

Lampiran Korespondensi: Informality of Media Freelancers

1. 16 Maret 2021 : Email konfirmasi manuscript submitted
2. 4 Juli 2021 : Email Hasil Keputusan Peer Review – Revisi
3. 11 Juli 2021 : Email konfirmasi revisi 1 manuskrip telah submitted
4. 17 Agustus 2021 : Email Hasil Keputusan Peer Review – Revisi
5. 20 Agustus 2021 : Email konfirmasi revisi 2 manuskrip telah submitted
6. 15 September 2021 : Email Hasil Keputusan Peer Review – Accepted



CRC-2021-0069: Your manuscript submitted to Journal of Creative Communications

1 message

SAGE peer review <Noreply.Peerreview@sagepub.com>

16 March 2021 at 09:49

Reply-To: arpit.christian@micamail.in

To: jandyluik@petra.ac.id

16-Mar-2021

Dear Author(s),

Thank you for your decision to consider the Journal of Creative Communications as an outlet for your scholarly pursuits. Our journal is supported by MICA (a leading institute in strategic marketing and communication and located in Ahmedabad, India) and published by SAGE Publishing.

Your submission Informality of Media Freelancers has been recorded as manuscript CRC-2021-0069. You must refer to both your manuscript's title and this number in future correspondence with the editorial team. You may view the status of your manuscript anytime by accessing your author desk at the <https://peerreview.sagepub.com/>.

Your manuscript will first be desk reviewed by the editor/ associate editor to ensure that the manuscript meets these three criteria: (1) its alignment with the journal's aims and scope, (2) its adherence to our submission guidelines, and (3) a similarity index of less than 10%.

If your manuscript passes the desk review, it will be sent to our reviewers. Based on their input, you will receive a communication stating our decision and its rationale. You can expect to receive one of four possible decisions at that time: (1) unconditional acceptance, (2) an invitation to resubmit with minor revisions, (3) an invitation to resubmit with major revisions, or (4) rejection.

Our overall acceptance rate has been around 25% in recent years while almost 80% of all major revisions that we invite, receive, and review ends up being published.

Wishing you all the best,

Sincerely,
Journal of Creative Communications Editorial Office



CRC-2021-0069: Decision on manuscript - Journal of Creative Communications

1 message

SAGE peer review <Noreply.Peerreview@sagepub.com>

4 July 2021 at 23:29

Reply-To: manisha.shelat@micamail.in

To: jandy.luik@petra.ac.id

Cc: manisha.shelat@micamail.in, kallol.das@micamail.in, arpit.christian@micamail.in

Dear Dr. Luik,

Thank you for submitting your manuscript, CRC-2021-0069 titled Informality of Media Freelancers.

I have now received the reviews from the experts. The reviews are constructive and thorough and are attached to this email. I have also read your manuscript and the reviewers' comments. Based on this information, I encourage you to revise and resubmit your manuscript in accord with the reviewers' comments and the comments in this letter.

I hope that you are able to address these concerns as I believe that the result will be a stronger contribution to the journal.

If you decide to revise and resubmit, please use the link below to begin the revised submission process.

<https://peerreview.sagepub.com/Home/WithoutLogin?Url=Author/RevisedManuscriptSubmission&mskey=70199&ID=6&IsRevised=1&UserKey=132135>

When submitting the revision, please complete the author response letter describing how you handled each of the comments in the reviews and in this letter. I will then send your paperback to the reviewers to see if you have satisfied their concerns.

Thank you for considering the Journal of Creative Communications as an outlet for your work.

Sincerely,

Manisha Shelat

Editor

Journal of Creative Communications

manisha.shelat@micamail.in

Reviewer Comments:

Reviewer 1 comments

1. It would be better if the title was changed to: "Informality of Media Freelancers in Indonesia: Motives and Prospects"
2. In the Method section, the time for conducting the research and the technique for checking the validity of the data must be stated.
3. Avoid the similarity of the title sentence with the subtitles in the script
4. Analysis of "Why freelance?" or about "reasons for freelance media" not using relevant theories or concepts. Whereas in this section it can be related to the concept or theory of "human needs". Relevant concepts and theories are also not seen in the discussion on "Combining creativity and self-management"

Reviewer 2 comments

Thank you for inviting me to review this interesting paper about the informality of media freelancers in Indonesia. This paper provides valuable inductive perspectives on the status quo of Indonesian media freelancers. However, some revisions are suggested.

1. The lack of theoretical coherence is the major issue. Though this is an inductive study, we still need to build on current theory/theories and previous studies. In the Introduction and Literature Review sections, please make solid arguments of the following questions: why is studying informality important to the field of creative communication? What can you explore/explain/predict

by studying informality? What have other researchers already found out regarding this topic? What do you think your study can contribute? The main RQ you mentioned is “how do media freelancers perceive the nature of the informality of their work?” Please elaborate on how this question is important theoretically? What did previous researchers say about this question? What can you contribute?

2. In addition to the general question, you still specific RQs for qualitative research. These RQs should help you break down the general inquiry and develop operational interview topic guides.

3. How are the interview questions related to your research inquiry and the concept of informality? This should be explained in your lit review. E.g., how are the motivations of doing freelance related to informality? Does the definition of informality in the literature include motivations? Or do previous studies suggest that motivations are related to the explanation of informality? You need to address the theoretical connection of each of your interview questions to the concept of informality theoretically, which is also why developing specific RQs in the lit review section helps.

4. The Method section needs more of a description of how the participants were recruited? What kind of sampling did you use? What are the demographic attributes of the participants? Explain the method more: were they recorded? Audio or video? Transcribed? How was data collected? And also describe how the data was analyzed. What framework did you use? What coding analysis did you use? You need to describe how coding was actually done, how categories were actually developed. How did you triangulate your data? This will provide clarity as to how, precisely, you got from the qualitative data to the results. Please read [Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design](#) Choosing Among Five Approaches by [John W. Creswell](#), [Cheryl N. Poth](#) for your reference.

5. Results and Conclusion sections: link back to previous research as you explain why each of your findings matter and how they contribute to the topic. Add explanations of the limitations and future suggestions.



CRC-2021-0069.RV1: Your revised manuscript submitted to Journal of Creative Communications

1 message

SAGE peer review <Noreply.Peerreview@sagepub.com>

11 July 2021 at 19:29

Reply-To: arpit.christian@micamail.in

To: jandyluik@petra.ac.id

11-Jul-2021

Dear Author(s),

Your revised manuscript has been submitted successfully.

Thank you for your decision to consider the Journal of Creative Communications as an outlet for your scholarly pursuits. Our journal is supported by MICA (a leading institute in strategic marketing and communication and located in Ahmedabad, India) and published by SAGE Publishing.

Your submission Informality of Media Freelancers in Indonesia: Motives and Prospects has been recorded as manuscript CRC-2021-0069.RV1. You must refer to both your manuscript's title and this number in future correspondence with the editorial team.

You may view the status of your manuscript anytime by accessing your author desk at the <https://peerreview.sagepub.com/>.

Wishing you all the best,

Sincerely,
Journal of Creative Communications Editorial Office

This manuscript has been submitted to Journal of Creative Communications

Journal Name: Journal of Creative Communications	Manuscript ID: CRC-2021-0069.RV1
Manuscript Type: Original article	Manuscript Title: Informality of Media Freelancers in Indonesia: Motives and Prospects
Keywords: contemporary communication, digital media, informality of media freelancers, mass and new media, media freelancers, Creative Industries	
MeSH terms:	
<p>Abstract: This article presents our analysis of the nature of informality of media freelancers and its implications to creative workers. Employing a series of fifteen interviews, we offer an interpretive understanding through the subjective experience of the Indonesian media freelancers. Accordingly, we analyse the participants' responses in four dimensions of informality: personal, professional, technological, and social. This analysis brings up a discussion about the flexibility, challenges, and opportunities of working as a media freelancer. Specifically, three themes emerged from our discussion: motivations of doing freelance, managing 'uncertainty' through creativity and self-management, and the importance of social-technological infrastructure. Considering the demographic bonus in Indonesia, we suggest a future research agenda towards the potentials of informality of media freelancers. This future direction would shed light on whether the informality, on the one hand, can lead to the casualisation of work, or, on the other hand, can lead to the idea of flexibility, and self-management of media freelancers.</p>	

Peer Review

1 Informality of Media Freelancers in Indonesia: 2 Motives and Prospects 3

4 ABSTRACT

5 This article presents our analysis of the nature of informality of media freelancers and its
6 implications to creative workers. Employing a series of fifteen interviews, we offer an
7 interpretive understanding through the subjective experience of the Indonesian media
8 freelancers. Accordingly, we analyse the participants' responses in four dimensions of
9 informality: personal, professional, technological, and social. This analysis brings up a
10 discussion about the flexibility, challenges, and opportunities of working as a media freelancer.
11 Specifically, three themes emerged from our discussion: motivations of doing freelance,
12 managing 'uncertainty' through creativity and self-management, and the importance of social-
13 technological infrastructure. Considering the demographic bonus in Indonesia, we suggest a
14 future research agenda towards the potentials of informality of media freelancers. This future
15 direction would shed light on whether the informality, on the one hand, can lead to the
16 casualisation of work, or, on the other hand, can lead to the idea of flexibility, and self-
17 management of media freelancers.

18 **Keywords:** *media freelancers; informality of media freelancers; informality dimensions;*
19 *social-technological infrastructure; media communication.*

20 INTRODUCTION

21 Although the critical understanding of freelance media workers has been studied in terms of
22 problematizing the legality of journalistic content produced by stringers in Indonesia (Santoso
23 & Lestari, 2017), there is an underexplored research space in understanding the nature of
24 working as freelancers directly through the subjective experience of the media freelancers
25 themselves.

26 This study therefore offers an interpretive understanding about the *informality* of the media
27 profession from the viewpoint of (media) freelancers in Indonesia. We situate informality as
28 the kind of work that is flexible and not bounded by a long-term permanent contract with a
29 specific company. In other words, this is the kind of work done by a freelancer that is 'a worker
30 who is self-employed or contracted to do short-term assignments for one or more individual
31 clients rather than works as a permanent employee of a company' (Salamon, 2019). Moreover,
32 from a more global-historical perspective, the shifting of work from the Industrial era to the
33 post-Industrial era raises a concern, for example, 'the substantial growth of freelancing, raises
34 questions about the trajectory of its ongoing evolution and the narratives that underpin and
35 legitimate it' (Popiel, 2017). Conceptually, informality has a processual meaning in the sense
36 that this informality can have different kinds of 'formalized' manifestations (Luik, 2020; Luik,
37 Ng, & Hook, 2018). This concept of informality is informed by 'proceeding from the *middle*'
38 (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), in which they write: 'It's not easy to see things in the middle, rather
39 than looking down on them from above or up at them from below, or from left to right or right
40 to left: try it, you'll see that everything changes'. However, this article does not attempt to prove
41 or disprove their assertion, rather, our purpose here is to underpin the meaning of *informality*
42 through the reflective experience of media freelancers.

43 We employ the case of media freelancers in Indonesia to analyse this informality in media and
44 creative industries. With various archetypes of media communication in the digital era (Chaffee
45 & Metzger, 2001), media freelancers are provided with avenues to reach diverse audiences,

46 and one of the challenges for communication researchers is to understand the producers in
47 this 'dramatic fragmentation of media productions' (Croteau, 2006). Moreover, we decide to
48 study the informality of media freelancers because of the emergence of various 'media
49 professions' (Deuze, 2007) in this digital era.

50 Indonesia's freelancing landscape took our attention because of two factors: the statistical
51 growth of freelancing in the country, and the growing attention of media freelancers and related
52 stakeholders in opening the discourse around their working situation. From the National
53 Statistics Bureau's (2019) data, Indonesia has 129.36 million workers; and an estimation made
54 by Tempo Magazine states that 5.89 million are freelancers (or, 4,55 per cent). Similar data is
55 made by an Indonesian freelancing platform that the number of freelancers in 2019 has
56 increased 16 per cent from the previous year. These numbers seem to represent a promising
57 discourse around freelancing in Indonesia despite the working situations experienced by some
58 of the freelancers. In a discussion held in a 'creative hub' in Indonesia, a number of media
59 freelancers expressed the issues surrounding their work such as the need for formal working
60 contracts and their enforcement, how they propose and settle on their fees during 'pitching',
61 how they manage the intensive timeline, and the issues of welfare, gender and workers' rights
62 (C20 Library and Collabtive, 2019).

63 These backgrounds on our motivation to understand the informality, the statistics published
64 by above mentioned entities, and working challenges of media freelancers contribute to our
65 main question of this study: *how do media freelancers perceive the nature of the informality of*
66 *their work?* This question led us to conduct a qualitative study by interviewing a number of
67 media freelancers in Indonesia. We position this empirical study as a starting point for
68 developing a working categorisation of the nature of informality perceived by the study
69 participants. Furthermore, we analyse the meaning and implications of this perceived
70 informality in the wider context of freelancers in media industries.

71 We also position our study to contribute to the efforts of understanding the nature of creative-
72 oriented freelance work. As our field is very much connected with human creativity, freelancers
73 have been playing a key creative role in the creative communication processes. Based on a
74 study of creative industries (firms and freelancers) in London, Mould, Vorley & Liu (2014)
75 argue that although freelancers are a crucial and significant part of the creative industries, and
76 often conduct the more creative aspects of the work, they remain largely 'invisible'. Another
77 similar effort to understand the nature of freelance is a study of freelance journalists in Europe.
78 Nies & Pedersini (2003, p. 20) conclude that 'freelancers constitute an important part of media
79 and play a major role for freedom and quality of the press and media', and freelancers' status
80 should be strengthened. Thus, these two studies have signified the *important nature* of
81 freelancers in the creative and media works, including creative communications, and the
82 freelancers themselves should be made 'visible' and strengthened.

83 Nevertheless, in terms of the *informal nature* of the working practices of freelancers
84 themselves, we find that there is still room for further exploration. Informality may involve a
85 short-period of working arrangements, and flexibility in beneficial ways (Edstrom & Ladendorf,
86 2012; Massey & Elmore, 2011; Storey, Salaman, & Platman, 2005). However, a form of
87 informal arrangement also implies a 'precarious situation' for the workers (Gill & Pratt, 2008;
88 Neilson & Rossiter, 2008). Furthermore, from the study of media work of a cohort of Media
89 Production graduates of a UK university, Wallis, van Raalte & Allegrini (2020, p. 190) argue
90 that the nature of 'media careers may also come with a limited shelf-life', and even more, they
91 also suggest that 'now, more than ever, media work is being skewed towards the young'. We
92 pay particular attention to this specific age and 'shelf-life' facet that factors a decision of a
93 freelancer to be (continuously) involved with freelance works in Indonesia. Thus, we are keen
94 to understand the nature of informality of freelance work from the Indonesian young
95 freelancers themselves to enrich our understanding of the working practices. The knowledge
96 gained from this study will inform us better in responding to the informality of freelance work

97 in Indonesia. Specifically, we would like to detail our contribution by discussing the following
98 questions: *what are the drivers for these freelancers to be involved in freelance media work?*
99 *And, how do they view the future of their freelance work?* By discussing these questions here
100 in this article, our study contributes to making the subjective experience of freelancers in
101 Indonesia visible, which can lead to subsequent supportive efforts from academia and
102 policymakers.

103 We organise this article according to the following structure. We first present our conceptual
104 background of the informality of media freelancers, and the interpretive understanding. In our
105 method section, we describe our data collection and analysis processes. In the next section,
106 we present the findings through our categorisation, and contextualise these findings in the
107 discussions of informality of a profession. We conclude by presenting the implications of this
108 analysis to our future research agenda on media freelancers.

109 MEDIA FREELANCERS

110 Informality and Flexibility of Media Freelancers

111 We define informality in the context of freelance work as the arrangement of work that is
112 characterised by being project-based, flexible, and self-entrepreneurial. This nature of
113 informality allows media freelancers to work from one project to another project, or to work on
114 several projects in a relatively narrow time frame. Freelance working allows the freelancers to
115 work on a variety of projects, and for a range of clients, and that puts them in a position to (in
116 theory) refuse unattractive offers, walk away from difficult clients and renegotiate impossible
117 deadlines (Storey et al., 2005). However, this is not always the case as the market is too open,
118 it has been observed that in the context of media workers 'it was too easy to enter the work
119 space, and with pressure on fees, newcomers or those desperate for work were prepared to
120 accept low fee rates or poor working conditions' (Storey et al., 2005).

121 The informality of media freelancers is often characterised by the flexibility related to the
122 working life of an individual. Freelancers can manage their own time in which they can have
123 more flexible lives: they have the opportunity to take longer vacations, to have home-based
124 working life with caring responsibilities or other personal commitments, and for being flexible
125 towards the needs of their families (Edstrom & Ladendorf, 2012; Storey et al., 2005). For
126 example, in the survey conducted on women freelance journalists in the US, most of the
127 respondents stated that freelance journalism is 'the kind of job they wanted', 'an ideal job', and
128 that they were 'satisfied with freelancing as a job and like it'; in other words, 'For women, self-
129 employment as freelance news workers may function as a refuge; as a "place" where they
130 can find their own right mix of work and family' (Massey & Elmore, 2011).

131 However, 'flexibility' itself is a double-edged sword. Besides those 'benefits' mentioned above,
132 a qualitative study of freelance journalists in northern Sweden found that 'the informants' felt
133 they needed to work even when they were sick, in order to meet deadlines', and that they
134 'experienced unsteady flows of work and income, and spoke about dips in work supply, such
135 as sometimes going two months in the autumn without work' (Edstrom & Ladendorf, 2012).

136 Besides the flexibility and project-based nature of media freelancing, entrepreneurship
137 becomes a unique quality. Specifically, this quality is related to the professional role of
138 freelancers as (self)-entrepreneurs and idealists. As entrepreneurs, the freelancers are driven
139 by 'innovation and successful entrepreneurship' and they are taking this path because 'they
140 did not want the insecurity and bad working conditions of short-term contract work' (Mathisen,
141 2017). While as idealists, they are motivated by 'the opportunity to work with the kind of
142 journalism they find important, even if it does not always pay well, such as documentaries,

143 books, art projects, and often non-commercial projects related to the ideals of journalism'
144 (Mathisen, 2017).

145 Moreover, with this self-entrepreneurial drive, freelancers also engage in reputation
146 management or personal branding. These self-branding practices are largely conducted on
147 social media as seen in the freelance media workers in London and Milan, in which 'self-
148 branding becomes an investment in social relationships with expected return for the
149 acquisition of a reputation' (Gandini, 2016). For example, freelance journalists utilise social
150 media to 'build audiences and brands while reinforcing and repairing journalistic norms,
151 including transparency' (Holton, 2016). Similarly, in the study of Dutch and Flemish employed
152 and freelance journalists on Twitter, social media platforms have created an avenue for
153 freelance journalists to build their own independent persona rather than 'names or initial under
154 articles' (Brems, Temmerman, Graham, & Broersma, 2017).

155 Therefore, informality of media freelancers is associated with their flexibility of working from
156 one project to another project and of managing work-life time, and freelancers prefer to see
157 themselves as 'as entrepreneurs and creatives, innovators and 'change makers' – rather than
158 a precarious, freelance working class that opposes capitalism and its latest advancements'
159 (Gandini, 2016). We see that this viewpoint is related with discourses of entrepreneurship that
160 contribute to the attractiveness of freelance lifestyle and of working under short-term projects
161 and personal goals (Edstrom & Ladendorf, 2012). Consequently, this informality of media
162 freelancers is related with the idea of an ideal neoliberal worker: 'flexible, unattached, and
163 adaptable' (Cohen, 2015).

164 Interpretive Understanding of Media Freelancers

165 Studies related to Indonesian freelance media workers have dominantly covered the critical
166 ground, for example, problematising the legality of the content created by the *stringers*
167 (Santoso & Lestari, 2017) and framing the stringer practices through commodification and
168 exploitation (Santoso & Lestari, 2016). By definition, a stringer is a freelancer 'who does not
169 work as a staff member of a news organization' and who 'is paid for each piece that an
170 organization publishes or broadcasts rather than a regular salary' (Salamon, 2019). Besides
171 those studies, in contributing to the discourses and efforts to make freelancers more visible,
172 we offer to frame the informality of media freelancers through interpretive understanding.

173 We refer to an interpretive understanding as an inquiry that relies on the subjective experience
174 of the participants themselves, e.g., in this study from freelance media workers. The nature of
175 this understanding is constructed through the individual and collective reconstructions, and
176 accumulated through vicarious experience (Guba, Lynham, & Lincoln, 2018). That is to say,
177 we offer the understanding that is based on 'the analysis and interpretation, through *verstehen*
178 or empathetic understanding, of the meaning that people give to their actions' (Jankowski &
179 Wester, 2002). Therefore, this understanding relies on the subjective experience of media
180 freelancers, for example, their motivations, their actual experiences working in the field, and
181 how they manage their work and their clients, and how they view their work.

182 Our interpretive understanding here is related to the idea that freelance media workers
183 themselves have their reasons and plans in facing this informality. Previous studies of women
184 freelancer journalists who leave traditional employer-based news jobs for self-employment
185 have contributed to the argument that 'freelance journalism can be more family-friendly than
186 organised journalism' (Massey & Elmore, 2011). Other drives of doing freelance can be
187 identified from the study of freelancers who are part of a union. There is the drive to selling
188 content and running one own and the drive of 'working in-depth on large-scale, non-
189 commercial projects that they find professionally satisfying' (Mathisen, 2017). Besides this
190 understanding, we are interested to know more about the specific drives or motivations of
191 young, non-union-based freelancers. Gaining insights on why they want to be part of this

192 informal working arrangement will make us better informed to think about the kind of support
193 offered for these young freelancers.

194 Furthermore, another facet of informality is the sustainability of the creative work itself. The
195 'project-based turn' (Mould et al., 2014) of economic activities, including the creative
196 industries, has allowed freelancers to secure more projects. There is a sense of opportunity
197 that freelancers become more visible and more significant in the creative industries (Mould et
198 al., 2014). At the same time, in strengthening freelancers' positions, there is a call for the
199 recognition of freelance status, improving the protection needed, establishing minimum
200 conditions, improving social security, and ensuring the possibility of collective bargaining (Nies
201 & Pedersini, 2003). Nevertheless, young media freelancers' views on the issue of future
202 prospects have received less attention from researchers. Filling this gap with the subjective
203 experience of the 'newbies' will enrich the dimensions of informality.

204 METHOD

205 We used a qualitative approach, in particular we used an interpretive – constructivist view
206 (Creswell, 2009; Guba et al., 2018; Jankowski & Wester, 2002; Jensen, 2002a), to bring up
207 an understanding of freelance media workers in Indonesia. In our study, we define media
208 freelancers as those who are engaging in the creation of media content. Table 1 summarises
209 our study participants' profile in terms of their sex, their kinds of work or expertise, and whether
210 they have other jobs or don't – a piece of information that is significant to our discussion
211 regarding the meaning of *informality* from the participants' viewpoint. Moreover, we
212 triangulated our findings with a manager of a media company that had been working with the
213 freelance workers. For the journalistic content, this practice of freelancing was informally
214 established with the connection with local correspondences (Personal communication with a
215 manager of a media company, 2020). For the other kinds of content, this practice was
216 observed through the presence of platforms for digital freelancers. Based on our observation,
217 we identified the kinds of media-related freelance work categories: journalist, content writer,
218 videographer, photographer, writer, graphic designer, content creator, and social media
219 manager.

220 >>> insert Table 1. Study Participants here<<<

221

222 Interviews were our data collection method (Jankowski & Wester, 2002; Jensen, 2002b), in
223 these interviews we explored questions that related to the informality of this profession. By
224 informality we refer to the practice of working to create content that is typified by being project-
225 based, flexible, and self-entrepreneurial. During the interviews conducted by our research
226 assistant, the semi-structured questions covered the following informality-related topics: the
227 motivations of working as a freelancer, the impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on freelancing, the
228 nature of the profession in terms of its growth opportunities and its sustainability challenges,
229 the use of digital technologies in supporting freelancing activities, the impact of co-location
230 spaces in the urban area, and the social aspects of freelancing profession in the context of
231 Indonesian culture. As discussed, we aim to gather data from young freelancers in Indonesia,
232 and our interviewees (age range: 20-35) came from different cities of Java island. Fifteen
233 freelancers, recruited with snowballing techniques, were interviewed during the third quarter
234 and the fourth quarter of 2020. Twelve interviews were conducted through online
235 communication channels, and three interviews were conducted through in-person mode with
236 a strict social distancing protocol. In total, the interview transcripts contain 12.019 words.

237 We then inductively analysed our data to construct the four dimensions of the informality of
238 freelancing. We followed the procedures of the grounded theory approach to explain the
239 process, action, or interaction on a topic (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Creswell, 2007).

240 Specifically, we employed open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Corbin & Strauss,
241 1990). This approach allowed us to be sensitive to the iterative nature of data collection and
242 analysis, and to recruit subsequent interviews (theoretical sampling) with different expertise
243 and social-technological characteristics. For example, our initial coding through breaking down
244 the results from our earlier interview found that 'long-term involvement' and 'the future of
245 freelancing' were part of the 'personal dimension' of the informality category. However, as we
246 gain more data and more samples to 'verify' the initial categories and sub-categories, we found
247 that 'long-term involvement' and 'future of freelancing' were part of 'personal dimension' and
248 'professional dimension' respectively. In ensuring the validity of our data, we maintain constant
249 comparative analysis during the iterative data collection and analysis processes. Moreover, in
250 triangulating the coding results, we ask our research assistant to independently apply the
251 result of selective coding into the transcripts. Finally, we then organised all the coded
252 categories (or, in our study: dimensions) to a 'core' category of the nature of the informality of
253 freelancers.

254 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

255 We organise our participants' responses into four dimensions: *personal*, *professional*,
256 *technological*, and *social dimensions* to understand our participants' subjective experiences
257 regarding the informality of work as a media freelancer.

258 Nature of the Informality

259 *Personal Dimension*

260 The personal dimension refers to the motivations of our study's participants and the perceived
261 long-term 'involvement' of the participants regarding the informal nature of working as media
262 freelancers.

263 We identified participants' motivations for working as a freelancer, these included: fit with their
264 interest (*P5-writer*); make use of their idle time (*P2-logo designer & branding; P10-logo &*
265 *product designer; P13-content creator*); opportunity offered by their peer (*P6- logo & product*
266 *designer; writer*); their idealism for not working in a specific company or as a certain full-time
267 professional (*P3-photographer;P4-writer*); gain more experiences (*P3-photographer*), and to
268 pay for their bills (*P14-logo & product designer*). Furthermore, a common thread found from
269 their responses was the idea of 'having more freedom' or flexibility that interested them the
270 most. The participants said that having a degree of work-management autonomy gave them
271 the ability to manage the time and place of their work (*P9-journalist*), gave them more space
272 to explore their creativity and critical thinking (*P3-photographer*), and offered them the
273 flexibility to take a side-job as well as their permanent job (*P3-photographer*).

274 Another sub-theme of this personal dimension is the participants' responses regarding their
275 long-term involvement in freelancing. Our participants provided us with two different answers.
276 On the one hand, for the 'I have set a time limit' camp, they planned to quit freelancing when
277 they reach a certain age (e.g., *P11-journalist said '35 years old'*), when they decide to start a
278 family and have kids (*P4-writer*), or when they have secured a permanent job (*P15-writer*). On
279 the other hand, the 'I have not set a limit yet' camp stated that they found working as a
280 freelancer is satisfying and they wanted to be there longer (*P9-journalist; P10-logo & product*
281 *designer*) and, for as long as there are still job offers then would take it, since doing freelance
282 is a 'side job' (*P8-content creator*). This kind of involvement was also reflected by the
283 participants' answer: 'not yet' to the question of 'has other jobs?' (see Table 1).

284 In relation to a contemporary challenge, i.e., the COVID-19 pandemic, participants mostly
285 agreed that they were affected. Freelancers whose work needed them to be in specific outside
286 locations (such as freelance photographers, journalists, videographers, and content creators)

287 acknowledged the impact to their jobs. They described the Pandemic's impacts on their work.
288 These impacts included cancelation or rescheduling their agreed projects (*P3-photographer*;
289 *P12-videographer*); having to reject job offers from locations with higher coronavirus exposure
290 (*P8-content creator*); improving their working methods due to restrictions in the field (*P9-*
291 *journalist*); and also, having to make an adjustment to their fee (*P14- logo & product designer*).
292 In a different situation, only a few participants whose freelancing work were primarily online-
293 based such as logo designing and online branding (*P2- logo designer & branding*), and content
294 creation (*P13-content creator*) acknowledged that they weren't affected.

295 *Professional Dimension*

296 The second category is the professional dimension that refers to the participants' perceived
297 characteristics of working informally as freelancers such as 'career' development and the
298 future of the profession.

299 Our participants agreed that there is no 'formal' career development in doing freelance, but
300 they agreed that there was a fair 'classification' of freelancers. For example, one freelancer
301 (*P7-writer*) said that the quality of a freelancer's portfolio and its received social media
302 engagement affected the reputation of that freelancer, which then influenced the range of
303 remuneration offered. Two of the participants (*P3-photographer & P12-videographer*) provided
304 a more self-defined answer that the level of a freelancer is defined by the freelancers
305 themselves; it depends on how the influencers valued themselves. Another related answer
306 provided by one participant (*P6-logo & product designer*) told that although there is no 'formal'
307 career development, the formal training, or educational experiences (certificate of
308 completions) could also be an alternative to consider the level of a freelancer. Furthermore,
309 P6 continued that often the fee offered to a prospective client, or fee range, implies the level
310 of experience of a freelancer.

311 Concerning the future of freelancing, i.e., in responding to the topic of job security, participants
312 disagreed that freelancing lacks long-term prospects. Our participants (*P2- logo designer &*
313 *branding; P11-journalist; P3-photographer*) argued that the creative nature of the profession
314 would equip the freelancers to make improvements and find creative solutions to face future
315 challenges regarding job security. They believed that freelancers would be able to maintain
316 their clients and open for new work opportunities. Moreover, our study participants responded
317 back by offering a deconstruction of this notion of 'lacking future prospects' through capacity
318 building to equip themselves, do networking, and keep doing their creative works. Particularly,
319 one participant (*P11-journalist*) clarified that that notion of insecurity was merely an outsider's
320 construction; *P11* emphasised on the flexibility of a multi-skilled freelancer working for different
321 jobs. In a similar tone, another participant (*P5-writer*) said that freelancing these days was
322 promising, different than before; *P5* emphasised that although there was a financially tough
323 beginning, *P5's* career prospects as a freelance writer had developed better despite there
324 being no fixed-amount of monthly income.

325 Our participants also highlighted external factors that affect the future of freelancing such as
326 the growth of general industries that need media-related jobs, the growing practices of
327 freelancing in media industries, and the globalisation of jobs. One of the participants (*P7-*
328 *content creator*) noticed the growth of businesses and products that need media-related works
329 in digital media, particularly creating content and branding for social media. Interestingly in the
330 media industries themselves, another participant (*P3-photographer*) highlighted the increasing
331 practices of industries employing freelancers or part-timers for efficiency reasons. Regarding
332 globalisation of jobs, our participants (*P7-content creator; P8-content creator*) raised this
333 concern that the competition for securing a freelance job would increase but, at the same time,
334 job opportunities would increase. However, one of the participants (*P8-content creator*)
335 expressed that number of jobs and of freelancers are contributing to the future of freelancing;
336 less jobs mean not many freelancers can secure a job, while another participant (*P4-writer*)

337 said that less freelancers (in a situation where freelancers shifted to more permanent 9-to-5
338 jobs) would threaten the future of freelancing too.

339 Another subject related to the future of freelancing is the flexibility of working. Participants (*P3-*
340 *photographer; P9-journalist*) said that freelancing allows for working from different physical
341 locations without a requirement to stay permanently in an office and to do 'check-clock'. In
342 other words, that working flexibility is one of the working preferences of the creative young
343 people. However, regarding this flexibility, one participant (*P3-photographer*) warned the
344 threat from within the freelancers themselves; that the tendency to stay in one's comfort zone
345 would jeopardise this working situation.

346 *Technological Dimension*

347 In this third dimension, we refer to the participants' view of recent technological development
348 in supporting the informal nature of working as media freelancers.

349 Some of our participants were not aware of the presence of the different kinds of freelancing
350 platforms. For example, four participants (*P3-photographer, P5-writer, P6-logo & product*
351 *designer, and P7-content creator*) acknowledged that they are not aware of these digital
352 platforms. However, one participant (*P5-writer*) used social media such as LinkedIn to build a
353 working profile and Instagram to build reputation. Similarly, another participant (*P11-journalist*)
354 utilised Instagram as a medium for portfolio.

355 Differently, one participant (*P2-logo designer and branding*) was familiar with freelancing
356 platforms and had been doing freelance works from these platforms. Through experiences of
357 working with two platforms, the participant pointed out that one platform has a different system
358 from another. For example, the presence/absence of entry test during sign-up and registering
359 to the platform, the option for the 'employer' to set it preferences in creating a job offer, and
360 the probability of securing a job for different kinds of freelancers—i.e., a freelancer's rating
361 affected its probability of securing a job.

362 In relation to securing a freelance job through digital platforms (social media and freelancing
363 platform), participants (*P2-logo designer and branding; P8-content creator*) gave a similar
364 response that building a good first impression and maintaining a good relationship with clients
365 are the best strategy. Moreover, participants (*P7-content creator; P8-content creator*)
366 emphasised the use of social media platforms for their business purposes. They have to
367 understand followers' preferences and engage with followers for increasing the possibility to
368 secure freelance jobs.

369 *Social Dimension*

370 Last, we categorised participants' responses as social dimension that refers to the relation
371 between the informal nature of media freelancers and the social aspects such as disclosure
372 to the public as a freelancer, building public image, and the presence of other infrastructures
373 for freelancers' interactions.

374 Our study participants had a split-response concerning disclosing they are working as a
375 freelancer. Participants (*P15-writer; P3-photographer; P8-content creator; P7-content creator*)
376 revealed to the public that they do freelance works; for instance, one participant (*P5-writer*)
377 presented themselves as a freelance writer to emphasise the skillset. They did this to build
378 their identity and to promote their works. While other participants (*P10-logo & product*
379 *designer; P13-content creator*) hesitantly opened up their work to the public because they felt
380 that they had no strong identity yet and they had just started doing a couple of freelance works.

381 In terms of reputation building, participants acknowledged the importance of reputation and
382 then provided us with their strategies. Besides utilising digital platforms such as profile account
383 in freelancing platforms and social media (*P2-logo designer & branding; P12-videographer;*

384 *P8-content creator*), creating websites (*P3-photographer*), and joining WhatsApp Groups
385 (*P11-journalist*), our study participants (*P10 & P14, both logo & product designers*) said that
386 positive word of mouth is another strategy to build and increase their reputation. However,
387 other participants (*P13-content creator; P15-writer*) argued that improving oneself first through
388 gaining more experience and giving meaningful work would parallelly increase one's
389 reputation.

390 Also, our participants (*P2-logo designer and branding; P3-photographer; P5-writer; P7-content*
391 *creator; P9 & 11-journalists; P12-videographer*) were aware of the presence of infrastructures
392 that facilitate social interactions among freelancers. Of these participants, only one of them
393 (*P3-photographer*) was actively involved in spaces such as creative hubs, co-working spaces,
394 and other kinds of forums. Even further, the participant argued that these kinds of
395 infrastructure have a potential to form a union that supports freelancers; in other words, the
396 participant said that the establishment of local-level infrastructures would benefit freelancers
397 in their localities.

398 Finally, we organised our categorical findings above into Table 2.

399 >>>Insert Table 2. Informality of Media Freelancers here<<<

400

401 Discussion

402 This section discusses the meanings of informality in working as a media freelancer from the
403 point of view of *millennial* participants in Indonesia. We offer three points of discussion about:
404 (1) motivations of doing freelance (2) managing 'uncertainty' by combining creativity and self-
405 management; and, (3) social-technological infrastructure.

406 *Why freelancing?*

407 We suggest thinking of the informality of media professions as a 'means' for maintaining
408 independence and idealism, and as a welfare vehicle. Firstly, working as a media freelancer,
409 which either creates journalistic or other kinds of content, is driven by individual values or
410 passion. The most obvious one from our study is the idealistic nature of freelancers who want
411 to achieve a goal that is not accommodated through the organisational formal-structure.
412 Besides this motivation, working on something that the freelancers are passionate about is a
413 driving force emerged from our participants' responses. However, this personal value-driven
414 freelancing is not the only reason why our participants have decided to take freelancing jobs.

415 The second reason for engaging in freelance is what we call a welfare vehicle. We offer this
416 second motivational point to capture different answers from our participants as presented in
417 Table 2. We see that those responses convey the meaning of informality of media freelancing
418 as an opportunity for gaining financial benefits or for increasing their chance of securing other
419 jobs in the future. For a part of our participants, considerably still in the stage of seeking
420 another job opportunity (as seen in Table 1), working as a freelancer is considered as a starting
421 point to build their portfolio and working experiences.

422 The significance of these drives to our conceptualisation of informality of media professions is
423 that those drives influence the way the freelancers perceive their freelancing jobs, including
424 their long-term plan. The informality of working as a freelancer attracts an individual with a
425 particular drive to engage in these professions of media communication. At its basics, human
426 needs may range from physiological needs to self-actualisation needs (Maslow, 1970), and
427 different human motivations such as freedom and autonomy and self-realisation may become
428 important for highly skilled freelancers (Stel & Vries, 2015). Here, we discuss the young
429 freelancers' views in our study in terms of doing freelance as a manifestation of their idealism

430 or of their welfare aims, and we contend that the motivations of doing freelance define the way
431 the freelancers perceive the informal nature of this profession.

432 Yet, our study reveals that the freelancers themselves realise the challenge of future
433 'uncertainty' or in terms of job security; although there were participants who had different
434 views regarding 'uncertainty'. A silver lining out of this split-view from our millennial participants
435 is that one should prepare oneself – which will be our second discussion point.

436 *Combining creativity and self-management*

437 In this point, we offer to think that informality represents an entrepreneurial culture that relies
438 on individual creativity and self-management. Media freelancers from our study acknowledge
439 the need to prepare themselves for facing the challenges such as the availability of jobs,
440 competition with other freelancers, and managing their projects. Successfully addressing
441 these challenges could impact the efforts of the studied media freelancers to reduce the
442 uncertainty they face.

443 Moreover, media freelancers realise the importance of both creativity and self-management.
444 Not only giving the best work at their current projects, freelancers are also aware of the need
445 to improve their skills to keep up with the changing requirements. Furthermore, freelancers
446 need to equip themselves to manage their actual work and reputation. One of the concrete
447 actions is the use of various digital channels for freelancers' self-branding (Brems et al., 2017;
448 Gandini, 2016). Our study participants also highlighted the awareness and actions of
449 reputation building as part of how they managed their persona. Developing a good reputation
450 can contribute to how freelancers deal with the competitive nature of media careers, e.g., the
451 'shelf-life' of media careers (Wallis et al., 2020). In other words, they are the manager of
452 themselves because they manage the work, the networks, and relations with clients.

453 This meaning of informality seems to point in the direction of bringing out the best of
454 freelancers in every situation. Either there were many simultaneous projects or no projects at
455 all, they have to be responsible and be creative to find their way out. One might argue that it
456 is the way the work is because there are ups and downs; another might argue that freelancers
457 shouldn't be left alone especially in difficult times – even more, in any times, the freelancers
458 should be given more structural support from the policymakers (Mould et al., 2014; Nies &
459 Pedersini, 2003).

460 *Social-technological infrastructures' awareness and impact*

461 The presence of various infrastructures such as social spaces (e.g., co-working space,
462 creative hubs, and discussion forums) and digital platforms (e.g., social media and freelance
463 platforms) would ideally benefit the social interactions and reputation of freelancers, and in
464 turn, led to the accumulation of their social capital.

465 Yet, a discussion point that emerged from our findings is an agenda towards increasing
466 awareness of the presence and impact of social-technological infrastructure for media
467 freelancers. This future direction will make a more socially-networked type of media
468 freelancing for the purpose of, for example, gaining information about a freelance job opening
469 or succeeding in job negotiations – a situation that can be captured as 'network sociality'
470 (Wittel, 2001). Particularly, in the type of job that relies on networking and word of mouth in
471 the recruitment process that can contribute to gendered outcomes (Wreyford, 2015),
472 freelancers' awareness of the social-technological infrastructure can contribute to the
473 democratisation of access and opportunity.

474 Moreover, building freelancers' awareness of these infrastructures would increase the social
475 capital of freelancers. Besides the individual efforts of building online persona and reputations,
476 media freelancers' efforts in increasing their social capital would benefit them, for example, as

477 founded in the study of work in the UK film and TV industry, social capital 'provided access to
478 work, guaranteed quality and helped to share skills and knowledge. It also offered a speed
479 and flexibility unlikely to be matched by more formal systems' (Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2012).

480 In contextualising these three discussion themes with the context of Indonesia, particularly
481 with its 'demographic bonus', we see that freelancing seems to gain more interest among the
482 millennials. In this study, their responses to the informality reveal the flexibility, challenges,
483 and opportunities of working as a media freelancer. Our study has captured these dynamics
484 of informality in the practical space. Simply put, 'demographic bonus' means a lot of job
485 opportunities, and freelancing these days has its 'perks' that attracts millennials in our study.
486 However, there is still a subsequent concern that needs to be explained further that is related
487 to the future of media freelancers in Indonesia in relation to the growth of population or
488 workforce. A concern that can open a discussion regarding what kind of support needed by
489 the media freelancers. Moreover, in a wider context, that concern can open a discussion
490 regarding the informality of the media profession with different stakeholders. Informality of the
491 media profession, on the one hand, may lead to the casualisation of works that involved the
492 issues of, for example, job security and employment benefits. On the other hand, informality
493 of the profession may lead to the idea of flexibility, creativity and self-management of the
494 media freelancers. Either ways, Mould (Mould, 2018) warns us against creativity that is
495 oppressed and exploiting creative (media and communication) workers.

496 **CONCLUSION**

497 This study reveals the meanings of informality to media freelancers in terms of perceiving
498 flexibility, addressing the challenges, and identifying the opportunities for further improvement.
499 Furthermore, as a result of understanding the growth of freelancers in media professions, we
500 present the nature of informality through the personal, professional, technological, and social
501 dimensions. To highlight the implications of this understanding, we first discuss the informality
502 of media professions through the independency and idealism, and welfare drives. We then
503 conceptualise that those drives influence the way the freelancers perceived their freelancing
504 jobs, including their long-term plan. We also discuss the meaning of informality that points to
505 the direction of bringing out the best of the freelancers in every situation. Media freelancers
506 are expected to be responsible and be creative to find their way out in the times of, for
507 example, many simultaneous projects or no projects at all. Our last discussion point suggests
508 an agenda towards increasing the media freelancers' awareness of the presence and impact
509 of social-technological infrastructure. An agenda that can shape media freelancers to be more
510 socially-networked and can increase the social capital of media freelancers.

511 Conceptually, the results of this study expand our understanding of the nature of freelance
512 work. Besides previous studies' contributions on the important nature of freelancers, this study
513 contributes to the conceptualisation of the informal nature of freelancers in our creative fields.
514 Particularly, this article highlights the dimensions of informality, personal motivations, and
515 prospects of freelance from the perspective of young (millennials) freelancers. With the
516 awareness of the informal arrangement, flexibility, and challenges of freelance, the freelancers
517 have described their views and plans. Our study here is based on certain characteristics of
518 the sample; hence we do not aim to generalise our findings to represent Indonesian
519 freelancers since there are different profiles of freelancers such as different age groups and
520 experiences, operational domains (platform-based and non-platform-based), and expertise.
521 Further studies may address these limitations and enrich the dimensions of informality that
522 emerged from this study.

523 Moreover, our study can set a further research agenda in addressing the challenges of
524 uncertainty faced by media freelancers in Indonesia, for example, in terms of the kinds of
525 micro-macro interventions and socio-technological interventions needed. In doing so, mapping

526 the various practices of freelancing in different contexts and experience levels would be
527 viewed as a fundamental starting point.

528 REFERENCES

- 529 Brems, C., Temmerman, M., Graham, T., & Broersma, M. (2017). Personal Branding on
530 Twitter: How employed and freelance journalists stage themselves on social media.
531 *Digital Journalism*, 5(4), 443–459. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2016.1176534>
- 532 C20 Library and Collabtive. (2019). Catatan diskusi “Kontrak kerja Freelance di industri media
533 dan kreatif .” Retrieved October 26, 2020, from [https://c2o-library.net/2019/05/catatan-](https://c2o-library.net/2019/05/catatan-diskusi-kontrak-kerja-freelance-di-industri-media-dan-kreatif/)
534 [diskusi-kontrak-kerja-freelance-di-industri-media-dan-kreatif/](https://c2o-library.net/2019/05/catatan-diskusi-kontrak-kerja-freelance-di-industri-media-dan-kreatif/)
- 535 Chaffee, S. H., & Metzger, M. J. (2001). The End of Mass Communication? *Mass*
536 *Communication and Society*, 4(4), 365–379.
537 <https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327825MCS0404>
- 538 Cohen, N. S. (2015). Entrepreneurial Journalism and the precarious state of media work.
539 *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 114(3), 513–533. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-3130723>
- 540 Corbin, J. M., & Strauss, A. (1990). Grounded theory research: Procedures, Canons, and
541 Evaluative criteria. *Qualitative Sociology*, 13(1), 3–21.
542 <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00988593>
- 543 Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five*
544 *Traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- 545 Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design* (Third Edit). Thousand Oaks & London: SAGE
546 Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781849208956>
- 547 Croteau, D. (2006). The Growth of Self-Produced Media Content and the Challenge to Media
548 Studies. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 23(4), 340–334.
549 <https://doi.org/10.1080/07393180600933170>
- 550 Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (B.
551 Massumi, Trans.). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- 552 Deuze, M. (2007). *Media Work*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- 553 Edstrom, M., & Ladendorf, M. (2012). Freelance journalists as a flexible workforce in media
554 industries. *Journalism Practice*, 6(5–6), 711–721.
555 <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2012.667275>
- 556 Gandini, A. (2016). Digital work: Self-branding and social capital in the freelance knowledge
557 economy. *Marketing Theory*, 16(1), 123–141.
558 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470593115607942>
- 559 Gill, R., & Pratt, A. (2008). In the Social Factory? Immaterial Labour, Precariousness and
560 Cultural Work. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 25(7–8), 1–30.
561 <https://doi.org/10.263276408097794>
- 562 Grugulis, I., & Stoyanova, D. (2012). Social Capital and Networks in Film and TV: Jobs for the
563 Boys? *Organization Studies*, 33(10), 1311–1331.
564 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840612453525>
- 565 Guba, E. G., Lynham, S. A., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2018). Paradigmatic Controversies,
566 Contradictions, and Emerging Confluences. In N. K. Denzin & Y. Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The*
567 *SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks & London: SAGE
568 Publications.
- 569 Holton, A. E. (2016). Intrapreneurial Informants: An emergent role of freelance journalists.
570 *Journalism Practice*, 10(7), 917–927. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2016.1166069>
- 571 Jankowski, N. W., & Wester, F. (2002). The qualitative tradition in social science inquiry:
572 contributions to mass communication research. In K. B. Jensen & N. W. Jankowski
573 (Eds.), *A Handbook of Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research*.
574 London & New York: Routledge.
- 575 Jensen, K. B. (2002a). Humanistic scholarship a qualitative science: contributions to mass
576 communication research. In K. B. Jensen & N. W. Jankowski (Eds.), *A Handbook of*
577 *Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research*. London & New York:

578 Routledge.

579 Jensen, K. B. (2002b). *The Qualitative Research Process*. In *A Handbook of Media and*
580 *Communication Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies*. London:
581 Routledge.

582 Luik, J. (2020). *Creative Hubs as Assemblages: Understanding the Reciprocal Forms,*
583 *Formalised Function and Territorialisation of Creative Hubs*. University of York.

584 Luik, J., Ng, J., & Hook, J. (2018). "More than just Space": Designing to Support Assemblage
585 in Virtual Creative Hubs. *Proceedings of the 2018 Designing Interactive Systems*
586 *Conference (DIS 2018)*, 1269–1281. ACM New York.
587 <https://doi.org/10.1145/3196709.3196758>

588 Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper & Row.

589 Massey, B. L., & Elmore, C. J. (2011). Happier working for themselves?: Job satisfaction and
590 women freelance journalists. *Journalism Practice*, 5(6), 672–686.
591 <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2011.579780>

592 Mathisen, B. R. (2017). Entrepreneurs and Idealists: Freelance journalists at the intersection
593 of autonomy and constraints. *Journalism Practice*, 11(7), 909–924.
594 <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2016.1199284>

595 Mould, O. (2018). *Against Creativity*. London & New York: Verso.

596 Mould, O., Vorley, T., & Liu, K. (2014). Invisible Creativity? Highlighting the Hidden Impact of
597 Freelancing in London's Creative Industries. *European Planning Studies*, 22(12), 2436–
598 2455. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2013.790587>

599 Neilson, B., & Rossiter, N. (2008). Precarity as Political Concept, or, Fordism as Exception.
600 *Theory, Culture & Society*, 25(7–8), 51–72. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0263276408097796>

601 Nies, B. G., & Pedersini, R. (2003). *Freelance Journalists in the European Media Industry*.
602 European Federation of Journalists.

603 Popiel, P. (2017). "Boundaryless" in the creative economy: assessing freelancing on Upwork.
604 *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 34(3), 220–233.
605 <https://doi.org/10.1080/15295036.2017.1282618>

606 Salamon, E. (2019). Freelance Journalists and Stringers. In Tim P. Vos & Folker Hanusch
607 (Eds.), *The International Encyclopedia of Journalism Studies*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

608 Santoso, D. H., & Lestari, R. D. (2016). Stringer Practices in National Television Industry:
609 Stringer Practice Case Study in National Television Media of Yogyakarta Period 2014-
610 2016. In D. H. Santoso, A. H. Setyawan, E. Hartati, & Noor Aeni (Eds.), *Media,*
611 *Communication & Society Empowerment* (pp. 109–121). Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Buku
612 Litera.

613 Santoso, D. H., & Lestari, R. D. (2017). Stringer Legality and Journalistic Works in Television
614 Media (Legalitas Stringer dan Karya Jurnalistik dalam Media Televisi). *Journal*
615 *Pekommas*, 2(2), 115–124. <https://doi.org/10.30818/jpkm.2017.2020201>

616 Stel, A. van, & Vries, N. de. (2015). The Economic Value of Different Types of Solo Self-
617 Employed: A Review. In A. Burke (Ed.), *The Handbook of Research on Freelancing and*
618 *Self-Employment* (pp. 77–84). Dublin: Senate Hall Academic Publishing.

619 Storey, J., Salaman, G., & Platman, K. (2005). Living with enterprise in an enterprise economy:
620 Freelance and contract workers in the media. *Human Relations*, 58(8), 1033–1054.
621 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726705058502>

622 Wallis, R., van Raalte, C., & Allegrini, S. (2020). The 'shelf-life' of a media career: a study of
623 the long-term career narratives of media graduates. *Creative Industries Journal*, 13(2),
624 178–193. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17510694.2019.1664099>

625 Wittel, A. (2001). Toward a Network Sociality. *Theory Culture & Society*, 18(6), 51–76.

626 Wreyford, N. (2015). Birds of a feather: Informal recruitment practices and gendered outcomes
627 for screenwriting work in the UK film industry. *Sociological Review*, 63(S1), 84–96.
628 <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.12242>

629

630

1

2

Table 1. Study Participants

Participants	Kinds of work/Expertise	Has other jobs?
<i>P1 (female)</i>	<i>Writer</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>P2 (female)</i>	<i>Logo Designer and Branding</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>P3 (male)</i>	<i>Photographer</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>P4 (female)</i>	<i>Writer</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P5 (female)</i>	<i>Writer</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P6 (female)</i>	<i>Logo and Product Designer</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P7 (female)</i>	<i>Content Creator</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>P8 (female)</i>	<i>Content Creator</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>P9 (female)</i>	<i>Journalist</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P10 (female)</i>	<i>Logo and Product Designer</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P11 (male)</i>	<i>Journalist</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>P12 (male)</i>	<i>Videographer</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P13 (male)</i>	<i>Content Creator</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P14 (male)</i>	<i>Logo and Product Designer</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>P15 (female)</i>	<i>Writer</i>	<i>Yes</i>

3

4

5

Peer Review

Table 2. Informality of Media Freelancers

Personal Dimension	Professional Dimension	Technological Dimension	Social Dimension
<p>Motivations of working as a freelancer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>fit with their interest</i> • <i>make use of the idle time</i> • <i>opportunity offered by peers</i> • <i>idealism for not working in a specific company or as a certain full-time professional</i> • <i>gain more experiences</i> • <i>to pay the bills</i> 	<p>No 'formal' career but fairly a way of 'classifying' of freelancers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>freelancer's portfolios influence the level of reputation</i> • <i>the freelancers themselves define their level</i> • <i>formal trainings or education completed influence the level of a freelancer</i> 	<p>The use of used social media such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>LinkedIn to build working profile and</i> • <i>Instagram to build reputation</i> • <i>utilised Instagram as a medium for portfolio</i> 	<p>Disclose the profession to public as a freelancer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>revealed to public that they do freelance works</i> • <i>hesitantly opened up their work to public because they felt that they had no strong profile identity yet</i>
<p>Long-term involvement in freelancing ('I have set the time limit'):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>planned to quit freelancing when they reach a certain age,</i> • <i>when they decide to start a family and have kids, and</i> • <i>when they have secured a permanent job</i> 	<p>The future of freelancing (regarding job security):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>freelancers can find creative solutions for future challenges</i> • <i>maintaining the quality of work and improving themselves</i> • <i>notion of insecurity was an outsider's construction</i> • <i>freelancing these days was promising</i> • <i>the flexibility of working is attractive</i> 	<p>The use of freelance platforms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>one platform has different system form another</i> • <i>the presence/absence of entry test when signing-up to the platform,</i> • <i>the option for the 'employer' to set it preferences in creating a job offer</i> • <i>the probability of securing a job for different kinds of freelancers</i> 	<p>Building public image through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>positive word of mouth</i> • <i>creating websites</i> • <i>joining instant messaging groups</i> • <i>creating a meaningful work</i>
<p>Long-term involvement in freelancing ('I have not set a limit yet'):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>they wanted to be there longer</i> • <i>as long as there are still job offers</i> 	<p>External factors that affect the future of freelancing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>the growth of general industries that require media-related jobs</i> • <i>the growing practices of freelancing in media industries</i> • <i>the globalisation of jobs (coming in/out the country)</i> 	<p>Securing freelance jobs through digital platforms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>(less) aware of the presence of freelance digital platforms</i> • <i>building a good first impression and maintaining a good relationship</i> • <i>understanding followers' preferences and engaging with followers to increase the possibility of securing jobs</i> 	<p>The presence of social infrastructures for freelancers' interactions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>involve in spaces such as creative hubs, and other forums</i> • <i>social infrastructures have a potential to support freelancers</i> • <i>local-level infrastructures would benefit freelancers in their localities</i>



CRC-2021-0069.RV1: Decision on manuscript - Journal of Creative Communications

1 message

SAGE peer review <Noreply.Peerreview@sagepub.com>

17 August 2021 at 15:24

Reply-To: manisha.shelat@micamail.in

To: jandyluik@petra.ac.id

Cc: manisha.shelat@micamail.in, kallol.das@micamail.in, arpit.christian@micamail.in

Dear Dr. Luik,

Thank you for submitting your manuscript, CRC-2021-0069.RV1: Informality of Media Freelancers in Indonesia: Motives and Prospects.

We have now received the opinions of the reviewers for your manuscript. I have also read your submission and the comments and I am pleased to inform you that if you would be willing to make some minor revisions as noted by the reviewers, your manuscript is likely to be accepted.

The reviewers' comments appear at the end of this mail.

I encourage you to revise and resubmit this paper as soon as possible along with your responses to the reviewer comments. When submitting the revision, please include a letter describing how you handled each of the comments in the reviews and in this letter.

In order to begin the revision submission process, please click the link below to directly begin the revision process.

<https://peerreview.sagepub.com/Home/WithoutLogin?Url=Author/RevisedManuscriptSubmission&mskey=83553&ID=6&IsRevised=1&UserKey=132135>

Alternatively, you may log into your account and access your author desk to locate the manuscript and begin the revised submission process.

Thanks again for your interest in Journal of Creative Communications.

Sincerely,
Manisha Shelat
Editor
Journal of Creative Communications
manisha.shelat@micamail.in

Reviewer Comments:

Reviewer 1 comments

Good job in incorporating all the suggested changes. The paper reads well now with all the suggested revisions incorporated. I sincerely hope the format of the write-up is in tandem with the author guidelines of this journal.

Reviewer 2 comments

Dear authors,

I am glad to see how this paper has been strengthened and thank you for taking the effort to address my comments. One minor revision is still needed. Please add one sentence indicating were the interviews video or audio recorded. This is important because this should be a key item in your consent form. You need to report how your participants were recorded during the interviews for ethical reasons.

Also, please cite some papers from the Journal of Creative Communications to make this paper relevant to the journal.

Kindly check out <https://journals.sagepub.com/loi/crca>



CRC-2021-0069.RV2: Your revised manuscript submitted to Journal of Creative Communications

1 message

SAGE peer review <Noreply.Peerreview@sagepub.com>

20 August 2021 at 18:57

Reply-To: arpit.christian@micamail.in

To: jandyluik@petra.ac.id

20-Aug-2021

Dear Author(s),

Your revised manuscript has been submitted successfully.

Thank you for your decision to consider the Journal of Creative Communications as an outlet for your scholarly pursuits. Our journal is supported by MICA (a leading institute in strategic marketing and communication and located in Ahmedabad, India) and published by SAGE Publishing.

Your submission Informality of Media Freelancers in Indonesia: Motives and Prospects has been recorded as manuscript CRC-2021-0069.RV2. You must refer to both your manuscript's title and this number in future correspondence with the editorial team.

You may view the status of your manuscript anytime by accessing your author desk at the <https://peerreview.sagepub.com/>.

Wishing you all the best,

Sincerely,
Journal of Creative Communications Editorial Office

Google Scholar page: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=m1aOFg0AAAAJ&hl=en&authuser=2>

Thank you!

This manuscript has been submitted to Journal of Creative Communications

Journal Name: Journal of Creative Communications	Manuscript ID: CRC-2021-0069.RV2
Manuscript Type: Original article	Manuscript Title: Informality of Media Freelancers in Indonesia: Motives and Prospects
Keywords: contemporary communication, Creative Industries, digital media, informality of media freelancers, mass and new media, media freelancers	
MeSH terms:	
<p>Abstract: This article presents our analysis of the nature of informality of media freelancers and its implications to creative workers. Employing a series of fifteen interviews, we offer an interpretive understanding through the subjective experience of the Indonesian media freelancers. Accordingly, we analyse the participants' responses in four dimensions of informality: personal, professional, technological, and social. This analysis brings up a discussion about the flexibility, challenges, and opportunities of working as a media freelancer. Specifically, three themes emerged from our discussion: motivations of doing freelance, managing 'uncertainty' through creativity and self-management, and the importance of social-technological infrastructure. Considering the demographic bonus in Indonesia, we suggest a future research agenda towards the potentials of informality of media freelancers. This future direction would shed light on whether the informality, on the one hand, can lead to the casualisation of work, or, on the other hand, can lead to the idea of flexibility, and self-management of media freelancers.</p>	

Peer Review

1 Informality of Media Freelancers in Indonesia: 2 Motives and Prospects

4 Abstract

5 This article presents our analysis of the nature of informality of media freelancers and its
6 implications to creative workers. Employing a series of fifteen interviews, we offer an
7 interpretive understanding through the subjective experience of the Indonesian media
8 freelancers. Accordingly, we analyse the participants' responses in four dimensions of
9 informality: personal, professional, technological, and social. This analysis brings up a
10 discussion about the flexibility, challenges, and opportunities of working as a media freelancer.
11 Specifically, three themes emerged from our discussion: motivations of doing freelance,
12 managing 'uncertainty' through creativity and self-management, and the importance of social-
13 technological infrastructure. Considering the demographic bonus in Indonesia, we suggest a
14 future research agenda towards the potentials of informality of media freelancers. This future
15 direction would shed light on whether the informality, on the one hand, can lead to the
16 casualisation of work, or, on the other hand, can lead to the idea of flexibility, and self-
17 management of media freelancers.

18 **Keywords:** *media freelancers; informality of media freelancers; informality dimensions;*
19 *social-technological infrastructure; media communication.*

20 Introduction

21 Although the critical understanding of freelance media workers has been studied in terms of
22 problematizing the legality of journalistic content produced by stringers in Indonesia (Santoso
23 & Lestari, 2017), there is an underexplored research space in understanding the nature of
24 working as freelancers directly through the subjective experience of the media freelancers
25 themselves.

26 This study therefore offers an interpretive understanding about the *informality* of the media
27 profession from the viewpoint of (media) freelancers in Indonesia. We situate informality as
28 the kind of work that is flexible and not bounded by a long-term permanent contract with a
29 specific company. In other words, this is the kind of work done by a freelancer that is 'a worker
30 who is self-employed or contracted to do short-term assignments for one or more individual
31 clients rather than works as a permanent employee of a company' (Salamon, 2019). Moreover,
32 from a more global-historical perspective, the shifting of work from the Industrial era to the
33 post-Industrial era raises a concern, for example, 'the substantial growth of freelancing, raises
34 questions about the trajectory of its ongoing evolution and the narratives that underpin and
35 legitimate it' (Popiel, 2017). Conceptually, informality has a processual meaning in the sense
36 that this informality can have different kinds of 'formalized' manifestations (Luik, 2020; Luik et
37 al., 2018). This concept of informality is informed by 'proceeding from the *middle*' (Deleuze &
38 Guattari, 1987), in which they write: 'It's not easy to see things in the middle, rather than
39 looking down on them from above or up at them from below, or from left to right or right to left:
40 try it, you'll see that everything changes'. However, this article does not attempt to prove or
41 disprove their assertion, rather, our purpose here is to underpin the meaning of *informality*
42 through the reflective experience of media freelancers.

43 We employ the case of media freelancers in Indonesia to analyse this informality in media and
44 creative industries. With various archetypes of media communication in the digital era (Chaffee
45 & Metzger, 2001), media freelancers are provided with avenues to reach diverse audiences,

46 and one of the challenges for communication researchers is to understand the producers in
47 this 'dramatic fragmentation of media productions' (Croteau, 2006). Moreover, we decide to
48 study the informality of media freelancers because of the emergence of various 'media
49 professions' (Deuze, 2007) in this digital era.

50 Indonesia's freelancing landscape took our attention because of two factors: the statistical
51 growth of freelancing in the country, and the growing attention of media freelancers and related
52 stakeholders in opening the discourse around their working situation. From the National
53 Statistics Bureau's (2019) data, Indonesia has 129.36 million workers; and an estimation made
54 by Tempo Magazine states that 5.89 million are freelancers (or, 4,55 per cent). Similar data is
55 made by an Indonesian freelancing platform that the number of freelancers in 2019 has
56 increased 16 per cent from the previous year. These numbers seem to represent a promising
57 discourse around freelancing in Indonesia despite the working situations experienced by some
58 of the freelancers. In a discussion held in a 'creative hub' in Indonesia, a number of media
59 freelancers expressed the issues surrounding their work such as the need for formal working
60 contracts and their enforcement, how they propose and settle on their fees during 'pitching',
61 how they manage the intensive timeline, and the issues of welfare, gender and workers' rights
62 (C20 Library and Collabtive, 2019).

63 These backgrounds on our motivation to understand the informality, the statistics published
64 by above mentioned entities, and working challenges of media freelancers contribute to our
65 main question of this study: *how do media freelancers perceive the nature of the informality of*
66 *their work?* This question led us to conduct a qualitative study by interviewing a number of
67 media freelancers in Indonesia. We position this empirical study as a starting point for
68 developing a working categorisation of the nature of informality perceived by the study
69 participants. Furthermore, we analyse the meaning and implications of this perceived
70 informality in the wider context of freelancers in media industries.

71 We also position our study to contribute to the efforts of understanding the nature of creative-
72 oriented freelance work. As our field is very much connected with human creativity, freelancers
73 have been playing a key creative role in the creative communication processes. Based on a
74 study of creative industries (firms and freelancers) in London, Mould et al. (2014) argue that
75 although freelancers are a crucial and significant part of the creative industries, and often
76 conduct the more creative aspects of the work, they remain largely 'invisible'. Another similar
77 effort to understand the nature of freelance is a study of freelance journalists in Europe. Nies
78 & Pedersini (2003, p. 20) conclude that 'freelancers constitute an important part of media and
79 play a major role for freedom and quality of the press and media', and freelancers' status
80 should be strengthened. Thus, these two studies have signified the *important nature* of
81 freelancers in the creative and media works, including creative communications, and the
82 freelancers themselves should be made 'visible' and strengthened.

83 Nevertheless, in terms of the *informal nature* of the working practices of freelancers
84 themselves, we find that there is still room for further exploration. Informality may involve a
85 short-period of working arrangements, and flexibility in beneficial ways (Edstrom & Ladendorf,
86 2012; Massey & Elmore, 2011; Storey et al., 2005). However, a form of informal arrangement
87 also implies a 'precarious situation' for the workers (Gill & Pratt, 2008; Neilson & Rossiter,
88 2008). Furthermore, from the study of media work of a cohort of Media Production graduates
89 of a UK university, Wallis et al. (2020, p. 190) argue that the nature of 'media careers may
90 also come with a limited shelf-life', and even more, they also suggest that 'now, more than
91 ever, media work is being skewed towards the young'. We pay particular attention to this
92 specific age and 'shelf-life' facet that factors a decision of a freelancer to be (continuously)
93 involved with freelance works in Indonesia. Thus, we are keen to understand the nature of
94 informality of freelance work from the Indonesian young freelancers themselves to enrich our
95 understanding of the working practices. The knowledge gained from this study will inform us
96 better in responding to the informality of freelance work in Indonesia. Specifically, we would

97 like to detail our contribution by discussing the following questions: *what are the drivers for*
98 *these freelancers to be involved in freelance media work? And, how do they view the future of*
99 *their freelance work?* By discussing these questions here in this article, our study contributes
100 to making the subjective experience of freelancers in Indonesia visible, which can lead to
101 subsequent supportive efforts from academia and policymakers.

102 We organise this article according to the following structure. We first present our conceptual
103 background of the informality of media freelancers, and the interpretive understanding. In our
104 method section, we describe our data collection and analysis processes. In the next section,
105 we present the findings through our categorisation, and contextualise these findings in the
106 discussions of informality of a profession. We conclude by presenting the implications of this
107 analysis to our future research agenda on media freelancers.

108 **Media Freelancers**

109 *Informality and Flexibility of Media Freelancers*

110 We define informality in the context of freelance work as the arrangement of work that is
111 characterised by being project-based, flexible, and self-entrepreneurial. This nature of
112 informality allows media freelancers to work from one project to another project, or to work on
113 several projects in a relatively narrow time frame. Freelance working allows the freelancers to
114 work on a variety of projects, and for a range of clients, and that puts them in a position to (in
115 theory) refuse unattractive offers, walk away from difficult clients and renegotiate impossible
116 deadlines (Storey et al., 2005). However, this is not always the case as the market is too open,
117 it has been observed that in the context of media workers 'it was too easy to enter the work
118 space, and with pressure on fees, newcomers or those desperate for work were prepared to
119 accept low fee rates or poor working conditions' (Storey et al., 2005).

120 The informality of media freelancers is often characterised by the flexibility related to the
121 working life of an individual. Freelancers can manage their own time in which they can have
122 more flexible lives: they have the opportunity to take longer vacations, to have home-based
123 working life with caring responsibilities or other personal commitments, and for being flexible
124 towards the needs of their families (Edstrom & Ladendorf, 2012; Storey et al., 2005). For
125 example, in the survey conducted on women freelance journalists in the US, most of the
126 respondents stated that freelance journalism is 'the kind of job they wanted', 'an ideal job', and
127 that they were 'satisfied with freelancing as a job and like it'; in other words, 'For women, self-
128 employment as freelance news workers may function as a refuge; as a "place" where they
129 can find their own right mix of work and family' (Massey & Elmore, 2011).

130 However, 'flexibility' itself is a double-edged sword. Besides those 'benefits' mentioned above,
131 a qualitative study of freelance journalists in northern Sweden found that 'the informants' felt
132 they needed to work even when they were sick, in order to meet deadlines', and that they
133 'experienced unsteady flows of work and income, and spoke about dips in work supply, such
134 as sometimes going two months in the autumn without work' (Edstrom & Ladendorf, 2012).

135 Besides the flexibility and project-based nature of media freelancing, entrepreneurship
136 becomes a unique quality. Specifically, this quality is related to the professional role of
137 freelancers as (self)-entrepreneurs and idealists. As entrepreneurs, the freelancers are driven
138 by 'innovation and successful entrepreneurship' and they are taking this path because 'they
139 did not want the insecurity and bad working conditions of short-term contract work' (Mathisen,
140 2017). While as idealists, they are motivated by 'the opportunity to work with the kind of
141 journalism they find important, even if it does not always pay well, such as documentaries,
142 books, art projects, and often non-commercial projects related to the ideals of journalism'
143 (Mathisen, 2017).

144 Moreover, with this self-entrepreneurial drive, freelancers also engage in reputation
145 management or personal branding. These self-branding practices are largely conducted on
146 social media as seen in the freelance media workers in London and Milan, in which 'self-
147 branding becomes an investment in social relationships with expected return for the
148 acquisition of a reputation' (Gandini, 2016). For example, freelance journalists utilise social
149 media to 'build audiences and brands while reinforcing and repairing journalistic norms,
150 including transparency' (Holton, 2016). Similarly, in the study of Dutch and Flemish employed
151 and freelance journalists on Twitter, social media platforms have created an avenue for
152 freelance journalists to build their own independent persona rather than 'names or initial under
153 articles' (Brems et al., 2017).

154 Therefore, informality of media freelancers is associated with their flexibility of working from
155 one project to another project and of managing work-life time, and freelancers prefer to see
156 themselves as 'as entrepreneurs and creatives, innovators and 'change makers' – rather than
157 a precarious, freelance working class that opposes capitalism and its latest advancements'
158 (Gandini, 2016). We see that this viewpoint is related with discourses of entrepreneurship that
159 contribute to the attractiveness of freelance lifestyle and of working under short-term projects
160 and personal goals (Edstrom & Ladendorf, 2012). Consequently, this informality of media
161 freelancers is related with the idea of an ideal neoliberal worker: 'flexible, unattached, and
162 adaptable' (Cohen, 2015).

163 *Interpretive Understanding of Media Freelancers*

164 Studies related to Indonesian freelance media workers have dominantly covered the critical
165 ground, for example, problematising the legality of the content created by the *stringers*
166 (Santoso & Lestari, 2017) and framing the stringer practices through commodification and
167 exploitation (Santoso & Lestari, 2016). By definition, a stringer is a freelancer 'who does not
168 work as a staff member of a news organization' and who 'is paid for each piece that an
169 organization publishes or broadcasts rather than a regular salary' (Salamon, 2019). Besides
170 those studies, in contributing to the discourses and efforts to make freelancers more visible,
171 we offer to frame the informality of media freelancers through interpretive understanding.

172 We refer to an interpretive understanding as an inquiry that relies on the subjective experience
173 of the participants themselves, e.g., in this study from freelance media workers. The nature of
174 this understanding is constructed through the individual and collective reconstructions, and
175 accumulated through vicarious experience (Guba et al., 2018). That is to say, we offer the
176 understanding that is based on 'the analysis and interpretation, through *verstehen* or
177 empathetic understanding, of the meaning that people give to their actions' (Jankowski &
178 Wester, 2002). Therefore, this understanding relies on the subjective experience of media
179 freelancers, for example, their motivations, their actual experiences working in the field, and
180 how they manage their work and their clients, and how they view their work.

181 Our interpretive understanding here is related to the idea that freelance media workers
182 themselves have their reasons and plans in facing this informality. Previous studies of women
183 freelancer journalists who leave traditional employer-based news jobs for self-employment
184 have contributed to the argument that 'freelance journalism can be more family-friendly than
185 organised journalism' (Massey & Elmore, 2011). Other drives of doing freelance can be
186 identified from the study of freelancers who are part of a union. There is the drive to selling
187 content and running one own and the drive of 'working in-depth on large-scale, non-
188 commercial projects that they find professionally satisfying' (Mathisen, 2017). Besides this
189 understanding, we are interested to know more about the specific drives or motivations of
190 young, non-union-based freelancers. Gaining insights on why they want to be part of this
191 informal working arrangement will make us better informed to think about the kind of support
192 offered for these young freelancers.

193 Furthermore, another facet of informality is the sustainability of the creative work itself. The
194 'project-based turn' (Mould et al., 2014) of economic activities, including the creative
195 industries, has allowed freelancers to secure more projects. There is a sense of opportunity
196 that freelancers become more visible and more significant in the creative industries (Mould et
197 al., 2014). At the same time, in strengthening freelancers' positions, there is a call for the
198 recognition of freelance status, improving the protection needed, establishing minimum
199 conditions, improving social security, and ensuring the possibility of collective bargaining (Nies
200 & Pedersini, 2003). Nevertheless, young media freelancers' views on the issue of future
201 prospects have received less attention from researchers. Filling this gap with the subjective
202 experience of the 'newbies' will enrich the dimensions of informality.

203 Method

204 We used a qualitative approach, in particular we used an interpretive – constructivist view
205 (Creswell, 2009; Guba et al., 2018; Jankowski & Wester, 2002; Jensen, 2002a), to bring up
206 an understanding of freelance media workers in Indonesia. In our study, we define media
207 freelancers as those who are engaging in the creation of media content. Table 1 summarises
208 our study participants' profile in terms of their sex, their kinds of work or expertise, and whether
209 they have other jobs or don't – a piece of information that is significant to our discussion
210 regarding the meaning of *informality* from the participants' viewpoint. Moreover, we
211 triangulated our findings with a manager of a media company that had been working with the
212 freelance workers. For the journalistic content, this practice of freelancing was informally
213 established with the connection with local correspondences (Personal communication with a
214 manager of a media company, 2020). For the other kinds of content, this practice was
215 observed through the presence of platforms for digital freelancers. Based on our observation,
216 we identified the kinds of media-related freelance work categories: journalist, content writer,
217 videographer, photographer, writer, graphic designer, content creator, and social media
218 manager.

219 >>> insert Table 1. Study Participants here<<<

220

221 Interviews were our data collection method (Jankowski & Wester, 2002; Jensen, 2002b), in
222 these interviews we explored questions that related to the informality of this profession. By
223 informality we refer to the practice of working to create content that is typified by being project-
224 based, flexible, and self-entrepreneurial. During the interviews conducted by our research
225 assistant, the semi-structured questions covered the following informality-related topics: the
226 motivations of working as a freelancer, the impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on freelancing, the
227 nature of the profession in terms of its growth opportunities and its sustainability challenges,
228 the use of digital technologies in supporting freelancing activities, the impact of co-location
229 spaces in the urban area, and the social aspects of freelancing profession in the context of
230 Indonesian culture. As discussed, we aim to gather data from young freelancers in Indonesia,
231 and our interviewees (age range: 20-35) came from different cities of Java island. Fifteen
232 freelancers, recruited with snowballing techniques, were interviewed during the third quarter
233 and the fourth quarter of 2020. Twelve interviews were conducted through online
234 communication channels, and three interviews were conducted through in-person mode with
235 a strict social distancing protocol. **The freelancers permitted us to do audio recording during
236 the interviews.** In total, the interview transcripts contain 12.019 words.

237 We then inductively analysed our data to construct the four dimensions of the informality of
238 freelancing. We followed the procedures of the grounded theory approach to explain the
239 process, action, or interaction on a topic (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Creswell, 2007).
240 Specifically, we employed open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Corbin & Strauss,
241 1990). This approach allowed us to be sensitive to the iterative nature of data collection and

242 analysis, and to recruit subsequent interviews (theoretical sampling) with different expertise
243 and social-technological characteristics. For example, our initial coding through breaking down
244 the results from our earlier interview found that 'long-term involvement' and 'the future of
245 freelancing' were part of the 'personal dimension' of the informality category. However, as we
246 gain more data and more samples to corroborate the initial categories and sub-categories, we
247 found that 'long-term involvement' and 'future of freelancing' were part of 'personal dimension'
248 and 'professional dimension' respectively. In ensuring the validity of our data, we maintain
249 constant comparative analysis during the iterative data collection and analysis processes.
250 Furthermore, in triangulating the coding results, we ask our research assistant to
251 independently apply the result of selective coding into the transcripts. Finally, we then
252 organised all the coded categories (or, in our study: dimensions) to a 'core' category of the
253 nature of the informality of freelancers.

254 **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

255 We organise our participants' responses into four dimensions: *personal*, *professional*,
256 *technological*, and *social dimensions* to understand our participants' subjective experiences
257 regarding the informality of work as a media freelancer.

258 *Nature of the Informality*

259 *Personal Dimension*

260 The personal dimension refers to the motivations of our study's participants and the perceived
261 long-term 'involvement' of the participants regarding the informal nature of working as media
262 freelancers.

263 We identified participants' motivations for working as a freelancer, these included: fit with their
264 interest (*P5-writer*); make use of their idle time (*P2-logo designer & branding; P10-logo &*
265 *product designer; P13-content creator*); opportunity offered by their peer (*P6- logo & product*
266 *designer; writer*); their idealism for not working in a specific company or as a certain full-time
267 professional (*P3-photographer;P4-writer*); gain more experiences (*P3-photographer*), and to
268 pay for their bills (*P14-logo & product designer*). Furthermore, a common thread found from
269 their responses was the idea of 'having more freedom' or flexibility that interested them the
270 most. The participants said that having a degree of work-management autonomy gave them
271 the ability to manage the time and place of their work (*P9-journalist*), gave them more space
272 to explore their creativity and critical thinking (*P3-photographer*), and offered them the
273 flexibility to take a side-job as well as their permanent job (*P3-photographer*).

274 Another sub-theme of this personal dimension is the participants' responses regarding their
275 long-term involvement in freelancing. Our participants provided us with two different answers.
276 On the one hand, for the 'I have set a time limit' camp, they planned to quit freelancing when
277 they reach a certain age (e.g., *P11-journalist said '35 years old'*), when they decide to start a
278 family and have kids (*P4-writer*), or when they have secured a permanent job (*P15-writer*). On
279 the other hand, the 'I have not set a limit yet' camp stated that they found working as a
280 freelancer is satisfying and they wanted to be there longer (*P9-journalist; P10-logo & product*
281 *designer*) and, for as long as there are still job offers then would take it, since doing freelance
282 is a 'side job' (*P8-content creator*). This kind of involvement was also reflected by the
283 participants' answer: 'not yet' to the question of 'has other jobs?' (see Table 1).

284 In relation to a contemporary challenge, i.e., the COVID-19 pandemic, participants mostly
285 agreed that they were affected. Freelancers whose work needed them to be in specific outside
286 locations (such as freelance photographers, journalists, videographers, and content creators)
287 acknowledged the impact to their jobs. They described the Pandemic's impacts on their work.
288 These impacts included cancelation or rescheduling their agreed projects (*P3-photographer*;

289 *P12-videographer*); having to reject job offers from locations with higher coronavirus exposure
290 (*P8-content creator*); improving their working methods due to restrictions in the field (*P9-*
291 *journalist*); and also, having to make an adjustment to their fee (*P14- logo & product designer*).
292 In a different situation, only a few participants whose freelancing work were primarily online-
293 based such as logo designing and online branding (*P2- logo designer & branding*), and content
294 creation (*P13-content creator*) acknowledged that they weren't affected.

295 *Professional Dimension*

296 The second category is the professional dimension that refers to the participants' perceived
297 characteristics of working informally as freelancers such as 'career' development and the
298 future of the profession.

299 Our participants agreed that there is no 'formal' career development in doing freelance, but
300 they agreed that there was a fair 'classification' of freelancers. For example, one freelancer
301 (*P7-writer*) said that the quality of a freelancer's portfolio and its received social media
302 engagement affected the reputation of that freelancer, which then influenced the range of
303 remuneration offered. Two of the participants (*P3-photographer & P12-videographer*) provided
304 a more self-defined answer that the level of a freelancer is defined by the freelancers
305 themselves; it depends on how the influencers valued themselves. Another related answer
306 provided by one participant (*P6-logo & product designer*) told that although there is no 'formal'
307 career development, the formal training, or educational experiences (certificate of
308 completions) could also be an alternative to consider the level of a freelancer. Furthermore,
309 P6 continued that often the fee offered to a prospective client, or fee range, implies the level
310 of experience of a freelancer.

311 Concerning the future of freelancing, i.e., in responding to the topic of job security, participants
312 disagreed that freelancing lacks long-term prospects. Our participants (*P2- logo designer &*
313 *branding; P11-journalist; P3-photographer*) argued that the creative nature of the profession
314 would equip the freelancers to make improvements and find creative solutions to face future
315 challenges regarding job security. They believed that freelancers would be able to maintain
316 their clients and open for new work opportunities. Moreover, our study participants responded
317 back by offering a deconstruction of this notion of 'lacking future prospects' through capacity
318 building to equip themselves, do networking, and keep doing their creative works. Particularly,
319 one participant (*P11-journalist*) clarified that that notion of insecurity was merely an outsider's
320 construction; *P11* emphasised on the flexibility of a multi-skilled freelancer working for different
321 jobs. In a similar tone, another participant (*P5-writer*) said that freelancing these days was
322 promising, different than before; *P5* emphasised that although there was a financially tough
323 beginning, *P5*'s career prospects as a freelance writer had developed better despite there
324 being no fixed-amount of monthly income.

325 Our participants also highlighted external factors that affect the future of freelancing such as
326 the growth of general industries that need media-related jobs, the growing practices of
327 freelancing in media industries, and the globalisation of jobs. One of the participants (*P7-*
328 *content creator*) noticed the growth of businesses and products that need media-related works
329 in digital media, particularly creating content and branding for social media. Interestingly in the
330 media industries themselves, another participant (*P3-photographer*) highlighted the increasing
331 practices of industries employing freelancers or part-timers for efficiency reasons. Regarding
332 globalisation of jobs, our participants (*P7-content creator; P8-content creator*) raised this
333 concern that the competition for securing a freelance job would increase but, at the same time,
334 job opportunities would increase. However, one of the participants (*P8-content creator*)
335 expressed that number of jobs and of freelancers are contributing to the future of freelancing;
336 less jobs mean not many freelancers can secure a job, while another participant (*P4-writer*)
337 said that less freelancers (in a situation where freelancers shifted to more permanent 9-to-5
338 jobs) would threaten the future of freelancing too.

339 Another subject related to the future of freelancing is the flexibility of working. Participants (*P3-*
340 *photographer; P9-journalist*) said that freelancing allows for working from different physical
341 locations without a requirement to stay permanently in an office and to do 'check-clock'. In
342 other words, that working flexibility is one of the working preferences of the creative young
343 people. However, regarding this flexibility, one participant (*P3-photographer*) warned the
344 threat from within the freelancers themselves; that the tendency to stay in one's comfort zone
345 would jeopardise this working situation.

346 *Technological Dimension*

347 In this third dimension, we refer to the participants' view of recent technological development
348 in supporting the informal nature of working as media freelancers.

349 Some of our participants were not aware of the presence of the different kinds of freelancing
350 platforms. For example, four participants (*P3-photographer, P5-writer, P6-logo & product*
351 *designer, and P7-content creator*) acknowledged that they are not aware of these digital
352 platforms. However, one participant (*P5-writer*) used social media such as LinkedIn to build a
353 working profile and Instagram to build reputation. Similarly, another participant (*P11-journalist*)
354 utilised Instagram as a medium for portfolio.

355 Differently, one participant (*P2-logo designer and branding*) was familiar with freelancing
356 platforms and had been doing freelance works from these platforms. Through experiences of
357 working with two platforms, the participant pointed out that one platform has a different system
358 from another. For example, the presence/absence of entry test during sign-up and registering
359 to the platform, the option for the 'employer' to set its preferences in creating a job offer, and
360 the probability of securing a job for different kinds of freelancers—i.e., a freelancer's rating
361 affected its probability of securing a job.

362 In relation to securing a freelance job through digital platforms (social media and freelancing
363 platform), participants (*P2-logo designer and branding; P8-content creator*) gave a similar
364 response that building a good first impression and maintaining a good relationship with clients
365 are the best strategy. Moreover, participants (*P7-content creator; P8-content creator*)
366 emphasised the use of social media platforms for their business purposes. They have to
367 understand followers' preferences and engage with followers for increasing the possibility to
368 secure freelance jobs.

369 *Social Dimension*

370 Last, we categorised participants' responses as social dimension that refers to the relation
371 between the informal nature of media freelancers and the social aspects such as disclosure
372 to the public as a freelancer, building public image, and the presence of other infrastructures
373 for freelancers' interactions.

374 Our study participants had a split-response concerning disclosing they are working as a
375 freelancer. Participants (*P15-writer; P3-photographer; P8-content creator; P7-content creator*)
376 revealed to the public that they do freelance works; for instance, one participant (*P5-writer*)
377 presented themselves as a freelance writer to emphasise the skillset. They did this to build
378 their identity and to promote their works. While other participants (*P10-logo & product*
379 *designer; P13-content creator*) hesitantly opened up their work to the public because they felt
380 that they had no strong identity yet and they had just started doing a couple of freelance works.

381 In terms of reputation building, participants acknowledged the importance of reputation and
382 then provided us with their strategies. Besides utilising digital platforms such as profile account
383 in freelancing platforms and social media (*P2-logo designer & branding; P12-videographer;*
384 *P8-content creator*), creating websites (*P3-photographer*), and joining WhatsApp Groups
385 (*P11-journalist*), our study participants (*P10 & P14, both logo & product designers*) said that

386 positive word of mouth is another strategy to build and increase their reputation. However,
387 other participants (*P13-content creator; P15-writer*) argued that improving oneself first through
388 gaining more experience and giving meaningful work would parallelly increase one's
389 reputation.

390 Also, our participants (*P2-logo designer and branding; P3-photographer; P5-writer; P7-content*
391 *creator; P9 & 11-journalists; P12-videographer*) were aware of the presence of infrastructures
392 that facilitate social interactions among freelancers. Of these participants, only one of them
393 (*P3-photographer*) was actively involved in spaces such as creative hubs, co-working spaces,
394 and other kinds of forums. Even further, the participant argued that these kinds of
395 infrastructure have a potential to form a union that supports freelancers; in other words, the
396 participant said that the establishment of local-level infrastructures would benefit freelancers
397 in their localities.

398 Finally, we organised our categorical findings above into Table 2.

399 >>>Insert Table 2. Informality of Media Freelancers here<<<
400

401 *Discussion*

402 This section discusses the meanings of informality in working as a media freelancer from the
403 point of view of *millennial* participants in Indonesia. We offer three points of discussion about:
404 (1) motivations of doing freelance (2) managing 'uncertainty' by combining creativity and self-
405 management; and, (3) social-technological infrastructure.

406 *Why freelancing?*

407 We suggest thinking of the informality of media professions as a 'means' for maintaining
408 independence and idealism, and as a welfare vehicle. Firstly, working as a media freelancer,
409 which either creates journalistic or other kinds of content, is driven by individual values or
410 passion. The most obvious one from our study is the idealistic nature of freelancers who want
411 to achieve a goal that is not accommodated through the organisational formal-structure.
412 Besides this motivation, working on something that the freelancers are passionate about is a
413 driving force emerged from our participants' responses. However, this personal value-driven
414 freelancing is not the only reason why our participants have decided to take freelancing jobs.

415 The second reason for engaging in freelance is what we call a welfare vehicle. We offer this
416 second motivational point to capture different answers from our participants as presented in
417 Table 2. We see that those responses convey the meaning of informality of media freelancing
418 as an opportunity for gaining financial benefits or for increasing their chance of securing other
419 jobs in the future. For a part of our participants, considerably still in the stage of seeking
420 another job opportunity (as seen in Table 1), working as a freelancer is considered as a starting
421 point to build their portfolio and working experiences.

422 The significance of these drives to our conceptualisation of informality of media professions is
423 that those drives influence the way the freelancers perceive their freelancing jobs, including
424 their long-term plan. The informality of working as a freelancer attracts an individual with a
425 particular drive to engage in these professions of media communication. At its basics, human
426 needs may range from physiological needs to self-actualisation needs (Maslow, 1970), and
427 different human motivations such as freedom and autonomy and self-realisation may become
428 important for highly skilled freelancers (Stel & Vries, 2015). Here, we discuss the young
429 freelancers' views in our study in terms of doing freelance as a manifestation of their idealism
430 or of their welfare aims, and we contend that the motivations of doing freelance define the way
431 the freelancers perceive the informal nature of this profession.

432 Yet, our study reveals that the freelancers themselves realise the challenge of future
433 'uncertainty' or in terms of job security; although there were participants who had different
434 views regarding 'uncertainty'. A silver lining out of this split-view from our millennial participants
435 is that one should prepare oneself – which will be our second discussion point.

436 *Combining creativity and self-management*

437 In this point, we offer to think that informality represents an entrepreneurial culture that relies
438 on individual creativity and self-management. Media freelancers from our study acknowledge
439 the need to prepare themselves for facing the challenges such as the availability of jobs,
440 competition with other freelancers, and managing their projects. Successfully addressing
441 these challenges could impact the efforts of the studied media freelancers to reduce the
442 uncertainty they face.

443 Moreover, media freelancers realise the importance of both creativity and self-management.
444 Not only giving the best work at their current projects, freelancers are also aware of the need
445 to improve their skills to keep up with the changing requirements. Furthermore, freelancers
446 need to equip themselves to manage their actual work and reputation. One of the concrete
447 actions is the use of various digital channels for freelancers' self-branding (Brems et al., 2017;
448 Gandini, 2016). Our study participants also highlighted the awareness and actions of
449 reputation building as part of how they managed their persona. Developing a good reputation
450 can contribute to how freelancers deal with the competitive nature of media careers, e.g., the
451 'shelf-life' of media careers (Wallis et al., 2020). In other words, they are the manager of
452 themselves because they manage the work, the networks, and relations with clients.

453 This meaning of informality seems to point in the direction of bringing out the best of
454 freelancers in every situation. **Either there were many simultaneous projects or no projects at
455 all, they have to be responsible and be creative to find their way out. In a general sense, 'each
456 individual is held responsible and accountable for his or her own actions and well-being'
457 (Falnikar et al., 2019).** One might argue that it is the way the work is because there are ups
458 and downs; another might argue that freelancers shouldn't be left alone especially in difficult
459 times – even more, in any times, the freelancers should be given more structural support from
460 the policymakers (Mould et al., 2014; Nies & Pedersini, 2003).

461 *Social-technological infrastructures' awareness and impact*

462 The presence of various infrastructures such as social spaces (e.g., co-working space,
463 creative hubs, and discussion forums) and digital platforms (e.g., social media and freelance
464 platforms) would ideally benefit the social interactions and reputation of freelancers, and in
465 turn, led to the accumulation of their social capital.

466 Yet, a discussion point that emerged from our findings is an agenda towards increasing
467 awareness of the presence and impact of social-technological infrastructure for media
468 freelancers. This future direction will make a more socially-networked type of media
469 freelancing for the purpose of, for example, gaining information about a freelance job opening
470 or succeeding in job negotiations – a situation that can be captured as 'network sociality'
471 (Wittel, 2001). Particularly, in the type of job that relies on networking and word of mouth in
472 the recruitment process that can contribute to gendered outcomes (Wreyford, 2015),
473 freelancers' awareness of the social-technological infrastructure can contribute to the
474 democratisation of access and opportunity. **A possible future situation is to assess whether
475 social media socially enhance or compensate (Gadekar & Ang, 2020) the freelancers.**

476 Moreover, building freelancers' awareness of these infrastructures would increase the social
477 capital of freelancers. Besides the individual efforts of building online persona and reputations,
478 media freelancers' efforts in increasing their social capital would benefit them, for example, as
479 founded in the study of work in the UK film and TV industry, social capital 'provided access to

480 work, guaranteed quality and helped to share skills and knowledge. It also offered a speed
481 and flexibility unlikely to be matched by more formal systems' (Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2012).

482 In contextualising these three discussion themes with the context of Indonesia, particularly
483 with its 'demographic bonus', we see that freelancing seems to gain more interest among the
484 millennials. In this study, their responses to the informality reveal the flexibility, challenges,
485 and opportunities of working as a media freelancer. Our study has captured these dynamics
486 of informality in the practical space. Simply put, 'demographic bonus' means a lot of job
487 opportunities, and freelancing these days has its 'perks' that attracts millennials in our study.
488 However, there is still a subsequent concern that needs to be explained further that is related
489 to the future of media freelancers in Indonesia in relation to the growth of population or
490 workforce. A concern that can open a discussion regarding what kind of support needed by
491 the media freelancers. Moreover, in a wider context, that concern can open a discussion
492 regarding the informality of the media profession with different stakeholders. Informality of the
493 media profession, on the one hand, may lead to the casualisation of works that involved the
494 issues of, for example, job security and employment benefits. On the other hand, informality
495 of the profession may lead to the idea of flexibility, creativity and self-management of the
496 media freelancers. Either ways, Mould (2018) warns us against creativity that is oppressed
497 and exploiting creative (media and communication) workers.

498 **Conclusion**

499 This study reveals the meanings of informality to media freelancers in terms of perceiving
500 flexibility, addressing the challenges, and identifying the opportunities for further improvement.
501 Furthermore, as a result of understanding the growth of freelancers in media professions, we
502 present the nature of informality through the personal, professional, technological, and social
503 dimensions. To highlight the implications of this understanding, we first discuss the informality
504 of media professions through the independency and idealism, and welfare drives. We then
505 conceptualise that those drives influence the way the freelancers perceived their freelancing
506 jobs, including their long-term plan. We also discuss the meaning of informality that points to
507 the direction of bringing out the best of the freelancers in every situation. Media freelancers
508 are expected to be responsible and be creative to find their way out in the times of, for
509 example, many simultaneous projects or no projects at all. Our last discussion point suggests
510 an agenda towards increasing the media freelancers' awareness of the presence and impact
511 of social-technological infrastructure. An agenda that can shape media freelancers to be more
512 socially-networked and can increase the social capital of media freelancers.

513 Conceptually, the results of this study expand our understanding of the nature of freelance
514 work. Besides previous studies' contributions on the important nature of freelancers, this study
515 contributes to the conceptualisation of the informal nature of freelancers in our creative fields.
516 Particularly, this article highlights the dimensions of informality, personal motivations, and
517 prospects of freelance from the perspective of young (millennials) freelancers. With the
518 awareness of the informal arrangement, flexibility, and challenges of freelance, the freelancers
519 have described their views and plans. Our study here is based on certain characteristics of
520 the sample; hence we do not aim to generalise our findings to represent Indonesian
521 freelancers since there are different profiles of freelancers such as different age groups and
522 experiences, operational domains (platform-based and non-platform-based), and expertise.
523 Further studies may address these limitations and enrich the dimensions of informality that
524 emerged from this study.

525 Moreover, our study can set a further research agenda in addressing the challenges of
526 uncertainty faced by media freelancers in Indonesia, for example, in terms of the kinds of
527 micro-macro interventions and socio-technological interventions needed. In doing so, mapping

528 the various practices of freelancing in different contexts and experience levels would be
529 viewed as a fundamental starting point.

530 References

- 531 Brems, C., Temmerman, M., Graham, T., & Broersma, M. (2017). Personal Branding on
532 Twitter: How employed and freelance journalists stage themselves on social media.
533 *Digital Journalism*, 5(4), 443–459. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2016.1176534>
- 534 C20 Library and Collabtive. (2019). *Catatan diskusi “Kontrak kerja Freelance di industri media
535 dan kreatif .”* [https://c2o-library.net/2019/05/catatan-diskusi-kontrak-kerja-freelance-di-](https://c2o-library.net/2019/05/catatan-diskusi-kontrak-kerja-freelance-di-industri-media-dan-kreatif/)
536 [industri-media-dan-kreatif/](https://c2o-library.net/2019/05/catatan-diskusi-kontrak-kerja-freelance-di-industri-media-dan-kreatif/)
- 537 Chaffee, S. H., & Metzger, M. J. (2001). The End of Mass Communication? *Mass
538 Communication and Society*, 4(4), 365–379.
539 <https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327825MCS0404>
- 540 Cohen, N. S. (2015). Entrepreneurial Journalism and the precarious state of media work.
541 *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 114(3), 513–533. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-3130723>
- 542 Corbin, J. M., & Strauss, A. (1990). Grounded theory research: Procedures, Canons, and
543 Evaluative criteria. *Qualitative Sociology*, 13(1), 3–21.
544 <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00988593>
- 545 Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five
546 Traditions*. SAGE Publications.
- 547 Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design* (Third Edit). SAGE Publications.
548 <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781849208956>
- 549 Croteau, D. (2006). The Growth of Self-Produced Media Content and the Challenge to Media
550 Studies. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 23(4), 340–334.
551 <https://doi.org/10.1080/07393180600933170>
- 552 Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (B.
553 Massumi (trans.)). University of Minnesota Press.
- 554 Deuze, M. (2007). *Media Work*. Polity Press.
- 555 Edstrom, M., & Ladendorf, M. (2012). Freelance journalists as a flexible workforce in media
556 industries. *Journalism Practice*, 6(5–6), 711–721.
557 <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2012.667275>
- 558 Falnikar, A., Lyn, T. E., Ganchoudhuri, S., & Dutta, M. J. (2019). Discursive Constructions of
559 Income Inequality in Neo-liberal Singapore. *Journal of Creative Communications*, 14(2),
560 132–146. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0973258619851979>
- 561 Gadekar, R., & Ang, P. H. (2020). Is Social Media Use Socially Enhancing or Compensating ?
562 *Journal of Creative Communications*, 15(3), 269–288.
563 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0973258620943705>
- 564 Gandini, A. (2016). Digital work: Self-branding and social capital in the freelance knowledge
565 economy. *Marketing Theory*, 16(1), 123–141.
566 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470593115607942>
- 567 Gill, R., & Pratt, A. (2008). In the Social Factory? Immaterial Labour, Precariousness and
568 Cultural Work. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 25(7–8), 1–30.
569 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276408097794>
- 570 Grugulis, I., & Stoyanova, D. (2012). Social Capital and Networks in Film and TV: Jobs for the
571 Boys? *Organization Studies*, 33(10), 1311–1331.
572 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840612453525>
- 573 Guba, E. G., Lynham, S. A., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2018). Paradigmatic Controversies,
574 Contradictions, and Emerging Confluences. In N. K. Denzin & Y. Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The
575 SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- 576 Holton, A. E. (2016). Intrapreneurial Informants: An emergent role of freelance journalists.
577 *Journalism Practice*, 10(7), 917–927. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2016.1166069>
- 578 Jankowski, N. W., & Wester, F. (2002). The qualitative tradition in social science inquiry:
579 contributions to mass communication research. In K. B. Jensen & N. W. Jankowski

580 (Eds.), *A Handbook of Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research*.
581 Routledge.

582 Jensen, K. B. (2002a). Humanistic scholarship a qualitative science: contributions to mass
583 communication research. In K. B. Jensen & N. W. Jankowski (Eds.), *A Handbook of*
584 *Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research*. Routledge.

585 Jensen, K. B. (2002b). The Qualitative Research Process. In *A Handbook of Media and*
586 *Communication Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies*. Routledge.

587 Luik, J. (2020). *Creative Hubs as Assemblages: Understanding the Reciprocal Forms,*
588 *Formalised Function and Territorialisation of Creative Hubs*. University of York.

589 Luik, J., Ng, J., & Hook, J. (2018). "More than just Space": Designing to Support Assemblage
590 in Virtual Creative Hubs. *Proceedings of the 2018 Designing Interactive Systems*
591 *Conference (DIS 2018)*, 1269–1281. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3196709.3196758>

592 Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and Personality*. Harper & Row.

593 Massey, B. L., & Elmore, C. J. (2011). Happier working for themselves?: Job satisfaction and
594 women freelance journalists. *Journalism Practice*, 5(6), 672–686.
595 <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2011.579780>

596 Mathisen, B. R. (2017). Entrepreneurs and Idealists: Freelance journalists at the intersection
597 of autonomy and constraints. *Journalism Practice*, 11(7), 909–924.
598 <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2016.1199284>

599 Mould, O. (2018). *Against Creativity*. Verso.

600 Mould, O., Vorley, T., & Liu, K. (2014). Invisible Creativity? Highlighting the Hidden Impact of
601 Freelancing in London's Creative Industries. *European Planning Studies*, 22(12), 2436–
602 2455. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2013.790587>

603 Neilson, B., & Rossiter, N. (2008). Precarity as Political Concept, or, Fordism as Exception.
604 *Theory, Culture & Society*, 25(7–8), 51–72. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0263276408097796>

605 Nies, B. G., & Pedersini, R. (2003). *Freelance Journalists in the European Media Industry*
606 (Issue October). European Federation of Journalists.

607 Popiel, P. (2017). "Boundaryless" in the creative economy: assessing freelancing on Upwork.
608 *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 34(3), 220–233.
609 <https://doi.org/10.1080/15295036.2017.1282618>

610 Salamon, E. (2019). Freelance Journalists and Stringers. In Tim P. Vos & Folker Hanusch
611 (Eds.), *The International Encyclopedia of Journalism Studies*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

612 Santoso, D. H., & Lestari, R. D. (2017). Stringer Legality and Journalistic Works in Television
613 Media (Legalitas Stringer dan Karya Jurnalistik dalam Media Televisi). *Journal*
614 *Pekommas*, 2(2), 115–124. <https://doi.org/10.30818/jpkm.2017.2020201>

615 Santoso, D. H., & Lestari, R. D. (2016). Stringer Practices in National Television Industry:
616 Stringer Practice Case Study in National Television Media of Yogyakarta Period 2014-
617 2016. In D. H. Santoso, A. H. Setyawan, E. Hartati, & Noor Aeni (Eds.), *Media,*
618 *Communication & Society Empowerment* (pp. 109–121). Buku Litera.

619 Stel, A. van, & Vries, N. de. (2015). The Economic Value of Different Types of Solo Self-
620 Employed: A Review. In A. Burke (Ed.), *The Handbook of Research on Freelancing and*
621 *Self-Employment* (pp. 77–84). Senate Hall Academic Publishing.

622 Storey, J., Salaman, G., & Platman, K. (2005). Living with enterprise in an enterprise economy:
623 Freelance and contract workers in the media. *Human Relations*, 58(8), 1033–1054.
624 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726705058502>

625 Wallis, R., van Raalte, C., & Allegrini, S. (2020). The 'shelf-life' of a media career: a study of
626 the long-term career narratives of media graduates. *Creative Industries Journal*, 13(2),
627 178–193. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17510694.2019.1664099>

628 Wittel, A. (2001). Toward a Network Sociality. *Theory Culture & Society*, 18(6), 51–76.

629 Wreyford, N. (2015). Birds of a feather: Informal recruitment practices and gendered outcomes
630 for screenwriting work in the UK film industry. *Sociological Review*, 63(S1), 84–96.
631 <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.12242>

632

633

1

2 **Table 1. Study Participants**

Participants	Kinds of work/Expertise	Has other jobs?
<i>P1 (female)</i>	<i>Writer</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>P2 (female)</i>	<i>Logo Designer and Branding</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>P3 (male)</i>	<i>Photographer</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>P4 (female)</i>	<i>Writer</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P5 (female)</i>	<i>Writer</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P6 (female)</i>	<i>Logo and Product Designer</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P7 (female)</i>	<i>Content Creator</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>P8 (female)</i>	<i>Content Creator</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>P9 (female)</i>	<i>Journalist</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P10 (female)</i>	<i>Logo and Product Designer</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P11 (male)</i>	<i>Journalist</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>P12 (male)</i>	<i>Videographer</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P13 (male)</i>	<i>Content Creator</i>	<i>Not yet</i>
<i>P14 (male)</i>	<i>Logo and Product Designer</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>P15 (female)</i>	<i>Writer</i>	<i>Yes</i>

3 **Source:** The authors

4

5

Peer Review

Table 2. Informality of Media Freelancers

Personal Dimension	Professional Dimension	Technological Dimension	Social Dimension
<p>Motivations of working as a freelancer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>fit with their interest</i> • <i>make use of the idle time</i> • <i>opportunity offered by peers</i> • <i>idealism for not working in a specific company or as a certain full-time professional</i> • <i>gain more experiences</i> • <i>to pay the bills</i> 	<p>No 'formal' career but fairly a way of 'classifying' of freelancers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>freelancer's portfolios influence the level of reputation</i> • <i>the freelancers themselves define their level</i> • <i>formal trainings or education completed influence the level of a freelancer</i> 	<p>The use of used social media such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>LinkedIn to build working profile and</i> • <i>Instagram to build reputation</i> • <i>utilised Instagram as a medium for portfolio</i> 	<p>Disclose the profession to public as a freelancer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>revealed to public that they do freelance works</i> • <i>hesitantly opened up their work to public because they felt that they had no strong profile identity yet</i>
<p>Long-term involvement in freelancing ('I have set the time limit'):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>planned to quit freelancing when they reach a certain age,</i> • <i>when they decide to start a family and have kids, and</i> • <i>when they have secured a permanent job</i> 	<p>The future of freelancing (regarding job security):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>freelancers can find creative solutions for future challenges</i> • <i>maintaining the quality of work and improving themselves</i> • <i>notion of insecurity was an outsider's construction</i> • <i>freelancing these days was promising</i> • <i>the flexibility of working is attractive</i> 	<p>The use of freelance platforms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>one platform has different system form another</i> • <i>the presence/absence of entry test when signing-up to the platform,</i> • <i>the option for the 'employer' to set it preferences in creating a job offer</i> • <i>the probability of securing a job for different kinds of freelancers</i> 	<p>Building public image through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>positive word of mouth</i> • <i>creating websites</i> • <i>joining instant messaging groups</i> • <i>creating a meaningful work</i>
<p>Long-term involvement in freelancing ('I have not set a limit yet'):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>they wanted to be there longer</i> • <i>as long as there are still job offers</i> 	<p>External factors that affect the future of freelancing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>the growth of general industries that require media-related jobs</i> • <i>the growing practices of freelancing in media industries</i> • <i>the globalisation of jobs (coming in/out the country)</i> 	<p>Securing freelance jobs through digital platforms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>(less) aware of the presence of freelance digital platforms</i> • <i>building a good first impression and maintaining a good relationship</i> • <i>understanding followers' preferences and engaging with followers to increase the possibility of securing jobs</i> 	<p>The presence of social infrastructures for freelancers' interactions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>involve in spaces such as creative hubs, and other forums</i> • <i>social infrastructures have a potential to support freelancers</i> • <i>local-level infrastructures would benefit freelancers in their localities</i>

7

Source: The authors

8

9

Peer Review



CRC-2021-0069.RV2: Manuscript accepted, submit contributor form

1 message

SAGE peer review <Noreply.Peerreview@sagepub.com>

15 September 2021 at 18:41

Reply-To: arpit.christian@micamail.in

To: jandyluik@petra.ac.id

15-Sep-2021

Dear Dr. Jandy E Luik

Your manuscript CRC-2021-0069.RV2 has been accepted for publication in Journal of Creative Communications.

In order for SAGE to proceed with publication of your article, you must complete a Contributor Form. Under the agreement, you retain copyright to your work and grant an exclusive license to SAGE to publish the article.

Please make sure to review the online form and digitally sign it by entering your name and current date.

You may access the form directly through the below link:

<https://peerreview.sagepub.com/Home/WithoutLogin?Url=Author/ManuscriptWithDecision&mskey=88480&ID=11&UserKey=132135>

Or login to your account and follow the below instructions to access it:

1. Go to your 'Author Dashboard'.
2. Click on 'Manuscripts with Decision' section.
3. Under 'Action' section, click 'Fill the Contributor Form'.

To submit the form online click on 'Submit Contributor Agreement' button at the bottom of the agreement.

Should you need any assistance with accessing or completing the form, please feel free to get in touch with me.

Sincerely,
Mr. Arpit Nirus Christian
Journal of Creative Communications
arpit.christian@micamail.in