

Content Analysis of Religious Program Patterns in Indonesian Local Television

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Abstract—This study aims to investigate the construction made by local television media in compiling the schedule and the format of religious programs broadcasted by them. By applying qualitative descriptive approach where the data were collected by interviewing and documenting, this study is conducted at 5 television station in Central Java. The investigation was conducted by involving content analysis, using the following parameters (1) economic and political forces (political economy approach), (2) media managers, as active parties in the production process (organizational approach) and (3) The combination of various internal and external factors of the media (cultural approach). The results indicated that the internal and external factors were the most dominant factors than the other two, namely economic-political and the media owner factors. The construction of Muslim holiday on Friday and the worship hours in it, enhanced the choice of placing a lot of Islamic religious programs on that day, especially during the worship hours. The sacredness of the worship day and hour is the main factor in determining the schedule of religious programs.

Keywords—Content Analysis, Local Television, Religious Program, Media Construct

I. INTRODUCTION

The law ratification, permits the establishment of local television, which made more people to locally harbor their initiatives to establish TV stations in their respective regions. Article 7 of the Ministry of Information Decree number 111 of 1990 opens doors for private companies to established brodcasting stations [1]. Televisi Pendidikan Indonesia (TPI) emerged as the first private station in 1991. The nuances of the new order (Suharto era) regime at that time were full of nepotism as the owner of TPI was a member of the President's family [2] and its schedule pattern was implemented by Televisi Edukasi, owned by the Ministry of Education and Culture, hence it broadcasted many educational programs - in accordance with its name - from elementary school to high school levels.

Amid national televisions siege that adhere to capitalist ideology and are only owned by several media conglomerates [2],[3], local televisions strive to exist by presenting a variety of specific district programs. For example, JTV (Surabaya) prepares news broadcasts in Javanese and Madurese, while Bali, Yogyakarta and Borobudur TV take on a segment of the audience who are bound by local culture. Favorit TV (Padang) features a special broadcast of Minang customs. TV Manado and TOP (TV

Orang Papua), program the characteristics of local humor, based on the region, in order to attract the viewers' attention [4].

Indonesia is the biggest Muslim country compared to any other Muslim countries in the world [5], although Saudi Arabia is the origin of Islam. Furthermore, this fact enables televisions to promote religious programs as the main programs. However, the fact remains that televisions in Indonesia, including the local ones, do not place doctrinal programs as the main schedule, they are only brodcasted during Ramadan so as to gain rating [6], [7], [8], [9]. The portion utilized for religious affairs is therefore little, when compared to entertainment and the likes because they are only placed in the morning, at the start of the day, or at night, at the end of the day, through religious lectures, delivered in a classical manner. Based on the variance of religious lineups on national television, e.g. reality programs, Islamic TV series, talks, comedy, religious lecture and others[10], it is of interest to study the pattern of religious program on local television.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data was collected by interviewing up to 5 local television station managements in Central Java, including Banyumas, Semarang, Ratih (Kebumen), Simpang 5 (Pati) and TVKU (Semarang) TV. Each station however, possessed different characteristics, which makes the information obtained varied enough to represent a variety of backgrounds. Banyumas and Semarang TV are owned by local investors, while Ratih TV is owned by the Kebumen Regency Government. Furthermore, Simpang 5 TV Pati is a interconnected local station, owned by the Jawa Pos News Network group, while TVKU is pioneered by UDINUS Semarang and broadcasted from campus. Investigation was further carried out, using Mc Nair content analysis [11], with the following parameters, (1) economic and political forces (political economy approach), (2) media managers as an active party in the process of programs production (organizational approach) and (3) a combination of various internal and external media factors (cultural approach).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Some television stations broadcast religious programs every day, but others only do this on Fridays and Sundays, as shown in table 1. Furthermore, those that televise those

programs every day have broadcasting time in the morning and evening before Maghrib. Besides that, the common understanding that Friday is Muslim holiday, constructs the thoughts of station managers to display doctrinal content on that day. The most time slots for broadcasting Islamic programs are in the morning and in the dawn (just before Maghrib) where Muslims worship. Hence, this pattern is in line with what was conveyed by Robert Abelman, stating that according to secularist view, watching religious shows on TV substitute people's worships in holy places [12]. This view of watching religious shows in secular countries turn out to also ensue in Indonesia that is known as a religious country.

Religious information shared in TVKU Semarang, originates Islamic contents from collaborating with MAJT TV Semarang, a local station, set up by the management of the Central Java Grand Mosque, with aims of providing alternative clerical programs to the people in the locality and its surroundings, which is advantageous to both parties. Furthermore, MAJT TV has benefited from the broader broadcast, utilizing TVKU Semarang network, who conversely receives a considerable number of content without the hassle of going through production and also at a considerable cost. Therefore, the portion of religious programs in TVKU Semarang is expanded by up to 240 minutes per day, whose broadcasting patterns are morning and evening shows, also night and midnight (as a closing program), as shown in table 1.

TABLE I. RELIGIOUS PROGRAMS ON LOCAL TELEVISION

	Day	Hour	Duration
Simpang5 TV	Monday-Sunday	05.30	—
		06.00	—
		17.30	—
		18.00	—
Semarang TV	Friday and Monday	17.00	—
		18.00	—
		08.00	—
		08.30	—
Ratih TV	Friday and Monday	21.00	—
		22.00	—
		16.00	—
		17.00	—
TVKU	Sunday-Monday	04.30	—
		05.30	—
		21.00	—
		22.00	—
		23.00	—
		24.00	—
		07.00	—
		08.00	—
Banyumas TV	Sunday-Monday	07.00	—
		07.30	—
		11.00	—
		12.00	—
		17.00	—
		18.00	—
		150	minutes/day

The sacralization of the day, related to religious activities built in the community, creates the construction for television media to display clerical programs at hours and days,

according to the construction of the society. Furthermore, other example that reinforces the above opinion is the phenomenon of religious programs as rife when Ramadan is proof that the month of Ramadan is encompassed with blessings hence encouraging Muslims to worship. Therefore, all television stations in Indonesia, including the local varieties, compete to broadcast religious programs in the consecrated month. Unfortunately, there are many clerical schedules that only serves as entertainment [6], whose impact value is very minimal and is only a complementary.

McNair's books, News and Journalism in the UK, stated that media content was determined by three factors, which include, 1) economic and political forces, 2) media managers as active parties in the news production process and 3) a combination of various internal and external media factors. These views were further adapted into the process of preparing program patterns on local television. Economic and political forces are not as powerful provincially, when compared to their utility on national television because the local community tends to be conducive in order to bring a supportive business climate. A manager at one of the district television stations stated that the local government had no intervention on their sustainability, however, they became partners in publishing development activities that take place in the region. The relationship between local television and government is symbiotic mutualism, which is mutually beneficial to both parties, thus political intervention does not occur.

The second factor, relates to the media managers as an active party in the news production process, which involves intervention in the process of preparing program patterns. As administrators, they certainly play a vital role in the preparation of the schedule sequence, which is therefore dependent on the ability of the media crew to identify the local community needs. Furthermore, the religious background of these managers also influences the pattern of clerical programs being broadcasted, which includes their affiliation to certain religious organizations. The large number of religious programs in TVKU Semarang, can be related with the closeness of the owners with the cleric of Central Java Grand Mosque, which further resulted in a collaboration of religious content created by MAJT TV. Furthermore, the influence of media managers and owners becomes significant in determining how the program sequences are presented on local television, especially they depend on the clerical schedules.

Various internal and external media as combined factors, including cultural aspects, where a local television is situated, also determine how the program pattern is structured. Politics, economics, professional organizations and technology, are examples of cultural instruments, [11], as the religious experience of the managers of TV programs greatly influences what is manifested on the screen. Furthermore, the doctrinal beliefs of heterogeneous societies (although Islam is the majority) is the reason why clerical programs are not the main broadcasted content, hence entertainment schedules dominate regional the stations [10]. A bulk of local stations harnesses the mission to elevate provincial wisdom content, through the provision alternative programs with local content, amidst the hustle and bustle of national television capitalism.

Maghrib prayer call a "mandatory" program on all national and local stations. Since Muslims perform this

activity five times a day, the call echoes it. Furthermore, the television stations only shows the call for Maghrib, however the calls of the other four prayers are not showed. This phenomenon is not separated from the construct that had been built by the habits of the national television TVRI, that shows only the Maghrib prayer call.

IV. CONCLUSION

The sequence of religious programs in local television stations are formed on the construct of sacralization, mostly placed on days and hours, where devoted people of the community, conduct worship. Furthermore, the provincial media crew put religious programs at these periods as a form of "respect", for example, Friday is a Muslim holiday, where they carry out specific prayers and late afternoons, before Maghrib, a clerical program was fixed. Therefore, the preparation of schedule patterns, carried out by television stations, are largely influenced by a combination of internal and external factors, including cultural aspects, in comparison with economic-political factors and media managers. Furthermore, sacralization of the day and time of worship, observed in the community is an evidence of the influence of culture in the development of religious program sequence on local television stations.

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