# Media Literacy Education for Society in Facing Media Content in the Digital Age

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*Abstract*
*This study discusses the importance of media literacy education for the community, critical learning for the community about media content and selecting media content in obtaining effective and efficient information for the community. This research is a library research with a descriptive-qualitative approach. The method and analysis used is an inductive qualitative analysis. Inductive qualitative data analysis is an analysis based on the data obtained, then it is developed into an answer to the problems in this study, and the data is sought repeatedly so that the data collected can be known to be accepted or rejected. The results showed that media literacy education for the community is very important. Through media literacy education, it will affect the community both cognitively, affective and psychomotor, so that with this ability they are able to filter media content that is useless and not needed by them and ward off hoax news or sites. In understanding media literacy, society must also be critical in sorting, selecting, assessing and controlling the content of the media used. With critical learning, people are able to use the media wisely, ethically and responsibly with the media used. In addition, the public must also pay attention to strategies in creating messages or content in the media through message setting agendas, framing and semiotics. In selecting media content to obtain information effectively and efficiently, the public must be careful in utilizing the media. They must make the media a place to increase scientific insight, social transformation, and as entertainment. That way, the presence of the media has a positive effect on society to participate and make a constructive contribution to the mass media.*

*Keywords: Media Literacy; Media Content; Digital Age.*

## INTRODUCTION

The present era is the digital era. This era requires people to be able to make good use of mass media. The public must have competence in reading, knowing, and understanding media content and accessing the media. Therefore, media literacy education is needed by the community, because in this digital era there are very fast socio-cultural changes so that people also have to change quickly according to existing technological developments. Media literacy is a skill that a person possesses which is a continuum. The nature of this continuum means that everyone has different abilities, there are people who have high, intermediate and even low abilities about media. If today, society has a high continuum, it is not impossible that in the next

few years its ability will decline because it does not follow the development of technological media.

Media technology related to media literacy is television, film, video, radio, audio recording, print media, internet and other digital communication technology media. It is this media that influences society in terms of cognitive, affective and psychomotor abilities. Community cognitive abilities are related to the ability to understand, analyze and criticize media content. The affective ability of society is related to the ability to understand emotional content and moral values that exist in the media and deserve to be enjoyed and accepted by the community. Meanwhile, community psychomotor skills are skills in producing media and media content. If this ability is owned by the community, the community will filter all media content accessed so that sites with hoax news can be found. Thus, the public must be media literate and have a good education about media literacy, especially with regard to media content, in order to be able to ward off fake news that appears in the media.

In a media, there are at least four issues related to the media. The four issues raised by Elizabeth (Herlina, 2019) are:

1. Consciousness in choosing the time and media content consumed

   The public is encouraged to know about various kinds of media and media content. The exposure of various media is very important because each media carries a different message that can touch cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects for society. Knowledge of the variety of media content can prevent people from content that is useless and not needed by society, and switch to utilizing important content.

2. Critical reading or viewing skills, including media production activities

   The public must have a critical awareness related to the ability to produce alternative media content. After being able to find media content biases, the public can produce content that rectifies these biases. Thus, the media can be used to educate the public about a particular topic or issue.

3. Analysis of the political, economic, social and cultural context in the media environment

   Analysis of the macro environment is expected to equip people to understand the context of the media and media distribution more thoroughly. The public must be trained to understand the logic of opinion formation in the media. In this way, the public can be more careful when concluding media content.

4. Advocacy and media movements and social change.

   With media literacy education that is owned by the community, they will participate and contribute to the media. Armed with their media literacy, they will form correct public opinion and be able to overcome and provide solutions to complex problems faced by

society. Therefore, if people have a good literacy education, then the media will be a part of their lives that need not be feared and avoided, but the media will provide benefits and increase scientific insight and the welfare of society.

Media education has four main concepts put forward by (Buckingham, 2007), namely:

1. Production

   Media production involves the conscious introduction of media content to have been created. Text or media content is usually created by individuals working alone, only for themselves, their family and friends. In addition, text or media content is also mostly produced for commercial purposes.

   Media production is closely related to the technology used, distributing media texts, professional journalism practices, the media industry, media relations, media regulation, media circulation and distribution, and public access and participation.

2. Language

   Each medium has its own language combination that is used to convey messages. The use of language is adjusted to the media used. If the media used is printed media, then the language used is the language of writing and images or photos, and if you use social networks on the internet, you must use written media, images, audio, music, video and also provide feedback so that the community has space. to participate and also have independence in creating media content.

   Language is related to the conversion of meanings from media messages, language agreements that are often used by the media, certain codes in the media, language relations and codes used by the media, the impact of messages, combinations of images, sounds and words and technology that affects changes in meaning.

3. Presentation

   The media has gone through re-construction and is presented to the public. The way of presenting media is related to the reality of a media message, media as a source of information, presence and absence of certain messages, bias and objectivity, media stereotypes towards a group, interpretation of media messages and the influence of media messages on social groups or issues.

4. Audience

   Audience is a media source or a person who will interpret and react to the media. Audience is closely related as the target of media messages, the way the media communicates with a certain audience or community, the way the media reaches the community, and the way people use the media in their daily life, the needs that people can get from the media and differences or different social characteristics of each society.

The fundamental purpose of media literacy is to teach the public or media users to analyze the messages conveyed by the mass media, consider the commercial and political objectives behind an image or media message, and examine who is responsible for the message or idea implied by the message or image of the media (Tamburaka, 2013). Thus, media literacy education is the right solution for the public to ward off and overcome fake news or hoaxes in the media, so that the public will filter out which media content is important, which is not important. Therefore, this study will contribute to the community about the importance of media literacy education in today's digital era, especially in understanding media content. By understanding media content, people do not abuse the content, do not become individualistic in communicating in cyberspace, and always uphold ethics in media.

**RESEARCH METHODS**

This research is library research and the type of research is qualitative research. Data processing is done by processing and analyzing data qualitatively. Qualitative data processing is carried out through data reduction, data presentation, verification and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is something that is very urgent because it is an effort to answer problems with the right target. In this connection, data reduction for qualitative research is the reduction of existing theories, selecting the important ones and making important categories and notes about media literacy education and media content regularly so that readers can understand them, and removing unnecessary information or data. After reducing the data, the next process is to display the data. Because this research is a qualitative research, data display is carried out by providing a brief description or with narrative text, by presenting it in a pattern or creating a scheme, and connecting one category to another. The last process is the conclusion drawing and verification. The conclusions in this study are new findings that have been tested which are then constructed in the research theme (Sugiyono, 2011). These findings are in the form of a clear description or description of the importance of media literacy education for the community, society's critical of media content that can be accessed in mass media. , and selecting media content that is needed by the public to obtain information effectively and efficiently.

The data analysis technique was adjusted to the statements in this study. The statement put forward in this study is in accordance with qualitative analysis, namely qualitative analysis is inductive. Inductive qualitative data analysis is an analysis based on the data obtained, which is then developed into an answer to the problems in this study. Based on the answers formulated from the data, then the data is searched repeatedly so that it can be concluded that the answer to the problem is accepted or rejected based on the data obtained.

## RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Importance of Media Literacy for Society

Media and society have a good relationship or symbiotic relationship mutualism that need each other. The public is the consumer of media, while the media is the provider of content. Media needs people to distribute media content and society needs various media content for information and entertainment. In understanding media content, people must be observant in developing their abilities, which information is useful for them, which is not, which is needed, which is not. Therefore, they must sort and choose the ones that are truly beneficial for self-development and know their impact on themselves and others.

Media literacy is not only defined as media literacy or media education alone, but is also about understanding the impact of media content and learning to anticipate the impact it causes. Someone is said to be literate, when that person has understood something through reading the right information and doing something based on his understanding of the content of a particular reading. Literacy does not just appear, but requires a long process and conducive means. This process started from childhood, starting from the family environment, supported by the school environment and the community environment. Literacy culture is closely related to education patterns at home, school and society. If this is maximized, it will have a significant effect on the welfare of the community (Warsihna, 2016).

According to Art Silverblatt in (Tamburaka, 2013) there are seven identification elements of media literacy and one element from Stanley J. Baran is added so that it becomes eight elements of media literacy, namely:

1. Critical skills that enable people or audiences to develop independent judgments about media content
2. Understanding of the mass communication process
3. Awareness of the impact of media on individuals and society
4. Strategies for analyzing and discussing media content
5. Understand media content as text that provides insight into society about culture and life
6. Ability to enjoy, understand and appreciate media content
7. Development of effective and responsible production skills
8. Understanding of the ethical and moral obligations of media practitioners

Furthermore, (Caniago, 2013) argues that media literacy is a person's ability to use various media to access, analyze and produce information for various purposes in one's daily life which will be influenced by the media around us in the form of television, film, radio, recorded music, newspapers and magazines. In addition, the essence of media literacy is in line with what (Fitryarini, 2016) and (Waluyo, 2018) explain that media literacy is the ability to

access, analyze, evaluate and communicate the content of media massages. This means that media literacy is a person's ability to absorb and extract information, news, and everything from the media. Not only for accessing, but also absorbing, analyzing information, even evaluating the information obtained and which will be conveyed to the public.

Menurut (Suryadi, 2013) defines media literacy as the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and consume messages; knowledge of how the media function for society; and how to understand cultural, economic, political and technological forces in creating, producing and transmitting messages. Thus, media literacy is defined as the ability to understand, analyze, enjoy, appreciate and evaluate media content created by media owners so that people have a critical attitude and filter according to their needs and are able to provide solutions to improve media content.

The National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE) in (Tamburaka, 2013) states that there are six basic principles in media literacy education, namely:

1. Media literacy education requires active examination and critical thinking about the messages received and when creating

2. Media literacy education expands the concept of media literacy in all forms of media, namely reading and writing

3. Media literacy education builds and strengthens skills from different ages. Like print media literacy, skills require integrated, interactive, and repeated practice

4. Media literacy education develops linked information that reflects participation in a democratic society

5. Media literacy education recognizes that the media is part of the culture and functions as an agent of socialization

6. Media literacy education states that people use skills individually, belief and experiences to construct one's own meaning from media messages.

By paying attention to the six principles of media literacy education above, society or the audience will be involved in the media. Therefore, media literacy education is very important because media literacy education is present with the aim of providing insight, knowledge and skills to the public as media users to be able to sort, select and assess and control media content that can be used and at the same time so that people can think critically.

**Critical Learning for Society about Media Content**

Media literacy is a critical thinking skill to question the existence of media and media content. The introduction of media literacy is very important for the community, starting from children, adolescents and adults. However, this introduction starts with children from an early

age, because media literacy from an early age will produce a generation who understands, is wise, is able to absorb and respond and is responsible for using media for the future.

Menurut (Rubin, 1998) argues that media literacy is the understanding of sources, communication technology, codes used, messages generated, selection, interpretation, and the impact of media content. People are not only consumers, but they are also producers. They can consume media and also produce media according to their wants, interests and needs. With media literacy, people will realize that media has an impact on themselves, others, society and the State. With this awareness, the public is able to analyze media content so that it provides an understanding of the content (Rastati, 2018).

One of the basic essential elements in digital literacy is the critical element. This element can develop an independent assessment of a media. This element also requires media users not only to use their thumbs in operating gadgets and laptops, but also to activate their critical reasoning. Critical means not swallowing the information obtained in various media, especially content that is too bombastic, lacks sense, and nuances of hatred and violence. This content can be content that contains manipulative or hoax information (Tsaniyah, Nasimatus dan Juliana, 2019). To counteract all of this, the media literacy movement is very important so that people can produce and create creative, positive and innovative content.

In order for the public to critically understand media content, the community must understand the perspective of communication messages that are often carried out by media content creators as a strategy in making messages meaningful (Tamburaka, 2013), namely:

1. Mass Media Setting Agenda

   The media setting agenda is a working mechanism of certain parts and processes in three parts, namely the media, public and policy agenda. The media agenda regarding the media highlights important issues in media coverage. Public agenda relates to public opinion regarding an issue after obtaining important information from various topics in the mass media. Meanwhile, the policy agenda is related to policy makers in receiving responses from public views and opinions formed in society. This media setting agenda must side with the interests of the community and not for the interests of certain groups or only benefit certain elites. Therefore, the media must raise issues in society and voice the interests and aspirations of society.

2. Framing

   Framing is a description of message framing which is given meaning so that new meaning emerges from the message. Framing analysis is needed in order to find out the perspective used by message writers when selecting and writing messages or news. These perspectives

and perspectives will determine what facts are taken, which parts are focused or highlighted and which parts must be eliminated and where the message will be taken (Sobur, 2001)

Framing is very helpful in creating media content who want to independently participate in creating media content. With framing, we can control the problem by framing the message from the original source (first) and processing it so that the message becomes ethical, polite, attractive and does not lose the important value of the message.

3. Semiotics

Semiotics has the meaning of signs, objects, and interpretations. Semiotical analysis tries to find the meaning of signs, objects, and interpretations as well as the things hidden behind a good sign of text, advertisements and news. In order for the message conveyed to be attractive to the public, the media or media content creators use semiotics to give the audience curiosity, the meaning of the message can be clearly captured, the message reaches the community, is interesting and causes a sense of sympathy for the community.

With the above strategy, both the public and media content creators by the mass media, if they pay attention and consider this, they will be able to package and create media content that is truly useful and needed by the community.

**Choosing Media Content in Getting Information Effectively and Efficiently for the Community**

Media content has an influence on a person's values, attitudes and beliefs. If the media content that is broadcast presents values that do not contribute to society, then they will imitate the scene to be watched. Therefore, there is an influence or effect of violence in the mass media if the public does not understand media literacy. The public can become victims as a result of imitating behavior and assumptions that are always correct to the content broadcast in the mass media. They always think that whatever is shown in the media, they judge it right. With this belief, it will affect their attitude and behavior. The presence of the media presents a variety of content that not only provides entertainment for the public, but also provides information that adds scientific insight and educates the public. Therefore, media is not only a social transformation, but also as a medium of struggle, education and entertainment for the community (Anisti, 2018).

According to (McQuail, 2019), there are four motives for society to use media, namely:

1. To get information. Information is the urge in a person to seek and know new things that are happening in his life.

2. To find out personal identity. Personal identity is the urge to recognize himself as a person and not be immersed in the role he plays.

3. Integration and social interaction, namely the motive for adapting to the environment by staying connected with good friends in the real and virtual world and following what is happening in the environment

4. Entertainment, namely the motive for relaxing, filling time, channeling emotions, having fun and releasing fatigue to get mental pleasure.

The four motives above, in general, people focus more on social interaction and entertainment motives. People use media only for social interaction in cyberspace and release fatigue for pleasure and enjoyment of the soul. Whereas the community should not only focus on this motive, but also must focus on the motive for obtaining information or knowledge and knowing one's identity. Thus, the public must have media education and be aware of the bad effects that media messages can cause and learn to anticipate the bad possibilities that the media will cause. For this reason, society must have seven skills or abilities that are sought in media literacy activities (Potter, 2004), namely:

1. Analyze media messages

   Analyzing media messages is the ability to analyze the structure of messages packaged in the media, utilizing basic scientific concepts to understand the context in messages in certain media.

2. Assess media messages

   Apart from analyzing messages, the public must also make judgments about the media, and absorb and select media that actually provide accurate and reliable information

3. Group media messages

   Grouping media messages is done by determining each element is the same in several ways and vice versa, determining each element is different and in several ways.

4. Analyze by induction and deduction

   Induction analysis can be used in retrieving and inferring a pattern in a small set of elements or a pattern in a specific set of media messages. The conclusion of the message begins by stating statements that have a specific and limited scope in compiling arguments that end with general statements. Meanwhile, deductive analysis can be used in retrieving and inferring a pattern in a general set of media messages. The conclusion of the message begins by stating statements that have a general scope in compiling arguments that end with specific statements

5. Synthesize conclusions

   After studying the various media messages that appear, they can then be processed and assembled into elements of important meaning to form a new structure.

6. Create an abstract

Creating short, clear, and precise descriptions captures the essence of the message in a smaller number of words than the message itself.

With the above skills or abilities, the public will not be fooled by media broadcasts that only construct what is seen as real and happening in the surrounding environment. The community must have the ability to make the media a medium for education and a medium for literacy. Therefore, people must have an understanding of media literacy. The understanding of literacy is much influenced by factors of education, occupation and gender. People who work as housewives and their education level is only high school, so the media setting is very powerful regarding targets at the housewife level. They are not skilled and selective in choosing media channels and media content. Therefore, if you want the community to be well literate towards the media, then media literacy guidance or counseling is needed for the community in all circles. A selective attitude can hinder media content towards society, this happens because people have their own understanding of meaning and are only interested in media content that matches their interests (Anisti, 2018). The public must read and carefully examine the news or messages that are spread in the media, and not directly share news which, although interesting, is carried out on search engines on Google, Yahoo and other search engines. Apart from that, the public must be careful in giving oblique statements and comments, if the news is mixed in with people that do not fit the concept. If all the news or information has been researched, traced properly and it is believed that it is not fake or hoax, then it can only be shared in the media. However, if the opposite is true then the public may not share it in the media (Harahap, 2018). In addition, the community must also be given counseling and socialization of media literacy, which is one way that can help understanding digital natives in social media so that their understanding will be better. There are four effective ways to provide information about media literacy (Rastati, 2018), namely by displaying videos that are distributed to social media such as on YouTube and instagram, interesting memes in language that is easy to understand, through celebrities that are role models and positive images and billboards road side.

The public must also have an awareness of the impact that the media has on themselves and others. This awareness is needed so that people are not trapped in an information that cannot be justified, an authentic information or message. In creating media content, the public must also pay attention to ethics in media, because most people misuse the media by uploading other people's profile photos and making it a piracy platform that can harm others.

The existence of the media allows the public to be involved in filling media content by providing constructive criticism, supervising and providing and sharing information material in the space provided by the mass media. Mass media needs people to spread media messages, while society also needs media. This relationship must be built in an equal or equal manner, the

media provides space for the community to participate so that people also feel involved in creating content and the community must also feel that they have the media as a useful source of information and entertainment (Tamburaka, 2013). Thus, the presence of the media does not become a bomberang for society, but rather contributes to the benefit of society.

## CONCLUSION

Today's digital era requires people to have media literacy education. Media literacy education requires critical thinking skills, media literacy, reflects on community participation in a democratic manner, becomes a socialization agent and uses individual skills, beliefs, and experiences for self-development from media messages or content.

In understanding media content, the public must have critical learning about the perspective of communication messages as a strategy in making media content meaningful through the media setting agenda, framing analysis, and semiotic analysis. The media setting agenda deals with issues presented, public opinion, and policies in response to public opinion. Meanwhile, framing analysis is an analysis used in creating media content by controlling problems and framing them with ethical, polite, interesting and useful message frames. Apart from framing analysis, it is also analyzed semiotics. Semiotic analysis is needed as signs, objects and interpretations hidden in media content.

In selecting media content to obtain information effectively and efficiently, the public must analyze, assess, classify, analyze induction and deduction, synthesize conclusions and make abstracts from media messages. In this way, people make the media a tool of education, literacy, and entertainment media for their needs and welfare.

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