Conference Paper

Female Politicians Representation's in Corruption Cases in Online News

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Abstract

Despite having thirty per cent quota of parliamentary seats, women in fact are only able to fill up the quota amount of 23 per cent. This certainly has a great influence for women's active participation in politics in most countries worldwide. In Indonesia, the image of women's roles associated with politics is statistically unfavorable. With a strong patriarchal system, men still have a bigger role in politics rather than women. The images of female political actors also still tend to be flawed. Woman makes headlines in politics when she becomes the object of scandal. On the other hand stereotypes and gender bias between men and women will always exist in the mass media. Stereotypes are used to describe the social categories of men and women. In the news, text can be seen how media and journalists use gender categories in political news. This research uses discourse analysis method in online news text. The analysis focuses on the usage of language in the social context. By using the concept of text analysis, it can be seen how the news about women politicians depicted in the form of writing or discourse. The theory used in this research is Stuart Hall's representation. Using the concept of representation from Stuart Hall, it could be seen that online news portals have a gender bias in reporting corruption cases of female political actors. Through representation, the meaning was produced and exchanged among members of society and displaying distinctive images for female political actors in Indonesia.

Keywords: women in politic, online media, online news, gender bias, female politician

1. Introduction

Since the concept of gender emerged, the massive role of women in development is undeniable. In politics, which is mostly related to men, women aspiration has been recognized as well, although not in all aspect. Country which follows patriarchy system, men tend to dominate women and women are always considered as the second class citizen. Thus, it elicits the distribution of the field work on women since men are the one who make decision, in a family, as well as in the workplace. With patriarchy value, women's opportunity is limited. It is portrayed in Indonesia politic, though many women take part on it, their role is still limited.

In Indonesia, the representation of women in public related to politics is statistically disappointing. It can be seen from the result of election from year to year. The role of

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women in politics, in the top pyramid of government field is still dominated by men. It does not mean that there is no female figure in politics and leadership in government, yet the number of female is still remarkably imbalance compared to male figure and leader. Meanwhile, statistically, the number of the citizen shows that there are more female than male.

The finding of Woman Research Institute (WRI) in 2012 also showed that the performance of women in legislative had not shown because they were still trapped in administrative procedure role and party's interest [1]. Journal of Indonesian Women [1] indicated that most of female legislative candidate did not have proper capacity and basic knowledge in politics and politic organization. In other side, there is a tendency of media to show some of female legislators suspected in corruption without analyzing further why they tend to involved in corruption cycle. Meanwhile, media put less attention on women achievement where they give strategic contribution in legislative.

The disproportional report creates negative public opinion toward female legislators. Of course it effects on the bad image on the role of women in general, specifically in legislative. The negative image inevitably implicates on the decrease of public trust on them. Corruption cases involving female legislators shows that they have not realized that the real meaning of being a people's representative is to struggle for women welfare in grassroots which should be their main aim when holding a position in legislative [1].

In Twitter, one of the male politicians still becomes a headline compare to five female politicians combined. Some research in twitter account which observed six newspapers and three television channels stated that men are more often being mentioned in twitter compared to women. From that research, it can be concluded that gender matters in mainstream media. Besides, the headline of women in politics has different interpretation. For instance is in corruption cases. There is an obvious difference in the words used in reporting male politician and female politician.

In politics communication, reality constriction by mass media is typical. Because the way media constructs a political phenomenon will give a particular image on a reality in politics, which for the actor and party, image is crucial for the sake of their own politics interest. For mass media, the way they constructs the reality of politics is a strategy to keep each of the media motive behind the constructed report they made.

With the domination of men in politics as well as mass media, women's image can also be seen differently in politics news which showed by both online and printed media. This gender bias in media is inevitable and this may be related to the ownership of media, as well as the journalists who write news about female politicians.

2. Methods

Paradigm used in this research is constructivist paradigm. Constructivist paradigm is started by a basic question on how people in some place or location construct reality. This paradigm discusses about their perception, truth, elaboration, belief, and point of view about the world. Besides, the consequences from the construction of their behavior and others who interact with them were also observed [2]). The approach used in this research is qualitative method. The research is conducted to understand the investigated reality in a holistic approach, without measuring parts of the reality.

This research is an analysis of online news portals in presenting news about corruption done by female politicians in Indonesia. The author wanted to analyze this study through media discourse analysis which is a multilevel analysis technique as stated by Norman Fairclough. This Fairclough model of discourse analysis builds up a model which elaborates a discourse as linguistic mix and social politics thoughts which centralizes a concern on language use as social practice or reflecting something [3]. On the textual level, linguistic analysis was applied to describe particular text which includes vocabulary, sentences, preposition, sentence meaning etc.

3. Result

Cases of corruption committed by female politicians appear one after the other dominating and never absent adorning the mass media. During the last few years there has always been a name of women involved in corruption and reported by the mass media. The emergence of a number of women's names involved in cases of corruption at the same time gradually became not unusual to be seen in the mass media as the likes of Ratu Atut Chosiyah – former governor of the province of Banten, Angelina Sondakh – female politician from Democratic Party and member of People's Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia, to the other regional leaders such as Sri Wahyuni Maria Manalip – the regent of Talaud Islands in North Sulawesi.

Media often make women as public consumption, women are highlighted to be interesting package and become public consumption. Because women's presence are often not taken into account when designing a developmental plans, it is also the result of the adhered of stereotype that discourage women. This stereotype is internalized into the community's mindset due to socialization from an early age, and still survives as it is deliberately exploited by parties who occupy a hegemonic position to maintain the position and structure of women's social life itself. The problems faced

by women if not being correctly understood with the gender perspective, the next thing that would happen is gender bias. Mass media is an important element in the distribution of information on women's rights and gender justice. Through report and coverage on various issues of women and gender, mass media can influence their viewers' perspective, to become more women-sensitive and gender-sensitive, or the otherwise, to be more gender biased.

One of the mass media in Indonesia that has an important role in distributing information is the online news portal. Online news portal in Indonesia itself is still imbalance in giving the portion of news of politician, especially those involved in corruption cases. The number of corruption cases news by male politicians is more highlighted than the news of corruption cases by female politicians. Factors such as media owners, capital, and media revenues through click bait can affect the news portal manifestation. Such factors further set the headline, news object, any event that is possible or impossible to be reported in the news, as well as in which direction the media tendency to be directed. In the representation system, these factors can be a meaning process of news content to the audience.

Through news headlines to news content in an online news portal, there is a production process and an exchange of meaning. Meaning is none but a social construction through code exchanges that appear to be naturally formed and seemingly irreversible. The exchange of codes which then make people with the same cultural background will understand and use the same name for something. The code bridges concepts that exist in our minds with the system and language used [4].

For the most part, online media use headlines that leads to personal life of female corruptors. For example, [5] titled "Wearing Pink Hijab, Angelina Sondakh Eid Prayer in Pondok Bambu Prison. The news itself contain 180 news, and focusing more on Angelina Sondakh's personal life. Moreover, they often use "former Puteri Indonesia", "celebrity" and "ex-wife of Adjie Massaid". These keywords get more attention rather than the corruption case of "Wisma Atlet Kemenpora" which the reason why she was sentenced to ten-year term imprisonment.

Different form Angelina Sondakh, Ratu Atut Chosiyah – former governor of the province of Banten, often appeared in news headlines as a weak and emotional woman. [6] titled "Ratu Atut shed tears in front of the Judge". One of the sentence on that news was "Atut wiped away her tears and said she was sorry for the blunder that she did as a governor of Banten Province. According to her, the testimony from the witnesses did not indicate her wrong-doing".

Those sentences represent that women are weak, feeble and quite emotional than men. Detik.com journalist as if wanted to portray Ratu Atut Chosiyah as a woman who had no power at all in front of a man. The language that media use tend to deprive her strategic role in her corruption case by increasing the gender bias sides.

Another example is [7] titled "Track record of Talaud Regent Sri Wahyuni Maria Manalip, a judge's wife which become the prisoner of Corruption Eradication Commision". Kompas.com journalist deliberately focusing on Sri Wahyuni's husband, the journalist even wrote his profession as a judge. Kompas.com tend to describe that women who hold high position as regional leader won't ever detached themselves from their husband whom also hold high position and status in society. If we refer to gender representation table in online media, Sri Wahyuni Maria Manalip's news showed that women could not stand-alone and always associated to another party when they appeared in news headlines. Besides using male figures in news headlines, online media also often associate Sri Wahyuni with luxury goods such as luxury bags, jewelry and diamonds.

From the examples above, we can conclude that most of the online media news headlines were definitely had another aim which is as click bait for the readers. In other news headlines, numerous words such as "Artist" and "Celebrity" appear to represent Angelina Sondakh. Meanwhile, their personal lives have nothing to do with corruption cases. That news portal did not reveal the motives, political career and Angelina's role in that corruption case. The spread news regarding to Angelina Sondakh focused more on satisfying public curiosity about her personal life rather than the implications of Angelina's involvement in the corruption case as a member of the parliament who abused her position and authority, neither did Ratu Atut who abused her position as Governor of Banten and involved in corruption. In conclusion, the news about Angelina Sondakh and Ratu Atut were no different from the gossip news than comprehensive journalism news.

If being seen through the representation of gender context in media as in table 1, both news portal tempo.co and detik.com depicts Angelina Sodakh and Ratu Atut as a dependent figure, emotional, and powerless. Meanwhile in the theory of representation, both news and headline title used constructionist approach. In the constructionist approach, it is the social meaning that makes the world meaningful and connects to the world meaningfully to others [4].

Social actors who play a role in the news are certainly a journalist in the online news portal. When a characteristic represents another group of people, and we believe that thing, whether it is right or wrong, that's called stereotype. According to [4] characteristic

of stereotype always happened when there is an imbalance of power. It means domination and power will lead to an effort to expel and exclude the subordinate community using stereotype. In news portal, female politicians such as Ratu Atut Chosiyah and Angelina Sondakh were represented as beautiful and weak women. These traits are used as stereotypes of female politicians. Thus the news about their romance, fashion and their personal news sometimes become more important than the news about corruption cases that they do.

Stereotypes are obvious in mass media when it describes the use of corrupted money. If women are involved in a corruption case, the mass media tends to describe the female politicians in a weak gender context, as for what the corruption money is used. They opt to write that the money from corruption is used to buy luxury goods, to have facial and body treatments, as well as to travel abroad. Whereas when men are involved in a corruption case, the news tends to illustrate that the proceeds of the corruption are used for the benefit of the party, distributed to other parties, and other massive things. Women are represented to merely waste money, and unable to retain important and powerful positions in politics. It is, therefore, not surprising that the news of female politician corruption looks like a cheap gossip news.

Different projection is positively presented when looking for corruption news done by male politicians namely Setya Novanto, Anas Urbaningrum, Nazaruddin, and Ade Komaruddin. The news content of male politicians explains the details of what the corruption case is like. The language used in news content will focus on the job and position of politicians, as well as the power they have. The mass media tends to avoid writing romance and personal matter related to male politicians.

Judging from social cognition, the media is indeed a representation of the culture it represents. The mass media has not been able to escape from its role as a medium of economic power, whether coming from rulers, intellectual authority, political ideology, or capital owners. Indonesian mass media is dominated by patriarchal culture and capitalism with male dominance in it. Therefore, the mass media does not produce gender equality, but it strengthens, and preserves injustice to women in society [8].

4. Discussion

[9] sees that ideology can be read into four different approaches. Mass media such as Kompas and Tempo are agents that popularize the dominant ideology of patriarchy through their professional practices. Reviewed by the theory of political economy, the

existence of dominant groups somehow constructs the text and creates the reality of the media in the mass media coverage.

Barker and Hall inferred in the context of Cultural Studies on the media, that the media produce ideology which interprets the dominant ideology within the diversity of the ideas presented. Even in the diversity of ideas in the editorial space does not necessarily provide a balanced corner on the proportion of men and women in the news. So it becomes difficult to erode the dominance of patriarchal ideology in the language used in mass media [10].

This is acknowledged by [11] that political events about female politicians are determined by the operating system of the mass media. The system is influenced by the internalization of patriarchal culture on internal and external media, as well as media strategy to construct the political reality of female politicians. The background makes political news text laden with words and gender bias, therefore, the meaning and image of female politicians become myth. Through it, public opinion is formed and the political behavior of society is directed to perpetuate male domination in politics.

The domination of social spaces is still controlled by men, so the mass media tend to produce news that has relevance in the reality of its readers in the society. So it can be said that patriarchal ideology runs in a mutual direction and influence each other, between internal mass media and society. This circle makes this ideological domination cycle difficult to break because it is considered an established ideology and this reciprocal affiliation can be endless.

Whether in Indonesia as well as in some other countries, news content depends on reporters and journalists themselves. A study in the United States says that there is a strong relationship between gender and reporter with a news source. Female reporters usually use more female news sources. However, this gender pattern is not necessarily the same throughout the world since there are other factors such as organizational and institutional factors with sources used by a journalist in their story [12].

Kompas, as the largest and influential daily newspaper in Indonesia is also not free from the phenomenon. Research results from T. Titi Widaningsih showed that in 1999, the number of female journalists in Kompas did not reach 20 percent of the total number of journalists. Even from the overall number of editorial leaders, the number of women who sat there was less than 15 percent. Until last October 2010 there were only 67 female journalists (29.78%) in Kompas. In addition, 7 out of 9 people of Kompas Editorial Board were also dominated by men [13].

While data obtained from the Indonesian Journalists Association (2012) the number of female journalists in Indonesia is only about 1: 3 or 1: 4 in Indonesia. The study

also showed that women journalists mostly work in printed mass media, followed by television, radio, and the least is at online media. Approximately 56.5 percent of journalists have status as permanent employees, while the remaining has temporary and freelance status. Although they had received some journalistic training, only 17.4 percent of women journalists were trained in gender training. The data also showed from 33 percent of female journalists who entered journalistic organizations, only 6 percent of female journalists took decision in the editorial board [14].

Media as an ideological apparatus has a goal in perpetuating the dominance of men in politics. The most likely thing for the media to work to fulfill those goals is to create gender-biased languages. Gender bias here does not seem like something worth-concerned on looking at an aesthetic perspective of journalistic writing style. Perhaps even gender bias is one of many methods to beautify the writing style in order to attract the reader. However, if seen from a critical point of view, then the gender bias is the packaging of news words that are very detrimental to women as active contributor in politics [10].

5. Conclusions

5.1. Critical Media Literacy as a Bridge upon Media Gender Bias

Apart from the media system in reporting female politician in the news, the reality that must be faced is that we ought to be willing and able to deconstruct the image so it will yield the construction of a new image of women in politics. This will be made possible when the support of institutions and support of voters is achieved. Women should also gain support to be able to establish an active and intensive political communication with various political forces such as legislative bodies, political parties and international political networks that will make female politicians have better bargaining position.

Active political communication is able to attach authoritative symbols to female politicians, and to reinforce those meanings in public and the minds of society, mass media can be exploited. While us as media users must also be critical to demand and criticize the mass media as a producer of culture that has a broad influence in the spreading of the principles of democracy, equality, and peace.

In the economic and political sectors, the mass media are able to disseminate and strengthen certain economic and political systems and often negate over other economic and political systems. However, one thing that cannot be ignored is that the mass media indirectly upholds particular ideological functions which held by its

owners. Based on this, the effort to see the media in an integrative way cannot only be done with the economic approach alone, but also involves a political approach. For that reason then the study of political economy about the production of culture becomes an important study.

Therefore, critical media literacy is necessary to create balance news coverage and have gender perspectives. Policy for the media to oppose the practice of gender bias has been established for ages. One of them is a feminist group in the UN Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) in 1995. In addition, the National Union of Journalist in the UK also has made a writing guide for journalists for gender equality in the media. [15] has also proposed a series of media strategies and information literacy (MIL) that can be a tool to empower gender equality that encompasses women, girls, men, and boys.

In Indonesia, this can be strengthened by including critical media and gender literacy studies in the curriculum to inform students about gender inequalities and to give students the skills to develop critical thinking. Critical media literacy needs to be taught early so that both audiences and news producers can be more aware of the needs of news coverage in the mass media, processing gained information, to understand what conditions will occur if the news and information has been spread to the audience.

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