

# ***Kamasutra*<sup>1</sup> Journalism; Degradation of News Quality in Online Media in Indonesia**

**Nurul Hasfi**

**Communication Department, Social and Political Sciences,  
Diponegoro University, Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia**

[nurul@undip.ac.id](mailto:nurul@undip.ac.id)

## **Abstract**

Online media in Indonesia is called secondary journalism as it gives priority on speed and tends to ignore other journalism principles such as accuracy and completeness. 'Kamasutra journalism' is another label for this platform since it provides space for discussing sexuality vulgarly, particularly during the boom of the 'Ariel and Luna Maya<sup>2</sup> porn video case'. This study applies the theory of determination technology (Marshall Mc Luhan; 1962) to explain how technology has influenced the newsroom. Exploration on media routines (Pamela J. Shoemaker; 1991) is done to get in-depth description of how the production of online news is occurred and how the quality of reporting is affected by the use of the internet. The results of this study indicate that internet technology has contributed to the degradation of news quality. It happens when the media industry forces the editor to defeat old platforms by maximizing internet superiority such as quickness, interactivity, etc.

**Key words:** online media, degradation of news quality, media routines, media determination

Online Media Journalists work differently compared to those who work for conventional media. Reporters simply use laptops, digital cameras and tinny digital cameras to write stories. Stephen Quinn (2009) referred to the mobile journalist (MoJo) in reference to journalists who use mobile phones to do three main journalism processes; news gathering journalism, news processing and news distributing. Sue Robinson (2012; 1122) said the use of new technology not only changed the processes of news production, but also impacted on journalism routines and journalism culture. For example, during the eruption of Mount Merapi<sup>3</sup> in Yogyakarta in 2010, twitter and facebook became a channel for professional journalists to monitor victims and detect news value. Social media enables journalists to obtain information from various sources directly without depending on the reporter. In the US, the editor has new methods to detect issues and agendas from twitter called twitter journalism. Kyle Sears (2011), a George State University student does research into sport journalism and finds that twitter timelines become an important element in the editors' decision making process.

## **Online media: secondary platform**

Online media began to emerge in Indonesia after the 1998 reformation. Even at that time, it had become an alternative media to overthrow the former president, Suharto. Hill and Sen (2000:194) said that the internet rose to popularity for its use in mobilizing information in challenging Suharto's reign during the reformation days. Although the rapid development of online media is not a platform that currently dominates the audience as 92% of media users in Indonesia are television viewers. Table 1 shows online media is in second place subsequent to television and other media platforms, respectively radio, newspapers, tabloids and magazines.

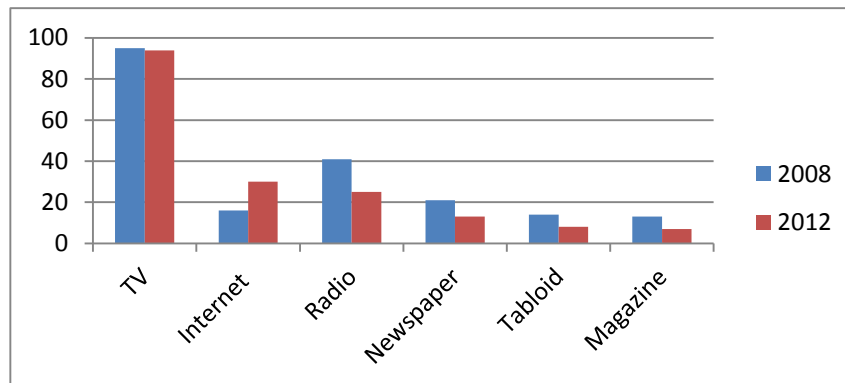
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<sup>1</sup> An ancient Indian Hindu text widely considered to be the standard work on human sexual behavior in Sanskrit literature written by Vātsyāyana

<sup>2</sup> Both are popular entertainers in Indonesia who was swept up in porn/sex video spreaded in internet at 2010

<sup>3</sup> An active stratovolcano mountaint located on the border between Central Java and Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Table 1  
Consumer Media Views<sup>4</sup>



The designation of online media as a secondary platform has two meanings. Firstly, online media is still a trial and error business for conventional media in Indonesia. Media owners in Indonesia<sup>4</sup> realize that they have to prepare for the multimedia era for its operations to be based on digital technology. They have built an online version of media that is still limited compared to the world trend in the media industry.

Media players are still worried of the impending collapse of the traditional media industry as has happened in America, but on the other hand the media is faced with the fact that Indonesian people still like conventional media, especially television. Although it still has a limited audience, online media is developing fairly rapidly in Indonesia

In the mid 1990s, the boom of the Internet became a trigger for the birth of online media in Indonesia<sup>5</sup>. Yanuar Nugroho (2012; 82-68) described the online media evolution in Indonesia. Table 2 shows the list of online media as well as the year of establishment. There are at least five online media that are competing rigorously namely tempo.com, kompas.com, detik.com, okezone.com, vivanews.com. These online media are currently owned by five different media groups that also have ownerships in other media platforms from television, printed media, and magazines to radio.

Table 2  
Important events in the development of online media in Indonesia: 1995-2008

Year	Online Media	Alexa rank <sup>6</sup>	Owner
1995	tempo.com	44th	Tempo Group
1998	kompas.com	12nd	Kompas Gramedia Group
1998	detik.com	7th	Trans Corp
2006	okezone.com	20th	MNC Group
2008	vivanews.com	18th	Bakrie & Brothers Group

<sup>4</sup> Customer and Media Views 2008 vs 2013, 9 cities, all people 10+

<sup>5</sup> Onno W. Purbo, in 'Mapping the Landscape of the Media Industry in Contemporary Indonesia' (2012;81) by Yanuar Nugroho, Dinita Andriani Putri, Shita Laksmi

<sup>6</sup> Alexa.com. 2013.Top side rank by country, accessed at 10th May 2013

### Online Media: Criticism

Table 1 represents that during the year 2008 – 2012 online media experienced a significant growth of 12 percent. In a capitalist media industry system such as in Indonesia, the online media becomes a good business opportunity. However, in its development, online media - which focuses on breaking news that prioritizes updating quick news – starts to reap criticism. This is due to the disinformation and imbalance of the news as the journalists tend to overlook the accuracy, completeness and verification of it. Within online media development context in Indonesia, this kind of journalism has a stigma of being number two. This title appears as the platform emphasizes the speed. Online media in Indonesia makes 600 to 800 news stories in a day, or an average of 2 news stories per minute. This amount of news is because the online news characters are released part-by-part. Lastly, the online media dubbed ‘Kama sutra’ Journalism because they report vulgarly the distributed porn videos cases of Luna Maya and Ariel, and some of Indonesian politicians. In 2012, the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) conducted observation to media coverage in DKI Jakarta governor election on the 2012. This research involved 4 online media, 8 printed media, and 4 television media showing that online media has a high tendency to make reporting more one sided compared with printed media and television. Detik.com became the most one sided reporting media followed by okezone.com, kompas.com and vivanews.com.

Table 3  
Media Balance on the 2012 Regional Heads Election in DKI Jakarta

Media	Unclear	Cover one side	Cover both side	Cover many side	Number of News
Detik.com	0	130	3	0	133
Kompas.com	1	62	10	3	76
Vivanews.com	0	41	30	4	75
Okezone.com	0	81	23	6	110
Republika	0	23	12	3	38
Kompas	0	8	12	1	21
Koran Tempo	0	2	6	10	18
Suara Pembaruan	0	0	5	2	7
Metro TV	0	9	0	0	9
TV One	0	2	1	1	4
RCTI	0	1	4	2	7

Source: Result of the Alliance of Independent Journalism (AJI) research in respect of Media on the 2012 Regional Election in DKI Jakarta

Of the above problems, the researcher tried to find a link between the uses of internet technology with the trend of decline in the quality of news. To achieve this the researcher had to make observations on the media routines that are conducted by the media cloud in newsrooms. It was essentially based on the thought of Pamela J. Shoemaker (2002) which stated that the routine of media is one of the factors that influence the news content. Political scientist, Langdon Winner (1986:6), in Sue Robinson (2011:1122) says that the use of a 'robot' in an industry can radically change the production process. If internet technology in this case is defined as a robot, then the analogy is the internet has also changed the news production process. Media routines are then used to help the researcher explore the process of media production. This research posed two fundamental questions, namely: (a) how is the

routine media in online media newsrooms? (b) How does the routine in online media implicate to the decline in reporting quality?

## **Literature review**

**Technology Determination Theory.** This research is under the Technology Determination Theory initiated by Marshall McLuhan (1962). The basic idea of this theory is the changes that occur in a variety of ways of communication and the form it will make on human existence itself. The technology establishes the way of thinking of individuals, people's behaviour and its eventuality in leading people to transmigrate from this century of technology to another. This theory explains on how technology forms the individuals in their social lives by the way they think, feel, and act as well as the influence to their culture. In this case, the human does not have any other option than to communicate by following the way most people communicate.

The implementation of technology determination concept in newsroom multimedia context is when the media has to adopt the technology to meet the needs of the market – the digital generation - which have adopted the new media in taking information. Media are competing with one another to create an online version featuring the news in multi-channel media; this is one way to survive in the adoption of tremendous technological developments in society.

In order to support the statement of Marshall McLuhan, Carey (1989/1992; in Sue Robinson: 2010; 1125) explains that the technology establishes a culture of when someone utilizes the technology he gets into a social relationship. When the implementation of information technology changes the physical structure of a workplace or an organization (Downey: 2003 in Sue Robinson: 1125), it will then display the new working condition, which may be forming a new culture as well. Many researchers have conducted researches on the effect of new technologies in organizations such as Downey, 2002; Haythornthwaite, 2006; Orr, 1996, and Rogers, 2004 (in Sue Robinson; 1125). The use of technology on a large scale within an organization will lead to the emergence of patterns of the relationships as well as a new organizational structure. Associated with this research, the new pattern of relationships will affect the routines of media whose consequences will influence media content.

## **Media Routines**

Routine media is one level in the gatekeeping process theory proposed by Shoemaker and Reese (2009: 74-88). They said that the media produce news through five levels: the individual, media routines, organizational, extramedia and ideology. All levels affect the media content including media routines. This opinion is supported by Gans and Gitlin (Shoemaker and Reese 2009: 74) that said that the media content is influenced by the attitude of the media workers, media routines, media ideology and external social institutions.

Journalist routines are a patterned and repetitive practice that should be done by the journalists in performing their duties (William P. Cassidy; 2006). Fishman (in Cassidy; 2006) called the routine as an important factor that determines on how media workers interpret a work world they encounter every day. Routines can be regarded as something that is patterned, routine, repetitive practice, and a means used by media workers in doing their job. Tuchman (1977) said routines were developed to assist practitioners to make the world make sense and interpret the situation that is less clear.

Within this context, researchers try to find the link between the routine of online media with the news content that is generated by the media. Furthermore, this research is expected to provide answers on how media routine changes are caused by the adoption of technology which has led to changes in the content of the news. The news content can then be interpreted by the quality of reporting. Media routines that will be emphasized in this study and hereafter used to find the research answers are gatekeeping, news value, workflow, news format and relationships with other media platforms. Gans and Gitlin mentioned that media content is influenced by the communication of the workers and the company they work for. For example, journalists are taught to write the story in an inverted pyramid structure by placing what they think is most important at the top and organizing continues downward: it is the journalists' judgment that determines the contents of the story.

Simple media routines are associated with the mechanism and news determining process. Each media generally has its own standards of what constitutes news, the traits of the news, or the news appropriateness criteria. Measurements are generated from routines that take place every day and become a standard procedure for media workers. Media routines are also associated with a mechanism of established news. When there is an important event that should be covered, how is the shape of the delegation of duties? Through what is the process of the editing of the writing prior to the printing process? Who is the author? Who is the editor? And who/what are the sources? And so on, that is an establishment of standardized news.

## **Journalism Ethics**

If we are discussing the journalism ethics, we also will discuss the journalism work principals that are truth and objectivity (Robert T. Craig, 2009; 299). Professional journalism ethics was built upon the twin pillars of truth and objectivity. By the late 1800s, mass commercial newspapers displayed a robust empiricism—an energetic pursuit of the news that amounted to a “veneration of the fact” (Stephens, 1988, p. 244 in Robert.T Craig, 2009). The premise is the concept of social responsibility theory (Peterson, 1956) that was developed by scholars and journalists in the United States and dominantly applied by the media across the world for more than 50 years.

Robert.T Craig (2009; 296-297) implicitly described the indications of truth and objectivity in some concepts which are:

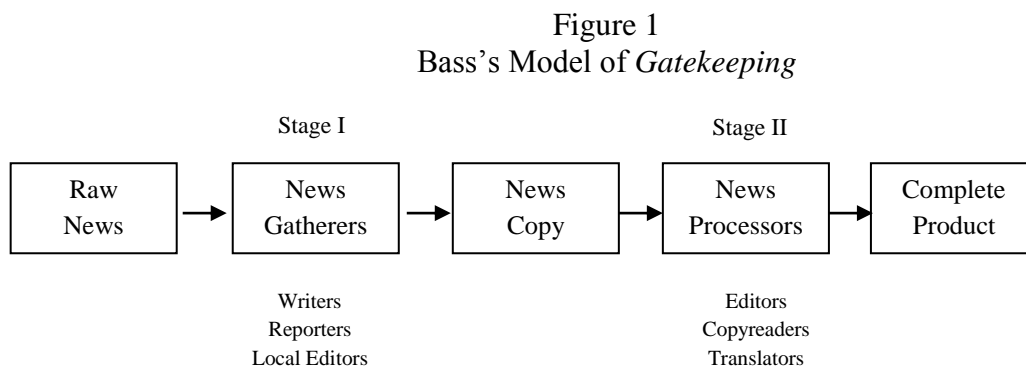
- Accuracy and verification: How much verification and context is required to publish a story? How much editing and “gate-keeping” is necessary?
- Independence and allegiances: How can journalists be independent but maintain ethical relations with their employers, editors, advertisers, sources, police and the public. When is a journalist too close to a source, or in a conflict of interest?
- Deception and fabrication: Should journalists misrepresent themselves or use recording technology, such as hidden cameras to get a story? Should literary journalists invent dialogue or create composite “characters”?
- Graphic images and image manipulation: When should journalists publish graphic or gruesome images? When do published images constitute sensationalism or exploitation?
- When and how should images be altered? Sources and confidentiality: Should journalists promise confidentiality to sources? How far does that protection extend? Should journalists go “off the record”?
- Special situations: How should journalists report hostage-takings, major breaking news, suicide attempts and other events where coverage could exacerbate the problem? When should journalists violate privacy?

- Ethics across media types: Do the norms of mainstream print and broadcast journalism apply to journalism on the Internet? To citizen journalists?

## Result

### Gatekeeping Process: Dominant Editor, Passive Reporter

Shoemaker (1991) defined gatekeeping as a process of controlling the information specifically selecting, adding, subtracting, highlighting information within news. The Gatekeeping technique can be seen as part of the news such as constructing a news angle lead, selection of words and balanced news. To clarify the findings of this study, I compared the gatekeeping process in traditional media called Bass Model (in Shoemakers, 1991: 15) as shown in figure 1.



Online media adopts the traditional media of the gatekeeping process. However, there are technical changes in routine such as the speed of this process primarily the events that have high news value. A reporter who is a stage II reporter does not write the news, but only reports the raw data (via telephone) to the editor. Editors have a dominant task in writing the news – determine angles, writing style, selection of – while the reporter does not have a task – if it cannot be called as authority – to write the news.

So, how influential are the changes to the news quality? Reporters claim that the speed of the gatekeeping process cause the reporter not to have adequate time to complete and verify the news. The lack of authority for the reporter to write news (determining angle, describing the fact) also contribute to the decline in the quality of news in terms of its accuracy. A reporter is a person who is in the field and directly sees' the event, he/she should then be the best person to describe the facts on the ground.

A weak gatekeeping process is due to the high demands of online media to speed. Online media in Indonesia is producing approximately 600-800 articles per day or one article every two minutes. According to this figure it is much higher than the online media in the United States for instance, that only produces about 40 news articles per day. The large amount of online media articles in Indonesia is compensated by the depth of the news. The information presented is by piecemeal, editors argue it is not an issue as the news continues to be updated and each article has hyper links so the readers can track down the news which was previously uploaded.

## News Value: Enjoying *Kamasutra* Journalism

Jerry Palmer (2000, p. 45 in Robert.T Craig, 2009) notes that news value is "a system of criteria which are used to make decisions about the inclusion and exclusion of material" and about which aspects of selected stories to emphasise. Some experts give criteria's of news value such as Walter Lippman (1922), Golding and Elliott (1979), Allan Bell (1991), Galtung and Ruge (1965) which have been used as guidelines by the conventional media for decades in performing their work routines.

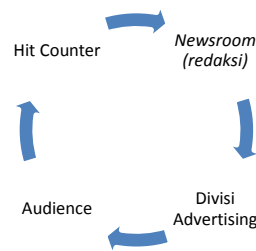
In principle, online media newsrooms have the same news value of criteria's with conventional media, but during the development of online media in Indonesia the shift of the meaning of news value changed. Nezar Patria, the managing editor of *vivanews.com*, says that 'the internet does not change news value, but the news value itself has changed'. This interpretation is based on the assumption that the online media has a different policy within the selection of the type of news it reports compared to conventional media. This shift took place along with the emergence of the data cycle in the new media environment called reader-driven. This can be used to explain the situation where readers drive the media agenda and editor's authority in determining the appropriate and inappropriate news to be uploaded on the web. It seems that the editor of online media is so much dependent on the cycle.

*Reader-driven leads the online newsroom to develop news that gives so many hits – does not matter whether news is important or not – while the low hit news– though it is important – they tend not to be followed up.*

*(Nezar Patria, the Managing Editor of Vivanews.com)*

The background of the reader-driven sustainability is market-driven i.e. the principle of online media business that works for the market<sup>7</sup>. Online media is a success when the market receives it and the revenue flows to the marketing. Reader-driven arises because of the so-called internet facility, page views and a hit counter. These tools provide information about the number of people who enter the web page and how many people are reading a particular article. Conventional media has a tool to estimate the total audience<sup>7</sup>, but cannot give as much detail as online media. Figure 2 shows how this process occurs. There are three parties that indirectly, realized or not, have been involved in the market process of the reader driven cycle namely counter hits/page views, advertising division, newsroom and audience.

Figure 2  
Reader-Driven Cycle



What kind of preferred news in the online media is generated from the reader-driven and market-driven cycles? Patria said the audiences are so much attracted with the issues related with sexuality, science fiction (planet and new species discovery), mystery (UFO), the occult, and nasionalism<sup>7</sup>. The most prominent issue of sexuality in the online media was the 2010 Ariel and Luna Maya's porn video and the creation of the title Kama sutra Journalism for online media in Indonesia. At that time, the online media was the first mass media to have reported the story before finally being covered by the conventional media. The content online is usually more vulgar, more free and accentuates the sensational side. One example is the coverage relating to the anatomy of both actors (Luna Maya and Ariel). In this context, sexuality became news value and up until recently proved popular in online media. View the table below regarding the most popular news on the three online media sites that are Detik.com, Vivanews.com and Okezone.com accessed from third index of the news portal on 15th May 2013:

Table 4  
The most popular news at Detik.com, Vivanews.com and Okezone.com at 15 May 2013

Detik.com	Topic	Vivanews.com	Topic	Okezone.com	Topic
Abdul's Miserable Story After His Genitalia Was Cut by A Transvestite	Crime and sexuality	VIDEO: A Young Man's Genitalia Was Cut by His Date	Crime and sexuality	"The Penis Butcher" Still Wanders About in The Pamulang Area	Crime and sexuality
His Genitalia Was Cut by A Transvestite. What is Abdul's Future Going To Be?	Crime and sexuality	A Youth's Penis Was Cut by His Date, His Mother Fainted	Crime and sexuality	Arsenal Brought the FA Cup's Champions Down	Sport
That Beautiful Police Woman Was Accompanied by Her Mother in Visiting Mabes Polri	Crime and sexuality	The Young Man's Genitalia Cutter in Tangerang is Still A Fugitive	Crime and sexuality	"Mancini is Arrogant, Selfish!"	Sport
When Reza 'Jokowi' Fought to See The Real Jokowi	Political	Jokowi: Do Not Let The South Jakarta Reservoir and Lake Become A Housing Complex	Political	M Has Gone Through Penis Reconstruction Surgery	Crime and sexuality

Source: Index of the three portals, accessed at 15th May



### Fastest update, incomplete data

The comprehensiveness of online media news became an ethical issue and came into the spotlight of media observers and players. The format of online news has a lower degree of completeness. A conventional media article requires 5W + 1H, online media only requires 3W (Who, What, Where) to be written in a single article. This type of policy usually generates an inaccurate and misleading story. A reporter of Vivanews.com noted that he was given a maximum 'deadline' time of two hours to confirm news, having such deadlines is recognized to cause incomprehensive news reporting. The rule of covering both sides of the story has not become a priority within online media. Associated with the source or informant, the online media source prefers to use an elite source. The news can be uploaded with one source only, on condition that the news source is an official source such as the government, police, and the president, but the source must be officially associated with the event being covered. AJI's study of 2012 highlights that the news source relating to online media news is not always confirmed. Table 2 shows the results of AJI's 2012 study.

Table 5  
Confirmation to Sources

Online Media	Confirmation		Total
	Do	Don't	
Detik. Com	25	61	133
Kompas. Com	12	24	76
Vivanews. Com	19	11	75
Okezone com	3	15	110

Source: Study result of Alliance of Independent Journalism (AJI) regarding the media on 2012 Regional Heads Election in DKI Jakarta

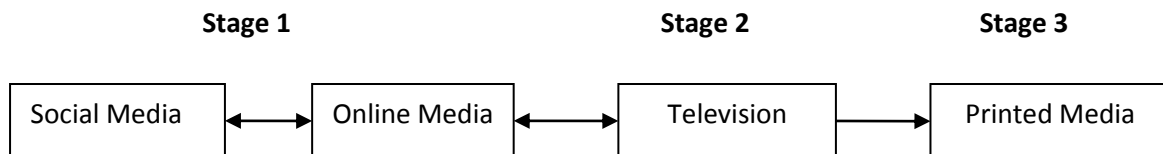
The editor provides reasons of why such a process occurs. The editor says that the completeness of data in online media is delivered in stages. The first stage is a preliminary report containing a straight news story which can be uploaded with only 3W. The Second stage, requires the editor to summarize 5 to 6 straight news articles that features interviews with expert sources, the completeness of the news article (5W +1 H) is fulfilled at this stage. The high volume of news in the online media industry is related to first stage reporting or 'part-by-part' news. Vivanews.com generates approximately 350 to 400 news articles per day or approximately one news article every four minutes. While detik.com generates around 600 to 800 news articles per day or one news article every two minutes. This number is much higher than the total news generated on online media in the United States America which is about 40 articles per day.

### Find information from social media

There is a new phenomenon in the news budgeting process of online media, where online media is highly sensitive to the issues that occur in virtual media, especially in the social media. The process of the cases exposure is never out of the online media which in turn

raises the case to become an issue that should be developed in the conventional media. This is evidence that online media has been successful in obtaining information from the social media – which previously may have had no value – to become so valuable in the conventional media.

Figure 3  
*New News Life Cycle*



Source: interview

**New News Life Cycle** (Figure 4) is a cycle that shows an interaction between social media and online media in creating information. This cycle appoints online media as the bridge that connects social media with conventional media. In the first step, the online media will bring up news from social media outlets or otherwise. The amount of hits the article has received and lively discussion of certain topics in cyberspace invites the conventional media to raise the related issue also. The first conventional media that brings up the issue is usually the television. If it proves valuable then the next day it will also appear in the printed media. One of the major cases that originated from the conversation in the virtual world was the Prita Mulya Sari case. This information was originally distributed on the mailing list, but it then became a discussion on Facebook and was then captured by the online media, it was then widely exposed last by the television and national news papers. In December 2009, the case was broadcast on CNN. Similar events are KPK: lizard versus Crocodile<sup>7</sup>, Roy Suryo scrambled for airplane seat, and so forth.

From the above cases, the online media has contributed to the development of democracy climate in Indonesia. But amid the optimism of online media the negative effect needs to be considered. The main concern is Indonesia's online media often brings up and develops trash information<sup>7</sup>. In the case of Ariel – Luna Maya, privacy issues such as the examination of the actors' anatomies shows how this kind of information is presented vulgarly in online media. Issues are evolving until irrelevant matters that are related to the actors' privacy. According to Patria, these digitalized characters inherited in online media have an unlimited space that can accommodate multimedia files such as videos, audio, text and photos. Based on this point of view, the online media has the tendency to contain so much news, but on the other hand, it does not really pay attention to the quality of the news.

### **Abusive Comments: Editor's *Trick* for Increasing Hits**

Interactivity is the power that online media has that does not occur in other media platforms. Comments become an inseparable part of online news. Even to the editor, ongoing discussions in the reader comments column may bring up new ideas, new news angles and new facts may even directly come from the news source. It means that the readers' comments have become the essential part of the information making process that is coming from so many perspectives.

However, it is interesting to uncover that the readers' comments on online media in Indonesia does not always make the news more comprehensive. The comments on online media in Indonesia tend to be aggressive, emotional, and insignificant with the reported issue.

Reader comments usually attack the antagonist figure within the news whether a corruptor, criminal, murderer, rapist, etc. For example, the Melinda Dee's case<sup>7</sup> in 2010 which had comments relating to articles about Dee's physical appearance such as her bra size, her breast implant, and so on. Based on the framing research over the Melinda Dee news on detik.com (Nurul Hasfi; 2010), Melinda was represented as a female pervert, ruthless mother, irresponsible wife and female monster.

Another important issue that arose was the reader's abusive comments to online articles evidently affecting the economic value of online media. Suwarjono<sup>7</sup> said that – in some cases – editors were 'using' reader's comments to increase hits. Although online media officially has a rule to regulate reader comments, in fact editors do not provide sufficient filter. Consequently, abusive comments irrelevant to news context are uploaded and are consumed by readers.

## Discussion

The results of this study indicate that internet technology has contributed to the degradation of news quality. Firstly, in the gatekeeping process, reporters became a passive element. News production processes (writing of the article, determining angle, defining sources) are dominantly carried out by the editor. Rapid news updates has generated faster gatekeeping processes compared to what is done by the conventional media. The editor slogan is 'write a story as fast as they can and as much as they can'. Vivanews produce 350-400 articles per day, or about 1 article per 4 minute. Secondly, news value is determined by the hit counter of each article. This is what editors call 'reader driven flow'<sup>8</sup>. By employing the concept, editors tend to explore only news with a high hit number. The problem is the news with a large number of hits, is usually sensational in content. For example; sexuality, infotainment and 'klenik'<sup>9</sup>. Furthermore, editors also 'use' readers comments to increase the hits. Although editors officially have a rule to regulate or to edit readers comments, but in fact they do not provide sufficient filter. Consequently, abusive comments irrelevant to news context are uploaded. Based on interviews, editors deliberately do that, as it is a certain practice for increasing hit numbers. Thirdly, online news format has a lower degree of completeness. If in conventional media article requires 5W +1 H, online media only needs 3W (Who, What, Where) to be written in a single story. This policy usually produces an inaccurate and misleading story. In addition, editors also accept news without a source and news with a one sided opinion (cover one side news). Finally, in terms of relationships with other platforms, the interviewee said that online news creates what they call 'life cycle news' in which online media becomes a platform that 'wraps' content from the social media that is usually not worth reporting in conventional media.

In this study, the technological determination theory (Marshall Mc Luhan, 1962) has explained how internet technology changes the media production process of the journalists in the newsroom. While the concept of media routines (Shoemaker, 1962) provides a technical overview of how the work of journalists experienced changes quite drastically compared to media routines in conventional media

This study shows that online media has damaged the fundamental principles of journalism. If we are looking back to the philosophical meaning, hence a journalist is defined as a profession whose task it is to find the truth. Julian Baggini (2005) says that "It cannot be, of course, a single absolute truth, but that does not mean people cannot try to find the truth."

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<sup>7</sup> Managing editor of vivanews.com, former managing editor at detik.com and okezone.com

<sup>8</sup> Situation where reader determine internet content – not editor

<sup>9</sup> an opinion, doctrine, or practice Contrary to the truth or to generally accepted beliefs or standards. In Indonesian context it is usually connected with the existence of ghosts, supernatural beings, demons, satan

In one way journalism is used to uncover the truth with the concepts presented by Robert.T Craig including accuracy and verification that are dominantly ignored by the online media. The online Media also has the same obligation. Journalism is the journalism. What has changed is the channel, while the journalism spirit in finding the truth is still an absolute must.

### **Future research**

For further research, it is interesting to more comprehensively see how the degradation of quality in online news media occurs and who are the actors involved? There is a theory that may explain it namely the Actor Network Theory (ANT) developed in the 1980s by Callon, Latour, and Law (Hassard, Law, & Lee, 1999; Callon, 1999; Latour, 1987). ANT can help researchers to see why the implementation of a technology is not going well. ANT aligns the technology position with the human so that both are considered equal and provide the same contribution in the failure or success of the technology implementation. With the ANT, researchers will unravel the problems of journalism in online media more comprehensively in many entities ranging from the human aspect as editor, reporter, media owner, reader to non-human aspect such as media ownership, media industry system, internet connection, computer network, soft ware (hit counter, page views), marketing system, etc.

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**Name** : Nurul Hasfi , MA

**Position** : Lecturer

**Institution** : Communication Department of Social and Political Sciences, Diponegoro University, Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia

**Short Biography:**

I was a news producer at a local television station in Semarang, from 2002-06, and I am presently a lecturer at Diponegoro University. My area of expertise is online journalism and broadcast journalism. In 2004, I got a scholarship to pursue a master program at Konrad Adenauer Centre for Journalism, ADMU, The Philippines. I actively join in scientific activities done by alumny associations whose members are mostly journalists from across Asia Pacific countries. In 2010, I was elected as a participant of the international program, Study at United State Institute (SUSI) on Media and Journalism, at Ohio University, sponsored by the US State Department. We discussed current issues of media in each country.