a model of reporting that does not reveal the veil of events but instead leads to viralism. So it is very thick as a fake journalism. Finally what happens is that journalism is only used as an instrument of hegemony to blackmail people or institutions, the interests of officials, local governments or companies.

It is not too difficult to actually detect a media with viral journalism, there are some easily recognizable features including not having legal status, unclear or even fake editorial address, not including the name of the media responsible, tentative and temporary publication, the language used does not meet journalistic standards and tends to violate journalistic code of ethics.

Viral journalism journalists are usually filled with people who are not professional and do not have knowledge, skills and experience in the world of journalism let alone have an academic background. They are a group of people with the status of 'sudden journalists' who only become targets of market capitalization and economic profit alone without considering the ethics, requirements and standards of the press company.

As a result of competition between the two streams of journalism has resulted in a very large gap (segregation). And who become victims of this unfortunate situation are internet users who are mostly inhabited by millennials. So to minimize these negative impacts, it is necessary to have a digital literacy movement for millennials who are vulnerable to exposure to hoax-charged issues. Because they do not have the epective selection power to sort out all the information that hit them.

That is the background of the birth of digital literacy programs from the Office of Communication and Information of the Bandung City Government as a form of government concern in minimizing the gap between the two streams of journalism.

The following are some of the strategic steps of the Office of Communication and Information Technology of Bandung City Government:

*1) Prepare a formidable generation in the digital age.*

This activity was attended by 100 representatives of parents of students at SD Kartika Siliwangi Bandung on Thursday (2/20/20) and was opened by the Dissemination of the Department of Communication and Information of Bandung City Dra. Elly Eliani, M.Sc. According to Elly, parents must have the expertise to face the digital era, so as to be able to prepare their children to face the rapid development of information and communication technology, such as how to communicate with children, how to protect children's gadgets, how to make agreements with children, and so on, because children are vulnerable to exposure to negative content such as pornography, cyber-bully, etc.

The parents are also expected to be able to provide counseling to the surrounding community, especially parents about how to use social media that is good and right so that it can create technology wise children. Because the key is in the parents who supervise, along with the hope that our cooperation will be maintained and even improved to be better in supporting Bandung City that is superior, comfortable, prosperous and religious.

**TOT Bandung Information Group**

The Office of Communication and Information of the City of Bandung in the field of dissemination of the community information partnership section held a Training of Trainers (TOT) Institutional Strengthening and Role of Community Information Groups (Kim) Village in Bandung on Thursday - Friday 12-13 March 2020 in the blue sea rerost hotel Pangandaran The activity was attended and opened by the Secretary of the Communication and Information Office of the City of Bandung, Dicky Wishnumulya R and was attended by Participants Composed of the Chairperson of the Urban Community Information Group throughout the City of Bandung.

Dicky conveyed in his remarks "in facing the digital era through its tasks and functions, especially in the delivery of development information, the City of Bandung Communication and Information continues to encourage and develop this community participation, one of which is through community information groups (KIM) formed and managed from, by and for the community which is oriented towards targeted, correct, honest and impartial information services, empowers people according to their potential and needs, and becomes a government partner".

### 3. Strengthening KIM Institutions in 51 *Kelurahan* throughout the City of Bandung

This activity presents speakers who are very competent in their fields such as Moch. Latief Faidah, Chair of ICT Volunteers in Bandung and Dra. Hj. Ati Suprihatin, Media Practitioners are expected with this institutional strengthening KIM is able to play this important role so that the people of Bandung have a better understanding of how to obtain information in the current digital era.

The Dissemination Division of the Bandung City Communication and Information Office held an Institutional Strengthening Activity and the Role of Community Information Groups in 51 *Kelurahan* throughout the City of Bandung at the Mitra Hotel. [6].

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The fight and competition between data journalism and viral journalism will continue along with the increasingly

rapid progress of the digital world and will give birth to an ever-widening gap or segregation. Of course, the academics need to strengthen the existence of data journalism in order to uphold journalism professionalism. In addition, there is a need for a massive digital media literacy movement for millennials to protect them from attacks by viral journalism or hoaxes laden with news. The Office of Communications and Information Technology of Bandung City Government has implemented digital literacy through three excellent programs, namely Preparation of tough generation in the digital era, TOT of Bandung City Information Group and Strengthening KIM Institutions in 51 *Kelurahan* throughout the City of Bandung.

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