

Metro TV's Editorial Strategy to Controversial Sources: The Case Study on Special Report TV Program

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<p>Article History: Received February 24th 2024</p> <p>Revised March 4th 2024</p> <p>Accepted March 13th 2024</p>	<p>ABSTRACT</p> <p>One strategy to pique viewers' interest is to display contentious topics, cases, and sources. Metro TV successfully achieved this with their Special Report, "Becoming a Suspect, Rafael Alun Talks". This study was conducted to learn more about Metro TV's editorial approach to airing contentious sources on the Rafael Alun episode of the Special Report show. The idea of editorial strategy and the Hierarchy of Influence theory are used as analytical tools in this study. A case study using a qualitative approach is the methodology employed, and post positivism is the paradigm. The study's findings demonstrate that Metro TV's editorial strategy for airing the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report consists of five key components: (1) picking topics that are popular and relevant to the general public, as well as their sources; (2) choosing the concept for the program; (3) choosing the team that produces the content; (4) processing the content in line with editorial and editorial direction; and (5) evaluation.</p> <p>Keywords: <i>editorial strategy; hierarchy of Influence; mass media; Metro TV; resource person</i></p> <p>ABSTRAK</p> <p>Menampilkan isu atau kasus dan narasumber kontroversial merupakan salah satu cara untuk meraih minat khalayak. Seperti yang dilakukan Metro TV ketika menghadirkan program Special Report "Jadi Tersangka, Rafael Alun Bicara". Penelitian ini dibuat untuk mengetahui bagaimana strategi redaksi Metro TV dalam penayangan narasumber kontroversial lewat program Special Report edisi Rafael Alun. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori Hierarchy of Influence dan konsep strategi redaksi sebagai pisau analisis. Paradigma yang digunakan adalah post positivisme dan metode yang digunakan adalah studi kasus dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Hasil penelitian yang dibayarkan menunjukkan bahwa terdapat 5 elemen penting terkait strategi redaksi Metro TV dalam penayangan Special Report edisi Rafael Alun, yakni (1) pemilihan isu yang sedang tren dan diminati masyarakat dan pemilihan narasumber, (2) pemilihan konsep program, (3) pemilihan tim produksi, (4) pengolahan konten sesuai dengan arahan redaksi dan redaksi, dan (5) evaluasi. .</p> <p>Kata Kunci: <i>strategi redaksi; hirarki pengaruh; media massa; Metro TV; narasumber,</i></p>
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INTRODUCTION

The large number of private television stations emerging currently has caused competition between television media to become increasingly fierce (Hilvania & Briandana, 2023; Sukmana et al., 2018), including news television in Indonesia. Currently there are six private television stations that focus on news programs, namely Metro TV, TV One, Kompas TV, iNews, CNN Indonesia and BTV. As competition gets tighter, news media players also have to think hard about how to compete to reach their audience (Jamil & Doktorlina, 2016; Rahmadani et al., 2024).

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One thing that is done is to broadcast controversial sources or sources that are often debated and are the subjects most discussed by the public (Bolin, 2014). In fact, television stations often label them as exclusive if they get sources who are considered difficult to get or are most widely discussed by the public (Briandana et al., 2020; Yoedtadi et al., 2021).

After his son, Mario Dandy Satrio, mistreated a teenager named Cristalino David Ozora, also known as David, teenagers began to take offense at Rafael Alun Trisambodo, also known as Rafael. Rafael has a staggering 56 billion rupiah in wealth, which became widely known due to this lawsuit. On Friday, February 24, 2023, Rafael Alun Trisambodo was dismissed from his positions at the Directorate General of Taxation (DJP) by Minister of Finance Sri Mulyani Indrawati, who was aware that this case had an effect on her ministry.

Since the beginning of this investigation, reporters have been contacting Rafael Alun's figure in an attempt to gain more information. Rafael Alun is a contentious figure with contentious issues around him. He is one of the highlights of a news program that features news information. Rafael Alun made appearances on several news outlets, including CNN Indonesia, Kompas TV, BTV, and Metro TV, prior to being taken into custody by the KPK. Ernie Mieke Torondek, the spouse of Rafael Alun, is solely featured on Metro TV out of all the media. In the media, he goes by the nickname "Ernie," who is even accused of peddling fake tears. On social media, passages from an interview that Rafael Alun Trisambodo and his spouse had on Metro TV went viral.

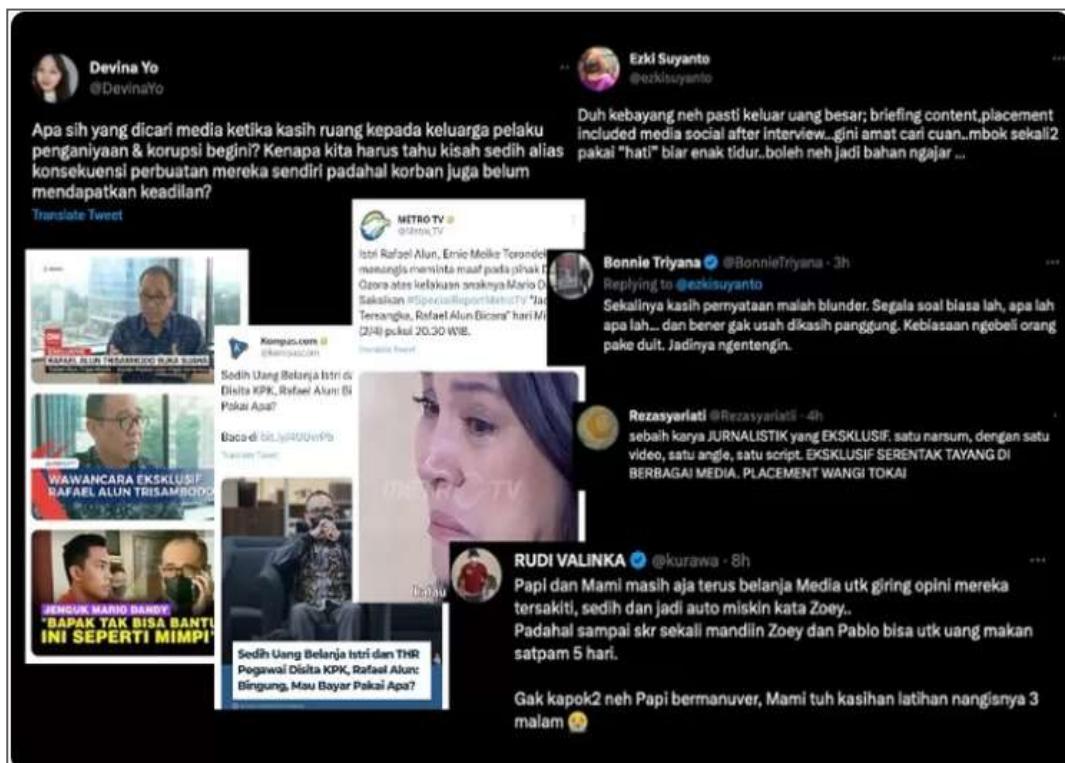


Figure 1 Compilation of netizens' tweets on Twitter after the broadcast of Rafael Alun and his wife, Ernie Mieke Torondek on a number of television media

The broadcast of Rafael Alun's interview on several national television certainly invited various responses from the audience. In fact, quite a few netizens stated that the media had been "paid" by Rafael Alun. One news television, namely CNN Indonesia, also responded in the form of an open letter stating that the television did not receive any compensation from Rafael Alun for broadcasting an exclusive interview.



Figure 2 CNN Indonesia Open Letter regarding Rafael Alun's interview broadcast (Twitter @CNNIndonesia)

The broadcast of Rafael Alun's interview in the Special Report program "Becoming a Suspect, Rafael Alun Talks" on Metro TV will be held on April 2 2023. At 20.30 - 22.00 WIB. In its broadcast, this program not only presents the figure of Rafael Alun as Mario Dandy's father and former tax official, but also presents Mario Dandy's mother, who is rarely touched by the media, named Erni Mieke Torondek. Apart from that, this program also presents criminal law expert Asep Iwan Iriawan and Anti-Corruption Society Coordinator or MAKI Boyamin Saiman.

Editors play an important role in determining which events will be made into news and which will not, which will be highlighted and which will be disguised, which groups will appear and which will be hidden (Briandana et al., 2022; Nugroho, 2023). However, the thoughts formulated in the editorial actually have an influence on the content of media reports. The Hierarchy of Influence divides the influence of media content into 5 levels, namely from individual media workers (individual level), influence from media routines (media routines level), influence from media organizations (organizational level), influence from outside the media (outside media level), and the last is the influence of ideology (ideology level) (Bunderson et al., 2016).

Quoting an article on the remotivi.or.id page with the title "Salon Journalism in an Interview with Rafael Alun" by Muhamad Heychael and Rangga Naviul Wafi, from the start the two of them said, "In the television station studio, problematic officials are dressed up." In this article, the two of them highlighted Rafael Alun's interview broadcast on the four TVs. In this article, the author generalizes CNN, Kompas TV and BTV with its framing which actually leads more opinion with questions asked that make it seem as if Rafael Alun was "sacrificed" after being made a suspect by the Corruption Eradication Commission. However, the author observed a different broadcast shown by Metro TV through the program "Special Report: Becoming a Suspect, Rafael Alun Talks" did not directly test Rafael's statements through the presenter, but Metro TV also presented Asep Irwan Iriawan and Boyamin Saiman, to provide a competing perspective. Fragments of the interview with Rafael were discussed again with Asep in the studio. Thus, Metro TV still does not provide a framing that Rafael was not "victimized", but indeed he had committed a criminal act and deserved to be a suspect for all his actions.

In this context, researchers use various literature as references, such as research entitled "Hierarchy of Influence in Editorial Policy" (Case Study of Perindo News Content on Okezone.com) by Permatasari & Putra (2022) shows that the media content on Okezone.com content is most influenced by news content at the organizational level which can be seen from the leadership of Hary Tanoesoedibjo who has the highest power in the Perindo Party and MNC Group. The next literature is entitled "Hierarchy of Influence on the Talk Show Kick Andy Double Check Metro TV Program Guiteres Pahlawan" by Rasyidi et al., (2022) shows that the influence of media ownership on media content is very influential, as is the case study of the Kick Andy program on Metro TV.

Apart from literature on the hierarchy of influence, there is also several literature related to editorial strategy which is used as a reference, one of which is research written by Pattia & Radjagukguk (2020) with the title "Radar Depok.Com Editorial Management Strategy in Facing Competition in the Digitalization Era" explains that the editorial management strategy carried out by radardepok.com in facing competition in the digitalization era is to hold meetings every day, evening, morning and afternoon with several stages carried out starting from planning, organizing, implementing, evaluating and monitoring. However, each media certainly has a different editorial management strategy. The second literature entitled "Broadcast Media Strategies in Creating Healthy Broadcast Programs for the Public" explains that there are five broadcast strategies in creating healthy programs for the public, namely content that is popular and interesting, paying attention to the audience, local content, age segments and interaction with listeners.

Furthermore, there is literature that explains media sources. The first research was entitled "Commodification of the Rocky Gerung Controversy in the CNN Indonesia Complete Peel Program" by Adiputro & Sunarwan (2020) who explained that Rocky Gerung's presence in CNN Indonesia's Peel Complete program helped increase awareness and viewership of the program. The controversy and debate from this broadcast was also replicated on various other social media platforms. In this way, the relationship between sources and the media industry can become a mutually

beneficial relationship. This also becomes a reference for researchers to discuss further the controversial sources used by a number of media when discussing an issue.

Regarding the explanation previously outlined, the researcher will analyze Metro TV's editorial strategy in broadcasting controversial sources with a case study of the special report program "Become a Suspect, Rafael Alun Talks". For this reason, this research aims to analyze Metro TV's editorial strategy in broadcasting controversial sources as well as the implementation of Metro TV's editorial strategy so that it meets its objectives. Meanwhile, the latest thing about this research is that there is no research that discusses Metro TV's editorial strategy in broadcasting controversial sources. A number of research data in the literature sought by researchers discuss the editorial management of a media which is linked to competition in the digital era and other media.

METHODS

The method used in this research is a qualitative method with a case study approach. Research that uses case studies is research that conducts in-depth investigations of various kinds of information regarding several units or cases for one period or between several compound time periods (Yin, 2006). In this research, the researcher used a case study with the Intrinsic case study type as a research method. This type is considered suitable to be used to examine the perception of a phenomenon experienced by Metro TV editorial staff in broadcasting controversial sources packaged in a special program called Special Report which is broadcast at certain times depending on editorial policy and direction.

In general, the subject of this research is Metro TV and the media actors in it. The following is a list of sources who will be interviewed by researchers to obtain the information needed for this research:

Table 1. Informant Data

No	Name	Position
1	Yohanes Siahaininea	Bulletin Manager
2	Ami Melanrosa	Eksektive Producer
3	Hafiyah Yahya	Producer
4	Aries Fadilah	Deputy Chief Editor

There are two data collection techniques used in this research, namely primary and secondary data collection techniques. The primary data used in this research is in-depth interviews. In this case, researchers will use data validity checks on the basis of trust or credibility, by selecting several important office

holders at Metro TV. The researcher himself here uses source triangulation. Meanwhile, secondary data is obtained by researchers from various sources, such as books, journals, online media articles, social media and so on.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Hierarchy of Influence in Determining Controversial Issues and Sources

The media has a central role in society, namely presenting information, views, ideas and discourse that exist in society (Miller, 2015; Novita et al., 2021). Sesuai dengan teori hierarki pengaruh (Hierarchy of Influence), the news presented by the media is influenced by various factors (Adila, 2011; Ewing et al., 2019). The hierarchy of influences theory introduced by Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese states that media content is shaped by a number of factors, both from within and outside the media organization, which produce different realities (Reese & Shoemaker, 2016). This theory also explains that there are five levels that influence media content, namely the influence of individual media workers (individual level), the influence of media routines (media routines level), the influence of media organizations (organizational level), the influence of outside media (outside media level), and the last is the influence of ideology (ideology level) (Reese & Shoemaker, 2016).

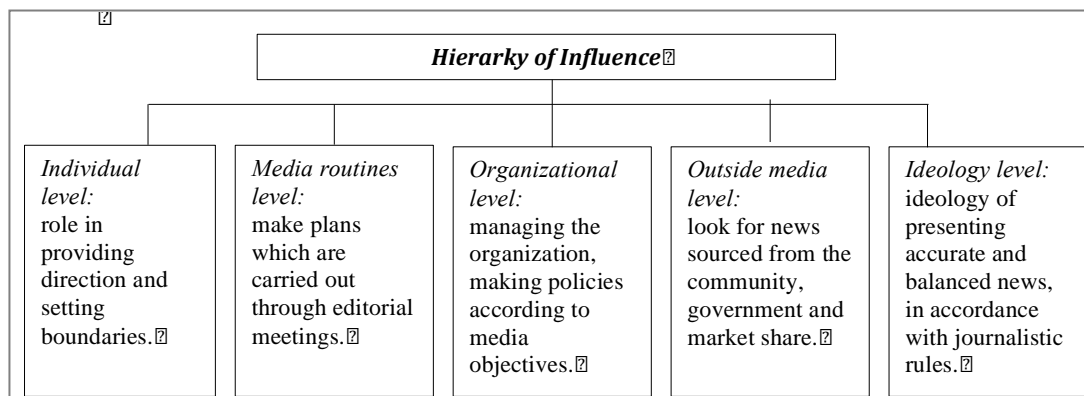


Figure 3 Research Findings

The results of this research, Rafael Alun's Special Report, quite reflect the circle classification of media content influence levels as explained by Shoemaker and Reese. At the individual level, executive producers and producers are the actors who play the most role in the process of designing and producing the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report. Based on the results of in-depth interviews, the idea to create a special interview program for Rafael Alun itself came from the production team itself who saw the Rafael Alun case as a hot and controversial issue. The idea was then discussed by top officials at Metro TV, who in this case were the deputy chief editor (wapimred) and manager and received approval. In this case, the Deputy Chief of Staff and managers at the individual level play a role in providing direction and determining boundaries. Meanwhile, executive producers and producers are given the

freedom to be creative in packaging the program. With many considerations, especially in terms of journalistic principles, it was finally decided to broadcast Rafael Alun's special interview with his wife, Ernie Meike Torondek.

"We look at issues, we can see what the public is concerned about in a case or event." (Aries Fadilah - Deputy Chief Editor of Metro TV, Interview, January 8 2024)

Second, the level of media routine which describes how the Metro TV editorial team presents news with Rafael Alun's Special Report packaging using work mechanisms according to established routines. There are several things to pay attention to in the work mechanism, namely selecting controversial issues, selecting speakers, selecting presenters, and the form of program packaging. This mechanism is discussed in planning which is carried out through editorial meetings which are attended by managers, executive producers and even producers. For the Special Report program, Metro TV has a different presentation mechanism from daily programs. This program is also part of Metro TV's routine as a national television medium, when controversial issues arise in society.

"So we emphasize that there is a news package that explains the background and interview dialogue with the person concerned plus providing context from legal observers." (Yohanes Siahainenia - Metro TV Manager, Interview, 11 October 2023)

Third, namely the level of media organization which is related to the organizational management structure, policies and media objectives. Metro TV has the aim of presenting actual news and based on facts that exist in society, one of which is in a program called Rafael Alun's Special Report. Metro TV's routine as a national news television medium is of course inseparable from hot issues that are currently viral in society. The Metro TV editorial team focuses on news processing by presenting main sources or A1 sources, so they can provide accurate information. As an independent media organization, Metro TV certainly wants to differentiate itself from other media in broadcasting Rafael Alun's news. When the Rafael Alun case was hot, several television stations broadcast special interview programs with Rafael Alun without any competing sources. Therefore, Metro TV presents Rafael Alun's interview with his wife as the main source, paired with MAKI Coordinator Boyamin Saiman and criminal law expert Asep Iwan Iriawan, so that it becomes a complete and balanced broadcast. The influence of the organization is also illustrated by how high-ranking officials supervise the production team to create content that can achieve high ratings and shares, but still complies with journalistic rules.

"What we sell is content. This content is dialogue content that we call exclusive dialogue." (Yohanes Siahainenia - Metro TV Manager, Interview, 11 October 2023)

Fourth, the external level of media which can come from society, government or market share. The Special Report itself comes from the strength of a controversial issue that originates from the community and is currently being discussed virally. In

the context of this research, Metro TV tried to cover the Rafael Alun case which at that time was going viral in society in a special program, called Special Report. Metro TV itself provided a special portion or stage for this case, because there was a lot of discussion on social media regarding the Rafael Alun case and the push for law enforcement in this case. Therefore, Metro TV accommodates public interest in the Rafael Alun case by presenting a program containing special interviews with Rafael Alun and his wife as the main sources. Researchers look at the external level of media, in this case society and viral issues, as influential actors in creating media content, which in this case is Metro TV. The power of netizens in making a case viral becomes a reference for the media to present news that is of interest and interest to the public.

"Let them have their opinion, but we already have principles and also use correct news rules." (Ami Melanrosa - Metro TV Executive Producer, Interview, 9 November 2023)

Fifth, the ideological level which is related to the individual's concept or position in interpreting reality in the media. In the context of this research, the editorial team in charge of the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report has the ideology of presenting accurate and balanced news, in accordance with journalistic rules. Therefore, the Special Report production team presents sources from various angles to present complete and balanced information. In this case, the selection of competing sources is very important, so that the information provided by Rafael Alun and his wife does not become the only information for the public. Unfortunately, the sources featured in the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report do not fully represent various parties, such as the KPK. In this case, Metro TV actually wanted to present the KPK as a rival source. However, the Corruption Eradication Committee at that time was not willing to be a resource. Finally, the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report production team decided to invite Boyamin Saiman and Asep Iwan Iriawan. A number of statements conveyed by Rafael Alun were further confirmed by the two competing sources, so that the public could receive accurate and objective information.

"Each of us already knows the principles of journalism. "The principle is 5W+1H when we hold a special report that is used and also balanced." (Ami Melanrosa - Metro TV Executive Producer, Interview, 9 November 2023)

Rafael Alun's edition of the Special Report really reflects the hierarchy of influence on media content that was previously discussed. The policy mechanism implemented from the editor-in-chief until the news is broadcast fully fulfills the elements conveyed in this theory, starting from the smallest circle at the level of individual media actors, routine practices, media organizations, extramedia, up to the ideological level. However, in this case, the level that has the greatest influence is the organizational level. Metro TV as a media organization has the aim of becoming the television that is most popular with audiences, with reference to rating and share data. This goal then becomes a reference for media workers to produce content. Apart from

that, Metro TV as a media organization also always emphasizes its employees to always comply with journalistic rules in producing content. The supervisory function of the organization is carried out in stages, starting from the editor-in-chief, deputy editor-in-chief, manager to executive producer to ensure that the content produced can attract the interest of the audience and comply with journalistic rules.

After the organizational level, the second most influential level in creating content for the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report is media routines. As is known, Metro TV's routine as a national television news media is to present the hottest information, such as the Rafael Alun case. Apart from that, Metro TV also has a routine for packaging big and hot issues into the Special Report program.

The next level that is influential is the ideological level, namely journalistic rules which are always the team's reference in producing content. In this case, the journalistic rule in question is producing accurate content with the principle of balance. Meanwhile, the 2 levels whose influence occupies the lowest position are the individual level and the external media level. The reason is, these two levels do not contribute too much in determining various details in the production of the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report.

Metro TV Editorial Strategy in Broadcasting Controversial Sources

Metro TV used an editorial technique that involved three stages: pre-production, production, and post-production, when airing the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report. In the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report program, these three phases represent Metro TV's editorial approach to airing contentious sources. Pre-production began as soon as one of the production teams thought of packaging a special interview with Rafael Alun for the Special Report program. In order to get the proposal to the editor-in-chief or deputy editor-in-chief, it is then addressed in more detail with superiors, specifically managers and executive producers. This process runs very dynamically with the exchange of ideas related to the planned program concept in an initial activity called a projection meeting. This stage also describes how managers, executive producers and producers sit together to organize various program elements in editorial meetings.

"Of course it's not up to me to decide individually. This is based on research and editorial meetings." (Aries Fadilah - Deputy Chief Editor of Metro TV, Interview, January 8 2024)

The main thing discussed in the editorial meeting is how the concept of the program that will be broadcast is in accordance with the directions. Apart from the program concept, the editorial meeting also decides on the team chosen to produce the program, the presenter who will guide it and the names of the sources who will be contacted. Apart from that, this stage also includes discussions regarding objectives and agenda settings which will become a reference in framing the program. Therefore, this stage is very important as a form of implementation of the editorial strategy. Metro TV itself already has a special platform to present hot issues

exclusively, namely the Special Report program. However, the Special Report concept itself is also very dynamic, depending on the issues presented.

The second stage, namely production, is the execution stage of the planning made during pre-production. In this stage, the production team led by the producer becomes the actor who plays an important role. In the initial stages, the production team begins to contact sources and arrange production times. Apart from that, producers also started making program rundowns as a reference when recording. Next, in the production stage, the team will carry out executions through shooting or recording broadcasts (Van Dijk & De Vos, 2001). This stage is also key because it greatly influences the form and content of the content, so it is important to pay attention to the guidelines that have been designed in the previous stage.

"We present the chronology or the beginning of this case, starting from the case of his son Mario Dandy until it was revealed that there were allegations of corruption and gratification against Rafael Alun. "And there is also dialogue, we prepare visual inserts when the resource person speaks, do we present appropriate visuals so that the show is dynamic." (Hafiyah Yahya - Metro TV Producer, Interview, January 12 2024)

After production, the producer edits with the editor and chooses which parts will be shown and which parts should not be shown. At this stage, the producer refers to the framing that has been determined in the projection meeting or editorial meeting. The producer's ability and creativity are really needed in this editing stage in order to produce a show that is complete and high quality, but still interesting for the audience to enjoy.

The final stage, namely post-production, is carried out after the program production process is complete. This stage is carried out before and after the program airs. Before being broadcast, the Special Report program goes through an editing stage by the executive producer. This stage is carried out in stages, starting from the executive producer to the quality control team. The difference is that the supervision carried out by the executive producer is more on the content and substance of the program. In this process, the executive producer sees whether the program is in accordance with the directions given in the planning stage. Meanwhile, editing by the quality control team is more technical, such as duration, placement of CG (character generator), placement of graphics containing data and other elements. Meanwhile, monitoring after the program is broadcast is carried out by analyzing audience responses, program ratings and shares as well as the impact of the program broadcast.

"The monitoring function is in duration and content. For evaluation, not all interview results may be included. So we evaluate which one is better and important to show to the public." (Hafiyah Yahya - Metro TV Producer, Interview, 12 January 2024).

Based on the analysis that has been described, researchers get an idea that Metro TV's editorial strategy in broadcasting the Rafael Alun edition of the Special

Report was carried out in 3 stages, namely pre-production, production and post-production. A number of important elements that are of concern in the editorial strategy are the selection of issues that are trending and of interest to the public as well as the selection of sources, the selection of the program concept, the selection of the production team, the processing of content in accordance with editorial and editorial direction, and evaluation. Each of these strategies is carried out carefully in order to produce special program broadcasts in accordance with the planning and agenda settings that have been made. The objectives to be achieved from broadcasting this program are, apart from attracting public attention, it also educates and provides complete information regarding the Rafael Alun case and also encourages law enforcement in this case. Based on Metro TV programming data obtained from Nielsen, the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report program succeeded in attracting public attention with a rating of 0.7. This rating is higher than the average daily rating obtained at the same broadcast time, which ranges from 0.4 to 0.5. On social media, excerpts from an interview between Rafael Alun Trisambodo and his wife on Metro TV went viral. At that time, people compared Rafael Alun's interview broadcast on Metro TV with several other television media, namely CNN TV, Berita Satu TV, Kompas TV and Liputan 6. Not a few netizens even stated that these media had been "paid" by Rafael Alun to defend himself. However, the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report program on Metro TV did not provide a stage for Rafael Alun to defend himself. The statements made by Rafael Alun were tested again by competing sources, so that the audience received complete and balanced education and information. Therefore, Metro TV broadcasts still receive many positive comments from the public who support law enforcement against Rafael Alun.

Apart from that, another impact is that Metro TV has become one of the media that has been involved in monitoring and encouraging law enforcement in the Rafael Alun case from the start. Evidently, currently Rafael Alun has been tried and sentenced to 14 years in prison and a fine of Rp. 500 million, subsidiary to 3 months in prison, because he was deemed guilty of committing the crime of corruption in receiving gratuities and the crime of money laundering. From the results of this analysis, researchers saw that the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report broadcast not only had an impact on Metro TV as the media that broadcast the broadcast, but also on the public and law enforcement in the gratification case that ensnared Rafael Alun.

CONCLUSION

According to the study's findings, there is a growing rivalry among mass media as they strive to present the audience with worthwhile information. A tactic to pique the interest of the audience is to introduce contentious topics and sources, like Rafael Alun's case, which at the time received a lot of media coverage. Media content that is made available to the public is a product of pressure and influence from both inside and outside of media companies, according to the Hierarchy of Influence theory applied in this study. For the purpose of accomplishing organizational objectives, namely reaching public information needs about viral topics, the Metro

TV production team prepared the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report program, as discussed in this research.

To produce a complete and balanced program, Metro TV has a competent editorial strategy, starting from the pre-production, production and post-production stages. The three stages which constitute the implementation of the editorial strategy are implemented by various levels of office holders and media workers in order to produce quality programs that are of interest to the public. In this case, Metro TV's editorial strategy is to create a complete and balanced broadcast through the Rafael Alun edition of the Special Report program, by going through the three stages mentioned previously. To implement this strategy to meet its goals, Metro TV implements a strict and multi-level monitoring mechanism, starting from producers, executive producers to managers. In this way, Metro TV is able to produce the Special Report Rafael Alun edition which presents information from main sources and rival sources, so that the audience gets a complete, balanced and educative view. Based on the analysis, the researcher concluded that there are 5 important elements that are of concern in the editorial strategy, namely the selection of issues that are trending and of interest to the public as well as the selection of sources, the selection of program concepts, the selection of the production team, the processing of content in accordance with editorial and editorial direction, and evaluation.

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