

Independence of Journalist in Facing Advertiser's Sources (Case Study: Commodification of Workers in TOP Newspaper)

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Abstract—Today's world has entered the age of digital communication so that all the information is easy to find with just a little touch of a finger on a gadget. Ultimately forcing conventional media companies both print and electronics have to converge or melt into an easily accessible, internet-based format. The impact of media companies no longer rely on the results of print sales or content, but now rely on revenue coming from advertising. So the company did a variety of ways to survive, including committing a press worker to hunt for a advertisement. The purpose of this study is to describe the commodification of the worker who is looking for advertisement type of reporter in TOP Newspaper/media and its relation to pressure for journalists. **Research Method:** The critical paradigm with qualitative method. **Results:** There has been a commodification of workers involving journalists in searching for advertisements in five models: as facilitators, advertising agencies, newspaper sellers, lobbyists and brokers. Most prominent in the commodification of journalists in the TOP Newspaper is as a facilitator or a spearhead of the negotiations between companies with potential sources of advertising. The implication of independence and professionalism of journalists in making journalistic work is influenced by both external and internal commercial purposes. **Conclusion:** there has been commodification in a number of press publishing companies that using journalists to get a bonus through advertising.

Keywords—Commodity Journalist; Advertiser; Independence

I. INTRODUCTION

Today's world has entered the age of digital communication so that all information is easy to find with just a touch of a gadget or smartphone. This fact forces conventional media companies both print and electronic to converge or melt into an easily accessible, internet-based format.

The presence of Integrated Networking (Internet) becomes a window of information and knowledge that can be easily accessed by anyone, anywhere at a low cost and free. Including conventional media companies such as print media are forced to change their products from printed form to e-paper or e-magazine, as well as electronic media to provide TV or radio streaming services.

So media companies no longer rely on print or content sales, but now rely on revenue coming from advertising.

Therefore, the company made various ways to survive, such as committing press workers to find and get ads.

In the end, the media companies is strongly influenced by the success of corporate strategy in finding and managing advertising. So it can be said that advertising is the main source of livelihood for its existence. All periodic, printed media, such as newspapers, tabloids, and magazines, as well as electronic media, such as television and radio and online compete in order to obtain advertising.

Fred S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm conclude [1]:

As advertising became increasingly important to newspapers, people perceived it as an evil force that tarnished news columns and which caused editors to get rid of news items that did not benefit the giant advertisers. This is the view of Upton Sinclair in *The Brass Check* in 1919 and Goerge Seldes in *The Freedom of The Press* in 1935.

So it can be said every millimeter per column from inside every newspaper sheet contains commercial value. As a result if there is advertising, then a number of news or editorial writings had to be postponed or removed, even though the news is up to date, (current). This condition often makes the editor feel as though the editorial space is getting smaller.

On the other hand a journalist must maintain independence and professionalism in work, for that he will always strive for reports or news can be loaded immediately and on time. Similarly for factual, accurate, neutral, balanced, and fair reports are a demand of a journalist's competence.

However, the reality is often that idealism stumbles or must be synergized with the interests of the company in managing newspapers as a commercial institution that must gain profit to still exist.

At this time many media, especially newspapers, who sell the issue at a price not greater than the cost of production. The amount of production costs that include employee salaries, distribution fees, agent commissions and so on, are forced to be subsidized from advertising costs.

As acknowledged by the TOP Newspaper Manager AS, the price stated in TOP Newspaper Rp3.000 / copies of News that only covers printing costs Rp1.450 and the rest for agent

commissions and shipping costs. While for other production costs, such as salary, honorarium, operational and others rely heavily on input from advertising.

Admittedly, the same thing also occurs in major newspapers, such as Kompas valued Rp3.500 / copies with pure printing costs Rp2.500 and the rest for agency commissions or shipping costs. Even sometimes Kompas, often provide bonuses or incentives to the agents to be motivated to carry out their duties. All of that is certainly the source of funding from advertising.

Currently there is a phenomenon of symptoms in the field, journalists who become the spearhead redaction in searching for news, allegedly directly or indirectly, oral or verbal is expected to be able to find and get ads as much as they can.

This is happening in a number of national print media, marked by the presence of journalists who often ask informant to advertise, both in the form of display and advertorial. The journalist did so because it has been obliged or appealed by the company.

Thus journalists deliberately involved in finding advertising, both affirmed in the formal policy of the company and orally (face to face) between superiors and subordinates. Similarly as technical of the implementation, can be directly involved in negotiating with the informant as well as prospective advertisers or simply to make way to the advertising division by introducing with the informant.

On the other hand, the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) has called on journalists to uphold professionalism, uphold ethics, and take up a position of defending public interests above the interests of affiliated companies or organizations.

AJI's appeal reflects on the Journalistic Code of Ethics (KEJ) Article 1, namely Indonesian Journalists being independent, producing accurate, balanced, and unflattering news. Which is, in carrying out their duties, journalists must be independent and have no motivation to seek profit or other commercial purposes, such as requesting advertisements from informant.

Its a very huge capitalism or capitalist power that has the freedom to organize and determine the contents of a media publishing. Even now, advertising is not only able to shift the results of editorial work but also affect the editorial content policy that becomes aligned to the advertiser.

With the inclusion of capitalism into the realm of editorial policy of the media, the consequences of the media must provide benefits to investors, so that indirectly affect the performance of the field of editors, especially journalists to no longer just write news or information from the informant, but has shifted its role as income seekers by hunting ads.

Based on the fact that journalists have become an important part, that is deliberately involved in the search process of advertising, then the question arises as to how the change of function of journalists from information seekers shifted into ad hunters? How does the burden of seeking revenue for the company affect the independence and professionalism of journalists?

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses Case Study method with qualitative approach. Case Study by Christine Daymon, Immy Holloway has the goal of increasing knowledge of contemporary communications events that are real in context [2]. Questions about how and why certain things happen in a particular situation, or 'What's going on here?' Being of primary importance when choosing this research approach.

The research on advertising journalists in Jakarta with professionalism as a Case Study is done through data collection and interview, observation and investigation. While Key Informant in this research is a number of journalists who allegedly seek and get ads incorporated in a daily national newspaper TOP company published in the New Order era, during the reign of President Soeharto 1974.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As usual a journalist will certainly maintain the idealism and professionalism. Therefore it will be a question when it is found the phenomenon of advertisers hunters reporters either openly or secretly for the sake of company survival and seek additional income. Reality in the field can certainly affect the performance of journalists, where in carrying out their duties must promote independence and professionalism.

The political economy of the media puts ideological dependence on economic power and directs the research's attention to empirical analysis of the ownership structure and mechanism of the forces of the media market. One of the disadvantages of a political-economic approach is that the elements of media in political control are not so easily explained in terms of the mechanism of free market work.

Although this approach focuses on the media as an economic process that produces commodities (content), this approach then gives rise to a variety of exciting new approaches, namely the variety of approaches that the media actually create audiences in the sense that the media directs the audience's attention to advertisers and shapes the behavior public media to some extent. Mosco, Vincent. (2009). [3]

Then Henry Subiakto and Rachmah Ida that in the development of the press is no longer merely as a social and political institution [4]. The press has become a business ground and a place of business. Many economic actors are beginning to penetrate the press sector with various economic and political interests.

Furthermore Vincent Mosco says 'the particular form that the product takes when it is the principal of transforming use value into exchange value' is the process of converting supply and services into commodities or merchandise as a means to profit (how to convert value into value exchange) [5].

So it is explained that the process of commodification is closely related to the product, while the production process closely with the function or the use of its workers. Workers have become commodities and have been commodified by the owners. Thus commodification is a form of commercialization of all forms of value from human-made.

But the reality of commodification is not only the motive of owners, but also because of the initiative of its own workers (journalists). As well as the phenomenon of journalists who seek additional activities by becoming an advertiser, brokers and brokers. Surely the existence of an advertisement hunt journalist can help additional revenue for the company.

The phenomenon of commodification of press workers (journalists) is not only due to external factors that are due to the pressure of the owners or the needs of the company. But on the other hand according to Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese (1991) there is also an internal reason from within the individual journalists themselves. [6]

With the reason internally that the journalist seeks to maintain relationships with sources. But this closeness is exploited by the company as it happens in TOP's daily newspaper by asking journalists to become facilitators and lobbyists in getting the advertising that should be the job of the marketing division.

While from the external side of the TOP editors ask all journalists to seek to get advertising either from informant, companies or agencies where the place the journalist assigned (posted). The compensation is when reporters get ads then will get a commission and award, otherwise if not able to contribute (generate ads), it will be rotated or mutated.

Instructions from the company was given by the leaders, in order journalists to become proactive to search for advertisements, statement by TOP Editor-in-Chief, BR, to journalists during the meeting, so that journalists can get closer to the informant persons in their respective posts (ministries, SOEs and so on) in the hope that the informant would advertise. "Actually there is no policy in writing that requires reporters to seek advertising for the company, but only in the form of an appeal, so that journalists support by make way or introduce to the informant. Even better if you can directly advertise through journalists," Says Manager TOP, SF.

IV. CONCLUSION

The reason for the TOP newspaper company to use reporters as an ad searcher, because it is considered more effective, flexible in finding ads than the marketing department. Effective because journalists have a closer relationship with advertisers, either informant, company or agency. Flexible in terms of pricing or advertising rates because reporters tend to be good at negotiating with advertisers.

In contrast, advertisers using the services of journalists are far more profitable and easy to compare than through the marketing department, in addition to tax avoidance reasons, administrative costs, time efficiency or the advertising agency will benefit more.

The consequences for an ad-track journalist will find themselves a heavy burden of work and pressure, inevitably they also need to keep good relationships with advertisers by often making coverage client. Even often assigned to make advertorial adverts for free when it is the task of the marketing division.

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