

## MASS MEDIA AND IMAGE OF POLITICAL ACTORS

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### Abstract

*Things or events about politics are always attracted the attention of mass media to be news materials. The news about political actors in the mass media will form the self-image of the political actors in the eyes of the public. Current media conditions are widely used as a political vehicle, made the news presented by the media is difficult to objective even the media prioritize the interests of this media. It can affect the image of someone who became the object of news. The formulation of the problem in this research is how the reception of the audience towards the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama through the news in mass media and what the factors that can affect the audience in the reception to the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama through the mass media. The purpose of this study is to determine how the reception of audience to image Basuki Tjahaja Purnama through mass media and also what factors affect the audience during the reception. Researchers used Stuart Hall's reception analysis theory to know how reception of audience to the image Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in mass media. The results obtained are the researchers found two sources who are in the position of the dominant-hegemonic and and four others are in the position of the negotiated reading. Researchers did not find the audience included in the category of the oppositional reading. The conclusion of this study is that not always the theory of reception analysis proposed by Stuart Hall can produce three audiences positions. Its because, audience is dynamic, not static. Then, factors that influence the reception of audiences are four, media usage that includes the frequency of news consuming and media selection, religion, culture and fanaticism.*

**Keywords :** *self-image, political actors, audience, reception analysis, mass media*

### INTRODUCTION

Things or events about politics are always attracted the attention of mass media to be news materials. This is because of two factors, the first is that political life is currently in the era of mediation, it is impossible for political life to be separated from the mass media. The second is a political event in the form of statements and the behavior of political actors, almost all of which have news value. The reporting of political actors in

the mass media will certainly form the self-image of the reported political actors. The self-image that will have an impact on the assessment of the public or audiences against the political actor.

Media is the spearhead of social change, so its existence is considered to play an important role in both local and national as a storehouse of information in the community. according to Denis McQuail, mass media has significance as a dominant source not only for individuals

to obtain images and images of social reality, but also for society and groups collectively. The media also presents normative values and judgments mixed with news or entertainment (Nurudin, 2007 : 35).

The mass media has a role in changing one's mindset about something being reported. For example, the news about Basuki Tjahaja Purnama or Ahok. Mass media intensively reported about Ahok, especially at the elections DKI Jakarta 2017. Moreover, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama also was stumbling the problem of religious blasphemy. The mass media that vigorously reported about Ahok will certainly affect the image or public assessment of it.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama is one of the few Indonesian political actors who have authentic character. Authentic character is a new style of marketing that puts forward authenticity, what it is, and not artificial. Authentic marketing in a political context is born of a consumer's concern about the difference between a promise that is communicated to reality. Many are just building a positive brand image, while the brand was not in accordance with consumer expectations (Majalah Marketing, edition 06/ XVI/Juni2016).

Ahok's attitude and style in leading Jakarta would have been a public secret. It

is also widely discussed in print and electronic mass media. Moreover, if Ahok runs the policy of green open land acquisition from illegal buildings. There are so many activists and citizens who criticize how Ahok runs the policy. But not a few who support the way he leads. Various criticisms from activists and even politicians received Basuki Tjahaja Purnama while running his policy. The criticism, among others, is not agreeing with the policies or work programs offered by Basuki Tjahaja Purnama.

Despite the criticism of his policies that contribute much to the controversy, according to a survey by Populi Center about the level of public satisfaction with the leadership of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama is quite high. According to Populi Center researchers, Miss Evita, Jakarta Capital City's performance and Ahok's leadership performance are directly proportional to the assessment level. Itu artinya, kinerja pemerintah provinsi DKI Jakarta dan kinerja kepemimpinan Ahok saling berpengaruh. The slogan he always uses is work, work and work. That's why many people appreciate his performance even though his attitudes are considered hard and rough.

Thousands of news about Basuki Tjahaja Purnama is very capable to make

the audience assess the good or bad of him. Through the mass media, the news of him is presented with so much information about himself, his leadership, and everything he does. Included in his nomination again became governor of DKI Jakarta 2017. The reporting of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in any form can affect how the judgment of society against him.

The people of Jakarta must have been very aware of how Ahok led, because they are the ones who have felt directly how the leadership of Ahok. Contrary to audiences outside Jakarta who only know who and how Basuki Tjahaja Purnama through mass media coverage. This kind of audiences will lead to opinions or judgments based only on what they read, hear, and see in the mass media.

Receptions made by audiences are certainly influenced by many factors. While each individual or audience has experience and background of each. So in this study, researchers will also find out what factors are affect the reception of audiences to the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama.

From the description problems, then the formulation of the problem that became the focus in this study is how the reception of Communication Studies UPN “Veteran” Yogyakarta towards image Basuki Tjahaja Purnama through

the news in the mass media? And what factors influence the audiences in the reception to the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama through the mass media?

Through the formulation of the above problem of course this study aims to how the reception of Communication Studies UPN “Veteran” Yogyakarta towards image Basuki Tjahaja Purnama through the news in the mass media. And what factors influence the audiences in the reception to the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama through the mass media.

The researchers used the theory of reception analysis to be able to answer the formulation of problems that have been raised. Theory of reception analysis emphasizes the meaning or interpretation of the reader in consuming news in mass media Interpretation is an active condition of a person in the process of thinking and creative activities search meaning (Littlejohn, 1999: 199). The meaning of media messages is not permanent, meaning is constructed by audiences through commitment to media texts that are repeated or continuous. That is, the audience actively interpret and interpret the media text consumed.

Theory of reception analysis in this study is used to explain how the audience do receptions to the image Basuki Tjahaja Purnama through the news

in the mass media. As Rachmah Ida has stated in her book *Studi Media dan Kajian Budaya* (2014 : 161), that the reception analysis is used to see and understand the responses, acceptance, attitudes and meanings produced or molded by the reader or audience. The basic assumption of reception analysis is the concept of an active audience. Active audiences are those who have autonomy to produce and reproduce the meaning that is present in a movie or text in a reading.

This reception theory refers to the decoding process performed by audiences, when audiences interact with media content, audiences do the activities of acceptance through the meaning of the contents of messages conveyed by the media (McQuail, 2004 : 326). Stuart Hall 1972, explains the theory of encoding-decoding as a process of audiences to consume and produce meaning in the process of receiving the content of the mass media consumed (Ida, 2014 : 161-162). According to him, the audience will do the decoding of messages received through three points of view or position, that is :

a. The Dominant - Hegemonic

When audiences interpret the contents of the media with the intended by the message maker or the media. Someone

does meaning in accordance with the predominant meaning (preferred reading) offered by the media text.

b. The Negotiated meaning

When audiences create alternative meaning or self-meaning to different media messages from preferred reading according to their conditions

c. The Oppositional decoding

When audiences make interpretations of media content contrary to the dominant interpretation Basuki Tjahaja Purnama's unique character, loud and explosive when talking certainly has the potential to bring up all three audiences as Stuart Hall has put forward. This is related to how audiences conduct receptions to the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama through the mass media they consume.

Image is formed based on knowledge and information received by someone. Communication does not directly cause certain behaviors, but tends to influence the way we organize our image of the environment (Soemirat, Ardianto, 2005: 114). News coverage in the mass media contributed to the formation of the image of political actors in the eyes of the public. News in a mass media is very capable of herding public opinion, regardless of how society interprets it. Because image formation requires a stimulus.

According to Niffenegger, the main product of a political institution is three and interrelated, namely the party platform, notes about things done in the past, and personal traits. The platform contains the concept, identity and ideology of a political institution. In addition, what political parties have done in the past influenced the formation of a political product. Finally, the characteristics or characteristics of a leader or candidate give the image, symbol and credibility of a political product (Firmanzah, 2007 : 205).

Media in politics has full power, which is able to be a tool that connects political players and society. The importance of mass media is also greatly felt when the political stage is held, namely when the community must choose someone to be a leader. Because the media can be a means of providing information about a person or candidate to be selected. No exception about the image of that person.

## **METHOD**

This research is a type of qualitative research. Qualitative research is a study that emphasizes the quality or the most important thing of a good or service. The most important thing of the goods or services in the form of events or social phenomena is the meaning behind the

event that can be a valuable lesson for a development of theoretical concepts (Djaman Satori & Aan Komariah, 2009 : 22).

This qualitative research will reveal how the role of mass media in shaping the image of a Basuki Tjahaja Purnama. Through the existing news will be known how the audience to interpret the existing text. Because of course the news presented in a mass media will be diverse and will bring many interpretations in each audiences. Problems in qualitative research are temporary and will develop or change after the researchers are enter a field of study (Sugiyono, 2008 : 205).

The method that researchers will use is the reception analysis. Researchers want to examine the process of meaning or interpretation of the public on the news about Basuki Tjahaja Purnama. Researchers use Stuart Hall's encoding-decoding method in conducting this audience-based research. Researchers want to know how the media encoded the news Basuki Tjahaja Purnama ago how the audience decoding mass media messages delivered about Basuki Tjahaja Purnama.

The object of this research relates to the role of mass media in shaping the image of a Basuki Tjahaja Purnama or Ahok in the public eye (in this case people

outside Jakarta, who only know the action Ahok through the news in the mass media). The unit of analysis researched in this study is students of Communication Science UPN “Veteran” Yogyakarta which is an active audience and consume the news of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama through mass media.

Researchers choose the type of qualitative research in which the results obtained must be deep, clear and specific. The researcher uses FGD (Focus Group Discussion) because this method will generate meaningful diversity to a discussion in the group and get information from each person related to his opinion and description of his or her interest behavior. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a data collection technique that is generally done on qualitative research with the aim of finding the meaning of a theme according to the understanding of a group based on the results of a discussion centered on a particular problem. FGD is also intended to avoid the wrong meaning of a researcher on the focus of the problem under study (Sutopo, 2008 : 73).

Before conducting FGD, the researcher will determine or filter the informant through the criteria of resource that has been made before. Once

considered to have found the informants who meet the criteria and are competent in providing information, then the researcher will contact the informants and make agreement in determining the time and place of FGD implementation.

Data were collected through FGDs conducted along with selected informants to explore how their feelings, actions, and opinions about a given topic. FGD involves a group of people into a group to discuss a problem, in this case the topic raised is the role of mass media on image formation Basuki Tjahaja Purnama. In addition to obtaining data by conducting Focus Group Discussion, researchers also conduct research literature through books, internet and other sources.

According to Bogdan dan Biklen data analysis is an effort done by working with data, organizing data, choose it to be a manageable unit, synthesized, searching and finding patterns, discovering what is important and what is learned and deciding what is told to others (Moeloeng, 2007 : 248).

The steps of the reception analysis are as follows : Identify and consider the purpose of the reception analysis, data collection, data analysis, conclusion. In the decoding step, the researcher focuses on the audience reception on the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in mass media. It

is about how the public interprets media content, giving meaning to its understanding and experience. The analysis at this stage is based on data obtained through Focus Group Discussion (FGD) conducted on informants. In this stage, the researcher will analyze the audience pattern to be grouped into three thinking patterns of the audience, that is dominant - hegemonic, reading, oppositional decoding or negotiated reading. Then, what factors affect the audiences in reception the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama.

## DISCUSSION

The image of a person formed through the mass media can not be separated from editorial interference and media owners. Along with the news presented by the mass media, there will be an image attached to someone who is reported. Whether positive or negative depends on how the audience receives messages delivered by the mass media through the news reported.

Attitudes and styles of leadership that are considered different from previous leaders, certainly make people can make an assessment of the figure of Ahok. Through the media, Ahok is not only known by the community he leads, namely Jakarta. But the people throughout Indonesia know it,

both because of its performance is considered able to change Jakarta, and all kinds of controversial.

News about Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in mass media is very diverse. From good to bad news that often presented in mass media. Mass media is very influential on the image of Ahok. The presence of large Indonesian media ownership by some politicians in the government, will affect how the presentation of news in the media. This problematic feels very obvious when the political figures are reported in the media owners of political opponents, so the news tends to negative.

In this reception study, researchers took editorial media to serve as a preferred reading or dominant meaning offered by the media. Preferred reading is the response expected by the media owner to an audience about the media product in production. When the audience's response is what the media owner expects, the media can be declared successful in the process of delivering a message to an audience. The presence of dominant meaning is also closely related to the position of the audience who appear.

Analysis of receptions that enter the realm of media can use the editorial to serve as the dominant meaning or choice

of reading. According to Lyle Spencer, the editorial is a statement of facts and opinions in a nutshell, logical, interesting in the case of writing and aiming to influence opinions or to provide a prominent interpretation of the news in such a way that most newspaper readers will pay close attention to the significance of the news being preached (Djuroto, 2002 : 78).

Researchers use five media which in this case is often consumed by resource persons in this study. These media are Metro TV, Kompas, Kedaulatan Rakyat,

Tempo and Viva. Meanwhile, the researchers took six selected people who serve as informants or resource persons who are students UPN “Veteran Yogyakarta. The six informants consisting of five women and one man came from various concentrations and cross-border forces. This aims to get more diverse information and from various points of view.

After the Focus Group Discussion, the results of receptions or interpretations made by informants on the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama are as follows :

**Table 1. Reception of Informants Regarding the Image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama**

No.	Name	Description of Informant	Reception or Meaning	Position
1	Debby H. Situmorang	Born in Balikpapan, May 16, 1995. Is a student of Communication Science, UPN Veteran Yogyakarta force 2013 and take the concentration of Public Relation. She is a non-Muslim.  Daily she used to consume news via Metro TV, tempo.co and kompas.com. Common news consumed is lifestyle, politics, science, and technology. Debby is a fanatic fan of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama.	Debby, interpreting the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama is as an honest, firm, fair leader. He also considered, although Ahok has a minority background, but he is among the best leaders in Indonesia.  Claiming as a fanatic fan Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, making Debby always positive rate about Ahok. Background Ahok's life from small until now he knows it.	<b>D</b>
2	Fairiza Insani Zatika	Fairiza is a student of Communication Science UPN Veteran Yogyakarta force 2013, which take concentration Journalism. Born in Jepara, 22 years ago and is a devout Muslim.  She consumes news from various media, namely Metro TV, SKH Kompas and kompas.com. The news that	Fairiza Insani Zatika rate the figure of Ahok as a leader who managed to bring changes to the area he leads. There is an attitude that Ahok needs to be changed, the style of speech, but according to him it is part of karakteristik a Basuki Tjahaja Purnama  The dominant meaning in the news consumed can be	<b>N</b>



		<p>she usually consumes is news that became headnews and related to education. However, politics is one thing that can not be abandoned.</p> <p>She consumes news from various media, namely Metro TV, SKH Kompas and kompas.com. The news that she usually consumes is news that became headnews and related to education. However, politics is one thing that can not be abandoned.</p>	<p>accepted without any rejection. Although there are alternative meanings that Fariza did about his displeasure with Ahok's speaking style.</p>	
3	Mega Artami	<p>Mega Artami is recorded as a student of Communication Science UPN Veteran Yogyakarta force 2014, concentration of broadcasting. She is a Muslim. Mega is a woman born in Sleman, 12 September 21 years ago.</p> <p>She consume a lot of news through print media SKH Kompas and online portal Kompas.com. usually she takes news that is being headline.</p> <p>Although not so much to follow the news about Ahok, but little he knows about the case of desecration of religion that dragged Basuki Tjahaja Purnama.</p>	<p>Mega interpreted the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama through the news that he consumed as a leader with different leadership styles from other leaders. Although the style of speech Ahok considered hard, according to Mega sometimes the language he used was not polite, but it is directly proportional to his performance in building a better Jakarta.</p> <p>The meaning presented by the media consumed is not necessarily accepted by Mega Artami. Usually he makes news comparison in different media with the same news to get various points of view on a news.</p> <p>Related cases of religious blasphemy that ensnare Ahok, Mega said that it happens because of lack of caution Ahok in speaking. Not to mention, Ahok's background that can not be denied the reason why his figure is quite controversial.</p>	N
4	Rossalia Dyah N.K.D	<p>She was born in Yogyakarta, August 7, 1996 was recorded as a student of Communication Science UPN Veteran Yogyakarta 2014, concentration Public Relation. Rossa likes to read softnews news, and usually gets news through print media SKH Kedaulatan Rakyat. She is not so fond of reading</p>	<p>Rossalia Dyah N.K.D interprets Basuki Tjahaja Purnama's image as a controversial figure, but her appearance is true. The dominant meaning offered by the media is consumed, but in the process the meaning that appears different between media and rossa.</p> <p>Rossa said, Basuki Tjahaja</p>	N

		political news, even though the news about Ahok related to religious blasphemy, he knows a little bit. She is a Muslim.	Purnama as a leader figure suitable for areas such as DKI Jakarta. With a loud and rough voice, Rossa says that Ahok is sometimes creepy.	
5	Farhan Kurniadi Ruliasto	Student Science Communication UPN Veteran Yogyakarta 2015, born in Jakarta, November 13, 1997 is taking the concentration of journalism. It has become a must for Farhan to read more and follow the existing news.  Farhan used to consume news through tempo.co and kompas.com news portals. He loves social and cultural-related news.	Some of the meanings offered by the media consumed by Farhan Kurniadi Ruliasto, can be well received though on certain aspects he has his own meaning. Basuki Tjahaja Purnama is a different leader from the others. According to him, there is a uniqueness in Ahok that others do not have.  He thinks Ahok is a controversial leader. Both of its performance and its actions.	N
6	Christine Anastasya	Christine Anastasya, born in Sumatra precisely in Pematang Siantar, November 10, 1996. She is a student of Communication Science class of 2015 and take the concentration of Public Relation. She has a penchant for reading and writing.  She is a batak blooded women. She consume news through kompas.com online portal and Metro TV. Christine usually mengonsusmi news that is headnews. Preaching about Ahok he is quite adhering though not intense.	The meaning of the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama by Christine in accordance with the dominant meaning offered by the media consumed. He thinks Ahok is a leader whose performance deserves thumbs up. Good performance through Ahok's work program brought many changes to Jakarta.  Although his style is much criticized. With the same cultural background as Ahok, make Christine rate Ahok's normal speaking style. He says that the Sumatran people are famous for their explicit and explosive style of talk.	D

(Source: The results of processed researchers)

Position Description :

D : The Dominant - Hegemonic

N : The Negotiated Reading

O : The Oppositional Reading

From the research results obtained two main conclusions, namely the meaning of the audience towards the image Basuki Tjahaja Purnama through mass media and the factors that affect the

reception. In this study, researchers found two informants who are in the position of The Dominant - Hegemonic and four others are in the position of The Negotiated Reading. Researchers did not find the informant who entered the position of The Oppositional Reading. The absence of the position of The Oppositional Reading shows the image of Basuki Tjahaja

Purnama in the eyes of the six informants is positive, although there are some aspects that can not be accepted completely by some informants.

The absence of the position of The Opposition Reading in this study, because the informants more often consume news from the media that memaknai Basuki Tjahaja Purnama image positively. The media that is in the middle between the support and not, but not openly refused. So it can be said that the selection of media in this case influences the meaning or receptions made by audiences towards the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama. Audience who often receive positive news about Ahok, will be affected how they see the figure of Ahok.

Image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama who tend to be positive in this research is because of the influence of something new in Ahok. In this context, the emergence of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama tries to offer something new that has never existed before. For example, his leadership style, his speaking style, even his work programs are judged differently from previous leaders. The image of a controversial leader also attaches itself to Ahok. According to Firmanzah, (2007 : 205), political images are formed based on information received through the media, whether social media or mass media

working to convey a general and actual political message.

There are several things that can affect audiences in interpreting the message. In this study, researchers found five things or factors that affect the meaning process conducted by audiences. These factors are media consumption patterns that include, the intensity or frequency of news consumption and media selection, religious factors, culture and fanaticism. These things were influential in the process of interpreting the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama.

Researchers found five factors that affect the audience in the reception of the image Basuki Tjahaja Purnama. The first is the pattern of media consumption in this case include the intensity or frequency of audiences who consume news and media selection. Both of these things affect the meaning made by the audience to the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in the mass media. Audiences plan what medium they choose to get the news and also how much time they spend to consume the news. Frequent audiences consuming news, allowing audiences to get exposed from the news tend to be larger than those who do not often consume news.

In addition to the frequency or intensity of the audience who often consume news, the next factor is the

selection of media that contribute to the meaning or reception made by audiences. Media that openly supports Basuki Tjahaja Purnama will certainly often give a positive assessment of it, and vice versa. Here the role of the media works, from how they pack the figure of Ahok, how the message is delivered and in what way they used.

In this research, religious factors become things that also affect the meaning or reception made by audiences. Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, who is a leader with a minority background, makes him a controversial figure. Especially when the election of DKI Jakarta 2017, many community groups who in the name of religion in droves refused Ahok to become governor.

Although many of the people in the name of Muslims reject Ahok, but not a few Muslims who support it. Including some informants in this study. The average of them admitted that indeed in their beliefs of Islam, it is advisable to choose leaders who are not as few Muslims who support it. However, when there is a non-Muslim leader and his performance is considered good and real, why not make him a leader.

Speaking of culture, it turned out to affect the meaning of audiences towards the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama. The

cultural equation makes Ahok's style of speech that many critics have criticized. That is because, Ahok's loud, firm and explosive style of speech is typical of the people of Sumatra.

The fifth factor is fanaticism which also affects the meaning made by the audience towards the image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama. Ahok fans certainly not only recognize the figure of Ahok as a regional leader, even for the life of Ahok when they were little. It becomes the basis of how their meaning towards Ahok. At the time Ahok considered negative by some people, fans of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama have the weapons of telling to dismiss it. Because the information they have about Ahok is more diverse, such as Ahok's life as a child, how his family, how he became regent of Bangka Belitung, made their judgment on Ahok's figure always positive.

## CONCLUSION

The oppositional reading position does not appear. Researchers found only two informants who were in the position of the dominant - hegemonic, while the other four entered in the position of the negotiated reading. The image of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama tends to be positive. There are some informants who are still considering some aspects of Basuki

Tjahaja Purnama. This is the reason why the oppositional reading positions do not appear in this study.

Not always Stuart Hall's theory of reception analysis can produce three audiences. Due to the dynamic nature of the audience, it is not static. This relates to the background and experience of the audience itself.

Factors influencing informants in interpreting Basuki Tjahaja Purnama's image through mass media are five: intensity factor or frequency of news consuming, media selection factor, religious factor, cultural factor, and fanaticism factor.

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