

Simulation; Constructing the Behavior of the DPRD Sumenep

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ABSTRACT: Members of the Sumenep DPRD prefer to polish their image in the media rather than show their true behavior. It is done to give a positive impression in performance, show good work and performance and gain public legitimacy. Thus, the simulation room became the choice of the council members as introduced by the French figure Jean Baudrillard. The purpose of this study is to describe the formation of simulations carried out by members of the Sumenep DPRD in the public space, both through documentation alone, and media publications, including reviewing the real reality behind the simulation. To review this study, the researcher used a qualitative method with a critical approach, in order to be able to reveal the simulation of board members. The research was conducted by interviews and media text studies. In the study, it was found that DPRD members prefer to use simulations, in their activities, such as recess, working visits, and in media publications rather than showing real reality. The use of simulations is considered ideal enough to form the image of Sumenep DPRD members in order to get good recognition from the people of Sumenep. So, most of the activities carried out are only used as content.

KEYWORDS : Simulation, Jean Baudrillard, Image, Media, DPRD Behavior

INTRODUCTION

The world of simulation has become a trend used in the world of politics, including in Indonesia. The goal is to form an image. The world of simulation was also carried out by members of the House of Representatives and the House of Representatives. That's because, humans today live in a world full of simulations, almost nothing real outside of simulation, nothing real and replicable. Industrial culture disguises the distance between facts and information, between information and entertainment, between entertainment and political interests, (Novi Indah Sari, 2020).

In politics, the simulation polished by political actors is close to a truth and can create a new reality. It is considered capable of decomposing a positive image. Politicians are interested in shaping political image through political communication. The political image that is formed can give birth to social stability by meeting the demands of the people. Politicians seek to create and maintain political actions for a satisfactory image, (Mughtar, 2016).

The term simulation or simulacra is a theory to describe a symbol or sign and image that appears in reality for which there is no reference in the truth of its existence. However, this simulation creates an image, sign, and symbol that then becomes part of a reality. The concept was introduced by Jean Baudrillard. For Baudrillard, today's interactive communication tends to ignore the real reality, (Setiawan, 2023).

Therefore, the political arena is like a polling space, which is measured by the community through the image that is formed. Thus, politics, as insinuated by Gunawan Muhammad is considered as stalls, stalls, stalls and *show room*. Politicians prefer to display attractive, more effective activities than social achievements and ideas, (Hasan, 2009). So, their duties and functions seem to be neglected, politicians do not display, ideas, ideas and achievements they obtain, preferring to show off activities that polish their image and forget the real world.

Currently, politicians prefer to show content that raises their "values" rather than the real work done. It turns out that the content presented attracts more empathy from the public. Symbols or signs (*sign*) preferred by the public, especially in Indonesia. The signs presented in the form of photos, videos and in other forms are reproduced by the community, then considered to be a truth, without validation of reality. Thus, in Jean Baudrillard's view, the sign or symbol has been far separated from the object it represents, (Arsita, 2018).

The presence of symbols or signs through the simulation is expected to be able to present a positive impression or good image. The politician wants to perform very well in front of the good, by showing a good self-identity. So, modifications to the content you want to display are always interesting, and sometimes hyperbole is exaggerated. Photos and language are over-assembled. Automatically, the meaning is multi-interpreted due to excessive construction. This language game is considered to be beyond reality and makes the construction so realistic in the life of real people, even though it is false, (Fitrianti, 2021).

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The use of simulations to show a positive image and good performance is also carried out by members of the Sumenep DPRD using simulations. Politicians at the local level want a positive impression of the activities carried out. This is because council members always want to appear stunning in front of the public. The members of the DPRD began to polish their image through activities that were held with symbolic games through the media with a social setting that had been constructed.

This is something natural, because political image is quite important to form oneself. Because, through political imagery, politicians hope to gain public sympathy and trust. The majority, politicians who only prioritize image, usually do not keep up with their own quality, only hack nihilism, (Hasan, 2009). At least, through the simulation, it can provide the best political image space, it is hoped that it can increase electability. Political image refers to the public's perception of oneself and the party to influence public support and views of politicians, (Aminulloh & Fianto, 2024).

Meanwhile, political imagery is a way used by politicians and their political parties to make a good impression on the public. The political imagery in question is the imagery carried out in the mass media, social media, traditional media and public relations to create and strengthen political messages, (Rahayu Ramadani & Mifda Hilmiyah, 2019). So, it will present an image of self and a good political image for the members of the DPRD.

So, council members must regulate all information that will be conveyed to the public through agenda setting. Where the activities held have been modified, edited and improved. Individual members of this board play roles according to their desires, depending on which stage they are on. A good simulation display requires consistency so that the image is maintained. With the hope of achieving the self-image that the individual wants, (Alvin, 2019).

One of the activities of Sumenep DPRD members that is often polished in the form of symbols is recess activities. Where recess activities are only used to take photos. This includes working visits and supervision. The three activities of the DPRD were only presented in symbolic and formal forms. The activity was only polished to be used as content to present a *good and authoritative* performance.

Recess is only done for a short time to take photos and videos. Similarly, surveillance and kunker, just to make content seem to work well. Where the documentation has been polished and refined to look better. The activity was only used as a symbolic activity. It was considered by Baudrillard to be one of the characteristics of today's society, contemporary. Prefer to give birth to signs, codes, symbols and other models, known as *simulacra*. From that space is built an image but it does not have a clear reference to reality, being in the pseudo-truth of the space is born *hyperrealitas*, (Akhlaq, 2024).

Documentation in symbolic form, photos and videos of DPRD members were then uploaded in the mass media (conventional) and social media. In the current era, social media is considered the most ideal to be used as a means of information for council members. Because, through social media, it can transcend space and time, not limited to one region but global, (Minan Jauhari, 2017). Therefore, the use of digital technology is the mainstay of council members to present a positive symbol of the activities carried out.

Because, in its development, the media plays the most role in shaping simulations. The media presents information that has been modified, and is set to give birth to good, exaggerated, hyperbolic messages. Paste closer to the community, help to look caring and royal and other symbol models. It is all done just to support the image and popularity of the council members. Everything is exposed neatly, well and beautifully through mass and social media.

Therefore, the media is a driver for the presence of simulations. Because, in Baudrillard's view, the media has been dominated by symbols. And, people prefer to be in an imaginary world, cyberspace. In fact, the real world began to be obliterated, (Naamy, 2018). It happened due to the development of today's technological media. This is one of the attractions for council members to take advantage of social media. It can boost the political image of DPRD members in the eyes of the public.

Members of the Sumenep DPRD are seen with ideal performance when in the media room. The expected space is able to arouse empathy, sympathy and public attention. Thus, it can form a new reality, hyperreality. The constructed reality is replaced by a representation that no longer refers to the actual reality. Because, the imitation turns out to be more trusted by the public. In the world of hyperreality, society lives in a system of representation that creates an artificial world in which reality has been reduced to images and symbols that are constantly reproduced, (Ampur & Toanubun, 2025).

The ideal performance in the public space through social media does not show sometimes does not show true self-identity. The behavior of DPRD members in the simulacra room is not the same as the real thing. There are those who choose to be calm, relaxed and ignorant and even do not look so good as when appearing on the surface, through the mass media. So, the mass media makes the political image of the Sumenep DPRD members more dominant, and it is produced consistently. So, the public believes it. Therefore, this research is important in describing the simulated space that is constructed, with real reality.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research method uses a qualitative approach with critical analysis. The data in this study was obtained through observation, interviews and documentation which included a study of media texts. Where in the media text there are several slogans created by council members, through pro-people phrases and the like. Through the research carried out, it can be described the construction of simulacra that forms members of the Sumenep DPRD, including through mass media and social media. Thus, it can

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form a positive image to council members. Seminars for the resource persons used in the research are members of the DPRD, secretariat staff, and the people of Sumenep Regency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher will present the findings of research conducted so far. The results of the study show that the members of the Sumenep DPRD in carrying out their activities are mostly produced for the sake of image only. In polishing the image, the council members used simulations to present a new reality. Meanwhile, the actual reality is not presented. The substance of the activity becomes non-existent.

Simulation in terms of meaning is an imitation of a situation. Simulation is identical to what is not. While reality is the physical world, it is an experience experienced by humans in real life. This field was described by Jean Baudrillard, where today's human being is in a simulacrum, where there is no longer any real and pseudo, (Asharudin, 2023).

Baudrillard identified the characteristics of simulacra that are simulations still reflecting true reality, enveloping and changing true reality, concealing the existence of true reality, and not having no connection with any reality so that in the end it forms a simulacrum or reality itself (hyperreality), (Himmah, 2020). From the truth of the simulation formation it is pseudo.

From the results of the research data, the work of the council members is more dominant in the form of symbols, which are represented by photos, videos, which are uploaded through mass media and social media. In turn, the work of the Sumenep DPRD became a symbolic work only. This is because the substance of the activity becomes unimportant, changing to the world of simulation. It is done as a form of gaining public empathy and legitimacy. The use of symbolic work is natural, because one of the characteristics of postmodern society, as Jean Baudrillard said, is the application of simulation.

For members of the Sumenep DPRD, the creation of simulacra has a better impact on public perception. Because, behind it there is an image construction that is being built. Despite the cycle of manipulation of truth in the simulation. From the findings in the field, the simulations carried out by the council members still represent the real reality, but only a little. However, it is quite dominant that has gone through the process of setting, editing and framing that is made to build an image. In fact, there are those who have formed hyperrealism, detached from facts, forming a new reality.

In the context of Hyperreality, Baudrillard describes the media as having ceased to be a reflection of reality, but to be reality itself, or even more real than reality itself. (Al-ayyubi et al., 2022). Members of the Sumenep DPRD are already interested in forming a new reality, without reference to the real reality in their lives with media channels. It is as if they are pretentious, pretentious, even though the characters actually show the opposite.

One of the dominant activities in the creation of simulations is recess activities, or absorbing the aspirations of Sumenep DPRD members. Where recess is a routine activity for DPRD members that is carried out three times a year. It was done using APBD (Regional Expenditure Revenue Budget) funds. Ideally, during the recess, council members come and meet with the community, conduct ceremonies, and dialogue as well as listen to the complaints or aspirations of the community in their constituency (dapil).

Through the recess, the people's representatives can find out in more detail the conditions of the community in their area, so that the implementation of programs and development evaluations can be optimized and utilized by all levels of society. In addition, recess is also carried out to maximize the performance of council members, (Wenas et al., 2021). This obligation is contained in Law Number 17 of 2014 concerning the MPR, DPR, DPD, and DPRD (MD 3 Law) that members of the Provincial, Regency/City DPRD, among others, have the obligation to absorb and collect the aspirations of constituents through periodic working visits, accommodate, follow up on the aspirations and complaints of the community, and provide moral and political accountability to constituents in their constituencies.

So, at the ideal level of recess, it is two-way communication between DPRD members and constituents who lead to becoming council members. Recess is considered a medium of communication between the community and members to convey their aspirations. Various aspirations were conveyed to council members, ranging from the problem of damaged roads, building construction to the issue of assistance that was sometimes uneven, and were reported in the plenary session.

In addition to absorbing aspirations, it is also part of shaping the identity of DPRD members. Where the recess shows council members present in public spaces. Apart from all that, the expectations of the community can be included in the RKPD (government work plan). Ideally, the aspirations of the community in the form of ideals, desires, desires and various desires that are so strong in achieving something, including achieving the success of the goals desired by the community.(Kurniasih, n.d., 2021.). It must be done by the council members.

However, in practice -according to the data in the field-, the recess activities took place briefly and were structured. Council members come to the location only to fulfill documentation. The documentation in question is a photo to complete the report and administration only. Council members come and take pictures in public while holding a mic, or a photo is presented while providing assistance. Council members sometimes show up for just a few minutes to fulfill a "seasonal" political ritual and then go home.

For the photo council anggotas is a sign of symbolic presence. Meanwhile, the substantive ones are not paid much attention such as complaints and aspirations. Besides being a report, photos and videos of the presence were uploaded in the mass media and

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social media as evidence of implementation. There are photos that have been edited and set, as well as with the framing text that has been prepared. Then it was uploaded in the media. This is what Baudrillard said was a simulation, photos and videos of the presence of council members in recess.

"The recess is not too long in the community. The most important thing is photos, other documentation and banners. This is because the photo will later be made a report in the plenary session. Moreover, the proposals submitted are not much different from previous recesses. So, be present for a while and take a photo. After that, say goodbye and leave the event," said council member, R. (October 20, 2025)

"The important thing is that there are photos, then the recess has been completed. Photos are authentic evidence in the implementation of the recess at the DPRD," said one of the DPRD staff. (October 30, 2025).

In Jean Baudrillard's view, what the council members did was a simulacra of the second stage. Where recess activities are considered a mere routine activity for the sake of documentation. Simulacra in this stage works through the ritualization of signs. But, it is still related to the real reality. Then, the council members, through the media and public relations team, did photo and video editing as well as framing that had begun to detach themselves from the real reality.

The photos and videos taken during the recess began to be sorted and selected to find the best performance. The editing and framing process is carried out to gain public trust, even though it has begun to be separated from the real reality in the implementation of the recess. The best performance is polished and reengineered to look attractive. So, the sign has begun to be separated from the real reality. While there is no longer a deliberative process, but rather as a "sign of recess": there are enough photos, banners, and news to give the impression that the function of representation has been carried out.

In the next phase, recess activities begin to be distorted from the actual reality that has begun to be hidden. In the news, for example, the recess was attended by many people, took place formally and orderly. There was a good dialogue. In fact, the reality is that there is nothing substantive, dialogue is not carried out, recess is only carried out by way of documentation. This phase is what Jean Baudrillard considers the fourth phase. Where the real reality has begun to be hidden, what appears is only on the surface.

In this phase, the recess is no longer used as a means of political communication, but a means to give birth to symbolic signs or work in forming a good image for council members. This is because there is no dialogue formed in the recess, but it is made hyperbolic to show if the recess activities are going on as expected. That was the fourth phase in Jean Baudrillard's simulation. Where the sign has formed a new truth, known as hyperreality.

Where the signs and symbols shown by the council members have surpassed the real reality. The dominance of the sign through photos and videos has created a reality, which turns out to be false. Understandably, hyperrealism does blur the line between right and wrong, real and false. Truth fuses with falsehood, the past blends with the present, facts intersect with engineering, signs merge with reality, lies compound with truth. (Ridwan et al., 2018).

Other activities that show the existence of simulations by council members are working visits outside the region or official trips (person), field visits in the form of supervision of government activities or projects. In that activity, the activities carried out no longer highlight substantive matters, but are the same as recess only presenting photos with writing while visiting or monitoring the implementation of the project.

Council members in carrying out these activities are more interested in displaying photos, as a representation of the activities carried out. When you are at the location of the activity, take the best photos and then post them on social media or Whatsapp's story. Through the symbol in question, the council members are showing their activities to the public, if they are carrying out kunker activities. In the symbol, there is no explanation of the substance of the activity. Because, the activity was only carried out for a moment.

Not only that, the council members also exhibited various photos and videos that have been edited and taken the best. Council members make videos through *cap cuts*, and the like to make the appearance more captivating, the most attractive photos are taken as if they are interrupting, holding a mic or holding hands. The symbol indicates that the activities carried out are serious. However, the substance of the activities held was never shown to the public. So, all that appears is photos and videos of activities.

The edited photos and videos were then posted on the Sumenep DPRD social media and belonged to their respective council members. It is produced continuously by board members, and repeatedly. The more often council members upload on social media, the more they know the public. And, what is done will give a positive image as a working council member. That is the simulation of the council members in building an image. Coupled with the "bombastic" media reports, it seems to be done seriously and marathon.

Council members are aware that the more people receive positive information, the more positive images there will be. In fact, if the message often reaches a positive one, then performance, and self-identity will be better in the eyes of the public. Through this symbol, positive love will give birth to sympathy and empathy. Council members want to minimize negative images while serving as council members. Positive identity and performance are seen in the symbolic behavior of the board members.

In fact, the respondents received information that members' activities outside the city were carried out within two days and were usually only done for a few minutes. The consultation only lasted about an hour at most. The formal activity was only briefly

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used as a place to hang out, walk, vacation and activities outside the office. Most importantly, the council members have received photos as a report to get state financing. And can get a budget.

A similar pattern also occurs when DPRD members conduct a surprise inspection (sidak) in the form of supervision to the location of regional projects. Supervision contains preventive and curative institutional actions that contain the meaning of evaluating and supervising local government programs, (Amiruddin Matutu, 2018). Supervision is one of the duties of council members, in addition to budgeting and legislation. That way, the function of the council can run optimally.

In the context of Sumenep DPRD members, supervision is only used for documentation in the form of photos and videos as in recess and kunker. This is because it is only done for the sake of media reports and "content". Usually, supervision to the field is carried out only for a short time. Usually, the council members only play at the location of the activity to take photos or videos and then use them as WA status. In fact, it is shared in a number of groups. It is purely symbolic politics because it does not present the substance of the activity.

"Keep coming to the location to take photos as a report, go around the location for a few minutes. Then go home. The arrival of several council members ensured that the ongoing project was running in accordance with applicable regulations. While the photos taken are only as reports as well as to be excelled in WA, then on TikTok. It must be the best photo, and one that has the impression that the members are monitoring in the field. It will definitely be followed up after going to the field," said council member, WD. (Interview, October 14, 2025).

The surveillance activities usually involve the mass media. The media publishes information if the board members have carried out maximum supervision by finding irregularities. Actually, the media present had also set a narrative to be published, and it was done by the members of the council and public relations of the DPRD. There is already an agenda setting made. Usually in the form of releases and advertorials issued by public relations. So, the narrative is conditioned by the Public Relations team. The media writes with almost the same narrative and benefits "board members".

The existence of public relations is important to maintain institutional relations with the media in order to create a good image. Behind its functions and duties, public relations plays a role as a communicator and also to build the image of an organization or agency. He also has an obligation to foster and develop harmonious relationships with his public because this is an activity to build good harmony. (Al habib & Suratman, 2018). Public Relations is leading the media to build opinions about the "correct" work of DPRD members. Even though there is no check, thorough evaluation, and no follow-up, just ceremonial.

Meanwhile, videos displayed on social media have also undergone a process of aestheticization, curation, and editing so as to form an ideal image of a politician. The results were shared to WA, social media. It is done as a form so that all activities carried out by council members are consumed by the public. The public trusts the photos, videos shown as a real reality. So, that's where the full simulacra process occurs. Hyperreality is created in the public. The public believes that the council members have carried out recess, visits, and supervision.

In that context, Baudrillard referred to it as political hyperreality, where the act of surveillance and surveillance is reduced to a performance intended for the media and the public. When the public is more familiar with the performance of the board through photos than the results of real supervision, the simulacrum has worked fully. More deeply, referring to Baudrillard's view, the Sumenep DPRD has entered a stage where performance simulation is stronger than the performance itself. Politics is no longer about facts, but about signs that are circulated and trusted by the public.

Media Text Analysis

In addition to the activities, there are other behaviors of Sumenep DPRD members that indicate simulation in Jean Baudrillard's perspective. Namely, the mass media is repetitive, normative, and full of slogans. The media often carry statements from council members with slogans of struggle. The slogan shows a sense of concern for the community. Through the media, council members often declare that they will fight for the rights of the people, fight for the equitable development of the islanders, and fight for the aspirations of the results of the recess and other slogans.

www.mediapribumi.com, 2024 wrote one of the statements of the Deputy Chairman of the Sumenep DPRD, Dul Siam. Where the PKB politician is committed to fighting for the interests of the community. One of the struggles in the news is fighting for the rights of the islanders with the aspirations that have been conveyed to them. So that there is no inequality in development. The mandate of council members will be maintained by fighting for all other aspirations. That has become the mandate of the people of the archipelago that I must fight for. (<https://mediapribumi.id/jadi-wakil-dprd-sumenep-dulsiam-komitmen-perjuangkan-kepentingan-masyarakat/>).

The popular slogan also appears every time the recess report is read out in the plenary session. Where DPRD members are always committed to overseeing the aspirations of the community to be included in the RKPD, then become an APBD program activity in the following year. Such slogans always appear in every media report. The narrative wants to show that the members of the council are working for the benefit of the community by accommodating the results of their aspirations. As published by

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madurapost media. (<https://madurapost.net/dprd-sumenep-desak-pemkab-tindakanjuti-aspirasi-reses-jalan-rusak-listrik-kepulauan-hingga-abrasi/>)

Narratives in the form of slogans that are always contained in the media are quite often echoed in media reports. It was conveyed repeatedly by the media. News about fighting for the aspirations of the community has also been raised by council members in the previous period, 2019-2025. Where the aspirations of the community must be accommodated by the government to be used as a program in the next APBD (<https://www.madurazone.com/2019/05/02/hasil-reses-banyak-tak-diakomodir-dewan-sumenep-geram/>).

The majority of the most often raised themes are local media. So, the recess and slogans conveyed by DPRD members are not only used as meaningless boasting. The slogan conveyed in the local media news is only a narrative. This is because the news does not include concrete data, follow-ups, policy evaluations, or measurable legislative results. The narrative of "fighting" becomes a symbolic keyword that keeps repeating, even if it does not yield maximum results. The people's struggle is just a slogan, because poverty in Sumenep is still high. According to BPS data, poverty reached 17.03 percent as of September 16, 2025 (BPS, 2025).

Including in the archipelago, development inequality still occurs. Recently, residents of the Sapeken Islands, a small Pagerungan village asked to be given 24-hour electricity supply to PLN and the government. This is because electricity is a basic need (media madurazone, 2025). This includes infrastructure that has not been repaired. For example, recently there have been repairs to damaged roads in Raas District that have not been repaired, even though the roads on the mainland are smooth (Kabarmadura, 2025).

Similarly, with the narrative of the struggle to control the results of the recess. The slogan was repeatedly published in the local media of Sumenep Regency. In fact, many of the proposals presented in the recess of DPRD members were not accommodated. The reason is that the budget is limited. Moreover, for 2025 there is an efficiency implementation that can be used as an excuse. Meanwhile, the budget for the pokir (main idea) program has not decreased in the slightest even though it has entered the efficiency period.

Information obtained from respondents stated that the maximum recess proposal submitted by 50 DPRD members could only be accommodated at a maximum of 30 percent. This means that the results of the recess are only received below 30 percent, meaning that there are 70 percent who are not accommodated. Interestingly, the government accommodates many of the results of development planning deliberations (musrenbang) initiated by local governments. So, the slogan will guard and fight for it only *Sign Up* (symbol) made to raise a positive image in the community.

"In every moment of the recess, of course, the council members will oversee the results of the recess to be reported to the media. The goal is that the recess is not just a formality, but there are results obtained and will be made a program. However, in the discussion the dynamics certainly change. If the results of the recess are accommodated by the budget team and the budget body, the maximum is only 30 percent. There are still many musrenbang carried out by the local government. However, council members still have a poke that can be used as an activity. We will definitely fight, the struggle is only 30 percent," said the DPRD member.

"Of course, the statement that will guard those aspirations will definitely be fought for in parliament. The question of what percentage is accommodated is the strength of the existing budget. So, the council members are already struggling. And, always fighting for the people, but there is a government at the time of discussion. And, the government is a budget shareholder. Including for the benefit of the people and the islands. Fighting about results, it's called a struggle," said another council member.

The informant's statement shows that the "slogan" was conveyed to meet the needs of the content before getting the results of the struggle. Because, the results are not there. Development inequality in the archipelago still occurs, the portion of the budget does not show partiality for the people of the archipelago. Thus, In Baudrillard's framework, it involves the implosion of meaning, information does not bring new meanings, it just repeats the same signs so that the meaning disappears. The word "fight" loses its substance of struggle and turns into an empty sign. Where the results are not in action.

The slogan "fight" in Baudrillard's study is part of the form of simulacra. Although there are no results because narratives are not action-based. This can be categorized as included in the third stage of simulacra. Namely, a narrative that does not need action. Where the media constructs the slogan without including any indicators that lead to the struggle for the people. So, the truth becomes *absurd*, because it has no reference to reality.

The slogan produced by the council members is a simulation that has no direct relationship with the world of reality. This is because there is no definite data and actions in the slogan. Language and signs in the simulation seem to be (*as if*) becoming a real reality, even though it is an artificial reality. (Himmah, 2020). However, every time this artificial reality becomes public consumption, which has been symbolically reduced.

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Media, Simulation and Hyperreality

The simulation formed by DPRD members through the mass media and social media, which has been distorted from reality, has become so dominant for public consumption. In fact, those that have gone through the process of editing, framing, and setting agendas to produce good performance are more trusted than the real ones. The reality in the media is more real than the real thing. Imitations are more trustworthy and more alluring. Thus, there is no clear boundary between reality and representation. That's hyperreality.

The activities displayed by DPRD members, which have deviated from reality due to modifications, settings for the sake of content, both in TikTok, FB and mass media, turned out to be more trustworthy. The content in the media is far from the real reality. It is done only to show a good self-identity, attractive performance, and a symbol of political legitimacy, such as closeness to the community, concern and in other forms. The public believes it with a reality without validation of the real reality.

"Surely the content presented in the media has been set in the process. It is impossible to show it raw. Because, it will not look aesthetic and attractive for the public to see. In fact, there are staff who edit so that their performance as a board member still looks authoritative and close to the people. Therefore, the existing photos or videos are chosen first to show a positive impression, as a representative of the people. Because, if they don't perform well, there will be negative comments," said Z, a member of the Sumenep DPRD, (interview on October 10).

From the informant's statement, it shows that those who appear on social media and mass media have gone through an editing process. All of the photo and video documents were all chosen to be used as content that gave the impression to the public that the council members were working. The simulation was made to polish the image in the eyes of the public. It is done massively, in order to work intensely in the imaginary world of society. The media produces massively and simultaneously.

The media continues to be invited to participate in shaping the new reality through news that has been prepared in the form of a release by the DPRD public relations. That is so that the photos, narratives, and videos obtained can be conveyed to the public. Then the representation affects the world of public imagination in providing an assessment of the performance of the DPRD. Positive council work continues to be uploaded by the DPRD, so that there will be confidence if the council members do indeed work well.

In addition to mass media uploads, council members also use social media, FB, TikTok, Instagram. Through this media, the DPRD wants to change the mindset of the public to better their perception of council members. The fact on social media is formed by technological tricks, board members appear as if they are good figures. This reality seems to be believed at a certain level so that it can be just as real and even more real than the real reality.

"We believe what is presented by the media, not what is actually done. For ordinary citizens, watching media such as tiktok is the reality that happens. The council members successfully recessed, then the council members came to the recitation in quite Islamic clothes. For residents, there is no need to be complicated, and trust all the messages conveyed by council members through the media. And, that's what is trusted, not taken care of behind," said HN, one of the residents in Sumenep Regency.

That way, the simulation constructed by the council members through the media succeeded in influencing the community, or succeeded in forming hyperreality. Creating a new identity. The artificial ones become more believable, more alluring, and more acceptable than the real ones.. This means, in the world of hyperreality, society lives in a system of representation that creates an artificial world, a world in which reality has been reduced to images and symbols that are constantly reproduced,(Ampur & Toanubun, 2025).

This construction of reality is then called the term reality simulation process by the media. The result of this reality simulation process seems to want to state that everything produced or produced by the media in the form of information or news is a reality. Even though reality is something that is reconstructed to resemble reality, so that reality in this case basically no longer exists or disappears. (Goncig & Syahrul, 2021). So, the media is a strong driver for the creation of hyperreality.

In the era of hyperrealism, the reality constructed through the media has no definite reference, no meaning, logic and purpose, and use. Communication runs without referring to the real conditions of the community. Completely full of engineering just to create a reality that has no basis, (Nurhalizah, 2022). So, in this hyperreality, media technology controls the way of the human mind which is called theater *theater of mind*.

That way, the Sumenep DPRD will be more massive in using social media. This is because the public knows the board members not by direct interaction but by the introduction of the digital world, not the real world. The public no longer cares about its empirical reality, but what is seen in the virtual world produced through symbols, images and media narratives. Council members no longer speak on substantive activities, but on political performance. It is in accordance with Baudrillard's statement that "the real is produced from models that can be replicated indefinitely.

Image through Simulakra

The findings of the study show that the simulations constructed by DPRD members through photos, videos and text narratives turned out to have a good impact, especially in providing a positive image. Political symbols presented through the media give the

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impression of good performance, professionalism, and political performance in the form of closeness to the community. The simulacra room presents the faces of DPRD members in accordance with the desired ideal image. Moreover, the simulation has formed hyperreality through the media, which does not require a reference source.

The existence of council members in the simulacra space identified by Jean Baudrillard as a code or symbol present in the public space shows political legitimacy to the members of the DPRD. Through the symbols shown by the media, in the end, it gives a pretty good impression, because the polishing of the image in the simulation has been designed to show good political performance according to desire.

For council members to use, the media has succeeded in shaping public confidence in the digital world, so that it can become an ideal image construction. Each in which each individual expresses himself not only to meet personal needs, but also to communicate their identity to others. It is considered successful. It is the media that forms the ideal image, which is seen in the virtual world, although it is not the same as the empirical one, (Deni Aries Kurniawan¹, 2025).

"As a board member, content and news in the media are enough to help build a positive image. Not only known in the constituency but also outside the constituency. This is because the media is universal in its spread. From that, the work and performance and behavior of what is done are known to the public. As a member of the council, he is not only silent, but does many activities. It is shown in every content uploaded on social media, including releases packaged by the secretariat," said Z, a member of the Sumenep DPRD. (October 10, 2025)

So, board members create content for the sake of political imagery alone. Activities and performances so that they are known to the public, consumed and become a truth. The hope is that the public will believe the content displayed by the media, even if it is by "lying" through simulations, which do not resemble real reality. At least, the blackmail council members are satisfied with the consumption of self-identity for popularity and self-electability as political figures.

Of course, with the content presented by the public, they can have a dependence on the "reality of the deception". Then unconsciously it is continuously consumed which in turn has acknowledged the truth. In fact, what appears in the simulation is only a pseudo-reality, which has a distance between reality and falsehood. It's just that people are not aware and have more of what appears in that imaginary reality, (Saumantri & Zikrillah, 2020).

"We believe as a community that what is displayed in the media and social media is done by the council members. Such as going down to the project site to conduct supervision and others. So, we the community believe that council members work in accordance with their functions, have worked in accordance with the interests of the people," said R, a resident of Sumenep, (October 22, 2025)

From the statement of the informant, the content through the media that has been simulated has a positive impact on the positive image of Sumenep DPRD members. The identity of council members is increasingly populist and certainly supported by symbolic political activities and performances shown through social media, and banners and posters that are installed. Council members have a positive impression in the public space. That way, symbols and signs dominate public perception in producing images. The artificial reality defeats the symbolic reality presented by the council members. Automatically, the image is no longer a construction of a reality but of hyperreality.

Image is an impression obtained from the level of knowledge and understanding of facts. Imagery is an image of information about an object, it can be in the form of people, products, institutions and others. That's as expressed by Philip Henslowe (2000). Imagery is an image of information about an object, it can be in the form of people, products, institutions and others. The more often a person or an institution is informed of its kindness, the more its positive image will increase and vice versa, (Hikmat, 2018). It is done by council members by producing images through kintinyu simulations.

Indeed, in forming an image through simulation by the council members, it seems hyperbolic. Namely, displaying symbols or signs that raise a new reality, even though the real reality does not exist, ignoring a fact of reality. Where the public is not important to evaluate the work and performance of DPRD members. The public no longer asks about the real success of the business, but the perception of the appearance shown by the media. Through this, it opens up space for the creation of public legitimacy through symbols conveyed through the media.

However, it must be admitted that the image built through the simulacra space is more likely to be stable because it has been standardized. Where the uploaded content has gone through careful planning, editing or refinement. The desired symbols are well controlled, so they are not affected by the actual reality. Whatever happens in the empirical world does not have any influence, because for the members of the council the reality is well set to show a good identity.

CONCLUSION

From the discussion of the results of the research that has been discussed above, it can be concluded that the behavior of Sumenep DPRD members in carrying out the function of representation in accordance with their duties, legislation, supervision, recess or absorption of aspirations is more dominant in displaying symbolic politics. Where the council members prefer to show their activities through signs, photos, videos and documentation that operate in the simulacra space. That way, substantive behavior

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is not so much noticed. Of course, from the basis of the political behavior of the Sumenep DPRD, there has been a shift from the substantive to the symbolic.

Social media has become a communication channel in producing and distributing representations of political work for Sumenep DPRD members. This is because the media is the one that works to help simulations, which manipulate the truth. Where through this simulation the truth becomes absurd, pseudo. Because, the reality that seems real in the media is a reality that is believed to be true.

In addition, the documentation of the work carried out by members such as in recess activities, working visits, and field supervision shows the dominance of the second to fourth stages of simulacra. Although there are still some who use the first stage of simulation, there is no longer the majority. The reality that is built on average has undergone reduction, editing to look good. Photos and videos only serve as a sign of political presence that replaces deliberative processes and substantive scrutiny.

In many cases, the activities were brief and formal, but were represented in the media as intensive, participatory, and pro-people. At this stage, empirical reality is reduced and covered by visual representations, until finally giving birth to hyperreality, an artificial reality that the public believes to be the truth. Included in the mass media narrative. Members of the council often raise slogans that fight for the interests of the people, controlling the aspirations of the people. The slogan only operates in the form of a linguistic simulacra. This is because it is not supported by measurable performance and policies until finally the slogan becomes a fact. It was an implosion of meaning, a symbol that had no new meaning, Baudrillard said.

Thus, this study confirms that the political practice of the Sumenep DPRD has entered a hyperreality phase, where performance simulation is more dominant than the performance itself. Political reality is produced through symbolic models that can be replicated infinitely, as Jean Baudrillard put it. Consequently, the public tends to accept and trust the image displayed by the media without questioning the substance and real results of political work. These findings show that political imagery no longer reflects reality, but rather replaces it, thus forming a simulacra-based political legitimacy.

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