

COMPETITION FOR PUBLIC INFLUENCER IN THE NEW DEMOCRATIC ERA (ONLINE NEWS MEDIA STRATEGY IN MONOPOLISING POLITICAL COMMUNICATION)

¹Indra Prawira, ²Rahmat Edi Irawan

Abstract: The media or press is losing its monopoly over the dissemination of information between the public and political actors as communication becomes more personal ([Chaffee & Metzger, 2001](#)). Therefore, it could be assumed that the mainstream media is less influential in constructing public opinion, especially in determining public agendas through the news. This phenomenon invites debate about whether the media will continue to decline due to the loss of its function mass communication ([Chaffee & Metzger, 2001](#)) or it will be just 'business as usual' ([Weimann et al, 2014](#)). This paper adopts Bourdieu's cultural production theory, the social theory of journalism and agenda-setting theory to understand the "struggle" of legacy media in maintaining their position in mass communication in Indonesia election 2017. Data is derived from published news, ethnographical studies of news-making practices and interviews with 30 news staff from three Indonesian online news outlets. It can be concluded that, firstly, journalists were dominant in determining agenda setting during the Indonesia elections in 2017. Secondly, journalists continue to influence the news agenda in the media by conducting traditional methods emphasizing skills, credibility, and journalistic ethics. Journalists are using new methods way to maintain their place in the status quo by engaging with social media to shape public opinion and via the certification of individual journalists and media organisation.

Keywords: Political communication; The journalistic field; Indonesian journalism; Cultural Reproduction; Media struggle, Social theory of journalism; Agenda-Setting theory.

1. Introduction

The media or press is losing its monopoly over the dissemination of information between the public and political actors because they are competing with citizen journalists. The development of the Internet over the last three decades is seen as a major factor that has led to such a phenomenon. However, researchers see these conditions as an opportunity to increase the development of democratic media spaces ([Gilmor 2006](#); [Coleman & Ross, 2010](#); [Prasad, 2017](#)). Scholars believe that the Internet can accommodate citizen involvement in the construction of news ([Allan, 2006](#); [Gilmor 2006](#); [Quinn & Lamble, 2008](#); [Lindner & Larson,](#)

¹Bina Nusantara University, Jakarta, Indonesia, Email: iprawira@yahoo.com

²Bina Nusantara University, Jakarta, Indonesia

2017; [Kim, 2016](#)). In the same vein, [Kaufhold and colleagues \(2010\)](#) have said that citizens can influence political discourse and the political involvement of the public.

The optimism about journalism conducted by citizens (CJ) is increasing as empirical evidence shows that CJ is capable of replacing the role of journalists in shaping public opinion and in political communication in a democratic environment ([Allan, 2006](#); [Gilmor, 2006](#)) and in the context of an authoritarian state ([Wall & Zahed, 2015](#)). [Chaffee and Metzger \(2001\)](#) argued that mainstream media are less influential in constructing public opinion, especially in determining the public agenda through the news. Researchers have identified that journalists are threatened by this phenomenon and are making efforts to maintain the status quo or to continue 'business as usual' ([Weimann et al. 2014](#)). Journalists conduct professional activities to compete with citizen journalists by adopting CJ themselves. Recent studies by [Domingo \(2011\)](#) and [Allan and Peters \(2015\)](#) have shown that professional journalists have incorporated elements of CJ into their own reportage. According to [Carlson \(2015\)](#), professional journalists still maintain their autonomy in the adoption of CJ. Other researchers argue that CJ has been co-opted by the culture and conventions of mainstream media ([Wall, 2015](#)). Based on the hierarchical relationships present in the editorial structure of the adoption of CJ, researchers have identified that professional journalists determine the nature of the relationship to differentiate themselves from citizen journalists ([Carlson, 2015](#); [Coddington, 2015](#); [Singer, 2015](#)).

The practice of CJ adoption in journalism as in journalism itself, depends on such factors as the type of media system concerned ([Siebert et al. 1956](#); [Hallin & Mancini 2004](#); [Yin, 2008](#)), the effect of economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2005), and social processes that occur during the transition to democracy ([McQuail, 2013](#); [Voltmer, 2014](#)). As [McQuail \(2013\)](#) argued, the conditions of journalism are highly dependent on the environment in which it is practiced, and so it is necessary to conduct empirical studies of CJ in particular national settings.

This paper fills a gap in research on journalism in new democratic countries, which surprisingly, has received little attention by scholar of journalism ([Voltmer, 2014](#)). The present research was conducted during the election in 2017 in Indonesia from January to March 2017. This study has two aims. First, based on a study of three national online news media, we examine which parties gained control in setting the media agenda during the election. It is argued that journalists made efforts to maintain the status quo, and therefore the second aim of this paper is to identify the traditional and new modes of journalistic practice used to maintain the journalistic status quo.

2. Citizen Journalism and Political Communication

Technology and the Internet have provided an opportunity for anyone to conduct journalistic activities ([Allan, 2006](#); [Gilmor, 2006](#); [Lindner & Larson, 2017](#)). [Gilmor \(2006\)](#) illustrated that the contributions of CJ to democratic development could revolutionize journalism and the political establishment in a country. In South Korea, the Ohmynews website, whose content is largely produced by citizen reporters, has been acknowledged to have won a contest with the mainstream media in influencing public opinion during the Presidential

Election in the country in 2002. Ohmynews was driven by 35,000 citizen reporters at the time, and favoured an untipped, Roh Moo Hyun, reformer who was given less attention by mainstream news media. Oh Yeon Ho, founder of Ohmynews, said that this “success” legitimized the idea that citizen reporters are equal to professional journalists who work for the mainstream media. According to Oh, professional news culture has eroded journalism and now every citizen can be a reporter to resurrect the values of journalism ([Allan, 2006](#)).

The motivations of citizen reporters in terms of political purposes also appear in the absence of professional journalism, such as when Syria became part of the Arab Spring in 2011. In an authoritarian system, the Syrian government tightly controlled the media, thus limiting the freedom of journalistic practice ([Wall & Zahed, 2015](#)). Wall and Zahed identified the activities of citizen journalists as the "new pop-up news", which tends to emerge when a country experiences rapid and dramatic political change resulting in conflicts such as those in Iraq and Burma. In Syria, dozens of citizen reporters successfully created reports adopting the formats used by professional journalists. The citizen reporters' reportage was then connected to global news networks, generally through YouTube and Facebook. On the other hand, these activities of citizen reporters are considered life threatening, and many citizen reporters have been killed while reporting. Nevertheless, such activities of Syrian citizen reporter are believed to be the foundation for change in a media system that had been in effect a government monopoly, as well as changes in political communication in the new media era. As [Goode \(2009\)](#) argued, CJ not only affects the public agenda through peer-to-peer information sharing, but also interferes with the agendas of professional media settings. This confirms the conclusion of [Kaufhold and colleagues \(2010\)](#) that CJ can influence political discourse and the political involvement of the public.

Similarly, [Mutsvauro et al. \(2014\)](#) found that the sense of social responsibility among citizen journalists fosters the emerging networked public sphere. Some researchers are optimistic that the rapid growth of CJ in the era of the Internet and digital developments will foster the development of civil space. The optimism about journalism becoming more democratic is increasing as journalism becomes more open to CJ ([Domingo et al. 2008](#)) and integrates citizen participation in everyday practice ([Domingo, 2011](#), [Bossio & Bebawi, 2016](#)).

2.1 The Agenda Setting Of the Media

Political actors have been important news sources for the media in political news coverage. Political actors provide leaks, and give their views through interviews and press conferences as news material for the media to influence the agenda setting in the media ([McNair, 2011](#)). In an era of an abundance of information, the power of political actors is less influential in setting the agenda of the media. According to [Swanson \(2005\)](#), journalists increasingly try to shape the agenda concerning political issues to show their autonomy. There is competition between media and political actors to win public consent and legitimating in the same political arena. Political actors have long recognised that news items can potentially reach millions of voters and they always try to influence news making. However, the media increasingly refuse the efforts of political actors to influence the news and instead develop

information that is different from that which the political actors provide (Zaller, 1997, cited in [Swanson, 2005](#)).

Theories of political communication change over time, especially before and after the presence of a greater abundance of media, digital communication, and the Internet ([Blumler, 2015](#)). New theories have emerged in this digital era, such as the theory of voice, of the actor's role and holistic and normative perspectives. However, agenda setting, priming, and framing are still important theories of the media in analysing political communication ([Blumler, 2015](#)). These three concepts are considered capable of showing the characteristics of the ways journalism organizes, interprets, and shapes political realities. The theory of agenda setting, for example, still plays an important role in media studies of newly democratic countries ([Shaw, 2007](#), [Tapsell, 2015](#)). The media conduct the selection, production, and interpretation of the reality of society. In selection, what is considered important is reported and that which is not deemed important or less important is ignored. The same process is conducted in presenting political reality before the audience consumes information, which is known as the agenda setting of the media ([Shaw, 2007](#)). This agenda setting is operationalised in two ways: using depth of coverage in a negative or positive way, and with the frequency of media coverage of specific issues ([McComb & Shaw, 1972](#), [Shaw, 2007](#), [Djuyandi et al. 2017](#)).

In choosing and displaying news, editors, newsroom staff, and broadcasters play an important part in shaping political reality ([McCombs & Shaw, 1972](#)). [Harcup and Oneil \(2016\)](#) argued that journalists share the same understanding in determining the news value in a story. News value is a reflection of the kind of information the audience wants, a reflection of media organisations, sociological and cultural norms, and economic factors. According to Harcup and Oneil, in a news organisation, journalists have different levels of power in determining the newsworthiness of information. Journalists decide the quality and quantity of information about an issue to make their audience attach to the issues. With agenda setting, the mass media direct the public in what to think, and [McNair \(2002\)](#) said that public agendas and political agendas are shaped by the news agenda.

2.2 Citizen Journalism and Cultural Production

A number of studies have begun to examine the practice of journalism in adopting CJ ([Paulussen & Ugille, 2008](#); [Domingo, 2011](#); [Kammer, 2013](#)). However, [Bourdieu \(1998\)](#) said that, to understand the practice of journalism as cultural production, one should recognise the power relations which exist in the field. Bourdieu's field theory is considered useful in exploring media organisational routines and journalistic practice because it understands that a field is a network or a configuration that sees the relationships between positions objectively ([Lindell, 2015](#); [Lindner & Larson, 2017](#)).

Bourdieu argued that the journalistic field is considered to be highly influenced by economic capital, which he called "heteronomous" ([Bourdieu, 1998](#)). However, [Lindner and Larson \(2017\)](#) argued that, in the new media era, the cultural capital of journalism has changed as other outlets, which have an equal position in the field, challenge journalism. They illustrated

how journalism is a "site of struggle" with other information outlets and providers of different types of news coverage.

According to [Bourdieu \(1986\)](#), cultural capital appears in three forms; namely, embodied, objectified, and institutionalised states. In the embodied state, Bourdieu emphasises that cultural capital is assumed to exist within a person and in the process of representation. This process is accomplished by the investor personally (it cannot be delegated) and it takes time. Cultural capital is integrated into the habitus of a person and cannot be directly transmitted to others. Examples of embodied cultural capital are skills, dialect, and personality. Cultural capital in the objectified state occurs when the embodied cultural capital of agent/agents is represented in the form of objects and media such as paintings, monuments, and instruments. Cultural capital affects the ability of an agent to compete in a field. The quality of cultural capital is shown by the agent through proven training or academic qualifications which are called the institutionalised state of cultural capital. This objectification of cultural capital is also used to distinguish between self-learned training from legally guaranteed qualifications. A certificate of cultural competence is required because, under the usual conventions, the holders of academic cultural capital are deemed to have better qualifications to compete in the field, even though their ability depends on the time and effort devoted to academic investment.

2.3 *New Democracy in Indonesia*

Indonesia is a republic that managed to liberate itself from colonialism in 1945 after having been dominated by the Dutch for more than 350 years. Located in Southeast Asia, Indonesia neighbours Singapore and Malaysia to the north and Australia to the south, meaning that the country is situated on an important trade route. Indonesia is the largest country in the region, covering 1.9 million squares kilometres of land and the archipelago is split into more than 16,000 islands. Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world with around 250 million people, making it the third largest democratic country in the world after the USA and India. In 2014, Indonesia's Central Statistics Agency (Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia = BPS) listed Indonesia's territory as being divided into 34 provinces, 98 cities, and 416 districts ([BPS, 2014](#)).

Some scholars have praised the development of the Internet since it is assumed to support the furthering of democracy in Indonesia ([Sen & Hill, 2000](#); [Lim, 2002](#)) and they support the development of online news media, which have interactive characteristics ([Quinn & Lamble, 2008](#); [Margianto & Saefullah, 2012](#)). Researchers have argued that the Internet accommodates the involvement of citizens in the construction of news ([Allan, 2006](#); [Quinn & Lamble, 2008](#); [Lindner & Larson, 2017](#)). In Indonesia, the presence of online news media is also expected to lead to diversification in the ownership of news media and to challenge the monopoly of information in constructing public opinion ([Lim, 2013](#)). The interactive nature of online news media is necessary in the development of Indonesia's democracy because it can accommodate citizens in engaging with politics through social-media platforms. With about 250 million inhabitants, the country is listed as having the second-largest population of Facebook users and the fourth-largest of Twitter users worldwide ([Freedom House, 2016](#)).

Even though Indonesia has entered a period of reform that is supposed to guarantee freedom of speech, the legal system in Indonesia does not yet fully support the freedom of the press ([Margiyono, 2010](#)). In the period 2008-2015, Article 27 of the Law of Information and Electronic Transactions (ITE Law) has been used against at least 74 citizens ([Detik, 2015](#)). In 2014 the Ministry of Communication and Information (Kominfo) launched campaigns to censor the Internet and social media. The spread of negative content has led the Indonesian government to start selectively banning pornographic, religious, and political content in cyberspace ([Yangyue, 2014](#)). Some content providers like Netflix, Tumblr and Telegrams have been banned from operating in Indonesia for these reasons. According to Freedom on the Net, censorship has made Indonesia only partly free in terms of free expression on the Internet ([Freedom House, 2016](#)).

In addition to government censorship, journalists themselves also exert control over news content. Indonesian media actively set their own agenda ([Djuyandi et al, 2017](#)) and journalists agreed to conduct self-censorship systematically by forming the Cyber News Writing Guidelines (Pedoman Penulisan Berita Siber). The focus of self-censorship is mainly on racist and religious content ([Margianto & Saefullah, 2012](#)) in order to avoid legal problems and to serve the interests of media business ([Margiyono, 2009](#)).

2.4 Defamation Case against the Governor of DKI Jakarta

The leadership of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) as Governor of the province and capital city of Indonesia, DKI Jakarta, has been praised as a symbol of the development of Democratization in Indonesia. Ahok is Christian-Chinese, which makes him a double minority member, who surprisingly gained the broad support of DKI Jakarta citizens which are majority indigenous Muslim. However, Ahok was never elected as governor but rather his position was inherited from the previous governor Joko Widodo (Jokowi). Ahok was previously the deputy governor who paired with Jokowi in the 2012 election. In 2014, Governor Jokowi won the election to become the President of Indonesia and left the seat to Ahok. Nevertheless, in two years as the governor of DKI Jakarta, Ahok's popularity was increased and he was supported in his wish to stay in office for the next term. Ahok gained support through a social movement in which people collecting their copy of identity card (Kartu Tanda Penduduk = KTP). This campaign was targeted at reaching one million copies of KTP. Public support was also shown through various social media such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube ([Sinaga, 2015](#)). However, Ahok rejected to continue his leadership as governor of DKI Jakarta by groups of people commanded by Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam = FPI). For these Islamic organisations, Muslims are forbidden to elect a non-Muslim as leader because it is contrary to the commandments of the Quran Surat Al-Maidah, verse 51. However, the interpretation of this verse varies among Indonesian Muslims. Other Muslims argue that it is not forbidden to appoint a non-Muslim as leader. At his working visit in Pramuka Island on 27 September 2016 Ahok mentioned that Al-maidah verse 51 is used as a tool to defeat him in election. He said,

"So don't believe in [that] people, it is possible that in deep in your heart you don't want to elect me [to be the next governor]. [You are] misled by [people] using [Quran] Surah Al-Maidah verse 51. All kinds like it. That is your rights [not to choose me].
(viva.co.id 2017)

The statement was recorded on a video and was then posted on the official DKI Jakarta website. The video maker Buni Yani also uploaded the video into his personal Facebook account to make it go viral on social media and provoke Muslims and Islamic organisations to sue Ahok in a defamation case. Ahok was reported to the police by 14 parties and, since October 6, 2016 the prosecutors have been working on the case to bring Ahok to a first court appearance on December 13, 2016.

Ahok's case was being processed during his campaign rallies in the DKI Jakarta elections of 2017. On the sidelines of the legal process, the Islamic organisations that demand that Ahok be imprisoned managed to mobilize the masses in rallies called 'Islamic Defence Action' in Jakarta city which started on 4 September 2016 and continued until 5 May 2017. Of the seven rallies, the marches on 2 December 2016 which were known as '212' the largest, involving million of people. The social movement to sue Ahok to be imprisoned is also active in the social media world such as on Twitter and Facebook. [Allan \(2006\)](#) observed that the citizens of Indonesia who support Ahok and their opponents conduct a hashtag war on Twitter in the form of #tangkapahok (arrest Ahok) and #penjarakanahok (imprison Ahok).

Although rejected by many groups of people, Ahok and his partner Djarot still had the support of most residents of Jakarta in the 15 February 2017 gubernatorial elections, gaining 42.99% of the total vote. However, the elections needed to proceed to a run-off because no candidate had achieved more than 50% + 1 vote. In the second round of the elections on 19 April 2017, Ahok/Djarot lost to Anies/Sandi with percentage votes of 42.05% to 57.95% (KPU, 2017). Ahok was formally the governor of DKI Jakarta until October 2017 but was forced to leave his post early because he was convicted guilty of in the defamation case on May 9, 2017 and sentenced to imprisonment for 2 years.

3. Methodology

The methodology used in this research is divided into two parts. Quantitative method is used to answer the first research question and a qualitative method to answer the second question. The data analysed to answer the first question were collected from the published content of political news before, during, and after the election. We use agenda-setting theory to examine the agenda setting of the media through news content. Agenda-setting concepts are considered capable of showing the ways journalism organizes, interprets, and shapes political realities. At the same time, we are conducted semi-structured interviews with three online news media staff to seek the answer to the second research question. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten participants from each online news media organisation with staff positions spread among the macro-level (management, news directors), meso-level (editors, heads of section) and the micro-level (reporters). As a new phenomenon, the organisational structure of online news media is possibly not formally or fully formed ([Franquet, 2014](#)), and therefore, the interviews were not only conducted with journalists but

also other parties that might also determine their news agenda, such as marketing or IT staff. The data from the interviews was triangulated with documents and a minimum of two weeks of observations of each media organisation.

4. Results

4.1 Agenda-Setting of the Media During the Election of 2017

The first aim of this research is to identify the dominant party in determining news agenda in the reporting of the February 2017 simultaneous election in Indonesia. To achieve the purposes of the research we observed news reports of three national online news media organisations during January to March 2017 including published political news totalling 5,778 items. The first thing we identified is that the three news websites focus on coverage of the election in DKI Jakarta Province even though elections took place in hundreds of other areas simultaneously. A total of 5,174 political news stories or 89.54%, was news about the elections for the province of DKI Jakarta.

Table 1. News reports on Indonesia Elections 2017

Media website	News on DKI Jakarta election	News on other local elections	Total news items
A	1423	215 (13.12%)	1638
B	2828	294 (9.41%)	3122
C	923	95 (9.33 %)	1018

Out of 101 election areas, there are several regions other than DKI Jakarta province that gained the attention of online news media, such as Banten Province, the City of Bekasi, Aceh Province, West Papua Province and West Java Province. Meanwhile, the three pairs of candidates for the DKI Jakarta Province, who were Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono (Agus) / Sylviana Murni (Sylvi), Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) / Djarot Saiful Hidayat (Djarot), and Anies Rasyid Baswedan (Anies) / Sandiaga Salahuddin Uno (Sandi), dominated the reporting in 51.83% of the total news items observed. Agus/Sylvi was the couple who were least reported, with a percentage of 18.01% coverage and Ahok / Djarot as the DKI Jakarta gubernatorial candidates were the most reported (see fig. 1)



Figure 1. Reporting on the DKI Jakarta Gubernatorial Candidates

5. Discussion

News reports of three national online news media organisations on the DKI Jakarta Province election dominated the coverage of the Indonesian elections in 2017 with percentages reaching 89.54% from a total of 5,778 items news items observed. Media centralization in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, has been the focus of the researcher such as Ade Armando. According to him as a result of the concentration of media in Jakarta, media coverage was affected in only cover stories about Jakarta. With the emphasis of the election in DKI Jakarta Province, the media constructed public opinion in the sense that the election in the capital city of Indonesia was more important than the other regional elections. As the Minister's Coordinator of Politics and Security in Indonesia, Wiranto said that the DKI Jakarta election was a barometer for national politics ([Agriesta, 2017](#)).

Some other regional elections also captured the attention of media even though to an insignificant extent. The Banten Province elections received some attention from online news media because Banten geographically neighbours to DKI Jakarta. The elections in Banten also received attention because the incumbent was a celebrity actor, Rano Karno. The same reason also motivated online news media in conducting reports on the city of Bekasi, in which the celebrity singer Ahmad Dhani was one of the contenders. Aceh Province is the easternmost region of Indonesia, while Papua is the westernmost region of Indonesia. However, based on our observations, reports on the elections of these two areas were motivated to show security issues as both regions experienced conflict with separatist movement. What is interesting is that news about the West Java election, scheduled to take place in 2018 received special attention from the three media organisations. News about the West Java election was dominated by information about the Mayor of Bandung, West Java Province. Ridwan Kamil was supported by political parties in attempting to become the new Governor for the following year.

The total news published by the three media organisations during January-March 2017 is focused on reports about individual candidates in the DKI Jakarta election. The online news media are assumed to be strongly influenced by the elite agenda, with the percentage of elite sources reaching 97.53% of the total news items observed. This is shown through news focusing on talking heads from the political elite, the activities of representatives of the candidates and their families, government, elite political organisations, and celebrities. The elite agendas of the three governor and deputy governor candidates gained the most attention. This indicates that online news media follows the logic of previous mainstream newspaper and television media which is highly dependent on the political elite ([McNair, 2011](#)). However, McNair who focused on the role political organisations in determining the news agenda, whereas the news about Indonesia elections in 2017 were dominated by stories about individual politicians. We argue that, even though the political elite was highly reported on by the media, the news construction was mainly driven by the newsworthiness of politicians. In practice, the three media organisations applied the logic of newsworthiness in their production of news ([Harcup & Oneil 2016](#)) such as celebrity, bad news, conflict and surprises. However, in a small proportion of news the media adopted a public agenda,

especially on Twitter such as news on #DebatfinalpilkadaJKT concerning final debate on the Jakarta election or #satunyaJakarta.

5.1 Practice to maintain the status quo

We now examine RQ2: the research questions, which concern the new and traditional modes of news-making practices the journalist used to continue to influence the news agenda. To answer this question we collected qualitative data through observation and semi-structured interviews focusing on cultural production, which involved embodied cultural capital, objectified cultural capital, and institutionalised cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) and the social responsibility of journalism (McQuail, 2013).

From the results of our interviews with online news media staff, we identified the most frequent words employed using the software Nvivo 11. A number of themes were recognised when journalists questioned the differences in practice between them and citizen journalists, such as the law, credibility, responsibility, access, verification, the ethics of journalism, and motivation. In general, participants were aware of the growth of CJ in Indonesia; nevertheless, journalists mentioned citizen journalists as "them", or in other words as not part of the body of journalists. Journalists recognised that citizen journalists are capable of influencing public opinion, and one of the journalists considered them as rival.

"...so journalists are getting more and more rivals" (interview J1, 2017).

The journalists drew a boundary line when asked further questions about the differences between journalists and citizen journalists. These boundaries are described as follows;

5.2 Embodied cultural capital

Journalists emphasise professionalism in order to maintain their autonomy from media proprietors and especially government. The majority of participants stated that they also needed to retain their autonomy in spite of the pressure of citizen journalists. The participants considered that citizen journalists are not professional and they mentioned the differences between them and citizen journalists in such areas as skills in understanding and applying journalistic ethics, and skills in information verification, credibility, and access. Journalists urgently need access to information, and access to verify any information they get in producing news, especially in political news. All of the journalists were aware that they needed to verify all information obtained. Verification has been cited as one of the boundaries between journalists and CJs as journalists think that CJs do not share the same ethics and capability. Verification is more important more than ever because, in the Internet era, information includes fake information, which is spread abundance. To verify information, journalists use their access to the public, political leaders, and the government, to whom CJs do not have access. Journalists believe that they will win the competition in influencing public opinion because CJs are not credible. These professional journalistic capabilities could be considered as part of the traditional way to distinguish journalists from other information producers.

5.3 Objectified Cultural Capital

A common view amongst the participants was that good quality news could win public attention. Researchers acknowledge that journalists actively building boundaries between themselves and citizen journalists ([Carlson, 2015](#); [Coddington 2015](#); [Singer, 2015](#)) and [Ornebring \(2013\)](#) argued that one of the efforts used is to improve the quality of news content. However, some of participants were also concerned about the recent practices of online news media production, which relies on individual events related to the DKI Jakarta gubernatorial candidates. One of the participants said that they needed to develop the quality of online news, which he called contextual journalism. Contextual journalism is intended to mean journalism that is based on the basic purpose of journalism, which is to enlighten the people (Basheer et al., 2019; Khan et al., 2020). With contextual journalism, journalists are forced to create news along with its context. News not only tells of the events that occur but also provides background or offers analysis of those events. Contextual journalism is in line with what [Bourdieu \(2005\)](#) means by the autonomy of journalism which is free from outside pressures such as the political economy. Emphasising the quality of news to create boundaries between journalists and citizen journalists is an old way to maintain the journalistic status quo. However, this process is always challenging because the field of journalism is a dynamic field that is easily influenced by powers of outside itself ([Bourdieu, 2005](#)).

5.4 Institutionalise d cultural capital

One of the most important things that journalists mentioned about the differences between them and citizen journalists is their legal status. The majority of participants said that citizen activities are not protected by law when they take part in journalistic activities because the Republic of Indonesia Law (Press Law number 40 of 1999) explicitly states that the press must be formed as a legal entity or corporation. Legal protection allows journalists to have the necessary access to perform their journalistic activities. For this reason respondent J26 said that journalists have the right to obtain information from public officials and any activities that prohibit journalists from doing so are considered to be against the law. To institutionalise boundaries between them and citizen journalists, journalists cite the legal status of the qualifications of their organisations and themselves. The institutionalised cultural capital of both organisation and the individual is shown through the certification issued by the Press Council. The individual certification aims to set the standards for the competency of journalists at several levels; namely young journalists, intermediate journalists, and primary journalists.

This individual certification was not previously popular, but in recent years many media organisations and especially the national media based in Jakarta, have encouraged its journalist staff to take a series of examinations to get certification as well as to get their organisations certified. In February 2017 online news media organisations gathered to create rules to redefine journalism. Journalist set qualifying standards for press organisations through the certification of the Press Council. In May 2017, online news media online organisations also collectively declared the format of the Indonesian Cyber Media Association (Asosiasi Media Siber Indonesia = AMSI). The institutionalization of cultural

capital is a new way of maintaining the status quo of journalist especially for online news media journalists, who only recently have become new members of the journalistic corps.

5.5 Social responsibility

In political communication, the journalists realised that the public in conveying their political messages uses social media and so they considered involvement in that new public sphere. A majority of participants realised the importance of social media in increasing readership and as a medium to deliver news. The number of followers in social media is becoming a new power of the media to be commoditised and used for the purposes of media politics.

Concerns were expressed by participants when they realised that they are losing their monopoly in constructing public opinion, especially in Ahok's case. According to the journalists, during the elections of 2017, the news reports could not compete with the information spread on social media, which demanded the imprisonment of Ahok. One participant (J16) admitted that the media were overwhelmed by the spread of information in a mass mobilisation. However, J16 also used social media and online news media followers to spread the campaign #jakartadamai (Peace Jakarta). According to J16, the rallies were very likely to cause conflict between people and to endanger the government's position. Therefore, they needed to do something to shape public opinion during the rallies. J6 acknowledged that a hash-tag campaign is not a journalistic activity, but the action was encouraged by a sense of social responsibility. As [McQuail \(2013\)](#) said, in time of crisis or emergency, the media are expected to voluntarily cooperate with authorities. The media has always been dominant in shaping public opinion through news stories, but the use of hash-tag campaigns is a new way to shape public opinion.

6. Conclusion

To conclude, the quantitative content of published news during the 2017 elections in Indonesia indicate that the elite agendas were a strong influence on the news. Three online news media organisations investigated in the study focused on DKI Jakarta governor and deputy governor candidates with the incumbent Ahok/Djarot being the most reported. However, we argue that journalists are still dominant in determining the news by selecting stories about DKI Jakarta Governor Candidates according to newsworthiness. Public agendas such as news from ordinary citizens, communities, and activists received little attention from the online news media, equals to 2.47% of total news items.

Journalists limited the access of citizens to become involved in constructing political news during the Indonesia elections in 2017 and regarded citizen journalists as rivals in influencing public opinion. The strategies of journalists in maintaining the status quo were conducted traditional and new ways. The traditional way used embodied cultural capital, which Emphasise s professionalism, such as the skills, credibility, and code of ethics journalists, and objectified cultural capital by developing contextual journalism. Institutionalise d cultural capital through the certification of individual journalists, media organisation certification, and public opinion via interaction in social media are new ways to maintain the status quo of Indonesian journalists. Future research could usefully explore the extent to which these

factors can be identified in the output of other type of news and in different political-economic contexts.

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