

Genderlect Theory in Online Prostitution (Case Study on Public Figure: Putri Amelia)

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Abstract: *This research uses qualitative approach and case study method to discuss sexism in online media reporting of online prostitution cases involving female celebrities in Indonesia. The purpose of this study is to explain how sexism involving female celebrities is featured in the news media online news sites. Primary data collection method is done with in-depth interviews and observations on two national online news sites, namely Detik.com and Tribunnews.com. While the secondary data collection method is done through in-depth interviews with online media policy managers. News analysis was carried out using the Gamson and Modigliani framing analysis methods. The results found that female celebrities who became online prostitutes were displayed as sexual objects and as news that was out of context and tended to be sensational. The reporting of these cases generally uses sexist words. This research also shows that online media coverage still lacks gender sensitivity.*

Keywords: Sexism, Framing, Prostitution, Online Media.

1. Introduction

The rapid development of Communications and Information Technology (IT) has had significant impacts on the core of people's lives, including the way the media reports facts. IT was created with the aim that the quality of human life would be better, which of course would make new way for new type of civilization. In the past, people sought information more reliably from print and electronic media, now information can also be accessed easily and quickly through cyber media or online. The nature of social media that is not institutionalized, there are no filters and controls have had both positive and negative impacts. One positive impact is that people are free to be creative in producing works without binding rules. Indonesia became one of the countries that felt the impact. One negative impact of social media is that it puts forward speed and sensation more than accuracy. This character causes online media to be of inferior quality, and if not critical, the public will also be led into unqualified readers. Journalist ethics in online media is very necessary and important then, because this is what will distinguish journalistic works from other writings. In addition, due to the lack of supervision by institutions or governments, some certain individuals eventually began to change the basic functions of online media such as the online prostitution business.

Online prostitution is developing fast as a result of the advancement of communication technology. Through social media such as Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter, the online prostitution business is growing rapidly, because the marketing process is easier, faster, has high privacy and seems safe from the supervision of police officers. The bargaining and selection process can be disguised by using the comment column or exchanging messages via Instagram, Facebook or Twitter direct messages. Usually the transaction begins with a friend request and exchange of messages, then

the ones with the business will offer online prostitution services to the public. People can also easily choose prostitutes according to their taste and financial ability. Bargaining transactions are also relatively easy, because the user does not need to come all the way to the place, simply by choosing directly to the prostitute's Instagram or Twitter profile.

As an Eastern nation that still upholds Eastern values, norms and customs, the online prostitution business really tarnishes the name of Indonesia. As known, prostitution is an activity that is contrary to moral values, norms and the law. Prostitution is a form of selling one's body, honor and personality to people to satisfy their sexual desires in return for payment [1]. The problem of prostitution is certainly troubling many people, because the negative impact of prostitution is very much, one of which is the transmission of venereal disease to the official spouses of users of prostitution services. The phenomenon of the online prostitution business is becoming increasingly phenomenal, because it also involves the public as well as famous artists and photo models. Instead of being a good example for the people of Indonesia, these public figures instead set a bad example. One of the public figures arrested by the police was Putri Amelia Azarahman, one of the artists who had been runner-up of Miss Tourism, also the Ambassador of Balikpapan Earth Hour in 2017, and also the Miss Lake Toba arranged by the Ministry of Tourism. On October 25, 2019, the East Java Regional Police's Directorate General Criminal Investigation apparatus arrested Putri in a hotel room in the Batu city area in Malang. In the raid, the police also secured a man with the initials AF, a resident of Bekasi, West Java, as a user of prostitution services, as well as a pimp with the initial J. After an examination, the motive why Putri Amelia was doing this illegal business was to pay off her debts.

In the midst of the pros and cons of the public looking at

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news of online prostitution of public figures in online media, the writers were then interested to find out in real terms, what exactly was happening in the community, related to reporting on the online prostitution business that involves female celebrities in online media. Online media are so tendentious to blame service providers, prostitution actors, prostitution users, or not even care, so this phenomenon is still a mystery in an interesting society still to be revealed. Moving on from this phenomenon it turns out there are differences between women and men in responding to and perceiving a similar phenomenon at the same time. Moving on from that problem, the writers are interested in choosing the title "Genderlect Theory in Online Prostitution (Case Study on Public Figure: Putri Amelia)".

2. Genderlect Theory.

Genderlect style is a part of intercultural communication theory that sees differences in communication styles between men and women in a social reality [2]. This theory teaches that basically a woman and a man have differences in speaking style and in the end they are also different in responding to and perceiving the same phenomenon at the same time. Therefore this theory needs to be conveyed because the research wants to reveal the differences in responding between women and men in a phenomenon. In a journal entitled Genderlect Style in the Mass Media Room (AJI Makassar Women's Journalist Case Study) written by A.Fauziah Astrid states that there are three main requirements in conversational communication both men and women, namely men communicate to confirm ideas, opinions, and their identity. Also to solve problems or develop strategies and talk to make people interested in him. While women talk to create and maintain relationships, they prefer to involve others in conversations because they need to be responded to, and show a high sensitivity towards others and also in a relationship [3].

In this theory Tannen also studies the differences in speech styles between men and women with the aim of promoting a harmonious and respectful relationship between men and women. In the Genderlect theory, there are several components that distinguish differences in communication between men and women, namely:

a) Private talk vs. public speaking.

Women usually use language relationship patterns, as a way to build good relations in negotiating. While men usually choose to maintain freedom and negotiate, and try to maintain the status of social hierarchy. In this context women more often vent, while men more often harbor. This is seen when in everyday life, women tend to associate their life stories with other people's life stories while men will usually tend to shut down when talking about themselves or personal matters. This aims to cover up his weaknesses and relate to the habit that men who like to talk about their lives are weak or weak men.

b) Status vs Connection

Male tend to care more about the status of their freedom, while women focus more on relationships. The difference

between men and women lies in the different points of view in the same situation. In this context women prefer to be cared for while men are uncomfortable if they are overly cared for or restrained.

c) Public vs Private

In public spaces, women prefer to talk and engage in private talks, such as vent. Whereas men prefer to govern, provide information, or ask for approval.

d) Metta Message

Conversations that are not spoken. The message is implied in the actual message. Metamessages can be seen from the tone of the message delivered in the form of nonverbal messages that are displayed, such as gestures and facial expressions. In this context an example can be taken when being lost on the road, women will tend to immediately take the initiative to ask the road to people or GPS, while men will remain clear he knows the way. This relates to the prestige of a man.

3. The Concept of Gender

The issue of gender is one issue that is always interesting to talk about. Many writings in the mass media, seminars, and also discussions raised this topic. Although it has become an interesting topic, many people still don't understand the true concept of gender. There are still many people who still think that gender and sex are the same thing. When we discuss the concept of gender, we must be able to distinguish between gender and sex. Sex is a biological difference while gender is a sex difference based on social construction or community construction. When examined from Indonesian in the Big Indonesian Dictionary gender is defined as sex [4]. This indicates that in Indonesian gender is the gender of male or female.

The concept of gender, which is a trait inherent in men and women socially and culturally constructed. For example, that woman is known to be gentle, beautiful, emotional, or motherly. While men are considered: strong, rational, male, mighty. The characteristics of the traits themselves are interchangeable traits. This means that there are men who are emotional, gentle, motherly, while there are also women who are strong, rational, mighty. Changes in the characteristics of those qualities can occur from time to time and from place to place. That is what is known as the concept of gender [5].

4. The Concept of Meaning

Greek thinker who lived in 384-322 BC, Aristotle, was the first philosopher to use the term "meaning". Aristotle argues that the meaning of the word can be distinguished between the meaning present from the word itself or conveyed by the subject. The concept of meaning is stated by Fisher as an abstract concept. The idea of meaning has attracted the attention of philosophers and social science theorists for 2000 years [6]. According to Djajasudarma, meaning is the link that exists between the elements of the language itself (especially words), whereas according to Palmer (1976:30), meaning only involves intralanguage elements. Meanwhile, Lyons (1977:204) mentions that studying or giving meaning

to a word is to understand the study of the word with regard to the relations of meaning that make the word different from other words. In this case, concerning the lexical meaning of the words themselves which tend to be contained in the dictionary, as lexemes [7].

Related to meaning, Jensen (1999), explains that reception analysis is a new perspective in the discourse and social aspects of communication theory [8]. Reception analysis that emerged as a response to the scientific tradition in social science revealed that the study of the experience and impact of the media on audiences should be based on representation theory and discourse, not merely using operations such as the use of scales in quantitative research and semantic categories such as in qualitative research. Reception analysis suggests that both the audience and the context of mass communication need to be seen as a separate social specific and object of empirical analysis. The combination of the two approaches (social and discursive perspective) is what later gave birth to the concept of social production of meaning (the social production of meaning).

The reception analysis approach basically sees the audience as active individuals rather than passively interpreting a text in the media. This means that the text in mass media can have different meanings depending on the awareness or the way individuals interpret the text that is influenced by the frame of reference of the individual. The premise of reception analysis is that media texts gain meaning at the time of the reception event, and that audiences actively produce meaning from the media by accepting and interpreting texts according to their social and cultural positions. In other words, media messages are subjectively constructed to individual audiences.

Reception analysis was introduced by Stuart Hall, an important figure in cultural studies, when explaining the encoding/decoding process. This analysis looks at contextual influences in the use of media as well as the meaning of the entire audience experience [9]. An important part of the reception in audience research can be concluded as [10]:

- a) Media texts are read through the perception of the audience, which shapes the meaning and pleasure of the media texts offered.
- b) The process of using media is the object's core purpose.
- c) The use of media is typically in a specific situation and oriented to social tasks that involve participants in the interpretive community.
- d) Audiences for certain genre media sometimes consist of separate interpretive communities that share the same form of discourse and frame of mind to make meaning of the media.
- e) Audiences are never passive because sometimes one can be more experienced than another.
- f) The method used must be qualitative and deep, look at the contents, reception and context simultaneously.

The strength of this reception analysis is to focus attention on individuals in the process of mass communication, respect the ability of media consumers and realize the meaning of different media texts [11].

Stuart Hall (1980) describes the encoding/decoding method to interpret public perceptions [12]. This method focuses on production, text and audience in a framework where the relationship of each element can be analyzed. Between the production process and the text carried out by the media there is an encoding stage which is then decoded by the public when they receive the text. Audiences solve media texts in ways that relate to their social and cultural conditions as well as the process by which they experience them. The meaning of media content by the public consists of three categories [13].

5. The Concept of Online Media

The emergence of online media (cyber) as a vehicle for communication in Indonesia has begun since the 1990s, and had increased in the 1998 reform era, as the development of information technology (IT) and the increasing freedom of expression of the people. At that time many community groups, such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), student alliances and other pro-democracy organizations built the web as a means of communication and political activities, including advocacy activities. Likewise among political parties, they are also working together to build a website as one of political communication strategies, especially in dealing with the 1999 indirect elections and the 2004 direct elections. This phenomenon, then engulfing the print media, who began to be tempted to use online media by creating news portals. There are three print media that started their appearance in the form of online media (online), namely the *Republika* daily (republika.co.id), *Tempo* magazine (tempo.com) and followed by the *Kompas* daily (kompas.com). But what they displayed was still limited to transferring the news in the printed version into the online version. Until then emerged *Detik.com* (1995) as a news portal pioneer, by implementing news practices that are very fast, real time, always updated every minute and focus on developing the concept of online journalism. Until 1998, cyber media penetration reached 10% of Indonesia's population or around 25 million people had accessed news through online media [14].

The digital era has influenced journalistic practices, not only in its journalism aspects, but also in the form and appearance of the media, from printing to digital.

Based on 2017 Press Council data, in Indonesia there are 1,755 online media news sites. Of these, only 211 followed the journalistic rules. The high number of news sites suggests that the public as an audience must be better prepared to face exposure to such a swift flow of information. In this situation, the people certainly cannot forget the critical power with consuming online media news. The critical ability of the community is needed because of the high emergence of online media, not directly proportional to its quality.

The practices of online media in Indonesia is still seen as leaving a problem, especially in the journalistic aspect, because it has not been able to display a quality equivalent to print journalism in applying journalistic standards, principles

and ethics. In fact, when referring to Law No. 40 of 1999 concerning the Press, particularly in article (1) on general provisions, it is explained that the online media is classified as the press category, namely as a social institution and a vehicle for mass communication which in its activities also upholds the principles of the press with carrying out journalistic activities which include searching, obtaining, possessing, storing, processing, and conveying information in the form of text, sound, images, sound and images as well as data and graphics and in other forms, by using print media, electronic media and all types of channels which are available. Thus, the practice of online media should also uphold journalistic principles.

From several studies conducted on online media, there are at least five trends that characterize online media. Kuskrido Ambardi (2017) concluded that the five trends are, first, always emphasizing the aspect of speed. Second, the truth that is being made (truth in the making). Third, sensation as a daily menu (sensationalism is a menu of the day). Fourth, Jakarta-centric and Fifth, practice the workings of public relations by twisting an issue. (Kuskridho Ambardi: Digital Journalism: The Contemporary Experience and Views of Indonesian Journalists: 2017). These five trends become the main points that can be used as points of criticism in consuming online media news.

Of the five trends, there are at least three prominent characteristics, namely speed, inaccuracy and sensation that characterize online media. So it can be concluded that online media tends to prioritize speed and sensationalism compared to the accuracy of an information. This character causes online media to be of inferior quality, and if not critical, the public will also be led into unqualified readers. Here, journalist ethics in online media is very necessary and important, because this is what will distinguish journalistic works from other writings.

6. Research Method. Research Approaches.

When compiling this research, the writers needed to make the research method as a guideline. With the research method, the writers can be facilitated in directing our research. So that the objectives and direction of the research are clear and can achieve the desired results. The purpose of the descriptive method is to systematically describe the facts and characteristics of the object or subject being studied appropriately. Descriptive research is "a research method that seeks to describe and interpret objects according to what they are" [15]

In this study researchers used a qualitative approach. According to some experts, the definition of a qualitative approach is as follows: Kirk and Miller [16] state that qualitative research is social science that has fundamentals that are grounded in human observation both in the region or in its terminology. Denzin and Lincoln [17] state that qualitative research is a study that uses a natural setting, which aims to interpret a phenomenon that occurs. The way to interpret that phenomenon is to use a variety of methods that already exist. Meanwhile, Jane Richie [18] states that

qualitative research is one of the efforts to present the social world, and also perspectives that occur in the world. This is demonstrated through the terms of concepts, behavior, perceptions, and issues about humans that are being studied. Based on the references of several definitions from some of the experts above, a conclusion can be drawn briefly that the qualitative method is one of the methods used by a researcher to study and understand naturally occurring phenomena experienced by the research subjects under study. This phenomenon can take many forms, for example behavior, perception, motivation, actions of the research subject.

7. Research Paradigm

The paradigm used in this research is the constructivist paradigm. The theory of constructivism is the antithesis of understanding that places the importance of observation and objectivity in discovering a reality of science prioritizing observation and objectivity in finding a reality in science [19]. This understanding provides the firmness of thought which states that positivism and post-positivism are wrong in expressing the reality of the world, and need to be replaced with constructivist understanding. The ontological understanding of constructivism states that reality exists in a variety of forms of mental construction that emphasizes social experience, is local and specific, and depends on the party doing it. This school believes that the epistemological relationship between the observer and the object is a subjective entity and is the result of a combination of interaction that occurs between the two.

Peter Berger, a sociologist, with Thomas Luckman developed this approach consistently. The basic assumption in this constructivist approach is that reality is not formed scientifically, but neither does it come down because of God's intervention. But instead, it was formed and constructed. Thus, the same reality can be responded to, interpreted and constructed differently by all people. Because, everyone has experiences, preferences, certain education and certain social or social environment, which to all of them will one day be used to interpret the social reality around them with their respective construction.

In addition, they see that reality is a symbolic formation through social interaction. The existence of symbols or language becomes important in shaping reality. Various groups with identity, meaning, experience, interests, etc. try to express themselves and then contribute to shaping reality symbolically. Social interaction becomes important in this process. Symbolic reality is a socially shared result. This approach is indirectly more focused on a specific scope. In the sense of only seeing how language and symbols are produced and reproduced comes through a variety of limited relationships between sources and speakers who accompany the relationship process. In simple language it only touches the micro level (self conception of the source) and the meso level (the environment where the source is located) and does not touch the macro level (political, cultural, economic system, etc.).

In the methodological application of the constructivist approach, we can see from the analysis of framing. One of the figures who contributed greatly to the development of framing analysis is William Gamson who consistently discussed to create a set of framing analysis methodologies. In addition to Gamson, there are many more figures who have contributed to this framing analysis, for example Robert Entman, Murray Edelman to Zon Pan and Konsicky.

8. Result of Analysis and Discussion.

From twenty informants, eleven males and nine females, data were obtained, which can be described as follows:

- 1) Regarding questions about the guilty party in an online prostitution case. The men firmly said everyone was wrong and did not add any other reason. Meanwhile, from the women's answer, even though they say everyone is wrong, they added "but we also have to look at it from a position ...". This proves that the Genderlect theory applies to the Mettmessage concept. Men will not give answers other than those asked, because they do not want to be categorized as soft or talkative men. Whereas a woman, she will take the initiative to see things from a different perspective. Even women will tend to reopen the conversation by asking the researcher back, "if in your opinion, who is wrong?".
- 2) Regarding question of the nature of knowledge and general understanding of online prostitution business news, all informants, both men and women, gave a yes, meaning that the informants knew and understood about the existence of an online prostitution business from media reporting.
- 3) Regarding causal questions, male informants tend to answer them straightforwardly and simply. This means that the informants didn't really think about it as something important for his personal life. While the female informants gave a slightly complicated answer. From these two informant answer models, researchers concluded that men were more rational while women were full of emotional feelings. This proves that the Genderlect theory is valid and proven true, namely the concept of private conversation vs. public speaking. When men are given a question, men will answer straightforwardly and concisely. While women do not. This is due to the habit of associating everything with a woman's personal experience according to Genderlect theory.
- 4) Regarding questions that are argumentative in nature, male informants tend to provide realistic answers even though they are slightly indifferent and solutive. While female informants tend to give serious answers, be a little emotional, judge and give solutions. From the two answer models, the researchers conclude that realistic men are solutive while women are seriously emotionally solutive. This proves that the Genderlect theory is valid and proven true, namely the concept of Status vs. Connection. Male gender has a tendency to care more about the status of freedom so the answers given are realistic. In accordance with the rational mind without being associated with emotions. This is because the Vanessa Angel case did not have an impact on his life or

the informant did not have a direct relationship with this case. In short, men will tend to be ignorant. While women are basically more focused on relationships, so the answers tend to be seriously emotionally solutive, because usually women have the habit of having greater empathy for a woman. This is related to the sensitivity of a woman. Even though they have no relationship or have no impact, women like to issue opinions like "if I'm in her position", this proves that women basically like to position themselves in the position of others, so that the answer will be more emotional.

9. Conclusion and Recommendations.

9.1. Conclusion

Based on the results of qualitative research with interview techniques, several conclusions can be drawn, as follows:

- 1) Online prostitution information has spread widely in the community because of the news that is still available from the mass media both print, electronic and online.
- 2) Online prostitution business information has provided a variety of perceptions in society, in which between men and women there are different perceptions. Knowledge, profession and economic background factors greatly influence people's perception.
- 3) Genderlect theory can be used to find out how people's perceptions of an issue are being highlighted. With this theory, we can examine how differences in responses or opinions from male gender and female gender in responding to an ongoing issue in society.
- 4) Although the Genderlect theory does not play a maximum role in the process of discovering scientific truth, but with some of the concepts possessed by the Genderlect Theory we can play a role in the early stages of the process of discovering scientific truth. Because the nature of the research is mini research, the findings found by researchers have not been maximized.

9.2. Recommendation

Based on the results of the study, we found several problems that have not been resolved, so researchers put forward some suggestions. These recommendations include the following:

- 1) The time available to conduct this research was very limited, so the technique of collecting data was done in an instant way which was an indirect interview via WhatsApp. Thus, the possibility of deviation (bias) of data must exist, so researchers believe this has an effect on unsatisfactory research results. In the future, it is recommended that we were to be given enough time.
- 2) The number of informants was limited, without detailed classification of informants, nor validity and reliability testing, according to Robert K. Yin (2011) informants for one case study are 25-50 people.
- 3) In Tannen's theory, we do not find answers about why men and women have such speech styles or dialects, for

example, men's speech tends to be open to conflict and women's tend to be close to conflict.

- 4) To get perfect results, it is necessary to design an ideal research, with survey methods and in-depth interviews involving more representative respondents, both from aspects of educational background, socio-economy, and profession.

In this study it was found that female informants tended to be open and associate questions with answers that were related to their personal and emotional lives. It is expected from the results of this study, that in the future for readers or informants in the field to be able to provide wiser boundaries in providing open answers such as linking with personal life, which is considered unnecessary.

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Author Profile



Novianti Sisilia earned a bachelor's degree in humanities from an Universitas Indonesia in 2012. She joined in-campus organizations (IKARISMA and IKPD) and also outside campus (Naposo HKBP Cibubur Cibubur and Galeri Foto Jurnalistik Antara).

In between her studies, she was an apprentice at the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2010, then took a journalistic photography basic class at Antara Journalistic Photo Gallery and graduated in 2011. During her studies, she was also a freelance contributor at Bravo Edutainment magazine. She is also active as a volunteer at the Hellowfest, Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan, Galeri Antara. In 2011 she became the Chair of the Antara's Journalistic Photo Gallery Workshop Exhibition Generation XVI Carpe Diem Workshop Exhibition. Also in 2011, she was entrusted by Oscar Motuloh (Head of Antara Journalistic Photo Gallery) to attend a Women-Only Writing Workshop with 5 selected women curated by Firman Ichsan (Chair of the Jakarta Arts Council 2009 - 2012) and produced a work entitled "Fragility and Survival of A Woman". From 2012 - 2014, she worked in the administration world at contracting companies, namely Timas Suplindo and Halliburton Indonesia. Liking new experiences, in 2015 she decided to turn around to the world of education where she learned many new things. Working in rural areas, makes the writer feel the need to develop herself in the field of communication and having the dreams to be able to change the education and worldview of the people of Pandeglang. Departing from that fact, she decided to continue her Master's education at the University of Persada Indonesia Y.A.I. Now she is the Head of Student Affairs at STKIP Mutiara Banten - Pandeglang.



Kiky Rizki Saptamathia obtained his Bachelor of Computer degree at STIMIK Perbanas, Jakarta in 2003. He began his career in the telecommunications industry from state-owned telecommunications companies to the private sector, having experience in various fields ranging from customer service, **Customer Relationship Management (CRM)**, business processes to Sales the private sector, having experience in various fields ranging from customer service, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), business processes to Sales and Marketing. His experience in many fields has shaped his personality to continue learning. In October 2013, he moved out of his comfort zone to enter the travel industry, especially Umrah and Hajj. This new industry turned out to provide another extraordinary experience, namely how to serve wholeheartedly and run a bureaucratic process related to the Hajj Umrah travel industry. Currently, he serves as the top management of the Hajj Umrah Travel. From these things, unlimited knowledge and communication are needed and it made his enthusiasm for learning arose. Finally he decided to study to add to the treasury of communication at the University of Persada Indonesia YAI majoring in Masters, Masters in Communication Studies.



Son Aji Wibowo obtained his Bachelor of Political Science (S.IP) in August 1994 with a concentration in Political Communication Science, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIPOL) UGM Yogyakarta.

Voluntarily in 1995, he began his career in the Air Force (TNI AU) as an Information Service officer with the rank of Second Lieutenant. During his career in the Air Force, he had a lot of experience in the field of military public relations, both experience in the field of Military War Operations (OMP) and Military Operations Other than War (OMSP). Assignments and education in the field of military public relations have been undertaken, both domestically such as the Ambon riots, Poso and the Aceh Military Operations Area (DOM), and abroad such as Thailand's Cobra Gold Exercise, Rajawali Audindo Australia and Elang Malindo Malaysia. As for military education that has been attended, among others, the Air Force Command School (Sekkau), the Air Force Staff and Command School (Seskoau), the BAIS Military Intelligence Officer Basic Course and the Elementary School. Various task challenges related to the advancement of the field of digital communication and new media, has encouraged him to continue learning. Although he already held the rank of Colonel with a strategic position in the Indonesian Air Force, he was still eager to learn. At present, he is the Head of Infonet Dispenau Division based in Mabasau Cilangkap. To improve his competence and answer the challenges of the task, he finally decided to continue his studies in the Master of Communication Studies program at the University of Persada Indonesia Y.A.I., Jakarta.