

The Journalism Crisis in the Era of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia

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The focus of this research is the practice of journalism in relation to the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship (JFPP) during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. Journalists and curators who are participants in the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship received fundings from the state. The Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship is a unique model because it is the only one in the world in journalism practice that involves state's financial assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. These fundings from the state for the media lead to dilemmas and controversies. This research uses a qualitative approach and a single holistic case study method. The Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship was held from May to December 2021, involving 7,276 journalists from 857 media (print, television, radio, and online media) and 26 curators. This study found that during the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship, journalism experienced a crisis and lost its function as a control overpower. Giving cash to journalists and curators during the fellowship makes journalism lose its independence and objectivity. The Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship has degraded or eliminated the function of the press as a watchdog. Incentives for journalists while participating in the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship is a long-term investment by the government to co-opt Indonesian media and journalists in the future. On the other hand, the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship raises another aspect; the crisis of journalism. Journalism work produced in the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship does not reflect the values and principles of journalism. Journalism values, such as independence and impartiality, are absent from the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship product.

Keywords: journalism crisis, COVID-19 pandemic, behavioral change, journalism fellowship

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1. Introduction

The media has experienced several crises triggered by the development of communication technology, especially the internet (Cagé & Goldhammer, 2016; Fuller, 2012; Hirst, 2011; Lowrey & Gade, 2011) and a chaotic economy (Supadiyanto, 2020). Furthermore, the current media crisis is triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic (Pasetti, 2021; Roubík et al., 2022; Yue et al., 2022). According to Australia's national news agency, the Australian Associated Press (AAP) had laid off 170 journalists as of June 26, 2020, and also closed its editorial production service and page master in August 2020. AAP was first published in 1935 by newspaper publisher Keith Murdoch—the father of the founder of News Corp., Rupert Murdoch. This agency is owned by Australian news organizations, including Australia News Corp, Nine Entertainment Co., Seven West Media, and Australian Community Media (Supadiyanto, 2020).

Previous studies showed that the COVID-19 pandemic affects all aspects of the media (Casero-Ripolles, 2020). Furthermore, it affects economic aspects, such as paying taxes, journalists' salaries, and purchasing special papers for print media, which placed the media on the verge of bankruptcy (Macleod, 2021). The media situation in Indonesia also has the same situation as other countries in dealing with COVID-19. In fact, several media are out of business because they cannot finance their operations, while others strive to avoid bankruptcy by reducing the number of journalists.

Table 1

Some Media that Stopped Operating during the COVID-19 Pandemic

No	Name of Media	Type of Media	Circulation Area	Start to Stop Publishing
1	Tempo	Newspaper	Indonesia	January 1, 2021
2	Indo Pos	Newspaper	Indonesia	December 30, 2020
3	Suara Pembaruan	Newspaper	Indonesia	February 1, 2021
4	Indopos.com	News site (Online)	-	December 30, 2020

Table 2

Media that Reduced the Number of Journalists and Employees during the COVID-19 Pandemic

No	Name of Media	Type of Media	Reason
1	Koran Tempo	Newspaper	Termination of Employment /early retirement
2	Indo Pos	Newspaper and Online Media	Retirement
3	Suara Pembaruan	Newspaper	Early retirement
4	The Jakarta Post	Newspaper	Termination of Employment /early retirement
5	Kumparan.com	Online Media	Termination of Employment

The government provides two forms of financial assistance to the media and journalists during the pandemic. This was realized through the Behavioral Change Journalism Fellowship and organized by the Press Council and the COVID-19 Handling Task Force.

Fellowships in journalism are commonplace and are provided by many independent institutions to journalists. For instance, it was once held by the Reuters Institute, New York University (Arthur L Cartes Journalism Institute), Nieman Foundation for Journalism, and South Asia Journalism Fellowship. There is nothing special about journalism fellowships in a normal era, therefore, it would be extraordinary when it is awarded by the government in a pandemic situation. Nevertheless, journalists need to control power, and the position of the state and the media makes the fellowship problematic, which raises pros and cons among journalism activists in Indonesia. This occurs even as the media and journalists experience the economic crisis caused by the pandemic.

The Behavioral Change Journalism Fellowship guidelines issued by the Press Council and COVID-19 Handling Task Force aim to promote behavioral change and health protocols. The behaviors include washing hands with soap, wearing masks, keeping a distance, avoiding crowds, exercising, maintaining vitamin and nutritional intake, self-checking as well as reporting symptoms.

The participants play a role in campaigning, supervising field implementation, evaluating weaknesses, and presenting success stories. In this fellowship, journalists function as hoax fact-checkers (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2010). They are required to clarify misleading information about behavioral changes and health protocols on social and mass media. Therefore, the fellowship participants receive IDR1,600,000 monthly for eight months (May - December 2021), while the curator's fee is IDR3,000,000 every month.

Based on the above description, this study aims to examine the Behavioral Change Journalism Fellowship pattern organized by the Press Council and the COVID-19 Handling Task Force as well as to explore the perspective of the media practitioners about the fellowship. Furthermore, it sought to examine the relationship between the media and the state after the fellowship.

2. Literature Review

Pavlik (2021) stated that journalism needs to be redesigned during the COVID-19 pandemic and aligned with the public agenda. The pandemic has changed the pattern of journalism, which has adapted to the development of information and communication technology, community culture, and economic pressures. Therefore, the redesign is required to make journalism attractive and relevant for the public interest (Kovach&Rosentiel, 2007).

In line with the ideas of Pavlik and Kovach & Rosentiel, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed journalism practices and patterns. Bernadas & Iagan (2020) showed that three parties were interested in journalism in the Philippines during the pandemic. The parties include the government as a policy maker, objective and independent journalists, as well as the public that needs accurate information about the pandemic. Also, COVID-19 has caused journalists to

suffer illness, psychological exhaustion, as well as limited access to sources.

Tshabangu & Salawu (2021) discovered the Zimbabwean government's tight control over newspaper coverage. This is to avoid confusing information about the pandemic in the community and prevent panic. Therefore, the state wants to develop positive journalism and adhere to the principles of accuracy, balance, and impartiality.

Estella (2020) explored the competence of journalists in 11 ASEAN countries during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results showed that journalists need to be competent in order to understand society, public issues, and create good quality content. Competence is essential to ensure high-quality journalism during the pandemic. Moreover, it enables journalists to verify information using communication and information technology development (Kovach & Rosentiels, 2010).

In Indonesia, Parahita (2020) and Utomo (2020) found that the media condition was severe during the pandemic. The sudden change in all journalism mechanisms has made the media to be unprepared for the pandemic. However, a collaboration between journalists and advances in communication and information technology could improve the quality of journalism. According to Parahita, the five aspects of the journalism crisis are journalists' readiness to report early signs of COVID-19 risk, critical coverage of government intervention for crisis management, the delivery of in-depth and accurate information, siding with vulnerable groups, as well as security coverage.

Also, Utomo examined the journalism crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic by analyzing the news content regarding the pandemic in eight national media using the Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) theory from Barbara Reynolds and Matthew W. Seeber. The study examined Indonesia's media conglomeration that prevented the public from getting information about the pandemic.

There are no studies that discussed state incentives through journalistic practices as framed in the Behavioral Change Journalism Fellowship. Also, various countries lack the journalism model practiced by the fellowship—a topic that makes this study unique and specific. The demand for economic incentives to the state is dilemmatic and problematic (Cagé & Goldhammer, 2016; Schultz, 1998). The media is required to oversee the running of the government, thereby serving as watchdogs and the fourth estate of democracy. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced it to conduct accommodative politics due to economic difficulties (Parahita, 2021).

The media is allowed to ask for state assistance (Cagé & Goldhammer, 2016) because an all-connected world is extraordinarily complex. Furthermore, the relations between all realities are highly complex, and no reality stands alone. Therefore, since everything is interdependent, the media cannot be wholly neutral or impartial. All realities are attached to certain positions, including media politics, which implies that all media cannot be innocent by hiding behind objective words (Karppinen & Moe, 2016); (Maras, 2013).

There is nothing wrong with the media attitude towards the state. It is only a matter of space, time, and context issues, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The media would create problems in case it did not respond to the request. Moreover, several media companies may close down,

and the information would decline due to financial constraints and the threat of unemployment.

3. Method

This research used a qualitative approach with a single holistic case study method and the data were obtained through observation and interviews. A qualitative study begins with the basic assumptions of humans as free, independent, and creative beings that create their subjective reality. This freedom and creativity results in meaning as the essence of qualitative studies.

Rober K. Yin (2016) mentioned five distinctive characteristics in qualitative studies which focus on the meaning of life below the surface or invisible, represent society's views or perspectives, and use contextual background. Moreover, qualitative studies provide opportunities for new concepts that explain human behavior and use various sources to obtain truth or belief.

This approach was used to understand the phenomena in a special contextual setting. In this regard, the case study was the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship organized by the Press Council and the COVID-19 Handling Task Force.

Case studies focus on one object as a unit limited to a certain space and time. Also, they comprehensively reveal why and how a case occurred (Cash-Gibson et al., 2021; Stilwell et al., 2021).

Observations were made on news and photos published on the ubahlaku.id website, press release documents for the Press Council, the Indonesian Journalists Association (PWI), and the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI). Meanwhile, interviews were conducted with nine participants selected through purposive sampling and other parties.

1. Interview with Press Council member—Agus Sudiby—at the Grand Zury Hotel, Serpong, South Tangerang, on Monday, December 6, 2021 (non-journalist).
2. Interview with the Deputy Secretary of the Indonesian Journalists Association (PWI) Suprpto Center at the Grand Zury Hotel, Serpong, South Tangerang on Monday, December 6, 2021 (journalist).
3. Virtual interview via the zoom application with the General Chairperson of the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) for the 2017-2020 period—Abdul Manan—on Tuesday, December 7, 2021 (journalist).
4. Interview with the Chairperson of the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) for the period 2021-2024—Sasmito Madrim—at the Jakarta State University (UNJ) Campus on Friday, November 26, 2021 (journalist).
5. Virtual interview via Zoom application with the curator of the Behavioral Change Journalism Fellowship—Dhimam Abrar—on Wednesday, November 10, 2021 (journalist).
6. Virtual interview via zoom application with the Behavioral Change Journalism Fellowship journalist—Muhamad Hakim—on Saturday, November 27, 2021 (journalist).
7. Interview with the General Chairperson of the Indonesian Television Journalist Association (IJTI)—Herik Kurniawan—at the IJTI Office, Jakarta on Monday, December 6, 2021 (journalist).

8. Telephone interview with Media Analyst and Lecturer of Atmajaya University—Agustinus Eko Rahardjo—on September 8, 2022 (non-journalist).
9. Interview via telephone with Media Analyst and Lecturer of Multimedia Nusantara University—Ignatius Haryanto—on September 12, 2022 (non-journalist).

4. Results

4.1. The output of journalism fellowship program across Indonesia

The media reached all 34 provinces across Indonesia, where West Java produced 35,938 news articles, followed by East Java, Central Java, DKI Jakarta, and Riau with 30,933, 27,232, 22,847, and 15,690, respectively. The average number of news articles published daily was 480 in printed media, 832 in digital form, 431 aired on television, and 50 disseminated through the radio. This program covers 857 mass media companies in Indonesia.

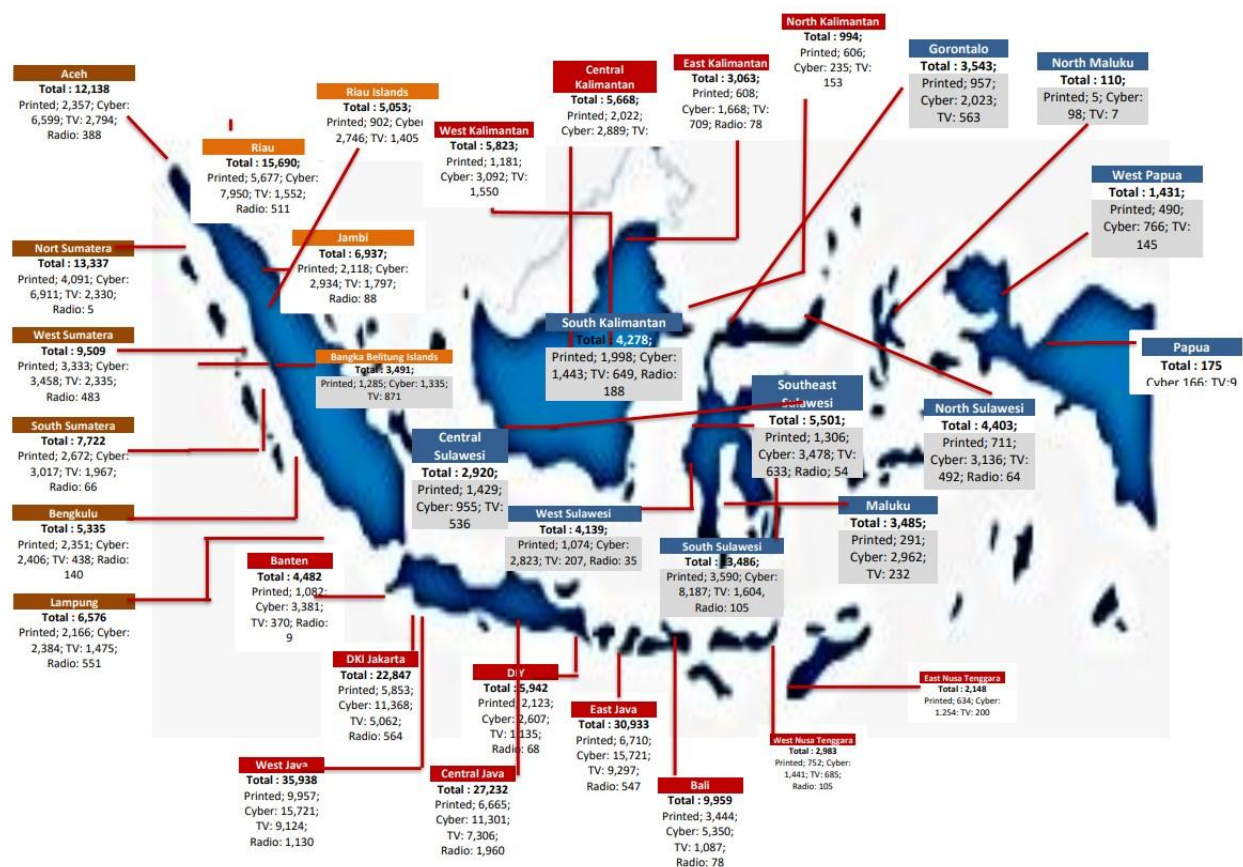


Figure 1. Distribution of the number of journalists and news production per province (Aisyah, 2021)

A total of 7,276 journalists and 26 curators from various media across 34 provinces participated in the fellowship program. Out of the total number of journalists, 46.01% came from cyber media, 30.39% from printed media, 21.23% from television, and 2.36% from radio. For the past five months, 288,607 news has been produced, including 59,375 published on television, 7,314 through radio, 140,493 digital news reports, and 80,455 in printed media form.

Figure 3 shows the pattern of the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship organized by the Press Council and COVID-19 Handling Task Force:

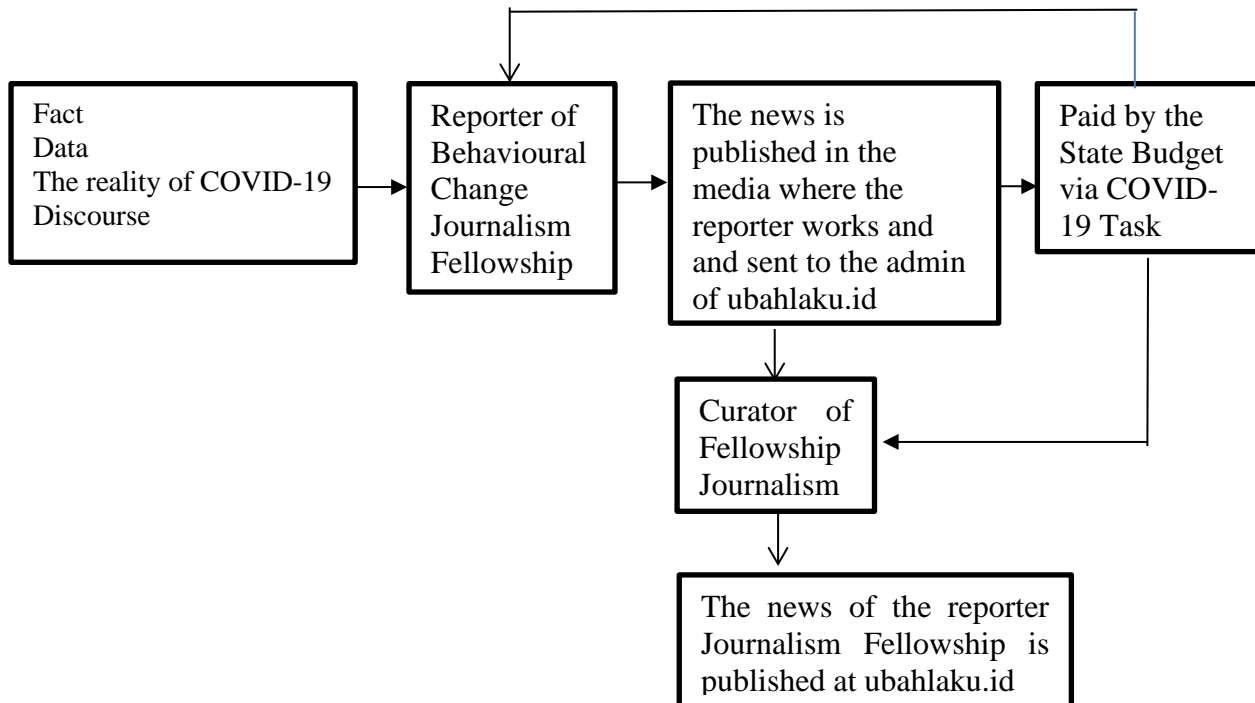


Figure 3. The pattern of the behavior change journalism fellowship.

Note. ubahlaku.id is a site for collecting and disseminating all news sent by journalists participating in the fellowship.

4.2. Fellowship problems and dilemmas

The observations, interviews, and field searches about Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship showed several interesting themes.

First, the news produced has low quality and is very different from that of mainstream media. The news production for the fellowship participants is only about reporting cases. For instance, the village or sub-district heads campaign by using masks or awards for the participants in upholding the 3M health protocol. The protocol entails wearing masks, washing hands with soap and running water, as well as maintaining distance in areas where journalists work. Furthermore, there is no fixed standard for the quality of the news produced. This is reasonable because journalists from the fellowship only need to pass the Young Level Journalist Competency Test organized by the Press Council in collaboration with journalistic organizations.

This news quality problem is also recognized by the Press Council as the Fellowship organizer. According to Agus Sudiby, a Press Council member, the quality of the news in this fellowship would give the Council a complete picture of the journalists' competence.

“This is one of the most important lessons from the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship. This fact would be a valuable evaluation and input for the Press Council to improve the quality of journalists after the fellowship.”

The Indonesian Journalists Association (PWI) also recognized the low quality of this news. Suprpto, Deputy Secretary of the Central PWI, stated that this was caused by the less stringent selection of participants of the fellowship. Participants only need to take the Basic Level Journalist Competency Test, including new journalists with minimal experience.

“This low quality is understandable because the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship only aims to disseminate or campaign health protocols from the government. Therefore, the quality of the news is not prioritized and the most important point is to spread the health protocols as soon as possible.”

Second, the participants’ knowledge of the Fellowship regarding the theory and practice of journalism is still very minimal as they do not understand the concept of 5W + 1H or the philosophical ethics of journalism. This is a fundamental problem because journalism has techniques and contemporary ethics sides.

“Knowledge about journalism can be obtained in college and infield practice. Not all journalists participating in the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship have an academic background in communication or journalism as many still do not know about the theoretical part. Therefore, they plunged into the world of journalism without adequate knowledge of journalism.” (Dhimam Abror, a curator).

Agus stated that the low understanding of journalism theory is a challenge for the Press Council after the fellowship. The challenge is to invigorate and increase journalists' knowledge in the future through the Journalist Competency Test.

“The Press Council and all journalism stakeholders in Indonesia would evaluate the implementation of the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship. Weaknesses and strengths would become input for the Press Council's work program in the future.”

Third, the media's role as a watchdog is declining. The Fellowship participants cannot produce investigative news, which is a hallmark of the media as a watchdog. The news is only produced to fulfill obligations and get a monthly payment of 1.6 and 3 million rupiahs for journalists and curators. The participants cannot be critical of government policies through the State Budget funds. Moreover, producing investigative news requires hard work, in-depth knowledge, and adequate time.

“From the beginning, the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) rejected this program. The agency also warned about the possibility of a conflict of interest arising in the participants of this Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship,” (Abdul Manan, former AJI Chairman).

AJI admitted that the Fellowship is a dilemma since extraordinary conditions hit the media and journalism during the COVID-19 pandemic. Subsequently, it could not prevent its members

from participating in the fellowship. However, in normal conditions, it would have sued members that received money directly from the state.

“AJI forbids direct money from the state budget. When it comes to collaborating with state institutions, the agency has never dealt with the money but only concentrates on the program.”

Sasmito stated that assistance through the Fellowship could eliminate the critical power of journalists. Furthermore, the necessity to publish news through press releases would eliminate independence, which is their non-negotiable value. Independence from external pressure enables journalism to remain a watchdog and the fourth democracy pillar.

Fourth, motivation to obtain financial incentives. The initial goal of the fellowship was to help journalists struggling financially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants only pursue 11 news per month as determined, with no desire to exceed this target.

The AJI, regional media, and journalists experienced various problems during the pandemic (Sushmita et al., 2021). The company does not pay the workers adequately based on the Provincial Minimum Wage. However, the workers need to survive the pandemic, meaning, they are required to join the fellowship in order to earn an additional 1.6 million rupiah per month. That amount is significant for journalists and media in the regions.

“The refusal of envelopes or transportation costs for coverage as in the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship does not pay attention to the condition of the media and journalists in the region. Transportation money is probably not important in the capital city and big media. However, it is very helpful for those in the regions” (Mohammad Hakim, a participant of the Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship from Surabaya).

Hakim also stated that those who refused state assistance in the fellowship should consider the condition of the media and journalists in the regions. Surviving in normal conditions is tough and becomes worse during the COVID-19 pandemic. The company needs to incur operational costs and journalists’ salaries as the revenue from advertising has decreased drastically.

Two sources from the media analysis circle agreed that giving money from the state to journalists participating in the fellowship was allowed because it was situational. Therefore, the press should exist in a democratic country and is eligible for financial assistance from the state in difficult situations, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

“What needs to be noted is that the press should remain critical of the state/government. It is not permissible to give money to silence the critical attitudes of the press,” (Agustinus Eko Rahardjo).

Ignatius Haryanto, a media analyst, stated that journalists receiving state financial support in critical situations, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, do not violate the values and ethics of journalism. This is because ethics and values change according to the situation and conditions, even though some things are permanent and universal.

5. Discussion

5.1. From crisis journalism to the journalism crisis

The Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship organized by the Press Council and the COVID-19 Task Force is a form of the journalism crisis because it was held during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this case, the data, facts, and information or discourse about the pandemic are conveyed by journalists to the public. The journalism developed is similar to a campaign or promotion of government programs dealing with COVID-19. Therefore, the government is concerned with ensuring that the public receives accurate information about its version of the pandemic.

Crisis journalism does not discuss independence, impartiality, and objectivity or cover both sides. The main thing is that accurate information about the pandemic reaches the public as soon as possible, although journalism does not operate at high speed (Sites, 2007); (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007). The Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship aims to fight hoaxes, misinformation, and disinformation about the pandemic. These are spread mainly through social media (Rahmanti et al., 2021) and fake or unclear mass media (Ferreira & Borges, 2020).

The news produced by journalists from the fellowship is mainly “statement news” issued by public officials at the central and regional levels. Journalists rarely expand the excavation of data, facts, and context. Most of the main informants are officials from the top to the lowest levels.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the movements of journalists are limited to avoid direct physical contact with sources. Also, journalism faced difficulty finding competent sources outside the circle of power (Bernadas & Ilagan, 2020); (Perreault & Perreault, 2021). Therefore, the sole resource persons were official institutions, such as the COVID-19 Handling Task Force through press releases.

The information and communication technology used by journalists did not offer a solution. This is because conducting field observation or participating in the best reporting technique produces quality information (Apuke & Omar, 2021; Butterfield & Levintova, 2011). Also, the COVID-19 pandemic has made news to be a statement from official government institutions, which made journalism to lose its vital role as a public voice carrier (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007).

The quality of the news produced in crisis journalism is low because the journalists prioritize quantity over quality. Moreover, their knowledge of techniques and ethics is minimal because selection is not rigorous. In addition, the journalists only pass the lowest level Journalist Competency Test.

The COVID-19 Handling Task Force is the government's public relations agency, while journalism produced by the fellowship participants is only a press release. The work is monotonous, one-way, and a monopoly of truth. Moreover, the news produced is a government public relations construction.

The COVID-19 pandemic also leads to the journalism crisis. Initially, the crisis was triggered by communication and information technology, especially the internet which resulted in excellent news and over-production (Chen et al., 2020; Molek-Kozakowska, 2018).

Furthermore, the journalism crisis due to the pandemic reduced the quality of news.

A crisis previously hit journalism due to a decline in advertising revenue, migration from traditional to digital media, presence of social media, involvement of the power-political elite, and changes in the audience (Balakrishnan et al., 2021; Weng et al., 2021). This can be identified by the low circulation, decreasing advertising revenues, diffusion of attention, the crisis in authority, and reluctance to question power structures. These factors contribute to a profound crisis in journalism, which includes problems related to time, money, autonomy, and cultural change (Siapera, 2012).

There is no demand for journalists to perform sacred tasks, such as cross-checking with two or three independent sources, seeking alternatives, and checking the sensitivity of the information as well as the reliability of the sources. When the sacred mission of journalism is ignored, it results in distorted public opinion and affects the credibility of the media concerned. Since the media is too spoiled to wait for the press release to be delivered by a government spokesman (Tshabangu & Salawu, 2021), there is no quality news in crisis journalism. During the COVID-19 pandemic, journalism quality needs to be based on expertise, and not on official government statement (Taylor, 2009; Yang et al., 2016).

5.2. The meaning of the fellowship and the myth of the watchdog

The Behavioral Change Journalism Fellowship did not prioritize the importance of independence, objectivity, and impartiality as pillars of journalism. For the fellowship, the important thing is how the information from the government about the pandemic reaches the public quickly and accurately. The fellowship has degraded or eliminated the function of the media as a watchdog or power supervisor. Also, watchdog journalism constantly monitors the activities of power (Şen, 2021). Nael Jebril (2013) stated that the three essential characteristics of watchdog journalism are objective, factual, and critical.

According to Schultz (1998), the watchdog press is not the voice of the other three pillars of democracy. The press stands independently as the fourth pillar because it oversees the activities of others. It is the crucial function of watchdog journalism in the state (Agbo & Chukwuma, 2017). Journalism would lose its function of criticism or control when the press becomes part of the three powers. Moreover, the absolute requirement for the press to be the fourth pillar of democracy is the presence of independent journalists, political autonomy, and accountability (Ranjan & Kashyap, 2014).

Ishadi (2014) asserted that the main reason the media cannot be independent is the collaboration of the government and media owners. Both manipulate various ways to cover up news that would harm their reputation. According to Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel (2007), journalism's first loyalty is to citizens, and not the media owners or power. Therefore, a press that prioritizes other parties castrates its independence. This implies that the press is an independent monitor of power.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Fellowship journalism did not meet the press criteria as a watchdog because it is the mouthpiece and voice of the government. Hence, reviving the media as the watchdog after the pandemic should begin by escaping political structures and economic power (Edgell et al., 2021; Lewkowicz et al., 2022).

5.3. Relations between the media and the state after the COVID-19 pandemic

The assistance of the Fellowship to the media and journalists is an investment that could be charged at any time by the government. Also, the government's debt or kindness to the media and journalists during the pandemic is not different from the assistance during the New Order regime.

This fellowship makes the grip of power on the media more hegemonic in Indonesia. Furthermore, the fate of the media in the future is increasingly pathetic and worrying. Besides being dictated by politicians and conglomerates, it is also controlled by the state through fellowship.

The requests for media assistance to the state are not new in Indonesia. During the New Order regime, some media requested not to be banned (Atmakusumah, 2009) or allowed to republish due to the threat of unemployment and the continuity of information. The public is unaware of an agreement behind the desk, certain hidden agendas, temporary interests, or collusion between the state and the media.

One big problem of the media in Indonesia is the acute and chronic conglomeration (Lim, 2012; Cahyadi, 2011; Nugroho, 2013). This conglomeration requires the concentration of media business, which leads to unfair competition regarding press releases or news content. It also requires encouraging violations of the journalistic codes of conduct. In addition, the journalism that initially served the citizens has turned to benefit conglomerates (Armando, 2016; Haryanto, 2014).

Conglomeration eliminates diversity of ownership and content, thereby making public opinion uniform. The uniformity of opinion, as well as power-politico-power and economy-business by the media's power threatens the freedom of the press and the democratization of the media. In addition, the condition of journalism controlled by the political elite causes an epistemological crisis (Healy, 2003; Piliang, 2010; Iskandar, 2017).

6. Conclusion

The Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship is the journalism crisis presented by the government incidentally due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It aims to financially assist the journalists affected by the media crisis. Also, the journalism crisis contains campaigns and promotions for handling the pandemic. The main center of the crisis is press releases and government policies from the center to the regions.

The Behavioural Change Journalism Fellowship causes a crisis in journalism because the work produced does not reflect the values and principles of journalism, namely independence and impartiality. The monthly provision of incentives or money for journalists and curators is one of the triggers of the crisis. In this context, the COVID-19 pandemic has added to the causes of the crisis. Moreover, this has been exacerbated by the intervention of the political elite, communication and information technology development, the migration of advertising to e-commerce, social media, and changes in community culture.

This fellowship study has theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it contributes to

the development of journalism theory. It also implies the relations of the media, state, democracy, humans, and journalism. There is a difference between the journalism crisis triggered by digitalization, the country's economic problems, and the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, journalism is different when the situation is normal.

At the practical level, this study provides lessons on media management, journalists' coverage, and the government's attitude in helping the media and journalists out of the crisis. Although this research is limited to the COVID-19 pandemic, it could be used as a reference in the future when similar incidents are repeated.

Future studies could use quantitative or qualitative methods to examine all products of fellowship journalism, and also compare fellowships held by the state or government with private institutions and individuals. Moreover, the studies could compare the state assistance and response to the media and journalists in several countries during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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