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Research Article

How are Media's Reports on China's Products? A Content Analysis on Indonesian Online Media concerning Sinovac Vaccine

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ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic currently hits the world, and no country is not affected by the pandemic, included Indonesia. Every country issued policies to stop the pandemic and mitigate its impacts. Besides economy-related policies, the governments in many countries also issued policies in the health sector, including vaccination policy. The Republic of Indonesia Government also issued a policy in public health that is the National Vaccination Policy. The vaccine mainly used was Sinovac, made in China. This research attempted to analyze how the Indonesian online media reported Sinovac. The most representative online media had been chosen as the primary target. The method used was content analysis on the news published in the target media within seven months from January to July 2021. This research concluded two propositions. First, the more sensitive a product will receive, the more public responses from various interest groups. Second, if a product is ineffective and has weaknesses, the media will investigate and report more frequently.

Keywords: *Content Analysis, Covid-19, Online Media, Pandemic, Sinovac*

Background

The coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has hit the world for almost two years. The virus was first reported at the end of December 2019 in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. According to Worldometers, on 23 August 2021, the total cases of coronavirus infection throughout the world had reached 212,594,479. 4,444,587 people died while 190,210,934 people were declared recovered. In Indonesia, specifically, the total coronavirus infection reached 3,979,456

cases. 126,372 people died and 3,546,324 recovered (Worldometers, 2021).

To respond to the current pandemic situation, the Government released some policies. One of them is a social protection program to protect the people with low-income rates from the negative impacts of COVID-19. The Government even prepared a budget of more than 100 trillion Rupiahs for the Social Safety Net Program.

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In response to the pandemic, the Government also issued some policies, including (1) Large Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB). PSBB covers school and workplace deactivation, religious activities restriction, and also restriction of activities at public space or facilities; (2) President Jokowi issued the Government Regulation, Law Number 1 of 2020 to regulate public sector finance and financial stability policies due to Covid-19 pandemic.; (3) Formation of the Covid-19 Response and National Economic Recovery Committee. President Jokowi formed this committee in July 2020 to replace the Covid-19 Response Acceleration Task Force; (4) Community Activities Restrictions Enforcement (PPKM) application. The Government applied PPKM in Java and Bali Islands, different from PSBB. PPKM restricted community activities at points deemed red zone; (5) Sanction imposition to Health Protocol Violators. President Jokowi requested heads of regions to arrange derivative of Presidential Instruction Number 6 of 2020 on Health Protocol Law Discipline and Enforcement Improvement in Prevention and Control of Covid-19 and prepare sanctions for violators. To accompany this regulation, President Jokowi asked TNI-Polri to exert its strength in supervising health protocol implementation in the community (Tempo, 2021).

In addition to the policies above, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government also issued vaccination policy in the form of Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 99 of 2020 on Vaccine Procurement and Vaccination Implementation in Dealing with Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) Pandemic. The purposes of vaccination are to: (1) Reduce Covid-19 induced morbidity and mortality; (2) Achieve herd immunity to prevent and protect public health; (3) Protect and strengthen the health system entirely; (4) Maintain productivity and minimize social and economic impacts.

The Presidential Instruction for the Covid-19 Vaccination Program regulates the implementation of vaccination, including; (1) Covid-19 is given for free, and the community not charged at all; (2) All lines of the cabinet, ministries, agencies, and local governments are to prioritize vaccination program in the budget year 2021; (3) Prioritizing and relocating other

budgets related to availability and vaccination for free; (4) President is the first to get vaccinated for Covid-19; (5) The people are asked to keep implementing the 3M discipline, that is wearing a mask, social distancing, and washing hands.

The whole batch of vaccines needed was for 181.5 million people, which was allocated to 1.4 million health workers, 17.4 million public officers, 21.5 elders, 63.8 million people in a high infection risk area, and 77.2 million others (Surya, 2021).

Through the Ministry of Health (Kemenkes) on 3 December 2020, the Government determined the types of vaccine officially used for the national vaccination program, either government-funded or independent vaccination. This policy is as contained in Decision of Minister of Health Number HK.01.07/ Menkes/ 9860/ 2020 on Determination of Type of Vaccine for the Implementation of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) Vaccination. The first and most extensive vaccine was from a Chinese pharmaceutical company, Sinovac, for 125.5 million doses. The second import vaccine was from United States-Canadian vaccine producer, Novavax, for 50 million doses. The third vaccine was from multilateral cooperation of WHO and the World Vaccine Alliance (Covax-GAVI) of 50 million doses. Fourth, the Indonesian Government also imported vaccines from UK producers, AstraZeneca, of 50 million doses. The fifth was from a Germany-United States joint pharmaceutical company, Pfizer BioNTech, of 50 million (Kompas, 2021). Finally, the national launching of Coronavac on 4 January 2021 was conducted with vaccination on the front line and health workers (Simamora, 2021).

There was controversy after the Government's vaccination program implementation with mostly Sinovac vaccine. Many people questioned why the Government used vaccines from China, of which the efficacy level was deemed not as high as the other vaccines. Some public figures, including politicians, even openly refused vaccination using the Sinovac vaccine. The online media Detikcom on 22 February 2021 reported doubt about the Sinovac vaccine among academicians and medics in four cities, including Aceh, Bandung, Mataram,

and Ambon. Professor Cissy Kartasasmita of the Faculty of Medicine, Padjadjaran University, explained that 3,441 respondents from every state university in the four cities participated in a survey conducted using a Survey Monkey method from 25 December 2020 to 15 February 2021. The respondents consisted of lecturers and students. The results show that 1,343 respondents or 39.03 percent responded that they were not confident in the Sinovac vaccine, 371 respondents, or 10.78 percent, did not will to receive it, and 1,727 respondents, or 50.19 percent, willed to receive it. Those who responded that they were not confident in and did not will receive the Sinovac vaccine argue that they were afraid of its side effect and considered it ineffective, harmful, and presented religious and other reasons (Detikcom, 2021).

Refusal of Sinovac vaccine, which was a Chinese product, was reported more widely by the media since the cooperation between the Indonesian and Chinese Governments was highlighted, especially in economic and investment sectors. The reason was that China's investment was followed by the entry of Chinese workers, as reported by the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) that noted increased China's investment in Indonesia. The increase in China's investment in Indonesia was also directly proportional to the increased number of Chinese workers entering Indonesia. The increased investment followed by the massive entry of Chinese workers certainly would lead to a negative view (Merdeka.com, 2018). The public also questioned the Sinovac vaccine in Indonesia because of information that Western experts, as quoted in international media, often associated a high infection rate of the corona of Delta variant in Indonesia with the low efficacy of the Sinovac vaccine from China (Detikcom, 2021).

The refusal of the Sinovac vaccine widely reported by the mass media had confirmed the mass media's role in building the image of a product or institution. That a product will be accepted or rejected by the community cannot be separated from reports in the mass media. In addition, the mass media is believed to play a particular role in helping the public construct social realities. The media can determine the public agenda (agenda setting) through news

topic selection by identifying the most critical topic to be reported (Gamson, 1989). The media can also make framing, aiming at directing how the public should view or think of an issue brought (Entman, 2010).

To get a more comprehensive overview of Sinovac vaccine information, we need a study concerning the quantity and content of news in a more systematic report. Nevertheless, the results of this study will be good for news readers as new references when they receive information from online media and for the Government to make better policies with a more significant impact on public health.

Specific questions to be addressed in this research were: 1) In the period from 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, how often did the online media report on the Sinovac vaccine?; 2) How are the descriptions of article sentiments? Are they positive, negative, or neutral?; and 3) Why is there a difference in the frequency of reports on the Corona vaccine?

Methodology

Media selection

The targets of this research were articles and videos published by online media Detikcom. This study used this online media since it was the first online media in Indonesia. This media is also classified in the Top 5 Indonesian Websites of online media category according to Similarweb version. Similarweb was nominated by the Indonesian Digital Association (IDA) to measure and analyze a website's traffic. This year Similarweb published website ranking by visitor analysis, consisting of (1) Kompas.com, (2) TribunNews.com, (3) Detik.com, (4) IdnTimes.com, (5) Jpnn.com (Beritamanado.com, 2021). Detikcom was also registered with the Press Council, had an editorial structure contained in its website, and had a physical address as contained in its website.

News Content Selection

This research selected news with a title containing the keyword "Sinovac" from the Detikcom published from 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021. The publishing duration was under the consideration that the beginning of December was the first time the Sinovac vaccine was imported and used in the national vaccination

program. The study obtained the Detikcom contents in the following ways:

1. Use the search menu in the Detikcom with the "Sinovac" keyword.
2. Read and analyze the content
3. Select and reduce inappropriate content
4. Classify the content into the Codebook

Developing Codebook

This study created a codebook based on variables to be analyzed, consisting of; (1) the publish time, (2) types of news containing articles (text) and videos, and (3) classification of content sentiments: positive, neutral, and negative. Positive content means news content presenting something positive about the Sinovac vaccine. Neutral content means a neutral report, not directing to deliver a positive or negative idea. Finally, negative content means news content presenting negative perspectives of the Sinovac vaccine, which will lead to declining public trust.

Data Analysis

After the collection of data by the search engine, data were tabulated under the Codebook design. Further, the data were analyzed using a descriptive statistical technique, namely frequency distribution and cross-tabulation. The results of frequency distribution and cross-tabulation were then presented in figures.

Results

About Detikcom

According to Wikipedia, Detikcom (stylized as Detikcom) is an Indonesian digital media company owned by the CT Corp subsidiary Trans Media. Detikcom is an online news portal and publishes breaking news. The portal is consistently ranked among Indonesia's ten most-visited websites and is among the top 259 in the world. It receives approximately 194 million visits per day.

Detikcom has its roots in DeTIK, which was Indonesia's top-selling and most critical

political tabloid in the early 1990s. DeTIK was effectively banned on 21 June 1994, when Information Minister Harmoko withdrew its publication license together with Tempo and Editor magazine. DeTIK had upset the repressive regime of long-serving president Suharto by publishing interviews with senior military officers who were critical of civilian politicians. The tabloid had also dared to speculate on who would succeed Suharto.

Following the resignation of Suharto on 21 May 1998, some journalists decided to set up an online news portal. Detikcom was originally founded by Budi Darsono (former Tempo and DeTIK journalist), Yayan Sopyan (former DeTIK journalist), Abdul Rahman (former SWA journalist), and Didi Nugrahadi. The domain name detik.com became active on 29 May 1998; however, the site did not start producing content until 9 July 1998, which is considered its founding date. The founders focused on continuously updating breaking news, as well as more analytical news articles. Detikcom's first office was a small room at Lebak Bulus Stadium in South Jakarta.

On 3 August 2011, Detikcom was acquired by Trans Media under CT Corp, owned by Chairul Tanjung. He has maintained the site's independent, neutral and unbiased media stance. In 2019, Detikcom expanded into a media group called Detik Network, which consists of CNN Indonesia, CNBC Indonesia, Haibunda, Female Daily, Beautynesia, and insertive (Wikipedia, 2021).

Number of News Monthly

Detikcom is one of the most active online media in Indonesia. Detik means second. We can state that this media always publish new news every second. The results of this research also prove that in the seven months, from January to July, it had reported the Sinovac vaccine almost 500 times. The complete data are explained in the figure below.

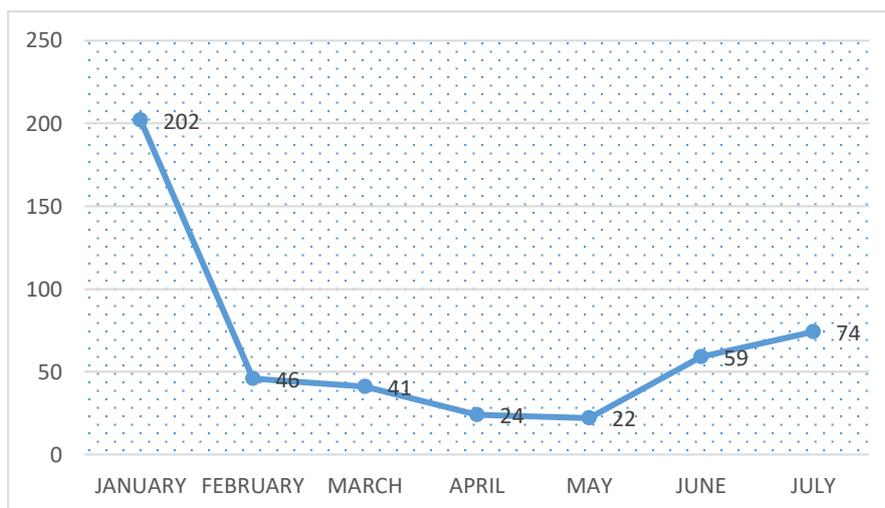


Figure 1. Number of Monthly Reports on Sinovac Vaccine

Within the seven months, there were 468 reports on the Sinovac vaccine in Detikcom, consisting of 380 articles and 88 videos. The news was mostly reported in January of 202 posts, followed by July of 74 posts, June of 59 posts, and February of 46 posts. The minor news was in May of 22 posts.

The next question is, from the 468 reports, how are the contents of the reports? Are they

positive reports on Sinovac that the news strengthens the positive image and impacts of Sinovac? Or, are they are neutral, that the reports do not lead to positive or negative imaging? Or, are they are the negative image of Sinovac, that the reports show low efficacy level and halal matter of Sinovac? The following data explain the distribution of news on Sinovac by characteristics.

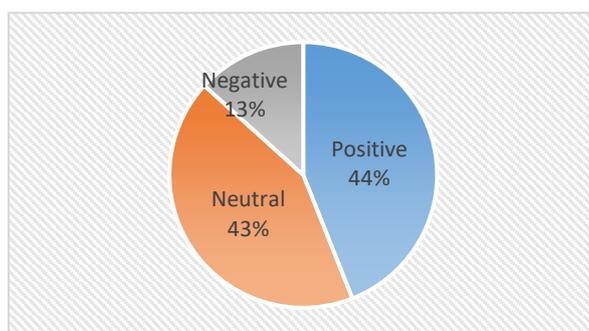


Figure 2. Reports on Sinovac Vaccine by Characteristics

The figure above shows that most of Detikcom's reports on Sinovac were positive (44%). For example, reports on MUI fatwa that Sinovac is halal and clean. The other positive reports were related to the efficacy of Sinovac that was deemed higher than any vaccine of different brands. There were 43% neutral reports, such as a report on Sinovac starting to be distributed to the Indonesian regions. The negative reports on Sinovac (13%) were mostly posted in July because of the entry of Delta

variant into Indonesia, followed by raising data of patients getting infected by Covid-19, high Bed Occupancy Rate (BOR) at a hospital, and more deaths of Covid-19 patients. These conditions made the public question the efficacy of Sinovac. Moreover, there are many reports on the necessity of vaccine boosters using other vaccine brands instead of Sinovac. The complete data of reports published monthly and associated with the characteristics of news are presented in the table below.

Table 1. Reports monthly by characteristics.

	Classification			Total
	Negative	Neutral	Positive	
January	17	84	101	202
February	5	19	22	46
March	6	20	15	41
April	2	14	8	24
May	3	11	8	22
June	6	27	26	59
July	23	25	26	74
Total	62	200	206	468

This table proves that from the 468 reports on Sinovac, the most dominant monthly are positive reports. However, it is different for July that the positive, neutral, and negative reports are almost balanced.

Back to figure 1, why were there many reports on the Sinovac vaccine in January? The reason is that the Sinovac vaccine just arrived from China in that month, followed by the start of the National Vaccination Program, initiated

by President Jokowi on 13 January 2021. The time before the President got vaccinated and afterward was the peak of reporting, accompanied with positive and negative sides of the Sinovac vaccine.

The number of reports per day in January can be observed more in detail in the figure below. (Note: data of less than five reports are not included in the figure).

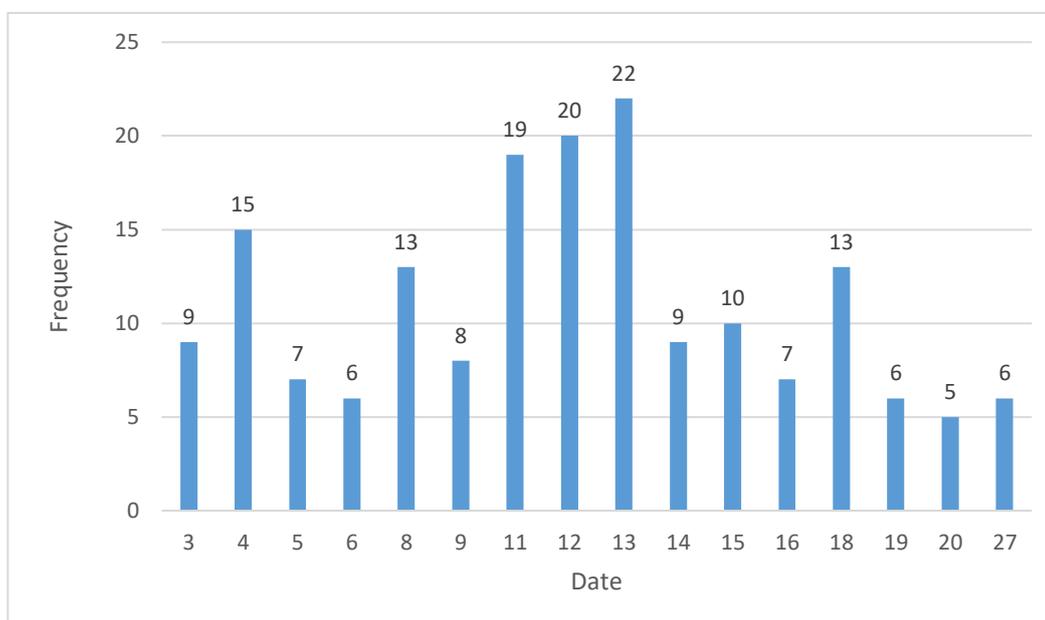


Figure 3. Reports on Sinovac Vaccine in January 2021

Two days before the President was vaccinated, on 11 January, within the day, Detikcom posted 19 reports. One day before the President was vaccinated, there were 20

reports. The peak was on 13 January that within the day Sinovac vaccine was reported 22 times. The data prove that the President was the magnet of news, and almost all reports on

the President getting vaccinated also mentioned the Sinovac vaccine. One day after the President's vaccination, it was still reported but at a declining frequency of more than 50%, from 22 reports to 9 reports.

As explained in figure 3, there were a total of 202 reports in January. These reports can be divided by format, whether the form was an article or video. The figure below explains the form of the news.

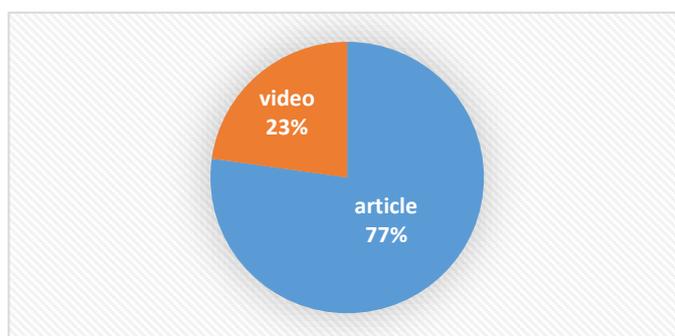


Figure 4. Format of News in January 2021

Detikcom is an online media that provides two news formats. News in article format is in the form of writing as a journalist's report, and one heading is commonly divided into pages. News in video format is a supplement to the news article, with a short duration of only about 2 minutes, commonly known as the Detikflash channel. Figure 4 shows that there were 202 reports in January 2021, 77% of which were articles, and the remaining 23 % were videos.

Discussion

Based on the data from the seven months, the news can be criticized from two critical aspects. First, why is there a difference in monthly reporting frequency? Second, why do negative reports increase in a particular month?

First, why is there a difference in reporting frequency? Based on a more thorough review of the news content in January, we can draw a proposition that the more sensitive a product is, the more it will invite public responses in the mass media from various groups. The Sinovac vaccine is a sensitive product for public affairs in Indonesia for three reasons; (1) Whether the vaccine is halal. The majority of Indonesians are Muslims. Besides the news circulating in the mainstream media, the issue that Sinovac is not evidently halal has circulated widely in Indonesian social media, primarily through Whatsapps application. Messages are spread

stating that the Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine contains harmful essential ingredients, one of which is African green monkey tissue. Some circulating messages also express that the Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine contains live viruses, borax, and even formalin. News emerging in January started with public opinion of Sinovac, accompanied with the process the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) issued a halal fatwa, with its peak when the national vaccination process was started by President Jokowi. Second, the vaccine's efficacy level. When the Government decided that the vaccine primarily used in Indonesia was Sinovac, many public responses questioned the extent of its efficacy and why it did not use vaccines of another brand. The circulating discourse was more related to a health issue instead of halal concern. The circulating news was dominated by a comparison of efficacy levels between vaccine brands, and many contained education of the efficacy and impacts of vaccination on health. Third, a product of Chinese origin. Discourses on Chinese products on mainstream media like Detikcom were indeed not notable. In social media, however, viral messages also circulated in social media that basically questioned why Chinese product was used, while China also imported vaccine from other countries. The media also reported that China ordered 100 million doses of coronavirus (Covid-19) vaccine made in Germany-United States, Pfizer/BioNTech.

Why do the media report negative news more at a specific time? Based on the in-depth content review, we can make a proposition that when a product is evidently ineffective and has weaknesses, the media will investigate and report it more frequently. This is evident from the reports published in July containing the entry of Delta Variant into Indonesia, and those vaccinated with Sinovac were infected. Therefore, the media compared the efficacy between vaccine brands. News also spread that China, where Sinovac was originated from, was also affected by the Delta Variant. Other circulating discourses included that in the prevention of Delta Variant, those vaccinated using Sinovac were planned to be revaccinated using vaccine booster of the other brand, instead of Sinovac. This incited the public question of why it should be the other brand.

The results of this research confirm another research that Mass media plays a massive role in circulating information, influences public behavior, and can curtail the spread of disease (Anwar, Malik, Raees, & Anwar, 2020). Likewise, the research conducted by Giri and Maurya (2021) concludes that Mass media during COVID-19 affects positive and negative emotions. Negative news deteriorates emotions more than positive news facilitates emotions (Giri & Maurya, 2021). Another study in India also has relevant results to this research. According to Dhanashree, Garg, Chauhan, Bhatia, Sethi, and Chauhan (2020), Mass media is playing a significant role in the dissemination of COVID-related information to the general public in north India (Dhanashree, Garg, Chauhan, Bhatia, & Sethi, 2021).

Conclusion

1. The Indonesian Government's decision to use China-made vaccines incited public reaction in Indonesia.
2. Within the seven months from January to July 2021 in the target online media, there were 468 reports consisting of 380 articles and 88 videos. January was where there were the most reports of 202 posts, followed by July of 74 posts. By news characteristics, from the 468 reports, most of them were positive reports on Sinovac (44%),

with only 13% being negative, and the remainder was neutral.

3. The frequency of news on Sinovac by the target media in the seven months was not evenly distributed. There were even 20 posts on Sinovac within a day by the media. The difference in reporting frequency was caused by the magnet of news, which was the start of the vaccination program initiated by President Jokowi.
4. The more sensitive a product is, the more it will invite public responses in mass media from various groups.
5. When a product is evidently ineffective and has weaknesses, the media will investigate and report it more frequently.

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