THE USE OF NEW MEDIA/INTERNET IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN PIDIE JAYA NANGGROE ACHEH DARUSSALAM

Umaimah Wahid

Faculty of Communication Science
Budi Luhur University

E-mail: nyakmah@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Pidie Jaya uses internet as the media to campaign the development programs of the government. It is shown by the preparation of technology infrastructure in this area that is served by the government such as websites, blogs, portals, emails, and Facebook sites. These programs are effectively giving positive impact in the progress of development in Pidie Jaya. This paper uses interpretative paradigms in concluding the facts where both human and natural resources in Pidie Jaya are explored and informed. Theories and concepts are formed by new media (Internet), local government, social and political development, and communication. The new media (Internet) had been playing an important part on the 4 years old district of Pidie Jaya and made this area became one of the best new district not just in Acheh, but also in Indonesia. The challenge is like other areas in Acheh, is to synergize the influence of the new media (Internet) with the traditional values that put meunasah (small mosques) as a specific cultural mass communication place without jeopardizing the goal for development it serves.

Keywords: Internet, social development, communication.

1.0   INTRODUCTION

Pidie Jaya Regency is one of the new districts in the Province of Nanggroe Acheh Darussalam with Meureudu as the capital. This district is formed pursuant to Act No. 07 of 2007 on the establishment of Pidie Jaya regency in Nanggroe Acheh Darussalam (Indonesia State Gazette Year 2007 No. 9, Republic of Indonesia State Gazette Number 4683), on January 2, 2007.

Historically, the State of Meureudu was nominated as the capital of the Kingdom of Acheh. But the kingdom's political conspiracy thwarted it away. When the Kingdom of Acheh collapsed, Meureudu was still a free country. Meureudu Affairs had been formed and recognized since the time of the Kingdom of Acheh. During the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636) Meureudu increased the privilege as an area free of the royal rule. There was only one obligation that Meuredu should do for the royal, that was providing logistical supplies (rice) to the needs of the Kingdom of Acheh.

During the years, Meureudu was then known as an area that has a high tradition of independent character supported by education and good community development system. This self-reliance had impacted the development patterns of Pidie Jaya today.

Today, born from the initiative and spirit of independent thinking, the local government of Pidie Jaya, where Meureudu is a part of it, explores the use of internet as an inexpensive medium that could reach the audience at large and in person. It is an indicator of creativity in building this region as characterized by the provision of websites, portals etc. to introduce Pidie Jaya's strategic development programs to the broader community including investors (Website Pidie Jaya).

Internet is a new media network that creates convergence of media. Internet is a telecommunications infrastructure which enables digital data communication via media web-based technology. "Network of computer networks" or the Internet, deserves to be called "media convergence" or "online media" (John Vivian, 2008). Utilization of new media has been part of the strategy implemented by the Pidie Jaya local government. It began in development planning, implementation, organization and evaluation. The new media in the form of websites is the top choice in introducing Pidie Jaya to the public. The whole community takes advantage of various forms of communication technology, new media for development and also ease of access of information.

Pidie Jaya Regency is located in the northern coast of Acheh. It is part of the Pidie district with a population which possesses a high scientific character compared to other districts in Acheh. This region's character is also influenced by the local conflict. Both traits are inherent in Pidie Jaya's community and can be a force in community development and human resources management which suit accordingly with the community's characteristics. The mass media has an ability to reach a wide audience in an inexpensive and quick manner. It is used by the government to introduce the area of Pidie Jaya widely. Media such as websites, portals, email, etc. facilitate and expedite the development in Pidie Jaya. However, the use of communication technology/new media-based Internet requires special skills and adequate knowledge in Pidie public access, so that technology gap among the community, or between government and society is not created.

Philip Tichenor (1970) in explaining about "knowledge gaps" stated that when the flow of information within a social system increases, the party who is more educated or coming from better economic status will have it easier and faster at absorbing information than those who are less educated and from a lower status. This aspect should be addressed by the government of Pidie Jaya so that citizens have a relatively equal ability in their access to information.

The management of potential areas of Pidie Jaya is fully supported and regulated by the Law on Regional Autonomy and Qanun/syariah in Acheh. Under the autonomous law based on decentralized governance, level 2 government of Pidie Jaya has the right to regulate the area of interest according to regional needs. Discretion is then fitted with the rules set out in the Qanun Acheh. The Qanun regulates local government to implement the right of government according to local capabilities and needs.

1.1 The Vision of Pidie Jaya

Pidie Jaya's vision is as follows: *"Realizing Pidie Jaya as a Peaceful, Prosperous, Just and Islamic Governed District for the People".*

The vision then clarified in Pidie Jaya missions are:

- Build and improve the credibility, capacity management and performance of local government apparatus.
- Actualize the potential for development of Pidie Jaya with the spirit of togetherness.
- Economic empowerment of society through creation of job opportunities in the plantation sector, agriculture and fishing.
- To nurture Islamic values and the formulation of development policies and social development.
- Facilitate the provision of venture capital for economic growth and prosperity of the society.

The motto of Pidie Jaya is "*PEUGAH LAGE BUET, PEUBUET LAGE NA* " which means that Pidie Jaya Regency Society will always do what they swore and stick to their commitments. In order to reach these visions, the new media/Internet plays an important role in it.

1.2 Issues

The focus in this study is to explain, understand and interpret the issues below:

1) How is the new media used by the government in the development of Pidie Jaya Regency?
2) Why is the new media chosen as an alternative in accelerating the development of the district of Pidie Jaya amid conditions for a fully communication technology literate society are not fully met yet?

2.0 PARADIGM AND THEORIES

The research was done to understand the reality and to interpret the meaning of reality. The theories and concepts used in this study are the internet and new media, the local government, social and political development, and communication. Meanwhile, the methodology behind this research is qualitative research, with case study and ethnographic methods used. Research with multilevel analysis employed observations at the level of government sources, public and mass media (new media-internet).

Paradigm is a way/angle of view to understand the complexities of the real world. In this case, Patton stated that the paradigm suggests something important, legitimate and reasonable (Littlejohn, 1995). Paradigm as stated by Guba and Lincoln (1994) help in directing the pattern and methods so that researchers think these studies are appropriate in certain thinking patterns and methods.

On the basis of the above idea, the paradigm/perspective used is an interpretive paradigm (Laurence Neuman, 1997) explained that in view of the interpretive effort to understand and explain reality or social action as a meaningful social action. This paradigm has a flexible definition of a situation which is created by social interaction. The use of interpretive paradigm in this study was an attempt to explain social reality where it tried to understand the interpretation of social reality as the meaning of social construction.

One part of theory and concepts used in this study is the Internet as a new media development community. Shel Holtz (2002) in the book *Introduction to Chapter Public Relations on The Net*, explained that the most powerful instrument in the progress of society development especially in terms of socialization or community development is the internet. The Internet could reach the audience without limit.

Some of the reasons for the utilization of the Internet that can accelerate the development are:

1. The ability to reach the masses at an unlimited target.
2. Ease of use and operate that allows further extension of access for using the internet facility.
3. Speed in designing or delivering a message and advanced technology that enable successful broadcast by its high speed broadband technology.
4. Compression and streaming of multi-media technology provides easier access and fun for the users.

In the development and construction of society like Pidie Jaya, new media tools like the internet is a necessity so that development can be carried out more quickly with access to information done easier and more widespread. Harold Adams Innis explained that communications technology such as internet is at the core of the technology that can lead to among others:

1. Existing communication media has influenced the forms of social organization.
2. Transform human consciousness with his social life.

In connection with the enormity of the power of the Internet as a channel of new information, Marshall McLuhan said that communications technology has affected the organization of life and even human thought. Humans discover a new world with the development of communication technology especially after electrical technology toward the world united by the power cord (global village).

The utilization of the media is not just for entertainment, but also serves many other beneficial uses. Some of the motives of media distribution are:

a. to fulfill the public's need of information.
b. to highlight the influence of the country's governance.
c. to disseminate the country's culture.
d. to offer entertainment.
e. to provide an outlet for artistic expression.

All types of profit-oriented media has to be able to withstand the demanding needs of the management of media that appear. This is because the Internet is a medium that is resulted in the integration/change of a variety of other media and the implications for changes in how to consume, to access, process and transform information.

Another concept used is the empowerment of communities (Community Development) which means community development activities aimed to increase public access to achieve an improved socio-economic-cultural state. It is done so that the communities in which it is covered will become more independent with better quality of life and better welfare. Community Development program has three main characters that are based on community (community based), local resources (local resource-based) and continuous (sustainable). Two goals to be achieved are the target capacity of communities and targeted welfare. Those mean the capacity should be achieved through the efforts of community empowerment (empowerment) so that community members can participate in the production process or supporting institutions in the production process, equality (equity) by not distinguishing the status and expertise, safety (security), sustainability (sustainability) and cooperation (cooperation), all of which run simultaneously (in the Tips and Strategies Public Relations Campaign, 2005).

Community development today inevitably involves the utilization of the communication technology. Today it has become an integral part of that is impossible to avoid in human civilization. Internet as a new media network creates social change and political culture in the community. The community has co-opted the media and it is now almost impossible to avoid the integration process which involves the development of community media. It begins from the utilization of all sectors and levels of society, including at the level of local government such as Pidie Jaya. Technology is a solution for community development undertaken by the government with the aim of accelerating socialization, the transformation of information and adding value to the local economy.

The role of technology in community development is closely related to cultural issues. Culture is the product of a whole series of social processes that is run by human beings in society with their activities. It means that culture is the tangible result of a social process that runs along with the human community. Selo Soemardjan and Soelaiman Soemardi stated that culture is all the work, taste, and human creativity.

Kluckhom, in Universal Categories of Culture (Koentjaraningrat, 1979 in Bungin, 53) and Bronislaw Malinowski (Bungin, 54) states that the universal elements of culture are:

a. Technology systems equipment and supplies in human life (clothing, housing, tools families, weapons, tools of production and transport, etc.).
b. Livelihood and economic systems (agriculture, animal husbandry, production systems, distribution systems, and others).
c. Social system (kinship system, political organizations, legal system and the system of marriage).
d. Language (spoken and written).

e. Arts (art, sound art, art movement and so on).
f. Knowledge system.
g. Religion (belief system).
h. Defense systems and power.
i. Norms systems and rules.
j. Education system.
k. Health system and.
l. Defense system (force).

Completing the concept of socio-culture as stated above is politics. Politics is who gets what, when, and how; the authoritative allocation of values; power; influence; actions oriented towards the maintenance and/or extension of other actions (Dan Nimmo, 1978). Politics is an activity that involves many aspects such as political actors, political system, the community/people, media and campaigns that transform audiences and followers of the mission, vision, issues and political programs. The mass media is a channel that is able to transform messages to reach the audience or followers/community in a very broad way, as well as capable in constructing the image of a candidate who will be selected by the community (Brian McNair, 1995).

Roger Everett in his book Communication Yearbook (2001), the article *Mass Media Communication Research at The Down of 21st Century* by Alan M. Rubin and Paul M. Haridakis, stating that the relationship between the media with the political system is integrated in the history, development and operation of political media.

Politics and studies on political communication are supplemented by the concept of autonomy. In a centralistic system, many regional interests are understood and defined by the central government. Relations system has resulted in centralization of authority that tends to elicit excessive and autocracy in central government, meaning that local governments have almost no authority to consider what is best for the region.

The implementation of regional autonomy stipulated in Law No. 32 of 2004 on Regional Government. UU/32/2004 Article 2 states:

1. Unitary Republic of Indonesia is divided into areas of the province and cities divided into districts, each of which has a local government.
2. Local governments as paragraph (1) administer and manage their own affairs according to the principle of autonomy and assistance.
3. Local government, as paragraph (2) running a wide-ranging autonomy, except in matters of government into the affairs of government, with the aim of improving public welfare, public services, and regional competitiveness.

When referring to the above legislation, the implementation of regional autonomy which aims to develop the area, the welfare of society is the authority of local government. Local governments are mobilizing all possible local capabilities, in order to achieve development goals mandated by the legislation.

The shift of authority and organization of the various tasks of government is putting local government (city and county government at the spearhead of the implementation of autonomy) in a delicate position. In addition to the limited financial capacity and human resources, local government is also faced with an increasingly dynamic business environment as a result of waves of economic globalization. Currents of globalization are almost unstoppable, spreading to every corner of the area through vehicle travel, transport and telecommunications, which is getting cheaper and convenient for users. The globalization process has opened up opportunities for economic actors to develop their business, both of which have been running for this or any type of new business. As a result, the government is also faced with the demands of education in order to provide an adequate policy response to this increasingly open information regime and doing a shift in the approach to the education sector in the region.

3.0   METHODOLOGY

Research methodology used was qualitative research with interpretive perspectives. The method of research was case study. Case study is a research strategy that refers to the forms of questions: why or how. In the research process, researchers are not too controlling of the events studied. The focus is more on the contemporary phenomena within the context of life. Robert K. Yin in his book Case Study: Design and Methods (1989) stated that the case study research strategy is used to examine contemporary events relating to the behavior that cannot be manipulated.

The units of analysis are: 1) Local Government and Bappeda Pidie Jaya as the manager of websites, portals and other new media, 2) community and *meunasah,* 3) activists and community leaders. In the data collection process, the observation method and in-depth interviews were employed.

4.0   DATA ANALYSIS

Regional Development of Pidie Jaya has successfully developed the regional capacity of Pidie Jaya into an area with good early development. During the process, new media has become an important tool of information in community development. Internet network (website and other new media) has been the main instrument in introducing potential sources of Pidie Jaya to the public. The Pidie Jaya government uses new media to facilitate the construction and development, both in community and infrastructure development.

With a website-based on GIS (Geospatial Information System), it is easier for the stakeholders to see firsthand the development of Pidie Jaya. All information such as road facilities, lowland rice fields, plantations, statistics of any kind, public transportation etc can be easily accessed. This facilitates Pidie Jaya district government in fulfilling its responsibility to the community.

Internet is also used as a medium to facilitate communication by using e-mail correspondence. Hence, when there is new information such as invitation from agencies or foreign organizations such as invitations for training can be directly sent via email to Bappeda. The use of communication technology specifically the internet by local governments, enables the second level to manage their areas independently.

Unlike some other regions in general, Pidie Jaya Government put the management of internet media on Revenue Agency, and not on the public relation division. The reason is the development of Pidie Jaya in the early stages require accelerated development in economy and society development.

One of the programs conducted by Bappeda Pidie Jaya is collaboration with BAKOSURTANAL (*Agency for Survey and Mapping Coordination Agency*) to build a spatial information system for Pidie Jaya Regency. Compilation of this information system is a form of appreciation by the government for Pidie Jaya's understanding of the importance of the role of spatial data in realizing the planning and implementation of regional development.

On highlighting the importance of new media / internet in the region, Bappeda Pidie Jaya has held an event called the "*Launch and Dissemination of the Potential of Regional Spatial Information Systems*". Bappeda head, Ir. Razali Adami, MP stated, "The system presents Spatial Information Information that can support effective decision making in land use, planning and management, asset inventory, natural resources, environment, transportation, urban facilities and other public services". He also said that this year's presentation of information will focus on cocoa plantations. This information system is capable of presenting information on land used for cocoa plantations in Pidie Jaya in spatial (map) form (website Pidie Jaya).

On the other hand, the Department of Transportation, Communication, Information and Telematics Pidie Jaya also held technical guidance and Free Open Source Software (FOSS) event in Oproom Setdakab Pidie Jaya. The event was attended by 30 participants from various SKPD in Pidie Jaya which will create a human resource that is able to master the science of installation and operation of Linux.

Some programs that gained advantage by the use of internet are:

a. Outreach programs

Outreach program is done to the community with the website (www.pidiejayakab.go.id) acting as an information provider of all the programs under the spectrums of politic, social, religion and community development. On this site the public can gain insight on the development programs running in the district of Pidie Jaya. This website also makes available a variety of public documents that can be downloaded by the public such as basic data of Pidie Jaya regency, Kab. Pidie Jaya in Figures, GDP Pidie Jaya, etc.

b. Information and other natural resources

Through *www.gis.pidiejayakab.go.id*, people could get information about roads, wide rice fields, plantations, ponds, and points schools available in Pidie Jaya. For the purposes of correspondence with various parties , Pidie Jaya (Bappeda) has also created and published its own e-mail account for the public: Bappedapijay@gmail.com (Bappeda Pidie Jaya, 19 September 2011).

It should be noted in this context that the use of new media is mostly used by certain circles of societies such as the government officers, educated, activist, media and some community leaders. It indicates that the use of website in Pidie Jaya is inadequate and has not created a cultural movement yet.

4.1   The Response to The Utilization of New Media

The response of the public on the utilization of the new media is generally welcoming (interview with Nazir, Bappeda Pidie Jaya, 20 September 2011). However, most of the users of this new media are those that are related directly to the government, such as academicians, activists or and government officers themselves. In this case, a thorough socialization for all layers of society on the use of new media / internet is a challenge that must be addressed by the local government of Pidie Jaya including the provision of infra-structure. If all layers of the society can already take advantage of the new media/internet, those who need a public document could directly download it without having to come to Bappeda, especially those who are located far from Pidie Jaya,. Through www.pidiejayakab.go.id, the public can find out various things such as: Basic Data of Pidie Jaya, Pidie Jaya HDI, GDP Pidie Jaya, Jaya RKPK Pidie, Pidie Jaya in Figures, Profile Pidie Jaya, Pidie Jaya Development Plan, and KUA PPAS Pidie Jaya, and Laws.

Utilization of the Internet also allows the public to know the various government programs in social and political aspects such as:

> a. Economic Affairs
> b. Education
> c. Health Sector and
> d. Politics

Internet also informs in detail about the Local Development Priority Programme Social Protection Sector such as: 1. Empowerment of Women and Child Protection, 2. Social and 3. Population and Civil. The contents also included Regional Development Priority Program Housing and Public Facilities such as: 1. Public Works, 2. Housing and Regional Development Priority Program of Tourism and Culture such as Tourism and Culture.

4.2   Future Challenges

Based on this short research on using internet/new media in community development of Pidie Jaya, it could be claimed that development in the age of 4 years has been running well. The government has done the planning and implementation on development for community with a very comprehensive plan. However, the community development with internet-based was still confined to the elites such as governments, students and community leaders (activists).Even the provision of information as accessible on the website has provided complete information about the data, development plans and information which could be accessed by the public openly and without limits.

Utilization of the Internet in providing a variety of potential economic, social, cultural and society has at least brought a change in the society of Pidie Jaya. Development has been widely utilized and maximized by the public. Therefore, the government must begin to develop the construction of public access to information to the whole area.

Internet utilization can be enhanced with the following remarks:

1. Socialization and the provision of infra-structure of the new media/ internet should be upgraded to increase the benefits for the whole society as well as to speed up the development and participation of potential users.
2. Utilizing *meunasah* which is historically a center of information and communications for people of Acheh through the establishment of Community Information Network and preparing the infrastructure for internet.

This is deemed useful as the functions meunasah in Acheh are numerous as stated below:

a. Place of worship/congregational prayer
b. Da'wah and discussion
c. Deliberation/consensus
d. Place to settle disputes/obtain peace
e. Development of artistic creations
f. Guidance and youth shelters
g. Forum to sharpen skill/sports
h. Center for the capital/village government (Badruzzaman, 2002: 3-7)

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