

EXPLORING THE IDEAS OF HYPERLOCAL NEWS AS A FUTURE JOURNALISM

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Abstract: *This study is to explore the ideas of hyperlocal news as future journalism. As the economy weakens, the general trend of declining circulation and advertising revenue for the past few years, Malaysia's media industry has begun downsizing or wrapping up certain segments of their operations. Utusan Melayu offers VSS to more than half its workers as part of its restructuring exercise to reduce overall costs due to the company's financial constraints, the same goes for Media Prima and Astro. The new media on news platforms has changes the practices of news making. Growing body research on digital journalism and news on digital media but little has been undertaken into the potential of hyperlocal news as future journalism. In this paper, researcher review articles related to the study of hyperlocal news, digital journalism and new media. By conducting this study, a deeper understanding of what is hyperlocal media, what the roles and how this hyperlocal media as a future of local journalism.*

Keywords: *Hyperlocal News; Future Journalism; News Making; Digital Journalism; New Media*

Introduction

The journalistic profession has experienced remarkable changes in content, format and also how news been gathered. The emergence of journalism is changing fast. The purpose of

journalism in is collecting, reporting and commenting on news and current affairs for publication (Splichal, 2015). However, in terms of social and demographic characteristics, journalists do not represent the population of the citizen who relies on their reporting and interpretation (Splichal, 2015). Today, the growing number of Hyper-local media and the growing importance of news has bought issues in the journalism industry. This study focused on Hyper-local news. Informative, relevant to the community, and has the potential of empowering community residents (Shih, Han & Carroll, 2014) are the criteria of local news.

With the emergence of the Internet, social media as a part of new approaches to disseminating news in digital journalism, and the Internet changed the production and diffusion of news, an array of news authors, web publishers, and journalists, professional or non-professional (Splichal, 2015). Some research on hyperlocal news shows the public interest approach to the professional norms of journalism and their business model (Leckner, Tenor & Nygren, 2019; Tenor, 2018; Simons, Tiffen, Hendrie, Carson, Sullivan, Muller, & McNair, 2017; Swatman, Krueger & van der Beek, 2006). Other studies indicate that the agenda-setting of the hyperlocal news (Funk & McCombs, 2017). However, to understand the ideas of hyper-local is to engages with “the people formerly known as the audience” means recognizing the communication ecologies they are situated in—how they may share a story with a family member on Facebook, or mention it at a community meeting (Wenzel, 2019) and understand how people understand journalism (Nielsen, 2016).

Because of the withdrawal of local news journalism in the mainstream media and changing patterns of news distribution there has been a long interest in exploring an understanding the hyper-local, especially in today’ changing media environment. Recent studies on journalism have shown that alternative media have been criticized for their soft line, for lacking objectivity and for preaching to the converted (Burrows, 2018).

Transformation in traditional journalism to the new digital journalism is not only about the technology and business model but also the arising of hyper-local news in the journalism field. It has been found out that media ethics and accountability are recognized as important challenges facing hyper-local entrepreneurs and that there is broad recognition of traditional dimensions of professional journalism (Tenor, 2018). This is because, in digital new journalism, the citizen is journalists and editors by themselves and for themselves (Splichal, 2015). It is related to the studies by Hermida, Fletcher, Korell, and Logan (2012), that a majority of social media users believe that their social circles provide them with a broader range of news and information than if they relied solely on traditional media.

Previous studies showed that Google news or BuzzFeed is increasingly intruding into news market and might force local, regional and nationwide journalism to act faster in the future (Menke, Kinnebrock, Kretzschmar, Aichberger, Broersma, Hummel, Salaverría, 2018). Especially with social media, it provides journalists with more information about their audiences than ever before (Tandoc & Vos, 2016). Given the popularity of the Internet and social media, new journalism evolves out of new places of storytelling that blend news production and consumption to produce narrative that ate reflexive (Papacharissi, 2015).

This study carried out through a articles review related to the study of hyper-local news, digital journalism, and new media. To further understanding of what hyper-local media is, what the roles and how this hyper-local media as a future of local journalism, researchers included the study of news consumption on digital news. This paper explores the ideas of hyper-local news as new journalism. It aims to understand hyper-local as new journalism.

The paper begins by selecting a paper related to the local news, local journalism, community journalism, and hyper-local news. The paper then goes on to explore the roles of hyper-local news, who plays an important role in shaping how issues are considered and viewed. By looking at the past studies and past articles in covering hyper-local journalism, the ideas of hyper-local been identified.

Local Journalism

One of the primary goals of this study is to explore the hyper-local news. Some scholars (Paulussen & D'heer, 2013) who see in today's digital media environment, it is no longer the professional producer but the individual user who decides which medium and which content is worth. However, to explore and understand hyper-local, first of all, researchers need to understand what and how local news functions. Local journalists covered national reporting in ways that attempted to stake a claim on who should cover the issues and how (Gutsche & Shumow, 2017) and in local news, geography or proximity and perceived audience needs (Gutsche & Shumow, 2017). Local news provides benefits for local residents to become more aware of and be able to more actively participate in helping local crisis (Shih, Han & Carroll, 2014). In reporting of local news, journalists tend to emphasize the location and might mention the community name (Mouton, Boulton, Solomon & Rock, 2019).

In addition, local journalists especially news on newspapers are critical of all generically defined parts of the urban area (well documented, negative coverage of inner cities, stereotypes of rural areas too, playing up crime and natural disaster) (Harris & Hendershott, 2018). In contrast, moreover, past studies found that media bias was not a factor in the differential community reactions (Voyer, Dreher, Gladstone & Goodall, 2013). but the problem with local news is the social affordances on existing local news aggregators are limited (Kavanaugh, Ahuja, Gad, Neidig, Pérez-quñones, Ramakrishnan & Tedesco, 2014; Tandoc & Jenkins, 2017).

One of the primary news coverage on local news is on political. Local news know they are not the main source of national, breaking political news but for politicians, affect the type of issues covered by local media and success in shaping local news content appears gained by issuing press release (Fogarty, 2011) and it is important for political outcomes (Martin & McCrain, 2019).

Hyper-Local Journalism

As been stated earlier, local news covered geography or proximity and perceived audience needs (Gutsche & Shumow, 2017). As stated by Metzgar et a. 2011 in Harte, Howells, & Williams, 2019; Hyperlocal media as a kind of hybrid form of local news-making that has elements where “ alternative newspaper movements combined the interactive and broadcast abilities accompanying and hyper-local media operations are geographical –based, community-oriented, original- news reporting organizations indigenous to the web and intended to fill perceived gaps in coverage of an issue or region and to promote civic engagement (Harte, Howells, & Williams, 2019).

Interestingly, in Germany, every news articles are dealing with a local, regional or national event (Bosshart (2013). As the transmission of the Internet, however in Netherlands, studies of hyper-local media shows that many websites are poor performances, they do not engage with social media, sufficient advertising, lack of original news or publish hardly any news (van Kerkhoven & Bakker, 2014) and online environments consists of too much poorly organized, ephemeral information that is difficult for users to find and make sense of their

own (Ananny & Crawford, 2014). Findings from more recent studies support that the limited use of social media to share hyperlocal news may stem from an insufficient overlap in readers' social networks between the people who are interested in hyperlocal news and the people with whom readers connect through social media (Bobkowski, Jiang, Peterlin & Rodriguez, 2018). In hyper-local news production, community contributors to a hyper-local site are generally most effective telling stories (Gerson, Chen, Wenzel, Ball-Rokeach & Parks, 2016). However, compared to professional journalists, citizens are more likely to use themselves as the primary and often the only source for the news stories (Paulussen & D'heer, 2013).

It has been argued that the norm of fairness and accuracy was widely noted as an important goal, but rigorous fact-checking was discouraging in professional experience (Agarwal & Barthel, 2015). In contrast citizen journalism like to write about themselves and has repercussions for how they judge the newsworthiness of facts, stories, and events (Paulussen & D'heer, 2013). Moreover, online journalists rejected the idea of credibility as being established through institutional routines "strategic rituals" (Agarwal & Barthel, 2015). One of the reasons is because of changes in news production that identified three facets of news affected by the audience feedback online (1) topic selection, (2) story placement and (3) performance evaluation (Lee & Tandoc Jr, 2017).

The content of hyper-local pages consists of a mix of hard and soft news that is similar to community journalism (Metzgar & Kurpius, 2011). Research shows that there is a strong correlation between the story categories and the type of contributor, whereas the professional journalists focus on crimes, fires, and accidents whereas the soft news topics are the most covered by citizens (Paulussen & D'heer, 2013). Tenor (2018), found that hyperlocals are small enterprises with limited resources, which make them vulnerable in a swiftly changing media landscape. This because citizen's general lack of access to official and institutional and usually citizen stories containing quotes from or references and more than half of the news contained at least one hyperlink (Paulussen & D'heer, 2013).

Agenda Setting Theory

The concept of agenda-setting theory explains that media set the agenda for the public; they tell people what is necessary by the number of times a story is reported and, by implication, if they do not report on a story, they indicate what stories are unimportance (West & Turner, 2018). Baran & Davis (2016) as studied by Walter Lippmann (1992), discover that the people do not deal directly with their environments as much as they respond to "pictures" in their heads. A researcher is focusing on hyperlocal news of what, how and why news of local contents selected and highlighted by the producer (editors).

Framing Theory on Hyperlocal News

In exploring the ideas of hyperlocal news as a future journalism, researcher applied framing as a guide in this study to explain and extend the knowledge on hyperlocal news. The Internet also reshaped the news side of the news content. The transition of the Internet and digital journalism has made news become more personal and news are more related to the users' own life and locality (Westley & Rulyono 2017). Past studies by Paulussen & D'heer (2013) showed that the content available on the hyperlocal pages consists of a mix of hard and soft news that is quite similar to community journalism. This explains that framing of hyperlocal news consists of geographic elements, community orientation, original reporting, indigenous to the web and civic engagement (Metzgar, Kurplis & Rowley, 2011).

Methodology

The research involved the analysis of articles published on Scopus from 2013 until 2019. The main objective of this research was to understand what is hyper-local media, what the roles and how this hyper-local media as a future of local journalism. Specifically, the research focused on hyper-local media and hyper-local news. The results were produced based on the descriptive of the Scopus. This research applied the Content Analysis method where the researchers chose and analyzed each of the past studies on hyper-local news and hyper-local media and classified into categories based on the research questions. (1) the roles of hyper-local news, (2) who plays an important role in shaping and (3) how issues are considered and viewed.

Results and Discussion

The new media on news platforms has changes the practices of news making. Hyper-local news and media. This research found that readers with little education used social media more than their highly educated neighbours to share news from hyperlocal websites (Bobkowski, et al., 2018).

What is Hyper-local

From the works of literature, past studies showed hyper-local is the cultural practices of journalism that extend to a new way of news making that focusing on the geographically angles of news through online digital media. The hyper-local news consists of a mix of hard and soft news. (see Table 1 for further details).

Table 1: What is Hyper-local

Year	Authors	Description
2017	Harte, Williams & Turner	Hyper-local journalism as a cultural practice that has as much to do with place-making as it does journalism and it is mutually reinforcing.
2016	Hess and Waller	Hyper-local as a new kid in the news neighbourhood that gets pushed or pulled from the curb, depending on its ability to serve a serious news agenda or generate profits. It has suggested there is a need to take a step back and view hyper-local not as a product or object, but as a cultural phenomenon
2015	Williams, Harte & Turner	Hyper-local news, on the whole, is very community and locally oriented. By contrast with much professional commercial news, which has become progressively less local in its focus and depth of coverage as resources decline, hyper-local audiences get lots of locally sourced stories with strong local news angles. Moreover, members of the public and local community groups tend to get more of a say as news sources than in the mainstream local and regional news. Official sources in local government, business and the emergency services still get a platform, but so do many local citizens.
2014	Ewart	The tyranny of the globalization of news with its associated diminution of hyper-local news provision is being offset by talk- back radio in hitherto unrevealed ways. Three types of hyper- local news for study participants: (1) specialized topics; (2) specific information about a relatively small geographical

		area; and (3) similar information about regions or areas located in relatively close proximity. For some it was their preferred or only source of news, while others used it in addition to more traditional news media.
2013	Paulussen & D’Heer	The content available on the hyper-local pages consists of a mix of hard and soft news. The “hard” and factual news about crimes, fires and accidents is still almost exclusively produced and delivered by professional journalists, the “soft” news coverage about daily community life has become the domain of the citizen reporters. Indeed,

Roles of Hyper-local

These sections discuss the roles of hyper-local. From the previous studies, it shows that hyper-local provide a forum for debate and information for citizens, local governments and organizations and it can be divided into nonprofit/nonprofessional, nonprofit/professional and profit/professional (see Table 2 for further details).

Table 2: The Roles of Hyper Local

Year	Authors	Description
2019	Jangdal, Cepaite-Nilsson and Stúr,	Media entrepreneurs view their news production as an important part of the local community. They provide a forum for debate and information for citizens, local governments and organizations. Their service also includes a channel for local events relevant for the community. The interactions with the local governments vary, as well as the hyper-local entrepreneurs’ evaluation of how the information provided by the councils can or should be handled. The relation between hyper-local media entrepreneurs and local governments is a complex process, including both interrelated and contradictory goals
2018	Tenor	Hyper-local can be divided into (A) nonprofit/nonprofessional could be to mirror community events, often as a “positive” counter-image. Within (B) nonprofit/professional, interrogative reporting could be viewed as a contribution to the common good. Niches of news alerts and partnership content are found within (C) for-profit/nonprofessional, while a full news standard is the (struggling) ambition within (D) for-profit/professional
2018	Liu, Chen, Ognyanova, Nah & Ball-Rokeach	Hyper-local digital media are not always about a one-way transmission of information; they serve to strengthen the local communication infrastructure through which more residents are incorporated in local civic life
2015	Chen, Ognyanova, Zhang, Wang, Ball-Rokeach & Parks	A key goal of the local political elite and traditional local press to serving the “public good. However, the council members feel what is “good” for the city is limited to the lack of visible problems and vocal complaints, thus allowing those in authoritative positions to dictate what they feel is beneficial to the entire community. On the other hand, the hyperlocal website seeks to promote a more idealistically democratized

		form of civic engagement by giving voice to not only policy-makers but also the previously unheard voices of the general populace. The fundamental goals of the hyperlocal operation and the city council clash with each other, and consequently, they have struggled to develop a productive relationship.
2016	Harte, Turner, & Williams	In terms of civic value that hyper-local creates, hyper-local producers take on the issue of money, they do at least share a common set of entrepreneurial attitudes and skill sets. Almost as an inevitable consequence of their circumstances: they are multi-skilled, enjoy relatively autonomous working conditions, have a high degree of personal agency and are not averse to taking risks. Above all, they generally enjoy their work and feel valued by the communities they represent.
2014	van Kerkhoven & Bakker	The economy is problematic, advertising rates are low while the competition is fierce. With this in mind, it is also possible to argue that many sites are performing quite well. However, a rather good performance in terms of local content prominent for all models—and a substantial share of original content. The hyperlocal news websites are both promising and vulnerable. There is a potential to grow but depending on a very small staff could seriously hamper development.

Who Plays Important Role in Shaping Hyper-Local?

Since the number of hyper-local is increasing, the numbers of the citizen to fulfill the role of journalist also increasing. The issues with the citizens are the credibility and accountability of the news. From the past literature found that some hyper-local news been produced by the professional journalists and some are from the citizen. That means there is complement each other (see Table 3 for further details).

Table 3: Who Plays on Important Role in Shaping Hyper-Local

Year	Authors	Description
2016	Gerson, Chen, Wenzel, Ball-Rokeach & Parks	Community contributors to a hyper-local site are generally most effective telling stories that are of personal interest to them and not in an objective way.
2016	Lowrey & Kim	Professional background of staff and affiliation with traditional media organizations proved most important in explaining favorability of coverage, and level of advertising was an important predictor of frequency of coverage.
2015	Chadha	a strong professional identity of being journalists, they hoisted their additional responsibilities of “schmoozing” with advertisers and cheering for their communities onto their journalistic responsibilities and melded them into a more positive, composite image of a journalist who is committed to public service. The
2015	Chadha	Primarily former journalists. Follow journalistic behaviors and gatekeeping practices with equal fervor and show the same skepticism in relation to user content and allowing contributors unsupervised freedom to participate online.
2013	Paulussen &	The fundamental differences or complementarities between

	D'Heer	amateur and professional news content can be observed at different levels. Firstly, the differences are apparent in the selection of topics for news coverage. Citizen journalists prefer to create news stories based on their personal interests and experiences, or on information from the local organisations to which they are affiliated compared to professional journalists, citizens are more likely to use themselves as the primary and often only source for their news stories. Professional local journalists, for their part, tend to rely mainly on official institutional sources like the police and courts. Lastly, the fact that users like to write about themselves or their organisations also has repercussions for how they judge the newsworthiness of facts, stories and events. According
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Conclusion

Overall, the results showed that the hyper-local is a cultural practice that has as much to do with place-making and is very community and locally oriented by using websites, blogs, and social media but still lacking. Moreover, hyper-local provide a forum for debate and information for citizens, local governments and organizations. Their service also includes a channel for local events relevant to the community. In hyper-local news media, news can be produced by the citizen and journalists. However, is lacking the objectivity, media ethics and accountability are recognized as important challenges facing hyper-local. Therefore, attention should be given to hyper-local news media in future research by the media and journalism scholars because of the number of increasing of online community news and declining of local newspapers.

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