The Emergence of Hybrid Journalism Practice in Travel Destination Coverage on Kompas.com and Detik.com

P. Intan Raka Cinti, M. Badriati

Abstract/Abstract

Perkembangan pariwisata mendorong media daring nasional memproduksi kanal khusus wisata. Destinasi wisata menjadi salah satu objek liputan kanal-kanal itu, dengan kualitas liputan berbeda-beda. Adu cepat produksi berita ternyata muncul praktik mengambil sumber dari tulisan wisata non jurnalis. Penelitian ini melihat pemahaman dan praktek jurnalis mengenai liputan destinasi wisata yang dikaitkan dengan konsep jurnalisme wisata. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif, paradigma konstruktivis, dengan metode wawancara mendalam terhadap empat wartawan dari detik.com dan kompas.com. Temuan menunjukkan, pengalaman, kebijakan redaksi, serta berbagai hal dari luar individu berperan dalam membentuk pemahaman liputan destinasi wisata. Praktik jurnalisme hibrida muncul. Liputan wisata tidak lagi mengandalkan liputan otentik jurnalis sendiri.

Traveling is one of many popular activities in recent years. As can be seen from the Statistics Agency (Badan Pusat Statistik/BPS) data ranging from year 2009 to 2018, there is an increase in number of foreign tourists from 6.32 million to 15.81 million people as domestic tourists grew from 229.7 million to 303.4 million people. This increase in the number of tourists is also acknowledged by World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) in 2018 which stated Indonesia as the country with the fastest growing tourism. Indonesia placed 9th in the world, ranked 3rd in Asia and the leader in Southeast Asia.

This increase in the number of tourists is also acknowledged by World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) in 2018 which stated Indonesia as the country with the fastest growing tourism. Indonesia placed 9th in the world, ranked 3rd in Asia and the leader in Southeast Asia.

Introduction

Traveling is one of many popular activities in recent years. As can be seen from the Statistics Agency (Badan Pusat Statistik/BPS) data ranging from year 2009 to 2018, there is an increase in number of foreign tourists from 6.32 million to 15.81 million people as domestic tourists grew from 229.7 million to 303.4 million people.

This increase in the number of tourists is also acknowledged by World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) in 2018 which stated Indonesia as the country with the fastest growing tourism. Indonesia placed 9th in the world, ranked 3rd in Asia and the leader in Southeast Asia.

Besides number of visits, the growing enthusiasm for traveling can also seen from the growing amount of searches for Online Travel Aggregator (OTA) such as Traveloka, Pegipegi, or Tiket.com. It is estimated that there is 20 percent growth from the first half of 2018 to the first half of 2019. According to Google Research, Temasek, and Bain&Company in the e-Conomy SEA 2019 report, Indonesia’s online travel market is still going to be the leader in Southeast Asia until 2025. This potential is encouraged by the grow-
The growth of Indonesia’s tourism industry has been seen in 2018, when the tourism sector contributed USD 19.2 billion worth of foreign exchange. At that time, Minister of Tourism Arief Yahya stated the achievement even beat that of oil and gas sector. Seeing the potential, government is also set on making tourism its new source of foreign income by creating 10 New Balis project and declaring the Toba Lake, Mandalika, Borobudur, and Labuan Bajo as four super priority destinations.

The trend for traveling emerged from the shift in society’s consumption pattern. Nazareth (2017) stated, society’s consumption pattern has started to shift from goods-based consumption to experience-based consumption. These experience can be obtained through entertainment and leisure. Leisure category such as traveling, staying at a hotel, watching movies, going to a concert, and going on a culinary adventure has become today’s lifestyle consumption. The shift in consumption, as the Statistics Agency noted, was triggered by the use of internet and technology as well as social media. In the end, this trend is what encourages tourism worthy of being researched.

Meanwhile, the development in tourism trend also encourages the increase in society’s needs for information. In the study of consumer behavior, Engel (in Margaretha, 2015) mentioned that the higher the need for entertainment is, the higher will be the effort needed to search for external information (information that comes from outside an individual’s experience, for example information in media).

According to Gitelson and Crompton (1983), travelers need to find the right information before going on traveling because of three reasons. First, traveling is a high-risk purchase, which means it takes up money and time. Second, travel destinations cannot be observed directly or tested on before actually arriving. The last reason is humans tend to choose new locations to see new environment or do new activities in different environment (Margaretha, 2015).

The importance of information to the travelers is also backed up by Fondness & Murray (1997) who argue that travelers look for information with the intention of reducing uncertainty in their travel. Moreover, information is also useful to improve the quality of their travel as they leave home. Furthermore, information they receive will also affect their knowledge and views about their destination (Pan, 2006).

This situation eventually triggers the press to intensively make better coverage on tourism, which in turn encourage them to create various products specialized in traveling. For example in print media, Kompas Sunday edition has pages dedicated for traveling, either domestic or abroad. In addition to that, there are magazines specialized in tourism such as Panorama, Travelounge, Destinasian, and many more. On television, there are numerous traveling programs such as Explore Indonesia (Kompas TV), Journey (Metro TV), Indonesia Bagus (NET TV), Jejak Petualang (Trans 7), and so on. And in today’s digital era, several online media are also seen to have dedicated traveling channels such as detik-Travel (detik.com), travel (kompas.com), leisure (republika.co.id), and many more.

Putting mass media and journalism into context, there is a genre called jurnalisme wisata (travel journalism). The end result of travel journalism can be reports on travel destinations with various themes such as nature, culture, culinary, and many other themes.

However, the articles found in journalistic media are varied in quality, for example the report entitled Kegelapan Abadi & Kolam Keramat di Gua Kong Lor (Eternal Darkness & Sacred Pond in Kong Lor Cave). In the report, there is no explanation as to why the cave is said to have eternal darkness and the pond being called sacred. Especially when it comes down to the sacred pond, there is no section in the report that gives explanation either from tour guide or the locals about this issue, thus creating an impression that the title is the journalist’s own opinion. Another example is an article entitled 6 Tempat Wisata ‘Kuburan Kuno’ di Toraja (6 Travel Destinations ‘Ancient Cemetery’ in Toraja) which describes tomb locations and talks about each tomb in each location. This article does not include information about how to visit, and it also does not include the voices of the locals or the site’s management official that can explain more about the cemetery.

Meanwhile, when writing for travel destinations, not all sources are obtained from direct observation. Journalists can look for inspiration and adapt from the internet or social media as their news source. However, there is a standard in writing travel articles, one of which is according to Bowes (2011), writing about travel destinations must use trustworthy sources.

This condition happens because people also like to share their experience on social media such as Facebook or Instagram. There are people who write their experience and put it on their personal blog or make videos and upload them on Youtube. They can be called travel blogger or travel vlogger. Some of the famous travel bloggers or vloggers are Ariev Rahman whose blog (backpackstory.me) has been visited by 4 million users and Drew Binsky who has 1.34 million subscribers in Youtube.

The information about travel destinations that the journalists share and what people share have become similar. For example, a blogger and a journalist can each write their own experience and describe a destination’s detailed information such as its location, prices, and facilities. The information given out is usually targeted for mass tourist.
Furthermore, in practice, the professional standard in the practice of travel journalism that must be applied is presenting information that is true to the facts for the sake of public welfare. Hill-James (2006) also argues that the work of travel journalism must be able to be used as a reliable information source for its honesty, courage, justice, and ability to become the container to voice every party involved.

By enforcing the professional standard, people will be able to rely on the reports from travel journalism to get information that can improve their knowledge and help them make decisions revolving the travel destination they are about to visit.

Furthermore, normatively, the work of travel journalism must contain educational value as stated in Law (Undang-Undang) No. 40 Year 1999 article 3. This idea is also backed up by Hartley (in Hill-James, 2006), where the role to give knowledge to society is not limited only to hard news, but also to sports news, modes, and travel news where the knowledge itself is worthless if it is unreliable.

In the practice of travel journalism, there are several challenges like transparency issue because the content might also become adversorial or a well-packaged advertisement in the form of journalistic article. Tiede (2016) argues travel content in the media can be a place where a large sum of money circulates and often times takes place without transparency. Regarding this issue, Daye (in Hanusch, 2010) argues that the experts doubt the capabilities of professional journalists in writing travel reports because of the difficulties in keeping objectivity when the journalist is put between facts and over-promotion.

In this research, the writer will focus on travel journalists in online media. The reason is, according to Nielsen Consumer and Media View, the trend of online media reader keeps increasing and reaches 6 million people in 2017. Besides having a large amount of reader, online national media also already have their own channel dedicated to traveling. Travel content revolves around various traveling themes and produced daily. This is different from other media that do not specifically have desks specializing in traveling. For example in television, eventhough the source of information in society comes mainly from television (96 percent), a travel program is usually put under entertainment category, or a travel report becomes a package that is inserted into a segment of a news program. Besides, travel programs on television usually do not last long enough or only run for a limited number of episodes, which is in contrast with travel content in online media that has more permanent space and produce dozens of reports everyday.

Based on these problems, researchers want to discover the reason why there is a discrepancy between journalists’ professional standard and the ongoing practice of covering a story for travel destination.

Theoretical Framework

The study about travel journalism is not a new thing. This could be seen from previous researches entitled Pola Penyajian Cultural Heritage pada Berita Wisata Kiriman Jurnalis Warga dalam Perspektif Faktualitas Berita (Study Mengenai Paket Berita NET 10 di NET TV) by Margaretha (2015). It is a quantitative research and the object of research is focused on travel content on television.

Another study is a thesis entitled Citizen Tourist: Newspaper Travel Journalism’s Responsibility to Its Audience by Hill-James (2006). In this research the researcher also used quantitative approach and focused on travel news content on newspapers.

Based on both researches, this current research is meant to fill in the gap unexplored by previous researches, which is seeing journalists as content writers who work in online media, considering online media is a trend in society today.

This research uses travel journalism as the basic concept, and the products of travel journalism are commonly in the form of soft news or feature on mass media. Travel journalism is a factual report aimed at audience as the consumers of travel or tourism activities by giving information and entertainment but with critical perspective (Hanusch and Fursich, 2014).

From the definition alone it can be understood that eventhough travel journalism present information for entertainment, the information itself must be factual. This view is supported by Hill-James (2006), who argues that travel journalism is as the same as common journalism practice, in which journalists still needs to obey the elements of journalism such as truthfulness, balance, and giving out important information to society. Tiede (2016) also agrees that travel journalism must keep being factual and staying away from bias in order to minimize shaping an impression of we versus them, reduce miscommunication, and help readers understand the culture as well as the importance of the places they visit.

Furthermore, Hill-James (2006) also calls travel journalism the beauty and the brain of the media. Travel journalism is called the beauty because there are proximity element, entertainment value, and coverage of fun activities that will make audience happy. Besides, travel journalism also needs brain to give information and context to a travel news piece by presenting international, politic, and economy issues to prepare the audience as tourists as well as part of the global society.

When it comes to the brain of the travel journalism, Hanusch (2010) also explains that the goal of travel journalism is to represent otherness or representation of foreign culture. Travel journalist has a role to describe society, its customs, and local culture. Hanusch states that travel journalist carry an important role as a mediator of cultures, so they must be fully aware of the impact of the way they describe people in
Moreover, nowadays the term travel journalism tend to get mixed up with travel writer. This happens considering not all travel content in the media comes from their journalists’ own observation. Media collects stories from correspondents, stringers, or the public through citizen journalists.

Nowadays online media journalists tend to practice the hybrid journalism, where mainstream online media take social media as their source of information, taking news content from the social network and then adapting them into a story (Lase, 2014). This practice is conducted by making a feature of citizen blog like Kompasiana in Kompas.com and d’travelers in Detik.com for detikTravel canal.

However, in terms of practice, there is a difference between a journalist and a writer. A journalist takes responsibility to public while travel writer is not bound to ethics and responsibilities of delivering useful content to the public.

Meanwhile, Tiede (2016) explains several differences between a journalist and a travel writer. The first difference is a travel article produced by a journalist is aimed for travelers or people who want to understand other culture as a whole, while the work of a writer are aimed for tourists or people who need entertainment. The second difference is related to the practice of journalism itself, where a travel journalist must keep delivering facts.

Pirolli (2009) tries to summarize differences between travel journalism and travel writing. The differentiating elements are the news value, objectivity, and ethical implications.

There are several guidelines for the journalists who write stories about travel destination, as stated by Bowes (2011) and Korte (in Turner, 2013). Both agree that the report on travel trips can be written with narrative form and first person perspective, where the journalist’s impression on a particular place becomes important. Telling the experience needs to be equipped with facts, description, and observation. Facts are obtained by talking with people in the travel destination or sources such as guidebook, but it is more important to use trustworthy sources that have been verified previously.

The report can be opened with unique experience or a strong but short anecdote. This can attract reader’s attention and make them want to keep on reading. Journalists also need to write economically which means write concisely. The focus is to inform the public about the particular destination and what to expect when they go on a particular trip.

Journalists must avoid cliché by creating a meaningful description of the travel destination. Journalists must include as many colors as possible when describing a destination with elements that can be detected by human senses such as sight, smell, hearing, and so on to show the spot’s exotic description and atmosphere.

The report must include historical information
about the place that the writer visits as information for the readers. Furthermore, some light cultural backgrounds can also be inserted.

Specifically for online media, Pirolli (2019) argues there is importance in making the article comply with the Search Engine Optimization (SEO) requirements. This needs to be done to improve readership through search engines.

From several explanations about the concept, there are seen several opinions about professional standard that needs to be obeyed in the practice of travel journalism. The difference in opinion happens because of the difference in understanding about the term travel journalism.

According to Bloom (1984), understanding is part of a human cognitive aspect that is one level higher than knowledge. Bloom divides understanding into three stages namely translation, interpretation, and extrapolation. On the translation level of understanding, an individual can translate from one language to another, turning a certain concept into his or her own language, and translating a certain principal by applying it through illustration or example. Moving on to the second stage is the interpretation, an individual reorganizes past ideas into a new form in his or her mind. The last stage is extrapolation, in which an individual makes estimation or prediction based on the understanding of trends, a particular tendency, or a condition already described in previous communication. Furthermore, an individual is also expected to make a conclusion related to its implications and consequences.

A person’s understanding can emerge from accumulated experience and information that relies on data gathering (Encyclopedia of Communication and Information, 2002). Besides, according to Daryanto (2008) there are internal and external factors that shape human understanding. The internal factors are physiology that consists of healthy senses, not having body disorder or being impaired, having sickness or imperfect growth, psychological factor that relates to intelligence, interests, talent, and potential for achievement, and factors that relate to physical or psychological maturity. Meanwhile, external factors revolve around social factors that consists of environment such as family, school, group and society, cultural factors such as tradition, knowledge, technology, and art, physical environment factors such as housing facility or knowledge support facility, and spiritual or religious environment.

Research Method

This research is using qualitative approach and constructivist paradigm. Constructivist paradigm is chosen to see how meaning is shared socially, in which reality in the society is constructed. In this research, constructivist paradigm is used to figure out the reasons why there is a discrepancy between the professional standard of travel journalists and the ongoing practice of covering travel destinations.

This research is using descriptive analysis where researchers relate various categories from interview results and describe them systematically, factually, and accurately. The research results are then written in words.

For selecting the research subject, researchers first observed various journalistic products that talk about traveling, starting from print media, television, to online media. Online media was selected because they have specialized channels for traveling and their own editorial staff to run the channel. However, when it comes to the finished products, the outcome of reports still lacked in terms of writing quality.

Another reason to choose online media is that based on a research conducted by Indonesian Digital Association (IDA) and Lembaga Riset Global GFK in 2015, online media is the type of media that people mostly access. Then from every online media in Indonesia, there are three news media that are accessed the most based on the data from Alexa (internet sites ranking organization) per October 15, 2018. The media are tribunnews.com, kompas.com, and detik.com. However, in the end researchers only selected kompas.com and detik.com because tribunnews.com did not match the criteria that will be discussed in the next section.

After selecting media, researchers then selected travel journalists as informants, picked out using non-probability purposive sampling technique because researchers wanted to obtain sample appropriate with the goal of this research, which was to discover journalists’ understanding about travel destination coverage.

The criteria of informants are mentioned below:

1. A journalist who works at a media institution who writes for online media.
2. A journalist who works at most accessed online media in Indonesia according to online media ranking site Alexa, which were detik.com and kompas.com and have channels specialized in traveling.
3. Currently being assigned in travel desk with minimum experience of one year.
4. Covering, writing, and reporting stories on travel destinations.

After the informants had been selected, then researchers collected data through in-depth interviews. Researchers also observed the works of the journalists that became the informants to gain more comprehensive understanding.

The interview results were then processed and analyzed using coding system, which consisted of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Open coding was conducted to the data, which is the interview results taking the form of verbatim. Researchers grouped answers or statements from the informants into categories.

Afterwards, the results of open coding were processed into axial coding by creating table,
where the results of the open coding were then grouped according to the concepts used in this research, namely professional standard, journalist understanding, and practice of travel journalism. In this stage, researchers also tried to relate all the concepts.

The next stage is selective coding, researchers selected and organized the results of axial coding into research findings. These findings were then analyzed further according to the concept of travel journalism.

In this analysis process, the data were grouped based on themes or it can be said the analysis was conducted thematically. The five major themes are informant characteristics, work of travel journalist, travel journalist writing about travel destinations, travel journalist enforcing the concept of travel journalism in writing about the destination, and lastly is travel journalist and travel writer.

Results and Discussion

Researchers selected four informants as research subjects, where Informants 1 and 2 worked from Kompas.com and Informants 3 and 4 worked for Detik.com. All informants were online journalists at their own respective media’s travel channels, which were Kompas Travel and detikTravel.

Informant 1 is male, graduated from Library Science University of Indonesia and in 2019 will be 30 years old. Informant 1 admitted having interest in writing since his high school years, he wrote in diaries and for the school’s bulletin board. His hobby carried on to his university years where he actively wrote in his personal blog.

Furthermore, Informant 1 also has traveling for a hobby, which then led him to join the university’s nature lover and outdoor activities organization (Mahasiswa Pecinta Alam/Mapala UI). When joining Mapala UI, Informant 1 combined his hobby of traveling and writing. At that time, he became a staff for the organization’s public relations division. That experience led him to learn other types of writing such as press release and travel feature, and his works were put on the organization’s magazine Majalah Jejak Mapala UI. Moreover, he also sent his writings to Kompas.com.

After graduating from university, he started to work as a travel journalist at Kompas.com. He started to work as a reporter in February 2015. He had been working as a reporter for 3 years and 6 months before being assigned as assistant editor. Until 2019, he has been working at Kompas.com’s Kompas Travel channel for 4 years. To him, his experience as a member of Mapala UI is beneficial for his work at Kompas Travel, especially when it comes to adapting to nature and society. When it comes to object of writing he likes most, Informant 1 prefers to write about nature and adventure.

Informant 2 is a 26-year old female from Jakarta. She graduated from Journalism School, Communication Study, Tarumanegara Universi-

ty. Informant 2 has deep interest in journalism, especially for writing on print media. This had been seen since university years when she took specialization in journalism writing production.

Moreover, Informant 2 has traveling for a hobby, especially traveling in the theme of nature, culture, and history. She admits not to really like man-made travel destinations. Her hobby of traveling helps her during her work when covering stories as a travel journalist.

Informant 2 has been a reporter at Kompas.com for 4 years but she was not immediately assigned to the media’s travel channel when she first enrolled there. At first she was assigned at female desk that talked about parenting, beauty, fashion, and so on. When she was working at female, Informant 2 more often did coverage about women’s lifestyle such as fashion shows. After two years at female, she was then assigned at travel.

During interview with Informant 2, she was very open to share her experience of doing coverage on various travel destinations. Informant 2 took her experience doing coverage as memorable experience. Moreover, researchers saw Informant 2 as an open-minded person because she enjoyed her interaction with people during every coverage. Through her personal Instagram, Informant 2 also tend to share her moments when meeting new people in the field. Informant also used Instagram to interact with readers of Kompas Travel. She used to get questions and inputs as follow ups for the stories she wrote.

Informant 3 is a 36-year old male. He graduated from Political Science, University of Indonesia. He had been a journalist in detik.com since 2005. During his time of being a journalist in detik.com, he had been assigned to various channels. Starting from politic to becoming vice managing editor in detik news.

Then in 2011 he was asked to manage a new channel in detik.com which was detikTravel. According to him, getting the assignment as managing editor that doubled as a conceptor for the so-called new channel was thanks to his hobby of going out and exploring new places.

During his time working as a journalist, he admitted his educational background as a political science graduate was beneficial to his work. He learned the basics of writing during university time, but for journalistic writing he admitted to learn from his editor during his time working at detik.com.

Informant 3 had been working as a journalist for 14 years that during interview he could tell his experience when covering various topics. Moreover, Informant 3 was also seen to be showing affection and care for Indonesia’s tourism. He had high hope for the traveling content that his media produces is able to initiate the improvement of tourism industry.

Informant 4 is a 24-year old female from Padang, West Sumatra. After graduating from Indonesian Literature in Andalas University, she
directly flew to Jakarta (merantau). Being a travel journalist in detik.com was actually her first job and she had been working there for 2 years.

Informant 4 is an extroverted person with cheerful, full of spirit, and expressive personality. This can be seen from the interview when she enthusiastically talked about her experience as a journalist even though it can be said she was still a beginner. She also admitted to really enjoy and be happy with her current profession, which happened to be in-line with her dream to travel the world.

When asked about her interest or hobby, Informant 4 would be pleased with outdoor activities. Moreover, because of her educational background in literature, she also put interest in culture and writing. During university years, she took a journalism basic writing class. This experience helped her in her work even though she admitted to gain more experience when doing coverage and writing reports about travel destinations.

All four informants have a same characteristic, which is loving to meet new people and explore various locations. This is seen from their hobby and interest which are in-line with their current professions.

Although some informants do not have formal journalistic educational background, all informants can do their job as journalists thanks to their knowledge and understanding they obtained during work, either from senior journalists or experience when doing coverage and writing.

In terms of work, all four informants are journalists who work for travel channels that talk about traveling. Putting into general perspective, the products of two media’s travel channels, which are Kompas Travel and detikTravel, are travel news, reviews about travel destinations, tips for traveling, also photos and videos.

When doing their tasks as travel journalists, all informants do the routines starting from attending editorial meeting, doing the coverage, writing, and reporting news about travel destinations. For the covering part, they usually get invitation either from government or private sector. On the other hand, there are also a type of sponsorship coverage that can help the media suppress the operational cost of coverage.

When accepting invitation to do a coverage, several things to be considered are whether there is news value and the availability of human resource for the event. Before going to do coverage, they make or are given a terms of reference which consists of a depiction of the current event, things to cover, list of questions, and so on. They also need to research and prepare physically. This is useful to ease work in the field and anticipate anything that may happen during coverage.

Then, when currently in the field, journalists must observe and interview various sources such as tourists, the locals, site management, or tour guide to obtain complete information. Their report must comply to the what, who, when, where, why, and how (5W 1H) rule.

When covering in the field, it is inevitable for journalists to face various challenges. One of which are related to their ability to adapt to every condition in the destination they are about to cover. These journalists must creatively overcome challenges starting from tackling the difficult area, money and time issues, and persuading introverted locals to be a source so that their reports will comply with standardized report for travel destination.

After covering, journalists must write down their observation. In writing about the news for travel destination in online media, the journalists are briefed to write concisely. This can be seen from the writings on online media which seldom or never exceed 15 paragraphs.

According to the informants, news about a destination is usually made in the form of descriptive feature. Facts are still needed to be mentioned clearly and in detailed manner, such as description for places, location of destination, how to get there, estimated cost, and so on. This must be done to avoid mixing journalists’ personal opinion in the report. Moreover, to make the article easily detected by search engine, the journalists must give the right input for the SEO.

In practice, while covering and writing, the journalists also need to consider whether the audience will find the story interesting or not. This is in relation to both media’s high market orientation, and that every story will get a significant amount of attention. Media’s motivation is to give entertainment and take audience to go on a travel.

High market orientation and media motivation can be seen from the article’s title made to be interesting and push people to read. For example, articles that are written by the informants: Keliling Ho Chi Minh dengan Vespa? Asyik.; Tempat Makan dan Nongkrong Anak Milenial di Cebu, Filipina; The Rocks, Kota Tua Sydney yang Oke Punya; Seru! Naik Kereta Wisata dengan Jalur Terdalam di Dunia.

However, to keep up with such content, Informants 1 and 2 clearly said in the interview that there are educational value to maintain in each story. This, according to the informants, is in-line with the value of Kompas.

Besides the articles that journalists produce from doing coverage, nowadays traveling content is also made by audience. Informants do not see content that comes from audience as something that competes with the journalism products they make. Instead, what the audience do has inspired the journalists to improve their journalistic content. For example, in detikTravel there is a sub-channel called d’Travelers, which put on articles that are written by the informants: Keliling Ho Chi Minh dengan Vespa? Asyik.; Tempat Makan dan Nongkrong Anak Milenial di Cebu, Filipina; The Rocks, Kota Tua Sydney yang Oke Punya;

Putu Intan Raka Cinti, Meily Badriati, The Emergence of Hybrid Journalism Practice in Travel Destination Coverage
because products of journalism must be made ac-
cording to facts and there is a responsibility to
the public to create beneficial content. What the
citizen has sent to the media will still be curated
and edited according to the style of each media.

Bloom divides understanding into three steps,
which are translating, interpreting, and exstrap-
olating. In translating stage, informants were
asked to explain the meaning of travel journal-
ism. Some informants admitted this was the first
time they heard the term even though they were
the very journalist assigned at the specialized
channels for traveling and had been practicing
traveling journalism.

However, most informants could translate the
definition of travel journalism. There was only
one informant who answered differently, and ex-
plained that travel journalism was a fun job be-
cause of the opportunity to travel for free.

Their translations on the understanding of
travel journalism came from the accumulation
of information they found when being journalists
up to this point in life, not from the background
of journalism education.

The second stage of understanding is interpre-
tation, as can be seen from what the informants
know about the principal and guidelines for cov-
erage and writing. In conducting the practice of
travel journalism, the informants admitted they
must be able to describe every travel destination
detailed as possible according to facts. This is
in-line with the guideline for writing about travel-
destination stated by Bowes (2011) and Korte
(in Turner, 2013). Information that needs to be
true to the facts for the stories is also backed up
by Hanusch and Fursich (2014) who argue that
report on travel journalism is a factual report.
Tiede (2016) also argues factuality is the first
condition for travel journalism.

As to what components must present in a re-
port on a travel destination, all informants an-
swered the same, in which the report must con-
tain 5W and 1H element accustomed to the object
of the coverage, for example its location, how to
get there, things to enjoy or to be done, prices,
best things about the spot, best time to visit, and
so on. This kind of information can be obtained
through observation, document research, or in-
terviewing various sources such as the manage-
ment, guide, visitors, or the locals.

Informants also admitted that inserting opin-
ions from tourists is an important thing to do, in
order to give a more complete and more objective
description compared to only inserting informa-
tion, observation, and experience that the jour-
nalists themselves experience during times of
coverage. By inserting opinion from sources, jour-
nalists have fulfilled Bowes (2011) and Korte’s (in
Turner, 2013) guideline for writing about travel
destination.

Informans also know the difference between
writing a report in the format of hard news and
a report in the format of travel destination. All
four informants write down their reports in the
form of feature.

Writing feature for travel destination report
also becomes its own challenge for the journal-
ists. One of the reason being the characteristics
of online media with its short and concise form
of report, and the fact that there is SEO to be con-
sidered made the informants admit they need to
reorganize and edit their reports to comply with
it. Feature report is distinguishable for the beau-
ty of its sentences, but journalists must consider
SEO that has popular words to be considered.

In working the role as travel journalists, some
of the informants clearly stated that educational
value is a point their media emphasize in pro-
ducing the news. This educational element is in-
line with Hill-James’ (2006) opinion where travel
journalism does not only discuss about beauty
but also brain.

However, all informants admitted that beauty
is still the dominant element in a report. The ef-
forts to highlight beauty element is also related
to motivational aspects from media as argued by
Liscke (2010), where both media in this research
have motivation to inform and inspire audience
to go and do the same trip as what the journalists
had done.

Informants pointed out that their readers love
attractive articles, so this aspect must be high-
lighted in the articles. Emphasizing and high-
lighting attractive aspect is related to high mar-
etket orientation of both media. The high market
orientation, as mentioned by Hanitzch and Ha-
nusch (2010), emphasizes coverage on the fun
side of the travel destination and aimed to enter-
tain the audience.

Meanwhile to convey the brain element, in-
formants are challenged by a few things, such
as time, target to produce article, and the role of
external party. External party such as the ones
who invite or the ones that become sponsor have
a big role either as a news source or the source of
funding. If the journalists accept their invitation,
they feel the need to “play safe” by writing down
critique but toning it down or even avoid from
mentioning it. In this occasion, informants carry
double role, which is to maintain good relation
with external parties and try the best to make
articles that still look objective to the public.

Meanwhile, related to brain, public actually
need correct and authentic information before
they go to travel. Authenticity can be obtained by
journalists from observation, interview, and the
way journalists deliver their experience to the
public. This is the issue that needs to be given
more attention when writing about travel des-
tination. Public need to know not only the best
part and the best experience of the journalists,
but also about the critique and unpleasant expe-
rience that the journalists face.

In writing about travel destination, all infor-
mants make some adjustments that follows the
rules from the travel channel they work for, in
which they need to be able to describe a desti-
nation as detailed and as attractive as possible
so public will be entertained and want to visit it. Furthermore, they also need to consider the party that invite them by writing articles based on the agreement such as mentioning the name of the inviting party, fulfilling a particular amount of article, and look for a way to “get around” critiques on the particular travel destination.

In producing the news, travel channels do not work alone. The channels work with marketing/sales division when it is related to invitation or business cooperation. On this occasion, news value is not the only thing considered if the media accept the offer for cooperation, but business value is considered as well. If the offered value is high, the editorial team will be asked to make articles that answer client’s expectation. However, informants stated they still uphold the principals of journalism. Informant 1 even stated if the client cannot agree with the editorial team’s decision, then it is best for the client to make advertisement instead.

External things are also taken into account in shaping the understanding of travel journalists. Based on interviews, it was seen that travel journalists who work at online media and government like Ministry of Tourism and Tourism Offices in each and every region. Specifically for traveling industry, it has double role, in which being the source of information as well as source of income for the media. This is because there is a mutualistic symbiosis, or as Informant 2 put it, barter. Cooperation with external parties can in fact contribute content for the media as well as suppress media’s expenses.

Then, because all informants are travel journalists who work at online media, it is inevitable that the media format—online media in this case—also shape their understanding in writing about destinations. The understanding of online travel journalists in writing travel reports will be different from travel journalists working in other media formats such as print (newspaper and magazine) or broadcast media (television and radio). These differences are caused by the differences in tools or technology they use to disseminate information.

When they make stories about destination, not only they pay attention to the quality of the writing but they also pay attention to the comfort of their readers, which is reflected from the length of the article as well as whether there are photos and videos, SEO, and interactivity with audience.

The informants understood that writing on online media is preferred to be short, so they tend to break the information from one coverage down into several articles. Furthermore, describing a travel destination will not be enough only with writing and sentences, but the audience also need visual elements, so it is a must for the informants also take photos and videos during coverage. In travel channels, usually every article about a destination can have more visual elements, this is something done differently from other channels.

Another aspect that also needs to be taken into account by the informants is the SEO. Based on the interviews, SEO is like a double-edged sword, as Pirolli (2019) argues. On one hand, it can improve journalists’ article readership on the search engine. But on the other hand, SEO can limit journalists’ creativity to write because they are supposed to insert popular words into the search engine, despite having their article look monotonous as a result. When examining closely from the articles that follow this rule, SEO does not have too good of an effect on the quality of the article’s title. Some articles end up having hyperbolical titles or tend to use interrogative sentences. Moreover, on other online media there are some titles that even contain clickbait.

The journalists’ work does not end when an article has been published on the website. Nowadays technology allows audience to instantly give comments to the article they have read. These comments can be conveyed through comment section and social media. Informants make meaning out of comments as something constructive. They also said that audience help them get inspiration to write destinations that have not been covered or written by their media.

The use of technology such as internet is useful in shaping the understanding and work pattern of journalists, as Daryanto (2008) argues, technology is an external factor that shapes understanding. Not only technology, audience also play a big role, where media produces articles about destination the audience are interested in.

On the other hand, norms and culture in society also become aspects that need to be considered when writing about travel destination. Informant 1 that represents Kompas Travel stated that his media chooses not to write at all about alcohol tourism, prostitution, and so forth. It is a different answer with Informant 3 who represents detikTravel, he stated that such travel destination are still written but in a less persuasive way. According to him, public deserve to know because such destination exists in the first place.

This is related to the extrapolation in level of understanding where all the informants have yet to have. Informants who have higher position and more experience understand about this better, because they have covered and wrote various in-depth travel destination reports and are courageous enough to throw a critique at the tourism world.

From the analysis, it is seen that informants have different understanding. These understandings are obtained from accumulation of information and experience when covering travel destination, as Schement (2002) has stated. However, the understanding about the professional standards for an ideal coverage of travel destination can not be completely noticed from the news that are produced, or in other words there is a discrepancy between the two because there are influences from external parties such as clients that give invitation, sponsorship, and technology.

Then according to Bowers (2011) and Korte (in
Turner, 2013), the report for a travel trip can be written in narrative format from the first person point of view, where journalist’s impressions and experience towards a spot are considered important.

However in writing about travel destination, some informants said they are inspired or rely on other people’s writings, in which are not the journalists’ own authentic works, as one of the sources to write articles about travel destination in mass media. This phenomenon is called hybrid journalism.

The practice of hybrid journalism is seen on the two media, where informants work but with different forms. For the informants from Kompas.com, they said there are local contributors and travel bloggers who send travel articles to them. The content is then edited to follow journalism principals before being put on the website. Kompas.com actually also has a citizen blog feature namely Kompasiana which is under one website. Moreover, informants also rely on social media accounts specializing in travel as their source of inspiration in writing stories.

Meanwhile, in detikTravel there is a feature in the form of citizen blog dedicated to travel, called d’Travelers, which contains writing and travel photos and is located in the website detik.com. The works of the citizens sent to them are put into moderation to be edited and then posted on the website. Informant 3 said that detikTravel is really helped by this kind of content because it will be impossible for them to cover the whole world with a limited amount of manpower without the help from citizens. Moreover, like the other informants, detikTravel also rely on posts from social media as source of inspiration or as Informant 4 put it they rewrite available content into their own style.

**Conclusion**

Based on the analysis and interpretation, travel journalists understand about covering travel destination eventhough not completely. This understanding is seen from the journalists’ ability in translating, interpreting, and concluding the principals of doing coverage on travel destination. Their understanding was shaped neither from education nor special training about travel journalism, but instead from experience or guidance from their editors or called learning by doing.

Furthermore, researchers also found several things that came up during interview, which are:

Coverage on travel destination is not only done based on editorial’s initiative, but instead more often comes from invitation or cooperation with external parties. This becomes a challenge for journalists to be able to write a story that is still factual and objective, considering there is mutualistic symbiosis involved where both parties have their own interest.

The travel news that informants and their media produce is more focused on the attractive value or being more interesting. This is related to the high market orientation and the fact that these media’s largest target audience is actually mass tourist. Furthermore, media’s motivation is to urge audience to go and travel to the destinations the media has reported.

Eventhough the journalists understand what a good coverage on a travel destination is, the stories they write does not reflect such understanding as a whole. This is because there are external sources to be considered like information giver and fund giver, the internet, and society who indirectly control what journalists create.

In working as a travel journalist at an online media, there is a discrepancy between professional standard that must be upheld and the practice because there are differences in understanding among journalists. The differences in understanding happen because of various things such as their experience in gathering information, internal factor, and external factor from outside the journalists.

Moreover, in travel journalism there has been found the practice of hybrid journalism, which is reflected from news sources used that do not come from the journalists’ own observation, but instead from documents or audience content on social media about a particular destination. Then the hybrid journalism is also seen from the existence of citizen blog feature that is integrated in the mass media’s website and posted side by side with journalistic reports written by journalists. In the next research, it could be observed how far the practice of hybrid journalism has been applied by mass media.
Bibliography

Bloom, B. S. (1986). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. New York: David McKay Co Inc.

Bona. (2018, April 27). *Kegelapan Abadai & Kolam Keramat di Goa Kong Lor*. Retrieved from https://travel.detik.com/international-destination/d-3994547/kegelapan-abadai-kolam-keramat-di-gua-kong-lor

Bowes, G. (2011, September 23). Retrieved from www.theguardian.com: https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2011/sep/23/travel-writing-tips-expert-advice

Daryanto. (2008). *Evaluasi Pendidikan*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.

Fodness, D. & Murray, B. (1999). A Model of Tourist Information Search. *Journal of Travel Research*, 503-523.

Fürsich, E. & Kavoori. (2001). Mapping a Critical Framework for the Study of Travel Journalism. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*. Hanusch, F. (2010). The Dimensions of Travel Journalism: Exploring New fields for Journalism Research Beyond the News. *Journalism Studies*, 68-82.

Hanusch, F. & Fürsich, E. (2014). *Travel Journalism: Exploring Production, Impact, and Culture*. London: Palgrave Macmillan

Hill-James, C. R. (2006). *Citizen Tourist: Newspaper Travel Journalism’s Responsibility to Its Audience*. Thesis Creative Industries Faculty of Queensland University of Technology

Kusnandar, V. B. (2019, July 3). Retrieved from katadata.co.id: https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2019/07/03/jumlah-perjalanan-wisatawan-nusantara-2018-tumbuh-12

Margaretha. (2015). *Pola Penyajian Cultural Heritage pada Berita Wisata Kiriman Jurnalis Warga Dalam Perspektif Fakualitas Berita (Studi Mengenai Paket Berita Net 10 di NET TV)* (Bachelor thesis). Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik Universitas Indonesia

Nazareth, L. (2007). *The Leisure Economy: How Changing Demographics, Economics, and Generational Attitudes Will Reshape Our Lives and Our Industries*. Missisauga: John Wiley & Sons Canada.

Pan, B. (2006). *Tourist Information Search and Acquisition: An Extended Framework*. Retrieved from https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/373b/7426533ef9b359946e48a6036144166641cd.pdf

Piroli, B. (2019). *Travel Journalism: Informing Tourist in the Digital Age*. New York: Routledge

Saputra, G. B. (2018, Juli 14). *6 Tempat Wisata ‘Kuburan Kuno’ di Toraja*. Retrieved from Kompas.com: https://travel.kompas.com/read/2018/07/14/090000927/6-tempat-wisata-kuburan-kuno-di-toraja?page=all

Schement, J. R. (Ed.). (2002). *Encyclopedia of Communication and Information*. New York: Macmillan Reference USA.

Tiede, R. M. (2016). *The Importance of Travel Journalism (Thesis)*. Department of Journalism Texas Christian University.

Turner, B. & Orange, R. (2013). *Specialist Journalism*. London: Routledge.

Widowati, H. (2019, July 17). Retrieved from katadata.co.id: https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2019/07/17/5-tahun-terakhir-rerata-pertumbuhan-kunjungan-wisawatan-mancanegara-14