

Understanding the Tendency of Media Users to Consume Fake News

S. Rouli Manalu, Tandiyo Pradekso, Djoko Setyabudi

Universitas Diponegoro

Jl. Prof. H. Soedarto, S.H. No. 1, Kampus Tembalang

Semarang, Jawa Tengah 50275

Email: srmanalu@fulbrightmail.org

Abstract: *This research investigates the groups' tendencies of media users based on age and income level in consuming, sharing, and believing fake news. These tendencies are examined through: (1) an analysis of pattern of media consumption; and (2) an analysis of types of the most trustworthy media platform. Using systematic random sampling based on residences, this study examines the responses of 400 households in Semarang, Central Java with level of confidence of 95%. The result reveals media users in the age group 15-30 years have higher risk to be exposed and believe in fake news.*

Keywords: *fake news, media consumption, media trustworthiness*

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini menelaah kecenderungan kelompok usia dan tingkat pendapatan untuk mengonsumsi, membagikan, dan mempercayai berita bohong. Kecenderungan ini ditelaah melalui: (1) analisis pola konsumsi media; dan (2) analisis jenis platform informasi yang dianggap paling dapat dipercaya. Dengan menggunakan systematic random sampling berdasarkan tempat tinggal, penelitian ini menguji tanggapan dari 400 rumah tangga di Semarang, Jawa Tengah, dengan tingkat kepercayaan 95%. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan pengguna media pada kelompok usia 15-30 tahun memiliki kecenderungan yang lebih tinggi dalam mengonsumsi dan mempercayai berita bohong.*

Kata kunci: *berita bohong, kepercayaan media, konsumsi media*

The discussions regarding fake news and hoax came to the forefront of public conversations in many countries in the past years. One of the prominent events that contribute to this discussion was the U.S. Election Campaign in 2016, where many information were distributed widely without verification. News Media Association Report (News Media Association, 2016) stated amongst those unverified information, the most popular

and widely shared were the Democrat's Candidate, Hillary Clinton, who had sold weapon to ISIS, and that Pope had endorsed Donald Trump to become the next U.S. President. In the aftermath of U.S. Election, the situation was even worse when the elected U.S. President, Donald Trump, repeatedly using the term "fake news" to number of media agencies that were reporting unfavorable information of the Trump Admiration to undermine their

journalism authority. CNN, ABC, CBS, and *New York Times* were among news agencies that labeled producing fake news by Donald Trump.

Not only in the U.S., the proliferation of hoax and heated discussion of fake news also taken place in Indonesia. The trend of sharing unverified news was started rapidly in the Presidential Election Campaign in 2014, and then intensified in the Gubernatorial Election Campaign of DKI Jakarta in 2017. Articles in *Harian KOMPAS* stated in its report (Hoaks Politik Dominan, 2017; Hoaks, dari Era Soekarno Hingga Kini, 2017) that many of those distributed fake news revolved around political issues. It further noted the massive production of fake news contents which were made possible by such elaborate team works. These teams were in possession of organized work divisions that involve producers, supporters, and followers. In the case of DKI Jakarta Gubernatorial Election, the report noted that fake news were often contain with views expressing hatred and manipulation of religious and racial sentiments. Hence, the sectarian issues became the main material for fabricated news with the intention to influence the outcome of the election.

A survey from the Indonesian Telematics Society or MASTEL (Masyarakat Telematika Indonesia, 2017) to 1.116 respondents, reports that people continuously exposed to fake news in their daily online interactions. Respondents admit that 9,8% of the false news they received were social-political news related

to the election of regional leaders and the works of the government. The lies were mostly spread through social media (92,4%), online conversation apps like Line, WhatsApp, and Telegram (62,8%), websites (34,9%), television (8,7%), print media (5%), email (3,1%), and radio (1,2%). Thus, online media are increasingly popular in the dissemination of fake news. With its affordances to spread information rapidly and widely in the vast network of users, online media also became the potential tool in spreading vicious, deceptive, and fabricated information.

The problem of fake news becomes consequential when people or media users do not recognize some particular news as fabricated news, and respond to those news as truth. It would have the possibility to lead to the emergence of conflict at various levels and contexts (Karlova & Fisher, 2013; Rojecki & Meraz, 2016; Allcot & Gentzkow, 2017). Thus, it is important to understand what news can be counted as fake news. Allcot and Gentzkow (2017) offer a helpful definition of fake news that differentiates it from verified news. They define fake news as “news articles that are intentionally and verifiably false and could mislead readers” (Allcot & Gentzkow, 2017, p. 213). From this definition, we can see there are at least two elements of fake news: (1) form of fabrication, and (2) contains deception with the intention to mislead readers. Thus, one characteristic of fake news that almost all people agree on is that it has the possibility of misleading others.

Fallis (2015, p. 402) also makes a contribution to the identification of inaccurate news content and defines two categories of misleading news or misleading information. The first category is disinformation, which is information that is deliberately created and distributed in order to deceive others. Most forms of disinformation such as fake news and propaganda are misleading information because the source of information intentionally aims to deceive others. The second category of misleading information, according to Fallis (2015, p. 402), is misinformation, which is information that is incorrect or inaccurate as a result of errors, omissions, and biases.

The categories proposed by Fallis (2015, p. 402) provide distinction of fake news based on the intention of the creator or the disseminator. Disinformation is a deliberate creation of fake news, while misinformation is negligence or accident without a specific purpose. In addition, disinformation and misinformation does not seen from the effects or the result of the information, but from the substance of the information. Disinformation and misinformation are not misleading information only when someone is successfully deceived by that information. Disinformation and misinformation are still misleading information based on the substance of information that is not describing the actual situation and containing errors and inaccuracies that deviate from the actual situation.

One of the driving forces that foster the proliferation of false information of fake news is the change in media ecosystem.

The distribution of information is no longer simply in the hands of news media agencies and professional journalists, but it could also be in the hands of various new actors, which made possible by the affordances of information technology. This lead to a situation which is known as hybrid news system, where there is a process of amalgamation between the old and new information channels. The conception of the hybrid news system is proposed by Chadwick (2011, 2013) in his study of political news in British. Chadwick (2013, p. 21) describes the characteristics of current political communication as “a set of competing and overlapping logic of the media”. Chadwick (2013, p. 159) mentions this current hybrid news system is characterized by high interdependence between old elites, new elites, and non-elite participants who construct as well as challenge meanings of the messages that flow and spread through the different channels of information.

In the hybrid news system, according to Chadwick (2013), mainstream media are under transition where they strive to adapt the presence of new technologies. This transformation not only limited in adopting new technology for their information channels and news delivery, but it is also updating journalistic practices by utilizing digital technology. The dissemination of information no longer relies solely on conventional channels, but also via the internet to spread information virally. Politicians are also quickly adapting to the complexity of information flows.

Many politicians use diverse types of social media to communicate directly to their audiences or their constituents without any mediation from conventional media or journalists. This type of political communication is straightforward without any filtering, gate-keeping, or framing process from the media. It is not uncommon for public officials, such as the presidents, ministers, politicians, and parliamentarians to use their Twitter accounts to convey information, personal views, and comment on the latest issues in the community. These accounts can be official accounts related to public office (as part of an institutional social media account), as well as personal accounts (often declared as personal votes and views, and not institutional views).

In this hybrid news system, to extent Chadwick (2011, 2013) arguments, the views of politicians conveyed through their social media accounts have become part of news for mass media. Short opinion pieces from politicians are not uncommon end up to be news, and it could even go further as part of the headlines in various media outlets. Journalists themselves also use the social media to add comments or personal views which they could not convey via media channels where they work. This kind of opinions could also shape people perception on particular issues. These complex flows of information not only exist in developed countries, such as countries in North America and Europe, but also took place in the context of political news in Indonesia.

Changes not only happen in the way news media agencies produce news.

Changes also manifest in the ways readers or media users consume the news. The practice of sharing or disseminating information from various sources now characterizes information consumption. The ease of distributing information by copying and pasting information hyperlinks in social media is a common practice in reading news nowadays. News-readers can become news-spreaders. Thus, there is information abundance because readers can also be a source or disseminator of information (Hermida, Fletcher, Korell, & Logan, 2012).

Information abundance that is available in various channels prompts newsreaders to select the information to be consumed and disseminated based on their personal assessment of the quality and truthfulness of the information. According to Giglietto, Iannelli, Rossi, and Valeriani (2016, p. 10), evaluation of the truthfulness of information in the current information ecosystem can be based on three elements: (1) the source; (2) the story; and (3) the context of the information they obtain. In term of evaluation of truthfulness of the source, media organizations with good reputation are often regarded as credible information channels due to verification and check and re-check mechanisms. However, the issues of media concentration and conglomeration by a group of capital owners often make news content on mainstream media suspected of containing particular interests. The emergence of alternative media is increasingly becoming reference because it is considered more independent and has no

economic interests that must be protected. But this does not necessarily solve the problem because at the same time there is an emergence of information sources that seems reliable but actually only disseminates information that cannot be justified as truth. This phenomenon raises the amount of information that contradicts each other and requires the reader to digest and to compare information.

In regards to evaluation of news content or story, Giglietto et al. (2016) state that individual tends to believe news that is not in contrary to his/her vision of the world as well as his/her personal beliefs and further reinforces existing beliefs. This is because individual would pay more attention to this kind of information and because it is easier to comprehend (Giglietto et al., 2016, p. 12). This often leads a person to only read and disseminate coherent information with his/her beliefs and worldviews of the world. Therefore, there is a tendency that users who are disseminating information through social media is often based on personal motive to reinforce her/his beliefs and influencing others to have the same belief.

Furthermore, in relation to evaluation of information truthfulness based the context of information, in the current situation that is characterized with 'information overload', Giglietto et al., (2016, p. 10) suggest that people would tend to have limited ability to process the content of information, and less capacity to evaluate whether they would get negative impact or benefit from particular information. This kind of situation is not

only take place on the side of media users. Professional actors, such as journalists, also have possibility to experience information overload that lessen the ability to assess truthfulness of information. In the wake of terrorist attack or natural disaster, media organizations and journalist faced deluge of information in the short amount of time (Giglietto et al., 2016, p. 13). Thus, from these three elements (i.e. source, story, and context), we can see there are number of factors that determined users' perception of information truthfulness.

Another important factor that shapes pattern of information selection and consumption is age or generational difference among users. Marchi (2012, p. 248) notes that younger generation of media users, have the ability to monitor multiple media sites simultaneously, while the older adult users put more attention to one source of news at one time. This pattern often misunderstood by older generation as a reflection of inattention (Marchi, 2012, p. 248). If younger generation easily bouncing from one media to other media channel and have a broader knowledge (albeit sometime superficial) of various issues, on the other hand, an older generation would rather focus on smaller number of topics with more in-depth comprehension of those topics. Furthermore, Marchi (2012, p. 248) notes difference also can be found generally in the immediacy of information consumption. While older generation prefer to have particular hours of the day to consume information, younger generation choose to get the news instantly

whenever they want (Marchi, 2012, p. 248). Communication technology, such as the Internet and mobile phone, enables this type of media consumption for younger generation with all-time connection with sources of information.

However, younger generation's ability to obtain limitless information in the current Internet era is not always followed by their ability to evaluate the quality of information. Research shows that age also an important factor when it comes to tendency in believing or sharing false information. A research from Stanford History Education Group (2016, p. 10) reveals that middle school and high school students in the U.S. have a low ability to differentiate fake news from real news. When students are presented with several different articles, they are failed to differentiate the sponsored contents from the real news stories (Stanford History Education Group, 2016, p. 10). Most of students also accept photographs presented in the study as portraying reality or fact without verifying the source, or asking further where the pictures came from (Stanford History Education Group, 2016, p. 17). Surprisingly, many students also show low ability to notice the difference between real news accounts from what looked like similar news account on social media. Students also have a low ability to determine sources of tweets and to evaluate the validity of information contained in them. Hence, this study shows although there is a general belief that young generations are fluent in using social media and many internet applications, and that they are relatively savvy in producing and appropriating various digital content, their

ability is not equally strong in evaluating the truth value and the credibility of the content.

In short, the proliferation of fake, false, or fabricated news cannot be separated from the complex transformation of information ecosystem. It was driven by the use of information technology and the Internet in news production, distribution, and consumption. The shifting practices of media production by news agencies as well as shifting practices in media consumption by newsreaders or media users make room in production and distribution of unverifiable information.

This study focuses on the side of the newsreaders or media users to see the users' characters who have tendency to consume and distribute fake news, particularly among the media users in Indonesia. Building on previous studies, this research use age as determinant factor which added with the level of income. This tendency is investigated through the examination of the pattern of news consumptions and the assessment of news channel that is perceived the most trustworthy or most credible. This study will yield media users' profile with propensity of consuming and distributing fake news.

METHOD

This study is part of a broader study that is funded by competitive research grant from Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Diponegoro. This research aims to investigate fake news in three different fronts. This first part is to conduct audience profiling with tendency to

consume and distribute fake news based on the pattern of media use and the assessment of news channel/media platform credibility and trustworthiness. The second part is to map out characteristics of false news and to trace the sources that are used to spread the information. The third part is to understand the behavior of audiences in the consumption, production, and reproduction of information through the media. This article presents the result of the first part of the study.

The data used for this study was collected using survey method. The research population is resident in Semarang city who actively use media, both mainstream media (i.e. television, newspapers, magazines, radio) and alternatives media (i.e. social media, weblogs, Youtube, etc.). The sampling technique which used is systematic random sampling by region. The number of respondents of this study is 400 that is determined with a level of confidence 95% and a margin of error of 5%. The determination of the respondents is done through several stages: from the determination of 5 zones (namely North, South, West, East and Central Semarang) to

the level of sub-districts (*kelurahan*), then to the level of *sub-keurahan* (RW), and finally to the level of neighborhood (RT).

The data analysis is conducted by using descriptive statistical analysis. By using this analysis, this study can reveal the pattern of media use based on age and level of income. The data is further analyzed to see the perception of media trustworthiness based on age, and level of income of the respondents.

FINDINGS

The result of the survey shows the composition of the respondent based on gender is male (40%) and female (60%). This composition was obtained naturally which means gender composition of the respondents is not predetermine before survey, but it was solely based on the availability of the household member that responded to the surveyors at the time the survey was conducted. Meanwhile, respondents' composition based on age are categorized into seven age groups (as shown in the Figure 1).

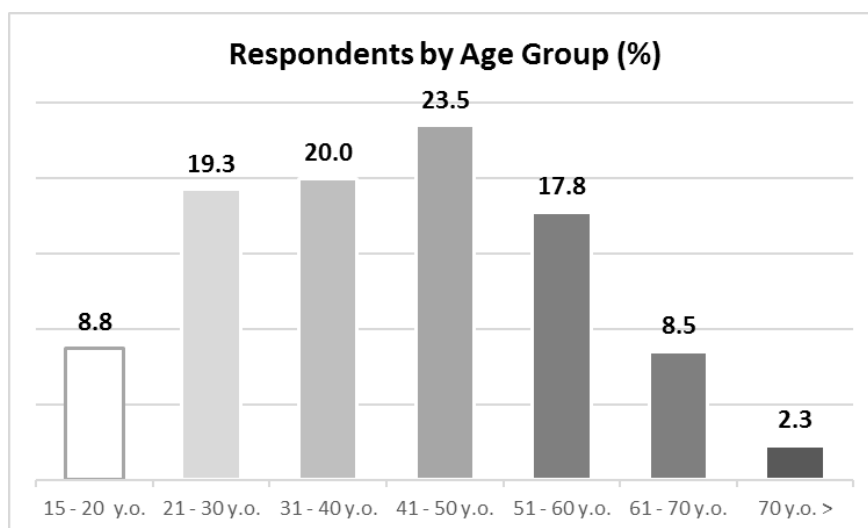


Figure 1 Composition of Respondents Based on Age (Source: Researcher data, 2017)

The largest proportion of the respondents are in the age group of 41-50 years old (23%). Although it is not significantly different compare to respondents in the age group of 31-40 years old (20%) and 21-30 years old (19%). In short, the survey was able to obtain responses from young and adult population in the group of 21-50 years old. The age group of the respondents will be relevant to see the ways in which they use different information channels and different types of media. The age group of respondents will also show different preference of media and their perception of media trustworthiness and credibility.

The survey was able to obtain responses from respondents from different income groups. The largest proportion of the respondents' income start from Rp. 1.000.000 to Rp. 2.000.000 per month reach 45,8% (as shown in Figure 2). Information about this income is related to the respondents' preference and consumption of media to get their information will be explained in the next section.

The inquiry regarding pattern of media consumption uncovers the ways, and through which channel, the respondents obtain their information and how different

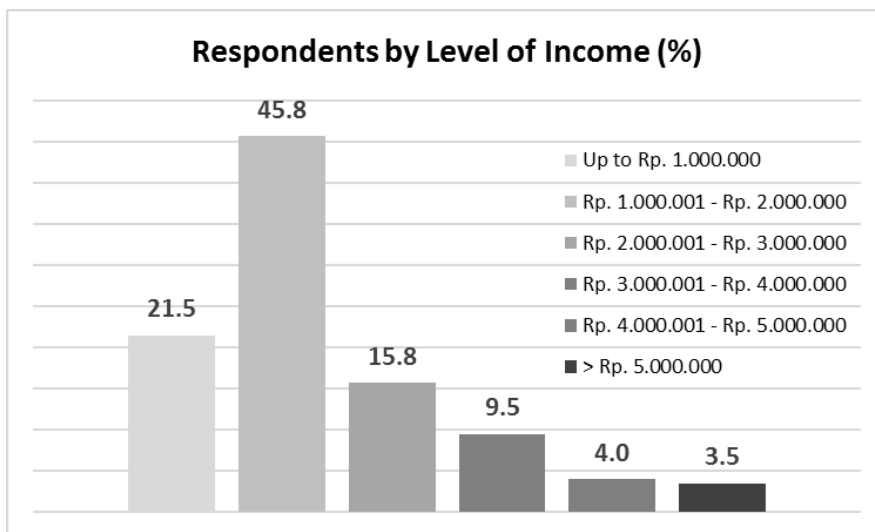


Figure 2 Composition of Respondents Based on Income Level (Source: Researcher data, 2017)

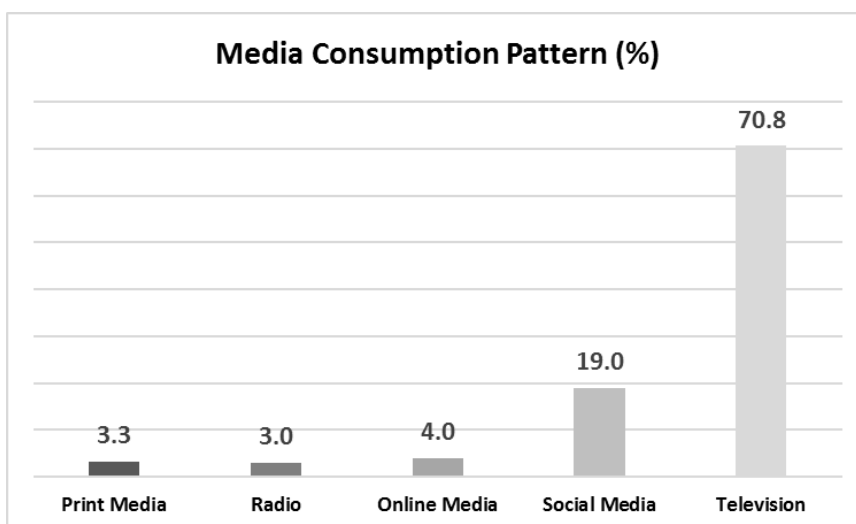


Figure 3 Respondents' Pattern of Media Consumption Based on the Types of Channel (Source: Researcher data, 2017)

age groups prefer different types of channel of information. The result of the survey shows that overall respondents used predominantly television as information channel to acquire their information and entertainment. This medium is still the most accessible channel of information, in which overwhelmingly 70.8% of the respondents said that television content is the most consumed information in their daily life.

The majority of the respondents mentioned two types of television watching pattern based on the time spending in watching. First, the group of respondents who spend four hours on average watching television in a day (20%). Second, the group of respondents who spend more than seven hours on average in watching television in a day (21,5%). Large numbers of the respondents also asserted that they have more than one unit of television in their home, for several respondents it is even up to three to four units. The placement of this television can be in living room, family room, and bedroom. This indicates that television has a very close connection with respondents' daily and family life. The fact that some respondents spend seven hours watching television means watching TV is counted one-third of their average daily activities. Among many television channels that can be watched nationally in Indonesia, the top three that is reported as the most frequently watch is Indosiar (20,5%), ANTV (18,3%), and RCTI (15,5%).

The second medium that is become the most used to obtain information is the combination of social media and other

online channels (i.e. news portal, website, blogs, etc.). Many respondents mentioned that they use more than one social media in their daily use, even small number of the respondents mentioned that they use five to six social media. These social media can be Facebook, Twitters, Instagram, Path, and a number of mobile chat applications, such as Line, Whatsapp, Telegram, etc. Respondents who use the combination of these two media counted up to 23% of the respondents. As for others respondents, a small group of them mentioned that they used radio (3%) and newspaper (3.3%) as the most consumed media to obtained information and entertainment.

If we look closely to the pattern of consumption based on the age groups, it can be seen that the largest number of respondents who mentioned that television is the most consumed mass media are in the age group of 41-70 years old. It seems that the older generation prefer this medium as their source of information and entertainment. This fact is somewhat contradictory to the younger age group (15-30 years old), where most of them use social media and other online platforms to get information and entertainment.

For those who are in the age of 21-30 years old, both online media and social media are the most popular media. Looking closely to the 23% of respondents who said that they predominantly used online and social media to get information, almost half of them are in the age group of 21-30 years old (43,8% and 40,8%, as shown in Figure 4). The next age groups

who rely on online and social media are the group of 31-40 years old and 15-20 years old. Therefore, this survey conforms with general knowledge that the younger generations are those who are use and consume information distributed through social media and various online platforms. Generational gap also clearly shows through the result of the survey, where among 23% of the respondents of the research who said the users of online and social media, only less than 10% are from the age group of 41-50 years old and 51-60 years old, and even smaller in the age group of 61-70 years old (1,3%).

For the other types of conventional media (i.e. radio and newspaper), it is interesting to see that the age group of 15-30 years in the survey no longer use newspaper and radio to access and to get information. There are several possible explanations for the lack of newspaper and radio use, as reveals in this research. One possible explanation is because media users have to buy or have to pay

something to access and read information on the newspaper. With the abundance of information available through online media and television that can be obtained for free (although users have to pay fee for Internet connection, this fee is not necessarily seen as cost to access information/news but also cost for other communication and entertainment purposes), less media users are willing to pay for information they get. Another possible explanation is related to the less practicality of newspaper to be read compare to online news media or social media that can be read anytime and anywhere through mobile devices.

As for the explanation of the lack of use of the radio, it is possible because a large number of radio channel in Semarang are predominantly contain with entertainment with less proportion of news content (although there are a small number of channel with news specialty). This situation causes many radio listeners see this medium as merely the source of entertainment, and not the source of news.

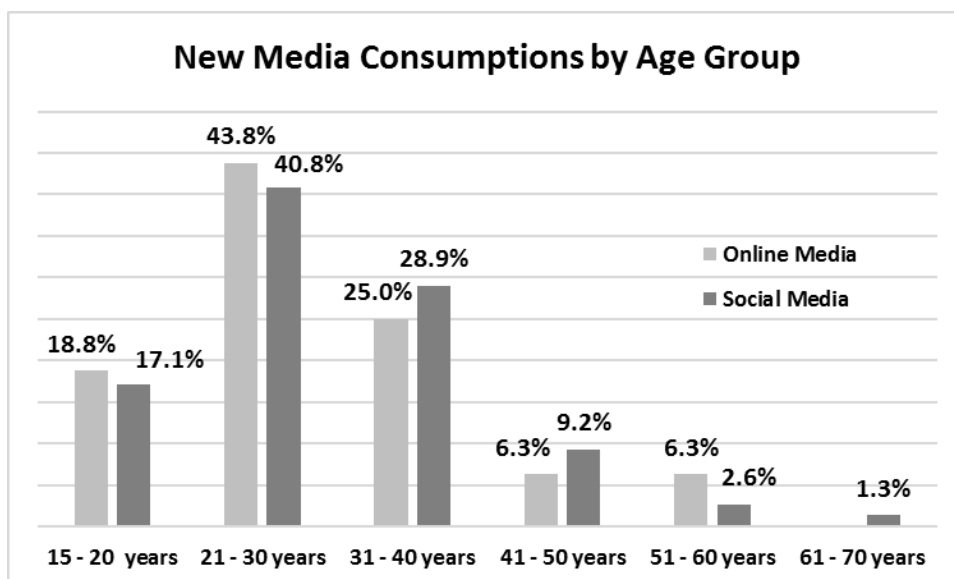


Figure 4 Respondents' Pattern of Media Consumption Based on the Types of Channel (Source: Researcher data, 2017)

The other possible explanation is because the less practicality of radio as compare to online media that can be accessed through mobile devices.

If we further look on the ways in which the pattern of media consumption different based on level of income, we can see that respondents with lower income level (up to Rp. 4.000.000) largely depend on television for their source of information. As for the groups of respondents with higher income level (> Rp 4.000.000) are starting to see online platforms and social media as the alternative source of information, although most of the time they rely on television as source of information and entertainment. The result of the survey shows the increasing number of the higher income level group no longer use television as the dominant source of information. Instead, they turn to online media as well as social media to fulfill their need of information.

The perception of media trustworthiness indicates the respondents' level of trust the

respondents have that one media channel delivers honest, accurate, and sound information. It also means that they would turn to that particular media in the situation where uncertainties occur. The result of the survey shows that large proportions of respondents asserted television is the most trusted media to deliver information, which accounted for 78,8% of the respondents. Not surprisingly, newspaper also considered as also one of the most trustworthy channel of information (7,8%).

Meanwhile, although relatively large proportion of media users utilized social media and other online platforms as to access their information, the level of confidence of these channels of information is relatively low. Only 4,5% of the respondents admit that social media is the most trusted source of information and only 5,8% assert that online platforms as the most trusted source of information. The level of confidence of radio is even lower, as the survey result shows only 0,5% of respondents

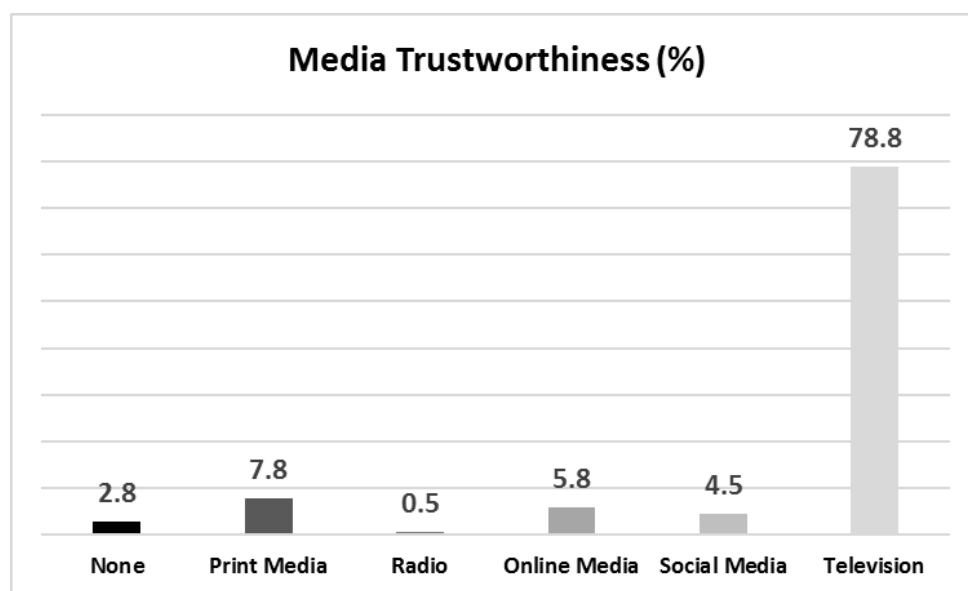


Figure 5 Respondents' Perception regarding Media Trustworthiness (Source: Researcher data, 2017)

considered radio as the most trustworthy media channel. It is important to note that there is also a group of respondents that have no confidence on either type of media to deliver trustworthy information. They see that television, social media, online platforms, radio, or newspapers cannot be depended on to deliver honest, fair, and accurate information. It can be said that this group of respondents has a fundamental skepticism on mass media.

Regarding the perception of media trustworthiness of different age groups, the survey shows that different age groups of respondents have different confidence level on mass media. As predicted, the respondents in the older age groups, from 41 years old to above, have more confidence in television and newspapers compare to other types of mass media. Further, there is no single respondent in these age groups (41 to >70 years old) that considered social media and various online platforms as trustworthy.

On the contrary, the younger generations media users (age group 15-30 years old) believe on social media and online platforms as the most trustworthy source on information. Although there are large number of respondents in this age group who still consider television is the most trustworthy media, but significant proportion admitted the trustworthiness of social media and online platforms as compare to different age groups. Among respondents who admitted that they have trust on new media, the highest proportions are in the age group of 21-30 years old and 31-40 years old.

In relation to the level of income, the groups of respondents who have the level of income from Rp 1.000.000 to Rp 3.000.000 (relatively low income level) see that television is the most trustworthy mass media and have more confidence with the information this medium presents. However, respondents with medium and relatively higher level of income (Rp

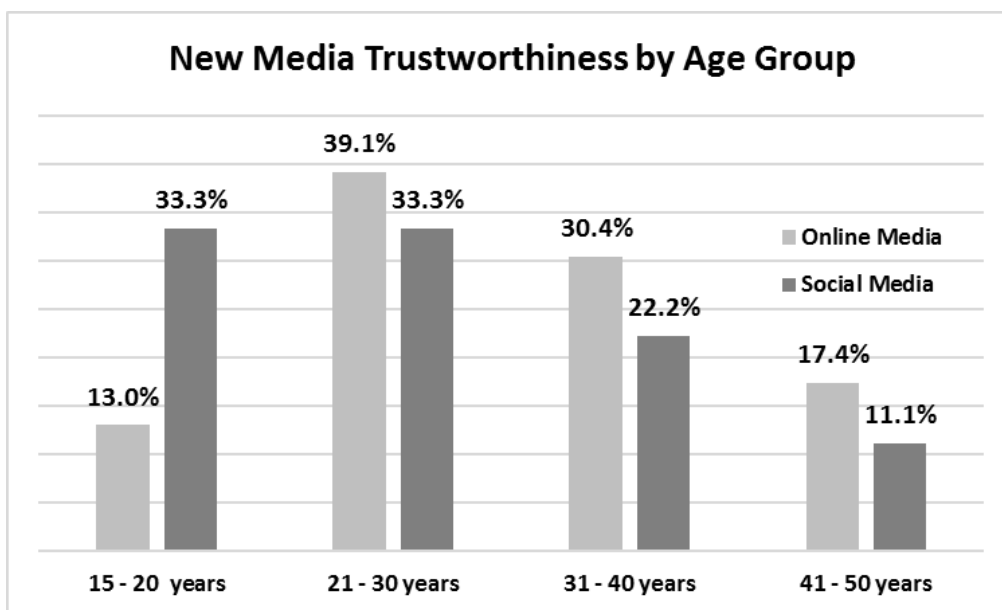


Figure 6 Respondents' Perception regarding Media Trustworthiness based on Age Group (Source: Researcher data, 2017)

4.000.000 up to > Rp 5.000.000) are not trusting information on television as high as the previous group. Although some of them have confidence on information on TV, reasonably numbers of people with higher income have more trust on newspaper and other online media.

DISCUSSION

The survey data shows the terms of media pattern of consumption, the majority of the respondents are still rely heavily on television as a primary source of information. This is especially true in the group of older generation, particularly of those who are above 40 years old. On the contrary, less media users are relying on radio and newspaper as the main source of information, particularly those who are in the younger age group of 15-30 years old. There are even some of media users that admitted they are no longer use these media (i.e. radio and newspaper) and obtain their information from other sources.

However, although television is still the primary source of information, the group of younger generation (particularly the group of 15-30 years old) stated that they rely on social media and various online platforms to get and to fulfill their need of information. The vast amount and the diversity of information available on the Internet is indeed one to the strong features of this medium as compare to others, which attract this group of younger media users. Marchi (2012, p. 252) has indicated a number of reasons of why teenagers or younger users prefer to learn about current

event from social networking sites such as Facebook, YouTube, and various blogs. One of the reasons is that this medium of information allows them “to connect and contribute to ongoing conversations about news via posting comments and/or content on social networking sites and blogs”. With this opportunity to provide feedback and commentary to the current affairs, reading or watching news on the Internet become more engaging activity compare to just passively watching news on television.

Another reason for younger generation to seek information through the Internet and social media is because teenager prefer to “self-tailor” their news, and because they see traditional news outlets “force-fed” the stories to them, which they find boring and less interesting (Marchi, 2012, p. 252). Teenagers see that the Internet and various social media also provide rooms for firsthand experiences and diverse perspectives (that also can be seen on the comment section), which they could actively seek if they are interested. Being exposed to many types of stories and different perspectives allow teenagers to consider their position on an issue and further develop their opinion on that particular issue (Marchi, 2012, p. 252). Nevertheless, Marchi (2012, p. 253) also acknowledge this “a la carte” news consumption among young generation raise a new concern that it could lead to the emergence of “echo chamber” in which individual only exposed themselves to information that match their own believe and strengthen their own conviction. This concern is become more significant in the

pervasiveness of false information on the Internet and social media nowadays.

If we refer to the previous studies that asserted online and social media have large share for distribution fake news sites (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017; News Media Association, 2017, Masyarakat Telematika Indonesia, 2017), then the groups of these young media users have the higher risk to be exposed to false information. It also means they have higher susceptibility to read and distribute fake news, with or without realizing it. In conjunction to this possibility of high exposure to false information, the tendency of younger generation to have lack of ability to differentiate false information from the real one (as shown in the finding of the Stanford History Education Group research, 2016) make them prone to trusting unverified information without further effort to do some cross-check. In addition to this age factor, this research also shows that media users with high consumption of information through online media and social media are those who have medium to high level of income. Therefore, based on these two factors, profile of media users with tendency to consume false information are those who are relatively young in age and with moderate and high level of income. Thus, if one were to conduct anti-fake news or anti-hoax campaign, these two factors should be taken into considerations.

Furthermore, in terms of perception of media trustworthiness, the largest proportions of the respondent still have confidence on conventional media, such as television and newspaper. The sound of

authority of news and information is still perceived closely related to professional journalists and institutionalized media that are considered have gone through several editorial steps in preparing the information before delivering it to the readers/media users. However, an important note worth considering is the tendency of the younger generation (15-20 years old), who are most likely still in the school age, to believe the information from social media. The level of trust of this group age to the social media information are considerably high compare to other age group. This research see that it is quite concerning that relatively significant proportion of respondents in the age of 15-20 years have confidence on information on social media and consider it as the most trustworthy channel of information, given that many unconfirmed sources and unverified information is flooding a number of social media platform.

Giglietto et al. (2016) and Marchi (2012) concern about echo-chamber which could be a logical explanation for this finding, in which they explain individuals would give greater attention and consideration to what is familiar with them since it is easier to understand. Consumption of information are done insofar it is feeding and sustaining their views of the world or understanding of a particular issue. Thus, the information on social media would sound factual and convincing if it is in line with users' interests. The fact that many times conventional media (such as TV channels and newspapers) in Indonesia rather obviously support some particular

political agendas lead to skepticism. This is where media bias is playing roles, although it does not mean it is equal to spreading false information. The high confidence to information in social media and various websites could also lead to spreading those information to closer networks, even sharing it publicly. This is part of the cycle in circulation of false information.

Therefore, it is important to recognize that if the younger generations' dependency on social media for their news consumption, and confidence to the truth-value of the information on this platform increasing, then, it is increasingly consequential to provide literacy to these younger generations to differentiate the fake news from the real one. As Stanford History Education Group (2016) noted, the fluency of the younger generation in using social media is not necessarily meant that they also easily assess credibility of information. Thus, the younger age groups are the media users who have the highest tendency to consume fake news. This situation leads to the urgency to provide digital literacy to this group to help them possess more ability to recognize the information worth considering and worth believing.

CONCLUSION

This study finds that the proliferations of fake news are relate with the complex transformation of media ecology that brought about by the affordance of digital technology and various internet applications, particularly social media. The shifting practices have taken place in both production and distribution side

of information as well as in consumption side of the information. This research observes a number of previous researches that investigate the tendencies of media users in consuming and distributing fake news, where the factors such as age and personal beliefs are some determinant in consuming fake news. This research, then, aims to examine the ways in which age and level of income were determining tendency to consume fake news.

The research result shows that based on the pattern of media consumption, the media users in the age group of 15-30 years old have the higher risk to be exposed to fake news. It also means that this age group was the media users with tendency to consume (and most likely to distribute) fake news. Meanwhile, based on the perception of media trustworthiness, this research also finds the younger group of media users, particularly the age group of 15-20 years old, was the age group who has tendency to believe on fake news. The result of this research, therefore, provides important information regarding who are the media users that should be targeted for literacy program to reduce, or even to eliminate, the distribution of fake news in public space.

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