

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

**The framing of an Indonesian leader: *The Jakarta Post* and the
Jakarta floods**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Management
in
Communication Management
at Massey University, Wellington,
New Zealand.

Betti Indira Sari Siagian

2014

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how *The Jakarta Post* frames Joko Widodo through the issue of annual Jakarta floods. Chapter *Background* describes the conditions of Jakarta through its socio-political situation, including the discussion of Jakarta annual floods. Here, this study presents the fact that Jakarta has a long history of flood recurrences, which means, that Jakarta *is* a flood-prone city.

This study gathers its sample (86 stories) from a one-year news coverage starting from the date that marked the beginning of the campaign for Governor of Jakarta in early March 2012 until the period that marked the end of the Jakarta floods (end of February 2013). The position of governor is important in Indonesia primarily because Indonesia had just implemented decentralisation in 2001, and the direct election of Jakarta governor was firstly implemented in 2007. Thus, Joko Widodo was the second Jakarta governor that won the direct election. In addition, Joko Widodo was a candidate from outside Jakarta, which means he had never experienced the Jakarta floods. However, this study finds that *The Jakarta Post* deliberately changed its way of reporting Jakarta flood issues after Joko Widodo won the 2012 Jakarta governor election.

Using content analysis, this study finds that although Joko Widodo had held office for only a couple of months when the Jakarta floods occurred, Joko Widodo was framed positively. Thirty six out of 86 stories assessed him positively, compared to 12 negative comments. In relation to the leadership characteristic, which is also one of the research questions in this study, the Chapter *Findings* outlines that most of the stories used in this research reflect Joko Widodo as a caring leader. Furthermore, in the Chapter *Discussion*, through the framing analysis that operationalises the sociological concept, this study argues that *The Jakarta Post* framed Joko Widodo positively by depoliticising the Jakarta flood issues. Finally, the Conclusion chapter outlines the need for the Indonesian media and/or journalists to apply the concept of critical thinking in their writings to contribute to the process of democratisation in Indonesia.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this thesis is not only the proof of helps from many people in Wellington and Jakarta, formally and informally, but also the marks of the struggle of an international student who wanted to make the most of her study useful for the possibility of change for the people in her country, no matter how small it might be. First of all, I want to thank Lord Jesus for His extremely brilliant sense of humor that keeps showing and 'nagging' me to believe that love still exists. Special thanks go to my supervisors, Dr. F. Elizabeth Gray and Dr. Kane Hopkins who are very patient to a non-English speaking Master student - they always assured me that I can complete my thesis regardless my difficulties in expressing my arguments, and my 'stubbornness' in keeping on looking for new references. Without their affirmation of my capability to complete my thesis, I would not get a three months extension of my study. I was also very lucky to join the class of political communication that introduced me to the references that I have been looking for since I was notified that I got a scholarship to study in Communication Department at MASSEY University. For this, I would like to thank Dr. Sean Phelan, also for being very patient in listening to and answering my questions on neoliberalism and neoliberalisation. The Learning Centre team, especially Greg, Lois and Penny, have been very helpful for me, and the Library staffs have been the good friends for me, especially those who work in night shift.

In reflecting my study and life for two years in Wellington, a very special thank you goes to Barmen, who has been taking care of me, especially when I was very sick for one month in October 2013. I would like to thank friends in Wesley Methodist church, especially Philo & Norbert, Vivien, Philip & Heather, Daphne, Bruce, Melina, Lothar, Allen, Erica, Bill, Shirley, Tapiwa, and Grace & Kone, for keep on encouraging me when I was down and out with my study. Among them, special thank goes to Philippa who has been helping me with editing without time limitation (you're my hero!). Some friends in the first postgraduate year also have been a support in sharing and discussing my thesis, especially Yeqi, Tracy, Claire, Tiwi, Sampath, Alicia and Angie.

Friends and families in Jakarta have been the source of my strength too during working on my thesis. A very special thank goes to my long-time best friend, Diah Pitaloka, who in the middle of a vicious and tight campaign to win one of national MP seats (and she won!), took time to make a distant call several times to update me on the current Indonesian political situation and remind me of the importance of the role of political economy, including in analysing media works. I also would like to thank my lecturers in DRIYARKARA – School of Philosophy (*STFD*), Jakarta: Father Prof. Dr. J. Sudarminta, SJ, Father Dr. B. Herry Priyono, SJ, Father Prof. Dr. M. Sastrapratedja, SJ, Father Dr. S.P. Lili Tjahjadi, SJ, and Dr. Karlina Supelli for encouraging me to be confident to leave Jakarta to take the opportunity to study overseas, and reminding me of the importance of getting involved in the core of the local culture in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Finally, I would like to thank my family: Petti (& Mamber), Beni (& Melfa), Tommy (& Lina), and Yeni for calling me when the earthquake struck. Special thanks go to my Mom, who visited me when I started my thesis just to see my condition, and as usual, loves her youngest child enough to let her go (Arundhati Roy, 1997).

This study has been possible because of the financial support of New Zealand ASEAN Scholars (NZAS) Award. This study is for those who are labelled as squatters, live along the riverbanks in Jakarta and thus, are blamed as the *sole* cause of the annual Jakarta floods, and also for the Jakarta street children who have to wait for a couple of days to receive flood relief just because they are counted as ‘non official’ citizens.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.....	1
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.0 HISTORY OF JAKARTA.....	2
2.1 JAKARTA’S GEOGRAPHIC CONDITION	2
2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS.....	5
2.2.1 SQUATTERS.....	6
3.0 FLOODS IN JAKARTA.....	8
4.0 THE 2012 JAKARTA GOVERNOR ELECTION.....	12
5.0 <i>THE JAKARTA POST</i> NEWSPAPER.....	15
5.1 POLITICAL LEANINGS OF <i>THE JAKARTA POST</i>	16
6.0 CONCLUSION.....	17
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	19
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	19
1.1 THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN POLITICAL COMMUNICATION.....	19
1.2 THE PRESS IN INDONESIA FROM NEW ORDER TO REFORM ERA.....	21
2.0 THEORIES OF AGENDA-SETTING AND FRAMING.....	22
2.1 DEFINITION OF AGENDA-SETTING THEORY.....	22
2.2 LEVELS OF AGENDA-SETTING.....	23
2.2.1 BASIC AGENDA-SETTING.....	24
2.2.2 ATTRIBUTE AGENDA-SETTING.....	24

2.3	FRAMING.....	26
2.4	AGENDA-SETTING AND FRAMING IN THE INDONESIAN CONTEXT.....	28
3.0	INDONESIAN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP.....	31
4.0	INFLUENCE OF ISLAM IN INDONESIAN NEWS REPORTING.....	36
5.0	CONCLUSION.....	38
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.....		40
1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	40
2.0	CONTENT ANALYSIS.....	41
2.1	DEFINITION OF CONTENT ANALYSIS.....	41
2.2	WHY CONTENT ANALYSIS.....	44
2.3	LIMITATIONS OF CONTENT ANALYSIS.....	46
2.4	HOW CONTENT ANALYSIS IS USED IN THIS STUDY.....	47
2.4.1	SELECTION OF MEDIA AND SAMPLE.....	47
2.4.1.1	SAMPLING MEDIA FORMS.....	48
2.4.1.2	SAMPLE DATES.....	49
2.4.1.3	UNIT OF ANALYSIS.....	49
2.4.2	CONSTRUCTING A CODING SCHEME.....	50
2.4.2.1	STORY-BASED CATEGORY.....	50
2.4.2.2	NEWS SUBJECTS AND SOURCES.....	51
2.4.3	KEY CODING DECISIONS.....	53
2.4.4	TESTING CODING SCHEME.....	53
3.0	CONCLUSION.....	54
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS.....		55
1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	55
2.0	FOCUSES OF THE STORIES.....	56
2.1	CATEGORISATION OF THE STORIES CLASSIFIED AS 'OTHER'.....	57
3.0	DISTRIBUTION OF THE WRITERS.....	59
4.0	ASPECTS OF FLOODS COVERED IN THE STORIES.....	61

4.1	FREQUENCIES OF THE FLOOD ISSUES COVERED.....	62
4.2	FLOOD ISSUES COVERED BASED ON THE FOCUSES AND WINDOWS OF TIME OF THE STORIES.....	65
5.0	CHANGES ARTICULATED IN THE STORIES.....	71
5.1	NUMBERS OF MENTIONS OF CHANGES ARTICULATED IN THE STORIES.....	71
5.1.1	CHANGES CLASSIFIED AS ‘OTHER’	72
5.2	NUMBERS OF PEOPLE WHO MENTIONED CHANGE.....	74
5.2.1	GROUPS WHO MENTIONED CHANGE AND ARE CLASSIFIED AS ‘OTHER’	76
6.0	FRAMING.....	77
6.1	COVERAGE OF JOKO WIDODO IN RELATION TO THE FLOOD.....	77
6.2	THE MOST POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE QUOTES ON JOKO WIDODO.....	78
6.3	COMPARISON OF JOKO WIDODO TO OTHER POLITICIANS.....	80
6.3.1	POLITICIANS MENTIONED.....	83
6.3.2	POLITICIANS QUOTED	85
7.0	LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS IDENTIFIED.....	86
7.1	LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS OF JOKO WIDODO.....	87
8.0	CONCLUSION.....	88
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION.....		90
1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	90
2.0	<i>THE JAKARTA POST</i> COVERAGE IS MERELY DEVELOPING ‘A LIST OF JOKO WIDODO’S ACTIONS’	90
3.0	FRAMING OF JOKO WIDODO THROUGH THE ISSUE OF FLOODS.....	97
3.1	MACRO LEVEL INFLUENCE OF ANALYSIS.....	97
3.1.1	PUTTING THE BLAME ON SQUATTERS.....	101
3.2	MESO LEVEL INFLUENCE OF ANALYSIS.....	103
3.3	MICRO LEVEL INFLUENCE OF ANALYSIS.....	108
4.0	LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS OF JOKO WIDODO.....	112
5.0	SUMMARY.....	116
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION.....		117

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	117
2.0	CONCLUSIONS.....	118
3.0	IMPLICATIONS.....	121
4.0	FURTHER RESEARCH.....	123
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	126
	APPENDIX A.....	136

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Focuses of the stories.....	56
Table 2: Categorisation of stories classified as ‘Other’	57
Table 3: Distribution of the writers of the stories.....	59
Table 4: Stories written by the academics and expert.....	60
Table 5: Frequencies of flood issues covered.....	63
Table 6: Flood issues covered in campaign-focused stories.....	66
Table 7: Flood issues covered after the election.....	66
Table 8: Flood issues covered before the flood event.....	67
Table 9: Flood issues covered in flood-focused stories.....	68
Table 10: Flood issues covered after the flood event.....	69
Table 11: Desired changes articulated in the stories.....	72
Table 12: Kinds of change classified as ‘other’	73
Table 13: Frequencies of the groups or people that articulated change.....	75
Table 14: People who articulated change and classified as ‘other’.....	76
Table 18: Stories’ assessment on Joko Widodo in relation to flood.....	78
Table 19: Sources of positive comments on Joko Widodo in relation to flood.....	79
Table 20: Sources of negative comments.....	80
Table 21: Politicians mentioned/quoted in the stories.....	81
Table 22: Politicians classified as ‘other’	82
Table 23: Politicians appearing to a moderate extent.....	84
Table 24: Politicians who dominate a story.....	84
Table 25: Politicians cited and/or quoted in a story.....	85
Table 26: Politicians not cited and/or quoted.....	86
Table 27: Leadership characteristic articulated when Joko Widodo was covered positively compared to other politicians.....	87

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Map of DKI Jakarta.....	4
Figure 2: Map of River Flowing Areas in Jakarta and other areas surround it.....	5
Figure 3: Flooded Areas in 1996, 2002, and 2007.....	11
Figure 4: Javanese Paternalistic Leadership.....	35