

JOURNALISM ETHICS AND ROLE OF INTERFAITH HARMONY FORUM IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Hipolitus Kristoforus Kewuel

Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Brawijaya

hipopegan@ub.ac.id

Informasi Artikel:

Dikirim: (30 Agustus 2019) ; **Direvisi:** (6 November 2019); **Diterima:** (13 November 2019)

Publish (15 November 2019)

Abstract: Human need toward information spread throughout history has always been fulfilled professionally within the field of journalism, whether it is paper-based, audio, or audio-visual. Various scientific paths have been established in finding reliable journalist with professional data collection and presentation, objective report, and ethical in attitude. However, at this moment, the journalism construction as though being tore down by the existence of communication media products which facilitate the growth of social media offering violent and vicious new face of journalism for they recruit the journalists without limit. Anyone can be a journalist and anything may serve as news, without censorship, and profession ethic. In short, social media has been accommodating news distribution without journalism principals. Who is in charge to guide or supervise people's work in social media? It could be the government, educational institution, the professional journalists, and the most substantial is the civil society organizations which directly accommodating the society, in particular the social media activists. The Interfaith Harmony Forum is seen as one of the LSM in charge in nurturing social media activists morality. Interfaith Harmony Forum is targeted particularly since the strategic role they hold in handling ethnical and religious issues which prone in triggering disharmony in social media nowadays. This paper is more a critical reflection on the loss of journalism ethics in social media reports.

Keywords: social media, journalism ethics, civil society organization, interfaith harmony forum

INTRODUCTION

The distressing social media at present time is initiated from private media misused as social media. The preference to use the term social media lays on the meaning distinction, where private media refers to the media used

as communication device between families, close acquaintances for personal and group's interest, which they understand and helped by the spread of information. In the other hand, social media refers to the communication device used toward not only the ones familiar, but also the anonymous, even

enemies. Therefore, exist hitch less space that facilitates people to curse each other and share hatred which is popular lately.

Function shifting is too slight to the point it traps and brings people unconsciously. Even by reading or hearing this argument, there are many will stand and support the guile of this cutting edge technology. As private media, communication devices such as handphone, gadgets, laptop and other devices are communication media provided intentionally to ease the work and communicate to relatives and friends. Therefore, as a matter of fact, these cutting edge thecnology are produced as productive and constructive work and communication. Thus, other emerging possibilities that develop because of technology must be opposed or at least minimizing their access. Who is in charge? Everyone, most importantly the civil society organization for they have authorization as an effective regulator.

This paper will discuss three important points consecutively in order to comprehend the theme of current discussion. The first part will discuss journalism principals as one of the

instruments in coexistence which has been organized professionally to help the development of social community. The second part focuses on in-depth comprehension regarding social media in which this paper assumes as sophisticated movement from technology and unconsciously working inversely from journalism principals that helped to build social environment. And the third part will discuss about the role of social media which tends to be less constructive, formulating possible action to maximize the role of civil society organization. Interfaith Harmony Forum is referred particularly within this context which is related to the strategically structure and work pattern as local government's apparatus, especially since the handling field is close related to interfaith harmony establishment. More significantly, since the conflicts occurring in social media lately are related to religious issues and quickly inviting reaction triggering horizontal conflict in social environment.

UNDERSTANDING JOURNALISM PRINCIPLES

Journalism development throughout history has been truly planned in order to provide safety in social environment and most importantly helpful by the information shared from journalists. Accordingly, the work of journalists are guarded and supervised to keep its quality, ethic and in line with journalism principles. Journalism principles are formulated to protect journalists and the society to avoid disorder in coexistence.

These matters are regulated in journalism profession ethic which manages the core material in undertaking journalism profession. First, personal requirement toward journalist and their responsibility in supporting a conducive coexisting. Second, regulating the procedures for journalists to write news and expressing opinion. Third, making sure authentic news source, reliable, and responsible. Fourth, regulating matters included in journalism violation (Widodo, 1997).

About the journalist personality, it is mentioned that Indonesian journalist have to be Pancasila, courageous, honor human rights, and

striving for the benefit of Indonesia either as local and global citizen. It is implied that journalist is a substantial and favored job for it is responsible not only toward oneself but also to wide community. In undertaking profession as journalist, one must be selfless and prioritize the larger community needs.

About the procedures for journalist in writing news and expressing opinion, it is stated that journalists must struggle with honesty to collect the news data. Journalists are also appealed within the ethical code to research the truth in particular news or the details before publishing. They are trained in special training to differ between phenomena and opinion. It is intended to avoid overlapping information. This shows that journalism profession is not a place for journalists to share hatred, gossip, and hoax. Journalism is an honored profession in the hand of responsible people in nurturing life.

Authentic news sources, reliable, and accounted implied that journalists as the subject of news spread are trained to appreciate and protect the interviewees and the sources. Other than that, journalists are required to be

honest in listing its sources which quoted from books, journals, etc. Such attitude is related to moral responsibility for they are trained to be responsible for what they have shared. With such pattern, readers are allowed to be passive with no possibility to directly clarify, support or protest on the news coverage (Adler, 2006: 188).

Regarding the matters included as violation, there are limits that guide journalists in formulating news, to identify whether journalist has violated the code of ethics or not. This shows journalism in profession is transparent and open for correction from anyone including the society. Thus, every violation occurred gets direct control from the society.

Furthermore, in conducting the profession, every journalist is continuously provided with journalism principles such as definition and news value, news collection, news requirements, news forms and direct guidance to compose news. Journalist professionally trained to conduct interview and presenting the result properly, taking and presenting informative pictures, and many others.

News definition stands form the fact or information written by reporter and published in media. The fact or information here, according to Nothclife (in Depdiknas, 2004), should provide uniqueness or oddity as the allurements for readers. As stated, “if a dog bites a man, it is not news, but if a man bites a dog, that is the news”. Mitchel (1978) points out, “news is anything timely that interest a number of person.” Clinton, R. Rush (in Widodo, 1997, 17-18) mentions, “news is usually stimulating information, from which the human being derives satisfaction or stimulation.” News should provide satisfaction or stimulation toward particular amount of readers.

News value means that news is accepted when it fulfills the fundamental elements as follow. First, time element. News get more authentic and interesting when the phenomena reported is closer to the initial time occurrence. Second, nearness element. News earn higher value when what is reported is near toward the readers, whether the scene, the necessities, or the interests. Third, humor. It means news containing humor or funny element tends to be more interesting. Fourth,

odd element. To report oddity also tend to attract readers interest. Fifth, conflict element. News reporting conflict is also interesting for many readers, not to worsen the conflict, yet, only to get updates about ongoing phenomena. Sixth, impact element. News report about action that affecting wide community normally invites many readers. Seventh, important element. Important value among society also invites people to read when there is news about it. Eighth, change element. News that serves report regarding changes among society also attracts reader. Ninth, human interest element. News that serves heart touching phenomena tends to catch reader attention since there are emotional involvement. In conclusion, news that fulfills the elements above tend to carry high news value.

Therefore, journalism is a profession that considers every aspect of life and is directed only to support a better and dignified human life. Violations toward journalism ethics holds its own sanctions and transparency. Journalism has become one of the jobs in life that support for the better human life. In journalism,

everyone learns a lot; education, elegant attitude, and most importantly throughout the history has become the agent to share truths of life, appreciation, and motivating one another as the basic and authentic purpose from journalism.

COMPREHEND AND CRITICIZE SOCIAL MEDIA TRAITS

The spread of social media nowadays is slightly contradict toward journalism principles. Social media in development in one hand is continuously innovating its technology devices. On the other hand, social media is expected to develop a technology that is not only advanced in technical and mechanical, but also support the quality development of life in wide community. In this context, social media weakness may be fatal since a lot of young generation employ social media as a platform to create identity (Ayun, 2015: 1-16). Considering how social media is relied in identity creation of young ages shows how undiscerning is social media.

According to communication theory, social media presence helps interpersonal communication in fast and

intensive information exchange between people (Adler, 2006: 188-189). However, such interpersonal communication does not follow any shared principles except conscience. Therefore, when conflict occurred among related people, situation will get worse without control.

In the eye of technology devices development, social media shows a fascinating and rapid development. The problem is such acceleration almost neglect the development of system and professional work pattern. Proven in the effort of social media development, there are no effort to regulate the responsibility of information spread. As if society no longer cares upon their social community interests. Social community becomes a media to share hatred, persuasive media for consumptive society (Piliang, 2004: 233).

There are no recruitment for news spreaders provides space for everyone to be news spreader without any age limit and education background. Whereas, news spreading is impactful toward society and should carry moral responsibilities which determined by educational background

and maturity level. These matters should be a moral consideration in spreading particular news. The absence of such matters has created social media grow carelessly in the face of anonymity. Communication used to be one way. News connoisseur may only enjoy the news media served (newspaper, radio, television). Nowadays, in line with the growth of social media, the paradigm has changed. Connoisseur can also be the news creator without guided by journalism principles (Setya Watie, 2011: 69). The only control is each individuals, therefore, social media growth without control is a signal of the declining conscience in present days.

No benchmark in operating social media allows every individual to say anything without mechanism control created by professionals. Recently, government is trying to intervene the situation using law establishment. However, it starts only after many have occurred; many offended by slander and blaspheme, many victims of hatred speech, and conflict between groups. Government has established the right thing, but they are not the primary in charge upon this

social media business. Apparently, it needs to be found and decided for the people in charge upon this social media development. This is important to provide transparency of who are in charge toward this issue and for the government and everyone to grant feedback and guidance.

Lacking of social media education turns the society clueless about communication ethics. Indonesia is the fourth biggest user of Facebook in the world; Amerika, 151,8 million; India 108,9 million; Brasil, 70,5 million; and Indonesia, 60,3 million (<http://ilmupengetahuanumum.com/10-negara-dengan-pengguna-facebook-terbanyak-di-dunia/>). Ironically, Indonesia does not have patterned learning upon dignified social media attitude. People are lost in search for social media education, yet the structured education for the technical development on social media devices are provided. It is rare to find patterned learning to hone conscience to be ethical in using social media. Democracy in Indonesia seems to be a strong fundamental for media perpetrators to express their freedom. Such matter is strengthened with New

Media concept which offers interactivity as the central concept to be understood and developed (Flew, 2002: 11-22). These issues need serious thought, integrated and cooperation from many elements.

'NEW ROLE' OF INTERFAITH HARMONY FORUM DEALING WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

Interfaith Harmony Forum is a forum idealized and founded by society and fully supported by the government in order to assist three main duties of the region government (Province, District/City) in The Maintenance of Interfaith Harmony, Empowerment of Interfaith Harmony Forum, and The Construction of Houses of Worship. In the implementation of these duties, Interfaith Harmony Forum is directly interacted with society and religious groups. When there is a conflict, this forum serves a role as the mediator and facilitator between society and the religious people.

Dealing with the problems of coexistence that inflicted by the development of social media today, allegedly that in the future, the role of Interfaith Harmony Forum is not only in

mediation function and conflict completion but they also have to think about the mediation and conflict completion in online based social media. Interfaith Harmony Forum is considered important to be responsible in social media issues because it contains hatred and some other things similar that thrive in those online media, related with religion issues in its implementations. Relying on each good will to self-control in the tempting of this heavy globalization stream is a good will, but it is not enough. Society need an insistence from a community that done gradually and well organized. The government movement in formally approach in any other kinds have to be supported by the society organization that approach from moral and ethics. Approach from religious touch is believed to have good strength in the conscience of Indonesia society. Interfaith Harmony Forum in this context have a reliable capacity. The key is, Interfaith Harmony Forum administrators have to start to build new strength dealing with online based conflict.

Thus, in the future the functions of Interfaith Harmony Forum in the

three main duties is not only involve in conventional issues in society directly and transparently. Interfaith Harmony Forum have to start minding about solutions of joint evaluation towards social media that bring up many religion conflicts. The conflict resolving by religious approach is still relevant to use in Indonesia at present. It is just need to be designed with structured strategy by Interfaith Harmony Forum in dealing with these new tasks and challenges. The offer from structured strategy, for instance, consider there is one special division in Interfaith Harmony Forum to resolve religion conflict in online communication. By this division, it can be considered and designed professional work patterns that involve the cooperation with professional IT workers.

CONCLUSION

There are some points that can be concluded from this article. First, there are many social crashes happened because of the development of science and technology in its implementations. Many conventional work mechanisms are changed to virtual or online based mechanism. The change of work patterns is affected to the society, not

only positive but also the negative impact. The positive impact is the human works is more effective and efficient, but the patterns of hatred and hostility spread is also getting more efficient and effective, and that is the main issue in many talks about social media.

Second, the phenomenon of social media as the media of irresponsible information allegedly as the deviation of journalistic norms that built in pattern in the journalism ethics construction. There is a heavy crash in many points.

About the qualification of the actor of news spreaders. In journalism, news spreaders are special prepared and professional in journalism ethics that is fully responsible. in online media, news spreaders can be anyone without work ethics bonding. It is more democratic because it depends on their own responsibility, but the attraction of mechanical world this day made the focus of human quality is not in moral but more in technical work quality. They become a good technical master, but without humanity, they are good in technical, but there is no care to others. That is the reason why they can spread

hatred and lies that damage social relation.

About news qualification or the information that will be spread. In journalism, the news that will be spread via mass media have to passed tight selection process. There is editorial board that runs control function and there are agreed rules of news writing. The point is, every published news has passed tight selection. If there is incorrect news, the reporter will be dealing with code of ethics and be ready to receive the consequences from their fault. In social media, the selection mechanism of news and information are not bound with code of ethics. Everyone is allowed to spread any news and the only control is their own conscience. This gives too much space to every individual to spread any information that they think was good, but it is not necessary good for other people.

Third, the impact of this paradigm change needs serious treatment. There are many kinds of parties that can involve' could be individual, government, or other social institutions. One of the social institution that appointed to be responsible in this article is Interfaith Harmony Forum that

supported by the government. Interfaith Harmony Forum is appointed because the reason of conflict in social media today is hatred in the name of religion. It is Interfaith Harmony Forum capacity besides religious leaders to involve the mediation of religion based conflict completion in social media. How to do it is adjusting the mediation approach in online work patterns. With this, Interfaith Harmony Forum have a role in doing their task in a 'new' paradigm, online system paradigm. In the realization, it needs the adjustment of organization management that especially work to resolve issues in social media.

REFERENCES

Adler, Ronald B., & Rodman George, 2006. *Understanding Human Communication*, New York: Oxford University Press

Ayun, Primada Qurrata, et al., "Fenomena Remaja Menggunakan Media Sosial dalam Membentuk Identitas" in CHANNEL Channel, Vo. 3, No. 2, October 2015

Depdiknas, 2004. *Pengembangan Keterampilan Menulis II: Ulasan, Teks Berita, Teks Pidato,*

Ceramah, Pengalaman, Jakarta: Depdiknas

Flew, Terry, 2002. *New Media: An Introduction*, New York: Oxford University Press

Mitchell, V., Charnley, 1978. *Reporting*, Holt, Rinehart & Winston of Canada Ltd

Piliang, Yasraf Amir, 2002. *Dunia yang Dilipat*, Yogyakarta: Jalasutra

Setya Watie, "Komunikasi dan Media Sosial" dalam Jurnal THE MESSENGER, Vol. 3, Nomor 1, Juli 2011, p. 69-75

Widodo, Drs., 1997. *Menulis Berita di Surat Kabar dan Majalah*, Surabaya: Indah