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News about the Sunda Strait Tsunami Disaster: From the Selection of News Sources to the Production Process

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Abstract

Journalists had to deal with varying information from government entities with power in the disaster sector when covering the 2018 Sunda Strait tsunami. Indonesian catastrophe journalism now faces new difficulties as a result of unequal and shifting information. This is especially true when it comes to respecting the rule that information should be presented quickly and accurately in order to mitigate disasters. This study aims to learn more about the journalism practices at KompasTV, CNN Indonesia, MetroTV, and Trans7 in the news production process as well as how journalists select news sources in emergency situations, particularly when a tsunami strikes the Sunda Strait. According to this study's findings, Indonesia's four top mass media outlets place a high value on issues including validating catastrophe information, upholding a journalistic code of ethics, and the skill of journalists covering disasters. Journalists rely on and trust information obtained from government organizations with power over disasters and other mass media. Because it is impossible to ensure the accuracy of the material posted on social media, journalists avoid and do not utilize it.

Keywords: sunda strait tsunami reporting, disaster journalism practices, news production, news sources

1. Introduction

At least ten tsunami catastrophes have occurred in Indonesia since 1990. Nine of these, the tsunamis in Flores (1992), Banyuwangi, East Java (1994), Biak (1996), Maluku (1998), Proud, North Sulawesi (2000), Aceh (2004), Nias (2005), West Java (2006), Bengkulu (2007), and Mentawai (1999), were disastrous and resulted in the loss of life and property (2010). The tsunami's effects included approximately 170,000 fatalities (Fauzi, 2020). Tectonic factors caused all tsunamis that occurred.

On December 22, 2018, a tsunami calamity struck the Sunda Strait. Java and Sumatra's respective islands are divided by the Sunda Strait. More than 430 individuals lost their lives in this tsunami, which struck without any early warning from the authorities and damaged coastal infrastructure.

The 200-meter inundation zone of the tsunami waves in the vicinity reached heights of 1-6 meters. The Mount Anak Krakatau cliff debris collapsing owing to increased volcanic activity and creating tsunami waves in the Sunda Strait was the cause of the tsunami. Research on disaster mitigation in the Sunda Strait region by Tubagus Solihuddin et al. reveals that the level of community readiness for catastrophes is still viewed as being inadequate, leading to many victims (Solihuddin, Salim, Husrin, Daulat, & Purbani, 2020). Ironically, given that there is an active Krakatoa volcano in the Sunda Strait, hazard prevention efforts are lacking. The tsunami catalog lists numerous tsunami tragedies that have occurred in the Sunda Strait over the years. The Krakatoa underwater volcano's eruptions in 416, 1883, and 1928, earthquakes in 1722, 1852, and 1958, and other geological events suspected of causing land failure in the form of landslides in the coastal region and on the seabed in 1851, 1883, and 1889 all contributed to the tsunami that occurred (Yudhicara, 2008).

The public will have a greater need for disaster news during an unpredictable time like a disaster. Mass media outlets were forced to cover disasters extensively due to the fast growing public demand for knowledge about them. According to Muzayin Nazarudin's research, Indonesian media outlets continue to report on calamities with enthusiasm. Most media outlets merely use disasters as "entertaining satirical stories," dramatizing them in various ways for the sole purpose of increasing their bottom line (Nazaruddin, 2015).

News about disasters resulting from disaster-related coverage, or can be referred to as disaster communication mediated by the mass media, generally consist of disaster warning messages and mass media news coverage of disasters (Rudianto & Anshori, 2020). News coverage of disasters usually gets more attention than other issues. Disaster coverage significantly influences or shapes the way citizens and governments perceive, understand, and respond to hazards and disasters (Alfani et al., 2021). At the same time, mass-mediated disaster coverage is limited because it usually involves messages created by a single source and disseminated to large audiences, with little opportunity for audience response and participation (P. Lestari & Sularso, 2020).

News about disasters has been conceptualized as a social process consisting of three elements: evaluation, dissemination, and response (Widyastuti, 2021). Evaluation includes the processes that occur from the initial identification of environmental hazards; dissemination is the delivery or transmission of threatening messages to the public; and response is a function of the public's assessment of the spread of news (Yue & Ju, 2021). For the mass media in Indonesia, this confusion of information from government agencies is a problem in reporting disasters. It makes it difficult for the mass media to report valid and accurate information (R. D. Lestari, 2019).

People living near the Sunda Strait experience this informational difficulty. Because the media, the government, and the Center for Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation (PVMBG) all present conflicting information about disaster words or the likelihood that the next disaster will occur, people are confused by the most recent information. "Fake" accounts that frequently present information that is far from the reality of what is happening or what will happen add to the uncertainty in the community.

The media are likewise affected by the community's misunderstanding (Hesthi Rahayu & Utari, 2018). The Sunda Strait tsunami is a challenging event for the media to accurately describe in terms of timing. Information from many shifting government agencies is to blame for this. The Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency (BMKG) issued a statement on Saturday, December 22, 2018 at 22:07 local time, confirming that the occurrence was not a tsunami. The BMKG did, however, alter the statement at 23:55. Through its Twitter account, BMKG declared the tidal wave at Serang, Pandeglang, and South Lampung to be a tsunami. This episode was brought on by Mount Anak Krakatau activity rather than tectonic earthquake activity.

The Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency and the Center for Earthquake and Tsunami reported that they had provided an early warning of strong waves from December 22 to December 25 before to the tsunami. The Center for Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation (PVMBG), a different government organization, reported that Mount Anak Krakatau erupted on Saturday (22/12/2018) at 17:22. Finally, it was determined that the tsunami was volcanic in origin rather than tectonic. This sets it apart from earlier tectonic tsunamis.

This makes it crucial to address the community's need for accurate information as well as its uncertainty over information that emerges after the disaster. The role of the media is required in this situation. As a result, this essay will examine how news is produced in the media, from journalistic standards to selecting reliable news sources.

Why is it important for us to understand how news is produced when a crisis strikes? because the media's role in crisis situations is vital, particularly throughout the mitigation process. A crucial component of catastrophe preparedness, response, and recovery is communication. Journalists and news organizations have important roles to perform in terms of safeguarding people and minimizing harm. The transmission of any warnings prior to a disaster and reporting on an incident after it occurs are perhaps the most basic of these (by describing what happened or what is happening). Additionally, journalists may be called upon before, during, and after an incident to examine mitigation and preparedness efforts, aid in long-term recovery, and promote resilience in both individuals and the community (Wardyaningrum, 2019).

The media must be closely watched in addition to playing a crucial part in the mitigation process since, on the other hand, it has the potential to spread panic and numerous "myths" that instill dread in the neighborhood closest to the catastrophe site. Before, during, and after such situations, the media can be extremely important. Because media accounts can misrepresent what occurs in a disaster and cause misunderstandings, it is important to watch and manage the media carefully. Myths that the media have produced may be the cause of poor media coverage (Isa & Urbanski, 2021).

This is consistent with research by Rudianto Nurdin on how Indonesian media coverage of disasters relates to disaster communication, which found that in an emergency, the media truly depend on reliable sources of information to ensure that the news that is broadcast serves the larger community (Rudianto, 2015).

Suryandari and Wijayani's research revealed that during natural disasters, the duration of vigilance, which becomes an early warning from government agencies, the importance of an information and media position, the dissemination of information about natural conditions, the extent of the disaster, and the time of vigilance are the most crucial factors. It is the duty of the mass media and other information providers to inform the public about catastrophe mitigation measures (Suryandari & Wijayani, 2021).

The importance of the media’s position is also related to how the media can build optimism into a need for disaster-affected communities. Research conducted by Filosa Gita Sukmono and Fajar Junaedi also provides a perspective on disaster reporting in Indonesia, where the media needs to prioritize optimistic journalism. A journalism model that encourages disaster coverage can display accurate information, hopes, and optimism for disaster victims (Sukmono & Junedi, 2018).

This article will discuss an important topic regarding the news production process and the selection of news sources that are used as references by the media in producing a coverage, in light of the issues surrounding the confusion of information during the Sunda Strait tsunami disaster and the significance of the media's role in the disaster mitigation process.

The novelty of this article also stems from the fact that none of the numerous studies discussed in the background illustrates the process of creating a news story on the selection of news sources that are used as media references, such as Kompas TV, CNN Indonesia, Metro TV, and Trans7 in the news, particularly in the case of the 2018 Sunda Strait tsunami.

2. Method

This research harnessed Bourque & Bourdon’s (2017) curriculum of social research methods and humanities, a basic qualitative approach. This approach is also popular in several fields of study where text data are manually analyzed. In this approach, several terms are known in the development of applied social research methods, such as QDA with narrative data (Michael Rich, 2002). Thus, this study uses a software-based qualitative approach for data structure, data analysis, and data reduction. The data in the study were sourced from structured and in-depth interviews with the media in Indonesia. We explored how the national media provided information about the tsunami in Pandeglang Indonesia from the perspective of journalism. In addition, the news was related to the disaster journalism approach in providing information to the public. The use of computer-based text analysis aims to integrate the two qualitative and quantitative approaches (Wegerif & Mercer, 1997) in a social scientific study (Roberts, 2000). This analysis is based on an in-depth literature review to determine research indicators. Then, the researcher builds a framework according to the categories and indicators in the research. Nvivo as an analytical tool is built on in-depth systematics by determining indicators from in-depth literature reviews.

By choosing the qualitative method as the approach used to analyze the data, this study uses a software-based qualitative research tool to multiply the qualitative data into quantitative data. As a research tool, Sotiriadou, Brouwers, & Le (2014) asserted that NVivo has been widely used and compared with other qualitative research tools, as it can answer basic questions from research. Edwards-Jones (2014) believed the use of NVivo in interdisciplinary research is a guide to starting a structured research phase. In NVivo, the stages of data analysis consist of; input data; making nodes and cases; coding steps, crosstab, data display, and data analysis. This research follows Dowling, Lloyd & Suchet-Pearson’s (2016) conceptual framework on a qualitative method using qualitative data from in-depth interviews (Baharuddin et al., 2022). Furthermore, we used NVivo as a tool of qualitative data analysis. This research combating a qualitative method on NVivo, as Brandão (2015) explains, that NVivo is to support to design qualitative method and deep literature with the clear and deep steps analysis.

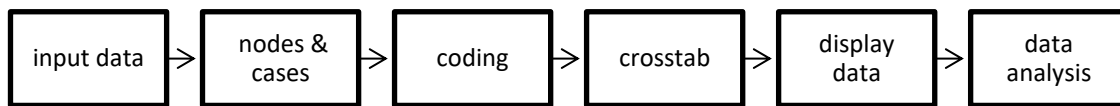


Chart 1. Stages Analysis Using Nvivo

3. Results and Discussion

Media Issues

In practice, journalists and news organizations are essential components of the disaster communication ecosystem (Wardyaningrum & Hutomo, 2022). Disaster journalism is the process of collecting and presenting news and information related to natural and human events that have occurred, are currently occurring, or may occur in the future (Houston et al., 2012). Disaster reporting can cover the basics of journalism, such as finding out about the event, reporting what was learned, sending journalists to the scene, providing background information, verifying information, correcting rumors or false reports, and gathering additional material (Goda & Abd Elmagid, 2019). Journalists are required to provide fast, accurate, and straightforward coverage (Dill & Wu, 2009). Reporting on disasters that impact the community can also be conceptualized as a process of ‘witnessing’ the event (Cottle, 2013).

When a natural disaster strikes, journalists play a significant role in several actions that are reassuringly possible to take, including (1) providing the public with timely and accurate information, (2) advising the public on what to do, (3) providing information about actions taken by the authorities and aid organizations, (4) conveying messages about the

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well-being of isolated or trapped groups, and (5) facilitating communication between affected people and their families (Jayasekara, 2015).

The Sunda Strait tsunami situation in Pandeglang is covered by the media as information, however the information does not address the urgency at hand. In reporting on the situation of the Sunda Strait tsunami in Pandeglang, this paper addresses a crucial topic. In the event of a tsunami, the media uses the government as its main source of information and reports on events as they really happen. However, this study concludes that the government misleads the media when disseminating information. The government does not offer early warning or quick and reliable information, which has an impact on fatalities.

Based on the findings of interviews with journalists from national media outlets that covered news immediately following the tsunami, they provided the response that the biggest problem at the time was erroneous reporting. Government authorities are the source of the false information. This is based on the strategy of assessing the potential tsunami's status. The information provided by the government was deemed false by four national media outlets who were directly involved in covering the tsunami, and subsequent media coverage followed. The four media are Trans7 (55.56%), Kompas TV (66.67%), CNN Indonesia (28.57%), and Metro TV (83.33%).

CNN Indonesia (71.43%) and Metro TV (16.67%) are the media outlets that provide information about emergency response. Because they had direct access to government information, the two media outlets were able to identify the key problems with their coverage of the Sunda Strait tsunami in Pandeglang from the perspective of emergency response. But because to a disagreement between the two entities over tsunami reporting judgments, the information was inaccurate. Pandeglang Sunda Strait. While this is going on, Metro TV examines government regulations in order to assess the probable impact of the Sunda Strait tsunami in Pandeglang.

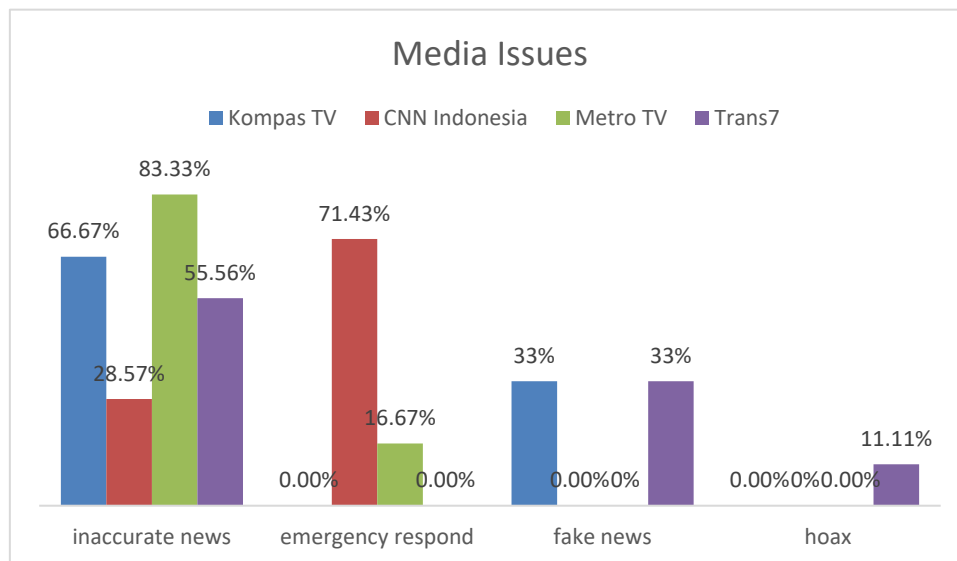


Figure 1. Percentage of News Issue Level

Fake news and even hoax news might still be found in Pandeglang's coverage of the Sunda Strait tsunami. The prevalence of fake news is 33% on Trans7 and Kompas TV, respectively. Trans7 continues to feature false news, with a percentage of 11.11%. Based on the four media outlets examined in this study, it was discovered that two major media outlets continue to publish news that contains untruths and even hoaxes. This finding suggests that even during a disaster, Indonesia's major media outlets continue to publish news that is not based on actual events.

This occurred because, at the time, neither of the government agencies could provide information on how the upcoming disaster would grow, such as aftershocks and other factors. Saptaji, a Trans 7 journalist covering the area at the time, clarified this.

The government did not provide clear information about the current conditions between the two BMKG institutions, and thePVMBGboth have information authority on this condition. The aftershocks that occurred in the Sunda Pandeglang strait were a form of response to rapid information, thus creating public panic. But the information became a hoax because there was no official authority that had the right to provide this information. During the earthquake, hoaxes and misinformation became the main factors for public panic (interview, 21/03/2021)

It may be said that these four media still cover non-normative concerns, albeit at varying rates, at the level of news issues. These four media outlets both presented false news about the Sunda Strait tsunami in Pandeglang with a disproportionately

high percentage. Trans7, on the other hand, emerged as the source of the most incorrect information. These unconventional topics are essentially a sort of sensationalism. In the event of a disaster, these issues take on a certain level of sensationalism, which the media values because it can raise the selling price of a news article. Academics view this as a type of media sensationalism (Fernando, 2010).

News Productions

News production is the process of producing news by the media through the editorial kitchen. In a crisis, information is needed quickly and accurately (Masduki et al., 2022). A fundamentally important role for journalists and news organizations is to deliver warnings before disasters and report incidents (describe what happened or what is happening). Journalists can also be involved before, during, and after disasters, examine mitigation and preparedness, facilitate long-term recovery, and promote resilience among individuals and communities (Fadilla & Sukmono, 3 C.E.). Journalists can investigate disaster mitigation and preparedness by liaising with emergency managers and other experts (Rosilawati & Fadilla, 3 C.E.), and participating in planning with government agencies and communities (Prestianta, 2022).

Journalists can also advocate for actions or policies that can reduce disaster risk, improve preparedness, or reduce impact by acting as a 'mitigation watchdog' (Suryandari & Wijayani, 2021). However, under these circumstances, the media frequently provides details to depict the scene's circumstances. Rapid information flow has the potential to disregard media products and journalistic norms. The news output of the four national media outlets differs, according to data processing results from Nvivo and interviews with journalists from the four media outlets.

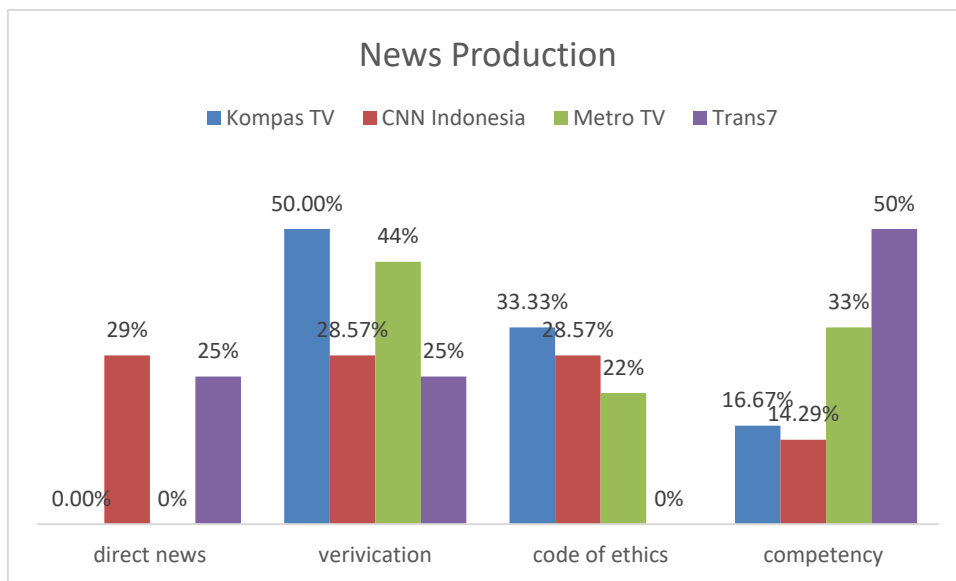


Figure 2. Percentage of News Production Level

In terms of direct news, Trans7 (25%) and CNN Indonesia (29%) both provided information to the public following the earthquake. Direct news refers to the actual circumstances that were at the site of the disaster and is a type of information. Because sources who are directly involved in the interview process, such as the police and the victims, are used, the information is exclusive. In addition to being more emotional and situationally aware than other methods of information gathering, direct news also involves stronger emotional reactions. Direct situational information from Pandeglang and information from the relevant authorities and victims is frequently given priority by CNN Indonesia and Trans7.

Additionally, these four media exhibit a comparatively high rate of information verification when producing news. The most popular channel is Kompas TV, with 50% of the market, followed by Metro TV (44%), CNN Indonesia (28.57%), and Trans7 (25%). In this regard, the percentage reached is quite high. This demonstrates that Kompas TV, Metro TV, CNN Indonesia, and Trans7 continue to cover crisis events using the fundamentals of journalism. Metro TV tends to check information more thoroughly than Kompas TV, CNN Indonesia, and Trans7, according to a comparison of these four media.

Journalists covering a disaster should check the data's veracity because it could be a major problem if not. If it turns out that information is confusing because it overlooks verification, reporting may even be labeled as a hoax. Media reports that misrepresent what occurred in a disaster can cause confusion, so it is important to keep an eye on them and handle them carefully. If this occurs, the media is viewed as having failed on a news report because of the misconception that the media fabricated (R. D. Lestari, 2019).

Additionally, Kompas TV (33.33%), CNN Indonesia (28.57%), and Metro TV (22%) display percentages that are inconsistent and lack sufficient variation in figures when it comes to the code of ethics. These media continue to follow the code of ethics when reporting news, according to the percentage generated. This doesn't mean much, but it shows that some news is thought to be based on the relevant code of ethics.

7 The code of conduct upholds standards that demand news organizations work toward professional accuracy and integrity and uphold the best traditions of investigative journalism in the public interest, unhindered by distorted commercialism, unwarranted pressure, or by specialized vested interests that work to stifle press freedom. Although they are free to have and express their own strong beliefs, they should also take into account what other people think and work to uphold social responsibility. However, few journalists actually use this feature in their work.

The final element of news production has to do with a journalist's skill. When on the field, journalists covering disasters need to possess specific skills in order to complete the production process. In this situation, journalists should be able to rapidly and effectively learn what needs to be done to make a disaster event since a disaster is an occurrence that is supposed to never happen again. When reporting crisis situations, journalists dread missing the opportunity and possibly even walking away empty-handed (Safitri & Noviadhista, 2020).

In this instance, the levels of journalistic quality at Kompas TV (16.67%), CNN Indonesia (14.29%), Metro TV (33%), and Trans7 (50%) appear to be different. Kompas TV and CNN Indonesia, two of the most significant and prominent media outlets in Indonesia, employ journalists who are less than competent. Figures below the average of 16.67% and 14.29% show that these two media should be able to increase their journalists' capacity to generate news that is both educational and instructive. Despite the vast disparity in viewership, Metro TV and Trans7 have reporters who are better equipped to cover natural disasters than Kompas TV and CNN Indonesia.

The four media types covered by this study's discussion have distinct production results when taken as a whole. Even with poor reporters covering the Pandeglang tsunami, Kompas TV prioritizes information verification and abides by the journalistic code of ethics. However, Kompas TV doesn't really care about direct news. In order to produce news on the Pandeglang tsunami, CNN Indonesia is extremely familiar with every step of the process, from gathering firsthand information from news sources to checking it against a code of ethics and employing qualified journalists to cover the event. CNN often performs around averagely among these four media and consistently ranks in the middle of the other media percentage. Despite this, CNN is a media outlet that is significantly more knowledgeable than the other three media outlets regarding every facet of the Pandeglang tsunami's production.

Metro TV is a largely effective medium at the production level, emphasizing verification, a code of ethics, and professional journalists while ignoring direct news. Last but not least, as compared to the other three media, Trans7 has the most skilled journalists. The value of immediate news and information verification is one thing Trans7 is well aware of. However, this media disregards and even fails to uphold the journalistic standards that need to be applied to every news report, particularly those concerning disasters. This indicates that each of these four media outlets has a distinct advantage when it comes to producing tsunami news in Pandeglang. Trans7 excels at providing qualified journalists, Kompas TV and Metro TV excel at verification factors, and CNN Indonesia is a good media for generating tsunami news in Pandeglang because it is sensitive to every part of news production.

News Sources

The information that the media conveys originates from a variety of sources. According to the study's findings, the media employs two key sources to disseminate information. Direct interviews and coverage of disaster scenes are the first two examples of journalism. The BMKG and PVMBG are examples of a government agency in the second category. There are varying percentages between these two sources of information.

Kompas TV (75%), CNN Indonesia (40%), Metro TV (20%), and Trans7 (75%), in order of importance, are the news sources used by journalists. Information that journalists send directly to the four media outlets is a source of news. Kompas TV and Trans7 are the media outlets that journalists turn to for the most information. Meanwhile, Kompas TV (25%), CNN Indonesia (60%), Metro TV (80%), and Trans7 (25%) are among the percentage of news providers that are connected to governmental organizations. In terms of the total percentage of sources of information, journalism makes up 36.67% while government agencies make up 63.33%. This indicates that the government is the main information source for news on the Sunda Strait tsunami in Pandeglang.

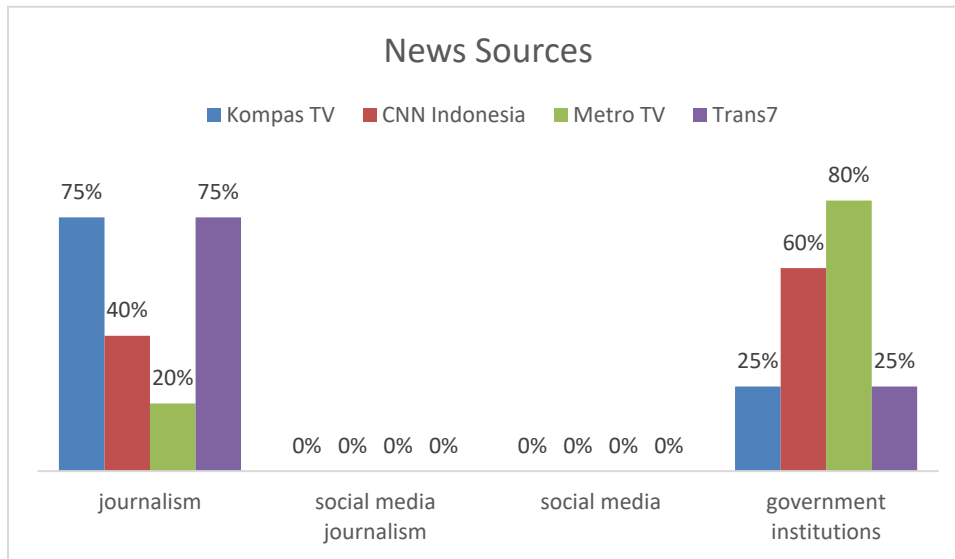


Figure 3. Percentage Level of News Sources

Because they provide news with information from relevant parties, Kompas TV, CNN Indonesia, Metro TV, and Trans7 are regarded as reliable media. In this instance, the source in question is getting its information straight from the Pandeglang tsunami incident site and linked parties. Additionally, none of these four media employ social media news sources, such as someone's status updates or social media uploads. This also applies to journalists being prohibited from using information from someone's social media posts without first speaking with them to confirm that they are not making things up or embellishing them (Houston et al., 2015).

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However, on the one hand, social media can be used as a source of information in reporting a disaster (Pantti, 2018). The news media's function has changed from gatekeeping to gatewatching, and they now publish and distribute pertinent news items. Before, during, and after the event, the media might be crucial. For effective warnings, for instance, social media is essential. It can also be the most important source of information for the general population following a tragedy (Scanlon, 2007). Social media can make it easier for people to share information that encourages civic engagement in disaster management, offers emotional support to victims, and increases catastrophe resilience (Reilly, Atanasova, Stone, & By, 2016).

Additionally, it appears that social media offers impacted individuals in disaster zones an empowering opportunity to express their own needs and experiences rather than being covered by journalists or humanitarian personnel (Maasilta & Haavisto, 2014). Digital technology is anticipated to enable catastrophe victims to tell and interpret their own stories in the international news media as it develops, gaining some autonomy from professional farming techniques. State actors, international assistance organizations, and the mainstream media continue to define and shape the discourse that is available on disasters and disaster relief activities in a globalized world. (Pantti, 2018).

3. Conclusion

Mass media coverage of disasters and disaster warning messages are the two main types of disaster communications. For media proprietors, disaster occurrences are a theme that tends to sell well. This is due to the fact that disaster-related issues usually call for pre- and post-disaster improvements. The likelihood of a calamity is also directly correlated with proximity and potentially alarming human values. This muddled information from government organizations is a challenge for Indonesian mainstream media when covering disasters. On Indonesian national media outlets such Kompas TV, CNN Indonesia, Metro TV, and Trans7, reportage on the Sunda Strait tsunami disaster in Pandeglang has a different framing.

These four media outlets continue to present erroneous versions of events at the news level. This shows that despite the government's misunderstanding about information, the major Indonesian media outlets continue to report on events that did not actually occur, even in the event of a calamity. The four media outlets mentioned in this study's production demonstrate that there are only a few media outlets in Indonesia that are aware of production factors including direct news, verification, a code of ethics, and skilled journalists. In this instance, CNN is significantly more informed than the other three media about every facet of the Sunda Pandeglang Strait tsunami production. Finally, these four media give direct journalism reviews and news sources from credible sources priority. This leads to the conclusion that the sources of these four media outlets are reliable sources of information.

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