Mobile Journalism Practice in the Kompas.com Newsroom

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ABSTRACT

Smartphones and social media have changed how the media gather, produce, edit, and disseminate news. By employing the journalistic capital concept, this paper examines how journalists in Kompas.com, one of the pioneers of online media in Indonesia, incorporate mobile journalism practice into their work. This article explores how journalists and newsrooms respond to change that coincides with mobile devices and social media in the newsroom. The qualitative data analysis obtained from in-depth interviews with Kompas.com journalists and document analysis revealed that the application of mojo in Kompas.com is relatively new and is still looking for a form. Kompas.com integrate mobile smartphones into journalistic work to produce stories with a multimedia approach to meet changing journalistic and business needs. Journalists are expected to produce journalistic content in short videos using mobile devices related to daily events around them. Thus, the practice of mojo emerged as a new order in journalism. Kompas.com develops a multimedia division and improves journalists’ skills through training on all desks in the newsroom. Journalists learn new applications and tools and produce short videos for social media.

Keywords: Kompas.com; Mobile Journalism; Journalism Practice; Multimedia; Media Convergence.

ABSTRAK


Kata Kunci: Kompas.com; Jurnisme Seluler; Praktik Jurnalistik; Multimedia; Konvergensi Media.
INTRODUCTION

Mobile phone technology offers converging functionality—camera, video capture, radio, network connection, GPS, messaging, mobile applications, and web browsing. It is fast becoming a legitimate media collection and dissemination tool. Journalism scholars argued that mobile devices could extend the newsgathering options for a news organization (Quinn, 2011b). Some found that new media technologies were altering the news cycle flow (Westlund & Quinn, 2018). Journalists now have the resources, skills, and training to do their work using mobile devices (Westlund, 2013; Burum & Quinn, 2016; Kumar & Mohamed Haneef, 2018).

Moreover, social media now also impacts news media to transform how news is produced and delivered (Adornato, 2018). For example, when the Beirut explosion was viral in seconds, people and journalists used social media to collect and share what was happening on social networking sites. According to Burum and Quinn (2016), journalist today has the possibility to transform raw user-generated content into complete user-generated stories. The innovation processes, such as searching, developing, and disseminating content for mobile devices, are called mobile journalism (López-García et al., 2019; Westlund, 2019). Thus, mobile journalism combines journalism, videography, photography, writing, editing, and publishing, offering endless possibilities to generate content across various genres, formats, and platforms, creating a new way of storytelling.

The rapid development of digital technology is fast becoming the core of life, work, culture, and identity in Indonesia. According to Kemp (2021), at least 65% of Indonesians, or 175 million people, are connected to the internet. Almost all (98%) access the internet via their mobile device and spend around four hours a day online (Kemp, 2021). According to Irawan, Yusufianto, Agustina, and Dean (2020), one of the main reasons Indonesians use the internet is to access news information services. The high level of internet access with mobile devices will undoubtedly impact the behavior of Indonesians in accessing information and news. As most Indonesians have turned to their smartphones to get news updates, the media are forced to adopt mobile journalism and media convergence so that the media is demanded to be multimedia (Kencana & Meisyanti, 2020).

The development of mobile devices and journalistic practices have led to the emergence of mobile journalists (mojo). The term mojo basically includes video journalists (VJ), multimedia journalists, backpack journalists, and journalists who do all journalistic activities alone (Quinn, 2011b; Westlund, 2013; Blankenship, 2016). Burum and Quinn (2016) refer to mojo journalists as journalists who produce multimedia stories using mobile devices. Westlund (2013) observes that mobile devices have become excellent journalistic tools for creating and publishing multimedia news. The origins of the word mojo are unclear, but the term mojo in the journalism context appears to have been coined by staff at Gannett newspapers in the United States in 2005 (Quinn, 2011b, p. 76). In his book, Quinn mentioned that mojo is a codename for a project at The News-Press at Fort Myers in Florida, where reporters gathered and distributed news in new ways.

Furthermore, he mentioned that the Thomson Reuters news agency had been a mojo pioneer from its European headquarters in London, equipping its journalists with a mobile journalism toolkit since 2007 to deliver images, video, and text to the web (Quinn, 2011b, p. 77). Since then, mobile journalism has grown and developed in various countries. In addition, such practice has grown around the globe, from North America (Martyn, 2009), Africa (Mabweazara, 2011), Europe (Westlund, 2011), and Asia and Australia (Jamil et al., 2019; Quinn, 2011a).

Some research related to mojo has focused on how journalists do their work by taking advantage of the technological sophistication offered by mobile phones. Problems associated with the development of mojo in the world are journalist work and the ability of newsroom organizations to adapt to change. Moreover, in the last decade, social media has driven audiences to consume information. Westlund and Quinn (2018) emphasize that media editors must be open and aware that mobile journalism is not only about how to produce with smartphones.

Mobile journalism is also about collecting information widely circulated digitally in society, collaborating on various sources, editing it, and sharing it with the public, of course, with journalism quality standard. In their research, Kumar and Haneef (2018) describe how Hindustan Times applies mobile devices for journalistic needs. Both reveal that multimedia in the current era is inevitable, so journalism must adjust and no longer see it partially based on the medium. To support the demands of multimedia and speed, journalists’ expertise in using mobile devices and other mobile devices is essential. Hindustan Times integrated the concept of mobile journalism into editorial work.
Dubey (2018), in her research, reveals various changes faced by Indian media in the presence of mobile journalism. Dubey said that some media in India transformed newsroom workflow to respond to the demands of changing audiences. His research revealed that the trend of mobile journalism had disrupted the press in India. Although the behavior of Indian society’s consumption of information through television is still significant, media organizations are starting to clean up and adopt digital and mobile ways of working in their respective newsrooms in Hindustan Times, India Today TV, and The Quint.

Mobile device users can now produce content, for example, audio-visual clips and images, then distribute them quickly through social media (Westlund, 2013; Burum & Quinn, 2016; Adornato, 2018). In addition, individual journalists and many organizations have integrated the smartphone into newsroom workflows and journalistic works (Adornato, 2018; Kumar & Mohamed Haneef, 2018; Quinn, 2011a; Sundet, 2012). Perreault and Stanfield (2019) argue that contemporary research needs to study how news organizations understand mobile media and how smartphones change journalists do their jobs and institutionalize mobile media tools in newsrooms. In addition, research needs to examine how journalists perceive cellular journalism.

Previous research has identified that applying mojo workflow in professional journalistic practice is relatively undocumented (Mills et al., 2012). According to them, the main requirements for a successful mojo workflow are integrating it into the newsroom workflow, aligning it with newsroom technical standards, and providing training and support to journalists. The same thing was also conveyed by Quinn (2011a) that the way the newsroom works must support gathering news using mobile devices. Therefore, newsroom workflows must accommodate journalists in collecting, curating, editing, publishing, and refining content using mobile devices and applications from inside and outside the newsroom.

However, despite the increasing need for mobile-based news content in Indonesia, the media’s adoption of mobile journalism practice is still immature. Integrating news editorial management and mobile journalism workflow in the newsroom in Indonesia is still relatively undocumented. Thus, this article discusses how the Kompas.com newsroom can harness the potential of mobile phones in content creation to publish editorial content. Kompas.com is one of Indonesia’s pioneers of online media news portals, established in 1995. Recognizing the growing potential of smartphone-based news production and consumption, Kompas.com points to the deputy managing editor of multimedia entrusted with being responsible for multimedia production and training journalists in producing short videos with smartphones. Kompas.com aims to build competencies across all reporting desks to create mobile videos and regular stories for all media and platforms.

This study aims to explain the integration of mobile journalism in newsroom workflows and journalist works at Kompas.com through the concept of journalistic capital, one of the four main areas of Bourdieu’s field theory. The main contribution of this study is to reveal the practice of mobile journalism in the Indonesian context. Against this background, the research questions asked were:

RQ: How does Kompas.com integrate mobile journalism workflow into the newsroom and journalistic practices?

This research examines the workflow of mojo story production, the mojo toolkit and the applications used in it, the range of mobile devices used by journalists, the preparation of training programs, the role of journalists determined, and perceptions of the role of journalists, and the resulting journalistic fields by Kompas.com.

Digital development encourages the emergence of new ways of working in the newsroom. The challenge of regulating how editors produce news is in the spotlight in studying modern journalistic practices (Kumar & Mohamed Haneef, 2018; Westlund, 2011; Willig, 2013). Then, as today, Newsroom organizations face new realities and challenges.

Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu’s field theory (1998), this study seeks to understand how journalists conceive their role. Field theory aims to understand journalism by exploring the relationship between journalists in the field and their relationship with other fields (Kumar & Mohamed Haneef, 2018; Perreault & Stanfield, 2019; Willig, 2013). Bourdieu describes a field as a structured social space where “various actors struggle to transform or preserve the field” (Bourdieu, 1998, pp. 40–41). Any social sphere, for Bourdieu, resembles a field of play that characterizes competition and can be associated with a game in which players employ different strategies to maintain or improve their position.

The application of mobile journalism at Kompas.com, reflecting on Bourdieu’s idea, has led to changes in the game rules. Journalists need to acquire and understand new forms related to mobile
The presence of mobile journalism as a new trend certainly raises issues and debates. Should and can one person do everything? Is it fair to expect one person to work long hours to produce content for any platform? In response to those questions, this study analyses from the point of view of journalistic capital. According to Willig (2013), journalistic capital is the journalistic field’s symbolic capital. Journalistic capital can also be understood as peer recognition. Having much credit means having much respect from fellow journalists and having a good position in the organization’s hierarchy. Journalistic capital can be material, such as reward, pay raise, or promotion for journalists, and immaterial, such as appreciative remarks in the newsroom.

In recent decades, the mass media has faced challenges and competition. All media compete to bring innovation and work on mobile. News needs to be accurate and high quality, but at the same time, each piece of content should be accessible on several platforms. Unfortunately, those demands are not quickly delivered. Therefore, there needs to be a balance between organizational demands and appreciation for journalists who meet targets. In his article, Hovden (2012) mentioned that journalist capital has to be recognized to affect the field. The absence of appreciation and recognition will impact the journalists’ performance and the media organizations’ development. Thus, mastery and understanding of journalistic principles are a journalist’s fundamental assets, acknowledging and recognizing what the media organizations need to do.

According to Willig (2013), cultural capital, social capital, and symbolic capital are new “rules of the game” when journalists adapt to a relatively new situation. This study examines how journalists acquire the required skills and capabilities to produce multimedia news content using mobile devices. Social capital can be the sum of the resources that emerge from the membership of various formal and informal networks formed through social media. The concept of social capital has been applied to discover how journalists expand their social network with their colleagues, sources, and readers using social media and how this network is used for journalistic activities. Finally, symbolic capital determines the position of journalists in the socially constructed value hierarchy of journalism, and it has been used to find prevalent “recognition principles” at Kompas.com.

**METHODS**

The study uses a constructivist epistemological commitment to explain the integration of mobile journalism workflow in the newsroom. The paradigm choice was in line with the research objective, which was to study the process of standard formation and practice of mojo from the journalist’s point of view. The paradigm choice was taken in line with the aim of the study, namely, to examine the process of standard formation and mojo practice from the perspective of the journalists involved. Furthermore, it is in line with the main idea expressed by constructivism that knowledge is constructed rather than discovered (Stake, 1995).

A case study method has been chosen to assess the concepts described above and their effect on the journalist practice and newsroom workflow. According to Stake (1995, p. xi), a qualitative case study is “a study of particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances.” In addition, case studies have often been used to examine newsroom and journalistic practices (Avilés & Carvajal, 2008; Singer, 2004; Willig, 2013).

This study analyzed Kompas.com in Indonesia. Kompas.com claims to be one of the pioneers of online media in Indonesia. This media is affiliated with Kompas Gramedia, one of the largest media groups in Indonesia. Kompas.com has 10 million followers on Facebook, more than 1.5 million followers on Instagram, more than 92 thousand subscribers on YouTube, and 358,000 followers on TikTok.

The data collection technique was carried out through in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis. However, participant observation cannot be carried out due to the Covid-19 pandemic, requiring all parties to prioritize health and safety. The data collection process was carried out from April 2020 to June 2020. Interviews were conducted with journalists, the deputy of multimedia editors, and the editor-in-chief. All the subjects were asked to explain their understanding of mobile journalism, its role, and workflow in the newsroom. Interviews were recorded by the authors with their permission and transcribed within a few days. The data obtained from interviews...
and document analysis were coded thematically to identify and find overall patterns and themes under mojo practices.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Mobile journalism has emerged as a popular term that promotes mobile devices to carry out journalistic activities. People chose mobile devices because they provide convenience and speed to support dynamic journalistic work. For a short time, mobile journalism has been accepted in numerous media to enhance their services, such as VOA, BBC, and Al Jazeera. This study reveals that the proliferation of a smartphone has also revolutionised journalism landscapes in the media working process. This aligns with literature on media convergence (Dominick, 2013; Drula, 2015; Kalamar, 2016) and journalism practice (Adornato, 2018; Burum & Quinn, 2016; Kumar & Mohamed Haneef, 2018; Westlund & Quinn, 2018). The existence of mobile devices brings journalism into a new chapter. Mobile devices can now collect and produce various digital content, do live reportage, disseminate it quickly through social media applications, and build continuous communication with audiences in a virtual universe.

Contextualisation of Mobile Journalism Practices at Kompas.com
The main objective of mobile journalism at Kompas.com is to increase the production of multimedia news content in text, audio, video, and live reports. Kompas.com still distinguishes between online reporters and multimedia reporters. Mojo at Kompas.com is included in the multimedia division, which specialises in producing multimedia-based content. The main task of the multimedia division is to present video, audio, photo content, and so on, plus the use and management of social media for content distribution and interaction with audiences. Today, video-based content has become a powerful multimedia news format.

Deputy Managing Editor Laksono Hari Wiwoho, who oversees the multimedia division at Kompas.com, said that video is the best method for attracting large digital viewers. The number of people watching online videos continues to increase. He emphasised that today’s news media must be adaptive to technology and platforms.

“The multimedia division prioritises the combination of video, photos, text, and infographics into news reports distributed to various platforms, such as social media, podcasts, and the web. In this multimedia desk, reporters carrying out their duties also do jobs like videographers and editors by optimising mobile devices (Interview, Mei 2020).”

The chief editor of Kompas.com, Wisnu Nugroho, confirmed this. According to him, applying mobile journalism is a strategy so that Kompas.com can be closer and more relevant to the audience. He said,

“Yes, the hope is more to serve readers. The goal is only that. If readers have a new behaviour, like it or not, we must also be willing to change our behaviour. Yes, so we can be relevant. It is that simple (Interview, April 2020).”

Based on Kompas.com editorial records, 80% audience of Kompas.com access the content through a mobile smartphone. The characteristics of readers via mobile are different from readers on the web. For this reason, Kompas.com provides a mobile version of the interface and a responsive display design, raising the YouTube Channel Kompas.com Reporter on Location. Kompas.com editorial team realises that understanding audience needs is essential. For this reason, the content is tailored to the characteristics of each platform.

Modified Workflow
Changing how the audience consumes news has prompted Kompas.com to develop editorial workflows. The workflow in the multimedia division involves several intermediate steps between news production and publication.

Journalists submit requests to the multimedia division to produce videos, or journalists can submit recorded videos to the division. The multimedia division received several video requests from journalists at Kompas.com. According to Laksono, “A limited number of editors are in the office or behind the desks. However, on the other hand, there are far more reporters. The number of editors is not proportional to the number of reporters, so many videos are delayed. Then it will make the
process take longer so that it can appear on the Kompas.com page or other platforms (Interview, Mei 2020).

In addition, around 2017, Kompas.com modified the Content Management System (CMS) to accommodate reporters’ work using a mobile device. The existence of this mobile version of the CMS aims to support reporters’ work in writing, sending photos, or videos. Laksono explained, “So it is straightforward, type in there, send photos from there; even now, the mobile version for sending videos can be done. So send video, audio, no matter what, it can go through the system (Interview, Mei 2020).”

As shown in figure 1, Kompas.com separates field gathering and digital gathering as two different processes in terms of information collection. Each field journalist, named a video journalist, is equipped with a smartphone and equipment as a supporting tool. On the other hand, the digital gathering is conducted by the content creator, collecting information from user-generated content and then transforming it into stories. Video journalists and content creators apply mobile journalism mindset and principles in their practice.

The division also produces videos for news-specific, news-based videos daily and collects videos from news agencies. This division uses DSLRs and professional cameras to record video and applications such as Final Cut Pro, Motion, Premiere Pro, and After Effects to process it. After receiving the last edited video from the multimedia division, a journalist sent it to the news editor and social media section to be published on the Kompas.com social media accounts and website.

The mobile journalism workflow removes several inefficient steps, such as several editorial reviews. It aims to build capabilities in each division so journalists can quickly produce stories using and optimise mobile devices and upload them directly to websites or social media accounts (figure 1). For example, the Kompas.com editorial cut several work processes by giving access to some experienced reporters to immediately bring up news, photos, or videos to the Kompas.com page without going through an editor at the office. However, such a case is only for particular specialties such as breaking news.

**Optimising Social Media**

Kompas.com’s strategy in optimising mobile journalism is not just a matter of gathering information to compile news. Kompas.com also optimises the use of YouTube. In carrying out journalistic work, journalists have the opportunity to obtain any information in the field. Soni encourages Kompas.com journalists to be sensitive to the surrounding situation and not hesitate to record the incident and upload it to Youtube “Kompas.com Reporter on Location” (KROL).
Journalists are free to shoot any video. Videos that have news value can be uploaded to KROL. KROL was created to prioritise the speed and diversity of incident information. According to Nugroho, KROL exists for content diversification because Kompas.com also has its own official YouTube channel.

The goal is to make a difference. Through KROL, reporters can upload their coverage directly. Meanwhile, news that appears on the kompas.com site will go through an editing process first. According to Sherly Puspita, Mobile Journalist, Kompas.com has a YouTube channel, Kompas Reporter on Location (KROL). She further stated that KROL was used to accommodate videos recorded by journalists while covering the incident. Apart from KROL, Kompas.com also has its official channel on Youtube under the name Kompas.com.

Even so, Kompas.com does not require all reporters to work like mobile journalists who prioritise multimedia. Kompas.com divides two types of reporters, namely, written reporters and multimedia reporters. Written reporters focus on quality text-based reports, but there will be additional points if a video is included. The video is only uploaded to the CMS or Youtube and Facebook. Still, it does not appear simultaneously with the article made by the reporter. Meanwhile, for video reporters and reporters who are indeed formed as mobile journalists, the whole process prioritises using smartphones and other mobile devices to make reports and upload them to social media.

**Cultural Capital: Training and Skill-Building Exercises**

Kompas.com’s multimedia division organises training sessions for journalists in terms of strategies for producing multimedia news with smartphones and technical use of supporting devices and applications available on the device. Wisnu Nugroho, Editor-in-Chief of Kompas.com, revealed that journalists need proper training during rapid changes. According to him, journalists must know the different perspectives in writing news for various media.

For journalistic purposes, we hold training telling us that writing from a mobile perspective differs from writing from a desktop perspective or even with a laptop.

Deputy Managing Editor, Laksono Hari Wiwoho, said that debriefing of journalists through internal training is carried out periodically and gradually. Besides focusing on developing coverage patterns and strategies, journalists are also equipped with practical skills.

Our training is done in stages. First, we provide all the reporters in each section about taking pictures, the story’s angle, and how to compose the story. Second, the video journalist team was given special training on recognising and optimising social media. Then, we provide training for new journalists, usually for 2 - 3 weeks, after which we assist for a month. Then, after they feel okay, another year or two years later, there is another training to update their abilities.

Capacity building is not only done internally. Editors provide opportunities for journalists to participate in training programs organised by other parties. Sherly Puspita, a Mojo journalist, revealed she got the chance from work. She said, “As a Mojo journalist, I must determine the angle, write, take pictures, edit and spread widely, and even be ready to go live through social media. So I participated in a mobile journalism training organised by Facebook in Jakarta (Interview Mei, 2020).”

Laksono explained that the current ability of journalists is not only a matter of using smartphones for news production but also needs to understand the function of social media and its characteristics. “Do Mojo journalists need to know how to manage Youtube? How does the engagement increase (views) like what? What kind of Facebook, what kind of IGStory, what sort of IGTV, and so on? So if it is an ordinary reporter team, it is only taught how to make a good video. However, for Mojo journalists, the social media team was trained more about how the engagement was, how the opening was, and choosing the font. Editors have also been given the training to choose fonts, write a script, write a scriptwriter, etc. (Interview Mei 2020).”

**Social Capital (Social Capital): Optimisation of Social Media**

Mobile journalism allows journalists to assemble social capital by maintaining a solid existence on social media networking sites. Thanks to the development of technology, online media today can be present in various forms, including social media. Social media facilitate people to access and consume information anywhere, anytime, and any information that they need without significant limitation.

Besides the journalist’s social capital, Kompas.com’s social media followers are the organisation’s collective social capital. Kompas.com has at least two Youtube accounts, namely Kompas.com
Journalistic production nowadays have to compete not only with other media but also user-generated content. Media is required to be present on various platforms while maintaining production costs to stay competitive. They tend to have higher multi-skill resources than a journalist with specific skills. In the online media era, the necessity of media in development not only follows technological developments but also serves as an economic policy (Kencana & Meisyanti, 2020).

Online and social media have made the dissemination of information faster and more massive. Lestari (2019) mentioned that the presence of technology would affect the behavior of journalists in the field in the process of searching, processing, and disseminating information.

Journalists express their concerns about journalism being increasingly demanding. New routines and roles have sparked confusion and panic among journalists. The study found that time constraints are a significant concern for journalists, as evidenced in previous studies. For example, in the workflow, the mobile journalist in the multimedia division must write a script even though the product at Kompas.com is a video. The manuscript is used for making the title, teaser, video caption, and video caption.

In addition, journalists admit that combining journalistic work and distribution through social media as a convergence media strategy results in journalists not having enough time to focus on their media as a convergence media strategy results in journalists not having enough time to focus on their
core responsibilities. Journalists are pushed to produce and share content across multiple platforms and simultaneously open communication with audiences.

Being multi-skill is not easy either. Expertise and tenacity are required in work. Multi-skills in mobile journalism give journalists less time to re-examine information sources and the context of an event (Avilés & Carvajal, 2008). In addition, there needs support from media organisations in terms of routine training and adequate infrastructure to support work (Octavianto et al., 2016). On the other hand, Internet connectivity remains a big challenge for reporters. The quality of a limited internet network sometimes slows down or stops the process of sending videos. This condition is even worse if journalists want to go live or stream.

CONCLUSION
This study found that media convergence and multimedia journalism have become integral to contemporary journalism at Kompas.com. Kompas.com is incorporating mobile devices into journalistic practice to produce multimedia stories to meet changing journalistic and business needs. Journalists are expected to produce journalistic content in short videos using mobile devices related to daily events around them. As Adornato (2018) claims that smartphones should act as communication and content production hubs, mojo’s workflow at Kompas.com helps cross-desk journalists record short videos and edit and publish them on Kompas.com’s website and social media accounts.

In addition, Kompas.com also builds the capabilities of other journalists so that cross-desk journalists can also produce content with the concept of mobile journalism. This effort was made to not rely solely on Mojo journalists in the multimedia division, which is limited in number even though there is much potential news in the field.

The competitive nature of journalism requires journalists to accumulate capital (cultural, social, and symbolic) to maximize their position and avoid redundancy. Bourdieu (1998) uses metaphorical references to games to describe the competitive nature of the field and suggests that “a good player anticipates who is ahead of the game.” Kompas.com journalists underlined that they must anticipate changes and new trajectories in journalism and become multi-skilled to avoid redundancy.

This study shows that journalists at Kompas.com accumulate various assets. For example, they participate in mojo and social media management training programs, spread social media networks for journalistic purposes, and create unique identities. Furthermore, Kompas.com also provides awards to journalists to recognize their contributions and encourage their efforts.

However, the existence of online and social media has made the dissemination of information faster and more massive. Of course, the presence of technology will affect journalists’ behaviour in searching, processing and disseminating information. Journalists are required not only to be able to carry out journalistic work but also to ensure the quality of news remains by standards and codes of ethics. Subsequent studies can explore how mobile journalists maintain news quality in fast-paced demands.

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