



A Discourse Network Analysis: How are Freelancers in Indonesia Portrayed?

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Abstract

This research focuses on the freelancer policy published in the electronic daily, Kompas, from 2003 to 2022 with a Discourse Network Analysis approach. This form of research includes qualitative research. The technique used for data collection is library research. The data analyzed is secondary data, namely in the form of online news articles on the Kompas.com portal. There are 98 pro and con statements. Data analysis using DNA Analyzer. It was obtained that the economic value of pro statements was 28 statements and there were 10 counter statements. In the autonomy value, there are 27 pro statements and 4 counter statements. The value of work-life balance has 18 pro statements and 1 counter statement. There are 4 social values for pro statements and 3 counter statements. There are 6 pro statement development values and 1 counter statement, then visualized using the Visone application. The research results show that there are six value propositions for daily freelancers, there is only one value that is not discussed, namely hedonic value. Regarding economic value, the focus of the discussion focuses on holiday allowances for freelancers. Meanwhile, the autonomy value discussed is freelancers who have no bargaining value. In terms of social values, discussions on the recruitment of freelancers still experience many obstacles, thus triggering conflict. Next, the balance value discusses daily freelancers who are forced to work outside company working hours. Lastly, the development value discusses the large number of daily freelancers in Indonesia.

Keywords: Discourse network analysis, freelancer, value proposition, electronic news, pro and con statement

Introduction

In the current era of development, company dynamics are becoming increasingly rapid. Dwind (2021) stated that in line with the demands of VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) or massive changes, the uncertainty of the future, and the increasingly complex and confusing world of business, requires companies to follow these changes. If the company does not change, it will be eroded by the change itself.

Changes to the company are inevitable. This is what makes companies need to issue policies related to several aspects. Situmorang (2021) reports based on McKinsey (2020) that there are four factors that companies need to boost, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic. The four determining aspects are Human Resources (HR), structure, process and technology. HR is more focused on the psychological side. Restructuring of company goals needs to be carried out, which has an impact on the priority of responsibilities and tasks previously carried out. Lastly, the use and implementation of technology for each employee. It cannot be denied, HR has a major role in company change. So, it is hoped that the company will be able to withstand existing demands. HR, who are employees, always need to be involved in the ever-present changes. Employees in a company are not only permanent employees, but also quite a few use the services of temporary employees. Non-permanent employees themselves are divided into honorary employees and freelancers.

Central Bureau of Statistics (or BPS) describes honorary or contract employees as those who work for a monthly salary on a temporary basis, regardless of the number of days worked. Meanwhile, freelancers are those who receive wages on a daily basis. This is regulated in Article 10 of Government Regulation no. 35 of 2021, which explains that it is no different from contract employees. These employees only carry out certain work whose type and nature or activities are not fixed. This change can be in terms of time and volume of work.

In implementing organizational development, employees have a very important role and position as actors and goals of the organization. In accordance with the role and position of the workforce, employment development is needed to improve the quality of the workforce and their participation in development as well as increasing the protection of employees and their families in accordance with human dignity.

One of the employees who played a role in implementing the development form was a daily freelancer. Where, they have an important role in the labor market because they can fill temporary job vacancies, provide flexibility for companies, and provide employment opportunities to individuals. If the definition of freelancers is in terms of employment status, it can be said that freelancers are also known as daily employees, namely people who are doing work at an institution or at a company, be it a government or private company, receiving a salary based on their time each day. Daily employee wages are paid every day, every one or two weeks or every month, depending on the agreement or regulations of the company concerned.

Every employee who works always has the goal of earning wages to meet their living needs. Sometimes the results received are not what should be received according to the provisions of the laws and regulations. Employment cases in Indonesia are very diverse. One

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of the groups of workers who have not received maximum legal protection is freelancers. Freelancers are spread throughout Indonesia.

Sundalangi (2018) stated that despite the uncertainty of the job, freelancers provide several benefits. Flexibility of time and place is the strongest reason for someone to choose to work as a freelancer. Meanwhile, the losses they obtain include: irregular work frequency and no health insurance coverage, the possibility of being cheated, and sometimes the work requires more time than a normal employee, namely 8 hours a day.

Interestingly, currently the millennial generation prefers to work as freelancers, including students (Firdasanti et al, 2021). Rights and obligations are not a collection or rules, but are the authority given to someone by law. Basically, there is no difference for all forms of protection of rights and obligations for employers in Indonesia. The most common fields of work that use freelancers are usually in the field of sales (marketing, sales, SPG/SPB, etc.), music, writing, computer programming, web design, graphic design, photography, translating, editing, etc. Freelancing practices vary widely. Some require clients to have a written contract, while others perform work based on an oral agreement, which may be imposed by the nature of the work. Some freelancers may ask for an estimate of the results of their work and payment in advance from their clients, as a form of idea of the results they will get when carrying out the responsibilities assigned to them later.

Pay for freelance work also varies. Freelancers may charge clients on a per day, per hour, or on a per project basis. Rather than a flat rate or fee, some freelancers have adopted a “value-based pricing” method based on the perceived value of what they produce for clients. With its own changes, payment arrangements can be upfront, percentage upfront, or upon completion of the job/contract. For more complex projects, the contract may set a payment schedule based on project milestones or deliverables that the freelancer has completed. Payment methods for freelancers vary depending on the initial agreement with the client. Some are calculated per hour, per day, per page, or per project being worked on. Payment systems also vary. It can be paid in full up front, 50 percent down payment or paid until the project is completed. Because the results of their work are related to intellectual property rights, their work is often not calculated in money, but also in the amount of benefits created. A daily freelancer does not have a definite guarantee regarding monthly salary, work insurance or pension because the work is not binding. However, a freelancer can also get several benefits that a permanent employee cannot.

Therefore, a good name is one of the important assets of a daily freelancer. If you look at the various benefits above, of course the existence of freelancers can be an opportunity in the business world in general and for companies/entrepreneurs in particular. This means that their presence, which has recently been felt, can fill gaps in company recruitment patterns which tend to be rigid or formal, or help with company-specific tasks that require certain expertise or skills. The freelance profession in Indonesia is actually not something new. Since ancient times, many Indonesians have done part-time work, ranging from the informal sector such as parking attendants or freelance construction workers to the formal sector such as sworn translators, consultants, ghost writers, and others. In the past, the freelance profession in Indonesia was looked down upon because it was considered lacking and did not provide

sufficient social security such as insurance or pensions. However, along with the development of technology, especially the internet and social media, freelancers are slowly starting to gain recognition and more and more people are starting to change professions to become freelancers. Moreover, the results of research by Anggriani and Saputra (2019) show that the productivity of contract employees is better than that of permanent employees. The same thing also happens to daily newspapers.

Until now there is no data regarding the number of freelancers in Indonesia from official government sources. However, according to the world's largest freelance data portal, Freelancer.com, there were approximately 550,000 freelancers from Indonesia registered as members on the site as of October 2015. In total, Freelancer.com has more than 16 million members registered as freelancers. Even though freelancers from Indonesia are still relatively small, their growth is the fastest considering that in 2012, the number of members from Indonesia was only around 60,000 users.

The increasing spread of freelancers has become an interesting phenomenon to study in more depth. Therefore, researchers are trying to photograph freelancers in Indonesia through pieces of news that have been documented since the policy of using freelancers first emerged. In order to make it easier to explain, Freelancer Value Proposition theory/FVP (Nawaz et al., 2020) is used as the basis for analyzing using discourse networks.

Literature Review

Discourse network analysis (DNA) is a combination of social network analysis and qualitative content analysis to produce a complex network. DNA has been applied to various policy processes and to show how actors' policies are related at the discursive level, so as to link coordination where they can be applied in the application of a social network approach (Leifeld, 2020). DNA was developed by Professor Philip Leifeld. DNA itself was initially the beginning of its development to understand a problem related to explanations from government science and public science.

This research utilizes Discourse Network Analyzer (DNAnalyzer) software. This software was developed by Philip Leifeld. Siagian (2020) explains that there are five basic types of discourse networks that can be produced:

1. Affiliate Networks, are an intermediary in related programs in online business. The intermediary bridges between the web owner and the merchandise that offers (open program). In addition, this term also refers to a group of related companies that sometimes offer compatible or related products. Sometimes, companies usually do not operate in the same industry (Nasrudin, 2019).
2. Actor Congruence Networks. Pratama (in Eriyanto, 2014) says that a network is a collection or actor (including people, organizations and countries) who have connections and relationships with other actors in a type or pattern of relationships or certain relationships.
3. Conflict Networks. According to Monge (in Eriyanto, 2014) the communication process does not involve attributes and this relationship does not belong to an individual. This is a

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characteristic of two or more individuals taken simultaneously. So, it is said to be communication if the structure is built based on relationships, not just conflicts between the actors in the discourse. Communication plays an important role in implementing conflict management in organizations. Communication also has an informative role, a regulative role, a persuasive role and an integrative role in managing conflict in organizations (Andersson & Zbirenko, 2014).

4. Concept Congruence Networks. Each discourse in various media can form a series of networks that are connected to one another (Fisher et al., 2013).
5. Dynamic Discourse Networks. Discourse networks as a new methodology for the study of policy debates. This approach can be used to measure empirical discourse both statically and longitudinally in accordance with network policies (Leifeld & Haunss, 2012).

The combination of category-based content analysis and network analysis provides the basis for DNA empiricism. The initial step taken is to annotate the data text using a coding scheme adapted to network analysis. Text sources can be newspaper articles or other types of documents (Warfield, 2015).

Furthermore, Warfield (2015) stated that there is a denotational statement in each document. This statement is the basic unit of analysis. A statement consists of 4 variables, but this definition can be adjusted to suit research or theoretical objectives. The first is the actor, perpetrator, person or organization that makes the statement. Most theories, secondly, related to policy-making processes and networks assume that organizations are the main actors of policy processes. The third is a statement. A declaration that refers to the meaning of true or false. The final fourth time of statement. This is used to measure the timing of the policy.

Research Method

This type of research was carried out using a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. According to Moleong (2017: 6) qualitative research is research that intends to understand phenomena about what the research subject experiences such as behavior, perception, motivation, actions and other actions holistically and by means of descriptions in the form of words and language, on a special natural context by utilizing various natural methods. Qualitative research according to Hendryadi, et. al, (2019:218) is a naturalistic investigation process that seeks a deep understanding of natural social phenomena.

The research object studied in this study is freelancers, which are used as keywords to search for news articles related to freelancers. Data collection has been limited since the implementation of the policy on the use of freelancers, namely from 21 June 2004 to 11 November 2022. The media chosen are national media whose credibility and trustworthiness has been recognized by stakeholders. This research chose Kompas as the national media used as a reference for collecting data. The data used is secondary data.

According to Sugiyono (2017: 137), secondary data is data that does not directly provide data to researchers, for example researchers have to go through other people or search through documents. Data was obtained using literature studies conducted on many books,

journals, articles and obtained based on notes related to research. Researchers use bold news stories that contain statements related to the research topic. Next, the unit of analysis will be analyzed using thematic units.

Kriyantono (2020) describes a thematic unit as a form of news association whose calculations are based on the theme of the event that occurred. The unit of analysis in this research is a word or phrase in the news that represents the research concept. Based on the concept that can be explained in the operationalization of the concept, the author reduces the concept to the most dominant content category of each actor's statement into two categories. Pro, namely a statement that is accepted or approved. Meanwhile, contras are statements or assertions that are not accepted. Categorization is possible to emerge through grouping actor statements. At this stage, researchers used the DNAnalyzer software.

After that, researchers combined online news analysis and social network analysis to produce a network, namely using DNAnalyzer and Vizione. This will create a visualization of the interactions that occur between actors and between organizations. This visualization will make it easier for researchers to sort out the pros and cons of a statement. Apart from that, it will also be seen which actors and organizations have the greatest influence. So, it will be seen the tendencies of answers from actors and organizations based on the discourse collected.

Results

After the statements of the actors on the online news channel Kompas were collected, it appears that the FVP indicator is dominated by economic values and the value of autonomy (see table 1), where there are several organizations that have the most arguments and are considered to have influence. In total, there are 102 statements consisting of pro (support) and con (not support) statements. The following are the statements. There are 28 statements that are pro and 10 statements that are against economic value. Meanwhile, regarding the value of autonomy, there are 27 pro (supportive) statements and 4 contra statements. Next, the values discussed are the value of work-life balance, with 18 pro (supportive) statements and 1 con statement. Social Values contain 4 pro (supportive) statements and 3 contra statements. Development value, there are 6 pro statements and 1 con statement.

Table 1. Number of statements collected based on FVP

Economic v.		Autonomy v.		Social v.		Development v.		WLB v.		Hedonistic v.	
Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
28	10	27	4	4	3	6	1	18	1	0	0

Researchers will discuss the following indicators for FPV:

1. *Economic value.* Chadwick (2017) explains that economic value is a measure of the benefits provided by goods or services to economic agents, what is the maximum amount of money that a particular actor is willing and able to pay for goods or services, within the scope of human resources, related to what the individual receives for what they have done

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using the resources they have. This can be in the form of payments, salaries, allowances, or other forms. The conclusion regarding economic value that has the most opinions is the actor, namely Ida Fauziah and from the organizational side, the Minister of Manpower who believes that the Holiday Allowance (or THR) applies to all employees including freelancers.

2. *Autonomy value.* In the context of autonomy, a freelancer has the power to choose existing projects that are considered appropriate to his expertise, including the freedom to organize and determine his schedule. From here, they can organize and motivate themselves. So, this is described as full power within him to do work according to his wishes. Garnett (2014) explains that the value of autonomy originates from the psychological idea of oneself as an autonomous agent, namely oneself. However, the results of the analysis show that a freelancer in Indonesia has no bargaining power in selecting and sorting jobs. Force must be taken to get a job, even as a freelancer. This is as stated by Juanda, et al. (2019), that a situation where all primary needs are becoming more expensive day by day.
3. *Social value.* Nawaz et. al (2020) imagines that freelance work is work outside of the main job and this is seen from the social side as being considered an individual's social advantage. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, because freelance work is the main job, recruitment is carried out which has the potential to cause conflict. Based on all the pro statements above, a common thread can be drawn, namely that freelancers are related to social values, discussing the large number of Indonesians who work as freelancers, automation of employees' labor rights remaining the same in the event of layoffs, pension plan (or *Jaminan Hari Tua*) socialization policy. Based on all the counter statements, it can be concluded that freelancers on social values discuss recruitment policies taken by companies which can cause divisions between workers. This is as said by Tampongangoy, et al. (2019), that the recruitment process is screening candidates for daily freelancers to be placed in the right job (right man on right job). Effective selection can be done only when there is effective matching.
4. *Development value.* Freelancing in Indonesia is the main job which is often given low wages (even though it refers to the job creation law). Based on all the pro statements above, the common thread can be drawn, namely that freelancers are related to the value of work-life balance, discussing work accident protection and the job creation law.
5. *Work life balance value.* The development value discusses the capacity for freelancers only, the demand for freelancers to become on-demand workers, increasing skills and reducing workers after the Covid-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, based on the counter statement above, it can be concluded that freelancers with development values discuss better educational progress, development and infrastructure in the Jakarta and surrounding areas (or Jabodetabek). This is different outside Jabodetabek which applies a conventional employment system to freelancers. This is as stated by Anggrian and Sumarlin (2016). Since ancient times, many Indonesians have done this, such as becoming translators, consultants, writers and so on. It's just that the freelance profession in Indonesia was still looked down upon because it was less prestigious and did not provide sufficient social security such as insurance or pensions. However, along with the development of technology, especially the internet and social media, the freelance profession is now

starting to gain recognition and more and more companies need freelancer services, especially small, family-based companies.

6. Hedonistic value. This value does not appear in the analysis results because none of the statements discuss hedonistic value. This is as stated by Arifianto & Valentino (2022), where the hedonistic value of freelancers themselves is described as satisfaction, namely when they receive a new job (for the first time) and a high salary.

Discussion

Of the six indicators, only hedonic value was not found in the article. This is because there is no specific research that describes hedonistic behavior in freelancers (especially freelancer who work less than 40 hours per week). However, Kamilah et al. (2020) found that hedonistic behavior occurs on Instagram celebrities (in fact freelancers too) and their followers. Description of hedonistic values, by Nawaz et al (2020), is more related to intrinsic motivation factors such as joy, pleasure, enjoyment and passion. Besides that, extrinsic factors can also help increase hedonistic values such as service quality, better platform layout and overall service experience. So it can be suggested that further research is needed regarding the hedonic values that exist/appear in freelancers in Indonesia. Although it cannot be denied, the potential is there.

Instead, it is the economic value that is most discussed. This is understandable because freelance work in Indonesia is described as main work (Arifianto & Vallentino, 2022) and is supported by labor law. With the policy of limiting working time for freelancers, the wages they receive are always below the City Minimum Wage and have the potential to suffer (financially) in navigating life in the city. In the future, it is necessary to reorganize the policy regarding the use of freelancers as 'employees' of a company. It's good to go back to the FVP theory, where freelancing is a side or additional job.

Conclusion

The conclusion from this research is that the condition of freelancers in Indonesia is always faced with economic value due to regulations. The career choice of being a freelancer in Indonesia is the main job, despite the difficulty of finding work. Consequently, freelancers do not have the power to choose jobs. Thus, the main values that are most discussed are economic and autonomy values. This research is only limited to photographing the condition of freelancers in Indonesia through the news. It cannot be denied that there is some real information that was not captured by researchers. So, it is recommended that future research use primary data, which can evaluate this research.

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