Digital Democracy in Rural Indonesia

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Abstract. Citizen participation is the key to democracy. The development of information and communication technologies makes citizens more empowered, have broad access to information and able to influence policy making, especially at the local level. This paper will describe digital democracy in rural indonesia, when the villagers report their local isues and fight for their right to have a favorable policy. "Speaker Kampung" is an online community media that express the aspirations of citizens in Ketangga Village, East Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. "Speaker Kampung" is a prototype of a digital democracy in Indonesia.

1 Preface

The information and communication technology has pushed the development of community media in the whole world. The internet is changing the pattern of media, from one-way, to two-way, or even multi-direction. Community media is media that their sources of information coming from many sides (crowd source). Internet, with its flexible format, is highly relevant for community media.

Internet highlight the advantages of communication media, which are hyperlocal and decentralized (non-centralized). Internet make community media can present information that has not been touched, even unthinkable, by the mainstream media. Community media can produce and reproduce the information in accordance with the aspirations or interests of the citizens.

Digital democracy arises when media started using the internet community. "Speaker Kampung" is an internet community media in Village Ketangga, Suela sub-district, East Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. "Speaker Kampung" is a form of digital democracy, when the internet bridging gaps of space for people to express their aspirations to government officials, particularly at the local level.

2. Theoritical Study

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The theory that used in this paper is the main theories about digital democracy, in particular the concept of deliberative democracy by [1]. This deliberative theory provides a perspective that democracy in "Speaker Kampung" is a democracy that leads to the fulfillment of the conditions of deliberative. The condition of deliberative is a condition which people consciously discuss with each other (community) about the important things in political life that affected them, including public policy.

2.1. Digital Democracy

The digital era is marked by the emergence of the Internet. As stated by [7], that people are now looking for the data is no longer in the form of an index in a book, or review in audio and video tapes, but in digital form. Today, people are easily typing in data search websites such as Google or Yahoo. In terms of politics and democracy, according to [7], there are at least four things that distinguish the digital world with the old world (2003: 135-136):

First, in this new age of reason. Digital communications will empower individuals at the expense of the elite, meaning the process of delivering information more politically independent and not dependent power elite (which may control the media).

Second, this new communication medium will move at a speed that is almost incomprehensible. Deadlines become irrelevant or, in fact, does not exist. The demand for real time news has increased dramatically.

Third, with the increasing speed of communication, the citizens in the digital world will demand more political information in accordance with their needs, both technical side (media) and content, to determine the pace in a general election. Convenience individual will become an integral part of the political conversation in the future.

Fourth, the public will experience an explosion of political information. Starting from the information shared by the conventional media to digital media. If not managed the information explosion it would be counterproductive for the development of democracy in the future.

Fourth novelty of politics and democracy in the context of the digital world over Franklin Roosevelt proved statement that "Democracy is not a static thing." Digital world politics and democracy would bring more dynamic, because the digital world provides an opportunity for people to express and discuss ideas. Individuals no longer depend on the elite. Democracy will be stronger because its base is the individual who has the freedom to determine their own destiny

2.2. The Condition of Deliberative

Digital democracy has changed the conventional democratic practices by representatives become participatory democracy through information and communication technologies. The capacity of technology has created a new political aggregation and articulation, when the citizens can delivery of their opinions directly and not depend on their political representatives [2]. Digital democracy became citizens' choice when the representative democracy are not able to deliver ideas, opinions, and interests of citizens related to public policy. At this point, digital democracy theoretically form a deliberative condition, which is a prerequisite for the realization of deliberative democracy.

The definition of deliberative condition is a condition where people consciously discuss with each other about the important things in political life that affected them, including public policies [1]. Citizens realize that representative democracy is less concerned about their interests, therefore people look for ways to be able to express their opinions directly.

The general election the citizens have to position the new media as a tool of democracy, use it as much as possible for the creation of open societies and dialectical [8]. Citizens discuss about the things around the election through the new media.

In addition to [8], there is another theory expressed by [5] about the relationship between digital and conditions of deliberative democracy in the context of elections. According to [5], internet promote mutual understanding by developing some critical public space which guarantees freedom of expression. New media (social media) have the potential to reconfigure the power relations in the context of the communication. With social media, citizens no longer have to be passive consumers of propaganda of political parties, the government or the news media, but was actually given space to share alternative perspectives and publish their own opinions. Strengthen the theoretical relationship between digital democracy with deliberative conditions [5].

3. Description and Profile of "Speaker Kampung"

"Speaker Kampung" presents to express the aspirations of the citizens. During this time the activists of "Speaker Kampung" think that the government doesn't care to the real conditions around the community. "Speaker Kampung" dreams that citizens have stronger bargaining power and able to determine the direction of public policy. Besides that, "Speaker Kampung" encourage two-way communication between the government and the citizens. "Speaker Kampung" disseminating local information that has been rarely covered by major media, whether in form of text, photos, video, and audio.

3.1. Vision and Mision of "Speaker Kampung"

"Speaker Kampung" has a vision to be a community media that encourages freedom of expression villagers, particularly those in the Ketangga, District Suela. While its mission is to: 1) organize information management activities through the citizen journalism. 2) develop the capacity of journalism member so the information that is processed and disseminated has an ethical responsibility.

3.2. "Speaker Kampung" as a Digital Media

At the beginning, "Speaker Kampung" was a print newsletter that circulated in the village Ketangga. Due to cost constraints, then the caretaker choose to use blog because it is cheaper. Transformation process occurs at the level of personal caretaker. Hajad Guna Roasmadi as editor in chief then experienced three models of technology: bulletins, radio, and finally blog and facebook page (internet).

Blog and facebook ultimately used by "Speaker Kampung" as an information medium. News and local information quickly uploaded by members of the media "Speaker Kampung", which is only 6 people, in the facebook page because it is more responsive than a blog. After appearing on facebook, Hajad Guna Roasmadi will edit the text and uploaded it on the blog of "Speaker Kampung", http://speakerkampung.blogspot.co.id/.

4. Aspirations of Citizens in the "Speaker Kampung"

Members of the media "Speaker Kampung" become the eyes and ears in responsing the aspirations of citizens. In a blog of "Speaker village", there are many pages that have distinctive and solely intended to accommodate the many different interests of the citizens.

The various pages including "Village Environment", "Village Development", "Village Products" and "Village Self-help".

"Village Environment" contains a variety of information about events around the community, which is usually not covered by the major media. As on March 2, 2016, "Speaker village" published information about public facilities in the Perigi Village of Wells District of East Lombok, Suela, that are broke by the flood that occurred in the three-point watersheds. Once this information appears on the blog "Speaker Kampung", aid for Perigi Village residents came from all sides.

"Village Development" contains a variety of information about the regional development process that involving residents, including a variety of administrative matters of information / resident population. One of the information that published in 15 November 2015 loaded the complaints of citizens on the birth certificate free service that was held at the District Suela by the Department of Population and Civil Registration (Discapil) in East Lombok District. The people complained because they have to wait for a very long time and stand in a line in an overcrowd situation.

"Village Product" loads a variety of information about the ultimate products of the village. As reported on March 2, 2016, the village chief Sapit keep doing innovation for the sake of building a community. In 2015 he tested the cultivation of fruit crops. So that in the future, Sapit Village, District Suela, East Lombok become the central area of agro tourism.

"Village Self-help" loads a variety of information about the habits of citizens, or citizens distinctive culture that is positive for their daily lives. On February 13, 2016, "Speaker Kampung" published an information about besiru. Besiru is mutual helping activities in the planting season that is still ongoing and sustained by the Sasak tribe community in Lombok. Besiru usually carried out during the rainy season, where the farmers help each other to plant their fields.

5. Analysis and Conclusions

Community media "Speaker Kampung" has become an alternative media in delivering the aspirations of citizens. During this time, while lots of community media using radio or television, "Speaker Kampung" using the internet (blogs and facebook) to accommodate the aspirations of the citizens. Motto of "Speaker Kampung" which is from citizens, by citizens, and for citizens becomes their principles in running digital democracy. Through the "Speaker Kampung", citizens are fully aware that they can express their opinions and aspirations directly.

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