ABSTRACT

This research analyzes Tempo's coverage on the Pertamina fuel-mixture corruption issue to look into the impact of media exposure with investigative journalism to corporate brand image. In Indonesia's media environment, investigative reporting serves not just as a public accountability instrument but also as a source of value, influencing audience perceptions of the institutions involved. This research aims to discover how exposure to such reporting impacts audience views and if these perceptions contribute to the development of corporate brand image. The conceptual framework brings together media framing theory, signaling theory, and brand image theory. Media exposure (X) serves as the independent variable, perceived media framing and signaling (M) as mediating variables, and brand image (Y) as the dependent variable. This framework allows the research to examine both the direct and indirect links between news consumption and brand evaluation. A quantitative survey method was used, with data collected from 267 people who had been exposed to Tempo's coverage. The data were examined using descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and path analysis with Sobel testing. The findings indicate that media exposure (X) has a significant impact on perceived media framing and signaling (M). However, perceived framing and signaling (M) had no significant effect on brand image (Y). Media exposure (X) has a small but significant direct effect on brand image (Y), but the mediating impact of perceived framing and signals is not proven. These findings suggest that investigative reporting may influence corporate brand image mainly through exposure rather than interpretative mediation.

Keywords: investigative journalism, media exposure, media framing, signaling theory, brand image