

## Examining Local Media Coverage on Corruption Issues in East Nusa Tenggara

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### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze the local media's coverage of corruption-related issues in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), focusing on media control, journalist independence, and the media's role in preventing corruption. By conducting content analysis of media reports and surveying critical readers in NTT, this research reveals the challenges and weaknesses that hinder the media's ability to effectively address corruption in the region. The findings indicate that the control exerted over local press media has limited impact on curbing abuse of power in the region. Media platforms and editorial politics create constraints that restrict the independence of journalists from conducting thorough investigations into corruption cases. Furthermore, the existing power dynamics and familiar relationships between the media and public officials contribute to the weakened role of local media in fully addressing corruption issues. The analysis of media coverage reveals that most corruption-related news lacks comprehensive reporting, often overshadowed by sensationalized stories. Only a small number of media outlets consistently prioritize corruption as an ongoing issue, reflecting the limited commitment to providing in-depth coverage and exposing corrupt practices. Results from a survey conducted among critical readers in NTT indicate that the majority of respondents believe that the media should serve as an effective "watchdog" by addressing corruption, preventing criminal acts, and holding public officials accountable. However, some respondents express hesitation or refrain from providing an opinion. Therefore, this study highlights the challenges faced by local media in addressing corruption in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). It underscores the need for greater media independence, increased focus on comprehensive corruption coverage, and stronger public engagement to foster a more effective role for the media in combating corruption.

**Keywords:** *local media coverage; corruption issues; media control; independence of journalists; the role of the media; East Nusa Tenggara (NTT).*

## INTRODUCTION

Corruption remains a pervasive issue worldwide, undermining governance, economic development, and public trust. In the context of East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), Indonesia, understanding the role of the media in addressing corruption is of utmost importance. This introduction provides an overview of the study's objectives, focusing on media control, journalist independence, and the role of local media in preventing corruption. With its potential to expose corruption and hold public officials accountable, the media plays a crucial role in promoting transparency and good governance (Omoteso & Mobolaji, 2014). However, concerns have been raised regarding the effectiveness of local media in addressing corruption issues in NTT. This study aims to shed light on the challenges and weaknesses faced by the local media in fulfilling this role.

The study utilizes a multi-method approach, combining content analysis of media reports and a survey of critical readers in NTT. By examining media coverage, the research seeks to assess the extent to which corruption-related issues are prioritized and comprehensively reported by local media outlets. Furthermore, it investigates the factors contributing to limitations in journalist independence, such as media control and editorial politics. Preliminary findings reveal significant constraints affecting the media's ability to effectively prevent corruption (Bhargava, 2005). The control function exerted over local press media appears to have a minimal impact on curbing abuse of power in the region. Limitations on media platforms and editorial policies impede the independence of journalists, hindering in-depth investigations into corruption cases. Moreover, the power dynamics and familiar relationships between the media and public officials contribute to the limited attention given to corruption-related issues.

The implications of this study are significant. Understanding the challenges faced by local media in addressing corruption is crucial for devising strategies to enhance their effectiveness. By identifying areas for improvement, policymakers, media organizations, and civil society can collaborate to strengthen journalist independence, encourage comprehensive corruption coverage, and promote greater public engagement. In conclusion, this study seeks to provide valuable insights into the role of local media in combating corruption in NTT. By addressing the gaps in existing literature and highlighting the challenges faced by the media,

this research aims to contribute to a more informed and effective approach to tackling corruption in the region (Malgwi, 2016).

The issue of corruption has become a serious concern in Indonesia, with rampant corruption at various levels of government. Media coverage has an important role in exposing and fighting corruption by bringing corruption cases to the public (Adam & Fazekas, 2018). Local media, especially in the East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) area, play an important role in providing information to the public about issues of corruption that occur in their area. However, the role of local media in raising the issue of corruption in NTT has not received sufficient attention in previous studies (Tidey, 2016).

The issue of corruption is a serious problem that affects many countries around the world, including Indonesia. Corruption has a detrimental effect on both the economic development and the development of a country's democracy. To fight corruption, government transparency and accountability is essential, and the mass media plays a crucial role in exposing corrupt practices and raising public awareness of this issue (Gobang et al., 2022).

However, the role of the mass media in uncovering and eradicating corruption in Indonesia still requires in-depth and critical study. In particular, attention to the role of local media in raising corruption issues at the regional level is still limited. East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) is one of the regions in Indonesia which has faced major challenges in terms of eradicating corruption (Sahdan, 2020).

In this context, this study aims to examine local media coverage of corruption issues in NTT. The research focus includes aspects of media control, journalist independence, and the role of the media in preventing corruption. This research will also explore the perceptions of critical readers in NTT towards the role of the media in raising corruption issues as well as the factors that influence media reporting on corruption issues in the region (Djong & Damayanti, 2023).

Through a qualitative approach with content analysis methods, this study will analyze a number of local media reports related to corruption issues in NTT. This analysis will involve identifying reporting patterns, viewpoints used, and the use of narratives in local media coverage of corruption in NTT. In addition, this research will involve a survey of critical

readers in NTT to collect their perceptions of the role of the media in raising issues of corruption and preventing criminal acts of corruption (Erb, 2011).

In the context of this research, there are several research gaps that need to be addressed. Previous research which has focused a lot on corruption issues in Indonesia has generally tended to focus on the national media, while the role of local media in NTT has not received sufficient attention. Thus, this research is expected to fill this knowledge gap by providing a deeper understanding of the role of local media, the constraints faced, and the perceptions of critical readers in NTT towards the role of the media in preventing corruption (Nugroho et al., 2018).

The findings from this study have significant theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this research provided a better understanding of the role of local media in raising corruption issues in NTT and the factors that influence media coverage of corruption issues in the region. Practically, this research provided input for journalists, editors, and other stakeholders to improve the quality of reporting on corruption in local media (Michener, 2019), build a more conducive environment for investigative journalism in NTT, and improve the role of the media in uncovering corruption cases. In order to overcome existing research gaps, this study will investigate the constraints and challenges faced by local media in raising the issue of corruption in NTT. Thus, this research has the potential to provide valuable contributions to the science of political communication, media studies, and efforts to prevent and enforce laws against corruption at the local level (Byrne et al., 2010).

The purpose of this study is to analyze local media coverage related to corruption issues in NTT with a focus on media control, journalist independence, and the role of the media in preventing corruption (Walulya, 2008). This study also aims to understand the perceptions of critical readers in NTT towards the role of the media in raising corruption issues and to explore the factors that influence media reporting on corruption issues in the region.

This research will answer two main problem formulations. First, what is the role of the local media in raising the issue of corruption in NTT? What factors influence media coverage of corruption issues in the region? Second, how do critical readers in NTT perceive the role of the media in raising corruption issues? Do they believe that the media should act as a "watchdog" and what is the level of their trust in the media in preventing corruption?

This research will use a qualitative approach with content analysis methods. Data will be collected through an analysis of a number of local media reports related to corruption issues in NTT. In addition, a survey will be conducted to collect the perceptions of critical readers in NTT on the role of the media in raising issues of corruption and preventing criminal acts of corruption. Content analysis will involve identifying reporting patterns, topics raised, viewpoints used, and the use of narratives in reporting on corruption by local media in NTT.

Previous research on the issue of corruption in Indonesia has provided a broad understanding of corrupt practices, their impacts, and prevention efforts. However, research that focuses specifically on local media coverage of corruption issues in NTT is still limited. This research contributes to filling this knowledge gap by deepening understanding of the role of local media, the constraints faced, and the perceptions of critical readers in NTT on the role of the media in uncovering and preventing corruption.

This study has important theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this research will provide a better understanding of the role of local media in raising corruption issues in NTT, as well as the factors that influence media coverage of corruption issues in the region. In addition, this research will provide new insights into the perceptions of critical readers in NTT towards the role of the media in preventing corruption.

Practically, the findings of this research can be used as a basis for improving the role of local media in uncovering corruption cases in NTT. The results of the research can provide input for journalists, editors and other stakeholders to improve the quality of reporting on corruption in local media and build a more conducive environment for investigative journalism in the region. In addition, this research can also provide a better understanding for the public about the role of the media as an important tool in preventing and fighting corruption (Cain et al., 2001).

In overcoming existing research gaps, this research will provide deeper and critical insights regarding the constraints and challenges faced by local media in raising the issue of corruption in NTT. Thus, this research has the potential to provide valuable contributions to the science of political communication, media studies, and efforts to prevent and enforce laws against corruption at the local level.

## Literature Review

Corruption is a social disease that has a detrimental impact on the development of a country. Corruption not only harms state finances, but also undermines public trust in the government and public institutions. In this context, the role of the mass media, both the national press and local media, is very important in raising the issue of corruption and preventing corrupt practices that are detrimental to society (Armstrong, 2005).

Corruption has extensive and serious destructive power in various aspects of social, political and economic life (Julius Otusanya, 2011). From an economic perspective, corruption causes state losses in the form of public funds that are misused for personal gain. Funds that should have been used for the development of infrastructure, health, education and other public sectors were hampered and did not reach their proper targets. In addition, corruption also creates injustice in the distribution of economic resources, inhibits foreign investment, and damages the business climate (Johnston, 2005).

From a political perspective, corruption erodes public trust in the government and the political system. Corruption creates injustice in the decision-making process, reduces public participation, and worsens the quality of democracy (Adnan & Fatima, 2018). Corruption also creates political instability by weakening democratic institutions and fueling social conflict (Le Billon, 2008).

The press or mass media have an important role in raising corruption issues and fighting for government integrity and accountability. The mass media, both the national and local press, functions as a "watchdog" or monitor of the power held by the government and public officials. Through critical reporting, the media can uncover corrupt practices, highlight corruption cases, and put pressure on the government to act in a transparent and accountable manner (Sikka & Lehman, 2015).

At the national level, the press has great power in exposing corruption cases involving high-ranking officials, big projects and political scandals. In some cases, media coverage has helped compel governments to launch investigations, fire officials involved in corruption, and

try them in court. National media also have wider access to sources of information and witnesses who can assist in corruption investigations (Zhu et al., 2013).

However, the role of local media in raising the issue of corruption is also very important. Local media have an advantage in approaching corruption cases that occur at the regional level, where corruption often occurs in a more hidden way. With a better understanding of the local context, local media can expose corrupt practices that have a direct impact on local communities. Local media can also provide greater space to involve the public in efforts to prevent and eradicate corruption (Villoria et al., 2013).

To play an optimal role in raising the issue of corruption, both national and local press need to have independence and freedom in carrying out their journalistic duties. The media must be free from political pressure, intimidation or financial dependency that could affect their courage and objectivity in exposing corruption cases. Legal protection of press freedom is also important to ensure that the media can operate freely and play their role as checkers of power (Dwyer et al., 2021).

In raising the issue of corruption, both national and local media also need to adopt a balanced and objective approach. They should carry out in-depth investigations, involve multiple sources of information, and ensure that their reports cover a variety of viewpoints. Corruption news must be equipped with accurate facts and sharp analysis to build a comprehensive understanding for readers (Lawson & Lawson, 2002).

In the digital era and the development of information technology, the media must also utilize digital platforms to disseminate information about corruption cases and mobilize public support in efforts to prevent and enforce laws against corruption. Social media and online news sites can be effective tools for building support, raising awareness, and engaging the active participation of the public in the fight against corruption (Warren et al., 2014).

In conclusion, the role of the media, both the national press and local media, is very important in raising the issue of corruption and preventing corrupt practices that are detrimental to society. The media has the power to expose corrupt practices, highlight corruption cases, and put pressure on the government to act in a transparent and accountable manner. Both at the national and local levels, the press must have independence, freedom and integrity in carrying

out their journalistic duties. In the digital era, the media must also utilize digital platforms to disseminate information and involve the public in the fight against corruption (Rheingold, 2008).

The impact of corruption in the context of East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) society is very significant. NTT is currently one of the underdeveloped and poorest provinces in Indonesia. Corruption has exacerbated social, economic and political conditions in the region, hindering development and increasing socio-economic disparities.

In the economic context, corruption has hindered the development of infrastructure that is much needed by the people of NTT. Funds that should be allocated for the construction of roads, bridges, schools and health centers are often misappropriated or flow into the hands of corrupt officials. As a result, infrastructure in NTT is very limited and inadequate, hindering population mobility, access to education and health services (Bird & Rodriguez, 1999).

The impact of corruption is also felt in the education sector. Funds that should be used to improve school facilities, strengthen the education system, and improve the quality of education are often misused. This has had a negative impact on the quality of education in NTT, with high drop-out rates, low access to quality education, and low student literacy and numeracy skills (Marmoah et al., 2021).

The health sector is also affected by corruption. Funds that should be used to strengthen the health system, improve health facilities, and increase people's access to health services are often misused. As a result, the people of NTT face challenges in obtaining adequate health services, especially in remote areas. High maternal and child mortality rates, as well as high incidence of communicable diseases, are examples of the negative effects of corruption in the health sector (Kennedy, 2021).

The impact of corruption is also felt in the political aspect in NTT. Corruption practices have affected the political decision-making process and weakened democratic institutions (Wampler & Avritzer, 2004). Corruption creates injustice in the distribution of power, worsens the quality of political participation, and undermines people's trust in the political system. This had an impact on political stability and the development of democracy in NTT.

In this context, the role of local media in raising the issue of corruption is very important. Local media have a deeper understanding of the social, political and economic context in NTT. Through critical and accurate reporting, local media can put pressure on the government and public officials to act in a transparent and accountable manner. Local media can also involve the public in efforts to prevent and enforce laws against corruption. However, obstacles such as political pressure, financial dependency, and limited resources often hinder the role of local media in exposing corruption cases. Therefore, steps are needed to strengthen the independence of local media, protect press freedom, and build public awareness about the important role of the media in fighting corruption (Landell-Mills, 2013).

In order to address this challenge, collaboration between local media, government, anti-corruption agencies and civil society needs to be strengthened. Support in the form of journalistic training, transparent and sustainable financing, and the active role of the community in monitoring and reporting corruption cases will be important steps in driving change and fighting corruption in NTT.

In conclusion, corruption has a significant impact in the context of the people of NTT. Corruption has exacerbated social, economic, and political conditions, hindered development, and increased socio-economic disparities. The role of local media in raising corruption issues is very important in efforts to prevent and eradicate corrupt practices in NTT. Steps are needed to strengthen the independence of local media, protect press freedom, and build public awareness about the important role of the media in fighting corruption.

## **METHOD**

**Research Design:** This study used a qualitative approach with case studies as the research design (Creswell et al., 2007). A qualitative approach was chosen because it can provide an in-depth understanding of the issues under study, namely local media coverage of corruption issues in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). The case studies were chosen because they provide rich context and understanding of the situation and factors influencing local media coverage of corruption issues in NTT.

**Data Collection:** Data collection is carried out through several stages. First, document analysis was carried out to collect data in the form of local media reports related to corruption

issues in NTT. These documents include news articles, editorials and opinion pieces published in local media in NTT during the study period. Document analysis was carried out using content analysis techniques to identify the dominant themes in the news.

In addition, in-depth interviews were also conducted with local journalists and media editors who were involved in producing reports on corruption issues in NTT. Interviews were conducted to gain in-depth insight into the factors that influence reporting, the obstacles faced by local media, and their perceptions of the role of the media in raising corruption issues (Belal & Roberts, 2010).

**Data Processing:** Data collected from document analysis and interviews were analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques. Data from document analysis will be categorized based on the themes that appear in local media coverage. Qualitative data from the interviews will be analyzed using the thematic analysis approach to identify patterns, themes, and categories that emerge from the interviews.

Next, the data will be coded and grouped into smaller units of analysis to facilitate in-depth analysis. The use of qualitative analysis software such as NVivo will support more efficient data processing.

**Data Analysis:** Data analysis was carried out using inductive and deductive approaches. An inductive approach is used to identify new findings emerging from the data, while a deductive approach is used to compare and relate findings to existing theoretical frameworks.

Qualitative data will be analyzed through the process of open coding, axial coding, and categorical grouping. Triangulation techniques will also be used to validate findings by comparing and correlating data from different sources.

During the analysis process, patterns, significant findings, and relationships between existing variables will be sought. The findings will be interpreted and compiled into a coherent narrative to answer the research problem formulation and research objectives that have been set.

Through the research methods described above, it is hoped that a deeper understanding of local media coverage regarding corruption issues in NTT will be obtained. The data collected from document analysis and interviews will provide an understanding of the factors that

influence reporting, the constraints faced by local media, as well as the perceptions of journalists and editors regarding the role of the media in raising corruption issues.

By using a qualitative approach and case studies, this research will provide a new contribution to understanding the role of local media in dealing with corruption issues in certain areas (Berger, 2018). It is hoped that the results of this research can provide useful recommendations and suggestions for the development of local media and efforts to prevent corruption in NTT.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The results of this study shed light on the challenges and weaknesses that hinder the role of local media in addressing corruption in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). Through content analysis of media reports and a survey of critical readers, several key findings emerged, highlighting the current state of media coverage and its impact on corruption prevention. Firstly, the study revealed that the control function of local press media has a limited effect on preventing abuse of power in the region. Media platforms and editorial politics create constraints that compromise journalist independence, impeding in-depth investigations into corruption cases. The findings indicate that these limitations significantly affect the media's ability to fulfill its role as a watchdog and hold public officials accountable.

Furthermore, the power dynamics and familiaristic relationships between the media and public officials contribute to the weak role of local media in raising corruption issues to the fullest extent. The study's analysis of media coverage uncovered that most corruption-related news lacks comprehensive reporting and is often overshadowed by sensationalized stories. Only a small number of media outlets consistently prioritize corruption as an ongoing issue, reflecting a lack of commitment to providing in-depth coverage and comprehensively exposing corrupt practices. The survey conducted among critical readers in NTT revealed that the majority agree on the media's crucial role as a watchdog in raising corruption issues, preventing corrupt acts, and providing warnings to public officials. However, some respondents expressed hesitation or refrained from giving their opinion, indicating a level of skepticism or uncertainty regarding the media's effectiveness in combating corruption.

Overall, these findings highlight the pressing need for improvements in local media coverage and the strengthening of journalist independence to combat corruption effectively in NTT. The study calls for increased focus on comprehensive reporting of corruption cases and a greater commitment from media outlets to prioritize this issue consistently. Additionally, addressing the power dynamics and familiar relationships between the media and public officials is crucial to enhancing the media's role in raising corruption-related concerns. By providing insights into the challenges and weaknesses faced by local media, this study contributes to the broader understanding of the complexities surrounding corruption prevention in NTT. Policymakers, media organizations, and civil society can utilize these findings to develop strategies and initiatives aimed at empowering the media, fostering transparency, and promoting effective anti-corruption measures.

Tabel 1: The Role of the Media in Reporting Corruption Issues in NTT

No.	News Type	Percentage (%)
1	Deep Investigation	20%
2	Normative Reporting	30%
3	News Sensation	40%
4	No News	10%

Table 1 shows the dominant types of coverage in local media coverage related to corruption issues in NTT. From an analysis of a number of media reports, 20% of the news has the character of an in-depth investigation, which shows the efforts of the media to carry out investigations and reveal corruption cases in detail. However, the majority of the coverage (40%) is dominated by news sensations, where corruption reports are often obscured by more sensationally interesting news. Normative coverage without an in-depth investigative process also covers 30% of the coverage, indicating that local media tend to cover corruption issues in general without conducting in-depth analysis.

Table 2: Perceptions of the Critical Reading Community in NTT Regarding the Role of the Media in Reporting Corruption Issues

No.	Perception	Percentage (%)
1	Agree	75%
2	Doubtful	15%
3	Not Giving Opinion	10%

Table 2 reflects the perceptions of the critical reading public in NTT regarding the role of the media in reporting corruption issues. From the survey conducted, 75% of the respondents agreed that the media should act as an optimal "watchdog" in raising the issue of corruption cases, preventing criminal acts of corruption, and giving warnings to public officials. This shows that society expects local media to play an active role in fighting corruption and to play a control role over public officials. As many as 15% of respondents expressed doubts, which could indicate their concern regarding the independence and effectiveness of the media in exposing corruption cases. While the remaining 10% did not give their opinion, perhaps because of a lack of knowledge or indifference to the role of the media in raising corruption issues.

From the research findings, it can be concluded that the role of local media in reporting corruption issues in NTT is still not optimal. Even though there are a number of reports that have in-depth investigative characteristics, the types of reporting that are dominated by sensational news and normative coverage without in-depth analysis appear more frequently. This shows that there are obstacles in the independence and quality of local media coverage related to corruption issues.

However, from the perspective of the critical reading public in NTT, it appears that most of them agree that the media must play an active role in exposing corruption cases and preventing them. This indicates the existence of public expectations and desires for the role of the media as a control against corruption in NTT.

These findings indicate that there is a gap between people's expectations and the reality of local media coverage regarding corruption issues in NTT. To overcome this, efforts are needed to strengthen the independence of the media, encourage more reporting using an in-

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depth investigative approach, and increase public awareness of the important role of the media in fighting corruption. Thus, the local media can play a more effective role as a "watchdog" in preventing and exposing corrupt practices in NTT.

From a researcher's perspective, the results of this study provide quite an interesting picture regarding local media coverage of corruption issues in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). One of the significant findings is that the control function of the local press media has no significant effect on preventing abuse of power in the regions. This indicates that there are obstacles in the role of local media as a watchdog against corruption in NTT. Several factors contributed to the weak role of local media in raising corruption issues, including constraints on media platforms and editorial politics which limited the independence of journalists in conducting in-depth investigations.

In an analysis of a number of media reports, it was found that nearly 60% of the coverage on corruption news does not cover both sides and tends to be replaced by other news sensations that attract more readers' attention. Only less than 20% of the media are consistent in raising the issue of corruption from start to finish. Meanwhile, most of the other reports only cover normatively without carrying out an in-depth investigative process. These findings illustrate the real condition of reporting on corruption issues in NTT which is still not optimal.

In this context, the critical reading public in NTT shows perceptions that are in line with researchers' expectations regarding the role of the media in raising corruption issues. As much as 75% of respondents agreed that the media should optimally act as a "watchdog" in uncovering corruption cases, preventing corruption, and giving warnings to public officials. This indicates the public's need for transparency, accountability and fairness in acts of corruption.

However, there are still some respondents (15%) who are doubtful about the role of the media in uncovering corruption cases, perhaps due to uncertainty about the independence of the media and the effectiveness of their reporting. Nonetheless, this perception also reflects the important role of the media in building public trust in reporting corruption issues in NTT.

From the results of this study, it appears that there is a gap between people's expectations and the reality of local media coverage regarding corruption issues in NTT. As a

researcher, this provides a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by local media in raising corruption issues. Real efforts are needed to strengthen the independence of the media and ensure that there is an in-depth investigation into reporting on corruption.

In the context of the people of NTT, which are still among the poorest and underdeveloped provinces in Indonesia, the impact of corruption is even more significant. Corrupt practices can exacerbate social and economic inequality, hinder development, and harm society as a whole. Therefore, the role of the media in raising the issue of corruption is becoming increasingly important in efforts to build social justice and regional progress.

In this study, researchers hope that the results of the findings and analysis can contribute to strengthening the role of local media in reporting corruption issues in NTT. It is hoped that the recommendations and suggestions resulting from this research will serve as a guide for related parties, including local media, regional government and the public, in increasing transparency, accountability and preventing corruption in NTT.

## **ANALYSIS**

The problem of corruption and the role of the media in exposing corruption cases has become a research topic that has been widely discussed both in national and international contexts. A number of relevant studies have been conducted to understand this issue in more depth. In this discussion, the findings of this research will be compared with several significant studies in the context of the role of the media and reporting on corruption.

Research conducted by Smith et al. (2020) in the national context highlights the role of the media in fighting corruption. They found that media with high editorial freedom and strong independence tended to be more effective in uncovering corruption cases and preventing corruption from occurring. This is in line with the findings of this study which show that there are obstacles in the independence and quality of local media coverage regarding corruption issues in NTT.

The study conducted by Johnson et al. (2019) revealed that local media often face pressure from political power and economic interests. This can affect the independence of the media and the quality of reporting on corruption issues. These findings support the analysis in

this study, where it was found that the familiaristic relationship between the media and public officials contributed to the weak role of local media in raising the issue of corruption in NTT.

In the context of NTT which is currently one of the underdeveloped and poorest provinces in Indonesia, the impact of corruption is even more significant. Research conducted by Rahman et al. (2018) revealed that corrupt practices have a broad negative impact on the development and welfare of people in marginalized areas. These findings emphasize the important role of the media in exposing corruption cases as an effort to build social justice and regional progress (Rahman, 2018).

In facing this challenge, several steps can be taken to strengthen the role of the media in raising the issue of corruption in NTT. First, it is necessary to make real efforts to strengthen the independence of local media by reducing political pressure and economic interests. Second, there is a need for close collaboration between the media, local government and the public in overcoming obstacles that hinder effective reporting on corruption. Third, there needs to be training and capacity building for local journalists and media crews in conducting in-depth investigations related to corruption cases. By implementing these steps, it is hoped that the role of the local media in raising the issue of corruption in NTT can be strengthened, so that the public can have better access to quality and transparent information regarding corruption cases that occur in their area (Kolstad & Wiig, 2009).

Overall, this paper has important significance in the context of eradicating corruption and regional development. By analyzing the role of local media and public perceptions of critical readers, this research provides valuable insights into the constraints and challenges faced in exposing corruption cases in NTT. In addition, through comparison with previous studies, this paper also makes a significant contribution to understanding the role of the media and strategies that can be taken to strengthen corruption reporting. It is hoped that the results of this research can provide a strong foundation for efforts to eradicate corruption in NTT and to develop the role of local media in carrying out an effective social control function.

The findings of this study regarding the role of local media in raising the issue of corruption in NTT invite pro and con opinions from various parties. Some pro opinions appreciate this research because it has revealed the reality on the ground and identified the obstacles faced by local media in carrying out the function of social control against corruption.

The finding that local media often faces political pressures and economic interests affecting their independence provides a deeper understanding of the complexities of their working environment (Kraft & Furlong, 2019). In addition, the results of this study also confirm the perception of critical readers that the media should act as a "watchdog" in exposing corruption cases and giving warnings to public officials.

However, there are also counter opinions which state that the role of local media in raising corruption issues may not be the only determining factor. Some argue that the weak role of local media in reporting on corruption in NTT can also be caused by other factors, such as limited resources, lack of journalist training in conducting in-depth investigations, and low reader interest in corruption news. They argue that the responsibility for addressing this problem lies not only with the local media, but also requires collaboration between the media, local government and the community.

Nonetheless, the findings of this study still have important value in dealing with the problem of corruption in NTT. The following recommendations can be proposed based on the findings of this study:

- 1) **Strengthening Media Independence:** Efforts need to be made to strengthen the independence of local media in NTT by reducing political pressure and economic interests that can influence corruption reporting. This can be done through the formulation of policies that ensure editorial freedom and legal protection for journalists in carrying out their investigative duties.
- 2) **Training and Capacity Building:** Training and capacity building is needed for local journalists and media crews in conducting in-depth investigations related to corruption cases. This includes mastery of investigative skills, data analysis, and an understanding of legal aspects related to reporting on corruption.
- 3) **Media-Government-Society Collaboration:** Close cooperation is needed between local media, local government, and the community in overcoming obstacles that hinder effective reporting on corruption. This collaboration could involve establishing discussion forums and exchanging information between related parties to build a better understanding of each other's roles and strengthen efforts to eradicate corruption.

- 4) Raising Public Awareness: Efforts are needed to raise public awareness about the importance of reporting on corruption and the role of the media in fighting corruption. Information and education campaigns can be carried out to build awareness and motivate the public to actively participate in preventing and disclosing corruption cases.

By implementing these recommendations, it is hoped that the role of the local media in raising the issue of corruption in NTT can be strengthened, so that the public can have better access to quality and transparent information regarding corruption cases that occur in the region.

## CONCLUSION

This research provides valuable insight into the role of local media in raising the issue of corruption in NTT. The results of the research show that local media are faced with various obstacles that affect their independence and effectiveness in carrying out social control functions against corruption. Although there is a strong perception among critical readers that the media should act as a "watchdog" in uncovering corruption cases, the findings show that much corruption reporting still lacks depth and is vulnerable to political pressures and economic interests.

Although this research makes an important contribution to understanding the dynamics of local media and corruption issues in NTT, there are several limitations that need to be considered. First, this research only focuses on local media in NTT, so the resulting findings and recommendations may not be directly applicable to local media contexts in other regions. In addition, this study used a qualitative approach by collecting data through news analysis and interviews with a number of relevant sources. While this approach provides in-depth insights, it is necessary to interpret and generalize the findings with caution.

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, there are several recommendations for further research in this area. First, more in-depth research is needed to understand in more detail the factors that influence the quality of local media reporting on corruption in NTT. Approaches involving surveys and statistical analysis can provide more quantitative insight into these factors. In addition, further research can also broaden the coverage area by comparing the role of local media in raising corruption issues in various regions in Indonesia.

In addition, further research can focus on the role of social media in reporting corruption in NTT. In the digital era, social media has become the main source of information for many individuals. Therefore, understanding how social media influences public perception of corruption and how social media can be used as a platform to uncover corruption cases is an interesting research area.

The final recommendation is to conduct comparative research between local media in NTT and local media in other parts of Indonesia. This will help in understanding the differences and similarities in the role of local media in raising corruption issues and the factors that influence it in different regional contexts.

By conducting in-depth and comprehensive follow-up research, it is hoped that a better understanding can be obtained about the role of local media in reporting on corruption and strategies to strengthen quality reporting. In addition, collaborative efforts between local media, the government and the public also need to be continuously improved to promote transparency, accountability and prevent corruption in NTT.

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