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## Toward New Media: Neutral, Creative, and Provide Solutions

**ABSTRACT:** *Mass media can expand the horizons of thought and build sympathy, concentrating development goals so as to create a harmonious atmosphere, and effective development. The mass media has also the task social change in society, namely: (1) Expanding to horizon of view; (2) Focusing to public with messages written; (3) Rising the aspirations; and (4) Creating an atmosphere to build media. Mass media is often viewed as an effective instrument power for its ability to perform one or more several things such as: attracting and directing attention, persuade opinion and perception, affect the choice attitude, given the status and legitimacy, and define and shape reality perceptions. It is desirable once a mass media that serves as a counterweight, reformer, and herald of truth. This study tries to answer about the neutrality of the news stories related to socio-political issues. This study uses qualitative methods through a descriptive approach, observation, depth interviews, and literature study. The research results showed that the mass media about the social politics still less yet neutral. The results also showed that the news of media is still less yet neutral, exaggerating the problem, not provide solutions, and sometimes just give the sensation itself.*

**KEY WORD:** *New media, news and views, communication, neutral, creative, provide solutions, and new changes.*

**IKHTISAR:** *Media massa dapat memperluas cakrawala pemikiran dan membangun simpati, memusatkan tujuan pembangunan sehingga tercipta suasana yang harmonis, dan pembangunan yang efektif. Media massa juga memiliki tugas perubahan sosial di masyarakat, yaitu: (1) Memperluas cakrawala sudut pandang; (2) Fokus kepada public melalui pesan tertulis; (3) Meningkatkan aspirasi; dan (4) Menciptakan suasana dalam membangun media. Media massa sering dipandang sebagai kekuatan instrumen yang efektif karena kemampuannya dalam satu dan banyak hal untuk menarik dan mengarahkan perhatian, membujuk pendapat dan persepsi, mempengaruhi sikap pilihan, memberi status dan legitimasi, serta mendefinisikan dan membentuk persepsi realitas. Media juga diharapkan berfungsi sebagai penyeimbang, pembaharu, dan memberitakan kebenaran. Penelitian ini mencoba menjawab tentang netralitas berita media terkait dengan isu-isu sosial-politik. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif, observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan studi pustaka. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pemberitaan media massa tentang sosial-politik masih belum netral. Hasil penelitian juga menunjukkan bahwa pemberitaan media massa membesar-besarkan masalah, tidak memberikan solusi, dan kadang-kadang hanya memberikan sensasi saja.*

**KATA KUNCI:** *Media baru, berita dan opini, komunikasi, netral, kreatif, memberikan solusi, dan perubahan baru.*

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## INTRODUCTION

New media is a broad term that emerged in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century to include the consolidation of traditional media such as movies, pictures, music, spoken, and written word with the interactive power of computers and communications technologies, consumer devices enabling the computer, and most importantly the internet. The emergence of new media has improved communication between people around the world and the internet. It allows people to express themselves through websites, images, and other user-generated media.

New media is due to the process of globalization is happening. Globalization is generally expressed as “more than the expansion of activities beyond the boundaries of a particular nation state”. According to Croteau and Hoynes, globalization shortens the distance between people around the world with electronic communications revealed that large developments as death “from” long distance. New media “radically solve the relationship between physical and social places, making the physical location much less significant to our social relations” (Croteau & Hoynes, 2003).

The globalization of communication and transition of information society, by Joseph Strautbhaar and Robert Larose (1997), driven by the accelerating convergence of digital communications technology through computer technology that bring clarity to the meeting to computers and communications. Concrete manifestation of the new communication technologies (merging with computer technology) are summarized in telemetric media, called by Joseph Strautbhaar and Robert Larose (1997) as “a depiction of a merger between computers with the technology communication”. The merger also included the form of an information network that is easy and fast to reach, referred to as “the information’s super highway”.

Media is a tool or means used to convey messages from the communicator to the audience. The term “mass” refers to a collectivity without form, whose components are difficult to distinguish from one another (McQuail, 1994). According to the concise English dictionary gives the definition of “mass” as a collection people who do not recognize the existence of individuality.

As for the mass characteristics of the media, according Hafied Cangara, are: (1) *It is institutionalized*, meaning that those who manage the media consisted of many people, i.e. starting from the collection, management came to the presentation of information; (2) *There are one-way*, meaning that communications made less possibility of dialogue between the sender and receiver. If it does happen, the reaction or feedback usually requires time and delayed; (3) *Widespread and simultaneous*, meaning that it can overcome the barriers of time and distance, because it has the speed to move widely and simultaneously, where the information submitted is accepted by many people at the same time; (4) *Wearing technical or mechanical equipment*, such as radio, television, movies and such; and (5) *It is open*, meaning that the message can be accepted by anyone and anywhere without know the age, gender, and ethnicity (Cangara, 1998:134-135).

There are three-dimensional effects of mass communication, namely: *cognitive*, *affective*, and *co native*. *Cognitive* effects include increased awareness, learning, and additional knowledge. *Affective* effects associated with emotions, feelings, and attitude (attitude). Whereas *co native* effects associated with the behavior and intentions to do something a certain way. Ben in Amri Jahi (1993), although the dimensions of these effects relate to each other, all three are also independent of each other. As an example of the increasing knowledge about an issue are not always followed by a change in attitude.

## METHOD

This study will use a qualitative approach. Reasons for using this method are to be able to describe the properties of individuals and groups. While the qualitative approach, according to Abercrombie, is useful to describe a reality in society (cited in Garna, 1999:32) with the stated purpose of qualitative research is to seek to understand the phenomena in such a way and does not require a quantitative, or because the symptoms are not allowing measured accurately. To understand these symptoms, it is necessary to learn according to socio-cultural context.

The problem research is a process; therefore, the things that need to be studied are real. Data on this process is obtained through careful and specific observations. In order to test the repeatability of observations necessary to have a more specific observation again for a second, then, the results compared. Comparison between the occurrence of one and the other events later turned into a case that needs to be deepened through the interview method.

Researchers put themselves into the group. Expected, researchers were able to better understand what is perceived by the group and more in order to observe behavior that is developed by the group. In addition, through a direct jump to join the group studied, the researchers hope to be able to understand the culture it bears.

Interviews were conducted to obtain information about the things required from the informant to converse face to face with the person. In-depth interviews and open using questions based on the guideline that contains grains or main ideas about the outline of questions to be raised (Koentjaraningrat, 1984:129).

This study uses qualitative methods in the qualitative study. Firestone, Eisner, Bogdan and Biklen, and Merriam mentioned six assumptions of qualitative research, as follows: (1) Qualitative research emphasizes attention to process rather than outcomes or products; (2) Qualitative researchers are interested in meaning, how people make a living, experience, and the structure of the world makes sense; (3) The qualitative researcher is the principal instrument for data collection and analysis. Data is approached through a human instrument, rather than through inventories, questionnaires, or machines; (4) Research involving qualitative fieldwork. Researchers are physically associated with the person, background, location, or institution to find or record behavior in natural settings; (5) Qualitative researchers are descriptive in the sense of researchers

interested in the process, meaning, and understanding gained through words or images; and (6) The process of qualitative research is inductive in which researchers build abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, and theories from details (cited in Creswell, 2002:136).

Meanwhile, Bogdan and Biklen, Glesne and Peshkin, and Denzin and Lincoln identified a number of philosophical assumptions underlying qualitative research approaches. *First*, reality or knowledge is socially constructed. Because the reality or knowledge is a shape, then, there could be multiple realities in this world. *Second*, because reality is shaped by cognitive or knowledge, then, it will not be separated from the researchers. In other words, researchers cannot separate what we know ourselves. This also means that researchers can only understand a particular formation or a symbolic construction, especially through language. *Third*, the entire entity, including humans, is always in a state of mutual influence in the formation process simultaneously. It is extremely improbable that we can clearly distinguish cause from effect. *Fourth*, because researchers cannot be separated from those examined, then, the research is always tied to the value (cited in Alwasilah, 2003:26).

More specifically, qualitative methodology experts have agreed that: (1) qualitative research goals is to understand, instead of explaining the various causes, of social phenomena from the perspective of the participants through the involvement into the lives of the actors involved; (2) approach of research is best suited to capture the phenomenon is ethnography that helps readers understand the definition of the situation are reviewed, and in an effort to understand the perspectives of participants to the researchers need to shed itself into the phenomenon studied; and (3) the nature of social reality is best served packed in thick description, which would later be reported to the reader in a narrative form (Alwasilah, 2003:26-27).

This study uses qualitative methods, which contextual research that make a human being as an instrument and adjusted to a reasonable situation in relation to the collection of data is generally qualitative. Bogdan and Tylor (cited in Moleong, 2000: 3) is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of words written or spoken of the people and behaviors that can be observed.

The steps involve data collection, among others: (1) establish the boundaries of research; (2) collecting information through observation, interviews, documents and visual materials; and (3) set out the rules for recording information. The idea of qualitative research is purposefully select informants, or documents or visual material that can provide the best answers to research questions. Researchers should consider four measures suggested by Miles and Huberman (cited in Creswell, 1994:139), namely: *background* (where the research will take place); *actors* (people who will be observed or interviewed); *events* (what will be observed or observed); and *the process* (the nature of events that made the actors in the background).

The research data has been collected in classifying primary data and secondary data; because this study used qualitative research methods, the data collection techniques have been used is to conduct in-depth interviews, observation of participation, and use of documents.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

To see the issue above, theory that used is the theory of Erving Goffman on the "Dramaturgis". The principles are well known in his book the presentational of self in *Everyday Life*, which expressed to us, a form dramaturgies and perspective are the appearance teeters (cited in Zeitlin, 1998:291). It is described by Erving Goffman that the language of theater has been so attached in sociology from which this study is removed, it will show the value problem when we try to talk about the stage (cited in Zeitlin, 1998).

The problem which we face is value, because we have to find all types of deficiencies or weaknesses. According to Erving Goffman, real life is like a stage, and there did our showcase and we present our life, and that's all we have time. But it as if being onstage and how human figures is seen there (cited in Poloma, 2003:229).

Erving Goffman calls the activity to influence others as a "show" or performance. Therefore, in dramaturgies perspective, life is like theater, social interaction similar to performances on stage, featuring the roles played by actors. To play a social role, usually the actor's use of verbal language and non-verbal behavior of a particular show. Dramaturgies model places the individual and social behavior in the analogy that marked a dramatic social actors on the stage of actual life. Then, focus dramaturgies approach is not what people are doing, or why they do what they want to do, but how they do it (cited in Mulyana, 2004:113).

Erving Goffman also looked at expressive behavior as a presenting themselves before public opinion in an effort to highlight the "role" or "character" as a self-manipulated (cited in Fisher, 1978:327-328). Behavior that is not common to be "behind the scenes" and very different from that presented to the public. Erving Goffman, then, explains that the individual can present a show for others, but the impression of the perpetrators of these performances can vary. Therefore, Erving Goffman divided it into two, like: (1) the front or front stage, this includes setting and personalized fonts, which can be further divided into the appearance and style; and (2) personal fonts are also associated with expressive always attached to the actor to wherever they go (cited in Mulyana, 2004:112-114)

Erving Goffman's impression management studies focus on the problems of dramaturgy of the presence of a person and his actions toward others. He was interested in the appearance and encounter or action that interplays between humans in the presence of each other (cited in Zeitlin, 1998:292). In according with that in mind, then, the communication model used in this study is the interactional model (Fisher, 1986:242).

Dedy Mulyana said that this interactional model of communication refers to communication models developed by social scientists that use symbolic interaction perspective, the main character of George Herbert Mead, Herbert Blumer, and his successors. Some important concepts used in this model is the self, self-others (others), symbols, meanings, interpretations, and actions. Interactional model of communication is actually very difficult to be described in a diagrammatic model, because it is qualitative, non-systemic, and nonlinear. Verbal model is more suitable to describe this model (Mulyana, 2001:159).

According to the interactional model above, the people as participants in the communication (communicator) are active, reflective, creative, interpret display a complex behavior, and unpredictable. Blumer (cited in Fisher, 1986:241) in this case which presents three basic premise of this model. *First*, human beings act upon the meanings given individual against his social environment (symbol verbal, nonverbal symbols, and physical environment). *Second*, the meaning obtained and directly related to social interaction by individuals with the social environment. *Third*, meaning is created, maintained, modified, and developed through a process of interpretation by individuals in dealing with the social environment. Therefore, the individual is constantly changing, so too, changed society through such interactions.

The conception of this communication is essentially the view that communication is a dynamic process that is continuous change parties communicate. One definition of this view is from Stewart L. Tubbs and Sylvia Moss (2000a:4-6), according to their communication is the process of meaning between two or more people.

Symbolic interaction, among others, derived from the work of John Dewey, Charles Horton Cooley, Robert Park, William Isaac Thomas, and George Herbert Mead. Even the interactions remain distinct from each other about the meaning and importance of various concepts that have anything to do with symbolic interaction. Until now, there are formulas that Mead in his book entitled *Mind, Self, and Society* is an exposition of the most comprehensive and least controversial of these perspectives (cited in Furchan, 1992:36).

For these theorists, people always are in the process of interpretation and definition as they switch from situation to another. All situations that consist of actors, other people and his actions, and physical objects. However, a situation can only have meaning through interpretation and definition of the situation. Meanwhile, the actions of others are derived from this meaning. Thus, this interpretation process serves as an intermediary for any tendency to act in addition as well as the act itself (Furchan, 1992:36-37).

The varieties of reason, each participant is looking at (providing a definition of) situation or aspect of the situation (i.e. the perpetrators themselves, other actors) in different ways. One of the reasons is every actor brings a unique past and also has its own way to interpret what he saw. Because the life experience of each person different, in addition, those people may occupy a different

position also in a situation (position here means a place in the environmental situation or organization that has been socially defined). Thus, each position will result in a situation may be different perspectives. In the view of symbolic interaction, as confirmed by Herbert Blumer, that the social process of life in groups that create and enforce rules, not rules that create, and uphold group life. In this context, the meaning is constructed in the process of interaction, and the process is not a neutral medium that allows the social forces play a role, but rather the substance of social organization and social forces. Strictly speaking, the public is the process of symbolic interaction (cited in Mulyana, 2001:70). The use of symbols, which include the meaning and value, do not take place in small units which are isolated, but sometimes in units (setting) a larger and more complex.

Perspective of symbolic interactions can be briefly based on three basic premises. *First*, individuals respond to a symbolic situation. They respond to the environment, including physical objects (bodies) and social objects (human behavior), based on the meaning contained in the components of that environment for them. Individuals are considered active to determine their own environment. *Second*, the meaning is the product of social interaction, because its meaning is not inherent in objects, but negotiated through the use of language. *Third*, individuals interpret the meaning may change from time to time, in line with changes to the situation found in social interaction. Changes in interpretation are possible because individuals can make a mental process, which communicates with itself (Mulyana, 2001:72).

Meanwhile, Noeng Muhadjir suggests that there are seven basic propositions in symbolic interaction, namely: (1) human behavior has meaning behind it is implicated, and then needed a method to reveal the hidden behavior; (2) humans have sought the source of meaning in human social interaction; (3) human society is a process that develops holistic, not linear, and unpredictable; (4) human behavior is applicable based on the interpretation phenomenology, which took place on the intent, meaning, and purpose, not based on mechanical and automated processes; (5) the concept of men mental develops dialectically; (6) human behavior is natural and creative constructive, rather elementary reactive; and (7) it is necessary to use method of sympathetic introspection, emphasizes an intuitive approach to capture the meaning (Muhadjir, 2000:184).

Herbert Blumer, as a figure of symbolic interaction, states that the organization of human society is the framework within which there is a social act that is not determined by individual behavior. Meanwhile, Campbell also states that the social structures, roles, and institutions influence individual behavior only through shared meanings expressed in symbols and group symbols, the way it is interpreted in the exchange between individual's individuals (cited in Mulyana, 2001:70). Likewise, George Ritzer (1992:50-51) said that phenomenology of seeing the human individual as a creative person

against reality itself. These theories have unitary view that humans are active and creative.

Adherents of both theories are equally interested in something that is contained in human thought, even though they cannot investigate it directly. Something is going on in human thought between each stimulus and response is emitted, according to the second theory is the result of human creative act.

Symbolic interaction theory is a growing flow of American sociology and the first time at the University of Chicago and Chicago is also known as flow. The main character comes from various universities outside the University of Chicago itself. Two figures of magnitude were John Dewey and Charles Horton Cooley. They were the philosophers who originally developed the theory of symbolic interaction at the University of Michigan. John Dewey, who later moved to the University of Chicago, affects some characters in there such as William Isaac Thomas and George Herbert Mead (cited in Ritzer, 1992:58).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Communication is universal, almost all living beings communicate with each other, even with different living with him. David Krech and Richard S. Crutcgfield argue that the notion of communication refers to the use of language and symbols to obtain or provide information about an object. They argue that the most important medium of communication is language and other symbols such as the nod of the head, shrugged, the movement of thumb, and so on (Krech & Crutcgfield, 1962:288). Berelson and Steiner define communication as follows: *"The submission of information, ideas, emotions, skills, and so on through the use of symbols, words, pictures, numbers, graphs, and other"* (cited in Fisher, 1986:10).

Communication is the process of delivering a message by someone to someone else to tell or to change the attitudes, opinions, or behavior, either verbally directly or indirectly through the medium (Effendy, 1993:5). Communication, according to Uchyana Onong Effendy (1993), aims to change the behavior of people through message that be delivered. Another opinion aims to change the attitude of other people and put forward.

Another definition of communication is not just conveying information, but also seeks to influence others (communicant) perform certain activities as may be desired person (communicator) as noted by Hovland, Janis, and Kelly. They define communication as the process by which an individual (the communicator) transmits stimuli (usually verbal) to modify the behavior of other individuals (the audience). Besides, Gerel A. Miler states, in the main, communication has as its central interest in behavioral. Those situations in which a source transmits a message to a receiver with conscious intent to affect the latte's behavior (cited in Effendy, 2000:49).

From the definition also appears that in the communication process, there are aspects of the communicator, communicant, messages, and media. But what is important in the communication process, according to Fotheringham,

is how to keep a message up to the communicant the same as it exists in the mind of the communicator. Gede also refers to the term “sense of togetherness” for two or more persons who originally monopolized by one or several people (cited in Fisher, 1986:11).

The process of communication in the psychological perspective as the process takes place within a communicator and communicant (encoding, decoding). If the communicant can be seen, the communication takes place face to face, whether it is communication between individuals or small group communication, whereas if the communicant distant place or many, and the communication of media, with the mass media.

In the communication process, there are two types of media. To convey the mind as the content of the message is, *the first*, media (primary medium) is a symbol, both verbal and nonverbal; while *the secondary*, medium (secondary medium) is a tangible medium, as mentioned earlier, when the communicant distant place and many number. For example, if the communicant distant place, then, used media such as newspapers, telephone, telegram, and others; if numerous media was used in the form of loudspeakers, bulletin boards, and so on; and if the communicant distant place and too many, and it is used the media of newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and so forth.

Herman Suwardi (1993) explained that these functions, rather than the mass media, are as follows: (1) the function of broadcast information, a variety of information quickly and accurately can be delivered by the mass media; (2) function to educate, newspapers are not directly providing educational function on its readers; and (3) affect the function, the news on the mass media indirectly affects their readers, while the editorial and articles can give direct effect to the reader. And finally, according to F. Rachmadi (1989), the mass media have the task of social change in society, namely: (1) Expanding the horizon of view; (2) Focusing the community with messages written; (3) Raise the aspirations; and (4) Creating an atmosphere to build.

*The following interview excerpt.* From the results of research through interviews with informants, in the findings of the research found that the mass media today is looking for sensation, rising, not provides solutions, not neutral, and still lacking a lot.

According to the informant, whose name was withheld, said that the role of the media is just looking for sensation, “*The media reported about the social politics are just looking for sensation of the real situation. Just looking for sensation, not according to actual events*” (interview with informant A, 22/5/2011).

According to other informants also that media coverage is now only find fault with it.

The media today are just looking for any errors that occur at this time. And the problem that occurs is not resolved, only criticizes and does not solve the problem, it's all there interests. Should seek sensation and also look for these mistakes do not happen again, because behind it all there is interest for a moment, not to solve sociopolitical problems (interview with informant B, 31/5/2011).

According to another informant, also said that:

Reporting media are just looking for sensation alone, which raised the pros and cons in the community. Preaching the existing socio-political would create problems in society, because there are pros and cons, because the news is delivered ultimately not solve the problem but a conflict of interest in the community (interview with informant C, 7/6/2011).

Mass media rather than exaggerate the real situation. Here's an interview with the informant:

The media in reporting on the news about the environment is still less open and just exaggerate the news. The media reported only exaggerate the existing condition and did not correspond to reality. The news media in terms of social politics, the preaching is still excessive and did not correspond with what is actually happening. This problem never should have happened, because the best news that should be like what actually happened (interview with informant D, 22/5/2011).

It is unfortunate that by the informant that the mass media is still in its early stages just preaching. Not arrive at solutions to problems. The following interview excerpt:

It should media provide solutions to problems that exist today. The solution is very necessary to overcome the problems that exist today. Mass media today just preach the politics of social problems alone. Meanwhile, for solutions rather than problems is explained and described. Rarely there is a media that provide solutions to social problems that exist (interview with informant E, 10/6/2011).

Mass media in the present is still less neutral, still partial to special interests. The following interview excerpt:

The news media in reporting still less neutral and still is ordered. Depending on who paid whom, the media coverage now is not neutral and can be paid. If the big pay off, then, the news could change. We hope that the news could be more neutral for the public interest. In my opinion, from a variety of media such as television and the internet on news has not been neutral about the sociopolitical and also explains the root of the problem. No interference of other parties in the reports, and that's not good because they are neutral. Though the news should be neutral, so that all the problems became apparent not covered. So for the future, problems can be done right (interview with informant F, 8/6/2011).

Finally, the results of interviews with informants also found that media reporting social life is still lacking many, many more political issues. Here's a statement rather than between informants:

The media in reporting social issues is still lacking a lot right now. Still more, who preach about politics, while for social problems is still very little. In fact, so many social problems that must be preached. Now this is all the news is mostly political news, if most of the political intrigue and talk (interview with informant G, 31/5/2011).

## CONCLUSION

The role of mass media in reporting social and cultural issues are very important, but the mass media in reporting political and social issues are still not as expected by the public. Mass media in social and political issues are still looking for sensationalism, exaggeration of actual conditions, not to provide solutions, not neutral, still lacking a lot in the news about the socio-political matters, and although there is a new innovation in the news but still need to develop more creativity.

It is desirable, the new changes in the mass media in Indonesia. Especially at this time, we recognize the existence of new media which should give enlightenment to the mass media in Indonesia. Enlightenment and renewal that is expected is that with the new media in Indonesia would lead to a much coverage than the news that is not neutral and only give a mere sensation. Preaching is not neutral and is just looking for sheer sensation is very important to be kept, so that better coverage will be achieved is the only side with the preaching of the truth. So that the mass media will remain a social control in society, and cannot be intervened by any party. Because the goal of new media is the truth and justice in society.

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