

Hierarchy Needs of Investigation Journalist in Spotlight Movie: The Semiotics Study

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Abstract

Spotlight movie explains about investigation journalist activities on The Boston Globe office. Editor in chief of The Boston Globe interests in the case of childhood sexual abuse in the US. While the team investigates it, they encounter many obstacles on the field. They get the threat and intimidate from any parts. The key sources do not want to talk about the incident. They do not provide important data about this case. In the end, *Spotlight* team managed to uncover the truth. Their investigation was successful and also get a Pulitzer award. This research use hierarchy of needs theory to analyze the motivations of investigative journalist. The hierarchy of needs illustrates the level of a person's needs, start from psychological needs; safety needs; love and belonging needs; self-esteem; and self-actualization. This research also uses Ferdinand de Saussure theory to analyze signs, signifiers and signified that indicate about fulfillment needed of humans. The findings of this study show that *Spotlight* journalist has reached the highest human needs, namely self-actualization. Investigation journalists have big motivation to occur the optimal work as a social warrior to reveal facts and uphold justice.

Keywords: Spotlight; Investigation; Journalist; Hierarchy needs; Semiotics

Abstrak

Film *Spotlight* menceritakan tentang kegiatan para jurnalis investigasi di kantor media *The Boston Globe*. Pemimpin redaksinya tertarik pada kasus pelecehan seksual pada anak-anak di Amerika. Saat tim investigasi menyelidiki kasus itu, mereka menemui banyak kendala di lapangan, seperti ancaman dan intimidasi. Narasumber kunci tidak ingin berbicara dan memberikan data penting terkait kasus itu. Pada akhirnya, tim investigasi *Spotlight* berhasil menungkapkan kebenaran dan mempublikasikannya. Hasilnya, mereka mendapatkan penghargaan dari Pulitzer. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori hirarki kebutuhan Abraham Maslow dan metode semiotika Ferdinand de Saussure untuk menganalisis mengenai tanda, penanda, dan petanda yang menggambarkan motivasi jurnalis investigasi dalam menganalisis kasus itu. Hirarki kebutuhan menggambarkan tentang kebutuhan-kebutuhan manusia dari yang paling dasar hingga puncak, antara lain kebutuhan psikologis, keamanan, cinta dan rasa memiliki, harga diri, dan aktualisasi diri. Temuan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa jurnalis investigasi di *Spotlight* telah mencapai kebutuhan manusia yang paling puncak, yaitu aktualisasi diri. Jurnalis investigasi memiliki motivasi yang besar untuk mewujudkan kerja yang optimal sebagai pejuang sosial untuk menungkap fakta dan menegakkan keadilan.

Kata kunci: Spotlight; Investigasi; Jurnalis; Hirarki kebutuhan; Semiotika

Introduction

Spotlight is a film in the crime drama genre released in 2015. The film's script is based on a true story, where there were cases of child sexual abuse by several church priests in Boston between 1970 and 2000. At that time, The Boston Globe newspaper formed an investigation team called *Spotlight* to

discover the truth regarding the abuse.

The *Spotlight* investigation team consisted of a desk chief, two male journalists, and one female journalist. The three started the investigation by meeting first in a room dedicated to *Spotlight* investigative journalists. Furthermore, when the investigation team took

to the field to interview various parties, such as the church, the lawyer who took care of the sexual abuse case, and the victim who was allegedly sexually assaulted, no one was willing to give the information. The lawyer rumored to be handling the case spoke as he pleased and did not want to provide any information. He even downplayed investigative reporters who sought to find the truth about the sexual harassment.

The team of *Spotlight* continued their investigation. They went to the Head of the Sexual Abuse Victims Community. They were informed that there were 13 victims of sexual harassment. *The spotlight* team also interviewed victims of sexual abuse from the pastor. They interviewed pedophile victims who had been sexually harassed many years ago.

Meanwhile, another journalist interviewed one of the victims who had been abused a dozen years ago and did not want to disclose the matter. After months of investigating the matter, they learned from one of the former priests who worked in the rehabilitation of pedophilic priests. From him, the *Spotlight* team knows that the number of preparators is much higher. Of the 1,500 pastors operating in Boston, about 90 committed the crime. Journalists searched by analyzing documents about the Diocese that went to court in Boston. Not quite there, they also asked relatives and neighbors who had lived in the same neighborhood as the priests who were suspects in this sexual abuse case. They also attempted to pry illegal data about the Diocese in Boston district court. As a result, the facts began to be revealed one by one.

The long journey of revealing the truth finally came to an end. Initially, The Boston Globe began conducting investigations in 2001. The news story about sexual harassment was published in 2002, and the headline of the story was “*Church allowed abuse by priests for years*” in the headline column. The effect was remarkable, one of which was when Cardinal Bernard Law resigned from the Diocese. In addition, victims of sexual abuse from around the world have also begun to dare to disclose

the truth over the phone to the *Spotlight* news agency. As a result, this news won the prestigious Pulitzer Prize.

Behind the awards given to those involved in drafting the news, work as an investigative journalist carries many risks, both risks in the fields of safety and defense and health, as well as risks of goodwill. In the field of safety and defense, reporters are not workers who are in the office from morning to evening. Journalists need to know the time to work as information seekers. Journalists are workers who are not allowed to turn off their mobile phones and must be on standby for 24 hours because they have to go to the field when an incident has news value and must be reported as soon as possible. No wonder reporters face many threats when interviewing sources individually, especially if the news is susceptible.

In doing such work, journalists are supposed to get balanced reciprocity. The scenes and remarks in the movie *Spotlight* do not mention the employees’ nominal salary. Based on the research results, a journalist’s job is doubtful because journalists in America do not have an attractive salary (Coleman et al., 2018). In addition, the level of risk in journalists’ work is also high. The chances of journalists being killed are huge even though journalists are protected by law (Wallace, 2009). Journalists are also at risk of experiencing high levels of stress after covering investigative news, such as post-traumatic stress disorder and other fears related to a career in journalism (Lee et al., 2018). The experience of journalists in Indonesia is similar to that of journalists in America in *Spotlight*, which is to receive threats of violence and murder if they continue to carry out investigations (Laksono, 2013).

This investigative journalism was born out of a press company in the United States. One of the figures of the birth of investigative journalists was Elizabeth Jane Cochrane, who covered malpractice at a psychiatric hospital in New York, and John Howard (Bly, 2015). From these events, it was agreed that this investigative

journalism was a form of resistance to the ruler's policy by affirming its form in organized reporting when reporting the truth of the cases that occurred (Leigh, 2019). In the United States, journalists working in the field of investigations are referred to as 'social justice fighters', such as exposing malpractice against people who have a mental illness, the enslavement of negroes in South America (Laksono, 2013), including investigating sexual harassment cases such as in this *Spotlight* movie. The question of investigative journalism constructed by journalists in America is "what they do," not "what happens to the person." (Girod & Wayne, 2015). As happened inside the film *Spotlight*, reporters questioned "what the sexual harasser did," accompanied by the evidence they found on the ground.

As workers in the mass media field, journalists are motivated to work with reciprocity that is not worth it. Journalists work around the clock on a small salary. Some media workers who choose to become journalists feel safer and more comfortable when they become journalists in lifestyle-related matters, such as fashion, health, and entertainment. They are also used to living in the office despite their obligations to the field (Tsourvakas et al., 2004). In addition, the motivation that makes them stay in the media office is that the very close relationship between the leaders and journalists in the company also keeps journalists in the office. However, journalists sometimes get bonuses or promotions like other livelihoods (Tsourvakas et al., 2004).

Another study stated that the motivation for journalists to work was the diversity of cultures and experiences they encountered within the mass media offices. For them, friends in the world of mass media have much experience, unlike other friends who continuously do monotonous office events (Chang & Massey, 2010). That is, the work environment in the office makes most of the journalists choose to commit and work hard.

Previous research also states that investigative methods have many advantages for news readers. It will make the public aware that

there are interests from parties who have power in society. For example, in managing the Dive Tourism Industry of Komodo National Park, there needs to be more information between party stakeholders and local society. The facts show that foreign communities and mass media have become the liaison between stakeholders and the local public. Foreign communities and media dominate the daily discourse in society (Berto & Murwani, 2022). It shows that the media has a significant role in approaching the local community, and investigative journalists should have the ability to do it.

One of the theories of motivation in organizational management is the theory of the hierarchy of needs proposed by Abraham Maslow. Each individual has needs that are arranged hierarchically, ranging from physiological needs, needs for security, needs for love and affection, needs for appreciation, and needs for self-actualization (Robbins & Judge, 2009). Based on this theory, several assumptions can be developed regarding the hierarchy of investigative journalists in *Spotlights* films. Journalists struggle to find information, encounter dangers, and get threats when investigating such sexual harassment cases because journalists want to meet their needs. Journalists want to make ends meet; they need security, the needs of compassion in their work environment, the needs of appreciation and respect from others, and the needs of self-actualization.

To find out about the needs pursued by investigative journalists, this study will use semiotic studies to analyze the signs of the hierarchy of investigative journalists when carrying out their responsibilities. Using semiotics, something contained in the *Spotlight* movie scene will symbolize something in a specific capacity. Something called a sign is everywhere, such as words in the movie *Spotlight*, gestures, colors, behaviors, actions, facial mimics, etc. Such signs are the object of study of semiotics (Sari et al., 2021).

The semiotics chosen to perform this analysis was Saussure's semiotics. The trick

is to look at the signifiers and signified shown in the film (Bezemer & Kress, 2015). The relationship between the mapper and the marker, that is, between form and meaning, is based on agreed conventions on social life (Hoed, 2011). Although *Spotlight* is a film that takes place in America, the performance of investigative journalists in *Spotlight* can be an illustration for media that employ investigative journalists in Indonesia.

Research Methods

Based on the studied object, namely *Spotlights* movie, the author uses a qualitative approach with semiotic methods. Such methods of semiotics pay attention to the signs presented in the analyzed film. With that method, researchers will describe several scenes in the *Spotlight* movie. The description refers to the activities of journalists in the *Spotlight* section in finding facts about news of sexual harassment.

From the selected scene, the author will describe by looking at the signifier and signified in the scene. The author uses Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of semiotics because it leans more towards signs in social life. The theory includes what the signs are and what norms helped the formation of the sign (Padoan, 2021). After describing the study results, the author will write a discussion by combining the results of the semiotic analysis with the phenomenon of

motivation of needs described in the theory of influence hierarchy.

Results of Research and Discussion

The first result of this study is scene analysis. The scene was taken from the shoot pieces in the movie *Spotlight*. The author analyzes the semiotic theory of Ferdinand De Saussure, which is to find the signifier element and associate that element with signified, that is, the meaning that is the convention for the wider community (Hoed, 2011).

In this study, the authors grouped these scenes into several themes first. These themes include (1) The work environment at The Boston Globe, (2) The Effort of *the Spotlight* Team as Investigative Journalists. and (3) the Motivation of journalists in conducting investigations.

Work Environment at The Boston Globe

The first scene shows a picture of the editor-in-chief and the head of the desk meeting with all journalists and employees in the same room. They stood up and formed a crowd to listen to the words of the editor-in-chief, the head of the desk, and other journalists. A brief meeting was held in standing condition, and the crowd was formed. The standing position and work clothes are the signifiers in this scene.



Figure 1. Meeting held at the offices of The Boston Globe

A standing position means no barrier is created between the editor-in-chief, the head of the desk, and their subordinates. As a figure who

has a position in The Boston Globe, the editor-in-chief and the head of the desk stand in the same place and do not create distance between leaders

and journalists. This position shows that the management of the organization at The Boston Globe does not recognize the barriers between superiors and subordinates. The company imposes various systems on its management. For family systems, the system is in the form of attention from the company to employees, as well as decision-making collectively and not individually (Kusumawarti, 2018).

The following meaning is fashion. Fashion and fashion products are also a form of self-existence for a person. The product will show specific values and images attached to the user of the fashion product (Trisnawati, 2011). In this scene, as the holders of a somewhat

important position in The Boston Globe, the editor-in-chief and the head of the desk wear clothes that are not much different from each other. The editor-in-chief and desk chief do not wear suits, ties, or other clothing properties that show a higher standing than other employees at The Boston Globe. The standing position and fashion selection in this scene show that the head of the desk and the editor-in-chief, who are in a high position in the company, can mingle with journalists in any rubric. It shows that the working relationship in the company only uses a 'machine' system but is more of a human relationship system.



Figure 2. Spotlight team having discussion on their room

In the next scene (figure 2), it can be seen that the head of the *Spotlight* desk and his team are holding a meeting and discussing the sexual harassment case that they will investigate. The *Spotlight* team consists of three investigative journalists and one desk chief. In this scene, the most visible signifier is the position of one of the *Spotlight* reporters sitting on the table. He was sitting right next to the head of the desk, explaining their plans for investigating.

The meaning of sitting at a table and right next to his superiors is an act that violates ethics. By mutual agreement, reporters who are subordinates of the head of the desk should behave more politely. Workers, including journalists, should be highly ethical in the office environment, including in the presence of their superiors. The ethics include the attitudes and ways of dressing established by the office

(Kristiyanti, 2011). Sitting at a desk and near a superior will also be considered a violation of office ethics.

Signified in the picture is that there is no partition between superiors and subordinates in The Boston Globe media. *Spotlight's* rubric desk head did not show an angry expression or an expression of dislike when one of his subordinates sat at the table. The head of the desk has the authority to reprimand him. It shows that the reporter and the head of the desk are as if they are close friends with each other. They behaved that superiors and subordinates at The Boston Globe had no barriers.

The third scene (figure 3) shows that the editor-in-chief of The Boston Globe visits the apartment of one of the reporters from the *Spotlight* rubric investigation, who looks distraught because his investigation encountered

problems on the ground. The signifier shown was the arrival of the editor-in-chief while carrying a box filled with pizza.

As for the signified taken from here is the family system within the company of The Boston Globe. As a superior, the editor-in-chief went downstairs to his subordinate's apartment

while carrying and giving the pizza. He gave directly to reporters who were his subordinates. It shows that The Boston Globe company gives attention to its employees. It also shows the family system's characteristics within the company (Kusumawarti, 2018).



Figure 3. Editor-in-chief brings pizza for journalist.

The next signifier in this scene is two cans of beer held by *Spotlight* reporters. He asked the editor-in-chief to come in. He handed one of the beer cans to his boss. They also stood face to face and told each other about the progress of the investigation carried out by the *Spotlight* team. What is visible is the familial relationship between the editor-in-chief and journalists.

In Western countries, beer cans show closeness to each other. An anthropologist from America wrote down his ethnographic results in Georgia, where beer became a marker of close relationships. It is done by young people to older adults when gathering together. Gatherings and drinking beer together are indicators of the closeness of their relationship. Although Georgia is very famous for wine production, the public prefers beer because beer is a sign of closeness between one person and another (Manning & Uplisashvili, 2007). The editor-

in-chief and reporters also show this meaning as his men. The two of them ate pizza and enjoyed beer together while talking about the progress of the investigation. That is, the family system at The Boston Globe is very thick. There is no awkwardness between superiors and subordinates there.

The Effort of *Spotlight* Team as Investigative Journalists

This scene (figure 4) shows the activities of two investigative reporters from the *Spotlight* column. They were reading archives requested from the diocese regarding the names of priests who had moved, quit, or were pursuing further education. They are also looking for the names of the children whom the alleged suspects guided. The investigative reporters examined nearly 800 archives provided by the diocese.

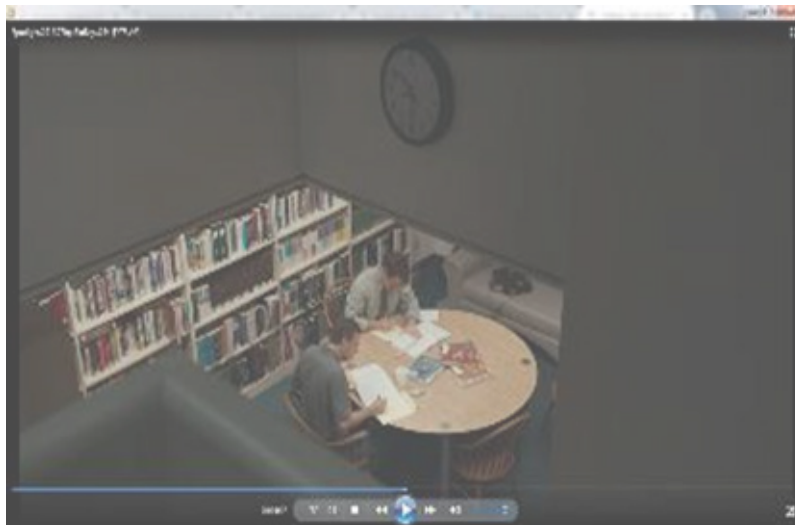


Figure 4. Journalist search data from archives in library

The signifier seen in this scene is the activity of two investigative journalists sitting inside the document room. The activity of looking at the archives has a meaning about the seriousness and thoroughness of journalists in searching for data to uncover facts about the sexual harassment that afflicts students in several cities in America.

The next signifier is the clock highlighted inside this frame. The meaning of the clock varies. In the poem entitled “Telling,” the depiction of

the clockwork shows the time from the present to the future. Time goes on, and what humans do does not matter (Cureton, 2019).

The same thing is also depicted in this scene, in which time goes on as the two journalists examine the archives in the document room. Two journalists from the Rubric *Spotlight* worked without knowing the time. They kept opening the archives and analyzing the data throughout the day.

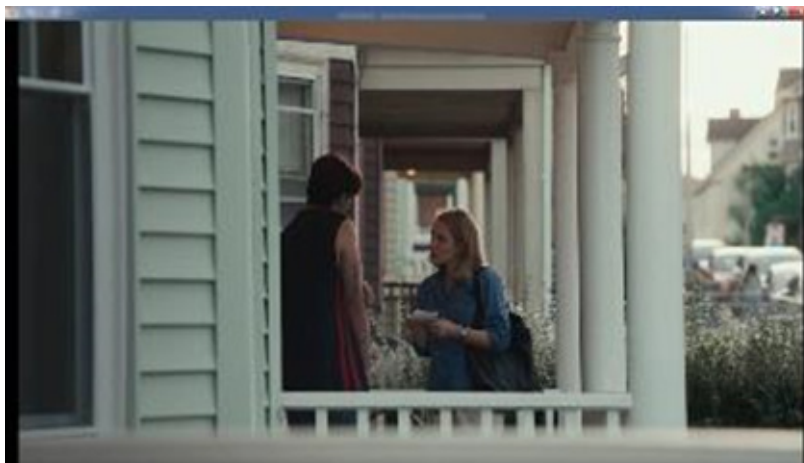


Figure 5. The journalist interview eyewitness to get the facts.

This scene describes the activities carried out by other investigative journalists. Two journalists conducted an archive check in the document room, while another investigative journalist conducted interviews with male

neighbors who were allegedly suspects of sexual abuse.

The signifier presented in this scene is an action carried out by the journalist. He walked from house to house and individually questioned

the neighbors in the housing complex. It shows that he carried out his duties as an investigative journalist. The basic techniques of investigative journalists are to search for sources of information, search for confidential information, conduct surveillance, and conduct in-depth interviews that resemble interrogations (Girod & Wayne, 2015). In this scene, the reporter also watched the house of the man who allegedly abused students at his school. It is also part of the basic techniques for conducting investigations, namely supervising

victims or alleged perpetrators to ensure the truth of previously obtained information (Girod & Wayne, 2015).

Motivations in Conducting Investigations

This scene (figure 6) tells the story of one of the investigative journalists who noticed that the victim of sexual abuse was having a dialogue with a psychologist in a room. He was accompanied by an administrative officer who worked in the office.



Figure 6. Journalists watch victims of sexual harassment in the psychology room.

The administration officer also explained to the investigative journalist about the condition of the victim who suffered the abuse.

The signifier of this scene is the sad expression depicted on the investigative

journalist's face when he notices the victim of sexual abuse handled by the psychologist. The meaning of the signifier is motivation in the form of a deep sense of empathy in the investigative journalist.



Figure 7. The editor-in-chief gave the news that the investigative news had a big impact on international scale.

It was empathy for the children that prompted the journalist to uncover the truth of the sexual abuse case. The issue of sexual issues does encourage journalists to present news based on empathy. Journalists will use thematic strategies

through word choices that match the incidence of sexual harassment, more humanist rhetorical words, and rhetoric words with the proper image selection to foster empathy from the audience (Wutun, 2018).

This scene explains the achievements of journalists after a year of investigation. The journalists finally got the satisfaction they deserved with the results of their investigations. Victims of abuse who were not

only in America but also in other countries of the world began to open up and ventured to report the crime to the authorities. They also called to The Boston Globe to be witnesses.



Figure 8. Spotlight team receive calls from abuse victims around the world.

They dare to speak out and describe the perpetrators who harassed them and the threats that have been given.

The signifier seen in this scene is the emotion depicted on the faces of the investigating reporters. The faces of the investigative journalists showed expressions that they were very empathetic to the victims of sexual abuse. On the other hand, the meaning of this emotion is a form of gratitude for the journalists for completing their investigative tasks well. The results of their investigation brought good repercussions from all over the world.

In the movie's final scene, we can see that the phones in the journalists' room are ringing loudly. As it turned out, the call came from the abuse victim. The victims also began to dare to tell stories about the bitter events they had experienced. Although the incident has passed many years ago, the victim is finally willing to tell it. During this time, the victim did not have the courage. On the other hand, victims are also concerned about reporting sexual abuse because the church that houses the priests is covering up the truth.

The signifier seen in this scene is a phone

that is bordering continuously. The journalists also seemed enthusiastic in picking up the phone. They recorded what the caller said, then strung it together into the news to spread to the broader community. The meaning of the signifier is the journalists' concern for victims of abuse. It shows that investigative journalists are not just a formality to complete investigative news but rather have a deep sense of care for the victims of abuse. Emphatic journalism is an effective strategy for building and uploading care for each other. It applies not only to readers but also to policymakers not to remain silent on sexual harassment that occurs (Malik, 2018).

Discussion

Some companies implement various types of work culture within the company. For the Boston Globe, the work system shown in this *Spotlight* movie relies on a strong sense of family. The sense of family in the organization can be seen in the attention of superiors to subordinates by visiting their apartments while giving pizza, and there are no barriers that significantly limit the position of superiors and subordinates in the work environment. They

blend in and behave as if they are friends and family, no longer as superiors and subordinates.

Ruben & Steward (2013) wrote that in organizational communication, companies that use this family system adhere to the school of approach between people. This school emphasizes the 'family' system within an organization. Suppose other schools believe that an organization is a group that works in a structured manner, like a machine. In that case, this school says that the positive nature of interpersonal relationships within the organization causes work productivity. If the supervisor gives family-like attention to the employee, the journalist's productivity will increase. The reason is that this attention will form greater trust and confidence between the two parties when compared to a regular work situation. The superior will give confidence to the subordinate and find out why the subordinate acted wrongly or made a mistake. Similarly, subordinates also respect their superiors very much and try to do their best to achieve the goals of the company (Ruben & Stewart, 2013).

As a mass media company, The Boston Globe routinely produces news and information that the public will read at large. This film, set in 1970, shows that the content of the media is not produced by robots or artificial intelligence but by humans. To get good news and have deep news value, The Boston Globe must hire journalists who are critical, insightful, and have great curiosity. Journalists with strong critical thinking skills are an absolute requirement for the investigation rubric (Girod & Wayne, 2015).

Although journalists and desk heads are figures full of critical thoughts, it was the family culture at The Boston Globe company that kept investigative journalists afloat to work for the company. Their workforce was drained to find information. The time to uncover the truth also reaches one year. Without the thick family culture in The Boston Globe, journalists would not necessarily be willing to stay in the company and produce satisfactory investigative news. Evidently, some journalists in media

companies in Greece, Taiwan, and America recognize that a comfortable work environment and family relationships are the main reasons for staying as journalists. They do not deny that journalists find it difficult to get promotions and bonuses like other jobs, even though they always work under pressure and deadlines that make stress levels high (Chang & Massey, 2010; Tsourvakas et al., 2004). Suppose it is implied in The Boston Globe company, as long as the work environment and family system between superiors and subordinates are maintained. In that case, the three investigative journalists will remain in the company.

Based on the history of investigative journalism, the journalists who work in this field are social warriors (Laksono, 2013). They have the motivation to analyze critical and profound matters. They carried out such acts with the aim of dismantling the truth that oppresses certain people. For example, one of the investigative journalists in New York, Elizabeth Jane Cochrane, investigated a Psychiatric Hospital suspected of malpractice. Elizabeth had to pretend to be crazy to enter the hospital, had to be resilient when she was treated inappropriately at the Psychiatric Hospital, underwent an inappropriate medical examination, and participated in eating unfit food at the Psychiatric Hospital. As a result, the Psychiatric Hospital in New York treats people with mental illness in the hospital with inappropriate behaviour. (Bly, 2015). It was also the beginning of the formation of investigative journalists who prioritized in-depth interviews, recording, disguises, and surveillance (Girod & Wayne, 2015).

Not all journalists have the same mental resilience as Elizabeth. There are times when the journalist prefers to 'play it safe' by not reporting on it. Especially if journalists begin to be pressured by sources, threatened, treated inappropriately, and even become victims of violence. Journalists have a reason to stop investigating, namely security and good-name reasons, if they cannot stand things that harm them in the end. However, journalists who have

motivations are undoubtedly different from journalists who are 'looking for safety'.

Journalists in countries that have de facto and de jure protections for journalistic freedom and autonomy are not spared from threats. In Sweden, some journalists have also come under pressure in the form of intimidation, harassment, and threats, especially journalists known as critical writers (Löfgren Nilsson & Örnebring, 2016). For the three journalists in the *Spotlight* section, they are people who work not only to meet physiological needs. They work with an even deeper goal than simply the fulfilment of physiological needs.

Abraham Maslow, the originator of this hierarchy of needs theory, believes that humans cannot be separated from the five stages of needs, namely meeting physiological needs, needs for security, needs for love and affection, needs for appreciation, and needs for self-actualization (Ruben & Stewart, 2013). In previous studies, the needs of employees did vary. The thing that makes employees survive in a company is the fulfillment of spiritual needs, which are no longer physiological. Spiritual needs in the office world will reduce employees with immoral, arrogant, and selfish attitudes (Guillén et al., 2015).

These *Spotlight* investigative journalists showed that they had passed through the needs described by Abraham Maslow. Journalists have acquired physiological needs, namely the needs of food, drink, shelter, and biological needs to survive.

The next stage is the need for a sense of security. The meaning of the need for a sense of security is protection from physical and emotional dangers (Ruben & Stewart, 2013). Man will avoid threatening information about his own safety. The human being tends to choose information or things related to the image of reality such as his beliefs and past experiences. If a person has previously worked as a journalist and has experienced a bad experience regarding a sense of security, then he will avoid the job, or find another company that provides a sense of security for him.

In the film *Spotlight*, journalists were not threatened or disturbed by their health because of an investigation into the sexual harassment. There are no visible scenes in *Spotlight* movies that they work to satisfy a sense of security. If they want to work safely, of course, there are many other jobs that can be chosen by them besides investigative journalists who have the potential to get intimidation and pressure from many parties. Journalists are not jobs that guarantee the safety of serratus percent. For example, one of Kashoggi journalists who was sadistically murdered as a result of news stories passed down by him (Atiqa et al., 2021). It could also threaten journalists in the field of investigation. Therefore, the need pursued by investigative journalists is not just a sense of security, but more than that.

The third need is social need is a sense of affection within the work environment. If physiological needs and a sense of security have been met, a sense of affection and friendship between colleagues, between superiors and subordinates, between strong seniors and juniors will encourage humans to continue to survive within the company. A good workplace environment, such as good leadership and communication, will provide effective education and experience to employees in that workplace environment. With a good working environment, the employee often tolerates about the amount of salary received, about promotions that are rarely given, and the longest bonuses are lowered for him. A safe and comfortable social environment, especially for employees who come from minority groups, is a work environment that offers the needs of love and affection desired by individuals (Rogers, 2010).

In the film *Spotlight*, the work environment at The Boston Globe upholds the love and love of family in a work environment. The proof is that there is no very wide partition between superiors and subordinates. Editors-in-chief, editors, desk heads, reporters, and other employees in *Spotlight* interact every day very fluidly. In fact, there was also a scene when the editor-in-chief brought pizza to the reporter's house. There was

no sense of reluctance and awkwardness between the two of them. In addition, there are scenes where *Spotlight* journalists dare to express their opinions in front of editors, editors-in-chief, or desk heads. They are not bothered by the higher posts of desk chief, editor, and editor-in-chief. That is, the family system within The Boston Globe makes journalists feel comfortable. The needs of love and affection have been met from the company in which they work.

In this modern era, something that is quite worrying at this level is the presence of robots or artificial intelligence in the work of investigative journalists. Previous research has shown that news relies not only on the presence of journalists but also on correspondents and commentators (Simon, 2022). It applies not only to mass media but also to some digital platforms (Simon, 2024). Digital technology has also meant that artificial intelligence has undermined journalists' central role (Thomas & Thomson, 2023).

The next need is the need in the form of rewards. Maslow, in Robbins & Judge (2009) writes, a person is at the level of appreciation when they have already reached physiological, secure, and social needs. Once fulfilled, the human being will look for internal factors such as self-esteem, autonomy, and achievement. Human beings also look for external factors, such as status, recognition, and attention. If we look at the theory of the hierarchy of needs in Abraham Maslow, we can mean that the physiological needs, sense of security, and acceptance by social groups have already been met. Next, the human being needs to meet the needs of the ego (Robbins & Judge, 2009).

These three journalists and desk heads in *Spotlight* are not working to get the award, but to prove to the people who covered up the truth. In the film *Spotlight*, the three journalists and the head of the desk attempted to find facts about sexual harassment by abusers because their self-esteem was suppressed by a number of parties. In the film *Spotlight*, the three journalists were underestimated by a lawyer who knew the truth of the sexual harassment case, but the lawyer did

not want to open his mouth. They also confronted the church who had spoken on the phone and said that "the church does not care about questions from The Boston Globe". Lawyers and the Diocese did not respond well when interviewed by *Spotlight* journalists. Thus, the investigative reporters worked hard in collecting facts so that they could get confessions from people who originally did not want to open their mouths.

At the end of the film *Spotlight*, it is written that three journalists representing The Boston Globe received the prestigious Pulitzer Prize because of the results of the investigation of the three journalists. From the beginning, when they worked on gathering facts, the three journalists never said and obsessed that they were conducting investigations for Pulitzer Prizes. The award was a reciprocity of the news stories they had been working on for the past year. It also shows that *Spotlight* investigative journalists don't just pursue the need for appreciation when revealing those truths. They have earned the need for rewards and they still pursue to the needs of the latter.

The last need and being at the top of Abraham Maslow's pyramid is the need for self-actualization. A person can achieve his final needs if he has met basic needs, as well as having the motivation to achieve the process of self-actualization. If the previous needs have been met, then he has the motivation to achieve the process of self-actualization, the achievement is not difficult to carry out (Irwan et al., 2016).

Based on stories from the film *Spotlight*, four needs have been successfully obtained by three investigative journalists at The Boston Globe. Physiological needs, a sense of security, love and affection, as well as an appreciation, have been met as a whole. The highest level is self-actualization. Maslow, in Robbins & Judge (2009) writes that self-actualization is the highest achievement in the individual. Achievement is in the form of growth of self-potential, achievement of self-potential, and fulfillment of self-potential (Robbins & Judge, 2009). If an individual works in a company or organization and is already at

this level, it can be said that the individual has understood his or her main purpose in working. He can understand how feelings in themselves and understand the achievements desired by him. He will pursue that achievement in good ways to improve his self-actualization. This is different from the people who are still pursuing the needs underneath. For example, a person who seeks to fulfill recognition from others will use various means to get that attention and recognition.

In the film *Spotlight*, the investigative journalist managed to achieve their goal, which is to uncover the truth. Their faces were depicted by emotion. The emotion was not only caused by the Pulitzer Prize, but because victims of sexual abuse dared to report about the crimes they had experienced. The sense of happiness that surrounds the hearts of investigative journalists relates to their self-actualization. Their abilities and hard work paid off amazingly.

Self-deedulation was also seen when one of the investigative journalists came to the psychologist's office that housed the victims of sexual abuse. He gave a newspaper containing the results of his one-year investigation to the administrative officers in the psychologist's office. The administration officer read the news with teary eyes and he said, "*Can I save this newspaper?*" to the investigative journalist who delivered the newspaper in person. Journalists from The Boston Globe nodded with satisfaction while saying, "*Sure*". This confirms that the investigative journalist was satisfied that the results of his investigation were fruitful in many parties, such as psychologists and children who were sexually abused.

In *Spotlight*, self-actualization is the main motivation for journalists to carry out their work as journalists. This is related to the history of the creation of investigative journalism in the United States, where journalists in the field of investigation are called social warriors. They work not for money alone, but to defend justice, uncover the truth behind the practices of capitalism and politics, and uncover the truths that have been hidden by interested groups.

Conclusion

The Hierarchy theory of Needs consists of five levels. Based on the signifiers and signified in *Spotlight*, investigative journalists don't just get basic needs, such as physiological needs and a sense of security. They have also acquired the needs of affection and love. It is illustrated from the family system in The Boston Globe, so there is no barrier between superiors and subordinates. *Spotlight* investigative journalists have also earned the need for awards. They have increased their self-esteem by proving the truth about the sexual harassment case. They get more detailed data than other mass media. Moreover, The Boston Globe won the very prestigious Pulitzer Prize because of the publication of the news.

Four needs in Abraham Maslow's pyramid have been met. For the highest stage, which is self-actualization, it is depicted in the signs at the end of the film. It was noticed that the *Spotlight* investigation team showed a face full of satisfaction when The Boston Globe published the news of their investigation results. They also feel a sense of satisfaction and emotion when their news has a positive impact on victims of abuse around the world. The signs of their expressions and actions after the news was published and showed a positive impact, indicating that they had achieved the highest satisfaction as investigative journalists.

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