

# Preference Survey of Newspaper Readers in the Digital Era:

Quantitative Descriptive Study of Public Preferences Pikiran Rakyat Daily Newspaper

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Abstract—The mass media industry continues to grow along with digital technological developments. Print mass media is now considered to be on the verge of extinction due to the development of online media. Print media such as the Pikiran Rakyat's Daily Newspaper need to implement a strategy in retaining their readers. Pikiran Rakyat requires preference data from its audience. This study describes the preferences of print media audiences that are in accordance with the interests in consuming newspapers. The research uses a survey method to get an objective picture of audience preferences. The sample was obtained using the purposive sampling technique based on the population of potential readers in West Java. The number of samples collected was 1540 respondents. Data analysis was carried out using non-parametric statistical test techniques by describing the actual situation in the respondent's choice. The results showed that most of the audience of Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper wanted a change in the format and appearance of the newspaper to be more practical, efficient, but containing news that was in accordance with the needs of the community. The audience is also more interested in the colorful tabloid format with illustrations in the news.

Keywords—preference, audience, print media, newspaper, industry

## I. INTRODUCTION

Preference is an interest, choice, or something that is preferred by consumers. Preference shows the level of consumer preference for a product offered [1]. Several studies have shown that consumer preferences can influence product purchase decisions [2-4]. Mass media has news as its product to be consumed by its audience [5]. Audience characteristics such as age and education level have an influence on the use of mass media [6,7]. For this reason, local mass media have dynamics in producing, packaging, and presenting news products that are suitable for consumption in a local industry [8]. The audience is now freer to have the choice to determine the media they want to consume.

Print media is significantly affected by the development of information technology, especially the internet [9]. The large number of print media that have begun to modernize their

conventional newspapers to digital newspapers is certainly a new challenge, including maintaining interest in reading them through innovation in page design displays [10]. The decline in print media, which is indicated by their shift to online formats, cannot be separated from the development of communication and information technology that changes the consumption patterns of readers [11,12]. Along with the dynamics and challenges that develop in the press and print media industries, media convergence and its integration between print, electronic and online are the best choice to survive in the world of the press industry with the harmony of strengthening its resources [13,14].

In Indonesia, print media, such as magazines, have experienced their heyday when they published in-depth reports and investigative news, such as tempo and gatra magazines [15]. But in the end, investigative news and in-depth reporting were absorbed into the online media as part of technological developments. Although the characteristics of print media are still in it [16]. Local media have the power to present local realities that can be used to reproduce or produce information that is close to the community [17]. However, the birth of online media that can form the construction of reality that comes from the language processing process, is ultimately constructed through news according to the wishes of the reader [18].

The uses and gratifications theory assesses that audiences are seen as active and purposeful individuals; they are responsible for selecting the media they will use to meet their needs [19]. According to this theory, individuals are aware of their needs and how to fulfill those needs [20]. Media is one way to fulfill needs and individuals may use media to meet their needs, or not use media and choose other ways. Audience as individuals who can choose media consumption that is able to meet their interests and needs [21], resulting in competition between media to attract the interest of the audience [22].

Previous studies have described how the print media industry is trying to survive [23-25]. However, the solution given is a solution at the stage of the print media's chance to survive. This research can describe how the audience's tastes in



the form of print media can still be consumed during media competition in the digital era.

### II. METHODS

This study uses a survey method with a positivist approach with quantitative methods. Quantitative research methods are related to the quantification and analysis of variables to obtain research findings and findings [26]. The survey data collection uses a questionnaire which is distributed through an online form which is distributed to potential audiences of the Pikiran Rakyat. The research population is an audience who lives in West Java as potential readers of the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling [27] where the sample is the public audience who have experience reading or have read the printed media of the newspaper. The sample selection was based on considerations so that the survey could accommodate every aspiration of the audience in the West Java area

Data analysis with non-parametric statistical tests to describe data that is not tied to an ordinal or nominal scale, further answers questions according to research objectives. Descriptive data measurement is used to obtain a description of each research question with certain indicators. Descriptive research aims to accurately describe the characteristics of a particular group or situation. Indicators are divided into categories of research questions, including preferences for format, appearance, coloring, typeface, and audience involvement in mass media.

#### III. RESULTS

The Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper Reader Preference Survey has been followed by 1,540 people of West Java who are potential readers of the newspaper. Pikiran Rakyat always provides a place for readers to enjoy the results of better information and news. This survey used a questionnaire in an online form. Based on the data collected, more than 97.5% of respondents who filled out the questionnaire stated that they knew and had read the Pikiran Rakyat. So, assuming a margin of error of 2.5%, respondents who fill out the questionnaire are considered to have met the requirements as a sample of the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper's reader preference survey. Based on this, the questionnaire data can be used as a description of the aspirations of the people of West Java towards the print media.

### A. Sociodemographic Characteristics of Respondents

The sociodemographic characteristics discussed in this survey include the respondent's age, gender, education, and occupation. The description of the data is divided into several proportions of respondents based on sociodemographic characteristics (Table 1).

TABLE I. THE PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS BASED ON SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	Sociodemographic Characteristics		
No	Type of Question	Total (n=1540)	Percentage
	Gender	( )	(1.17
1	Man	1053	68,4
	Woman	487	31,6
	Age		
	16 - 23 Years	203	13,2
2	24 - 37 Years	626	40,7
2	38 - 56 Years	621	40,3
	56 - 64 Years	71	4,6
	> 64 Years	19	1,2
	Domicile Residence		
	Greater Bandung (Bandung City,		
	Bandung Regency, West Bandung	1286	83,5
	Regency, Cimahi).		
	Ciayumajakuning (Cirebon,		
2	Indramayu Majalengka and	77	5,0
3	Kuningan).		,
	East Priangan (Ciamis,	63	4,1
	Pangandaran, Garut and Tasik),		,
	Other West Java Regions (Bogor,	114	7,4
	Sukabumi, Depok, Bekasi, Cianjur,		,
	etc.).		
	Profession/Job		
	Government employees	157	10,2
4	Private employees	431	28,0
	Self-employed	270	17,5
	Lecturer/ Lecturer	184	11,9
	Student/ Student	198	12,9
	Other	300	19,5

Source: Survey data (2020)

The table above shows that respondents from the age group of 24-37 years (40.7 percent) and ages 38-56 years (40.3 percent) are the most respondents who fill out the questionnaire. When viewed from the domicile of the respondents, as many as 83.5% of respondents live in the Greater Bandung area. The respondents' livelihoods consist of civil servants, private employees, entrepreneurs, teachers/lecturers, students/students, and other occupations, with most of their livelihoods being private employees (28%).

# B. Newspaper Format

The following will explain the discussion of respondents' opinions about the format of newspapers which include changes in appearance, color, format, and size as a new form of change that will be carried out by the general daily Pikiran Rakyat. The description of the data regarding respondents' opinions about the format of the Pikiran Rakyat newspaper can be seen in Table 2.



TABLE II. RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ON THE FORMAT OF THE PIKIRAN RAKYAT NEWSPAPER

	Respondents' Opinions		
No	Type of Question	Total (n=1540)	Percentage (%)
	What would you think if the	ì	` /
	Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper made		
	a change in its print appearance?		
1	Strongly agree	760	49,4
	Agree	749	48,6
	Do not agree	25	1,6
	Strongly Disagree	6	0,4
	What do you think if the Pikiran		
	Rakyat Newspaper comes with a		
	new format and size?		
2	Strongly agree	691	44,9
	Agree	782	50,8
	Do not agree	59	3,8
	Strongly Disagree	8	0,5
	What would you think if the new		
	Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper were		
	smaller (the size of a tabloid)?		
3	Strongly agree	440	28,6
	Agree	716	46,5
	Do not agree	335	21,7
	Strongly Disagree	49	3,2
	What would you think if the new		
	Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper		
	changed the appearance of the		
4	type and size of the letters used?		
4	Strongly agree	394	25,6
	Agree	916	59,5
	Do not agree	212	13,7
	Strongly Disagree	18	1,2
	What would you think if the new		
5	Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper looked		
	more colorful?		
	Strongly agree	784	51,0
	Agree	698	45,3
	Do not agree	56	3,6
	Strongly Disagree	2	0,1

Source: Survey data (2020)

Based on the results in the table above, almost half of the respondents (49.4%) stated that they strongly agreed to make changes to the printed appearance of the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper. Then more than half of the respondents (50.8%) agreed that the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper came with a new format and size. Then as many as 46.5% of respondents agreed that the new Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper had a smaller size (the size of a tabloid). Then as many as 59.5% of respondents agreed that the new Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper changed the appearance of the type and size of the letters used, and 45.3% agreed that the new Pikiran Rakyat came with a more colorful display.

### C. Typeface and Typography

Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper provides a wide selection of fonts and typography used in headlines (cover pages), news titles, and news content, namely Serif (Times New Roman, Garamond, Book Antiqua, Georgia, etc.) and Sans Serif (Arial, Futura, Helvetica, Franklin Gothic, etc.). A description of the

data regarding respondents' opinions about typefaces and typography can be seen in Table 3.

TABLE III. RESPONDENTS' OPINION ON TYPEFACE AND TYPOGRAPHY

	Respondents' Opinions		
No	Type of Question	Total (n=1540)	Percentage (%)
1	For the typeface in the headline (cover page), which one do you prefer to read?  Serif (Times New Roman, Garamond, Book Antiqua, Georgia,	473	30,7
	etc.) Sans Serif (Arial, Futura, Helvetica, Franklin Ghotic, etc.)	10676	69,3
2	For the type of writing in news headlines, which one do you prefer to read? Serif (Times New Roman, Garamond, Book Antiqua, Georgia,	698	45,3
	etc.) Sans Serif (Arial, Futura, Helvetica, Franklin Ghotic, etc.)	842	54,7
3	For the type of writing on the news content, which one do you prefer to read?  Serif (Times New Roman, Garamond, Book Antiqua, Georgia, etc.)	761	49,4
	Sans Serif (Arial, Futura, Helvetica, Franklin Ghotic, etc.)	779	50,6

Source: Survey data (2020)

Based on the results in the table above, it can be seen that as many as 69.3% of respondents chose the Sans Serif font (Arial, Futura, Helvetica, Franklin Ghotic, etc.) the type of Sans Serif writing (Arial, Futura, Helvetica, Franklin Ghotic, etc.) used for writing news headlines, as many as 50.6% of respondents stated that they chose the type of Sans Serif writing (Arial, Futura, Helvetica, Franklin Ghotic, etc.) news content writing. Therefore, the most widely chosen typeface and typography is Sans Serif (Arial, Futura, Helvetica, Franklin Ghotic, etc.).

### D. Coloring Type

In the following, a discussion of the characteristics of the type of coloring preferred by respondents will be explained. This is used as a form of change from the general daily Pikiran Rakyat themselves. The description of the data regarding respondents' opinions about the type of coloring can be seen in Table 4.



TABLE IV. RESPONDENTS' OPINION ON TYPES OF COLORING

No	Respondents' Opinions		
	Type of Question	Total (n=1540)	Percentage (%)
	In the change of the Pikiran		
	Rakyat into a tabloid, which one		
1	do you like more?		
1	Color Tabloid	621	40,3
	Black-White Tabloid	878	57,0
	Some are black and white	41	2,7
	If Pikiran Rakyat included a color		
	display, which part would you like		
2.	to color?		
2	Front and back pages only	159	10,3
	Entire Content	848	55,1
	Special pages	533	34,6
	If Pikiran Rakyat becomes		
	colorful. Which type of color do		
	you like?		
3	Warm Colors (red, brown, orange,	851	55,3
	yellow)		
	Cool Colors (purple, blue, green)	586	38,1
	Other	103	6,7

Source: Survey data (2020)

Based on the results in the table above, as many as 57% of respondents preferred Tabloids with the Black-White type of coloring when the General Thoughts Daily was converted into tabloids. Then, if the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper included colored displays, 55.1% of respondents chose the whole content to be displayed in color. Then, as many as 55.3% of respondents chose warm colors (red, brown, orange, yellow) if the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper became colored.

### E. News Presentation

The following will explain the discussion about the appearance of the presentation of news on the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper which is preferred by the respondents. This will be used as a form of change so that the general daily Pikiran Rakyat can be more attractive to the public. The description of the data regarding respondents' opinions about the presentation of the news can be seen in Table 5.

TABLE V. RESPONDENTS' OPINION ON NEWS PRESENTATION

No	Respondents' Opinions		
	Type of Question	Total (n=1540)	Percentage (%)
1	In the changes to the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper, which news presentation do you like the most? Straight News Storytelling News (Narrative) Other	1148 330 62	74,5 21,4 4,1
2	In the changes to the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper, which news display do you like the most?  News accompanied by images (photos, graphics, infographics, sketches, illustrations, tables)  News accompanied by one element of the image/picture	1236 299	80,5 19,5

Table V. Cont.

	Respondents' Opinions			
No	Type of Question	Total (n=1540)	Type of Question	
	What format of news presentation			
	do you most expect from the new			
	Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper?			
3	Concise finish on one page	1342	87,1	
	Long continued on next page	152	9,9	
	To be continued in the next issue	28	1,8	
	Other	50	1,2	
	Which type of news are you most			
	looking forward to in the new			
	Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper?			
4	Investigative News	584	38	
	Hard News	593	38,5	
	Soft news features	313	20,3	
	Other	50	3,2	
	Based on the issue/topic, which			
	source would you like the most to			
	be present in the new Pikiran			
	Rakyat Newspaper?			
5	Trending topics on social media	716	46,5	
	Special issues on the editorial	333	29,3	
	agenda			
	Case investigation	451	21,6	
	Other	40	2,6	
	In a geographical context, which			
	news do you prefer?			
6	Local News	454	29.5	
U	Regional News	358	23.3	
	National News	568	37	
	International News	157	10.2	
	Which rubric do you think needs			
	to be developed in the new Pikiran			
	Rakyat Newspaper?			
	West Jawa News	956	62,1	
	National News	610	39,6	
	International News	467	30,3	
7	Political News	366	23,8	
/	Economy News	395	25,6	
	Sport News	535	34,7	
	Education News	638	41,4	
	Technology News	661	42,9	
	Entertainment News	373	24,2	
	Lifestyle News	466	30,3	
	Other	98	6,4	

Source: Survey data (2020)

Based on the results of the table above, as many as 74.5% of respondents prefer to present the news as it is/directly so that the news is not conveyed in a narrative or other form of presentation. Then, respondents prefer the presentation of news accompanied by pictures (photos, graphics, infographics, sketches, illustrations, tables) than the presentation of news without pictures. Respondents expect that news presentation can be summarized on one page only so that there is no continuous presentation of news either on the next page or even continued in the next edition. The type of news that is most expected to be presented in the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper is news that is direct and investigative. Then, almost half of all respondents (46.5%) chose news containing trending issues on social media followed by news containing special issues scheduled by the editors, case investigations, and other issues. Then, if the context is seen from a geographical perspective,



respondents prefer to present news on a national scale followed by news on a local, regional, and international scale. Then, as many as 62% of respondents chose the West Java rubric that needed to be developed at the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper which was then followed by a rubric that discussed technology, education, national, sports, international and lifestyle, economy, entertainment, politics, and others.

## F. Formation of the Readers Council

The following will explain the discussion on the opinion of respondents regarding the formation of the Readers Council. With the establishment of the Readers Council, it is hoped that the aspirations of the readers can be better absorbed. The description of the data regarding respondents' opinions on the formation of the Readers Council can be seen in Table 6.

TABLE VI. RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE READERS COUNCIL

	Respondents' Opinions		
No	Type of Question	Total (n=1540)	Percentage (%)
	In order to absorb the aspirations		
	of readers and society in general,		
	what do you think if Pikiran		
	Rakyat formed a Readers Council		
1	consisting of community leaders		
1	from West Java?		
	Strongly agree	624	43,1
	Agree	694	47,9
	Do not agree	115	7,9
	Strongly Disagree	16	1,1
	If a Readers Council was formed,		
	which figures from among the		
	circles do you think should be		
	members? (You can choose more		
	than one answer)		
	Cultural and Art Figures	1048	72,7
2	Political Figure	516	35,8
	Religious leaders	750	52,0
	Economic figures	609	42,2
	Social Figure	792	54,9
	Academics	919	63,76
	Education figure	849	58,9
	Other	163	11,3

Source: Survey data (2020)

Based on the results of the table above, almost half of all respondents (47.9%) agreed if Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper formed a Reader Council consisting of West Java community leaders with the aim of absorbing the aspirations of readers and society in general. Then, for the membership of the Readers' Council itself, most respondents chose figures from the cultural and artistic circles (72.7%), academics (63.76%), and education figures (58.9%).

## IV. DISCUSSION

The results of the survey summarize the preferences of the Pikiran Rakyat newspaper audience with the sociodemographic character of the respondents being more male (68.4%) in the

age range of 24-56 years, with professional variants of private employees, entrepreneurs, students/students, teachers/lecturers and ASN; who are predominantly domiciled in Greater Bandung and quite a lot in other West Java areas such as Bogor, Sukabumi, Depok, Bekasi, Cianjur and a few in the East Priangan and Ciayumajakuning areas. Almost all respondents (97.9%) have read the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper.

Based on the results of the survey data, it was found that most respondents welcomed the planned changes in the format, appearance, colors, and typography of the Thought Rakyat newspaper. Almost all respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the change plan. However, the opinion about the change in size to the size of a tabloid, the smallest part disagreed (21.8%). Based on typography or typeface, both in the title and in the content of the news, respondents tend to have not much difference between choosing Serif and Sans Serif fonts. This shows that the choice of letters among respondents tends to be balanced and is not a priority of attention. In terms of color display, the majority stated that they would like it if the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper was more colorful according to the respondent's taste, namely warm colors such as red, brown, and orange.

In terms of presenting news, respondents prefer direct news (straight news) compared to storytelling/narrative news. Respondents also prefer news with a complete visual display accompanied by pictures, illustrations, and infographics. Even in the format of news presentation, respondents prefer news that runs out on one page without being continued. The answer to the survey regarding the respondent's desire to make Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper close to its audience and be able to receive input for future developments, one of which is the formation of a Readers Council, which represents the audience of Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper in West Java.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings in this study, the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper can implement a strategy by changing the format, appearance, color, and typography based on the preferences of potential readers in West Java. This preference is expected to help the Pikiran Rakyat newspaper to survive in the mass media information market, which in the digital era is more dominated by online media. Even so, the opportunity for the Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper to be able to continue to fill the segmentation of readers specifically for print media goes hand in hand with the development of integrated digital media. The Pikiran Rakyat Newspaper also needs to get closer to its audiences and consumers so that they can continue to innovate according to the needs of their audiences. The formation of the reader council also needs to be considered as a channel for connecting the mass media with their audiences.

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