



Indonesian Islamic Populism and Global Framing: A Content Analysis of the 212 Demonstration by the Greatpowers' News Agencies

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Abstract

Brexit phenomenon and Donald Trump's victory in the U.S. presidential election in 2016 simultaneously sent a signal of the populism movement spreading throughout the world. In Indonesia indeed, Jakarta gubernatorial election stimulated the heat of Indonesian political atmosphere after the Qur'an blasphemy scandal of the incumbent Governor 'Ahok' that eventually triggered the biggest demonstration in Indonesian Islamic history namely the 212 Demonstration. This research aims to describe the news coverage of the 212 Demonstration from news agencies belong to the Greatpowers, such as VOA, Sputnik, Xinhua, Deutsche Welle, and BBC by using the documentation method and content analysis. This research found that the Greatpowers' news agencies framed the 212 Demonstration as an extraordinary event and political strategy of anti-government politicians to gain a short-term benefit. Surprisingly, there was not any Greatpower's media that framed the Islamic populism event of the 212 Demonstration as purely religious movement.

Keywords: *islamic populism, extraordinary event, political strategy, political threat, religious movement*

Paper type: *Research paper*

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INTRODUCTION

The world stage of international politics changed tremendously with the triumph of Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton in the US presidential election and the withdrawal of British from the European Union (Brexit) through a referendum on June 23, 2016. These two political phenomena were happening at the same year and sent a clear signal of a new political wave known as populism. The Encyclopedia Britannica defines populism as political movement that (claims to) champions the common person by favorable contrast with perceived elite or establishment. In more recent usage and contemporary understanding, populism is usually associated with an authoritarian form of politics revolves around a charismatic leader who appeals to embody the will of the people in order to consolidate his own power (Munro, 2020). Cas Mudde and Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser, authors of the book entitled "Populism: A Very Short Introduction," explained that populism is an ideology like fascism that has a holistic view of how political life, economy and society are organized as a whole. Populism invites to overthrow political establishments, although it often does not mention what should be replaced. This movement is often associated with right or left-wing ideologies, such as socialism and nationalism. Populism is a divisive movement, not a unifier. They divide society into two opposing homogeneous groups, namely: a clean society and a corrupt elite. This movement claimed to represent "the will of the people"(Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2017).

Populism became a political buzzword of the 21st century. In many places, populism movement had flourished in overthrowing the political establishment by gaining significant public support. International public had shocked by the British government defeat from the Article 50 European Constitution referendum. It formerly prompted Brexit mandate from the British people. International public also astonished to see the victory of Donald Trump as Republican conservative figure over Hillary Clinton who was an elite politician in the President Barack Husein Obama office. Many political analysts could not explain sufficiently these two political phenomena using single theory unless explained them through the lens of populism.

In Indonesia, populism as a political phenomenon took its place and discussed publicly in seminars, talks, and mass media reports since public noise after controversial speech of Jakarta Governor, Basuki Tjahaya Purnama or Ahok, in Kepulauan Seribu, which was considered to have insulted Islam. The public noise was amplified by many political actors and religious movements, then turned into an organized movement under the formal name: National Movement for Guarding Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (*Gerakan Nasional Pengawal Fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia* or GNPf-MUI). This organized political movement claimed to be the representative of Indonesian Muslims who feel being insulted by Ahok's speech during his visit in Kepulauan Seribu. They wanted Ahok to be jailed for insulting Qur'an and the teaching of Islam. This movement did not stop merely on their target to criminalize Ahok due to breaking the positive law, but then turned into political agenda to overthrow Ahok from his gubernatorial office. Ahok's visitation at Kepulauan Seribu was actually his political campaign to win Jakarta gubernatorial election in 2017. His candidature was fully supported by PDIP, Jokowi's party.

On December 2nd, 2016, GNPf-MUI organized the biggest demonstration ever throughout Indonesia's history which was known as "the 212 Demonstration" or "the 3rd Islamic Defendant Action". This demonstration was not only involved by participants within Jakarta, but many protesters came from other regions and even outside of Java. CNN Indonesia calculated around 550 to 650 thousand protesters had taken a part in the demonstration with total estimated occupational zone of 205,800 square meters (Ahmad, 2016). Even though there were various versions and debates about the number of participants taken a part in the 212 Demonstration, yet the gathering of Muslim protestors to express their political aspiration with that huge numbers was a historical event throughout political dynamics of Muslim movement in Indonesia.

The 212 Demonstration and public noises surrounding Ahok's blasphemy topic had attracted international mass media coverages. In addition, the Guardian, a newspaper based in the UK, had reported various coverages on Ahok's blasphemy issue and GNPf-MUI movement. In a report entitled "Fears Over Violence in Jakarta as Hardline Islamists Protest Governor's 'Blasphemy'," the Guardian reporter Oliver Holmes, connected the wave of religious populism in anti-Ahok demonstration with the support of Syrian branch of Al-Qaeda terrorist *Jabhat Fatah*

al-Sham who publicly launched statement that Ahok must be imprisoned or they themselves would send “bullets” to him (Holmes, 2016). Kate Lamb, another the Guardian reporter, wrote a report entitled, “Jakarta Governor Ahok's Blasphemy Trial: All You Need to Know,” that analyzed which political groups benefit from religious populist actions against Ahok and tried to link the actions with the possibility of increasing religious radicalism in Indonesia (Lamb, 2016). These two international media coverages were alarming possibility of threat in forms of radicalism, terrorist attacks or political catastrophe on the aftermath of populism movement in Indonesia. Their analysis certainly did not concern with an empty context without supporting data. International public had a lesson learnt from political turmoil around Indonesian national revolution in 1945 and the tragedy of Indonesian Communist Party's coup in 1965, which were both motivated by populism movement throughout the country. As the year 2016 had signaled the widespread of populism movement around the globe, international mass media at that moment investigated on the emerging of populism movement in Indonesia and paid attention on how this phenomenon will shape political future of Indonesia.

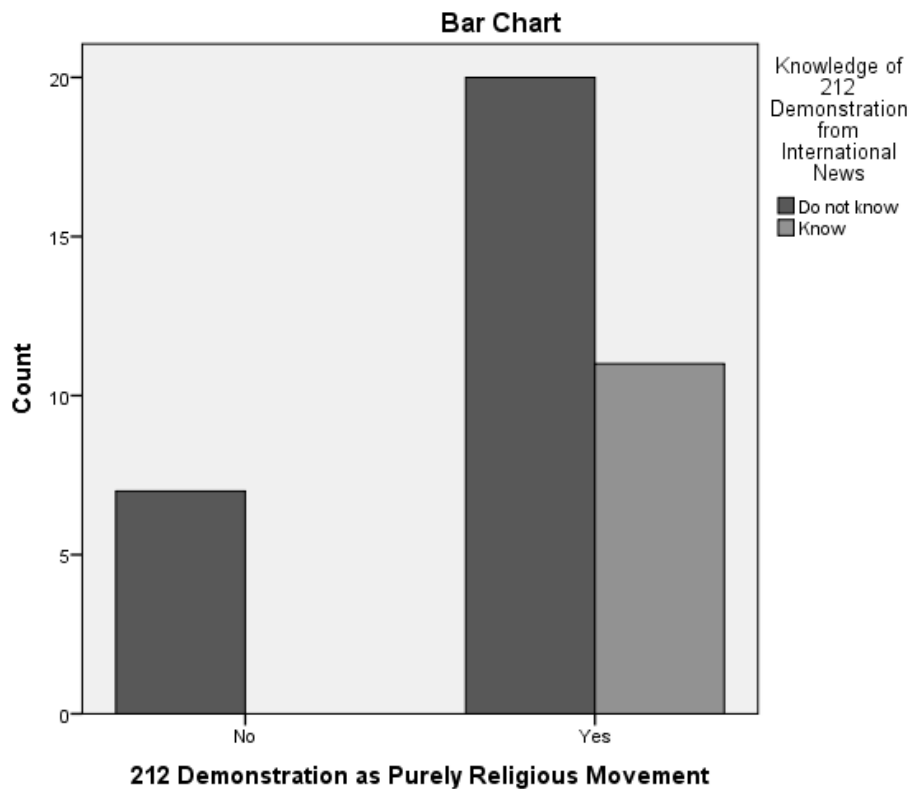
However, international mass media coverage on certain issue is often related to the political position or agenda of government supported to them. Throughout mass media history, evidences on government's role in controlling or censoring content of news were abundant. Governments may establish or control news agencies like Xinhua (China), AFP (France), DPA (Germany), and TASS (Russia) who known well as government-funded mass media (Boyd-Barrett, 2010). Paul H. Weaver, a former political scientist at Harvard University and journalist at Fortune magazine, argued that journalists need crises to dramatize news, and government officials need to be in charge responding to crises. He asserted a thesis that the news media and the government are intertwined in a vicious circle of mutual interests (Weaver, 1994).

Paying attention to a news topic that is reported by a news media funded by certain government will also lead to the interesting analysis related to the opinion, position, or interests of that certain government. This logic inspired the researcher to do preliminary study on how major news agencies in the world has covered

Muslim populism movement in Indonesia through 212 Demonstration and also how Muslim activists perceived to the event of 212 Demonstration. Conducted in 2018, the preliminary research examined 38 informants from *Hidayatullah* – one of Muslim organization participated in the 212 Demonstration - activists at Salatiga city, Central Java. This preliminary research revealed an interesting finding that there was strong indication of correlation between Muslim activist perception on the 212 Demonstration as mere purely religious movement and their knowledge about this movement from international mass media.

Figure 1.

Crosstabulation of Muslim Activist Perception on 212 Demonstration vs their Knowledge from International News



Source: Preliminary Research by the Researcher in 2018. Data analysis taken from SPSS Version 24.

Figure 1 shows crosstabulation chart from the two questions. First question is; “Do you perceive that 212 Demonstration is purely religious movement of Islamic people to defense Qur’an?” then second question is; “Do you keep up with the news from international mass media about 212 Demonstration?” The highest

chart shows total of 20 informants (out of 38) said that they perceived the 212 Demonstration as mere purely religious movement to defense Qur'an from Ahok's blasphemy, whereas they do not know or follow news about it from any international news agency. This finding gave strong argument to hypothesize that there is a correlation between Muslim activists' perception on the 212 Demonstration as mere purely religious movement with their knowledge about the demonstration from international news agencies.

This article comprehends further study with some concepts that have been developed qualitatively. The theme has developed from examining unspecific international news agencies for paying attention to the news agencies funded by the Greatpowers'. By changing the subject to be more specific, this research will be beneficial in portraying model relations between mass media, government agenda setting, and their response to certain political phenomenon. This research focused to answer some questions: Did the Greatpowers' news agencies frame the 212 Demonstration as an extraordinary event in Indonesian's history? Did the Greatpowers' news agencies frame the 212 Demonstration as a political strategy, or mere purely religious movement, or mere the public demand of the legal enforcement process? Did the Greatpowers' news agencies frame the 212 Demonstration as a form of world populism wave that possibly threatening to the world order and tranquility? And how was the political response of the Geatpowers' governments to the 212 Demonstration in Indonesia as seen in their news agencies reports?.

Literature Review

The religious populism in Indonesia as a research theme is not something new. In February 2016, Cambridge University Press published a book written by Vedi R. Hadiz entitled "Islamic Populism in Indonesia and the Middle East." The book indeed is the result of research on Islamic populism, especially covered in three Muslim countries, i.e. Indonesia, Turkey and Egypt. Hadiz succeeded in defining religious populism concept by taking the case from Indonesia. He characterized religious populism as a political vehicle that is possibly to be appeared as mass organizations, paramilitaries, political parties, and occasionally,

entities involved in violent terrorist activity (Hadiz, 2016:52). Inspired from theory of social bases of populist politics by Ionescu and Gelner (AlRoy, 1970), Hadiz connected the existence of a populist movement due the social changes commonly associated with the advance of the capitalist economy emanating from neoliberal globalisation processes (Hadiz, 2016). This understanding will certainly be very useful for this research. However, Hadiz over-simplified by concluding that religious populism in Indonesia as a result of secular-neoliberal conditions, which are only beneficially enjoyed by a handful of elites. Religious identity or sentiments factors, such as Ahok's case, have not been given an adequate analysis. Whereas in the 2017 Jakarta governor election, the issue of religious sentiment was dominantly overthrowing Ahok from his official position in Jakarta Governorship. This seems reasonable, considering that the book was written before the 212 Demonstration.

Ehito Kimura, a professor at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, wrote an article in *Asia Pacific Bulletin* published by East-West Center, entitled "Populist Politics in Indonesia." He explained that religious populism in Indonesia is not just ordinary mass mobilization, but also a political strategy for certain parties. He even predicts that if the trend of religious populism continues to occur, then another presidential election will be loaded with the colors of religious populism (Kimura, 2017).

In February 2018, Vedi R. Hadiz wrote another article on religious populism in Indonesia entitled "Imagine All the People? Mobilizing Islamic Populism for Right-Wing Politics in Indonesia," published by *Journal of Contemporary Asia*. In this article, Hadiz's study was supplemented with the data and analysis about the 212 Demonstration. Unlike Hadiz's analysis in his previous book "Islamic Populism in Indonesia and the Middle East," he indicated that religious ideology can be a triggering of religious populism in Indonesia. Hadiz asserted that the end of religious populism movement in Indonesia is the establishment of a sharia-based state through a democratic process (Hadiz, 2018).

Academic works related to this topic are significantly increase as the event of 212 demonstration grab the public's attention. As shown from the result of searching any works related to the topic using Academia search engine (www.academia.edu with premium account), when the researcher type keywords of "populism Islam in Indonesia", it resulted 42,079 articles from past five years (2017 until 2022). The figure 2 shows that academic works in the form of journal

article, book and conference paper are significantly hike from year of 2017, at the moment of Jakarta gubernatorial election and the historical event of 212 demonstration.

Figure 2.

Academic Works on Topic "Populism Islam in Indonesia" from Past Five Years



Source: Academia search engine with premium subscription

Some literatures resulted from the Academia search engine should be considered as important material related to the topic discussed. Savitri and Adriyanti through the article entitled "The Demise of Emancipatory Peasant Politics?: Indonesian Fascism and the Rise of Islamic Populism" argued that the event of 212 demonstration signed the rise of Islamic populism and the return of fascist ideologies in Indonesia (Savitri and Adriyanti, 2018). Populism movement in Indonesia also has a direct influence towards Indonesian democracy (Hara, 2018). Mietzner and Muhtadi revealed an interesting fact that despite declining trend of conservative attitudes among Indonesian Muslims, around a quarter of them were supporting an Islamist socio-political agenda (Mietzner and Muhtadi,

2018). From an article written by Santoso et. al. entitled "Populism in New Media: The Online Presidential Campaign Discourse in Indonesia", showed that populism had been implemented as political strategy to exploit political discourse during Indonesian presidential election in 2019. The increasing amount of academic literatures discussing on Islamic populism in Indonesia on the aftermath of the 212 demonstration event had showed the rising of Islamic populism in Indonesia whose basis support from the society and, to some extent, it had been exploiting for certain political purposes by some elites.

The event of 212 demonstration facilitated by Gerakan Nasional Pengawal Fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia (GNPF-MUI/Guard National Movement for Indonesian Religious Leader) clearly shown as a manifestation of the rise of Islamic populism in Indonesia (Luthf, Fathy, and Asadi 2019). What made this populism sentiment increasing around early 2017? Many researchers would answer by multivariate factors, but the socio-economic inequality in Indonesia has been proved as a good catalyst factor to increase polarized ideological competition and populist campaign (Muhtadi and Warburton, 2020).

The literatures taken in this review provide an adequate conceptual framework in discussing issues related to religious populism in Indonesia. Conceptual definition, causal factor analysis, and political agenda of religious populism movement in Indonesia were already shown clearly from these literatures. However, overall issues were not related directly to the international responses and geopolitical context. These literatures studied Islamic populism as a national political phenomenon with its domestic causal factors and without related the phenomenon to the international context. Furthermore, a research topic about international context surroundings religious populism issue in Indonesia, especially upon responses from the Greatpowers' and mass media framing from their news agencies, is a noble topic that needs to be explored further through this research.

METHODS

This research utilizes intrinsic case study method. The purpose of intrinsic case study is to emphasize the researcher's understanding (*verstehen*) of the interesting single case qualitatively (Idrus 2009:58). The 212 Demonstration was the unique interesting case that evoked the researcher's curiosity to understand it deeper, notably when it was related to the news coverage of the Greatpowers' news

agencies. In this research, the purpose of the intrinsic case study design is not intended to generalize data or to form a theory, nevertheless more emphasize to the intrinsic importance (Idrus 2009:58).

Subject, Location, and Data Collection Techniques

Subject of the research are person, organization or institution where from them the data could be gathered. In this study, the subjects were the Greatpowers' news agencies where the data about their news coverages on the 212 Demonstrations event could be attained. The Greatpowers' countries discussed in this study taken from the Power Subranking of 2016 Best Countries Index by the U.S. News & World Report. The Power Subranking is based on an equally weighted average of scores from attributes that are related to a country's power, i.e.: a leader, economically influential, politically influential, strong international alliances, and strong military. This study took five countries possessed the most high-power rank in the world, which were the United States of America, Russia, China, Germany, and the United Kingdom (US News & World Report, L.P. 2016). This study examined five news agencies belong to (fully funded by) the Greatpowers' governments, which were VOA (the U.S.), Sputnik (Russia), Xinhua (PRC), DW (Germany), BBC (the U.K.).

Data will be obtained from five news agencies funded by the most high-rank Greatpowers' countries in 2016, the year that the 212 Demonstration took a place. The research locations might vary. For the online data collection method, the researcher collected the data anywhere as far as internet connection was accessible. Focus Group Discussion and survey method were utilized to conduct preliminary research in Salatiga city, Central Java. Mainly, to answer the research questions, the researcher utilized document research, analyzing documents that contain information about event under consideration (think.design, 2021).

Data Analysis Technique

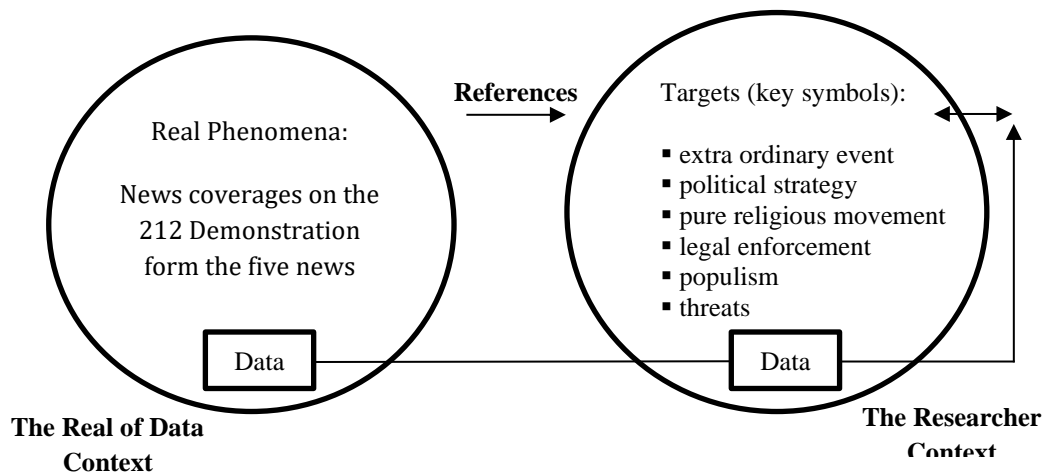
The researcher utilized content analysis technique to analyze the data collected. Content analysis technique emphasizes on how the researcher interpret the contents of communication, reads symbols, interprets the contents of symbolic

interactions that occur in communication process (Bungin, 2007). Initially, the researcher determined news coverage on the 212 Demonstration from the five news agencies as communication phenomenon to be observed. Afterwards, the researcher code (find) terminologies, words, or sentences related to the context desired in this research. Then, these relevant words or sentences were classified based on symbols/categories as determined from the research questions context. The categories were related one another to find meaning and purpose of the communication. The result of this analysis then described in the research report format (Bungin, 2007).

In content analysis, researcher works based on two contexts, namely: the real of data context and the researcher context. The real of data context consists of real phenomena and the surrounding situations. While the researcher context is made by the researcher based on his/her own target analysis. These two contexts influenced each other and constructed the researcher's analysis (Bungin, 2007).

Figure 2.

The Research Framework



Source: Inspired by Burhan Bungin's Content Analysis Framework Model

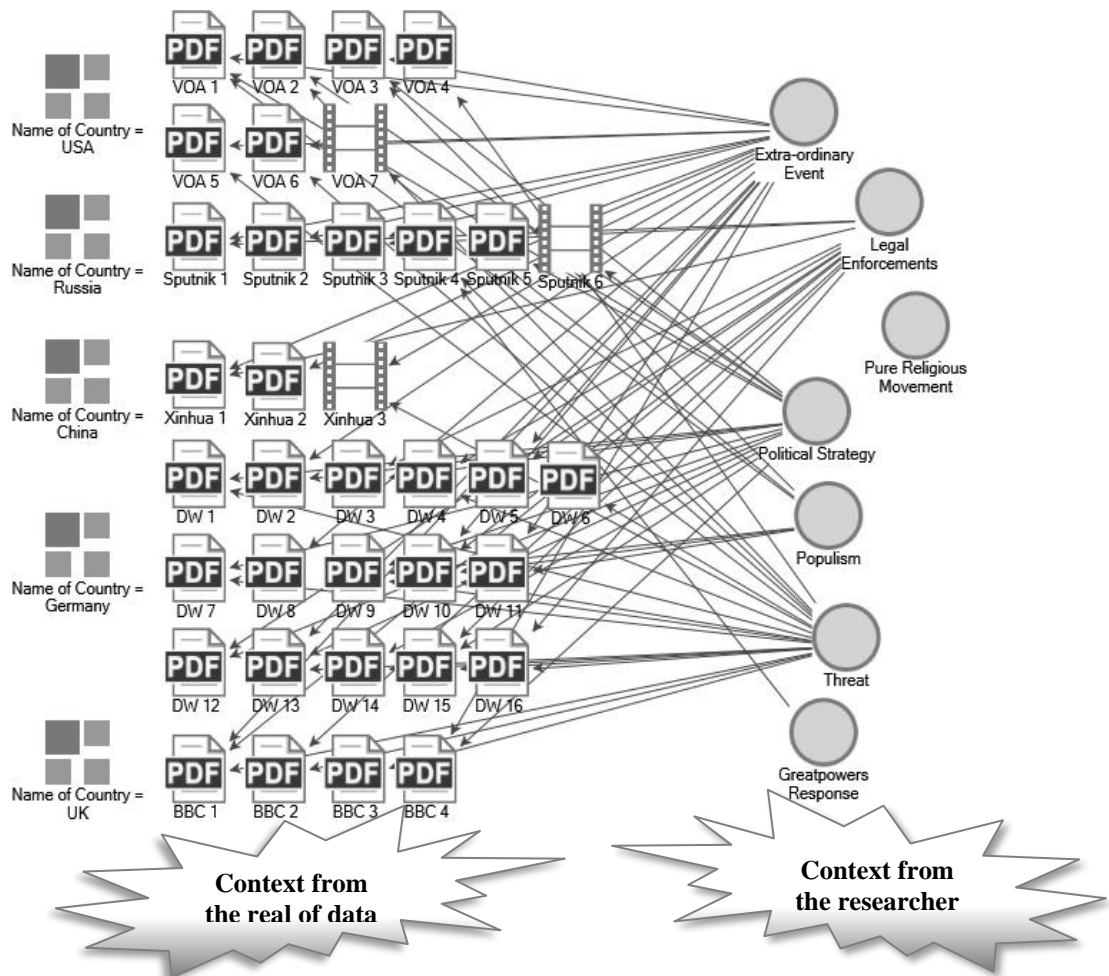
Figure 2 illustrates the content analysis framework based on contexts that are used in this research. News coverages on the 212 Demonstration event from five Greatpowers' news agencies - VOA, Sputnik, Xinhua, DW, and BBC – were the real of data context. Meanwhile, the researcher established own context based on the research questions (Bauer, 2007). They were seven key symbols that constructed the researcher context, i.e.: extraordinary event, political strategy, pure religious movement, legal enforcement, populism, threat, and political response.

These key symbols became criteria to examine the real data from five Greatpowers' news agencies. By using representational techniques, the researcher could find messages from the data that were represent the targeted symbols (Krippendorff, 2004).

The Research Findings

This research found that the Greatpowers' news agencies framed six contents regarding the 212 Demonstration event in Jakarta, 2016. Based on the research questions proposed, this research determined seven frames. As showed in Figure 3, the data collected from the field were only found six out of seven frames.

Figure 3.
Map Analysis



Source: Data display by NVivo 12 Pro

Firstly, the Greatpowers' news agencies framed that the 212 Demonstration was an extra-ordinary event. They covered the issue as an extra-ordinary event by exploiting the number of protesters and policemen deployed to secure the demonstration. Moreover, many reports selected a clear word to express an extra-ordinary situation by using the word of "surprise."

Secondly, the Greatpowers' news agencies framed that the 212 Demonstration was a political strategy of the opponents of President Joko Widodo who were trying to gain favor concerned with Islamists, especially the FPI. However, only Xinhua who did not say anything about this political strategy agenda.

Thirdly, only VOA who did not frame the 212 Demonstration as the public expression to demand for the legal enforcement against Ahok. The rest of Greatpowers' news agencies framed that the 212 Demonstration as a public demand for the legal enforcement process by mentioning police investigation and trial process of Ahok who violated the blasphemy law.

Fourthly, VOA and DW framed the 212 Demonstration as an Islamic populism movement, while other news agencies did not say anything about it. These two news agencies covered the analysis on how such large number of demonstrators could be gathered easily. The 212 Demonstration was populist movement by exploiting and sidelining sentiment of fundamentalist Islam and marginalized poor people.

Fifthly, the Greatpowers' news agencies framed that 212 Demonstration was threatening to There was a wariness of returning authoritarian rule - most probably in the military - if the authoritarian rules join forces with the Islamists and come to power.

Sixthly, the news agency reporting political response from the Greatpowers' government towards the 212 Demonstration was only Sputnik. Sputnik reported the US Embassy official response by releasing a statement warned US citizens in Jakarta and other Indonesian cities to avoid protests by some extremist groups and demonstration areas due to threat of violence or terror attacks.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research found six Greatpowers' news agencies frames towards the 212 Demonstration in Jakarta, 2016. These six frames were classified based on categories from the research questions context. For a deeper analysis, then to find meaning or purpose of the communication, these six categories are going to be related one another (Bungin, 2007). The categories as analytical constructions are going to be analyzed using the re-presentations technique, the kind of content of analysis model that usually intended as the purpose of communication, to analyze specific discourse. In the re-presentations technique, researcher mapping the semantic interpretations onto a world model or territory of the larger discourse (Krippendorff, 2004). In this research, the larger discourse as a form of a deeper analysis and as a mean of communication can be presented into the following themes.

The 212 Demonstration as a Threatening Extra-ordinary Event

This research found that all the Greatpowers' news agencies considered the 212 Demonstration as an extra-ordinary event and also threatening to Indonesian life and peace. Xinhua covered story from Indonesian authorities who estimated the demonstration would be attended some 200,000 people and secured by some 22,000 security forces (Xinhua, 2016). The element of extra-ordinary event could be found in their story when President Joko Widodo postponed his visit to Australia due to the 212 Demonstration (CCTV.com 2016). At the event of the 212 Demonstration, Xinhua through its news television branch (CCTV) reported for more than 80,000 policeman and soldiers were deployed to secure the 212 Demonstration in Capital City of Indonesia (CGTN 2016).

All the Greatpowers' news agencies reported number of the protestors in the 212 Demonstration some 200,000, yet they differed in the number of police and military personals deployed in the mentioned event. Deutsch Welle, BBC, and VOA added the element of extra-ordinary by noting the appearance of President Joko Widodo and the Vice President Jusuf Kalla before the protestors surprisingly joining them in prayer and thanking them for being peaceful (Deutsche Welle 2016a).

The 212 Demonstration was considered as a threat. Xinhua related the event to the possibility attack of some terrorist groups (CGTN, 2016). Deutsche Welle covered 10 news reports framing the 212 Demonstration as a serious threat. The event was threatening traditional moderate form of Islam and strengthening radical Islamist positions in the nation's politics (Deutsche Welle, 2017). Sputnik of Russia worried about possibility of some extremist groups could take advantage from the protest to incite or carry out violence (Sputnik, 2016).

BBC related the issue of Ahok's blasphemy to possibility of violent action against Ahok, including calls to kill him from provocative statements on social media (BBC News, 2016), such as message from Indonesians fighting with Syria's radical Jabhat Fateh al-Sham militant group who said, "Sentence Ahok or we will sentence him with bullets" (BBC News, 2017). Whilst VOA, underlined the rising of anti-Chinese sentiment and religious tensions due to Ahok's blasphemy issue in the Jakarta governor election (VOA News, 2016).

VOA Vs. Xinhua: Political Strategy or Legal Enforcement?

There was an interesting finding when the researcher compared framing position between VOA and Xinhua. Both news agencies are representing political position of each government who currently involved in many political conflicts, competition, and trade war. Xinhua seemed to be more emphasize on legal enforcement aspects of Ahok's blasphemy case. Xinhua position tended to avoid internal political dynamic of Indonesian people although they had already known that the 212 Demonstration had raised anti-Chinese sentiment within Indonesian society. Xinhua, as news agencies representing the Chinese government agenda, was trying to maintain harmonic relationship with Indonesian government which was in the peak of close relationship between them. It was said, "Good walls make good neighbors." Xinhua did not try to connect the 212 Demonstration with Indonesian internal political dynamics related to Jakarta Governatorial Election 2017 or General Election in 2019.

On the other side, VOA as representative news agencies of the U.S. government, tended to see the 212 Demonstration as political strategy of the opponents of President Joko Widodo, especially the Islamist groups, who were trying to conquest public attention and national political stage. In all VOA's news coverage about the 212 Demonstration, there was not proper coverage about legal

enforcement aspect of Ahok's case, as if there was nothing to do with it. This position was understandable since the raising of radical Islam and terrorism were two things that remain U.S. public concern until nowadays.

Measuring the 212 Demonstration as an Islamic Populism Movement

Both VOA and Deutsche Welle framed the 212 Demonstration as an Islamic populism movement, while other news agencies did not say anything about it. Deutsche Welle quoted statement of a political analyst and campaign advisor to former President Abdurrahman Wahid, Wimar Witoelar, that the 212 Demonstration and Ahok's blasphemy issue as the test of Indonesian pluralism's ability to stand up to the pressure from religious groups and populists (Deutsche Welle, 2017).

To measure populism as divisive movement, Deutsch Welle covered President Joko Widodo worried about non-conducive situation in the aftermath of Ahok's blasphemy issue and its connection to Jakarta Governatorial election and Indonesian national politics. He admitted that the anti-Ahok protest movement had divided the society, "Don't let our different political choices divide us, let's maintain our unity" (Deutsche Welle, 2017).

To measure the 212 Demonstration as populist movement which was champions the common person by favorable contrast to perceived elite or represent the will of people, VOA revealed FPI operation to Luar Batang residents in April 2016. FPI exploited popular support from 1,000 evicted residents of Luar Batang by set up charity operation. They supplied food and clothing to potential eviction victims for three months, and when they closed shop in June, they had accrued strong ideological support from local citizens (Varagur, 2016). Dharma Dhiani, one of Pasar Ikan resident in Luar Batang, she and others did not want to leave and joining forces with the-right wing FPI in the 212 Demonstration. Residents said they hope the protest will convince Jakarta's government to offer social services and rebuild their neighborhood (VOA News, 2016). Luar Batang's residents' alignment with FPI was understandable. What emerged was analogous to what has happened with similar working-class concerns across the globe. The majority party serves middle-class and global interests, and radical parties or politicians give voice

to the marginalized poor. In the 212 Demonstration case, two sentiments that many believe had been sidelined in the demonstration were fundamentalist Islam and poor people's land rights, amplified each other's concerns (Varagur, 2016).

VOA labelled the 212 Demonstration as genuine populism. Although many Jakarta protests relied on hired "protest organizers," there was little evidence of hired manpower at the 212 Demonstration. Hundreds of protesters were already camped out having traveled from long distances in night before the rally. The number of voluntary participants in the 212 Demonstration was one of many things that made it different from other demonstration. Typically, food and refreshments are the incentives for "hired protesters." In the 212 Demonstration case, the protesters came largely of their own accord. But it was there for them anyway, in much larger quantities than could even be utilized. And it was one reason why, rain-free day, 200,000 protesters were happy, peaceful, and organized (Varagur, 2016).

Political Strategy, Not Pure Religious Movement

All Greatpowers' news agencies examined in this research, were not considered the 212 Demonstration as purely religious movement. On the contrary, four out of five Greatpowers' news agencies framed that the 212 Demonstration was a political strategy of the Government's opponents. Deutsch Welle covered an analysis of how Ahok's Muslim rivals had capitalized on the opportunity to show opposition to his leadership. Some had called for Ahok's removal under Indonesia's blasphemy laws. President Joko Widodo also had met political and religious leaders as he looked for a solution to the religious unrest. This was complicated by former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono supporting the 212 Demonstration on national television, prompting Widodo to decry how political actors had taken advantage of the situation (Deutsche Welle, 2016).

Sputnik covered a story during the demonstration when a protestor yelled a political content to overthrow Ahok from his chair (ruptly.tv 2016). Meanwhile, VOA stated clearly that Far-right Islamic parties were the driving force behind the 212 Demonstration against Jakarta's governor (Varagur 2016c). Land eviction, political interests due to Jakarta's local election, and sectarianism, circling around the so-called blasphemy charge against Ahok (Varagur 2016a). Whilst BBC analyst said that President Joko Widodo had blamed "political actors" of trying to take advantage of the furore over Ahok to destabilize his government. The BBC's Ging

Ginanjari, at the rally, said organizers told police it would just be a public sermon and mass prayer, but many attendees were carrying banners condemning Jakarta's governor and calling for him to be jailed (BBC News, 2016).

CONCLUSION

The research's hypothesis as mentioned earlier in the introduction stated that there was a correlation between Muslim activists' perception on the 212 Demonstration as mere purely religious movement with their knowledge about the demonstration from international news agencies. Addressing this hypothesis, the researcher concluded based on strong evidences or data obtained in this research that all Greatpowers' news agencies were not framed the 212 Demonstration as purely religious movement. Surprisingly, none of them explained the 212 Demonstration as mere purely religious movement. This research confirmed that Muslim activists' perception on the 212 Demonstration as mere purely religious movement should be evaluated critically. For more they exposed to news coverages upon the demonstration from many international news agencies, they would be more understand the reality of the phenomenon from a wider perspective objectively. As Allah *Subhanahu Wata'ala*, Glory be to God, said in *Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat* verse 6:

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهْلَةٍ
فَتُصِيبُوا عَلَى مَا فَعَلْتُمْ تَادِيمًا

“O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done” (Ali, 1946)

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