PERCEPTION OF LOCAL JOURNALISTS IN WEST NUSA TENGGARA ABOUT THE MEDIA INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the perceptions of local journalists in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) province, especially Lombok. This type of research is qualitative and the method used is phenomenology. The process of collecting research data was carried out through observation, and in-depth interviews. The researcher also conducted documentation and literature studies relevant to the research. The researcher analyzed the stages of organizing data, noting important points, describing meanings for informants, grouping statements into several units, developing descriptive text, detailing the experiences of informants more deeply through descriptions, and drawing conclusions. This research found that journalists who work in online media think that the print media industry still has a special niche of customers from the educated to government employees, but if they are not creative then print media will decrease. On the other hand, print media journalists feel that the print media industry will survive as long as regulations regarding local government advertising spending do not change. This regulation benefits print media because the value of their advertising partnership is much higher than online media. This research also found that print media journalists understand the condition of their company’s dependence on local government and this relationship pattern is not sustainable. Meanwhile, online media journalists understand that their work culture in this industry demands more work while there is very little support for social and health insurance, especially for those who are contributing journalists.

Keywords
industrial media
Perception
journalist

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1. Introduction

The media industry in NTB is currently growing increasingly. Since Lombok Post and Suara NTB were founded, they have become the two dominant newspapers news in West Nusa Tenggara. Lombok Post which is affiliated with Jawa Post and Suara NTB which is affiliated with Bali Post have long been media partners of the government, legislature, judiciary, and companies in NTB. On the other hand, the development of media in NTB does not stop at these two media. Data from the Press Council show that there are only six online media in NTB, the developments in communication and technology have created many online media in NTB that have not been recorded by the press council. In addition to local online media, various national online media have also expanded the reach in NTB, some of them such as Kompas.com, Tribunnews.com, Idntimes, Antaranews.com and others. This data can be seen on data.provntb.go.id.

Online media are increasingly appeared in various regions, including in West Nusa Tenggara due to the transformation of our current society into an information society. Damanik (2012) describes the information society as a state of society that actively participates in actions related to technology and information. Quality of life, social change, and economic development depend on information. If people do not master information and technology, they will be classified as passive people in the world of information and technology. The media, as one of the important elements in the information society, is thus experiencing changes. The concept of media has also changed. Aoyama & Castells (2002) explained that it is undeniable that the concept of media also follows changes in the current information society era.

In the context of the rise of online media in NTB today, dynamics also appears in the life of journalists in NTB. The migration of journalists from print media to online media journalists is unavoidable. (STL), for example, one of the senior journalists at the Lombok Post print media has now turned into an online media journalist. Apart from that, there is also (WW), who was previously a journalist for the Suara NTB print media, now he is also an online media journalist. Of course, not all journalists decide to move from print to online. (AH), for example, prefers to stay in the Suara NTB print media rather than move to online. (TON) also prefers to stay at the Lombok Post in print media.

The phenomenon of migration of journalists and those who remain in print media is related a decision-making process. It can be determined by various indicators, one of which is the perception of journalists about online media and the print media itself. There are various explanations for perception, Mulyana (2015) describes it as an internal human process that makes us have the possibility to choose, organize our behavior and environment. Meanwhile, Rahmat (2011) describes it as an experience about a particular object or event that is collected and interpreted as a message. Based on these explanation, journalists’ perceptions of the online media industry can be defined as the internal process of journalists when experiencing events or seeing objects in this context the media industry which is then interpreted as a message to choose or organize their behavior and environment.

In the transition process to move from print media to online media, there are things that cannot be separated from the perceptions of journalists about the online media industry. On the other hand, the journalists who choose to remain are also determined by their perceptions of the media industry. Several studies on the perceptions of journalists and audiences have been conducted. One of the highlights is Berganza et al.’s research (2017), which examined the perceptions of 390 journalists from 117 media in Spain regarding their professionalism. The
research results that journalists tend to perceive themselves as people who represent the public to speak out rather than as monitors of power, spreaders of the status quo, instructors for audiences, infotainment journalists, and a media for the dissemination of objective information. Meanwhile, so far there has been little or no research on journalists’ perceptions of the online media industry. Dirgahayu’s research (2015) regarding journalists’ perceptions of investigative journalistic activities using a quantitative descriptive method by using 20 journalists as a sample tries to provide an overview between journalists’ perceptions and the journalistic activities they have carried out. The results of this study indicate that all journalists understand journalistic activities both normatively and practically. Journalists never did investigative journalistic activities, but not all journalists like investigative coverage. One important thing that can motivate journalists to carry out investigative journalistic activities is support from the company where they work.

The research that is probably the most similar to this research is Cassidy’s research. P (2007) who examined the number of US citizens who in their daily lives access the internet and read news through online media. Cassidy is interested in finding out how the perception of print journalists and online journalists on news credibility in online media. Of the 655 journalists who became the sample of the research, Cassidy found that journalists positively perceive online media including the credibility of the producing news. Journalists who work in online media show a very significant positive perception and even consider online media to be more credible than print media. Not only those who work in online media, but journalists who work in print media also respond positively to credibility. This research also shows that the workplace of journalists does not affect their perception of the credibility of news in online media. Even though this research has a similar topic to the three studies above, there are fundamental differences from a methodological perspective and focus of study. Methodologically, the three previous studies used a quantitative research perspective by collecting data from samples. Even though this method can be used to see general perceptions, it can analyze more deeply the data and the meaning that exists in journalists. For this reason, this study uses a qualitative perspective to look further at the experiences and meanings that create the perceptions of local journalists in NTB regarding the rise of online media in NTB.

Besides there are methodological differences, space and time, this research also has differences in the treatment of the object of study due to differences in context and dynamics. Previous research examines the perceptions of journalists in the contexts in Spain, the US and Indonesia. However, the focus of objects and events that are trying to be studied is different from this research. Berganza’s research focuses on the professionalism of journalists which is definitely related to journalistic law and ethics, while this research covers a wider area, namely the media industry but in the context of NTB. Dirgahayu tries to focus on perceptions related to one type of journalistic product, namely investigation, while this research does not only look at one type of product from online media. Cassidy examines the perceptions of print and online journalists more specifically regarding the credibility of their news. Even though this research will also cover this, there are other reasons and motivations that are important and meaningful for journalists regarding the credibility of working in the context of NTB.

Interpersonal communication is very closely related to perception. In short, interpersonal communication can be interpreted as a process of communication between two people. This communication is very close to our daily lives, such as when we communicate with our wives, relatives, lecturers, or people around us. In the context of this research, a journalist communicates with the people around them and often it is done alone. This communication is
also often done by journalists when conducting interviews with their sources, relatives, readers/audience, or even their company leaders.

Mulyana (2015) describes interpersonal communication as communication between people who are face-to-face. This communication allows participants to respond directly both verbally and nonverbally. On the other hand, interpersonal communication is communication that has a very broad scope and is carried out almost every day. Therefore interpersonal communication can also be carried out by individuals who are under certain organizations. Patriana (2014) revealed that the Surakarta Correctional Center also conducts interpersonal communication through their personnel to gather information from the families of the convicts. This research shows that not only as a person, institutions can also carry out this communication through their representatives who come directly to meet clients, customers, or people who have an interest in an institution. Meanwhile, Rahmat (2011) explained that interpersonal communication is closely related to the process of receiving information, processing, storing and reproducing it personally/interpersonally. Interpersonal communication includes several things, namely sensation, perception, memory, and thinking. The sensation is the process of capturing stimuli, memory is the process of storing information and recalling it, and thinking is the process of manipulating information to respond and meet needs. While perception is the process of changing sensations into information. Perception is a process when a stimulus has been given, someone will catch it which is then called a sensation, when we turn this sensation into information, that's when perception occurs. Rahmat (2011) explains that perception is the activity of concluding and interpreting messages from experiences, objects, and events.

Furthermore, Rahmat explained that perception is determined by functional factors and structural factors. These functional factors include needs, experience, and other things related to human personal. It means that there are many factors related to the human personality that may determine one's perception. Meanwhile, the factor structural that determines perception includes physical stimulus with all the effects it causes. In other words, understanding someone cannot be done only by separating the facts but also looking at the whole, such as the context, the environment, to the problems faced by a person. In the context of this research, journalists are confronted with objects or events related to the media industry. Their perceptions cannot be understood only by exploring personal experience but also by looking at broader facts, namely the context, the environment and the problems faced by journalists. In other words, this research tries to understand journalists' perceptions of the media industry more broadly.

The media industry referred to in this study is the process of production, distribution to media consumption. Several references interpret the media industry from a different perspective. Ri'aeni & Sulistina (2017) define the mass media industry as a creative industry that will continue to develop according to the needs of knowledge, art, and entertainment. Permana & Suzan (2018) define the media industry as the management of mass media in its existence in the middle of the market. In this perspective, the market becomes the focus in defining the media industry. Therefore, the economics of mass media and media conglomeration are also an important concern. Gillian Doyle Dalam (havens & Lotz, D, 2017) explains the media industry as an industry that makes intellectual property, packaging, and maximizing income by selling it as much as possible to the public.

Based on several definitions of the concept of the media industry, it can be concluded that the media industry is on the same side as business or other industries, but has significant
differences because the media industry allows intellectual property/creativity to be continuously produced, distributed, and widely consumed. The media industry is also related to how the media works in getting the maximum profit to compete and defend themselves during competition. Furthermore Havens & Lotz. D (2017) explains that there have been significant changes in the media industry related to the way the media works. This change can be described by two things, namely the information economy and mass customization.

The concept of information economy refers to work dependence on the manufacturing sectors of physical goods decreases while new sectors such as the information economy become more important. Work relating to the information economy is defined as a job that involves symbolic manipulation such as designing, calculating, rearranging words, images or sounds. Meanwhile, mass customization refers more to the adaptation of a commodity to a more specific context and/or local market. It means that the target market is no longer broad but varied and targeted for individual consumers or groups that have the same economic, political, or cultural preferences. In the context of this research, journalists are seen as people who work in a world where the information and customization economy is a growing market. Thus, the researcher does not only look at personal experiences but also the context of the media industry that is currently happening in NTB and is also being experienced by local journalists in NTB. This research wants to examine how the perceptions of journalists in NTB about online media and print media from the experiences that have been through by journalists. This research is important to know the dynamics of mass media in NTB. Knowing journalists’ perceptions of the media is also important to map the strengths and weaknesses of each media where journalists work so that anyone who wants to become a journalist can choose the media that is considered most suitable for him/her.

2. Method

The study of perception in communication science is basically very close to the psychology of communication. In addition, research on perception cannot be separated from interpersonal communication carried out by humans. Therefore, research on perceptions is mostly conducted with a quantitative or positivist approach. However, research methods using a constructivist perspective are also possible. This study uses a constructivist paradigm with qualitative research methods. Qualitative research methods are complex methods, involving fieldwork, collecting words and pictures, and analyzing information inductively. On the other hand, qualitative research must remain focused on informants and write down the process of using expressive and persuasive language by Creswell (2014). Meanwhile, phenomenology in this study is used as a method and not as a theoretical basis. Research with the phenomenological method is research that focuses on examining phenomena and meaning for individuals, based on studies on philosophy of phenomenology, using the established procedures and ends with the essence of the meaning of Creswell (2014) of a phenomenon and meaning that is interpreted from the experience they experienced. The subjects of this research were local journalists in NTB who chose to migrate to online media and those who choose to stay in print media. The object of this research is the meaning and experience of journalists dealing with the phenomenon of the growing media industry in NTB. Researchers determine informants using purposive sampling, namely by selecting informants who can provide answers that are following the object and subject of this study clearly and cooperatively. The primary data of this research are the results of interviews and observations of journalists.
While secondary data is in the form of relevant research documents with a study. As an exploratory qualitative study, the design of this research method aims to obtain valid data at the news text level as well as at the socio-cultural context level. Because of that, the data collection and data analysis techniques used aim to meet the needs of the two layers. Data was collected using the technique of interview depth, observation, and documentation. Data analysis in this study refers to Craswell's (2014) phenomenological research data analysis method intending to understand journalists' perceptions of online media based on their experience of the media industry in the context of NTB. For this reason, the procedure for analyzing the data in this study is briefly described as follows:

Create and organize files for data: In this first stage, the researcher organizes the data files that have been collected from interviews, observations, and documentation.

read through the text, make margin note: At this stage, the researcher reads the text that has been produced and then the researcher records the important points that the researcher identifies from all the existing data. Describe the meaning of the experience for researchers: In this data analysis stage, the researcher describes the meaning of the experience for researchers after conducting interviews and observations. Find and list statements of meaning for individuals, Group statements into meaning unit At this stage, the researcher tries to group the meanings obtained into several units. Develop the textural description of the " How " phenomenon: At this stage the researcher developed a descriptive text about how the phenomenon occurred in the context of journalists' perceptions of the online media industry. Develop an overall description of the experience the "essence": At this stage the researcher develops an overall description of the experience in more detail, in other words, the most essential things. Conclusion: At this stage, the researcher concludes all the previous stages have been carried out.

3. Results and Discussion

Base on data released by the NTB Provincial Government on data.ntbprov.go.id in 2020, there are at least nine local and national print media in NTB. complete data on print nad electronic media in NTB can be seen in the following table.

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The development of media in NTB can be seen from the gap in number of print, electronic and online media. Data on number of online media in 2020 released by data.provntb.go.id can be seen in the following table.
In 2021, the number of media collaborating with the NTB government became 173 media. This increase in data shows the rapid development of media in NTB. Thus, displacement of journalists from print media and online media is very common. It should be noted that there is no accurate data that can show the extent of penetration of journalists moving from print media to online media. However, this phenomenon is clearly felt among journalists.

In general, journalists who choose to stay in the print media are aware of the rapid development of the media industry in NTB, especially in Mataram City. Informants see the changes that are happening and they are currently facing as something that cannot be avoided. Thus, they need for innovation in the print media industry to survive in the competitive media...
industry, even though until now the print media is still taken into account in decision-making and policy, the media is heavily involved. "Media is currently growing rapidly" (CEM). "The media is still heard by the public, meaning that the media is involved in making decisions and policies" (TON).

Phenomenologically, the journalists who commented indicated that their experience so far had told them that print media was still an important source of information in NTB. Although they are aware of quite a lot of challenges for print media in the future, they are still optimistic that print media will have a place in the people of NTB.

Based on the experiences of the informants, this study found several things. First, print media journalists are of the view that print media production processes tend to spend more time, money, and effort when compared to online media. Even so, the productivity of print media journalists is no less than online media because according to them, to be said to be productive, each media has its standards. "Lombok Post journalists must publish 4 stories to be said to be productive journalists" (TON). " Where I work, every journalist is targeted for three stories a day, but if you want to be productive in my opinion journalists must be able to produce five to six stories" (CEM). These statements indicate that productivity for journalists who work in print media is not the same. The experience of working in a different office makes their perception of productivity different.

Second, the print media distribution process requires a longer time than online media. In addition, the print media industry requires more human resources and workers than online media. In reaching the readers, print media through the printing process and then distribute it directly by messengers (newspaper deliverymen) to institutions or customer addresses. Thus, the function of the messenger in the process of distribution and access to information by readers is quite decisive. The faster the newspaper arrives at the customer’s place, the faster the reader’s access to the information presented. All journalists share the same view regarding the distribution process for newspapers taking longer than online media. This indicates that there is awareness within journalists that time and the distribution process are very important in this industry. They think that online media makes the media industry grow because the distribution process is changing.

Third, related to the audience, print media journalists assume that print media readers tend to be the upper middle class while online media targets the general public. "If most of the readers of newspaper media are from the upper middle class if online media can be accessed by everyone" (TON). Print media readers rely more on institutions, and rarely do people personally buy newspapers on the side of the road. " Mostly customers are government institutions and companies. Now it’s rare for people to buy newspapers at crossroads" (NDI). The statements of these journalists are quite reasonable. Print media customers in NTB are indeed dominated by government institutions and companies. In terms of education, people who work in government institutions and companies belong to the upper middle class. The large number of print media customers from private institutions and companies cannot be separated from the cooperation and media relations practices carried out between the media and companies and vice versa. Based on some of the general assumptions of journalists related to the processes of production, distribution, and consumption, it can be seen that there is optimism among journalists when comparing print and online media, especially in terms of readers. "We have our readers" (TON).

Based on their statements about how they see the audience, the researcher sees that the informants see the audience only in terms of social class. Their awareness and perceptions...
show that newspapers are read by the upper middle social class and online media is read by all social classes. This perception results from the journalist’s experience in seeing the audience. It means that journalists who become informants do not have the perception that their audience is an integral part of themselves because their profession acts on behalf of their audience to gain access and certain advantages that other professions do not have.

Some interesting findings in this study are the perceptions of online media journalists when viewing the print media industry in terms of competition that must be more innovative and creative, print media must analyze the news more deeply in order to have something new to offer the readers. Researchers divide this perception into two. The first is technical perception and quality perception. Technically, online media journalists believe that there will always be readers of print media if there is technical innovation and creativity in presenting news. Meanwhile, in terms of quality, investigative coverage can be a choice of print media so that there are always new things offered to readers even though they have read the same issue through online media.

This technical perception concerns many things, for example, related to news writing, organizational/company work routines, technical presentation of news, division of tasks, and others. In technical terms of news writing, print media journalists are required to be more creative compared to online media so they don’t present news that is no longer interesting. It’s useless to print it, so you have to find another point of view or another angle from the news” (IDHM). Similar comments were made by other journalists regarding the need for print media to be more detailed and concise than online media. “In online, one issue could be some news while in print, maybe it’s more detailed, but it’s the same, the difference is when it’s read” (VKY). These comments show how creative the presentation of content is also needed by the print media.

Based on the results of the interviews, the informants indicated the perception that the print media is currently not creative and innovative enough in producing journalistic products. For them, if the print media does not adapt to the current developments in the media industry, it will be very difficult to survive in the middle of the industry. Perceptions about the problems faced by print media are not only in terms of the quality of the content offered but also related to the technical presentation, for example, whether to continue to use paper or innovate with other methods or materials.

Technical work routines also affect journalists’ perceptions related to productivity as journalists.” It was very influential, if at that time I was printed writing 4 news that was quite mandatory 3 news. If it’s online as much as possible, that day sometimes it can produce 8 news or 10 news according to the events of that day” (VKY). Standard deadlines between print and online media when producing news are also considered to have a significant effect on productivity. “Influent because online media requires speed and accuracy as well as accuracy where journalists are challenged when they get news directly, while print media has a deadline, for example at 7 pm or 8 pm” (RZA). The experience of journalists reveals that the online media industry is fast and dynamic. The routines and work culture of print media and online media are very much different. Journalists are allowed to produce as much news as possible whenever it can be done. This kind of work routine and culture makes it difficult for journalists to distinguish working hours, meanwhile, in print media, journalists are given regular work deadlines.

The perceptions of online journalists in terms of quality show that the quality of online media is not always bad and even the same as print media. “Yes, the point is that in terms of
"quantity it increases, if it's quality, I see a decrease in journalism." (ALA). The journalists' statements show different perceptions among journalists regarding what is called a quality journalistic product. The perception of journalists who tend to work longer as journalists see a decline in the quality of journalism in the online media era. Meanwhile, relatively younger journalists see no significant difference in the quality of their journalistic products. There is a lot of research on how journalists cover certain topics. For example, how do journalists cover politics, economics, crime, and sports? However, research on the profession of journalists and their position in interpersonal communication and mass communication has not received much attention. This study found that, from the experience of journalists, basically they are not aware that they are conducting interpersonal as well as mass communication in their work processes.

Based on the results of the interviews, the journalists said that their reporting process, from data collection, information, and writing to publication, was carried out every day. If referring to the concept of interpersonal communication put forward by Rahmat (2011) that interpersonal communication is closely related to the process of receiving, collecting, processing information, and conveying it back in a personal way. So, based on the experience of the journalists who interviewed researchers, all carried out interpersonal communication when reporting. Meeting with informants, interviewing, collecting data, and processing data to produce the data obtained to be used as news are processes that involve interpersonal communication practices.

The work of journalists is also not only in dealing directly with sources. Journalist work is a unique work that at the same time also relates to the public, in this case the audience. In the process of collecting data, processing data can be done interpersonally, but when at the stage of reproducing the data that has been collected and processed through messages and journalistic products, the context is different. The events that occur are no longer just interpersonal communication but mass communication. The experiences of journalists show that, even though their communications do not directly deal with the public / their audience because they have to go through the editing and editorial curation stages when their journalistic products are published in the system, they automatically deal directly with the audience. This kind of unique moment seems to only be owned by journalists and similar professions. Further research is needed to find out in more detail related to this.

4. Conclusion

The perceptions of local journalists in NTB regarding the media industry are divided into two, namely technical perceptions and quality perceptions. Technically, online media journalists believe that there will always be readers of print media if there is technical innovation and creativity in presenting the news. Meanwhile, in terms of quality, there is no significant difference between online media and print media. Online media journalists believe that investigative coverage can be a choice of print media so that there are always new things offered to readers even though they have read the same issue through online media. Technically, print media journalists view that print media production processes tend to spend more time, money, and effort when compared to online media. The print media distribution process takes longer than online media. In addition, the print media industry requires more human resources and workers than online media. Regarding quality, print media journalists think that there is no significant difference in quality. Print media journalists also believe that print media readers tend to belong to the upper middle class while online media targets the general public.
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