



Journalism and Professionalism in Ethnic Media: The case of Turkish language newspapers in the UK.

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Keywords:	ethnic media, professionalism, role conception, Turkish-language media, Turkish speaking community, immigrant
Abstract:	<p>This article, focusing on journalists working for Turkish language newspapers in the UK, examines the way ethnic media journalists perceive their professional role and performances. Ethnic media have different forms and functions than mainstream media and present different challenges and pressures for journalists due to their communities' consumption habits and social, economic and political circumstances. This study, based on interviews conducted with journalists and editors working for Turkish language newspapers, suggests three conceptual dimensions that can be operationalized as a model in understanding ethnic media journalists' professional roles and performance: perception of audience, relation to power and professional ideals. These dimensions, which may overlap in practice, aim to provide the basis for studying ideas and attitudes towards journalism and the context of production within ethnic media.</p>

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Abstract

This article, focusing on journalists working for Turkish language newspapers in the UK, examines the way ethnic media journalists perceive their professional role and performances. Ethnic media have different forms and functions than mainstream media and present different challenges and pressures for journalists due to their communities' consumption habits and social, economic and political circumstances. This study, based on interviews conducted with journalists and editors working for Turkish language newspapers, suggests three conceptual dimensions that can be operationalized as a model in understanding ethnic media journalists' professional roles and performance: perception of audience, relation to power and professional ideals. These dimensions, which may overlap in practice, aim to provide the basis for studying ideas and attitudes towards journalism and the context of production within ethnic media.

Keywords: ethnic media; professionalism; role conception; Turkish language media; Turkish speaking community, immigrant

Introduction

Ethnic media tell stories of a particular community. They are usually produced and consumed by immigrants, racial, ethnic and linguistic minorities and indigenous populations living across different countries (Matsaganis et.al. 2011). They have a different form and function than mainstream or community media. Mainstream media, which are produced by, for and about mainstream society, or local and community media that serve the public in a particular place, provide people with information to help them participate as citizens. However, as Matsaganis and Katz (2014, 928) state, ethnic media

‘serve a more complex set of functions for their audiences than community media as their local focus intertwines with serving as a forum for concerns specific to new immigrant and linguistic, ethnic and racial minority communities unlikely to be covered by mainstream media’.

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4 These complex set of functions change from creating and maintaining ethnic
5 cohesion and cultural identity to supporting community members' integration into
6 the host society (Aksoy and Robins, 2003; Christiansen, 2004; Georgiou, 2005; Karim,
7 1998; 2003). They function as a mobilising force, as indicators of social change and as
8 an information resource for members of diaspora (Matsaganis et.al.2011; Rigoni and
9 Saitta, 2012). By advocating community rights and organising collective actions, they
10 also act as watchdogs (Shi, 2009). Overall, they play a central role in the exercise of
11 full citizenship by members of their communities (Rigoni 2003).
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20 Ethnic media provide communities that exist in a local, national and transnational
21 space, with a media space in which they can connect with each other, the host
22 community and their homelands (Aksoy and Robins, 2003; Christiansen, 2004;
23 Georgiou, 2005; 2006; Karim, 1998, 2003; Naficy 1993). This allows members to
24 interact and communicate with each other in order to reconstruct and maintain their
25 identities. Supplying information for these communities in their native language
26 about services, rights and political, social and economic developments in the local
27 and national contexts in which they are embedded are the key functions of these
28 media. They help orient especially new comers to their host community and ease
29 their adaptation process (Georgiou, 2005). Acting as a source of information and
30 channelling information from the broader society to the community, these media
31 encourage community members to participate in public life. This is an important role
32 as research shows that minority communities are critical of their invisibility or
33 negative representation in the mainstream media (Husband, 2005; Matsaganis et.al.
34 2011; Baffoe, 2012; Seo and Moon, 2013, Cottle, 2000). This disenchants them with
35 the news media and public life and they turn to their community media channels to
36 use them as platforms for discussion and exchange. This is also a way of telling the
37 host community that the community exists and has issues that need to be
38 acknowledged (Matsaganis et.al. 2011). However, this does not mean that ethnic
39 media replaces the mainstream media channels but that both can be consumed in
40 parallel (Deuze, 2006) as audiences seek information not only from their community
41 and country of origin but also from their national and local context (Georgiou, 2005).
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4 Journalism within ethnic media differs from that practiced within mainstream mass
5 media as it needs to respond to the demands and expectations of their communities.
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7 These demands and expectations pose challenges and impose pressures on
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9 journalists (Husband 2005; Matsaganis et.al. 2011; Matsaganis and Katz 2013;
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11 Shumov 2012; Skjerdal 2011). For example, journalists can experience a tension
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13 between their professional and ethnic identities because they are divided between
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15 their commitment to professionalism and their communities' needs (ibid).
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17 Communities' patterns of consumption and social, economic and political
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19 circumstances affect their professional ideologies, conceptions of their role and
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21 production processes (Shumov 2012; 2014; Arnold and Schneider 2007; Ojo 2006;
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23 Mercado 2015). Understanding how these journalists conceptualise their
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25 professional roles is important, not only to enhance knowledge of the relationship
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27 between their role conceptions and performance as journalists, but also to better
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29 understand how their journalistic outputs affect their communities' experiences in a
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31 transnational context.

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34 Studies that explore journalism as a profession have focused on journalists' shared
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36 values, practices and the self-legitimation of their work. (Deuze 2005; Hanitzsch
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38 2007; Hanitzsch et.al 2011; Reese 2001; Schudson 2003; McNair 1998; Willnat,
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40 Weaver and Choi 2013; Weaver and Willnat 2012). Ahva (2012, 790-791) states that
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42 the professional core of journalism is 'a collection of shared but continuously
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44 contested values that define how proper journalists should act or at what they
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46 should aim'. Professional values, which are self-defined and discursively constructed,
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48 help members of a group to define their role as professionals (Soloski 1997, 139;
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50 Aldridge and Evetts 2003). Journalism studies focusing on professionalism as an
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52 ideology (Deuze 2005, 444) or as a culture (Hanitzsch 2007, 370) argue for the
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54 importance of understanding the system of beliefs and practices shared by
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56 journalists to legitimate their position in society and make their work meaningful.
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58 The way journalists conceptualize their role may also shape their performance of this
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60 role and can manifest in their journalistic output and commitment (Shoemaker and
Reese 1996; Hellmueller and Mellado 2015; Mellado 2014; Tandoc et.al. 2015; Pihl-
Thinkvad 2015). Factors that range from individual to organizational, from political to

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3 economic can influence journalists' roles conceptions (Shoemaker and Reese 1996;
4 Hanitzsch et.al. 2011; Hanitzsch et.al. 2010; Donsbach 2004).
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9 Studies that focus on the role of journalism mainly focus on journalism within the
10 mainstream media. Yet, there are counterhegemonic approaches, such as public
11 journalism or peace journalism that challenge the roles, norms and practices of
12 mainstream journalism (Ahva 2012; Atton 2003; Atton and Hamilton 2008; Glasser
13 1999; Harcup 2012; Ruusunoka 2006). The basis of mainstream professional
14 perceptions and praxis can be interpreted, used and applied differently among
15 journalists practicing these alternative forms of journalism (Deuze 2005). Whether
16 journalism within ethnic media can be described as an alternative to mainstream is
17 debatable. Acting against injustice, organizing collective action, providing visibility
18 and different perspectives to their audiences, they have the characteristics of
19 alternative journalism. However, as Shi (2009) points out, ethnic media have a
20 tendency to cover stories that are of relevance to a generic audience which can
21 mean that they avoid reporting controversial issues within the community. As a
22 result, they may offer an alternative to mainstream media only to the extent that
23 they act as a watchdog on injustices in the mainstream but not within their own
24 communities (ibid).
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41 The models, which aim to describe and explain the professional role conceptions of
42 journalists, mainly focus on mainstream media and do not consider factors that
43 affect journalists within ethnic media. The study of journalism practice within ethnic
44 media presents an interesting case as it shows how professional role
45 conceptualizations influence performance and output in the context of ethnic media
46 and how this differs from mainstream media. It also better informs us about the role
47 that the journalistic productions of ethnic media have in the construction of
48 community and identity. Yet, the journalism practices of ethnic media have not
49 received much attention from scholars (Naficy 1993; Shumov 2012; Ogunyemi 2014).
50 One reason for this could be the difficulty of positioning them within the dominant
51 journalistic notion of professionalism. Different pressures on the news production
52 process imposed by their communities needs and interests present different
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3 challenges and responsibilities for these journalists and may cause their practices to
4 be criticized for a lack of professionalism (Ojo 2006; Husband 2005; Matsaganis et al.
5 2011; Skjerdal 2011).
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10 Existing studies that have examined ethnic media journalism provide some evidence
11 of the development of professional identity. Husband (2005, 463) examined the
12 professional identity of journalists working in ethnic media using the communities of
13 practice model. According to this model, each community of practice has its own
14 characteristics, organizational structure, resources and constraints. Husband (ibid)
15 regards minority ethnic media as communities of practice, in which 'individuals work
16 together by employing shared routines and complementary skills and a location
17 where new participants are socialized into the community'. He stresses that
18 journalists working for ethnic media experience tensions between their professional
19 and ethnic identity as a result of the existing institutional dynamics and identity
20 politics within minority ethnic media. However, Husband's framework does not
21 include audience and Matsaganis and Katz (2014) develop this model to incorporate
22 influences outside the ethnic media newsroom, including audience. They find that
23 the professional identity of ethnic media journalists is also affected by their
24 interactions with mainstream media, mainstream society organizations and
25 audience. Their findings show that ethnic media journalists are treated differently by
26 mainstream media and mainstream society organizations, which makes them feel
27 inferior to mainstream journalists. Although Matsaganis and Katz's model rightly
28 studies factors beyond the ethnic media newsroom, when interactions between
29 ethnic media journalists and mainstream media is very limited, as is the case in
30 Turkish language newspapers, the influence of this on their conceptions of
31 professional identity becomes restricted. While these two models focus on the
32 practices of communities as the key factors in shaping professional identity, Shumov
33 (2012, 2014) suggests looking at journalists' experience of immigration. In his studies
34 of Venezuelan journalists in the US, he shows that this influence may result in
35 different models of journalism than the mainstream one. Although this approach
36 recognizes the impact of journalists' professional and personal experience as
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3 immigrants and discusses how journalism aimed at immigrants is practiced, the
4 ethnic and transnational characteristics of such journalism receives little attention.
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9 This article, focusing on journalists working for Turkish language newspapers in the
10 UK, discusses ethnic media journalists' conceptions of their professional role in the
11 media and community. The category of Turkish language newspapers does not
12 reflect the diversity of journalists that work for them but collapses them all into one
13 group. Working on newspapers for the Turkish-speaking community are Turkish and
14 Kurdish journalists from Turkey as well as Turkish Cypriot journalists from Cyprus.
15 Such a diverse group of journalists present an interesting case study for examining
16 the impact of individual and group characteristics on conceptions of professional
17 role. Accordingly, this article studies how these journalists, from diverse
18 backgrounds but working within the same community of practice (that of Turkish
19 language newspapers) perceive their journalism and responsibilities to the
20 community. However, the overall aim is to further knowledge of ethnic media
21 journalists' understanding of their role. Therefore, it also assesses the generic forces
22 that affect these journalists' role conceptions in order to suggest conceptual
23 dimensions by which to analyse ethnic journalists role conceptions. Such an
24 examination also provides evidence of how media for ethnic communities are more
25 generally produced, and how they function and influence the community.
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45 **The Context of Journalism in Turkish-language Newspapers**

46 The 'Turkish-speaking community' in the UK consists mainly of Turks and Kurds from
47 Turkey and Turkish Cypriots from Cyprus. Each of these groups arrived in the UK at
48 different times and for different reasons (King et al. 2008; Change Institute 2009).
49 Turkish Cypriots started coming to the UK in the 1950s, mainly for economic reasons,
50 and then during the 1970s and 1980s when the island of Cyprus divided in 1974
51 following inter-communal conflict (King et al. 2008; Change Institute 2009; Greater
52 London Authority 2009; Atay 2010). The arrival of Turks from Turkey started in the
53 late 1960s and early 1970s, mainly for employment. More Turkish people followed,
54 seeking political asylum after the military coup in Turkey in 1980. Kurds from Turkey
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3 began migrating to the UK in the 1980s when the conflict between the Kurdish
4 Workers' Party and Turkish armed forces intensified, forcing some to flee the
5 country and seek refuge and asylum (ibid.).
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10 The community shares ethnic, linguistic and religious characteristics despite their
11 different and sometimes conflicting experiences in their homelands. As Georgiou
12 (2005, 2006) states, despite different experiences in their homeland, the boundaries
13 between different ethnic groups can shift and to some degree dissolve within the
14 host country. In the Turkish speaking community, their shared consumption of
15 Turkish language media from the UK is one such practice that brings these otherwise
16 diverse communities with different cultural, political and social characteristics
17 together and gives them a sense of belonging.
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27 Apart from mainstream British media channels, the Turkish speaking community in
28 the UK consume non-British media such as satellite television channels and
29 newspapers from Turkey and North Cyprus, and radio stations and newspapers that
30 are based in London. The media from Turkey and North Cyprus provide the
31 community with news and entertainment from their homelands.
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38 There are five newspapers published in the UK for the Turkish-speaking community –
39 namely, *Londra Gazete* (London Turkish Gazette), *Olay* (Event), *Haber* (the News),
40 *Avrupa* (Europe) and *Telgraf* (Telegraph). They are all weekly newspapers apart from
41 *Olay*, which comes out twice a week. They all have similar formats, which is 30–50
42 pages filled with community news, colour pictures and advertisements. They cover
43 issues that are relevant to the community such as immigration, housing and
44 education. They also publish stories from North Cyprus and Turkey. The actions and
45 statements of powerful individuals and groups such as the Turkish ambassador or
46 the London representative of Turkish Cyprus are frequently given as news.
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57 These newspapers are small organisations owned by a member of the community as
58 their primary business. The ownership and management of these newspapers
59 reflects the community dynamics: *Londra Gazete* and *Olay* are owned and managed
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3 by Turkish Cypriots, *Haber* and *Avrupa* by Turks and *Telgraf* by a Kurd. Although the
4 size of staff is different in each newspaper, the core team consists of a managing
5 director, a news editor/reporter, a salesperson and a page designer. In some cases,
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8 the owners are also the managing directors of the papers and in some they not only
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10 act as the editors in chief but also as reporters (Şahin 2014). For example, Nesim
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12 Fehmi, the owner of *Olay*, who acts as the editor in chief, is involved in every aspect
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14 of news selection and the production of stories, including writing, editing and page
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16 design (Fehmi, interview, 14 January 2014).
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20 Since all these newspapers are distributed free of charge, advertising, rather than
21
22 circulation, is the primary source of revenue. This commercial imperative influences
23
24 editorial policies and the news production process. The newspapers frequently
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26 publish stories that promote the commercial interests of businesses as news in an
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28 effort to encourage businesses to advertise with them. In order to reach as many
29
30 advertisers and readers as possible, the newspapers do not want to be identified
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32 with any political ideology, group or organization. Therefore, they claim to be
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34 independent and neutral. Only one newspaper, *Telgraf*, positions itself ideologically
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36 in line with the Kurdish nationalist movement in Turkey and claims to be not
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38 affected by pressures from advertising.
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41 They are all based in London, where the majority of Turkish speaking people in the
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43 UK live. They have websites that contain an e-newspaper, which is an exact copy of
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45 the print version that readers outside London could access. The main language is
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47 Turkish. Among them, only *Londra Gazete* has some English pages, and *Telgraf*
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49 includes news in Kurdish. Publishing news other than Turkish language is an evidence
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51 of their efforts to maximize their audience within the community. The English pages
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53 in *Londra Gazete* are for the second or third generation of immigrants who were
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55 born and educated in the UK and whose knowledge of Turkish may not be sufficient
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57 to read in that language. It shows the newspaper's awareness of generational
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59 difference amongst its readers. *Telgraf*, on the other hand, publishes some stories in
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Kurdish for readers whose main language is Kurdish and may struggle to read in

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3 Turkish. As the editor of *Telgraf* explains, it is also designed to enhance the cultural
4 identity and sense of communality of Kurdish people (Sinayic 2014).
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10 **Method**

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12 The purpose of the research is to understand how journalists working in Turkish
13 language newspapers define their professional identities. Therefore, data for this
14 research are mainly collected through in depth semi-structured interviews with 12
15 journalists and news editors from five newspapers that were being published during
16 the time of writing. Nine Turkish, one Kurdish and two Turkish Cypriot journalists
17 were interviewed. Five of them were female and seven were male. Apart from one
18 who was born in the UK, the rest have come from Turkey or North Cyprus at
19 different times for political or economic reasons. They are all educated at university
20 level and two have studied media or journalism at Masters level. Journalists working
21 for these newspapers have varying levels of journalism experience. Ten of them
22 worked as a journalist before coming to the UK and continued here as a journalist.
23 Two of them learned the job when they started working for a newspaper in the UK.
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37 The number of interviewees reflects the quantity of journalists who were reporters
38 or news editors at these newspapers at the time the interviews were conducted and
39 who agreed to participate in the research rather than reflecting the researcher's
40 choice. The sample includes at least one representative from each newspaper.
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46 Interviews lasted around 35-45 minutes. Questions for these interviews, which were
47 conducted between 2012 and 2015, aimed to identify the major influences on
48 journalists' abilities to practice their profession and their perception of their roles,
49 identities and goals. Interviews allowed journalists to articulate their views on their
50 professional identities, on the journalism culture within the Turkish language news
51 media and the influences that they believe affect their journalism. Participants
52 shared their personal and professional experiences as journalists and explained the
53 challenges they faced in their jobs.
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4 It is important to explain here that this article only focuses on journalists working in
5 newspapers although there are also radio stations in the UK that broadcast for the
6 Turkish speaking community. This is because the existing Turkish language radio
7 stations produce mainly talk and music shows rather than news. The news on these
8 radio stations is sourced from other news agencies rather than being produced by
9 their own news teams.
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16 Interviews were analysed using the constant comparative method (Glaser and
17 Strauss, 1999; Charmaz, 2014) to develop a full understanding of these journalists'
18 conception of their professional role. According to this method, each interview was
19 transcribed and common patterns and themes that emerged from the interviews
20 were grouped together in order to draw comparisons between the answers of
21 respondents. A synthesis of the results is presented as a model for understanding
22 journalism within ethnic media.
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32 **Analysis**

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34 This study, which is a qualitative investigation into the role conceptions of journalists
35 working for the Turkish language newspapers, provides a framework for
36 understanding ethnic media journalism. Based on a mixture of individual and
37 organisational level factors that inform and shape these journalists' roles and
38 performances, as identified in the interviews, it suggests three conceptual
39 dimensions that can be operationalised as a model in understanding ethnic media
40 journalists' professional roles and performance: perception of audience, relation to
41 power and professional ideals. This model, which fits within a larger theoretical
42 framework, also highlights the variety of influences and processes that shape their
43 journalism.
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57 *Perception of audience:*

58 Perception of audience has a crucial role in shaping journalistic professional role and
59 performance. For example regarding their audience as immigrants journalists can act
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3 as a 'cultural and civic explanatory tool and a catalyst to assimilation' (Hickersen and
4 Gustafson 2016, 956) or for long established members, they can provide news to
5 keep them informed and engaged with their community.
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11 Although there is no information or data available about the actual readership of
12 these newspapers, journalists working for these newspapers claim that being in
13 touch with the community in general, through work and personal life, helps them
14 understand who their readership are and identify their concerns, needs and
15 interests. According to them, their readers are mainly people with low educational
16 levels and not in the habit of reading newspapers in general. They acknowledge that
17 there are educated professional members of the community who also read these
18 newspapers but these people are not their main readers. Inevitably, their
19 perceptions of readers shape their news selection and production processes. For
20 example, *Haber* believes that the community is more interested in seeing itself in the
21 paper than in reading news stories, and it therefore publishes lots of pictures, while
22 *Olay* and *Londra Gazete* report extensively on social, educational and cultural events
23 held by the Turkish-speaking community in the UK. *Telgraf*, on the hand, includes
24 issues that concern Kurdish people in the UK and Turkey.
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39 Journalists working in the Turkish-language press use the public-service ideal to
40 validate and give meaning to their actions and positions in society as journalists
41 (Deuze 2005). Interviews show that they define what they do as 'community
42 journalism' (Reader and Hatcher 2012), which highlights the civic dimension of their
43 journalism. Their role conception, which is based on this public service ideal and
44 community role, regards their audience as citizens and includes different
45 responsibilities that range from acting as an information resource for the community
46 to becoming its voice and informing and connecting members with one another. The
47 journalists stress that their main aims are to tell the stories of Turkish speaking
48 people living in the UK, inform them of events and developments from both the UK
49 and homeland, and maintain communication within the community.
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What makes their journalism distinctive to other forms is their experience of immigration. Regardless of differences in their backgrounds, these journalists understand their audiences' experience of immigration and try to create a transnational media space within which they can sustain their identity and culture at a distance (Arsoy and Robins, 2003). These communities, who live within specific local, national and transnational contexts, depend on this transnational communication and media space for their shared sense of identity, expression and participation (Georgiou 2005, 2006; Christiansen 2004; Karim 2003; Deuze 2006; Srebreny 2005). These journalists see as their responsibility to provide information and analysis from both the country of origin and host country as well as connecting members of the community with each other within the host country. This puts them in the position of being 'bottom-up facilitators and moderators of community level conversations among citizens rather than functioning as top-down storytellers for an increasingly disinterested public' (Deuz 2006, 275).

All the journalists interviewed believe that the national and local context in which their audiences is grounded is important for them, not only to connect and engage with the larger society but also for 'the construction of meanings and community and identity' (Georgios, 2005, 18). Therefore, they are in favour of providing more news and information from the community and host country than from the countries of origin. Their inclination to prioritise news from the host country is partly because they think many community members already have access to Turkish and Turkish Cypriot media and can therefore readily follow the news in their homelands. It is also, in part, because they believe that some members of the Turkish speaking community cannot or do not follow the British media, either because they lack language skills, time or habit, which means that they are not fully informed about what's happening in the UK. They want the community to understand political, social and economic developments in the country so they can engage with the host society and make informed decisions on issues that affect them. They all agree that learning about the host country and the community they belong to is an important step in the process of settlement and integration and they see it as their responsibility to

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3 provide such information. These views are in line with the idea that assimilating
4 migrants into a host country is an important role of ethnic media (Riggins 1992).
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9 Apart from being a resource for information, the journalists believe they play an
10 important role in community formation and dialogue. Although some members of
11 the community co-exist most of the time, the community as a whole doesn't
12 necessarily share a common space where they can interact with each other. These
13 newspapers provide them with media space for shared communication and culture.
14 The journalists working for the Turkish language newspapers are aware of this and
15 state that their newspapers encourage interaction and communication between
16 members of the community, which is dispersed around the UK. By reporting on
17 issues and events that are happening within the community, they inform and
18 connect immigrants with each other. In other words, by acting as a connector
19 between different groups within the community (Ahva 2012), they enhance a sense
20 of belonging to the community (Matsaganis et. al. 2011) as well as a sense of
21 security and inclusion (Georgiou, 2013). As a minority community surrounded by
22 national media that target the majority, these media help to reconstruct and
23 maintain the community's existence (Dayan, 1998). Journalists see this as an
24 important part of their role. For example, both Yörük (interview, 14 January 2014)
25 and Fehmi (interview, 14 January 2014) expressed their belief that without their
26 publications, community members would have limited communication with each
27 other, which indicates that they regard their role as vital for their community. They
28 claim their reports not only create an awareness of issues concerning the community
29 but also initiate discussions about them and bring these issues to the wider public
30 agenda. By reporting on the cultural, social, economic and political issues that are
31 relevant to the community, they reproduce a sense of community and identity. This
32 reproduction does not mean homogenisation of their identity but supporting
33 cultural cohesion by providing information on similar interests, experiences and
34 issues that are important to the community (Cover 2013).
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Relation to Power: Watchdog Role

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4 The relationship of journalists to those in power can be described as adversarial or
5 loyal and is influential in how they perceive their role and practices (Mellado 2014;
6 Hanitzsch 2007; Pihl-Thingvad 2015; Tandoc Jr et.al. 2012). Journalists working for
7 the Turkish-language media see it as their job to act as a watchdog on behalf of the
8 community. However, sometimes questioning, challenging or investigating powerful
9 interests can be difficult for them, especially if the newspaper they work for has
10 good relations with powerful individuals and groups in the community. Local
11 authorities, state representatives of the country of origin and community leaders are
12 good news sources for these newspapers, providing them with information regularly.
13 The newspapers treat information from these authorities as credible and regularly
14 publish their announcements rather than scrutinize or hold them to account.
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26 This relationship causes uneasiness among the journalists. Some, such as Tim
27 Ekingen and Esra Türk are not happy about publishing the information they receive
28 from political elites without questioning or checking and condemn their counterparts
29 for doing it. Yet, all journalists claim this is due to a lack of time and resources rather
30 than negligence. The apparently loyal position of these journalists in relation to
31 power is not because they lack professionalism but is related to the cohesive
32 function of the media, which is to reconstruct and maintain the political and cultural
33 integrity of the community. Community leaders and state representatives of the
34 country of origin such as the Turkish ambassador or the London Representative of
35 Turkish Cyprus are regarded as symbolizing the community. Their positive
36 representation in the media conveys a positive image of the community and
37 cultivates a sense of belonging, identity and unity among its members.
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50 Although journalism in the Turkish language media shows characteristics of loyal
51 rather than adversarial journalism in relation to powerful political elites within the
52 UK, attitudes towards those in power back at home can be critical. This is especially
53 visible in *Telgraf*, which supports the Kurdish nationalist movement in Turkey and is
54 very critical of Turkish government policies towards the Kurds in Turkey. Its editor,
55 Alaettin Sinayiç, explains that they report on significant political events in Turkey
56 that are relevant to Kurds not only to inform their readers of the issues there, but
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3 also to support and enhance the movement's ideals among the community
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5 (interview, January 14, 2014).
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9 Acting as a watchdog on businesses is more difficult for these journalists. The
10 newspapers are distributed free of charge which makes advertising their main
11 source of revenue. In a limited market, the competition for advertising is vigorous
12 and the newspapers struggle to sell space to a small number of businesses and
13 organizations that can pay for advertising. Although commercialism is not a problem
14 for ethnic media alone, the extent and frequency of this is a significant concern for
15 the journalists. The commercial interests of the organisations they work for means
16 that they frequently consider the profit expectations of their managers and the
17 demands of advertisers. They assess the harm their reports may cause to an
18 individual, business or organisation that they work with or with which they have a
19 close relationship: If the story would upset them, then they either don't run the
20 story or tell it in a way that would not harm the people or organisations involved.
21 There are many examples of this: Yasemin Bakan relates how the newspaper she
22 works for did not report that a shop owned by a Turkish man had failed a hygiene
23 test by public authorities because of the newspaper's relationship with the shop
24 owner (interview, March 27, 2015). Ekingen (interview, August 21, 2012) knows loss
25 of advertising is a serious concern for these newspapers as the paper he used to
26 work for lost advertising from a Turkish bank for printing a critical news story about
27 it. This discourages them from investigating any commercial wrongdoing.
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46 Journalists are unhappy with these practices as they regard them as undermining
47 their professional integrity. Figen Güneş believes it diminishes their standing in the
48 eyes of the community as they are perceived as 'half reporters and half salespeople'
49 (interview, June 12, 2012), motivated by commercial rather than public interests.
50 However, although such managerial priorities are in conflict with their concept of
51 professionalism, they recognise that advertising is important for them. Therefore,
52 journalists heed the warnings of their managing directors or owners who are
53 concerned that covering a particular story would harm their commercial links with
54 businesses.
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5 This conflict between public interest and the newspapers' own commercial interests
6 is also evident in their approach to tensions within the community. The newspapers
7 are concerned about upsetting or causing offence to different groups within this
8 diverse community for fear of losing advertising. Knowing this, journalists are
9 reluctant to investigate and report on controversial issues within the community. For
10 example, Fehmi is adamant that no stories related to gang crime, which is prevalent
11 in the community, would be published in *Olay* as it causes a 'headache' (interview,
12 January 14, 2014). This 'headache' mainly refers to the loss of advertising that might
13 result from such reports. As Özcan Yörük (interview, January 14, 2014) states, 'we
14 are concerned about causing offence or upsetting a group. We can't publish critical
15 stories about a group or organisation. Someone from that group may stop
16 advertising with us'. However, it is not just the loss of advertising that worries them
17 but also the threats that they receive. Some journalists were threatened after
18 writing news articles that offended an individual or a group (Yörük, interview,
19 January 14, 2014; Güneş, interview, June 12, 2012; Şahin, interview, June 12, 2012).
20 This explains why they may avoid reporting controversial issues within the
21 community.
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41 **Professional Ideals**

42 *Professional standards*

43 Professional ideals are essential in journalism because, as Pihl-Thingvad (2015, 407)
44 explains, 'they articulate the societal obligations of the profession and guide and
45 commit individual journalists in their daily work'. Therefore it is important to
46 understand what values and norms guide ethnic media journalists.
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54 Regardless of their ethnic or political background, the journalists interviewed
55 expressed their commitment to professionalism and placed importance on a
56 journalism culture that embraces professional values and norms (Tuchman 1978;
57 Schudson and Anderson 2009; Soloski 1997, McNair 1998). Their understanding of
58 what journalists should aim for and how they should act is no different than
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4 commonly held conceptions of professionalism in journalism. They describe the
5 norms that guide them as objectivity, fairness, accuracy, respect to their news
6 sources and avoiding harm to any group within the community. However, ethnic
7 newspapers require them to participate in a 'community of practice' that has its own
8 characteristics, organisational structure, resource base and constraints of time and
9 space (Husband, 2005) and these influence their reconstruction and renegotiation of
10 their professional identity.
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18 Measuring their own work against their journalistic ideals, they feel that their
19 practice is characterized by a low level of professionalism and that they are
20 therefore less professional (see also Şahin 2014), even branding their efforts as
21 'amateurish' (Fehmi, interview, January 14, 2014; Güneş, interview June 21, 2012).
22 Some question whether their practice can be described as a profession or not and
23 are even reluctant to call themselves a 'journalist'. Esra Türk, who has a Masters
24 degree in journalism, questions her practice:
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31 'What I am doing at the moment doesn't fit in the category that I view to be
32 journalism...I call myself a journalist but I don't feel comfortable with it.
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34 Maybe a reporter is the correct term. Because being a journalist is going out
35 and getting the story. When I get a story from an agency and publish it, I
36 don't call it journalism (interview March 30, 2015).
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43 There is a strong dissatisfaction with the general quality of journalism in the
44 community newspapers and their own journalism practices. In the interviews,
45 journalists described it as advertising-driven, over-reliant on the statements of
46 sources, lacking any element of investigation and overly deskbound. One
47 interviewee remarked, 'we don't go to stories, stories come to us' (Sinayic,
48 interview, January, 14, 2014). Some interviewees criticized fellow journalists, saying
49 that many people working as journalists were not real journalists and that they did
50 not know the key principles of journalism.
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Comparing their journalism with what they regard as 'real journalism', these
journalists do not feel themselves to be 'real' journalists. Although, as Deuze (2005,

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4 444) argues, ideas about ‘who was a “real” journalist, and what (parts of) news
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6 media at any time would be considered examples of “real” journalism’ shifts over
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8 time, for these journalists the current journalism praxis seen in mainstream news
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10 media are seen as closer to “real” journalism. Research shows that they are not
11
12 alone in feeling like this, as similar views exist among other immigrant journalists
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14 (see Shumov 2014; Matsaganis et. al. 2011).

15 16 17 18 *Community advocacy*

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20 The (close) relationship between these journalists and their community is a key
21
22 factor in them feeling less professional. As research shows (Husband 2005;
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24 Matsaganis and Katz 2014; Shumov 2012; Skjerdal 2011), separation of professional
25
26 and ethnic identities can be challenging for ethnic media journalists. It places
27
28 competing demands on them as they are seen not only as news providers but also as
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30 defenders of community interests, values and rights. These expectations impose a
31
32 certain degree of pressure on these journalists who nevertheless try to remain
33
34 detached. Yet, they frequently find themselves renegotiating their roles as
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36 journalists, especially when many community members approach them for advice on
37
38 social issues.

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40 ‘When people have problems such as housing, visa or education they call us
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42 and ask us to talk to the authorities on their behalf. I don’t want to call the
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44 authorities for them, so I just tell them what they need to do, where to call.
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46 But there are times that I find it difficult to reject’ (Güneş, interview, June 12,
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48 2012).

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51 In this journalist’s view, the risk is that she may be seen as a community advocate
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53 rather than a journalist and her neutrality compromised as a result. This is a
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55 common perception among these journalists. They believe the concept of
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57 community advocacy goes against the professional norm of objectivity. Therefore,
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59 they distance themselves from the advocate label and express their commitment to
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objectivity. However, as Waisbord (2009, 371) explains, advocacy journalism can be
seen as another form of civic journalism that aims to raise awareness, generate

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3 public debate, influence public opinion and promote changes around specific issues.
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5 Instead, they define their journalism as an instrument for the self-representation of
6
7 the community and as advancing its causes and opinions to the wider British public.
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9 They frequently celebrate the achievements of individuals or groups in business,
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11 education, arts or sports as the success of 'one of us'. In contrast, any bad news,
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13 such as an individual's involvement in crime, is distanced from the community as the
14
15 errant actions of an individual rather than tainting the whole community. They also
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17 see their journalism as a way making the community visible within mainstream
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19 society. This is an important mission of these newspapers, according to Kemal
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21 Erdemol, one of the founders of *Haber*, especially since the community appears in
22
23 the mainstream British media mostly in crime-related stories rather than as a
24
25 cultural entity. 'We should be the voice of the Turkish speaking community on issues
26
27 that are important for it and get ourselves heard in the mainstream community'
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29 (interview, March 25, 2015).
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33 *Resources*

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35 The respondents all recognize that a lack of time and resources are the major
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37 reasons for their low level of professionalism, confirming the relationship between
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39 the role conceptions and performances of journalists and institutional structures and
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41 resources (Husband 2005; Matsaganis and Katz 2014). Working with a small team
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43 means research, newsgathering, reporting and editing of the majority of stories in
44
45 the newspaper can be one person's responsibility. Limited staff and resources
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47 require these newspapers to choose to report on issues and events that are easy and
48
49 inexpensive to process. Journalists do not have much time to research and report on
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51 issues that require investigation and this is a problem for them. All journalists
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53 expressed their desire to work on more investigative reports but acknowledged that,
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55 under existing conditions, their journalism is limited to reporting mainly on social
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57 and cultural events organised by the community.
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60 Small production teams mean that sometimes journalists are asked to help in other
sections of the newspaper such as selling advertising space or page-design. For

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4 example, in *Telgraf*, where Erem Kansoy works, the small number of staff means
5 they all contribute to different areas of newspaper production, ranging from news
6 writing to photography, page design and advertising. Some also work in other jobs
7 such as teaching and translation to support themselves financially while working as a
8 journalist. This affects their conception of their role as journalists as they feel it
9 undermines their professionalism. As one interviewee remarked 'you can't be a
10 professional journalist unless you do it full time' (Sinayiç, interview, January, 14,
11 2014).
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18 19 20 *Mainstream Media* 21

22 The research also looked at the relationship between journalists working for Turkish
23 language newspapers and mainstream or other community media journalists to see
24 if it influenced the conception of their professional role, as suggested by Matsaganis
25 and Katz (2014). It revealed that there is very little contact between these two
26 groups of journalists and that this did not go further than mainstream journalists
27 contacting the Turkish language newspapers from time to time to get the
28 community's views or reactions on issues related to them (Sercan, interview, March
29 30, 2015). Therefore, learnt common journalism norms and values affect their
30 professional ideals rather than contact with mainstream or community media
31 journalists. But some, like Erdemol, believe this relationship should be strengthened
32 and that journalists should look for ways of developing their relationships with
33 mainstream news producers and learn from them (interview, March 25, 2015). Such
34 views show how the mainstream media are seen as the authority on journalism
35 standards.
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50 At the same time, they also recognize that they cannot apply the journalism they
51 observe in the mainstream news media to their own work, mainly because the
52 media they work for have a different function. Yasemin Bakan explains this
53 difference: 'When I worked for the mainstream media back in Turkey I dealt with
54 stories that were relevant to the whole nation, but here, I am focusing on local and
55 community issues' (interview, March 27, 2015). She understands that her readers
56 here are immigrants and that she needs to cater to their needs and interests.
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3 Erdemol is also keen to highlight the difference between these community
4 newspapers and mainstream ones:
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7 'In a country, if you publish in a language different than the language of that
8 country then you are a community newspaper. Ours are Turkish language
9 community newspapers, not local newspapers. We publish for the
10 community. This community has different culture, values, needs and
11 interests and we need to publish according to them' (interview, March 25,
12 2015).
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18 19 20 21 22 **Discussion and Conclusion** 23

24 This article discusses how ethnic media journalists conceive their professional role
25 and performance by identifying key effects and processes that influence their work.
26 It suggests three conceptual dimensions, perception of audience, relation to power
27 and professional ideals that can be used to study role conceptions among ethnic
28 media journalists. These dimensions, which may overlap in practice, aim to provide a
29 basis for studying ideas and attitudes towards journalism and the context of
30 production within ethnic media.
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39 The study revealed the significant effect of organisational rather than individual
40 factors on the journalists' role conceptions and production. The journalists
41 interviewed did not show much difference in their role conceptions or the factors
42 that affect them. They all expressed similar values and ideas about professionalism
43 and talked about similar effects on their roles. *Telgraf* was a good example of this,
44 where journalists of differing ethnic backgrounds – Kurdish, Turkish and Turkish
45 Cypriot - and varying years of experience all expressed similar concerns and
46 mentioned the same forces shaping their work. This could be explained with
47 Husband's (2005, 464) observation that entering into a community of practices does
48 not just mean acquiring professional skills but also 'demands a committed
49 participation in a system of values and beliefs that are the criterial attributes of a
50 shared identity'.
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3 The way these journalists view their audience and its needs and expectations is a key
4 factor in defining their professional roles. They identify their role as providing a
5 public service by acting as resource for information and civic engagement, as they
6 believe that is what their audience wants and needs from them. Yet, they also feel
7 that the characteristics, expectations and interests of their audience restrict their
8 journalism to a degree and are a source of discrepancy between their professional
9 identity and practice. For example, the fear of causing offence to a member or a
10 group, the perceived need to cater to an audience with low educational levels, and
11 their desire to act as the voice of the community, all serve to shape their journalism
12 as well as bringing extra responsibilities towards their readers.
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25 A lack of autonomy is a major concern for these journalists. Skovsgaard (2014)
26 suggests that when professional goals clash with organizational goals, journalists
27 question their autonomy. This certainly applies to the journalists working for Turkish
28 language newspapers. They experience tensions between meeting the demands and
29 interests of their public and the commercial concerns of managers and find this
30 discomfoting. Journalists frequently feel the need to question the impact of their
31 stories on powerful individuals or groups as well as the businesses that advertise
32 with them and avoid publishing any story that might give them bad publicity. Even
33 though they regard this as against the norms of the profession, they accept it as a
34 necessary practice in avoiding financial loss since they share the pressure of
35 generating sufficient revenue to sustain the newspaper. However, this also
36 contributes to their feeling less professional.
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51 Their role conceptions fit within the general theoretical framework on the
52 professionalism of journalism (Hanitzsch 2005; Deuze 2005; Mellado 2014). The
53 journalists interviewed expressed professional ideals that are in accordance with the
54 common understanding of journalism roles, such as providing information to people,
55 acting as a watchdog on their behalf and promoting civic engagement. These ideas
56 are mainly derived from mainstream journalism cultures and do not always fit in
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3 with their practices. Consequently, incongruities between these ideals and their
4 work practices make these journalists feel less professional. Their responsibilities
5 towards the community and their audience, along with a lack of resources and
6 complicated relations with power interests and market forces meant they could not
7 practice their journalism as they believed it should be.
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16 It is clear that these journalists are practicing a form of journalism that deals with the
17 challenges of producing for a specific community. It focuses on their audiences'
18 needs and expectations closely. However, the audience is not a passive receiver but
19 also a source of information and feedback and, in some cases, a producer of content
20 for the paper, displaying a degree of citizen participation in the production of the
21 newspaper. This process, at odds with practices in the mainstream media where
22 audience involvement is limited, does not mean the disappearance of boundaries
23 between news producers and consumers but it does indicate a closer relationship
24 between journalists and their readers. It shows how these journalists are closely tied
25 to the community they serve and that they are in touch with and responsive to their
26 audiences in a way that mainstream news media cannot be.
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39 These journalists are striving to meet mainstream professional standards, but
40 although many ideas and practices are drawn from the mainstream, the journalism
41 practiced within ethnic media is clearly different. It diverges from the mainstream
42 with regard to its organisational structure, resources and the way in which it engages
43 with its audience. These differences make it difficult to position it within the
44 dominant notion of journalistic professionalism for both scholars and practitioners,
45 as was reflected in the interviews with journalists. It shows how this form of
46 journalism requires different dimensional structures to study its norms, values and
47 practices. This article suggests one such model for this. However, further research is
48 needed to test and validate it. More research on ethnic media journalism will help to
49 understand ethnic media production as well as its contribution to the communities
50 they serve and the larger societies they are embedded in.
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