

Online Journalism and the Contestation of Interest in the Post-Truth Society of Indonesia

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Abstract: The progress of digital media is transforming the nature of Indonesian media, especially in journalism. The individual citizen can influence a lot, while the internet encourages new forms of media journalism that are more immediate and interactive. Journalists shared journalistic activities through social media or new kinds of media. The economics of journalism and the Citizen's Media struggles as audiences migrate online. The shrinkage of newsrooms creates concern for the future of journalism and truth. The revolution requires us to re-think our assumptions. What can ethics mean for a profession that must provide instant news and analysis, where everyone with a modem is a publisher? The media revolution has created ethical tensions. If journalism and online media have a global impact, what are its global responsibilities? Should media ethics reformulate its aims and norms so as to guide the media and truth now that it has a global reach and impact? What would that look like?

1 INTRODUCTION

Communication experts are now beginning to agree that the modern era is marked by the information age. The mastery and hegemony of information places power as a logical consequence. The prediction and analysis conducted by Alvin Toffler (1980) stated that the era of humanity is divided into three major eras, namely the era of agrarian society, industrial society and information society. This has been and is becoming a common fact that will not be recognised. Don Tapscott (1996), an observer of the development of information and communications technology in the United States, in his book 'The Digital Economy, Promise and Peril in the Age of Networked Intelligence', suggests that the development of the world economy is undergoing a shift from the dynamics of an industrial society based on steel, vehicles and roads to the dynamics of a new economic society formed by silicon, computers and networks. Some of the adagios that have been expressed by observers of the development of modern communication show that information has become one of the constitutive elements in society.

Straubhar (2002) stated that an information society is a society that has political and social economic activity through the process of the production, consumption and distribution of information. An information society is characterised by a high intensity of exchange and through the use of communication technology (Straubhar, 2002). It can be said that information becomes a basic requirement, which it can be expressed with the phrase "information is the lifeblood that sustains political, social and business decisions". Society has begun to open up with the development and dynamics of new media and global communications. Production turnover, consumption and information distribution are increasingly experienced and owned by a new global community system that is powered by economic strength and expansion, global information system networks and supported by technology.

Technology, in the development of the production, consumption and distribution of the flow of information, plays an important role. The role of technology in the process of information massification occurs when technological results help to change the pattern of communication that is bound by space and time into a pattern of unlimited

information communication. Technology is basically good, so it is not surprising if there is a change from traditional mass media into new mass media. Ultimately, new media in the context of technology and globalisation undergoes complex changes. Globalisation is one of the most important factors in the industry and in relation to media technology.

2 THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS

Over the past three decades (1970-2000), global media has gone through major technological and structural transformations leading to significant penetrations of the national media systems. This has taken place through direct broadcast satellites (DBS), low orbit satellites, digital telephony and the internet, as well as micro-media such as audiotapes, videotapes, CDs, computer laptops, palmtops, and wireless telephony and the Internet. Global communication has virtually created a world without borders. While commercial systems dominate the content of news and entertainment, government systems attempt — often unsuccessfully — to control the information flows through censorship within their own territorial sovereignties. Three technological trends characterise the global media, including digitalisation, convergence, and miniaturisation. The technological transformations have led to three structural consequences, including globalisation, localisation, and fragmentation. Structural changes have, in turn, led to three new cultural patterns; globalisation, tribalisation, and democratisation.

The age of media digitalisation was established through the promise of convergence between all forms of media, relying on digital codes. Digital formation storing and circulating information has become basic information in computers, mass media and telecommunications. It can be said the digital format is seen of as the basis of world media. In the book titled 'The Internet Challenge to Television', Bruce Owens (2000) stated that through digitalisation, the Internet will be all, and television, telephone, and computers will all converge on the Internet. Henry Jenkins (2006) and Friedrich Kittler (1999) said that a platform of digital media is the basis for the convergence of discrete kinds of media for which digital code is enabled as a generic language. Jenkins argued that the interoperability of new media or platform convergence can provide much more participation in the media if made to work. He argued that there was not isolation between the old audiences and new. The new

audience of convergent and digitalised media are more socially connected.

In the economic perspective, Brian Winston (2005) stated that digital media technology has become a rhetorical justification for wider deregulations in the communications and media industries, downplaying capital accumulation as a cause. For Winston, economical mergers and takeovers are not just about plundering technological opportunities but they are also driven by the monopoly of a single industry. From a technological standpoint, Winston argued that digital media or technology is not required for convergence. Rather, there have been other sufficient means of convergence based on analogue signals that have allowed interchangeability between medium functions for many years. Today, people can listen to the radio over their digital televisions or make telephone calls on their computers.

3 A REVOLUTION IN ETHICS

Digitalised media has been transforming journalism and its ethics. The internet encourages a new genre of journalism that is interactive and immediate. The ecology of media has changed. Journalists share journalistic links with the citizen journalism that is apparent on Twitter and other social media platforms.

In the midst of every revolution, new possibilities arise when and where old-fashioned journalism is threatened. The economy of professional journalism fights when audiences migrate online. The depreciation of the editorial space or newsroom creates concerns over the future genre of journalism. However, this fear also encourages experimentation in journalism, such as a non-profit investigative journalism. The main question is the extent to which existing media ethics are suitable for today's news media and that of tomorrow, which is direct, interactive, and always online. We are moving toward mixed news media - citizens of news media and professional journalism on many media platforms. This genre of new media requires new media ethics - guidelines that apply to social media journalism, blogs, tweets, and writing for newspapers. Media ethics needs to be rethought and reinvented for today's media.

4 TENSIONS ON TWO LEVELS: INTEREST AND ROLES

These changes challenge the foundations of media ethics. The challenge is deeper than the debate about one or two ethics principles on their own, such as objectivity or accuracy. The challenges outweigh special problems, such as how the editorial room can verify content from its citizens. The rapid evolution requires rethinking the assumptions. What is the meaning of ethics for providing instant or immediate instant news and analysis? To what extent do ethics have meaning related to the algorithms related to news in social media etc.?

The changes in the media have influenced ethical tensions. For the first level, there is a tension between traditional journalism and online journalism. Traditional journalism culture, with its accuracy values, publication verification process, impartiality, editorial process and information filtering integrates an online journalism culture that emphasises speed, transparency, transparency, alignment, non-professional journalists and post-publication corrections. At the second level, journalism has a global impact. What is its global responsibility? Should new media ethics redefine its goals and norms to guide current global journalism in its reach and impact?

The challenge for current media ethics can be summarised with the question: Where is ethics in the multi-media world? Media ethics should go beyond just showing these tensions. Theoretically, it should describe the conflict between the values. It must decide which principle to preserve or create. Practically, this should provide a new standard to guide both online and offline journalism.

5 INDONESIA ONLINE JOURNALISM ETHICS: IN PROGRESS

Ward stated that the presence of the Internet as a new medium, with all of its practical implications, has created a new tension in the ethical world. The issue of journalistic ethics comes in two levels. First, ethical issues arise when journalism is mingling with an interactive reader. Secondly, the new style of online journalism that has developed in Indonesia is very distinctive. The new style of journalism is unique and different from the old journalism model that has been applicable in print and television. Beyond that, the old problem of media junction business is still prominent.

Online media opens up a free public conversation space on the comments page provided on any news article. As mentioned above, interactive space is an online medium. However, we also see that the interaction space also has a business perspective. What kind of mechanism does the editorial staff impose on incoming reader comments? Of course, we often see reader comments that are rude, sarcastic and disrespectful.

The second ethical issue is a matter of accuracy. The speed of Bill Kovack and Rosentiel states that the obligation of journalism is the truth. "The main principle of journalism, rather than partial truth, is that it greatly differentiates it from all other forms of communication." Furthermore, Kovach and Rosentiel said that in pursuit of truth, the essence of journalism is the discipline of verification. Today's high-tech era brings in journalism resembling a conversation. "The function of journalism has not changed fundamentally even though we have entered the digital age. The technique used may be different, but the underlined principle remains the same. Verification is a precondition for absolute accuracy. Therefore, no matter how and in what form, online media is a verification medium. A related issue, created by new media, is how to handle errors and corrections because reports and comments are constantly updated. The more journalists who blog 'live' are working at speed, the more mistakes are made, from misspelled words to making factual errors. Should the news organisation go back and correct all of the errors? Or should they fix the error later and leave no trace of the original error – making it "unpublished?"

In addition to its accuracy, the quick and flowing principle also alludes to the old principle of journalism which is a matter of balance. This news comes in 3 KEWI: "Indonesian journalists respect the notion of innocence, do not confuse facts with opinions, balance and always check the truth of information, and Article 3 KEJ affirms that:" Indonesian journalists always test information, remain balanced, do not mix facts and opinions and apply the presumption of innocence. This is as explained in KEJ, an information test that means checking and re-checking the correct information.

Meanwhile, the balance principle is about providing space and time when reporting to the respective parties proportionally. Typically, the print media broadcast news. The balance is in the rules contained therein. For online media, the principle of balance in their news does not appear in the news, but in principle, in the updates, piecemeal or broken. So, news that is balanced typically does not appear

in the news at first, but in the second report or the third and so on. Ethical problems are potentially detrimental to certain public opinions that have been formed while those who feel cornered are not getting the opportunity to clarify the content of the news. The news verifies the views at the next opportunity, to allow those who feel cornered to assess their clarification late. Over this issue, the online media is often blamed for unbalanced news.

Partisan journalism comes in at least two types: First is opinion journalism that likes to comment on events and problems with or without verification. Another form is partisan journalism that uses the media as a funnel for political parties and movements. To some extent, we can see the resurrection (or return) of popular opinion / partisan journalism before the emergence of objective reporting in the early 1900s. Both opinion and partisan journalism have long roots in the history of journalism. However, their revival in the online world creates serious ethical riddles for current media ethics. Should objectivity be abandoned by all journalists? Which one is best for a strong and healthy democracy - impartial journalism or partisan journalism?

To make matters more contentious, some new exponents of impartial opinion and journalism do not only question objectivity, but they question the old principles that journalists should be independent of the group that they have written about. For example, some partisan journalists reject allegations of journalistic "conflicts of interest" when they receive money from a group or when they contribute to a political party. Economically, the main newsroom that upholds traditional principles, such as impartiality, is increasingly compelled to move toward a more polite or partisan approach to news and commentary. No impartiality is said to be boring for viewers. Audiences are said to be interested in strong opinions and a conflict of opinion.

Even where the editorial room upholds the rules of impartiality - say by delaying a journalist due to a conflict of interest or partial commentary - they fail to gain full public support. Some residents and groups complain that the newsroom restricting what analysts and reporters can say about the groups that they cover is censorship. Is it good that more and more journalists no longer stand between opposing groups in society and try to inform the public fairly about their perspectives, but become part of the groups that seek to influence public opinion in the process?

Another problem is that less attention is paid to online media managers concerning content

aggregators. Simply put, content aggregators are sites that stream information from other sites. They do not produce, just collect. Technically, the practice of news accumulation can be done automatically through RSS systems and the like. What matters is when accumulator sites get information from something that is not self-produced.

6 CONCLUSIONS

Ethics for media and journalism could be public in one of two ways - in terms of topics and in terms of justification. Ethics are a common topic if its role is to discuss and evaluate behaviour and policies with significant public impacts, such as ethics related to police actions during protests or ethics to enable severely ill patients to die. Ethics are a public justification if it is necessary, in the end, to justify the norms by referring to the concepts of public goods, and not individual goods. Often, this type of behaviour involves public ethics in both senses.

Has the media revolution undermined the idea of journalistic ethics based on the public interpretation of the role of journalism in democracy? The answer is no. The overall impact of journalism is increasing, not declining. What is different is that many citizen journalists are not included in the professional code. It's hard to say if the public code should include professionals and non-professionals. But such difficulties do not deny the idea that some of the public grounds for journalism ethics are necessary. Their job is to reinterpret the ethics of public journalism for the global media world.

These points lead to my main conclusion - journalistic ethics does not "belong" to journalists. There should be publicly owned journalistic ethics. Responsible reporters should formulate principles that meet the "media needs" of citizens in a self-regulating democracy. There are at least six media needs: information needs - citizens should be alert and informed even if without access to a rich soup of information about the facts and reports going on in their world. Explanation needs - citizens need more than facts. They need context and cause-and-effect explanations to understand the facts and events correctly. "Perspectival enrichment" is necessary: citizens need comments, criticism, and many points of view about the information that they get, and about the state of their society. Advocacy and reform needs - citizens must be free to go beyond the comments to use the media to advocate for causes and to encourage reform, or to hear the position of supporters. Participative needs - citizens must have

the ability to participate in meaningful ways in discussions and debates, sharing facts and analysis. Dialogical needs - citizens must have the opportunity to be part of a plausible and informed dialogue on a common problem, and should not be subjected to offensive attacks. Therefore, journalists have no special authority to simply announce ex cathedra, as individuals, as a particular platform user, or as a collective, what they value. They must show how their values are firmly rooted in the six media needs. Of course, they can make such announcements but their statements do not have any social power unless the journalists show how their principles promote the public good, and not just their subjective or idiosyncratic goals. Subjectivism can damage free journalism. If citizens are notified by journalists that they are making their own ethics, then the citizens can conclude that tighter press laws are needed. "Ethics are subjective" makes hash of the idea of self-regulation journalism. The latter refers to wide accountability practices. The "self" in "self-regulation" does not mean that every journalist regulates their own activities.

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