

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the background and purpose of this report. Additionally, it reveals the scope and limitation, as well as period and location of this internship report.

### I.1 Background of the Problem

A gap has emerged between the governors and the governed in Indonesia. Subsequent governors and politicians have failed in meeting public expectation, making the youths (age 17 to 30) wary, apathetic, and disenchanted with the politicians and the political climate.

This rising political apathy is characterized by *golongan putih* (the non-voters), an Indonesian term for voters who refuse to participate in elections – either by casting a blank or spoiled ballot, rendering it invalid (Arianto 2013; Thornley 2013).

Statistics from *Komisi Pemilihan Umum*, or the General Election Commission, revealed that during the 2009 presidential election, there were 27.4% out of 176.441.434 registered citizens who did not exercise their right to vote. This is a significant increase from the 2004 presidential election in which *golput*, an abbreviation of *golongan putih*, amounted to 23.34% of the vote (Komisi Pemilihan Umum 2009, 99).

Similarly, during the first round of the Jakarta gubernatorial election in

2012, *Golput* was shown as the party who received the most votes. The recapitulation of first round votes on the provincial level revealed that there were 2.555.207 (36,6%) nonvoters out of the total population of 6.962.348 (Thornley 2013). Trailing behind was the winner of the election, Joko Widodo and Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (known as the Jokowi – Ahok pair), with 1.847.151 votes. Meanwhile in the third place, Jakarta’s incumbent governor, Fauzi Bowo and his running mate, Nachrowi Ramli (Foke – Nara pair), received 1.476.648 votes (Riana<sup>1</sup> 2013; Riana<sup>2</sup> 2013). It was due to this low turnout that jokes were made; claiming that at 36,6% *golput* was the strongest candidate overall.

It was due to this rising political apathy that the upcoming legislative election and presidential election in 2014 are tinged with anxiety regarding the voter participation of the youth. With around 59 million votes and numbering up to 34.3% of the total populace (Badan Pusat Statistik 2013; Chen and Syailendra 2013), youths or young voters from the age group of 17 to 30 is the secret political powerhouse of Indonesia. With their huge number, they make up a powerful voting bloc, able to change the outcome of any election, and yet, most of them show apathy towards politics and are not inclined to vote in elections.

In order to combat this growing apathy, Ayo Vote, a youth initiative powered by Berita Satu Media Holdings, is trying to help bring about a solution to the low turnout in the legislative and presidential election. Utilizing a series of educational talk shows and new media technologies such as website and social media, Ayo Vote is trying to appeal to the youths and help alleviate their apathy.

For Ayo Vote, this problem of low turnout is caused by young voters who

lack political socialization and education, and therefore think that politics are too complicated and would be inclined to vote during elections. As such, Ayo Vote believes that it is imperative to educate the young voters of the importance of their participation in the upcoming elections. This internship report aims to understand how Ayo Vote plans to alleviate young voters' apathy and be involved in trying to get them to be interested in politics and vote actively during elections.

Inspired by Rock the Vote, a youth movement from the United States, Ayo Vote sets out to educate and remind young voters that their participation in the elections will have a significant impact to the future of their country.

## **I.2 Purpose of the Internship**

Voter turnout in Indonesia's national parliamentary elections has dwindled sharply over the past decade – from 94.02% in 1971 to 70.99% in 2009 (International IDEA 2013). The trend has shifted from voting to not voting in elections, an act that is popularly referred to as *golput* – short for *golongan putih* – in reference to the protest marking or non-marking of the ballot which renders it invalid.

When Jakarta Governor Jokowi (popular nickname for Joko Widodo) endorsed candidates recently lost the 2013 gubernatorial elections in North Sumatra and West Java, headlines read out “Golput Wins in the North Sumatra Gubernatorial Election,” and “Golput Wins the 2013 West Java Gubernatorial Election.” (Thornley 2013).

According to Burhanuddin Muhtadi, a senior researcher from *Lembaga Survey Indonesia* (Indonesian Survey Circle), *golongan putih* numbers is predicted to continue to rise up to 50% on the upcoming 2014 presidential election (Octa 2013).

In this situation where voter participation is dwindling and *golput* is on the rise, youths in Indonesia is expected to play an important role in the upcoming 2014 election. Amounting up to 34.3% of the total populace, youths have the power to reverse this overall downward trend and as such, they are expected to use their voting rights and vote for the betterment of their country. Yet the reality today is that most youths tend to not vote during election and are apathetic towards politics (Chen and Syailendra 2013; Lestari 2013).

As the one of the largest democracies in the world, this growing political apathy among the young voters is worrying and should be addressed seriously. Indonesia needs its youths to care and willing to take part in bringing a positive change to the country. As such, youths cannot afford to be apathetic towards politics and be *golput* during election. They need to know and start caring about the political issues that concern them, their families, and their jobs, and vote accordingly.

Created to help bring about a solution to the low turnout in election, Ayo Vote believes that young voters are averse to politics only because they lack political education regarding politics and the voting process. In order to appeal to these youths and at the same time educate them about their right to vote, Ayo Vote is utilizing new media technologies that are part of the youths' culture, for

example, website and social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter. Furthermore, Ayo Vote is also using casual and everyday language in order to help youths understand issues regarding the elections.

With this framework in mind, therefore the purpose of this internship is:

- 1) To apply the journalism skill gained from coursework in real life setting
- 2) To understand and be involved in Ayo Vote's effort in encouraging young voters, not only into learning about politics but also actively voting at the upcoming elections.
- 3) To examine Ayo Vote's use of its website and social media
- 4) To evaluate Ayo Vote's publications in its website and social media using the theory Rhetoric, Dramatism, and Narrative Paradigm.

### **I.3 Scope and Limitation of the Internship**

The scope and limitation of this internship is as follows:

#### **Scope of Internship**

The author worked as an intern in the Social Media and Digital Strategy Department in Berita Satu Media Holdings and was mainly responsible for developing and maintaining web-based materials to be posted in Ayo Vote's, Jakarta Globe's, or BeritaSatu.com's website.

Additionally, the author was also tasked with reporting and writing feature articles for BeritaSatu.com and managing Ayo Vote's social media assets and CeritaLensa, a photography community which is hosted by Berita Satu, with its

social media assets, specifically Facebook and Twitter. Furthermore, the author was often invited to provide assistance on events held by Berita Satu Media Holdings and Ayo Vote.

### **Limitation of Internship**

As an intern at Berita Satu Media Holdings that was mainly responsible for developing content for Ayo Vote, the author has several more limitations to the research:

#### 1) Limited scope

The author's scope of research is limited to the publication in Ayo Vote's website and its social media, specifically Facebook and Twitter.

#### 2) Lack of knowledge

As a student new in the research field, the author lack practical experience in the collecting and analyzing data taken from the field. This lack of knowledge limits the author's ability to obtain accurate information.

#### 3) Small sample size

This internship report is limited by the size of the sample. The data that the author has collected is confined to observation and informal interview of Ayo Vote's volunteers, contributors, and audience.

### **I.4 Period and Location of the Internship**

The period and location of this internship is as follows:

## Period of Internship

The author had undergone her internship at Berita Satu Media Holdings, a leading news organization in reporting and producing multi-platform news and analysis about Indonesia, for five months, starting from 20 May 2013 and ending at 19 October 2013. During the internship, the author worked from Monday to Friday, usually starting at 9AM and ending at 5PM.

## Location of Internship

Berita Satu Media Holdings is located in:



Figure 1.1 – Location of Berita Satu Media Holdings  
(Source: Berita Satu Media Holdings)

Berita Satu Plaza (formerly known as Citra Graha Building) Floors 9 to 11

Jl. Jenderal Gatot Subroto Kav. 35-36

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