

Fact Searching in Investigative Reporting in Indonesia: A Case Study of Tempo and Gatra Magazines

SEPTIAWAN SANTANA KURNIA
Universitas Islam Bandung

SITI SURIANI OTHMAN
Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia

FIRMANSYAH
ENGKUS KUSWARNO
Universitas Padjadjaran Bandung

ABSTRACT

Investigative journalism is a new development in the Indonesian press and the study is at infancy. However, news magazines have investigated quite a number of scandals and problems in Indonesia during the Reformation era, post-New Order authoritarian regimes. This research examines fact searching activities at two main news magazines in Indonesia namely *Tempo* and *Gatra* in the process of producing investigative stories. This study deploys case study and an in-depth interview in its exploration of identifying specific processes involved in the process of producing investigative stories in these two news organizations. The interview was conducted with six informants including journalists at *Tempo* and *Gatra* news magazine, book authors and journalism analysts. The results of the study indicate that news magazines in Indonesia reveal various issues and cases, which are deliberately hidden to the community. The findings also demonstrate that the facts searching process encompasses several styles that effectively complement each other in news narration, especially with the particular concept, attitude, direction and effort to report its best to the society. This suggests that investigative stories in Indonesia news magazines emphasize the originality of news with in-depth coverage based on independent position, free from the influence of other societal entities, government's pressure, as well as from other interests.

Keywords: *Investigative journalism, reformation era, news magazine, Tempo, Gatra.*

INTRODUCTION

Investigative activities, in the life of the mass media, also play a role in improving society's economic life. Media investigative activities that unmask corruption and mismanagement of government bureaucracy are the instruments of monitoring the government's path towards working effectively and efficiently (Pate, 2013). Investigative practices in multiple countries, and media, have been studied multifariously (Carson & Farhall, 2018; Coronel, 2013; Gerli, Mazzoni, & Mincigrucci, 2018; Norsiah, Mohd Sobhi, & Nazialita Geynna Maharan, 2015; Kovačič & Erjavec, 2011; Kunia & Othman, 2019; Lanosga, Willnat, Weaver, & Houston, 2017; Stetka & Örnebring, 2013), and explaining each and every element influencing investigative reporting's production including in the post-truth era and the relationship with policymakers (Lanosga & Houston, 2017) in promoting democratic society (Abdenour & Riffe, 2019) including in Indonesia.