



JURNAL KOMUNIKASI

P-ISSN: 1907-848X, E-ISSN: 2548-7647

Homepage: <https://journal.uui.ac.id/jurnal-komunikasi>

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To cite this article:

Harahap, T. R., Mutmainnah, N., Irwansyah, & Kurnia, N. (2025). More media-oriented than literacy-focused: Problematizations in Indonesia's digital literacy policy. *Jurnal Komunikasi*, 19(2), 275–296. <https://doi.org/10.20885/komunikasi.vol19.iss2.art6>



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Published online: April 26, 2025



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To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.20885/komunikasi.vol19.iss2.art6>



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More media-oriented than literacy-focused: Problematizations in Indonesia's digital literacy policy

Lebih berorientasi media daripada terfokus literasi: Mempersoalkan kebijakan literasi digital Indonesia

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Article Info

Article History

Submitted:

August 15, 2024

Accepted:

April 20, 2025

Published:

April 26, 2025

Keywords:

Digital literacy, discourse analysis, policy, policy communication, negative contents.

Kata kunci:

Analisis wacana, kebijakan, komunikasi kebijakan, konten negatif, literasi digital.

Abstract: This study aims to discuss the construction of the problem underlying the digital literacy policy in Indonesia. As policy communication research, this study considers the Ministry of Communication and Informatics (MOCI) digital literacy programs as policy-as-discourse. This study is qualitative and uses a desk-based method to collect the data. This study uses the “What’s the ‘problem’ represented to be” (WPR) analytical strategy to analyze the data. This study finds out that the MOCI constructs the digital literacy policy to be based on handling the massive spread of negative content and illegal activities on the internet and social media platforms. Therefore, this MOCI’s construction of knowledge on digital literacy is oriented more toward media issues than literacy issues in digital technologies. This study recommends that the knowledge construction on digital literacy policy is based not only on the problem of media criticality but also on addressing the problem of literacy in the utilization of digital technology for educational purposes.

Abstrak: Kajian ini bertujuan membahas konstruksi permasalahan yang mendasari kebijakan literasi digital di Indonesia. Sebagai penelitian komunikasi kebijakan, kajian ini meletakkan program-program literasi digital Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika sebagai kebijakan-sebagai-wacana. Kajian ini bersifat kualitatif dan menggunakan metode desk-study dalam mengumpulkan data. Dalam menganalisis data, kajian ini menggunakan strategi analitik “What’s the ‘problem’ represented to be” (WPR). Kajian ini menemukan bahwa Kemkominfo mengkonstruksi kebijakan literasi digital dengan berdasarkan pada penanganan atas masifnya penyebaran konten negatif dan tindakan ilegal lain melalui internet dan platform media sosial. Konstruksi pengetahuan tentang literasi digital Kemkominfo ini, dengan demikian, lebih diorientasikan pada isu-isu media daripada isu-isu keliterasian dalam menggunakan teknologi digital. Kajian ini merekomendasikan bahwa konstruksi pengetahuan tentang kebijakan literasi digital perlu tidak hanya didasarkan pada permasalahan penggunaan media, tetapi juga imperatif mendasarkan pada permasalahan literasi dalam pemanfaatan teknologi digital untuk tujuan pendidikan.

INTRODUCTION

This research discusses how the Indonesian government constructs digital literacy knowledge from the perspective of policy communication. The digital literacy knowledge is constructed and implemented in the Ministry of Communications and Informatics (MOCI) digital literacy policy. Since many countries around the world have been incorporating digital literacy into their governmental agenda, whose frameworks of digital literacy are different from one another for specific reasons and considerations (see, e.g., Law et al., 2018; Hermanadi & Daniswara, 2021), it is challenging to question how Indonesian government constructs the digital literacy knowledge through MOCI's digital literacy policy.

Communication scholars have increasingly joined the policy conversation in recent years due to policies' inherent communicative nature. The policy domain represents an important context for applied communication research because of policy processes' impact on people's lives (Canary & Taylor, 2020). There are many definitions of Policy, with many kinds of literature addressing the theorizations of the term 'policy' (see, e.g., Peters, 2016; Birkland, 2011; Cairney, 2020; Peterson, 2009). According to Cairney (2020), policy can be defined as "the total of government action, from signals of intent to outcomes. However, as there is no single definition, this study will refer to Canary and McPhee's (2009) definition of policy, stating that policy can also be viewed as "collections of texts, practices, and decisions articulated by an institutional system to solve problems involving people in society" (p. 148). In this sense, policy can mean more than just a document; it "represents a complex combination of assumptions, arguments, texts, behaviors, and outcomes that serve to construct knowledge, count as justification for

decisions, and both constrain and enable social action" (Canary & Taylor, 2020: 675). From this perspective, Canary and Taylor (2020) argues that communication becomes a focal and vital phenomenon that plays important roles in the policy process through which knowledge is constructed through many modes, media, actors, and processes (see also (Canary & McPhee, 2009).

Along with this, some communication researchers have begun to address how public policy constructs knowledge. For example, as mentioned by Canary and McPhee (2009), (Buzzanell & Liu, 2005) used poststructuralist feminist analysis to study how female participants handled contradictions and competing discourses regarding maternity leave policies and practices. A study by Fawzi (2018) noted that the construction of policy knowledge involves various actors engaging in different power structures and drawing different levels of public attention. Canary and Taylor (2020) noted that being multidisciplinary, policy communication research still lacks definite theories and methods. Otherwise, many policy communication researchers translate other theories into practices, such as critical approaches (e.g., critical policy studies, poststructuralism, Habermas's theory of communicative action), feminist and gender approaches, policy discourse, and many others (see Canary & Taylor, 2020). In this case, this research will adopt Bacchi's (2000) approach to discourse analysis, which she terms a "policy-as-discourse" approach, to analyze the construction of policy knowledge on Indonesia's digital literacy policy.

This research views policy as a discourse (Bacchi, 2000; Goodwin, 2011; Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). That is to say, discourse is defined as more than just language; it may refer to assumptions, values, presuppositions, and

accompanying indicators that are perceived as conceptual logic (Bacchi, 2009). Under the concept of viewing policy as discourse, this study sees digital literacy policy as discourse. Discourse takes shape in the forms of ideas, beliefs, and theories on the world that the policy-makers are using to frame the problem. In other words, this point of view requires the analysts to view policy not as a response to existing conditions and problems, but more as a discourse in which both problems and solutions are created' (Bacchi, 2000: 48). Therefore, the focus for policy-as-discourse theorists is not 'problems,' which are often the starting point for policy analysis, but problematizations. Based on this formulation, a policy is treated not only as an instrument for governance but also as a social text that offers abundant underpinnings for interpretation. Policy-as-discourse approach departs from the assumption that all action, object, and practice is socially meaningful and that the interpretation of those meanings is shaped by social and political struggles in specific socio-historical contexts. This conceptualization of discourse is considered highly relevant as it captures how policy shapes the world through the framing of social 'problem' and its 'solution' and the construction of concepts, categories, distinctions, and subject positions, i.e., the construction of policy knowledge (Canary et al., 2015). As with other forms of discourse analysis, policy-as-discourse analysis involves exploring the processes of meaning construction. Policy-as-discourse analysis requires policy analysts to uncover the normative nature of statements that appear obvious, inevitable, or natural, test judgments about the claims of truth, and consider or imagine alternative ways of developing policy and practice (Goodwin, 2011).

As stated above, due to the development of digital technology, digital literacy has been developing considerably, and it is to be considered by many countries for their governmental agenda. However, the reasons for the countries to adopt and develop their digital literacy frameworks vary (Livingstone et al., 2023; Law et al., 2018). Inarguably, this body of knowledge is intensely prioritized in learning or for educational purposes (Lankshear & Knobel, 2008; Bandura & Leal, 2022). However, this is not to overlook that several countries, for certain reasons, take a broader standpoint on digital literacy. Some governments intend to enhance the digital literacy of their public officials to increase the efficiency, transparency and delivery of services to citizens through public administration, such as in South Korea and some European countries (Law et al., 2018; Eynon, 2021; Livingstone et al., 2023; van Laar et al., 2020), some are focusing at increasing the students capacity in various degrees, such as Canada (Hoechsmann & De Waard, 2015), while some others intend to their citizens capacity to use digital technology for job-related purposes (Wang et al., 2022), or even for the mediating role of parents and schools in the development of resilience to online risks of harm, such as in UK (Polizzi, 2020; Livingstone et al., 2023). So, from those kinds of digital literacy policies, it is relevant to investigate how Indonesia's digital literacy policy is constructed in relation to the underlying problems.

Like many other countries, Indonesia has also been facing many problems due to the advancement of digital technology and the ongoing digitalization process. The survey conducted by APJII (2018) reveals that despite the considerably high penetration of the Internet and digital media in Indonesia, it

is not used for such productive tasks, but most of which are for leisure. Kurnia et al. (2022) show that online crimes in Indonesia, such as frauds, hoaxes, personal data leaks, and many others, are so excessive that they have generated massive social problems. From another point of view, the low-ranking literacy of Indonesian students in PISA measures also echoes the digital illiteracy of our students in schools (Khurniawan et al., 2019). Even an Accenture survey conducted in 2016 revealed that Indonesian digital fluency ranked low from the bottom 30 out of 31 countries (Mastel et al., 2017). All these problems have, in turn, invoked not only such kinds of social movements for developing the digital literacy of society (Kurnia & Astuti, 2017) but also raised the government's concern about increasing society's capability in the utilization of digital technology.

The government has been promoting digital literacy policy in Indonesia through several digital literacy programs run by the Ministry of Communications and Informatics (MOCI). A prior observation of this matter reveals that this policy was initiated in 2017 through a government program named Digital Literacy National Movement (Pamungkas, 2021). So, since 2017, MOCI has designed and implemented several digital literacy programs for public targets, including eventually successfully developing a digital literacy framework called MOCI's digital literacy framework.

When Gilster (1997) first popularized the concept of 'digital literacy' through his book *Digital Literacy*, he defined it in educational terms, recognizing the fundamental and revolutionary changes that the Internet would make to the world of literacy, surpassing the basic skills of reading and writing in its conventional and traditional meaning (Meyers et al., 2013). By then, digital literacy was more associated with technical

skills in information searching, hypertextual navigation, knowledge assembly, and content evaluation by using computers and the Internet (Bawden, 2008). However, as digital media and technology became more advanced and more dominantly used, the initial concept of digital literacy was challenged (see, e.g., Lankshear & Knobel, 2008; Buckingham, 2006; Meyers et al., 2013; Martínez-Bravo et al., 2021). Buckingham (2006), for example, criticized the 'know-how' meaning of digital literacy since it is restricted to the basic skills of computer operations. In such a way, digital literacy would fail to deal with the broader cultural uses of the Internet and digital media.

The concept of digital literacy has now been evolving and expanding. Many literatures from different disciplines propose a variety of definitions and conceptualizations of digital literacy (e.g., Lankshear & Knobel, 2015; Belshaw, 2012; Martin, 2006; Martínez-Bravo et al., 2020). Following Ray (2019), those conceptualizations stem from a lack of consensus among stakeholder disciplines, including education, communication studies, media studies, library studies, and so on. However, despite these prevalent articulations, Belshaw (2012) categorizes the concept of digital literacy as falling under two paradigms: 'literacy' and 'digital'. According to Belshaw (2012), while the first paradigm associates digital literacy with computer skills and focuses more on its literacy dimension, the second focuses more on the media uses or criticality and, hence, emphasizes that of the digital dimension.

Likewise, Tornero (2004) sees that the phrasal expression of 'digital literacy' contains educational and communicative dimensions. Regarding the educational dimension, digital literacy refers to what we generally understand as a metaphorically expanded meaning of traditional literacy. Thus, digital literacy

indicates the importance of the learning process through the digital environment. Meanwhile, the communicative dimension tends to be associated with the digital aspect, referring to the means of communication, involving specifically both traditional media and Internet and digital media in more recent innovations of ICT. Thereby, the communicative dimension of digital literacy refers specifically to media criticality or media education.

There have been a number of researches that give attention to the issue of digital literacy policy in Indonesia (Law et al., 2018; Pamungkas, 2021; Azzahra & Amanta, 2021; Shafira & Rahayu, 2021; Kajimoto et al., 2020). However, since those researchers focused more on the implementation of MOCI's digital literacy programs, such as the National Digital Literacy Movement or *Siberkreasi* (Pamungkas, 2021) and the importance of digital literacy programs to be counted in the school curriculum (Azzahra & Amanta, 2021), only a little attention was given to the questioning of how MOCI's digital literacy policy comes about. Thus, instead of conducting a rationalist or positivist study on implementing digital literacy policy, this study is challenged to critically question the digital literacy policy from the perspective of policy communication (Canary & Taylor, 2020).

Departing from the two paradigmatic conceptualizations of digital literacy, this policy communication paper positions MOCI's digital literacy programs as the Indonesian government policy on digital literacy. Hence, as a policy, MOCI's digital literacy programs can be identified as a policy discourse (Canary & Taylor, 2020; Bacchi, 2000). By considering MOCI's digital literacy programs as policy-as-discourse, this study will use Bacchi's "What's the 'problem' represented to be" (WPR) analytical strategy to uncover how

the knowledge on digital literacy is constructed through MOCI's digital literacy policy. Therefore, this study is concerned more with the interpretive problematization of how digital literacy knowledge is discursively constructed in Indonesia's digital literacy policy, which is considered a discourse to uncover the underlying problem.

METHOD

Being a qualitative study, this research uses document analysis (see Bowen, 2011). This method was chosen because of its capability to analyze various types of documents, including books, newspaper articles, academic journal articles, and institutional reports (Morgan, 2022). Any document containing text is a potential source for qualitative analysis. Karppinen and Moe (2012) gave wider reasons that in the context of public policy analysis, documents could be in various forms, all of which are primarily official documents, such as legal law documents, reports, position papers, meeting agendas, press releases, and consultation reports by public organizations.

This research uses two different types of policy documents issued by two structurally different echelons in the Ministry of Communication and Informatics (MOCI), all of which are published in the websites (www.kominfo.go.id) and (<https://aptika.kominfo.go.id>). The first types of documents are those of MOCI's Strategic Plans for 2015–2019 and 2020–2024 and those of the Directorate General Informatics Applications' Strategic Plans for 2015–2019 and 2020–2024. The second type is the MOCI's Annual Report from 2017 to 2022 and the Directorate General of Informatics Applications' Annual Report from 2017 to 2022. In collecting the data, the researchers use a

desk-based method (Bassot, 2022). Those documents are identified and classified using thematic analysis (Herzog et al., 2019). Following Herzog et al. (2019), thematic analysis in policy analysis is built from analytical construction: (a) code, (b) themes in qualitative verbal expressions, and (c) patterns of recurrence, evaluation or associations within these themes. Since the gathered data of the documents are relatively sizable, using this thematic analysis method is very advantageous, especially for mining large documents. Accordingly, through this method, the data are identified, grouped, and mapped out for tabulation, making it easier for the researchers to conduct further analysis and interpretation.

Added to those policy documents, this research also uses some interviews to gather additional information to support the data analysis. Van Selm and Helbelger (2019) state that interviews can be the method of choice if the overall goal is to understand better concerns, attitudes, and solutions citizens assign to a particular issue, a first exploration of the topic from different perspectives, rather than getting quantitative insights about the magnitude, statistical representativeness or scope of particular issues. Therefore, the interviews are conducted to provide additional information directly from those actors involved in the policy-making process of MOCI's digital literacy policy. In this regard, the interviews are used both to clarify the assumptions of the research and to verify any new data found in the documents. This interview is significant for the research since it involves some of the policy-makers who were directly influential and involved in the policy-making process.

In the analysis, the researchers apply the analytical strategy "What's the 'problem' represented to be?" (WPR) developed by Bacchi (1999, 2009). This WPR framework is an analytical strategy to facilitate a critical investigation of public

policies. This analytical framework is constituted to be an interpretive method for discourse analysis and has widely been applied in many fields, such as organizational studies (Riemann, 2023), health policy (Bacchi, 2015), educational Policy (Woo, 2023; Tronde, 2020; Hanell, 2018), gender study (Ville et al., 2023), critical policy studies (Tawell & McCluskey, 2022; Morissey, 2020), and fairly influential in other fields of study (Archibald, 2020; Riemann, 2023). Specifically in communication research, this WPR method has been used, for example, by Pringle (2019), to analyze the assisted dying discourse in Canadian health policy. Similarly, Hanell (2018) also applies this WPR analytical framework to examine the significance of digital competence in teacher education.

As an analytical strategy, the WPR framework is derived from many schools of thought, e.g., poststructuralism, feminism studies, social construction theory, and governmentality (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). In one of her books, Bacchi (2009) explains that WPR is an open approach that can be used to analyze governmental programs. However, unlike the problem-solving paradigm that is dominantly applied in policy studies, this approach offers a new way of viewing by proposing a problem-questioning paradigm against a public policy (Bacchi, 2009). Hence, this analytical framework is concerned not with intentionality and identifying gaps between a specific policy's terms and what is delivered, but rather with the 'deep conceptual premise' on which policies are built (Bacchi, 2009: xix). The WPR analytical strategy provides a systematic methodology to critically question the taken-for-granted assumptions that are embedded in government policies and policy proposals by interrogating the problem representations it uncovers within them (Tawell & McCluskey, 2022).

As a method for analysis, WPR analytical strategy is implemented to be

based on six underlying questions, as elaborated in Table 1 below.

Table 1
The WPR Analytical Framework

No	Questions	Objectives
1	What's the 'problem' represented to be in a specific policy?	To identify the representation of the problem in order to see what is problematized in the documents.
2	What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the 'problem'?	To identify the assumptions and meaning, which forms a base for the problem representation.
3	How has the is representation of the 'problem' come about?	To refer to the conditions that allowed the problem representation to assume dominance.
4	What is left unproblematic in the problem representation? Where are the silences?	To raise the issue of silenced perspectives in identified problem representations for reflection and consideration.
5	What effects are produced by this representation of the 'problem'?	To identify the effects of specific problem representations so that they can be critically assessed.
6	How/where has this representation of the 'problem' been produced and disseminated?	To pay attention to the means through which the problem is produced and disseminated.

Source: Adapted from Bacchi (2009)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the WPR analytical framework, the discussion will focus on answering six elaborate questions.

Problems represented

The main goal for answering the first question of WPR is to identify the construction of the problems in the policy documents textually instead of criticizing and extrapolating them. In this regard, the simple idea to identify and determine the problem representation is to read off the proposed solutions in the policy documents (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016; Pringle, 2019).

Two problem representations are being identified in the policy documents: negative content and low digital literacy.

While the first representation occurs explicitly and repeatedly, the second occurs mostly implicitly. First, the data reveals that negative content in the media is explicitly represented as the main problem that is being problematized in distributed places in the documents, as excerpted in a few examples below.

...the widespread of pornography, gambling, violence, racial discrimination, malwares and other illegal contents has brought up sexual harassments against children, racial and religious riots, crimes, and harmful risks for the society, especially for children (Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika, 2015: 20).

... latent threats of harmfully negative content spreading through the Internet, such as hoaxes, cyberbullying and online radicalism (Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika, 2021: 50).

The protection of the society from the ICT negative effects, either internet contents or electronic trash (Direktorat Jenderal Aplikasi Informatika, 2016: 54).

...negative contents that are repeatedly blocked... including the categories of gambling, pornography, fraud, intellectual property rights infringement, negative contents recommended by sectoral, the violation of information security, false news/hoaxes, terrorism/radicalism, racial discrimination, trading with special (Direktorat Jenderal Aplikasi Informatika, 2021: 27).

These problem representations occur consistently and multiply through explicit expressions. All data are explicitly indicative of negative content by means of various constructions, such as the naming of hoaxes, cyberbullying, online radicalism, etc. The negative content is dispersed through two main channels: the Internet, numerous news sites, and digital media platforms.

As for the second representation, the construction of MOCI's digital literacy policy problem largely concentrates on promoting and improving the digital literacy capacity of the society. Here, as shown in the data, the low level of digital literacy is expressed both in explicit and indirect ways. Though not being expressed as dispersed as those negative contents, this low level of digital literacy can in some cases be represented either through a number of statements or through the statements of the goal of the digital literacy program. However, as the way the negative contents are being problematized, the

expressions of the low level of digital literacy are represented consistently and repeatedly in most documents, as excerpted in a few examples below.

...designed to encourage citizens to understand the basic usage of information technology (Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika, 2021a: 50).

...this program is failing due to, among others...the level of digital literacy is very low in many regions... (Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika, 2021a: 25).

Ditjen Aptika leads the attempts to increase literacy and digital skills... This movement likewise aims at... disseminate positive contents through the Internet and to be more productive in digital media (Direktorat Jenderal Aplikasi Informatika, 2021: 13).

...to protect society from the spreading of negative contents... the improvement and development of digital literacy as well as the controlling of negative contents in internet (Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika, 2018: 30).

...everyone should be smart and critical to any digital information... In other words, anyone who is able to filter what is good and what is bad in the digital world, i.e. digital news and information. Without having digital literacy, anyone would be disposed to the negative excess of digital technology (Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika, 2019: 82).

These facts are also confirmed by the interviewees, stating that MOCI's digital literacy policy came into being due to the low level of digital literacy. Two of the interviewees, the ones who were officially in charge of the policy-making, confirmed the condition, as excerpted below.

"The digital literacy level of our citizen are so very low, especially compared with those of developed countries, that MOCI comes to conclusion that the increasing of citizen's digital literacy capacity is truly very important for empowering people to face with the negative contents" (Interview with Mr. Rudiantara, Minister of Communication and Informatics in the period 2015–2019).

"...the upstream is basically meant to deliver knowledge and to increase the competence of the citizens so that they become digitally literate, that later on became known as digital literacy" (Interview with Dedy Permadi, Special Staff for Ministry of Communication and Informatics in Digital and Human Resources).

Underlying assumptions

The second question of WPR is concerned with the underlying assumptions of the identified problem representations. By examining the assumptions, the task is to discover the conceptual logic underpinning the identified problem representations. According to Bacchi & Goodwin (2016), three goals must be achieved in answering the second question of WPR. Firstly, it is necessary to consider how to discover the problem representations by identifying the meanings that need to be in place for it to make sense or be intelligible. Secondly, it is to identify how the problem representation is constructed—to what concepts or binaries does it rely upon. Thirdly, it is also to identify and reflect upon possible patterns in problematizations that might signal the operation of a particular political or governmental rationality. Therefore, to mine and reveal the conceptual logics of the problem representations, Bacchi (2009) suggests to dig up the key concepts, binary,

and category within the policy documents by using Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1984). The archaeology of knowledge is applied to critically interrogate these "unexamined ways of thinking" (in Foucault 1984: 456, as cited by Bacchi, 2009: 39). For adding, what is here to be meant by conceptual logics refers to the meanings that must be in place for a particular problem representation to cohere or to make sense (see e.g. Carson & Edwards, 2011; Riemann, 2023).

So, based on the postulates of key concept, binary, and category, this study proposes the conceptual logics to rely upon: (1) medium as the key concept; (2) media freedom versus regulation as the binary, and (3) society as the category. At first, the key concept is medium. The data reveals that the Internet and social media or digital media platforms become the crucial determinant factors representing the identified problems, i.e., negative contents. Thus, this research proposes that their being problematized in the policy text centers on these two mediums: the Internet and social media. In this regard, the key ontological and epistemological concepts that underpin the problems are the Internet and social media as mediums, i.e., communication channels. In other words, the main causes of the problem are both the Internet and social media, through which massive false news and other misinformation spread. Besides, a close reading to the earlier documents, such as those of MOCI's strategic plans, shows that the discourses of the problem representation center mainly on the Internet, through which false news spreads out. However, by examining the later documents, such as the strategic plans 2020–2024 and annual reports from 2017 to 2022, the problem of negative content came not only from the news sites on the

Internet but also from social media platforms.

Second, the binary that underpins the problem representation is that of media freedom vs. regulation. A binary assumes a position where two sides oppose each other (Chan, 2018). For instance, a more widely increased public discussion is normally triggered by dichotomic contention on a specific issue (Bacchi, 2009; Chan, 2018). These two poles are consistently in mutual influence, just like a continuously oscillating pendulum. While a pole is getting larger or increased, the other is inclined to get smaller or decreased, and so be it the other way around. Bacchi (2009) gave us examples of how public debates work on binaries or dichotomies, such as nature vs. culture, public vs. private, national vs. international, mind vs. body, man vs. woman, legal vs. illegal, and so on. This binary position is considered important mainly because it exposes the operation of conceptual logic that may act to constrain or limit our understanding of an issue. In this regard, this study concludes that a binary to which the underpinning assumptions of the problems represented in MOCI's digital literacy policy is depending upon is that of media freedom versus regulation. It is clearly stated that the implementation of regulations, such as the Law Number 19 of 2016 as amendment to Law Number 11 of 2008 on Information and Electronic Transaction and the Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Informatics Number 19 of 2014 on Handling of Internet Sites with Negative Content, has been a legal basis for MOCI to conduct so-called repressive approach to any sites or media being considered to violate the law. By enacting this regulation, MOCI may legally conduct the termination of access (see e.g. Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika, 2017). Meanwhile, implementing those regulations has consequently instigated

many criticisms from civil society (e.g., Hamid, 2022).

The freedom of media, with all the metaphorical terminologies, such as freedom of opinion, freedom of speech, or freedom of media in the current context (see e.g. Schneider, 2019; Koltay, 2019), is a fundamental human right that the Constitution has guaranteed for every individual, including rights to information and rights to internet access as well as digital rights in the context of the digital domain (Hamid, 2022). Several studies have proved that the massive spreading of negative content is primarily caused by the excessive freedom of media that, in the context of the emergence of Internet and digital media platforms, people find new channels to get more freedom to express themselves (Taufani, 2023; Hamid, 2022). On the other hand, Indonesia is liberal regarding media freedom (Masduki, 2017). As echoed in the Freedom House's Report 2022, Indonesia is categorized as a partly free country concerned with internet freedom (Repucci & Slipowitz, 2022).

Third, this study finds out that the category of people or society is the underpinning assumption of the represented problems, negative contents, and digital illiteracy. In other words, the very underpinning consideration to represent the problems of negative contents and digital illiteracy centers on society and, hence, is considered important to be made as a targeted group that is necessary to be governed. Also, the data shows that the category society is consistently positioned as the focused subject whose level of digital literacy is so low that this subject is required to be governed through digital literacy policy, i.e. as the condition that Bacchi and Goodwin (2016) argues to be the operation of a particular political or governmental rationality. For example, in 2022, MOCI's national digital literacy movement targeted approximately five million people, grouped

into three segments: public, students in all levels, and governmental officials (Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika, 2022).

Origins of the problems

The third question identifies three issues that are the starting points of the problematization: media messages and negative contents, media panics, and regulation and literacy approaches. First, negative content is not a new social phenomenon that emerges as the mere effect of technological development. If traced to the early development of communication technology, exposure to mass media, such as television, radio, newspaper, magazines, movies, and so on, had brought harmful effects on the audiences, particularly those of children and young people (see e.g. Potter, 2019; Hobbs & McGee, 2014; Hargrave & Livingstone, 2009). In this case, media messages constructed reality with their creative language to influence the audience's behaviors, physiologies, attitudes, emotions, beliefs, and perceptions (Potter, 2019; Thoman, 1993). The emergence of the Internet and social media have successfully brought with them those old phenomena. However, they have also shaped users' more dynamic and interactive relationship with the media. *Hoax, radicalism, cyberbullying, online betting*, and other illegal activities on the Internet are a few examples of negative content that come to appear along with the development of digital media technology, all of which were still unknown yet in the mass media model.

The second origin is media panic. The massive spreading of negative content in the Internet and digital media platforms that bring risks, especially to children and vulnerable groups, has raised and generated deep pessimism in several social

groups concerning the effects of the new media. The pessimism is straightforwardly triggered by the serious effects caused by the media (Drotner & Livingstone, 2008; Buckingham & Jensen, 2012). Drotner (1999) explained that the accumulation of emotional reactions in those particular people is a kind of media panic. So, examining the genealogy of digital literacy policy in Indonesia, it is not difficult to deduce that emotional reactions to the current phenomena in the media mainly instigate the policy. In this context, the massive spreading of hoaxes, fraud, sexual harassment against children, and cyberbullying could be proposed to examples of cyber-crimes being exposed against Indonesian society, especially the children, which in turn raise and generate the moral courage of the academicians or educated ones to gather up for prevention actions (see e.g. Kurnia & Wijayanto, 2020).

The third is the regulation and literacy approaches. For classifying, there are in fact two kinds of responses to the identified problems: i.e. those of government and civil society responses (see Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika, 2017). While MOCI's governmental effort in handling negative content used mostly to implement regulation, only a little attention is given to the literacy approach, i.e., ICT literacy. In fact, before 2017, MOCI had commenced several literacy programs to empower people to use the Internet. However, such programs were not as massive and nationally-scaled as those National Digital Literacy Movement programs. For example, since 2011, MOCI has helped to inaugurate the *Relawan TIK* (ICT Volunteers) in support of the healthy and safe Internet (Internet Sehat dan Aman) program (see Kementerian Komunikasi dan Informatika, 2015). However, this

program was not run for the sake of digital literacy; instead, it was termed ICT Literacy, which was, in many ways, different from digital literacy approaches.

Alternative Perception

The fourth question of WPR considers limits in the underlying problem representations. Above, it is stated that two problems underlie MOCI's digital literacy policy: negative contents and low-level digital literacy. Compared to one another, the negative contents are qualitatively regarded as more dominant than the other one. Even the discussion on the low level of digital literacy is, to some extent, associated more with the capacity of society to deal with the negative content on the Internet and social media. Consequently, what matters most for MOCI's digital literacy policy is the effect of the Internet and social media on society. In other words, it is the media criticality that the digital literacy policy needs to address more. Thus, following Tornero's (2004) conceptualization of the two dimensions of digital literacy, what concerns MOCI's digital literacy policy is the communicative dimension, which refers specifically to the means of communication, embracing both traditional media as well as more recent innovations, such as Internet, social media, and so on (see also Belshaw, 2012).

Subsequently, Tornero (2004) categorized the educational dimension of digital literacy as a secondary concern, if there is any, in MOCI's digital literacy policy. Then, the answer to the fourth question of WPR is that MOCI's digital literacy policy emphasizes the digital aspect, which is oriented more to media uses and criticality. On the contrary, the "literacy" aspect (Belshaw, 2012) or the "educational" dimension (Tornero, 2004) is relatively limited in the policy discussions.

Effects Produced

The fifth question of WPR invites the researchers to consider the effects of the identified problem representations (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). There are three specific "kinds" of effects to be considered—discursive, subjectification, and lived effects—all of which need to be understood as interconnected. Altogether, two relatively dominant discourses emerge from the problem representations as they are revealed in answering the WPR first question. The first discourse is concerned with the regulation. The second discursive effect is the need to increase people's competence through digital literacy. Meanwhile, based on the subjectification effect, it is argued that it indicates that common people are vulnerable to negative content and have a low level of digital literacy. The final effect, basically in mutual dependence with the discursive effect and subjectification effect, is those effects expected to be the lived effects as a result of discourse on "how people live their lives on a day-to-day basis" (Bacchi, 2009: 43).

Dissemination

As discussed in the third question of WPR, the problem of negative contents in internet and social media platforms has become the main trigger of moral panic for civil society and government. This moral panic then became worse because the digital literacy level of the people was, on the other hand, low. This shared awareness, in turn, found its way out to establish a joint movement called the National Movement of Digital Literacy or *Siberkreasi* (Pamungkas, 2021). Thus, *Siberkreasi* became the convergence point where it joined civil society, on the one hand, and the Indonesian government's response, on the other hand, to design and implement digital literacy programs (see Direktorat Jenderal Aplikasi Informatika, 2020). The subsequent question is how the

issue of the policy is produced and disseminated? The study finds out that the issue of the policy problem is produced and disseminated through several ways, such as seminars, academic meetings, scientific publications (see e.g. Kurnia & Astuti, 2017; Yanti & Yusnaini, 2018), the mainstream media, and digital media platforms as well (see e.g. Kompas.id, 2017; Antaranews, 2017). Those academic activities and mainstream media are proved to have played such important roles not only in producing the issues and disseminating them to broader audiences but also in constructing knowledge about the problem.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that, through MOCI's digital literacy programs, the Indonesian government constructs digital literacy knowledge to be based on media-oriented rather than literacy issues. It is the media, through which negative content is massively spread out, and illegal activities take place, that is considered to be the determinant reason for policy implementation. This is evident from the way digital literacy programs are problematized in policy discourses. Primarily, since those social media platforms flourished, the government undertook an alternative approach to protect society from the negative effects of the media along with the regulation approach. By enacting digital literacy programs, the government found it important to empower people so that they can use the Internet and social media platforms safely and effectively.

Consequently, framing negative content as the underlying problem in MOCI's digital literacy policy would subsequently define the conceptualization of digital literacy knowledge. Now that the underlying problem is that of negative contents in the scope of media uses, the implication would unquestionably be that the knowledge construction of digital literacy would take on the communicative dimension or media-oriented issue instead of engaging more on the literacy dimension as the solution to the identified problem. By concentrating more on the communicative dimension, MOCI's digital literacy policy would neglect the educational dimension, which is in this case, regarded no less important, i.e. the literacy aspect of digital literacy. While there is considerably little attention given to the literacy issue, it is of slightly secondary significance because MOCI's digital literacy programs quite emphatically place its concern on the advancement of digital media platforms more important. Therefore, compared with the two evolving paradigms of digital literacy, i.e. for the expansion of the concept of educational literacy on the one hand and for media criticality and media education on the other, the conceptualization of digital literacy in Indonesia falls upon the second paradigm, i.e. media education oriented. Moreover, finally, this study recommends that the construction of knowledge on digital literacy policy in Indonesia should be given more focus on literacy issues since the critical problem to overcome in our current digital environment is not just that the media matters, but education also matters.

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