



Social Stigma of Unemployment in United States Online Media during COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: The social stigma of unemployment during COVID-19 pandemic related to problems of marginalization. This study explores the construction of the meaning of the social stigma of unemployment in United States online media. This study is a comparative study to compare the construction of the meaning of social stigma between online media usa.today and nbwashington.com with Entman's framing analysis. The problem formulated through framing is that social stigma makes it difficult for unemployed people to get a job and stigma creates feelings of inferiority. The cause of the social stigma is perception low personal qualities and stigma consciousness. Framing moral judgement is a negative perception in employers mind and the feeling of shame due to unemployment. Countermeasure suggestion is wide distribution of vaccines and suggestions about ways to get job. Online media can contribute as agents of change through news framing that can improve public perceptions and provide informational support.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, the COVID-19 pandemic has hit the world, causing health, economic and social problems. Most of the digital communication channels are flooded by various news related to this virus (Setiawan et al., 2021). The pandemic also causes many changes in social life, including uncertainty, financial pressure, social isolation, and causes psychological pressure that can cause stress and anxiety (Li et al., 2021). The economic crisis due to

the COVID-19 pandemic is predicted to have an impact on global unemployment (UN, 2022). News about unemployment dominated the media coverage in the United States during the pandemic, with consistently high public attention. As the unemployment rate rises, fear spreads about the condition of America's workforce (Gallagher, 2021).

Unemployment has a negative impact related to social, financial, and psychological problems. Unemployment

has a direct impact on the financial condition of individuals. There has been a sharp and persistent reduction in income that forces unemployed individuals to make severe adjustments that negatively affect the quality of nutrition, housing, and health care. Financial problems have consistently been a significant predictor of psychological stress on unemployment (Farré et al., 2018).

Periods of unemployment are associated with symptoms of stress, such as stomach ailments, headaches, and mental health symptoms, such as anxiety, depression, sleep problems, and declining health habits (Hammarström & Ahlgren, 2019). Experiences that worsen or improve health depend on the position of the workforce acquired (Hammarström & Ahlgren, 2019). This mental health condition is related to the quality of human resources as reflected in the Human Development Index (HDI), which covers aspects of education, health, and economy. HDI is one measure of state welfare in addition to Gross Domestic Product (Suparno, 2018).

Psychological problems can be the result of unemployment, but poor mental health can also result in a person losing his job, being unable to find work, being unemployed for more extended periods, and having a lower chance of being accepted for work (Krug et al., 2019). Poor mental health can lead to job loss or the inability to find work (Farré et al., 2018).

The refusal to accept unemployed individuals due to the perception of personal failure is a stigma effect. (O'Donnell et al., 2015). The social stigma imposed on unemployment is one of the essential mechanisms related to unemployment's psychological and social consequences (Tyler & Slater, 2018). O'Donnell et al. (2015) reported the research results that the social stigma of

unemployment negatively impacts individuals. The greater the stigmatization the unemployment has, the less the institutions' willingness to employ unemployed individuals

Stigma is defined by Goffman (1963) as an attribute that discredits or vilifies a person. Stigma is a relationship between attributes and stereotypes. The discrediting attributes are given to individuals who have characteristics or behavior that are different or deviate from what is considered normal by society. Link and Phelan (2001) state that stigma is the presence of several components, namely labeling, stereotypes, separation, loss of status, and discrimination.

Stigma can lead to negative and hostile behavior towards stigmatized people (Krug et al., 2019). Labelling developed because of a social selection process to define different things in society. Differences, such as race, can be easily recognized so that society can categorize people into specific groups based on race. Labels connect individuals or groups to several undesirable characteristics, which can be used then as stereotypes. The process of labelling and stereotyping creates separation because people do not want to be associated with less positive characteristics, so hierarchical categories are created. When the categories have been formed, groups with negative or unwanted characteristics become victims of the loss of status and discrimination. Individuals who are stigmatized feel ashamed, and so do those associates with the recipient of the stigma (Link & Phelan, 2001).

Stigma is a psychological process that involves individual cognition. The socio-cognitive approach explains how individuals construct categories that relate these categories to certain stereotyped beliefs in the stigma process. Stigma is different from discrimination.

Discrimination gives greater attention to the process of rejection and exclusion, while stigma is directed at something that is inside a person (Link & Phelan, 2001).

There are three types of stigmas, namely ethnic identity, body hatred, and character weakness. Ethnic identity stigma includes ethnicity, religion, nationality, or gender stigma. Stigma related to body hatred covers the stigma of physical disability. Stigma related to character weakness are stigma against mental disorders, addictions, or a history of detention. Social stigma against unemployment is related to the belief that unemployment status is caused by personal weakness (Tyler & Slater, 2018).

Goffman (in Tyler, 2018) suggests four crucial things about stigma. First, stigma is a perspective that develops in a social context; second, people learn to cope with the adverse effects of social stigma by adopting identity-regulating strategies; third, stigmatization is specific; fourth, stigma can function as social control. Furthermore, according to Tyler (2018), a better understanding of stigma is something that can be improved, either through forms of social action that focus on "educating people" about stigmatized conditions or educating people who experience stigmatization to be able to cope with their stigmatized condition.

Stigma can be classified into three levels of social fields: social stigma, self-stigma, and professional stigma. The levels here do not refer to the hierarchy of interests of various stigmas. Social stigma is the belief that individuals who are stigmatized are less equal or are part of an inferior group. The social stigma that exists in society can create inferiority. This belief system can result in unequal access to services in the community or a policy setting. Self-stigma is a social stigma that is

internalized by individuals (Ahmedani, 2011).

Stigma can have negative impact toward well-being and physical health. O'Donnel et al. (2015) reported the results of research that social stigma can cause negative psychological impacts, such as depression, anxiety, reduced quality of life, negative emotions, and decreased self-esteem. Stigma can lead to poor physical health, such as increased symptoms of illness, which generally include chest pain, nausea, coughing, to comorbid chronic diseases (O'Donnel et al., 2015).

According to the World Health Organization (2014), stigma is a major cause of discrimination and harms family relationships, limiting individuals' ability to socialize and find work. Stigma also hinders efforts to prevent mental disorders, improve well-being, and access health services, as well as human rights violations. Based on the description, it shows that stigma given to the unemployed can cause mental health problems, such as stress and depression. Therefore, it is crucial to reduce, even break the stigma of unemployment. In this case, the role of online media is significant, especially in constructing the reality of unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic through framing news texts in the online media.

Stigma against unemployment is reported in online media. The stigma of unemployment was reported and discussed by two US online media, namely usatoday.com and nbcwashington.com. The online media usatoday.com reports the results of interviews about unemployment and stigma associated with unemployment. The online media interviews unemployed Americans, business people, recruitment practitioners, and social and economic scientists. Media usatoday.com is an online media included in the top 10 US online newspaper according to

allyoucanread.com, the most extensive database site for media from around the world (Allyoucanread, n.d.).

Another view on the stigma of unemployment is found on the online media nbcwashington.com. The online media nbcwashington.com reports on the results of a LinkedIn survey, interviews with a career expert and provides helpful tips for getting a job. LinkedIn is a social networking website primarily used for professional and business networking. LinkedIn surveyed 2,000 recently unemployed people, 2,000 working professionals, and 1,000 hiring managers. According to a LinkedIn survey cited by nbcwashington.com, 46% of unemployed people lie about losing their job.

Differences in views in online media about the social stigma of unemployment are essential and worth studying because the media can influence individual perceptions of social reality through the information conveyed and constructed. Especially in this era of media convergence, media can reach people more quickly and widely (Gushevinalti et al., 2020). News coverage in the media, especially during this pandemic, even affect the business of big company that has a good reputation for a long time (Hasibuan & Irwansyah, 2020). The reality presented by the media becomes the reality that is not objective but the reality of the construction results that are constantly changing (Utami & Sokowati, 2021).

The reality presented by the media can be perceived as less objective in describing reality. A survey conducted by Gallup, a survey agency in the United States, indicates this trend. Gallup survey results show that most adults in the United States lack confidence in the media. Six out of ten adults in the United States said they "did not strongly believe" (27%), and 33% "did not believe at all" in the accuracy of the

media, while 9% strongly believed and 31% believed it moderately (Brennan, 2020). The survey result makes the media in the United States relevant to study.

There are different perspectives on unemployment and problems related with it during the pandemic (Gallagher, 2021). The stigma of unemployment was reported by online media usatoday.com and nbcwashington.com. There is a difference in emphasis on the issue of social stigma of unemployment between usatoday.com and nbcwashington.com even though both online media are classified as media with a left tendency in polarization (MBSC, 2022b; MBSC, 2022a; Allsides, 2021). In general, sources which is rated right or left tendency support almost all policies in their category. The left tendency is characterized by collectivism, community above the individual, equality, educational opportunities, and social safety nets for those in need. The right tendency is characterized by individualism, placing the individual above community, private property and competition. The evaluation is from an American perspective and may not be compatible with all countries (MBSC, 2021).

Usatoday.com online media tends to be skeptical about negative stigma of unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic. The tendency to hold a pessimistic view is reflected in one of their news stories entitled "As COVID-19 persists, more Americans are unemployed beyond six months. Does that carry a stigma even in a pandemic?". They stated that unemployment results in declining skills and prolonged unemployment can lead to stigma.

The media nbcwashington.com also reported that there was a stigma of unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic in the news entitled "Unemployment Stigma? Majority of

Unemployed Believe It Exists". But different from *usatoday.com*, they emphasized the optimistic perspective that the unemployment problems can be overcome and it is important to help each other during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on the background of the problem that has been described, this study aims to analyze the text about unemployment stigma in two US online media, namely *usatoday.com* and *nbcwashington.com*. Therefore, *usatoday.com* and *nbcwashington.com* becomes the unit of analysis of this study.

The theory used in analysis is gestalt theory and meaning construction in framing. Online media plays an essential role in constructing reality (Utami & Sokowati, 2021). Framing, according to Entman, has relevance in explaining stigma because it involves the process of giving meaning and ways to overcome stigma proposed by Frost (2011).

The construction of meaning is carried out on texts in online media which involves understanding language and cognitive processes. The process of structuring words and sentences as language units and construction of meaning, in general, takes place simultaneously, involving dynamic mechanisms that represent overall meaning or Gestalt (Col et al., 2011).

The process of interpreting meaning can be explained by Gestalt theory according to the figure and ground principle (Wagemans et al., 2012). Gestalt theory covers a vast field, from perception to social life (Stemberger, 2020). Gestalt theory states that all objects or events must be observed as a unified whole and comprehensive. The Law of Simplicity in Gestalt theory shows that an object or event is more important than its elements. Humans actively interpret objects or events through perceptions that are overall,

namely a unified whole or Gestalt. The concept of figure and ground in Gestalt theory states that humans actively interpret objects or events through overall perception. All perceptions tend to be organized into different figures from the ground. The focus of a person's attention determines what that person sees (Irwanto & Gunawan, 2018).

Individuals who talk about and describe an event perform linguistic conceptualization and pay attention to varying degrees of the aspects discussed (Choi et al., 2018). The concept of figure and ground in Gestalt theory can be applied in framing, where things that focus on attention in framing become figures, while things that are not the focus become ground. The construction of figure and ground in the language is an individual's effort to express experiences clearly and effectively in their communication (Choi et al., 2018).

Currently, there is few research on stigma and health in unemployed individuals, especially in online media. The literature on social stigma focuses more on the stigma of mental disorders or physical illness, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, while there is still limited literature on social stigma against unemployment (Krug et al., 2019).

Unemployment causes stigmatization, which becomes a stressor of psychological and physical health problems. However, it is yet known whether the stigma of being unemployed is related to psychological and physical health (O'Donnell et al., 2015). Social stigma in the context of work is a fairly large and complex problem, where there is a knowledge gap about the long-term effects stigma on unemployment (Brouwers, 2020).

The period of unemployment is characterized by reduced social contacts, where social media helps unemployed

individuals to maintain their social relationships (Feuls et al., 2014). Social networks have an important role in helping people find work, but research reports that unemployed individual rarely engage in networking. The shame related with stigma is an important factor in the desire to network (Peterie et al., 2019). Unemployment status is a shameful social identity (Panari & Tonelli, 2022)

Research shows that both entertainment and news media tend to present a distorted image that emphasizes danger, crime and negative reactions to individuals with mental disorders. The consequences of the negative image presented by the media can lead to social stigma. The media plays an essential role in changing these negative perceptions and portraying the positive side of humanity. The media can play an important role in challenging public prejudices (Stuart, 2006).

This study aims to examine the social stigma of unemployment in United State online media during the COVID-19 pandemic, in this case, *usa.today* is compared with *nbcwashington.com* through framing analysis. The analysis was conducted on the United States online media because the United States is a country that has a dominant position in globalization with mastery of information and communication technology (Utami & Sokowati, 2021). The results of this study can provide benefits for the development of theoretical understanding and its application from a multidisciplinary perspective.

METHOD

This study applies a qualitative approach. Qualitative research explores the meaning. The construction of meaning can be done through the words used to

describe the experience, which has a constructive dimension and reflects reality (Willig, 2013).

This study uses a constructivist paradigm that views social reality because of social construction so that the truth is relative. Humans can interpret and construct reality. Truth results from consensus between constructors, not related to objective reality (Patton, 2002).

The reason for choosing the constructivism paradigm is because the reality of the social stigma of unemployment described in the text is the result of a relative social construction, which is influenced by the subjectivity of news writers in highlighting certain information in the text.

The method for analysis used in this study is framing analysis, according to Entman. Framing analysis is a text analysis method that is included in a qualitative approach (Marta et al., 2020). To frame means to select some aspects of reality and make them more prominent in a communication text. Analysis of the frame shows that the influence on the mind, namely human consciousness, can occur through the transfer or communication of information from one place, such as news, to consciousness. Framing has four functions: defining a problem, interpreting its causes, conducting a moral evaluation, and providing recommendations for problem-solving. Problem definition is to define a problem with its disadvantages and benefits; the interpretation of causes is the identification of the forces that cause problems. Moral judgment is an evaluation of the causes of problems and their effects. Suggestions for countermeasures provide ways of overcoming problems and predicting possible effects (Entman, 1993).

Two online media in the United States, namely *usatoday.com* and *nbcwashington.com*, discussed the issue of

unemployment stigma. According to a US media survey, *usatoday.com* and *nbcwashington.com* received high ratings for factual reporting due to their precise sources and clean fact-checking records of news reporting. Both media are also considered to have a left polarization tendency (MBSC, 2022b; MBSC, 2022a; Allsides, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the number of unemployment, so that the unit of analysis is online media with a left-leaning tendency that sided with the community and providing a social safety net.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The frame's power is formed by highlighting certain aspects of an event to attract attention while other aspects are ignored. According to Entman (1993), framing has four functions, namely defining a problem, interpreting its causes, conducting a moral evaluation, and providing recommendations for problem-solving.

Problem definition Framing

The function of the problem definition framing is to determine the problem with its disadvantages and benefits (Entman, 1993). The problem in texts defined through framing is social stigma.

Table 1. Defining Problem in *usatoday.com* and *nbcwashington.com*

usatoday.com	nbcwashington.com
<p>COVID-19 cases are hitting new records....</p> <p><i>Historically, the long-term unemployed have a much tougher time finding jobs than those sidelined for shorter spells....., and extended unemployment may carry a stigma.</i></p>	<p><i>The COVID-19 pandemic has left millions of Americans without jobs. According to a new survey from LinkedIn, 46% of unemployed people have lied about being out of work.</i></p> <p><i>84% said they believe there's a stigma associated with unemployment, 67% believe this stigma is affecting their ability to get hired.</i></p>

(Source: Davidson, 2020; Royster & Hogan, 2020)

Table 1 describes the framing function of the problem definition, namely determining the problem with its disadvantages and benefits (Entman, 1993).

In *usatoday.com* and *nbcwashington.com* texts, the problem is the social stigma on unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Framing on *usatoday.com* text highlights the problem of social stigma that persists during the

COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the Gestalt theory, the problem of unemployment stigma that persists during the COVID-19 pandemic has become a figure. This social stigma will make it difficult for the unemployed to get a job. Social stigma can lead to inferiority and unequal access to services or policymaking (Ahmedani, 2011).

The online media *nbcwashington.com* provides a problem definition frame about

the social stigma against unemployment believed to exist by unemployed individuals and makes it difficult for them to get a job. Media nbcwashington.com quoted the results of a survey by www.linkedin.com about the stigma of unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Gestalt theory, the highlighted information or that becomes a figure is a problem of social stigma perceived by unemployed individuals so that they do not openly or cover up their status that is not working.

The unemployment stigma can be perceived differently, resulting in different figures and ground, as written in usatoday.com and nbcwashington.com news texts. Media nbcwashington.com makes the attitude of unemployed individuals who cover their unemployment status as figures, while other information about stigma becomes ground because it is not discussed in depth. This difference is because the world's perception is subjective, which does not correspond to the actual reality, but the structure that one assumes about the world (Jäkel et al., 2016).

Media usatoday.com and media nbcwashington.com mention the disadvantage of unemployment's stigma because the stigma can affect a person's ability to be accepted for work. The social stigma of unemployment does not benefit unemployed individuals because it makes it difficult for them to find work.

In the usatoday.com text, framing is done by highlighting social stigma that persists during the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the Gestalt theory, the problem of unemployment stigma that persists during the COVID-19 pandemic has become a figure. This social stigma will make it difficult for the unemployed to get a job. Social stigma can lead to inferiority and unequal access to services or policymaking (Ahmedani, 2011).

Problem Cause Framing

Interpretation of causes is the identification of the forces that cause problems (Entman, 1993). Table 2 describes the framing function that causes the problem.

The cause of the social stigma of unemployment that is highlighted or becomes a figure through framing by usatoday.com is the increasing number of unemployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, a person's inability to get a job is associated with personal qualities. Mental health is one aspect of personal quality, where poor mental health can cause a person to be unemployed for a longer time and have a lower chance of re-entering the job market (Farré et al., 2018). Stressors can lead to adverse effects, such as decreased performance (Taylor, 2018). The refusal to accept unemployed individuals due to the perception of personal failure is a stigma effect (O'Donnell et al., 2015).

Table 2. Problem Cause in usatoday.com and nbcwashington.com

usatoday.com	nbcwashington.com
<p><i>If a long-term unemployed candidate is competing against others who are working or have been jobless for shorter periods, some firms may assume “they’re not good workers or they got turned down at other places,” Van Horn says. “I think the stigma will be there.” “Skills actually do atrophy.”</i></p> <p><i>Some data supports this skeptical view.</i></p>	<p><i>Eighty-four percent said they believe there’s a stigma associated with unemployment, 67 percent believe this stigma is affecting their ability to get hired.</i></p> <p><i>27% who are unemployed have not asked anyone they know for help with their job search.</i></p>

(Source: Davidson, 2020; Royster & Hogan, 2020)

The online media nbcwashington.com developed a framing of the causes of the social stigma problem of unemployment in terms of the effect of stigma on individual perceptions. According to Gestalt theory, the figure in this framing is the individual's perception of the stigma of unemployment. There is a belief that the stigma associated with unemployment affects the chances of getting hired. In addition, unemployed individuals have problems finding work because they do not ask for help when looking for work, especially from people they know. This condition shows that stigma develops from subjective perceptions, which can affect a person's attitude toward looking for work.

A person can have a high stigma consciousness, namely the anticipation of getting a stigma. The existence of stigma consciousness can cause a person to have a

negative self-concept so that they do not ask for help to get a job. This is what can cause individuals with a high stigma of consciousness unemployment to have a low chance of working again (Krug et al., 2019). In addition, stigma consciousness in unemployed individuals can cause psychological distress, and declining mental health tends to increase marginalization (Farré et al., 2018).

Moral Judgement Framing

Moral judgment is an evaluation of the causes of problems and their effects (Entman, 1993). Table 3 describes the function of moral judgment framing based on an assessment and the impact of the problem.

Table 3. Moral Judgement in usatoday.com and nbcwashington.com

usatoday.com	nbcwashington.com
<p><i>Despite employers’ goodwill, some economists believe the long-term unemployed will likely face the same old employer biases as the pandemic grinds on and their jobless stint is lengthen.</i></p>	<p><i>They say they are embarrassed or think people aren’t willing to help.</i></p>

(Source: Davidson, 2020; Royster & Hogan, 2020)

The news figure in *usatoday.com* on framing moral judgement is that there is still a bias in employers against unemployed individuals, which is no different from the times before the COVID-19 pandemic, despite good intentions from employers.

The *nbcwashington.com* stated different things, where this online media framing moral judgments makes the feeling of shame due to unemployment a figure. Media *nbcwashington.com* highlights the psychological aspect, namely the feeling of shame due to unemployment, and explores the impact. As a result of feeling ashamed, unemployed individuals do not ask for help, so the unemployment problem is not solved. Other things related to moral judgments are not discussed in-depth or become ground; for example, the bias against unemployed individuals still exists even though they are currently in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stigma is a psychological process that involves cognition (Link & Phelan, 2001). Individuals can internalize social stigma resulting in self-stigma. The existence of a stigma in society can have an impact on individuals (Ahmedani, 2011). Feelings of shame about being unemployed cause unemployed individuals not to ask for help from others to overcome their problems because of the anticipation of being stigmatized by the existence of stigma consciousness (Krug et al., 2019).

Countermeasures Suggestion Framing

Suggestions for countermeasures provide ways of overcoming problems and predicting possible effects (Entman, 1993). Table 4 describes the framing of the countermeasure's suggestions.

The online media *usatoday.com* developed a framing of countermeasure suggestion with figure for the wide distribution of vaccines. The distribution of vaccines that reach the wider community can bring the economy back to life, and unemployed individuals can return to work.

The online media *nbcwashington.com* provides framing of countermeasure suggestions with information figure on ways to find work that unemployed individuals can do. Although stigmatized individuals are considered individuals who have weakness character (Krug et al., 2019), *nbcwashington.com* emphasizes that they do not need to feel ashamed of the social stigma that exists in society because stigma exists as a result of their perception. As recipients of framing messages in text, newsreaders can be influenced by perceiving and processing information about one interpretation and having little data about alternative information (Entman, 1993).

Table 4. Countermeasure Suggestions in usatoday.com and nbcwashington.com

usatoday.com	nbcwashington.com
<p><i>If a vaccine is widely distributed by spring, the economy could bounce back more swiftly than expected, and chronically jobless workers who have been furloughed could be recalled while those permanently laid off suddenly find a plethora of open jobs...</i></p>	<p><i>Here are tips to help your job search:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Use the “Open to Work” tool on LinkedIn</i> • <i>Learn a new skill or improve on those you already have...</i> • <i>Ask friends and family to reach out to their networks.....</i> • <i>Use social media and professional networking sites to let everyone know you’re out of work...</i>

(Source: Davidson, 2020; Royster & Hogan, 2020)

The online media nbcwashington.com developed a framing that during the COVID-19 pandemic people need to help each other, including at work. The figure in this framing is in the aspect of social support. In response to the existence of stigma in society, it is necessary to consider the process of giving meaning, countermeasure suggestion, and social support (Frost, 2011). Social support plays an important role in overcoming mental health problems (Davison et al., 2004).

Social support is comfort, attention, appreciation, or assistance given by other people or groups to individuals. The types of social support include emotional or esteem support, tangible or instrumental support, informational support, and companionship support. Emotional support can provide entertainment, reassure feelings, and make someone feel loved when experiencing stress. Information support in the form of providing advice, direction, advice, or feedback on what someone is doing. Friendship or companionship support includes the willingness of others to spend time with someone, thereby providing a feeling of membership in a group that shares interests and social activities (Sarafino & Smith, 2011).

Online media can provide information support through framing with information figure that can solve the problem of unemployment. The solution to the unemployment problem can be explored in its meaning in the news text. It is done by nbcwashington.com, which reviews practical suggestions for finding work for unemployed individuals and provides an optimistic view. The solution to the unemployment problem is constructed as something internal, where individuals can overcome the unemployment problems, they experience by building positive perceptions of themselves and others. This situation means that the unemployed individual must eliminate the stigma of consciousness that can hinder him from developing his potential.

Media nbcwashington.com mentions the importance of developing one's potential by learning new skills. The development of self-potential is significant, especially in the current era of globalization, where individuals must develop global competencies that include hard and soft skills. Hard skills can be mastering foreign languages and developing technical excellence, while soft skills, such as developing professional work attitudes, having intercultural sensitivity,

and fighting power in overcoming problems (Panggabean, 2012). Technology can help society especially in the era of pandemic to do activities, such as RuangGuru as the solution of online learning (Chinmi et al., 2020).

Humans need to have an orientation that can truly be lived based on understanding and self-knowledge (Marta, 2017). Unemployed individuals need to develop positive perceptions about themselves, such as not feeling ashamed, being open about unemployment, and seeking help. The feeling of shame is related to inferiority or feelings of inferiority due to unemployment (Ahmedani, 2011). Negative views from other people can be internalized by individuals, giving rise to stigma consciousness which causes individuals to anticipate rejection from others. It makes unemployed individuals tend to be less open and not seek help to solve their problems. Negative perceptions about the stigma of unemployment become a ground not highlighted in the nbcwashington.com news text. On the other hand, usatoday.com media presents a framing of unemployment solutions with external solution figures, namely the availability of vaccines in sufficient quantities and economic assistance from the government for unemployed individuals. The developing aspect of individual potential is the ground in the USA. Today media framing, and those unemployed individuals can work again if the economy recovers after the vaccine is widely distributed. This vaccination solution does not explore self-potential development as in the nbcwashington.com media framing.

Online media can provide information support that can be a solution to the problem of unemployment. If this is not addressed correctly, then the impact is that the mental health of unemployment cannot be handled properly, and

unemployed individuals do not obtain information that can be a solution to their problems.

Online media can provide information support by presenting messages based on objective data. The results of a Gallup survey of the media show that most adults in the United States lack confidence in the media (Brennan, 2020). The media need to pay attention to objectivity in conveying information because the information presented is the result of the construction of news writers. Discussions on the issue of social stigma in online media texts usatoday.com and nbcwashington.com show that there are different meaning constructions on the social stigma of unemployment. The selection of figures and ground in discussing the problem of social stigma of unemployment can affect the perception of news readers about the stigma of unemployment. For example, the media usatoday.com gives a view that tends to be skeptical, that unemployed individuals still have difficulty getting jobs because the number of job opportunities is limited while job applicants are many and recruitment managers tend to be selective. The stigma of unemployment persists and makes it difficult for unemployed individuals to find work. On the other hand, the nbcwashington.com media sees the problem of social stigma from a different perspective that is more optimistic, that the unemployment problem can be handled if individuals are open, eliminate feelings of shame due to unemployment, do not hesitate to ask for help, and eliminate the perception that other people are not willing to help.

Presenting information objectively through online media can be a means of education for the public (Sadmego & Nasucha, 2019). Objective information can also provide benefits and produce optimal solutions for various problems in the

community, especially the problem of unemployment.

CONCLUSION

Online media plays an essential role in the construction of reality. Framing involves constructing meaning towards social stigma, so it plays an essential role in representing the phenomenon of social stigma in online media.

The construction of meaning involves understanding language and cognitive processes that coincide, which results in an overall representation of meaning that can be explained by Gestalt theory. The concept of figure and ground in Gestalt theory can be applied in framing, where things that focus on attention in framing become figure, while things that are not the focus become ground. The social stigma problem of unemployment can be constructed with different figure and ground to produce different framing of the same topic in news texts in online media. The construction of figure and ground in a language attempt to express experience clearly and effectively in communication.

The problem formulated through framing is that social stigma makes it difficult for unemployed people to get a job. Stigma of unemployment creates feelings of inferiority, such as feeling of shame. The cause of the social stigma is perception low

personal qualities and stigma consciousness, namely the anticipation of getting a stigma. Stigma consciousness can cause a person to have a negative self-concept so that they do not ask for help to get a job. This condition can cause unemployed individuals to have a low chance of working again. Framing moral judgement is stigma related with tendency of having a negative perception in employers mind toward unemployed individuals. Social stigma also created the feeling of shame due to unemployment. Framing countermeasure suggestion is wide distribution of vaccines and suggestions about ways to find work and improve skills.

The social stigma of unemployment that exists in society can harm individuals. It does not provide benefits because it can make it difficult for unemployed individuals to find work, cause mental health problems and marginalization. Online media can contribute as agents of change in the social stigma of unemployment through news framing that can improve public perceptions and attitudes towards unemployment. It is further expected to reduce the stigma of unemployment. Online media can also help people to understand the social stigma of unemployment by providing informational support in the form of writing that can solve the problem of unemployment.

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