A STUDY OF CLICKBAIT TITLES:
Online Media Users Perspective

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Abstract

The development of globalization has brought many changes in various aspects of life, one of which is the information media. This change makes information media continue to evolve in influencing the media landscape by capturing online media. Often the titles of articles that appear in online media are too excessive and do not even match the contents of the article. This phenomenon is often called clickbait. This study aims to further examine the titles of articles containing clickbait from the perspective of online media users. The research was conducted with quantitative methods with data collection techniques using questionnaires or questionnaires. The sample in this study was online media users. The results of the research conducted show that more than half of online media users are familiar with the word clickbait. However, there are still many online media users who do not understand clickbait news in its real context. Not only that, even though clickbait is considered manipulation or a trap, people especially online media users, are aware that they read articles or news entitled clickbait to fulfill their curiosity from the sensation caused by clickbait title.

Keywords: *Clickbait, Online Media Users, Media Information*

Abstrak

Perkembangan arus globalisasi membawa banyak sekali perubahan dalam berbagai aspek kehidupan, salah satunya adalah media informasi. Perubahan ini membuat media informasi terus berevolusi dalam memengaruhi lanskap media dengan menjaring media *online*. Seringkali judul-judul artikel yang tampil di media *online* terlalu berlebihan bahkan tidak sesuai dengan isi dari artikel tersebut. Fenomena ini sering disebut umpan klik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji lebih lanjut judul-judul artikel yang mengandung umpan klik menurut perspektif pengguna media *online*. Penelitian dilakukan dengan metode kuantitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan kuesioner atau angket. Sampel pada penelitian kali ini adalah pengguna media *online*. Hasil penelitian yang dilakukan menunjukkan lebih dari setengah pengguna media *online* tidak asing dengan kata umpan klik. Akan tetapi, masih banyak pengguna media *online* yang belum memahami berita umpan klik dalam konteks yang sebenarnya. Tidak hanya itu, meskipun umpan klik dianggap manipulasi atau jebakan, masyarakat terutama pengguna media *online* justru sadar bahwa mereka membaca artikel atau berita

yang berjudul umpan klik untuk memenuhi rasa penasaran dari sensasi yang ditimbulkan oleh judul umpan klik tersebut.

Kata Kunci: Umpan klik, Pengguna Media *Online,* Media Informasi

INTRODUCTION

In line with human civilization that continues to develop ushering technology into the realm of daily life. The rapid development of technological flows indirectly has brought changes to the order of life in a faster direction. A world that is gradually entering the age of digital information has affected the media to become more practical and efficient. Information media continues to innovate to be the best means for audiences in obtaining news or information.[1] Media companies that originally only provide news or information through print media (such as newspapers, magazines, and tabloids) are now entering the realm of digital media or online media. Most people see copywriting as a complicated thing that takes years to master and decades to get a handle on. They make it this big, complicated mess in their head.[2]

Online media is currently the most developed mass media in spreading information replacing print media. Nielsen Media Research survey results show that digital media readers as many as 6 million have exceeded print media readers of 4.5 million people.[3] The presence of online media is very helpful for information seekers, especially online media users because of the ease of obtaining information about topics that are being hotly discussed can be present quickly because of its real time nature. In addition, online media is considered more efficient because it can be accessed anytime and anywhere.

The rampant use of online media such as social networks as a place to access news attracts more people to use the internet in order to get news more practically. This condition of course paves the way for the information media industry in

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[1] Sandi dan Risa Dwi Ayuni, 'Tren Umpan Klik Di Media Daring : Keselarasan Antara', 1.2 (2018).

[2] Jim Edwards, *Copywriting Secrets: How Everyone Can Use the Power of Words to Get More Clicks, Sales and Profits . . . No Matter What You Sell or Who You Sell It To! | Jim Edwards | Download*, ed. by Author Academy Elite, 2019 <https://id1lib.org/book/7220872/e541cf> [accessed 26 October 2021].

[3] Ahmad Syafieq and others, 'Penggunaan Umpan Klik Pada Judul Berita Untuk Menarik Minat Pembaca', 2020 <www.kalsel.prokal.co,>.

developing its business. The information media industry is vying to open online news portals to align the pace with the development of technological flows. As a result, it is not uncommon to find news that passes by simply when online media users are accessing a certain site, even though the site accessed at that time is not an information media to get news. This is inseparable from the rise of industrial media that open news portals online.

More and more information media that provide news online, of course, make the public, especially online media users are free to choose which news portal they will access. Indirectly, this condition has demanded the media industry to be more creative in presenting news to attract readers. Most media innovate using click feeds and present the best content as a means to invite more readers to access their site.

However, there are currently deviations from the actual purpose of the click feed.[4] Media utilizes click feeds to increase reader traffic and increase income, no matter between the alignment of news presented with the title displayed. The situation makes readers feel deceived when reading click bait news because of their unrealized expectations from the news read. From the description, there is an interesting thing to be studied further, namely how the perspective of the community, especially online media users in responding to the phenomenon of click bait. The study will be discussed in an article entitled *"A Study Of Clickbait Titles: Online Media Users* Perspective".

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Definition of Clickbait

Clickbait is the use of sensational titles that encourage you to click on a link to an article, image, or video. Instead of presenting objective facts, clickbait headlines often attract your emotions and curiosity.[5] Once you click, the website hosting the link will earn revenue from advertisers, but the content actually usually has dubious quality and accuracy. Websites use clickbait to attract as many clicks as possible, so as to increase their ad revenue. Meanwhile, the use of headlines and

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[4] Syafieq and others.
[5] Patrick Trusto Jati Wibowo, 'Apa Itu Clickbait?', 2021 <https://www.wartaekonomi.co.id/read347438/apa-itu-clickbait>.

sensational content has been used since the 19th century, and has now become widespread in the digital world. Although based on an old idea, clickbait still has the same goal as its ancestors: to get your attention by any means necessary.

2. History of Clickbait

According to history, clickbait has been around for 100 years. The Iluminasi.com website mentions the explosion of the American warship USS Maine in a Cuban port, where it was originally an ordinary, sudden uproar after Pulitzer and Rudolph's newspaper ran a provocative and clickbait headline.[6] The essence of the title is provocative, which states that the explosion was caused by a Spanish attack, which was done by spies with the aim of attracting readers to buy their newspapers. The newspaper news eventually became the trigger for the war between Spain and America, despite the fact that the explosion came from inside the ship itself and not from an outside attack.

3. Dangers of Clickbait

Although it looks trivial, but clickbait itself can be a serious and dangerous threat, not just for readers, but for the creator of the clickbait itself.[7]

The dangers of Clickbait for creators

a) Damage the image and credibility of the media.

b) It won't get a good response for the reader.

c) It's just going to be a junk article.

d) The article won't last long. what else in SERP search engines

e) Erode the quality of writing itself.

f) etc.

The dangers of Clickbait for readers

a) Won't find the information you're looking for.

b) Waste time reading content that is not searched for.

c) One form of the meaning of "deceived"

d) If not selective can be consumed hoaxes and false information.

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[6] Godham Eko Saputro and Toto Eko Haryadi, 'KOMIK STRIP DAN FENOMENA CLICKBAIT', *Titik Imaji*, 2.1 (2019) <https://doi.org/10.30813/.v2i1.1528>.

[7] Rosyadi, 'Apa Itu Clickbait Pengertian Penerapan Dan Bahayanya - Sengedan Blog', 2017 <https://www.sengedan.com/2017/04/apa-itu-pengertian-clickbait.html> [accessed 18 October 2021].

    e) Upset and emotional.

    f) etc.

4. Media Online

The invention of the World Web Wide (WWW) made a massive revolution in the field of journalism with the advent of Online (cyber) journalism. This revolution has to do with the speed with which the message spreads.[8] An incident written on the internet a few seconds later has spread around the world. For example, the incident of the arrest of the broker of the case of Gaius Tambunan, moments later the results can be accessed by internet users around the world. As for the daily media, it's only a few hours or one day next. Electronic media also takes a while to broadcast.

Online media has an advantage, namely speed. We can get information quickly and easily. Not only that, the costs needed to manage online media tend to be cheaper compared to print media.[9] In addition, another advantage of online media is that it can be read anywhere in the world so that the spread of information that occurs is more widespread. Online media promises so many conveniences in journalistic work, ranging from the process of gathering news to the spread of the news. One of the conveniences that online media provides is the ease for convergence. We can create a variety of media models in the distribution of information. The website can display information in the form of writing, images, sounds, to sounds and moving images. All forms of convergence can be utilized without having to spend very large costs such as building television or radio media.

METHODS

Research is conducted using a quantitative approach. According to Sugiyono, quantitative methods are research methods based on the philosophy of positivism, which is used to examine a particular population or sample. The object of the study is a society of social media users who are randomly selected so that the

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[8] 122050034 Elga Setianingcahya, 'TRANSFORMASI MEDIA CETAK KE DALAM MEDIA ONLINE(Studi Deskriptif Kualitatif Majalah Destinasia Di Bandung)', 2017.

[9] S.IKom Muya Syaroh Iwanda Lubis, 'MEDIA ONLINE EKSISTENSI DARI MEDIA CETAK DI KOTA MEDAN', *JurnalNetwork MediaNetwork Media*, 1 (2018) <http://inet.detik.com> [accessed 18 October 2021].

data obtained comes from various circles. The data collection technique is to use questionnaires or questionnaires with 16 (sixteen) questions to measure how far respondents understand the click bait and what the impact of the click bait on the respondent. Later the data obtained will be analyzed descriptively so that it becomes a theory or conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Clickbait is manipulation. Abhijnan Chakraborty, of the Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, in his paper entitled "Stop Clickbait: Detecting and Preventing Clickbait in Online News Media" revealed, clickbait exploits the cognitive side of humans *(curiosity gap)* (quotes from the web). Furthermore, the results will be presented with research that has been done from the perception of online media users using quantitative methods. The results of the study that will be studied first are the characteristics of respondents, one of which is the age of respondents. Based on the results of the study using questionnaires against 40 online media users, the most dominant respondents were between the ages of 18-19 years. A total of 47.5% or 19 respondents aged 19 years, and as many as 35% or 14 respondents aged 18 years. Furthermore, the age range of other respondents ranged between 17 years, 20 years, and 21 years. From the results of research that has been done, it can be concluded that online media users who are the subject of research are people in productive age.
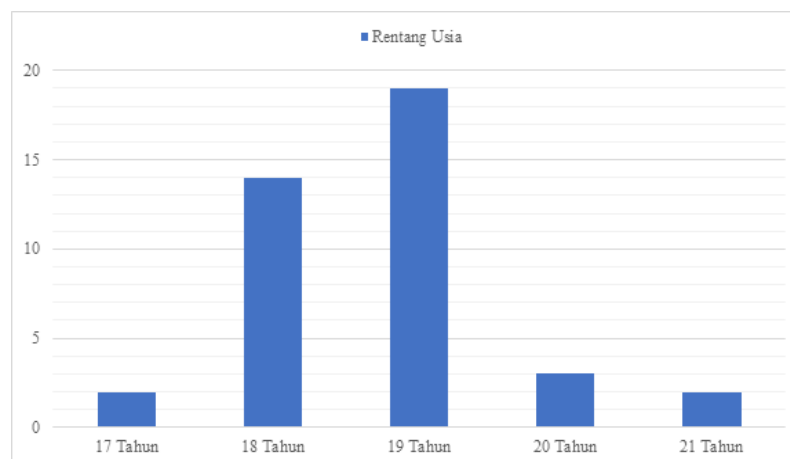
Graphic 1. Age Range of Online Media User Research Subjects

1. Respondents' Knowledge of Clickbait Titles

Based on the collection of data in the form of questionnaires that have been distributed before, a picture of a circle diagram will be presented to illustrate how much respondents have understood clickbait. The results of data collection showed that more than half of respondents or many as 75% of respondents understood the definition of clickbait. While the other as many as 25% of respondents still do not understand the definition of clickbait. The following will be presented a picture of the results of the questionnaire in the form of a circle diagram.
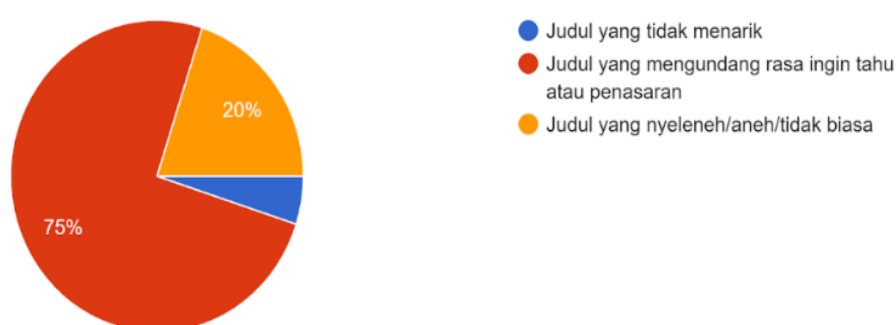
Figure 1 Percentage of Understanding of Clickbait

Furthermore, it will also be presented the characteristics of the click feed simply as supporting question points in the questionnaire to measure the understanding of online media users to the click bait. As a result, as many as 80% or as many as 32 respondents have understood the intent of the click bait with simpler language. If you look closely, the title of the clickbait article is very closely related to sensationalism. In addition to sensationalism, clickbait article titles also attract readers by triggering curiosity. This is achieved by providing incomplete information so that readers are tempted to fulfill their curiosity by clicking on the article to find more information.[10]

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[10] Yayat D Hadiyat, 'Clickbait Di Media Online Indonesia Clickbait on Indonesia Online Media', 4.1 (2019), 1–10 <https://doi.org/10.30818/jpkm.2019.2040101>.
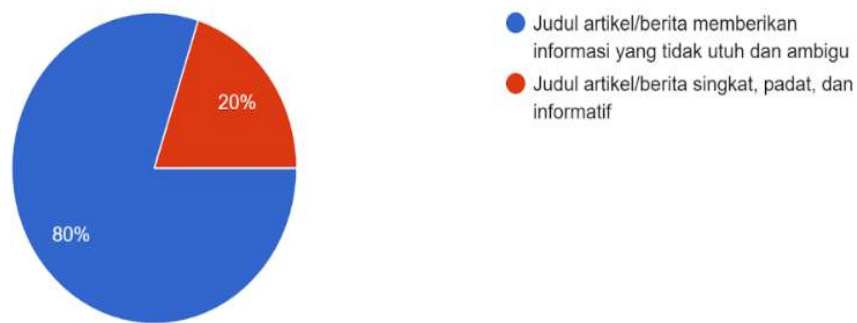
Figure 2 Percentage of Understanding of Clickbait Characteristics

The definition of clickbait itself is a title that invites curiosity or curiosity. Some parties actually take advantage of the clickbait phenomenon for personal gain by increasing reader traffic. Clickbait is just a sales technique, or optimization of a title that appears because the online media market is now dominated by these things. Indeed basically a good news headline at least has conditions such as: Provocative, Short &Dense, Relevant, Functional, Formal, Representative, Refers to Standard Grammar, and Specific. Sources say that click bait is a new thing related to online media as a new medium, which of course can change the old journalistic tradition. Many things are evolving with the changing times, click feeds on online media one of them. But the rules remain rules. There are important points and noble journalistic ethics that should not be lost in the writing of a news story. To be able to understand clickbait articles, you should first know the characteristics of the clickbait article itself. Clickbait articles basically have a characteristic by using pointer words and hiding the content of the content shared. [11]There are some of the most commonly encountered clickbait title features.

1) Sensational titles such as using sensational words and seem to attract the general public.

2) The title is like an interrogative sentence, for example, "What does Dewi Sandra say about the Jilboobs phenomenon? This is the answer."

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[11] William Shakespeare, 'Toward a Media History of Documents', 2014, 7–21.
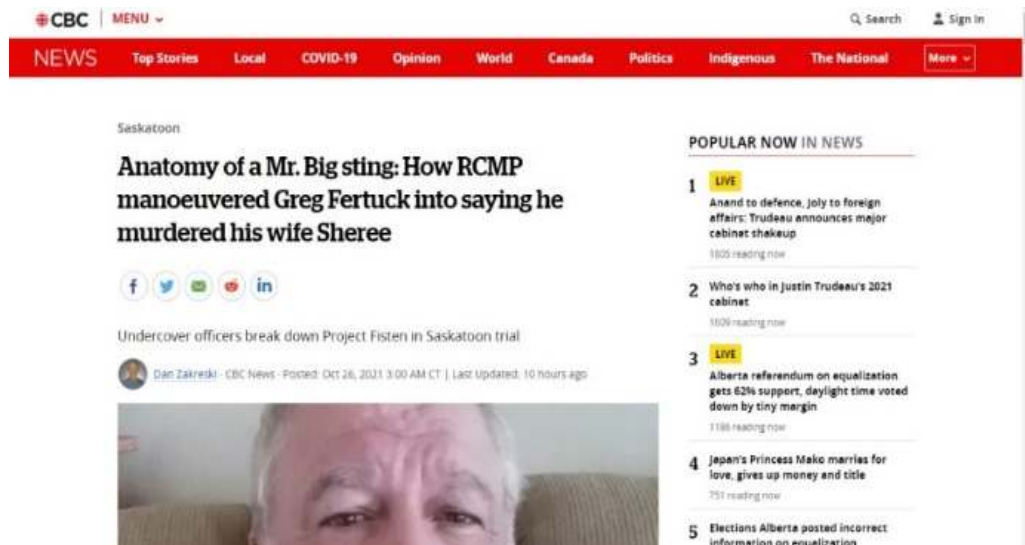
Figure 3 Anatomy of a Mr. Big sting: How RCMP manoeuvered Greg Fertuck into saying he murdered his wife Sheree (Source: cbcnews.com)

3) Use, the pointer words "this" or "this is it". Here's an example.
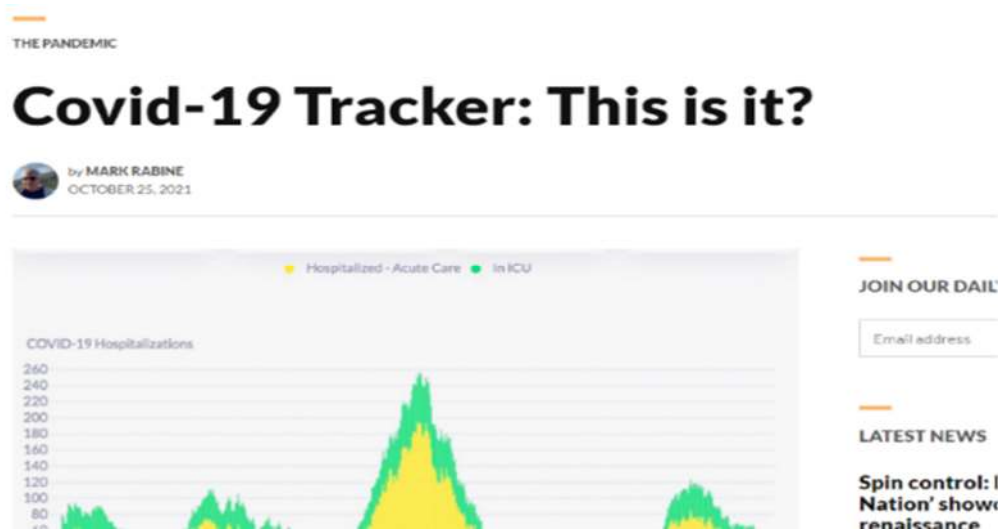

Figure4 Covid 19 Tracker: This is it? (Source: missionlocal.org)

4) Use the word fun (interjection), Wow!, Cool!, Duh!, Gosh!. And the most commonly found are clickbait titles by using pointers and words of exclamation (interjection). (Shakespeare 2014) Here's an example.

Figure5 Wow! Momo is now Rs 1,225 crore company – Here's how it turned things around
(Source: indiatvnews.com)

Based on the theory, given a question item about the clickbait title in the questionnaire. Given 3 examples of news headlines and respondents must choose which of the headlines displayed which is a clickbait title. As a result, as many as 85% of respondents or as many as 34 respondents can distinguish news headlines that use clickbait. The rest, as many as 15% or 6 respondents are still mistaken in understanding news headlines that use clickbait.
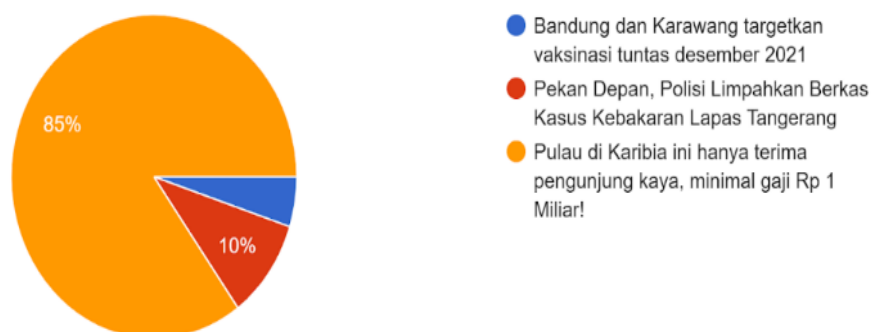

Figure6   Percentage of Clickbait Title Identification

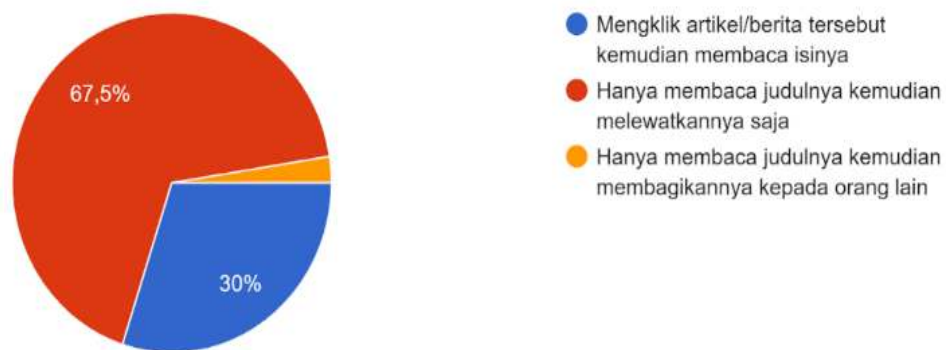## 2. Respondents' Responses Regarding Clickbait

Figure7 Percentage of Respondents When Encountering Clickbait Articles

The description of the questionnaire results states that the use of *clickbait* in *online* media is very widely used, it raises problems where the majority of the content of the news spread does not match the headline displayed. Respondents stated that when they see sensational titles, they tend to feel curious to access the news or article. This statement can be inferred from the results of questionnaires that have been distributed. A total of 67.5% or approximately 27 respondents agreed with the statement.
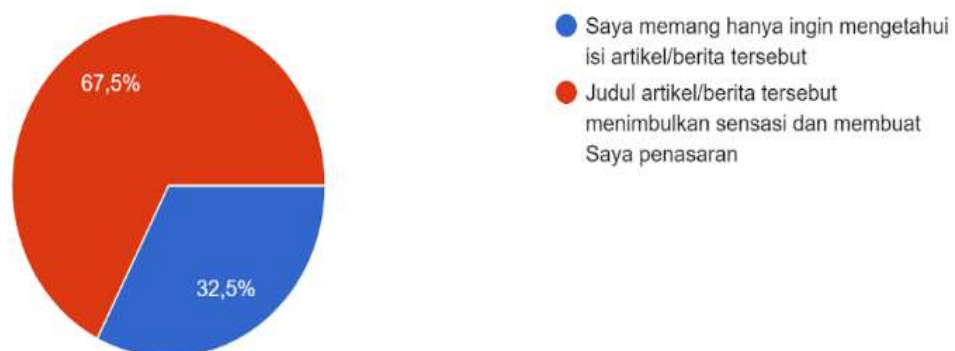

Figure8 Percentage of Reasons to Access Clickbait Articles

Figure9 Percentage When Respondents Have Read Clickbait Articles

Clickbait titles have a special style of news writing, which at first glance looks like a delayed news message (also called an inverted pyramid). This makes the web page visitors restrained with curiosity on the page visited and makes the news page ask the visitor to read the entire news up to the last line, but with a delay of satisfaction until finally reaching the entire information. When the reader has reached the end of the news or information, the reader does not get the news they expect.
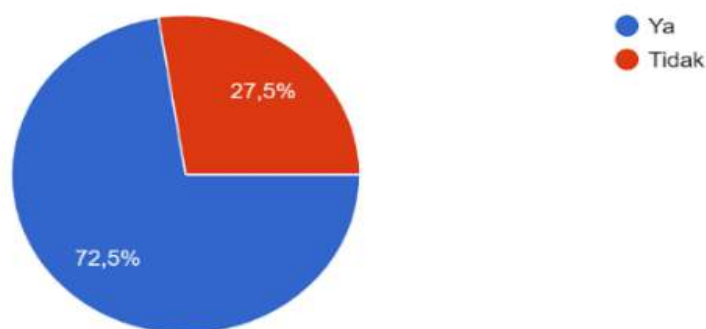
3. Level of Trust in the Media

Figure10 Percentage of Trust in Online Media

Through the diagram above can be explained, that 72.5% of respondents are less likely to trust online media while 27.5% still believe in online media despite news headlines that contain clickbait elements. Because of the clickbait phenomenon, respondents feel that online media is no longer concerned with facts.

information that relies only on sensationalism titles but does not think about weighty content.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data collection in the form of questionnaires that have been distributed before, as many as 80% or equivalent to 32 respondents have understood the intent of clickbait in simpler language. According to the source clickbait is a new thing related to online media as a new medium, which of course can change the old journalistic tradition. In understanding clickbait articles that must be understood first are the characteristics of the clickbait article itself. Clickbait articles basically have a characteristic by using pointer words and hiding the content of the content shared. As a result, as many as 85% or equivalent to 34 respondents can distinguish news headlines that use clickbait. Respondents from online media users feel that the use of clickbait in online media is very widely used, it results in the majority of news content that does not match the title displayed. Furthermore, the reason online media users still read the article even though the title of the article contains clickbait, because they feel stifled with curiosity due to delayed satisfaction from the content of the article they read. Therefore, 72.5% of respondents no longer trust online media, while another 27.5% still believe in online media even though it is often found titles containing clickbait.

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