

# New Media, Young Generation and Community Empowerment: A Theoretical Reflection

Yenny Pramawati

*Student at Master Degree Program in Communication Studies, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta- INDONESIA.*

*Article Received: 29 January 2018*

*Article Accepted: 26 February 2018*

*Article Published: 20 April 2018*

## ABSTRACT

This paper is a theoretical reflection that sees how the role of new media in its social function, namely the empowerment of society. If the development of communication and information technology is a belief, then the change and dynamics of society is also a necessity. At this point it will be seen in a conceptual perspective, how the two take on each other's roles and positions. There will also be 'operators' of the two entities, the younger generation, which in contemporary Indonesia will be an extraordinary entity, the bearer of Indonesia's future on the most important guard. The discussion will be conducted with the perspective of Joseph R Dominick's theory of the function of mass communication. That theoretical thought will be linked to contemporary sociological reality, where new media take on the role. The result is the young generation and new media work together to empower the community, according to their respective roles and functions.

Keywords: Community Empowerment, New Media.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The more massive penetration of new media in this country can't be separated from the empirical facts of the media's popularity among users. In this context that will be the spotlight, of course it is the users who fall into the category of the younger generation. This popularity also becomes a necessity, because a new media network can be enjoyed by all circles. User-friendly designs provided widespread spreading space. The new media also allow synchronization, so messages delivered in one type of media can be directly connected to other media and can spread quickly. In addition, an increase in the adoption rate of young people against smartphones and tablet computers supported by the availability of affordable mobile internet services encourages the Internet to be an integral part of their habitat (Azca & Widhyharto, 2014).

This techno-sociological reality explains that the younger generation is very close to a new media culture. The research results of The Center for Internet and Society of Bangalore India facilitated Hivos Netherlands with the title "Digital Native with Cause" identifying digital natives are those born after 1980 (categorized as young people) and familiar with digital media. The study found that digital natives are e-agents of changes because information and internet technology is widely used by young people whose political participation is still apathetic. The study emphasizes the behavior of digital media users that young people tend to do. (Azca & Widhyharto, 2014).

The deep intersection between the younger generation and new media technology, is not an uninteresting encounter. Society, whatever the circumstances, is the most obvious arena for that intersection. The young generation in a position that can't be separated from its social base, that is society itself. Then new media technology, is an impossible civilization if not alive and rooted in the community of cultural stakeholders. The problem that requires no other explanation is how the younger generation as a large quantitative entity relates to new media technologies and treats that relationship on its social basis, i.e., the structure of society.

As perceived by the new media it is ultimately a contemporary mass communication vehicle. As a means of mass communication, then the functions of mass communication itself must be seen also from the existence of technology (new media) that enclose it. Therefore, the reflective discussion of the problem will use the thinking of Joseph R Dominick, who provides explanatory guidance in the socio-technological dimension.

## **2. DEFINITION AND EMPOWER PRINCIPLES**

The term empowerment literally refers to the notion of making 'empowered' a society or a group of people who were initially 'helpless'. Empowerment can be applied to aspects of human life covered physical, mental, social, financial, educational and other aspects. Empowering the community is an effort to improve the dignity of the people who are in a condition now unable to escape from the poverty trap and backwardness (Kartasmita, 1997). The issue of community empowerment is one of the important activities that need to be done in an effort to empower the most in groups that are perceived as weak and poverty-stricken so that they have the ability and power and can rid themselves of various degrees, backwardness and latency and thus their desires to become a group that is advanced, independent and fulfilled all needs can be achieved. It's just that the term empowerment was often overlapped with the term development although both actually have a close relationship with each other but how also the concept of empowerment may be said is a translation of the word "Empowerment" while the word development is a term that is translated from the word "Development". Nevertheless the two concepts above need not be contradicted each other because these two concepts are always oriented to an activity that aims to create a change for the better in all areas of community life. Another opinion is said by Rappaport, which defines empowerment as a process whereby individuals, organizations and societies are capable of meeting their life needs (Rappaport, 1984).

Meanwhile Osmani's other definition defines empowerment as a condition in which helpless people create a situation in such a way that they are able to convey their desires and at the same time feel involved in government-related activities (Osmani, 2000). The World Bank give more meaningful of empowerment activities as an effort to provide opportunities and capabilities to the community groups in which the poor families to be able and courageous to voice their ideas and opinions and have the courage to choose either in the form of methods, products, actions or a concept that is best regarded not only in the family and personality but also for the whole society (Worldbank, 2014).

Furthermore, one of the important aspects discussed in the process of community empowerment is the issue of empowerment principles related to policy issues that can be used as guidance in the implementation of empowerment as a whole, comprehensive and comprehensive so that targets to be achieved, especially in empowering the group in value very vulnerable to the problem of poverty can be realized. Moreover, in the face of increasingly complex challenges and diverse forms of policy elections that are considered appropriate, effective and will produce something optimal can be realized. According to Dahana and Bhatnagar that there are several principles that need to be noticed in the process of empowerment among them: (1) Cooperation and participation.

In this case, empowerment activities can only be successfully implemented if there is solid cooperation among various elements of society to participate actively in the realization of the program already in the previous design.

(2) Using the right method. That is the method used should be adjusted to the socioeconomic conditions of the community who become the target group of empowerment activities so that the method is not only efficient and effective but also can be efficient and effective. (3) Democratic meant that in carrying out the activities of empowerment then the process should be ongoing should be democratic in the sense of giving the opportunity loosely and freely in the community to choose which method should be in use including the process of making decisions was made by the community itself. (4) Interest and needs. In this case, community empowerment must be based on something that is a top priority and related to the interests and needs of the community so that the results obtained more efficient and effective. (5) Lower community groups. To further optimize the execution of the program made in the past then the target community empowerment activities should be more directed at those who fall into the category of marginal people in the sense of being at the grassroots level of society.

(6) Cultural diversity. Community empowerment activities should be adjusted to the existing local cultural diversity on the grounds that if the activity is done by using the principle on the uniformity of eating culture in the fear this will cause various problems and obstacles in the field. (7). Goal and specialist. For this context, the facilitator / extension worker / reformer agent involved in community empowerment activities should consist of people who have skills and skills in particular, especially those that require specialists for activities that are part of the community empowerment agenda. (8) Learn while working. The meaning of community empowerment activities is not just not done in the form of conveying concepts and ideas that are theoretical but far more important is actively engage the target group to try to conduct their own activities in accordance with what is directed by the facilitator so that the community can work while studying using the concepts they get from extension workers. (9). Cultural change. In this context community empowerment activities should be undertaken in accordance with the local cultural values of the target group. Thus it can avoid the occurrence of culture shock among the target group of empowerment activities and therefore the extensionists are strongly demanded to act cautiously (Dahana & Bhatnagar 1980).

### **3. YOUNG GENERATION AND NEW MEDIA**

The encounter of young people with new media is an important milestone in entering the round of social change, the widespread of digitalization, informational, social media, information technology and so on. The younger generation with its coveted technology, ultimately demonstrating value creation, and the new norm of future interaction. The impact of young people and new media has adapted to characters such as flexibility-mobility, and freedom of space and time (Azca & Widhyharto, 2014).

Reflection of factual data, in 2015 and then obtained the face of the use of new media in our young generation. The data is an illustration showing that young people use the internet for friendship by 79%, seeking 80% information, looking for 73% entertainment, and breaking the routine by 26%, and looking for 18% schoolwork. The tools used

by young people to access the largest internet is still PC computers by 69%, 52% mobile phones, 34% laptops, 21% smart phones, 4% tablets, and 2% online games. The character is clear enough to represent young people as objects as well as new media subjects (Kompas, 2015).

The factual find is not a reality without theoretical explanation. In the end the new media becomes another kind of identity, which marks the generation living in a strict socio-technological culture. As for the factual presentation of Kompas daily, then thinkers such as Tapscott carefully identified that the younger generation is a 'net generation' reflected in the behavior because of their encounter with the new media. There are at least eight characteristics in the relationship, which can be explained as follows: 1) Freedom - affirming the concept of freedom that young people do in new media, either opening their identity or redding it without being questioned by anyone; 2) Customization - young people are active consumers, who seek and get what they want, as well as what they want and know where to look for; 3) Scrutiny - young people are critical to the selection of fiction and information facts, as well as between the real and the absurd; 4) Integrity - young people in the new media are committed to honesty, awareness, transparency and accountability, thus rejecting the bad stereotype that young people have in the offline dimension.

Furthermore, the other characteristics are the 5th. Collaboration - rejects the notion that young people and new media live solitary, instead they network using various social media, even they create collaboration for certain interests that may not be possible in the offline dimension; 6) Entertainment - young and new people make it possible to get pleasure and seek the necessary pleasures such as entertainment and information needed 7) Speed - young people and new media create instant responses and instant responses, given the speed with which media is presented new infrastructure that is supported generate quick respond and real time communication; 8) Innovation - young people and new media as the originator of new ideas and findings for the present and the future, even those in their daily lives are very attached and embedded in the development of information technology (Tapscott, 2009).

#### **4. NEW MEDIA AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT**

The whole aspect of Tapsott's perspective can be considered to represent the expression of this nation's young generation now and in the future. The intimate relationship of the young generation and the new media will appear in the form of behavior and thought. Information technology rides that live their fate as a vehicle for mass communication, in terms of community empowerment, will at least show 5 pieces of performance, as revealed by Prof Joseph R Dominick as follows:

(1). Supervision, where the mass media presents information obtained from the results of supervision that can not be done by the community. Furthermore this function is subdivided into: (a). Warning controls, such as media surveillance of information relating to specific threats, such as natural disasters, economic crises, military invasions or the threat of unemployment. The illustrations that can be expressed in this context are the new media that quick reports about the disaster in the Aceh Earthquake, about the theories in Sarinah and others. (b) Supervision related

to information useful to everyday life, such as information about the price of material needs, products to publication of knowledge. For example are the news about the market price, harvest highway and also others. At this point, the manifestation of empowerment is to mobilize society for sympathy and empathy, and to stimulate a wise response about certain information. The new media on the part of young people seems to have empowered people from an inner perspective, which is not impossible to manifest into real action.

(2). Interpretation, mass media not only presents facts and data but also interpretation of a certain news. In many cases, mass media / new media also gave their point of view. In social media, people everywhere can also provide a free point of view. The point of view can be in line with the media, but it can be very different from the media. This is where the media help people empower the power of analysis and positive criticism.

(3). Relationships, the media can connect elements in society that can not be done directly by individual channels. For example advertising, connecting the needs with the products seller. In the world of contemporary advertising, a more massive digital ad format will certainly provide a bigger demand for more demand. In this case the new media play its role to empower the community, especially for the marketing of its products. If market achievement is high, people will be economically more economically empowered.

(4). Socialization, that socialization is a transmission of values that refers to the ways individuals adopt the behavior and values of a group. If we observe in social media or new media a lot of creative young people who upload positive content that can be associated to the effort to disseminate thoughts, values, creativity and more broadly. Many parodies, memes, and other content in the new media are manifestations of community empowerment in the areas of thought, creativity and other values. Society becomes creative, creative and concerned about existing social conditions by displaying ideas as presented in new media.

(5). Entertainment, the media is able to present things that are entertaining for the audience. How the new media is able to empower people in the context of entertainment. There is an interesting story from South Sulawesi that will prove it. A pelvic port worker in South Sulawesi succeeded in making game apps that sell well in the market. This is evidence that the function of new media in the corner of entertainment though able to empower the community.

## **5. FINAL WORD**

Finally it can not be denied that the relationship between the three entities ie the younger generation, new media and community empowerment is a necessity. It is a positive manifestation of the existence of new media as an important part of the progress of human civilization. By discussing through the perspective of Joseph R Dominick's theory of the function of mass communication, proved in the context of contemporary sociological reality, new media have taken on the role. The young generation and new media work together to empower the community, according to their respective roles and functions. The future challenge is precisely to ethics, how these young people showcase the ability to use new media to empower people with polite and educational content. Theoretical

reflection produces a belief that all that enter into the relationships of the three entities is necessarily coupled with an ethical perspective.

## REFERENCES

- Azca, Najib. Widhyharto. Derajad.S, R (ed), 2014, Buku Panduan Studi Kepemudaan, Teori Metodologi, dan Isu-isu Kontemporer. PMPS- YouSure-Kemenpora RI, Yogyakarta.
- Chambers, Robert.1987. Pembangunan Desa: Mulai Dari Belakang. Jakarta: LP3ES.
- Dahana, OP & Bhatnagar, OP 1980, Education and Communication for Development, Oxford & LBH Publishing CO, New Delhi.
- Kartasasmita, G. 1997. Pemberdayaan masyarakat : Konsep pembangunan yang berakar pada masyarakat. (diakses dari <http://www.ginandjar.com>).
- Osmani. 2000. Participatory Governance, People's Empowerment and Poverty. Washington: UNDP.
- Rappaport J. 1984. Studies in Empowerment: Introduction to the Issue. USA: Prevention.
- Tapscott, Don, 2009, Grown Up Digital How the Net Generation Is Changing Your World, McGraw Hill, NY.  
<https://tekno.kompas.com> > Tekno > Internet
- [www.worldbank.org/in/country/.../community-driven-development-in-indonesia](http://www.worldbank.org/in/country/.../community-driven-development-in-indonesia)