Does Generation X Intend to Use E-Wallet in Daily Transactions?
Felix ; Wella
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Motivation of Entrepreneurs for Service Innovation
Shunichiro Morishita
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Stereotyped Emo Kids: A literature review
Proud Arunrangsiwed ; Ratjit Arunrangsiwed
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Advances in Industrial Robotics: From Industry 3.0 Automation to Industry 4.0 Collaboration
Khalid Hasan Tantawi ; Alexandr Sokolov ; Omar Tantawi
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4

Thailand’s Learning Management Development for 21st Century Students Based on Singapore’s Framework
Suparada Prapawong
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

An Empirical Study to Evaluate Structural Similarity for Source Code Translation
Xulu Yao ; Moi Hoon Yap ; Yanlong Zhang
Design and Simulation of Reliable Standard Cell Library for INDEP Approach
Vijay Kumar Sharma
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
Abstract

(294 Kb)

Dengue Fever Outbreak Prediction in Surabaya using A Geographically Weighted Regression
Siana Halim ; Tanti Octavia ; Felecia ; Andreas Handojo
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
Abstract

(752 Kb)

Impact of Correlation-based Feature Selection on Photovoltaic Power Prediction
Jung-Hyok Kwon ; Sang-Woo Lee ; Sol-Bee Lee ; Eui-Jik Kim
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4
Abstract

(1557 Kb)

An Analysis of Log Management Practices to reduce IT Operational Costs Using Big Data Analytics
Narongsak Sukma ; Wasin Srisawat ; Prush Sa-nga-ngam ; Adisorn Leelasantitham
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
Abstract

(435 Kb)

Development of Electronics Armor Shirt for the Shooting Practices of Law Enforcement Using Arduino Board
A. Moungkhaodaeng ; S. Noimanee ; S. Rodampom ; K. Noimanee
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4
Abstract

(687 Kb)
Choophong Lairat; Paphaphat Amornpatarakit; Jakkrit Kunthong; Wilaiwan Viputhanupong; Nutkitti Thavornsettawat; Wimolsiri Pridasawas
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

- Abstract
- (305 Kb)

The Meaning of Sharing Information in Citizen Journalism
Ido Prijana Hadi; Alexander Setiawan; Desi Yoanita; Agusly Irawan Aritonang
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

- Abstract
- (223 Kb)

Recommendation Analysis of Candidates for Student Union Leadership Based on Data Mining Techniques
Chiagoziem C. Ukwuoma; Chen Bo; Chibueze D. Ukwuoma; Reuben Nanenu
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

- Abstract
- (173 Kb)

Performance Analysis of Students Based on Data Mining Techniques: A Literature Review
Chiagoziem C. Ukwuoma; Chen Bo; Ijeoma A. Chikwendu; Emmanuel Bondzie-Selby
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

- Abstract
- (190 Kb)

A Survey on Data Stream Mining Towards the Internet of Things Application
Saifun Nahar; Ting Zhong; Happy N. Monday; Michael O. Mills; Grace U. Nneji; Hassan S. Abubakar
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

- Abstract
- (225 Kb)

Value Added of Software Business for runners group using factor analysis
Factors Influencing Supplier Selection for Vendor Managed Inventory Adoption in Hospitals
Sovandara Voeng; Duangpun Kritchanchai
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Deep Learning Review on Drivers Drowsiness Detection
Chiagoziem C. Ukwuoma; Chen Bo
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Mitigating Smart Primary User Emulation Attackers in Cognitive Radio Networks
Amar Taggu; Ningrinla Marchang
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Optimizing the Segment Value of Welch Algorithm by Data Fitting Technique for Double Pulse Welding Signal
Smach Kim; Eakkachai Warinsiriruk
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4

An Security Analysis of Ext Filesystem metadata
Yeonghun Shin; Hyungchan Kim; Wooyeon Jo; Taeshik Shon
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
Analyzing Data Mining and Its Application to Smart Business
Saifun Nahar; Ting Zhong; Happy N. Monday; Grace U. Nneji; Michael O. Mills; Hassan S. Abubakar
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Abstract

(291 Kb)

Practical Anti-Counterfeit Medicine Management System Based on Blockchain Technology
Hoai Luan Pham; Thi Hong Tran; Yasuhiko Nakashima
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Abstract

(947 Kb)

Blockchain-based Integrity Protection System for Cloud Storage
Pratima Sharma; Rajni Jindal; Malaya Dutta Borah
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Abstract

(343 Kb)

Blockchain Art and Blockchain Facilitated Art Economy: Two Ways in Which Art and Blockchain Collide
Marko Suvajdzic; Dragana Stojanovic; Joel Appelbaum
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Abstract

(801 Kb)

An Ergonomic Chair with Internet of Thing Technology using SVM
Benyapa Prueksanusak; Punawatchara Rujivipatand; Konlakorn Wongpatikaseree
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Abstract

(699 Kb)

Effect of Big Data in Accounting: Case Studies in Thailand
Manirath Wongsim; Pongsatorn Tantrabundit; Sommai Khantong; Charuay Savithi
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
- Abstract
- (385 Kb)

Pros and Cons Analysis of a Flying-wing and a Canard Conceptions for a Special Purpose UAV in High Altitude
Tomas Jurak; Josef Bajer; Adolf Jilek; Martin Bares; Karel Silinger; Tomas Sedlacek
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
- Abstract
- (541 Kb)

Health Information System for Home Visits
Anuchit Nirapai; Jittarporn Somchue; Pongsiri Chaikot; Nipa Kimsungnoen; Manas Sangworasil; Ratchanee Saosuwan; Anantasak Wongkamhang; Nipa Kimsungnoen
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4
- Abstract
- (665 Kb)

Drug-Use Tracking System
Anantasak Wongkamhang; Thanakrit Hengwanich; Singchai Uamnoi; Surawut Tonsri; Manas Sangworasil; Ratchanee Saosuwan; Anuchit Nirapai
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4
- Abstract
- (380 Kb)

Investigating the Next Level Digital Divide in Indonesia
Kasmad Ariansyah; Vidyantina Heppy Anandhita; Diana Sari
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
- Abstract
- (103 Kb)

Knowledge Management and Transfer to the Future’s World Largest Project in Space: NASA’s Mission Roadmap to Mars in 2033
Masaaki Komatsu; Sanit Teawchim
Principles of Ethical Consideration in Safety Critical Software Systems Development
Emanuel S. Grant
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
Abstract
(310 Kb)

Factor Influencing Labor Productivity On-Site Construction in Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Samrith Teab; Pisit Chanvarasuth
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
Abstract
(95 Kb)

Ergodic Capacity and Outage Probability of Maximal-ratio Combining for Distributed Antenna System with General Configurations
Kanoksiri Rassamee; Kampol Woradit
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
Abstract
(110 Kb)

TIMES-iCON 2019 Program and Abstracts
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 102
Abstract
(280 Kb)

TIMES-iCON 2019 Author Index
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 103 - 108
(47 Kb)

Front cover
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): c1 - c2
(260 Kb)
A Model of Cooperative Education Competency Expectation of Modern Management and Information Technology
Raslapat Suteeca
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4
Abstract
(88 Kb)

Development of Succulent Species Prediction System by Deep Learning Technique
Raslapat Suteeca; Pasit Chalernkhawn; Khawsroung Pakdee
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
Abstract
(547 Kb)

Participatory Heuristic Evaluations of Jeliot Mobile: End-users evaluating usability of their mlearning application
Muhammad Mustafa Hassan; Markku Tukiainen; Adnan N. Qureshi
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 6
Abstract
(271 Kb)

Museum Visitor Activity Tracker using Indoor Positioning System
Andreas Handojo; Resmana Lim; Tanti Octavia; Jonathan Kurnia Anggita
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
Abstract
(515 Kb)

The User Interface and The Implementation of Mobile apps for Donors in Natural Disaster in East Java, Indonesia
Djoni Haryadi Setiabudi; I Gede A. Widyadana
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 6
Abstract
(507 Kb)
Factors influencing the intentions of customer with regard to the use of E-WOM behavior to promote the use of E-commerce websites
Aungkana Jattamart; Achaporn Kwangsawad; Kannika Boonkasem
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Hydrocarbon Compounds Learning Application
Silvia Rostianingsih; Andreas Handojo; Alexander Setiawan; Karla Septriana Usmana
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4

Combination of Candlestick Pattern and Stochastic to Detect Trend Reversal in Forex Market
Agustinus Noertjahyana; Agustinus Noertjahyana; Zuraida Abal Abas; Zeratul Izzah Mohd Yusoh
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4

Cultural Tourism Web Service via Augmented Reality for Public Relations in Prachuapkhirikhan Province
Paingruthai Nusawat; Achaporn Kwangsawad; Noppadol Saikatikorn
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Integrate Digital Twin to Exist Production System for Industry 4.0
Chaiwat Assawaarayakul; Wasin Srisawat; Smitti Darakorn Na Ayuthaya; Somkiat Wattanasirichaigoon
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Communication Process Management with in Virtual Work for Startup Entrepreneur
Warat Saksilapachai; Theeraya Mayakul; Somkiat Wattanasirichaigoon; Supaporn Kiattisin
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4
• Abstract
• (255 Kb)

Selection of Logistics Service Provider for e-Commerce Using AHP and TOPSIS: A Case Study of SMEs in Thailand
Mooktida Nuengphasuk; Taweesak Samanchuen
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
• Abstract
• (184 Kb)

The Performance Evaluation of a Website using Automated Evaluation Tools
Achaporn Kwangsawad; Aungkana Jattamart; Paingruthai Nusawat
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
• Abstract
• (543 Kb)

Server Scalability Using Kubernetes
Lily Puspa Dewi; Agustinus Noertjahyana; Henry Novianus Palit; Kezia Yedutun
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4
• Abstract
• (533 Kb)

An Analytical Data Monetization Value Chain for Educational Process Improvement under Thai University Central Admission System
Sotarat Thammaboosadee; Sorawee Yanta
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 6
• Abstract
• (429 Kb)

A Review of Wireless Power Transfer for Electric Vehicles: Technologies and Standards
Taweesak Samanchuen; Kamon Jirasereeamornkul; Chainarin Ekkaravarodome; Thamvarit Singhavilai
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5
The best business model for improving the competitiveness of local convenience store in Thailand
Aumparin Chantayarkul; Supaporn Kiattisin; Smitti Darakorn Na Ayuthaya
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Factors Influencing Motivation of Subscribe to the Beauty YouTube Channel
Thavinee Vilamas; Smitti Darakorn Na Ayuthaya; Wasin Srisawat
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Fake news and online disinformation: a perspectives of Thai government officials
Prush Sa-ngam; Theeraya Mayakul; Wasin Srisawat; Supaporn Kiattisin
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4

A Comparison of National Enterprise Architecture and e-Government Perspectives
Theeraya Mayakul; Prush Sa-Nga-Ngam; Wasin Srisawat; Supaporn Kiattisin
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 6

A Perspective of Thai Government information Service
Wasin Srisawat; Theeraya Mayakul; Prush Sa-Nga-Ngam; Supaporn Kiattisin
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4
Communicating Digital Spillover and Implications to Thailand’s Digital Economy Policy
Phakaphon Chaengchenvate ; Supaporn Kiattisin ; Prush Sa-nga-ngam
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 5

Abstract

Vessel Silhouette Identification Based on Edge Detection
Buncha Chuaysi ; Supaporn Kiattisin
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): 1 - 4

Abstract

TIMES-iCON 2019 Technical Programs
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): i - iv

(TIMES-iCON 2019 Frontmatter]
Publication Year: 2019, Page(s): i - xi

(138 Kb)
The Meaning of Sharing Information in Citizen Journalism

Ido Prijana Hadi 1st
Department of Communication Science
Petra Christian University
Surabaya, Indonesia
ido@petra.ac.id

Alexander Setiawan 2nd
Department of Informatics Engineering
Petra Christian University
Surabaya, Indonesia
alexander@petra.ac.id

Desi Yoanita 3rd
Department of Communication Science
Petra Christian University
Surabaya, Indonesia
dy-nita@petra.ac.id

Agusly Irawan Arintonang 4th
Department of Communication Science
Petra Christian University
Surabaya, Indonesia
agusly@petra.ac.id

Abstract—The practice of citizen journalism in an era of freedom and ease of access of information makes citizens as active users of digital media technology. Various mainstream media in Indonesia (pasangmata.detik.com and kompasiana.com) provide websites and citizen journalistic applications to make space for audiences to talk, share information and stories. This study aims to found out how the meaning of sharing information from application media users as a citizen journalistic media. The paradigm of research uses interpretive with the phenomenology method. The data collection technique uses focus group discussion which focuses on the experiences of various actors as research subjects who were directly involved as contributors to information in citizen journalistic media.

The results of the study indicate that citizens are interested in sharing information. It usually gives an understanding of something. The information they send was useful for the public interest, such as information about the latest traffic conditions. Besides that, being a contributor helps others in their own way. They gather facts from what they saw themselves, according to the process of producing their own knowledge. Moreover, the interesting thing of being a contributor is being able to give a digital footprint for old age. They were proud to be witnesses of events that dissolve in the event itself. The implication of learning about journalism is that events reported from the perspective of citizens are a form of authentic journalism. Citizen involvement in the editorial space through a smartphone application creates an open and democratic society.

Keywords—Citizen Journalism, Sharing Information, Pasangmata; Kompasiana.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the life of a democratic citizen, the practice of citizen journalism is a demand for citizens’ freedom to access and disseminate information according to their needs and openness. Meanwhile, not all mainstream media can meet the information needs according to public tastes and public expectations. Urban residents are accustomed to finding alternative information channels in meeting information needs following their interests. Citizen journalism practices in any technology platform are always faced with challenges in maintaining the accuracy and ethics of information. The existence of communication technology in the hands of citizens makes them contributors for information. Citizens involved in journalistic practices as news producers as well as gatekeepers. They assess the feasibility of news and information before being published. In contrast to the mainstream media that has a system and filter of a strict news production process in the newsroom.

The mainstream media in Indonesia also facilitates citizen journalism channels. You name it, Kompas newspaper with Kompasiana; Metro TV has a Metro Wide Shot program; Detik.com has Pasangmata. Residents can contribute in the news process. Rosen, Merritt and Austin (1997) mention the practice of citizen journalism is a community activity that plays an active role in the process of gathering, reporting, analyzing moreover disseminating information and news.

In line with the development of communication technology, citizen journalism practices are available in various platforms, such as application-based. The reason for conducting the pasangmata media research (https://pasangmata.detik.com/) and Kompasiana (kompasiana.com) is because these two citizen journalism media are quite popular in Indonesia. Pasangmata.detik.com is a citizen media conceptualized article writing based on facts in the form of news or information on events that occur in the community moreover delivered directly by the public through online platforms (web and mobile apps).

Pasangmata.detik.com accommodates and disseminates text, photos moreover videos from members who have access to Pasangmata.detik.com. Everyone can report situations that occur by writing articles that contain incident reports that can be uploaded by members who have been registered as "Spies" (designation for members of Pasangmata.detik.com).

Citizens are free to express, express, convey various ideas, opinions, comments, or responses. Moreover, Pasangmata claims as of March 2018 has had 16,000 registered accounts in the form of emails and phone numbers. The contributors from citizens who send news in text, photos or videos total between 300-400 per day. While, which successfully published about 150-200, the rest according to the editorial does not meet the requirements of news. All information published must be accountable and not violate the norms, journalistic ethics, and applicable law in Indonesia. Our tagline is "Be an Information Spy".
Meanwhile, Kompasiana is a Kompas journalist blog platform, developed by Kompas since October 22, 2008. The journalist's blog is then transformed into a citizen media. Everyone can proclaim events, express opinions and ideas, moreover channel aspirations in the form of writing, pictures or audio and video recordings. The name Kompasiana itself was taken from the column name filled by the Founder of Daily Kompas, PK Ojong. Kompasiana is a news channel and public opinion (Citizen News and Opinion Channel). Based on statistical data as of December 2016, its members are 327,000 people, 500 article submissions per day, 260 visitors per day and 7.7 million visitors per month.

Previous relevant research related to editorial policy in some media has been done. Such as research in print media conducted by Nurhasanah who examines Media Indonesia Editorial Policy[1]. Moreover, other research on application-based media by Benazir, titled Detikcom News Site Editorial Policy on Twitter social networking[2]. Meanwhile, research related to citizen journalism ever done by Yani with the title of Annida Online Editorial Policy In the channel Citizen Journalism[3].

Based on this background, this research focuses on how the meaning of sharing information among news contributors in citizen journalism media. The benefits of this research are expected to contribute to journalistic studies related to citizen participation in the process of producing moreover distributing news through smartphone technology. The real practice of citizen news contributors is interesting to explore based on their personal experiences.

II. CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

A. Social Phenomenology

Humans as social beings have a social awareness of the world of their daily lives. Humans are required to understand each other, including their social actions. The main idea of phenomenology is that people will actively interpret their experiences by giving meaning to what they discern. However, interpretation is an active process of giving meaning to something that is observed, such as a text, an action, or a situation, all of which can be called experience. Consequently, a message or action can mean many things, meaning cannot be simply "discovered".

Phenomenology focuses on a general description of what participants have such as the participant's experience of the phenomenon. Neuman emphasized an interpretive approach such as phenomenology is the study of meaningful social action, not just the external or observable behavior of people[4]. Social actions are actions that people attach to subjective meanings. Social actions are related to goals or intentions. Researchers must consider the reasons of social actors and the context of social action. The researcher must take into account the social actor's reasons and the social context of action. The description consists of what their experience is moreover how they experienced it.

Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) published that phenomenology is a branch of philosophy. The philosophy of phenomenology then has implications for the thinking of the Social Sciences and Humanism, including Communication[5]. Alfred Schutz, then developed as a theory, as well as a more operational approach, moreover for Social Sciences research including Communication research[6].

B. Citizen Journalism and Accuracy

Citizen journalism is an informative production process that involves ordinary citizens, not from a professional journalist. This journalistic product contributes directly to the public, by way of publishing information owned through the existing media. Mark Glazer as quoted by Nugraha (2012) on his website at Media shift defines citizen journalism as, "everyone, without the special skills and training as well as professional journalists, with their simple communication technology, can do coverage, upload, moreover distribute news through online media"[7].

According to Rich, the concept of citizen journalism involves the reader and audience in covering and reporting the news, called citizen journalism, participatory journalism, or user-generated content[8]. This participation intends to provide independent, reliable, accurate, wide-ranging and relevant information that a democracy requires.

News can be trusted if it has accuracy. Inaccurate reporting will lose their reputation and trust and neglect their audience. Stovall emphasized that accuracy can be seen from the completeness of the elements of who, what, when, where, why and how[9]. In addition, another issue of citizen journalism is journalistic ethics and has not been professionally trained in data verification. Consequently, the truth is doubtful. To reduce this problem, everything reported must be factual, verification is actual significant to avoid inaccurate data.

On the other hand, citizen journalism is also a kind of effort from media organizations to increase their interaction with audiences. The contributors are commonly called citizen journalists, because they are not staff members of media organizations, even though they write blogs whose basis is a media site.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

The tradition of phenomenological studies is an interpretive paradigm that seeks to explain the meaning of the life experiences of some people about a concept or phenomenon, including their own self-concept or outlook in life. Creswell states "a phenomenological study describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon"[10]. Conversely, Littlejohn asserted, "the phenomenology makes the actual lived experience the basic data of reality" [11]. Meanwhile, Neuman stressed that interpretive researchers share the feelings and interpretations of the people he or she studies and sees things through their eyes[4]. That is how the principals construct their lives and the meaning they give to that life. Researchers seek to understand deeply the practice of citizen journalism from contributors or users of applications, especially in sharing information and publishing news.

The technique of collecting data conducted focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with ten contributors from various occupational professions. Among them, online drivers, content writers, social media managers, entrepreneurs, user-generated content coordinators, superintendent content, private employees, bloggers, managers of Pasangmata, and managers of Kompasiana. Discussion of contributors with researchers regarding their
daily meaningful social actions as contributors to citizen journalism

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS
A. Being a Contributor Helps Others in Their Own Way

The contributors to citizen journalism generally have reasons why they post information. They want to share information with others in their own way. They share their experiences about many things, so that they benefit others. As one of the active contributors said since 2015, Wahyuwin Sofyan (47 years) an online driver based in Jakarta said, I want to be a part of the community, where I can help them in my way.

Initially, he was interested in becoming a contributor because of the hobby of photographing while working as an online driver. He photographed interesting events on the highway. Like when he saw the bus drop off all of its passengers in the middle of the road, he took a picture, ordinarily it sent it to the editor of Pasangmata.detik.com. He targeted that in one day there would be at least 10 news stories.

In 2018, he recounted one extraordinary case. His relatives in Medan, North Sumatra asked for help if, in his village, there was a broken wooden bridge. This wooden bridge has long been a means of connecting fluent fellow residents to other villages. At that time, Wahyuwin was hesitant to bring up the news on Pasangmata.detik.com, then he contacted his relatives to send photos of the bridge and he would help send it to the editor of Pasangmata.detik.com. Unexpectedly, the approval editor received photos of the damaged wooden bridge for publication. That means it is definitely read by countless people. Consequently, the local government felt cheated, moreover it became viral discussed by various residents. One week after posting, finally the damaged wooden bridge repaired.

Another contributor is Deden Purwanto (29 years) who lives in East Jakarta. He is a private employee who has been a contributor to Pasangmata.detik.com from 2016 until now. He said that initially he involved as a contributor because of the hobby of photographing daily traffic jams. Unique and interesting events become smartphone camera shots.

Another confession from Agung Handoyo (45 years) who works as an entrepreneur, lives in South Tangerang, since 2014 he has been a Kompasianer (Kompasiana blog writer). He said that as a Kompasiana blog writer is different from journalists. He had been interested in writing family humanities, and enjoyed the results of his writing. As a blogger he writes more about family life, dealing with marriages, marital relationships, having children and child relationships with parents. So, he wrote practical tips on how to manage a family. Ordinarily, he wrote on a blog about his family's own life experiences.

Meanwhile, Nurhayati (46 years) living in Jakarta, was a full-time blogger and has been a writer at Kompasiana since October 9, 2009. In 2016 she received the title Kompasianer of the Year (2016). She recounted initially being a Kompasiana writer because she interested in trying to write. The longer, the more find your own happiness when writing in Kompasiana. Her hobby is watching MotoGP, both on TV and directly to locations in Sepang, Malaysia.

Nurhayati wrote in Kompasiana about her experience watching MotoGP. Topics such as how to watch MotoGP in Sepang, how to buy tickets, how to get a hotel that is close to the circuit. Her experience watching MotoGP, she wrote in Kompasiana. Topics include how to watch MotoGP in Sepang, how to buy tickets, how to get a hotel that is close to the circuit. Following her explanation, "I wrote about the cheapest hotel in Bukit Bintang, Sepang Malaysia. Means of transportation to the circuit." Moreover, she also wrote on location using her smartphone about the uniqueness of the MotoGP audience in the Tribune, including how to enjoy watching MotoGP.

Nurhayati told the researchers, "it's a pleasure that my writing really helped a lot of people". When she was in the Sepang Circuit, the audience often poked her. The audience said, "Is this Ms. Nurhayati? Then she answered, who are you. I came here because I read your writing". According to her, the implementation of MotoGP in Sepang Malaysia was in October. Moreover, in early October several people asked her about tickets, transportation or accommodation. So, she even wrote twice a day about MotoGP, consequently she has her own column in Kompasiana. In the end, Nurhayati has several MotoGP journalist acquaintances. In 2018, she obtained an ID Card to enter the back room of the dock.

B. Becoming a Contributor Giving Digital Footprint to Old Age

One of the contributors Deden Purwanto (29 years) a private employee who lived in East Jakarta, stated that the motivation to write in Kompasiana because he likes traveling with the backpacker community. He wrote his experience of being a traveler, so that it became an inspiration for others. In 2014, he became a backpacker best writer. He said that I originally wrote to inspire others moreover give a digital footprint in old age.

He tells not only writing about backpackers. But when he worked in the drug rehabilitation unit as a facility manager handling various things about health check-ups, he continued to write to provide informative information in Kompasiana to ward off hoax news about rehabilitation drug sufferer. Ordinarily, information about the number of rooms, rehabilitation programs carried out, and so on.

Some interesting sides based on each other's experiences, it turns out the writings of the contributors are extraordinary. They are accustomed to reporting events. In fact, the results of Deden's testimonials from his writings were included in the blog competition as a form of learning to improve writing skills. On the other hand, an obstacle to the recognition of citizen journalist contributors is that they do not have the legality (ID Card Press) for recognition. Because when they report and write events in the field, they often asked about their legality from what media. So for security, they write in a balanced and impartial manner so that no one is offended.

Wahyuwin Sofyan (47 years) in 2018 had personal experience when reporting in the field. He saw, photographed and videotaped a policeman on Jalan Jendral Sudirman Jakarta who stopped and lifted a motorcycle selling coffee sellers on the sidewalk. So, when he was absorbed in videotaping the incident, he was approached by the police and then his smartphone was taken away. He was interrogated by the police, asked who, from what media, did he have a press card or not. As he said, "that's the obstacle; when in the field want to cover a story where the news is interesting, consequently I
cannot do anything, because I do not have legality as an identity”.

Consequently, the interesting information that they have reported, moreover has news value is not dared to be published, rather than risky. Or they reported it secretly from the police. They need their identity as media contributors, even as ordinary citizens. On the other hand, mainstream media organizations do not issue identities to ordinary citizens who participate in the reporting process. Including the regulations of the press law, it has not yet established that ordinary citizens obtain a press card identity.

The contributors are generally from various occupational professions. But when they see an interesting event on the highway, they write, take photos and videos and then send them to Pasangmata.detik.com. The important thing in citizen journalism is the act of citizens reporting events to be useful for others. To share information with the citizens themselves, to give understanding to others. Citizens are joyful, ordinarily proud to be witnesses to events, let alone share the latest information. Below is the process of sharing information based on research findings.

Sharing information through citizens is a hallmark of citizen journalism. Moreover, the mainstream media does not necessarily meet the expectations of information that is essentially needed and is close to citizens. So, in the conception of citizen journalism, the involvement of citizens in the process of reporting news is precise valuable by mentioning which local residents are involved. So, when the news is made by residents from the same area, the level of public trust in the news will be greater.

Pasangmata.detik.com and Kompasia.com are examples in Indonesia that they have grown into alternative media besides the mainstream media. Information is not the monopoly of a professional reporter, ordinary citizens can make news according to their own version, determining what is important to them from their perceptions. The media landscape in Indonesia is becoming more participatory, consequently there has been a shift in the consumption patterns of news and information. Media companies also include participatory sites and applications in their business portfolios[12]. As Biocca stressed that active citizens can select media content, adjust their interests to the media, media selection, involvement in developing issues, moreover the resilience of media influence is in these five characteristics[13].

Essentially journalism records an event. But in the digital age, the recording can be a comparison trail for a new recording. That is the reality of journalism. As added Wael quoted by Mathari (2018) is the right of everyone to know more over the role to preach can be done by anyone. The mainstream media might be able to manipulate writing, but photos and video recordings can tell what really happened[14].

Citizen involvement in utilizing citizen media will provide critical learning, foster awareness moreover a high sense of belonging to the environment, so a group of citizens will be able to continue the sustainability of the group. True happiness as a journalist for citizen journalism is when their work is useful to others. It makes citizen journalism meaningful for contributors to fellow citizens. In the information age that continues to develop citizen journalism can be an important forum in maintaining the identity of citizens.

Freedom of speech in virtual space still demands good ethics and morals from every communication actor. Therefore, the demand for equality of rights and duties must be balanced. Citizens can write anything as facts for dissemination and sharing of information including opinion writing. On the other hand, democratic readers can also judge, criticize, and comment on the writing. Nevertheless, mainstream media collaboration that facilitates moreover channels citizen participation will determine how citizen journalism develops.

V. DISCUSSION

Citizen journalism is a citizen activity that uses media channels to cover, write and report events for fellow citizens. Basically, citizen journalism very segmented because of the specific events that are published, ordinarily the intended audience is also specific. Everyone has the same opportunity, they can report events moreover write opinions. They are free to argue as long as they are in trustworthy order, ethics and morals without editor censorship. Democratically, citizens can write, others can judge, criticize and respond to the writing. A smart reader can immediately judge whether the writing is of quality and not.

VI. CONCLUSION

This phenomenology study found that the contributors to citizen journalism meant that sharing information helped others in their own way. They stated that they wanted to be a part of the community, which could directly contribute to inspiring others. Moreover, the contributors to citizen journalism from various occupational professions state that
being a contributor can give their digital footprint for old age. So, they feel recognized as useful citizens.

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VIII. REFERENCES


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We suggest that you use a text box to insert a graphic (which is ideally a 300 dpi TIFF or EPS file, with all fonts embedded) because, in an MSW document, this method is somewhat more stable than directly inserting a picture.

To have non-visible rules on your frame, use the MSWord “Format” pull-down menu, select Text Box > Colors and Lines to choose No Fill and No Line.