

Feast and Famine? Local TV Newswriters Expand the Offerings but Say They are Hungry for Quality Journalism

Scott Reinardy and Chris Bacon

William Allen White School of Journalism & Mass Communications, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS, USA

Correspondence: Scott Reinardy, William Allen White School of Journalism & Mass Communications, University of Kansas, 1435 Jayhawk Blvd., Room 203b, Lawrence, KS 66045. Tel: 1-785-864-7691. E-mail: reinardy@ku.edu

Abstract

By the nature of the work, TV newswriters face a time famine: Too much to do in too little time. The famine has been compounded in recent years as local newsrooms produce content for two- and three-screen audiences. Chaos Theory says that even during chaotic times there are constants, such as deadlines and breaking news obligations. This study of 877 broadcast journalists examines their perceptions of work quality in light of organizational support, job satisfaction, work overload and autonomy. Results indicate that organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy are significant, positive predictors of work quality. Additionally, 81% of newswriters said they work differently than a few years ago, with social media/online obligations and doing-more-with-less consuming much of their time. In the meantime, diminished quality is a rising concern.

Keywords: television journalism, chaos theory, job satisfaction, quality, organizational support

The demise of local television news in the United States has been greatly exaggerated (Steinberg 2008; Mendte, 2012). In fact, by some measures local TV news is doing rather well. Local TV news in the United States produces more content on a variety of platforms (Potter, Matsa and Mitchell 2013), consumes more airtime (Hofstra University 2012), with larger staffs (Papper 2012a) than almost any time in history.

Local TV remains a prominent source of news for Americans (Waldman 2011; Potter, Matsa and Mitchell, 2013) but that delivery mechanism isn't always the actual television. The Pew Research Center's State of the News Media 2013 report states that while 48 per cent of Americans regularly watch local TV news (down from 54 per cent in 2006), the digital audience continues to grow. LIN Media Executive Vice President Scott Blumenthal told the Pew Research Center, 'We are not a TV station anymore as much as a provider of news on multiple platforms' (Potter, Matsa and Mitchell 2013). The talk of 'two-screen' and 'three-screen' experiences is commonplace at TV stations that are trying to grow their audiences, particularly among the under-30 demographic where viewership rests at 28 per cent (Potter, Matsa and Mitchell 2013).

Nonetheless, the low viewership among the younger generation has not slowed news production. According to the 2012 RTDNA/Hofstra University annual study, local news programming now accounts for a record five hours, 30 minutes on weekdays (Papper 2012b). Also, online content has come of age. For the first time ever, every TV station in every market size reported having a website in 2011 (Potter, Matsa and Mitchell 2013). News developed for smartphones and tablets, as

well as social media offerings, is on the rise, and nearly 80 per cent of local TV stations report having at least one or more apps (Potter, Matsa and Mitchell 2013).

Meanwhile, newscasts are the most profitable aspects of programming for local television stations, accounting for 44 per cent of stations' profits (Yanich 2011). However, profitability and news quality do not always mesh. Yanich (2011) writes, "There has been the perennial balancing act between what information the stations believe will 'sell' and what information the public needs for informed citizenship, although the types of information may not be mutually exclusive" (2011, 110).

Pressures to develop content for websites, mobile devices and social media continue to mount (Potter, Matsa and Mitchell 2012), as 'one-man bands' (one person acting as a reporter, producer, cameraman and editor) become more prevalent with 39 per cent of stations in the United States using them (Papper 2012c).

One-man bands, more airtime to fill and additional online and social media content demands can take their toll. Potter, Matsa and Mitchell (2012) write: "The effort in local TV station newsrooms is now not simply reporting and producing broadcast news. Increasingly it is spent translating that reporting into content across multiple platforms" (News Staff).

Diminished quality journalism could be the unintended consequence during this seismic shift in local television news. As newsrooms evolve and change, new personnel and additional work responsibilities can potentially create chaos in the newsroom. Initially, chaos theory was introduced and applied in the field of

mathematics to explain nonlinear dynamics, which is ‘the study of the temporal evolution of nonlinear systems (Kiel and Elliott 1997, 1)’. More recently, chaos theory has been introduced in many different fields to explain the influence of change on the stability of organizations (Thietart and Forgues 1995). Thietart and Forgues (1995) concluded that the forces of change and stability create chaotic organizations. In this study, chaos theory will be utilized to examine perceptions of the broadcast work environment during times of unprecedented transition.

The purpose of this study is to examine broadcast TV news workers’ perceptions of quality of work in light of organizational support, workload, job satisfaction, and autonomy. This study will not measure quality but rather the factors that determine quality among news workers who are mired in a changing, and sometimes chaotic work environment. By examining the perception of news quality in the context of organizational commitment, work demands, job satisfaction and autonomy, this study will shed light on the turbulent transformation of local TV news in the United States and its impact on the end product. This study will determine what factors play a role for news workers trying to produce good journalism. To that end, the following research questions and hypotheses will be examined.

RQ1: What are the correlations between organizational support, workload, job satisfaction, autonomy and perception of work quality?

RQ2: Are there correlations between demographics of the TV news workers (age, gender, work experience, station market size) and perception of work quality?

H1: Organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy will be positive predictors of perception of work quality among TV news workers.

H2: TV news workers with high levels of organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy will have higher levels of perception of work quality than TV news workers with lower levers of organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy.

Literature review

Advances in technology offer new ways for the public to get their news faster and quicker than before. Even as technology has made it easier to get news from a variety of sources, local television is still the most trusted news source (Potter, Matsa, Mitchell 2013).

As local television news remains the most trusted news source, many television stations are expanding their coverage on a day-to-day basis. Even though the amount of coverage is at an all-time high, television stations are still evolving in regards to utilizing the personnel they have working in the newsroom. A major part of the increase comes from more stations attempting the '3-screen approach' to covering news: on-air, online and mobile. Since most stations utilize personnel other than designated 'web employees' to produce content, employees are being asked to do more work throughout the day (Papper 2012d). Approximately 70 per cent of television stations designated themselves as newsrooms that used multimedia reporters either 'some' or 'mostly' (Papper 2012c).

While many journalists try to separate themselves from the bottom line, journalism is still a business. Powers (1993) looked at the relationship between television news departments' commitment to news and how it affected ratings. She applied the industrial organization model, which 'is derived from microeconomic theory and useful in evaluating the market forces affecting how firms and entire

markets function' (1993, 38). This model groups local television news into that spectrum and analyzes competition, conduct and performance variables. The study successfully established a link between conduct and performance variables in television news. It also discovered that stations seemed to add more news time in order to effectively compete with other stations in the market. However, staff sizes are not affected. This means more work with the same amount of people. As a result, the quality of the news product could be affected. Interestingly, the State of the News Media 2013 project reports that between 2005 and 2012 newscasts devoted to sports, weather and traffic – easily produced content – increased 25 per cent and now account for 40 per cent of airtime (Jurkowitz, Hitlin, Mitchell, Santhanam, Adams, Anderson, and Vogt 2013).

While defining 'quality' remains a sketchy proposition, researchers have developed grading scales (Rosenstiel, Gottlieb and Brady 2000; PEJ 2003), relied upon ratings and awards (Spavins, Denison, Roberts and Frenette 2002), and even used newsroom investment (more investment equals commitment to quality) (Scott, Gobetz and Chanslor 2008) to determine quality.

Some research has shown that spending more time on journalistic quality increases ratings. Thorson (2003) reviewed 35 years of research in newspapers and concluded 'investment in quality content improves the bottom line'.

Belt and Just (2008) developed a five-year study that compared quality of content to local television ratings. Television stations in their study that focused more on quality journalism, which includes reporting on important local issues,

fared better in the ratings than ‘slapdash or superficial tabloid journalism’ (2008, 194).

In its 2002 report, the Federal Communications Commission did not evaluate actual programming to determine quality, rather it used three measures to assess quality: local TV news ratings; RTDNA awards; and local TV Silver Baton of the A.I. DuPont Awards (Spavins, Denison, Roberts and Frenette 2002). The quality index utilized in the FCC study was criticized because those awards require entry fees, which generally are paid by stations owned by networks (Plamondon 2003).

Scott et al.’s (2008) measurement of quality was based on an ‘investment-driven model’. They write, ‘Since local television news is expensive to produce, we believe that the resources devoted to the production of news are a revealing indicator of the organizational commitment to news quality’ (2008, 89). The results indicate that financial investment in enterprise stories (Scott et al. 2008) and resource allocation (PEJ 2003) met a standard of high quality journalism.

Attempts by researchers to define ‘quality’ in journalism remains elusive as disagreements prevail (Moses 2003). There has not been a definitive academic explanation of quality in regards to local television news either.

The State of the News Media 2013 Report assumes quality is being threatened with less time to produce content for broadcast. ‘The amount of time devoted to edited story packages has decreased and average story lengths have shortened, signs that there is less in-depth journalism being produced’ (Jurkowitz, et al. 2013). Although that might be true, some constants remain: Several daily newscasts need to be produced; unexpected, breaking news remains a priority; local

TV news continues to explore multi-screen options; and personnel in small and medium-sized markets have not increased.

Chaos Theory

Chaos theory was developed in the natural sciences in the 1970s and was adopted by the social sciences in the 1980s (Lucking 1991). Chaos theory does not mark the randomness of chaos in an organizational system, but rather 'attempts to understand the behavior of systems that do not unfold in a linearly predictable, conventional cause-and-effect manner over time' (Murphy 1996, 96). Also, the chaos is not random. While the path to an outcome might be unpredictable, some of the outcomes will remain constant. For example, exactly predicting a person's political viewpoint on a specific issue might not be possible but it is possible to determine that person's underlying perspective over the long term (Murphy 1996). Chaotic systems assume the oxymoronic position of being determinant and unpredictable at the same time (Lucking 1991).

As a society, Americans face what anthropologists call a 'time famine' (Parkes and Thrift 1980): too much to do; too little time to do it. With the advent of developing online content and pressures to compete in a 24/7 continuous news cycle, journalists face a time famine of their own. In the journalistic time famine, efficiency takes precedence over in-depth reporting. Trade magazine *Editor & Publisher* (2007) reports that work demands are increasing throughout journalism. 'For reporters, it often means taking time that was once spent digging for stories or networking with sources and instead using it to crank out or update the latest Web scoop' (Strupp 2007, 36). Barnhurst (2011) said for newspapers the time famine

has forced reporters and editors to focus on present issues in lieu of gathering background information, spotting trends or examining future problems. Barnhurst writes: ‘... it has accelerated especially on television, where competitive pressures to go live have left journalists without time to investigate or even edit their work’ (2011, 99). Barnhurst continues to say that the trend is the result of a shorter news cycle that has evolved with new technology.

Generally speaking, organizations have contrary actors at play. While some actors steer the organization toward stability and order through planning, structure and control, other actors push the organization toward instability and disorder through innovation, initiative and experimentation (Thietart and Forgues 1995). Thietart and Forgues (1995) write: ‘The coupling of these forces can lead to a highly complex situation: a chaotic organization’ (1995, 23). Hence the rub. Without order, an organization would fall into complete chaos and, in essence, would not be an organization. Without some chaos, the organization would grow stale, failing to innovate and adapt (Thietart and Forgues 1995). However, even in chaos there is stability. Individuals afforded the autonomy to innovate still work within the confines of the organization. Chaos in an organization does not equate to anarchy.

Research method

The purpose of this study is to examine broadcast TV news workers’ perceptions of quality of work in light of organizational support, workload, job satisfaction, and autonomy. Through the scope of chaos theory, the following research questions and hypotheses will be examined:

RQ1: What are the correlations between organizational support, workload, job satisfaction, autonomy and perception of work quality?

RQ2: Are there correlations between demographics of the TV news workers (age, gender, work experience, station market size) and perception of work quality?

H1: Organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy will be positive predictors of perception of work quality among TV news workers.

H2: TV news workers with high levels of organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy will have higher levels of perception of work quality than TV news workers with lower levels of organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy.

To address the research questions and hypotheses, this study operated under the theoretical premise that TV news work is conducted under the guise of a chaotic state as defined by chaos theory. Management provides resources with the expectations that news workers will create a product in a timely fashion several times a day (Altheide 1976). And because time to create the product is a scarce commodity, news development has become 'a series of purposive, socially learned routines employed to expedite tasks' (Berkowitz 1992, 46; Fishman 1982; Gans 1979; Tuchman 1978). But, when breaking news, tight deadlines and multimedia obligations become part of the equation those routines are not that routine. Berkowitz (1992) writes: 'In practice, it is rare that news workers are able to strictly apply elements of their routine process, but instead they must make frequent small departures from the process in order to comply with its spirit' (1992, 46).

Inherently, journalists expect to work under stressful, deadline pressure situations. Previous research has demonstrated that job satisfaction among journalists derives from autonomy at work (Weaver, Beam, Brownlee, Voakes and Wilhoit 2007; Weaver and Wilhoit 1996; Weaver and Wilhoit 1986) and support of the organization (Reinardy 2007; Reinardy 2012). However, variables such as job

satisfaction, organizational support and autonomy have not been examined in the context of the quality of work being produced at American TV stations. This study helps fill that void.

The survey used in this study allows the American TV news workers to self-evaluate the quality of work being produced in an environment with increasing demands and evolving expectations (more content for the three-screen experience and an increasing number of daily newscasts). The established variables (organizational support, workload, job satisfaction, and autonomy) will allow the researcher to measure their affect on the quality of news TV journalists think they are producing during these transitional times.

Methodology

An online survey was developed to measure TV news workers and their work. The 55-question survey asked about job responsibilities, perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, autonomy and perception of work quality. The survey included four sections: 'Your job stress,' 'You and your work,' 'Your work responsibilities,' and 'Your background'. The introduction explained that responses would be confidential and only reported as part of group results. The study was vetted and approved by the university's institutional review board.

An email database of 6,613 television broadcast news employees was developed through Vocus marketing and public relations software. The database search terms included 'anchor, director, producer, executive producer, reporter, and sports'. When duplicate emails were removed, the total number of respondents dropped to 6,177.

MaxBulk Mailer was used to contact respondents through email. Of the 6,177 emails distributed, 939 were 'dead' accounts, reducing the sample size to 5,238. The sample included television station employees from all 50 states and market sizes ranging from No. 1 (New York City) to 209 (North Platte, Neb). At 210, Glendive, Mont., is the smallest market in the United States.

Respondents were first contacted via email on May 30-31, 2012. The email invited respondents to participate in the study and included a SurveyMonkey.com Web survey link. A second invitation was distributed June 18 and a third on July 3.

Of the 5,238 participants, 887 provided useable responses to the survey for a response rate of 16.9 per cent, which is within acceptable levels for an Internet survey (Wimmer and Dominick 2006).

Measurements

Perceived organizational support

Organizational commitment was the basis for Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa's (1986) pursuit in developing a scale that would measure employees' perceptions of organizational support (POS). Specifically, Eisenberger et al., wanted to examine an individual's dedication to an organization and the factors that might influence that dedication. Eisenberger et al.'s POS research centralized on how an organization treats an employee and how employees perceive that treatment and the underlying motives concerning that treatment.

More than 70 studies have used Eisenberger et al's POS scale (Rhodes and Eisenberger 2002). In this study, perceived organizational support registered a Cronbach's alpha of .96.

Role overload

According to Beehr, Walsh and Taber (1976), role overload is 'having too much work to do in the time available' (1976, 42). Bucharach, Bamberger and Conley (1990) wanted to differentiate between role stressors of role overload and role conflict, refining Beehr, et al.'s scale by defining role overload as 'the professional's perception that he or she is unable to complete assigned tasks effectively due to time limitations (i.e., the conflict between time and organizational demands concerning the quantity of work to be done)' (1990, 202). In this study, the role overload Cronbach's alpha is .64.

Overall job satisfaction

Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins and Klesh's (1983) Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire included a measurement for overall job satisfaction. Cammann et al. said the MOAQ was created to measure individual attitudes in an organization as part of a larger organizational analysis. The scale to measure overall job satisfaction was established 'to provide an indication of the organization members' overall affective responses to their jobs' (1983, 80). In this study, the Cronbach's alpha for overall job satisfaction is .88.

Autonomy

A scale was developed to examine autonomy among TV news workers in this study. The measurement included four statements that were answered on a 7-point, Likert-like scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). The statements included 'I have the independence to develop new projects' and 'My project ideas are mostly

ignored at my station' (reverse coded). The Cronbach alpha for autonomy in this study is .84.

Perception of work quality

Because determining work quality is a subjective proposition (Scott et al. 2008), this study set out to allow news workers to determine if they were producing quality journalism. The five-question measurement included items such as 'My station is committed to producing good journalism,' 'I sacrifice work quality to get the job finished' (reverse coded), and 'My station's commitment to good journalism matches mine'. The Cronbach alpha for perception of work quality is .80.

Results

Descriptive statistics were used to provide some insight into the sample demographics. Respondents on average are 41 years old with 18 years of professional broadcast journalism experience, and have been working at their current stations for 11 years. They work an average of 42 hours a week and more women (55 per cent) participated in the study than men. Nearly 82 per cent are Caucasian, and the average market size (DMA or MSA) of the respondents is 66. As for job titles, a majority of respondents are anchors (49.2 per cent), followed by reporters (15.5 per cent) and producers (10.9 per cent).

RQ1 asks about the correlations between organizational support, workload, job satisfaction, autonomy and perception of work quality. Simple correlations determined that organizational support (.71), job satisfaction (.53) and autonomy (.58) are positive, significant and moderate or strong predictors of perception of work quality. Organizational support was also a positive, significant and moderate

or strong predictor of job satisfaction (.67) and autonomy (.75). Autonomy was a positive, significant and moderate predictor of job satisfaction (.57). Not surprisingly, work overload was a negative, significant and small or moderate predictor of organizational support (-.25), job satisfaction (-.23), autonomy (-.23) and perception of work quality (-.34)(see Table 1).

Descriptive statistics were used to examine RQ2, which asked if there are correlations between demographics of the TV news workers (age, gender, work experience, station market size) and perception of work quality. Market size was the only demographic variable demonstrating a positive, significant but modest correlation to work quality (.08). Closer examination shows that there were no significant differences between size of markets (1-25; 26-50; 51-100; 101-150; 151 and above) and perceptions of work quality.

Multiple linear regression analysis was used to examine H1, which states that organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy will be positive predictors of perception of work quality among TV news workers. When quality is the dependent variable, organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy account for about 51 per cent of the variance (adjusted r-square = 50.9). Organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy are positive, significant predictors of perception of work quality. In this model, the strongest predictor of work quality is organizational support (.55). Job satisfaction (.11) and autonomy (.11) are modest predictors of work quality. H1 was supported (see Table 2).

H2 states that TV news workers with high levels of organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy will have higher levels of perception of work quality

than TV news workers with lower levels of organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy. To determine high, moderate and low levels of organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy, each variable was divided into three equal categories. For instance, a minimum score on the job satisfaction scale would be a 3 with a maximum score of 21 (three questions answered on a 7-point Likert-like scale). Therefore, the job satisfaction categories were 3-9 (low), 10-15 (moderate) and 16-21 (high). The same principle was applied to organizational support and autonomy. Independent sample T-tests determine that TV news workers with high levels of organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy (n = 223) had higher levels of work quality (26.2 vs. 18.8) than the news workers with low or moderate degrees of organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy. Therefore, H2 was supported.

Additional analysis determined that of the TV news workers (n = 128) with high levels on the four variables (organizational support, job satisfaction, autonomy and perception of work quality), 55 per cent work in top 50 markets. In terms of job responsibilities, anchors account for 51 per cent of that group with reporters (13 per cent) and producers (10 per cent) a distant second and third.

Discussion

The survey included questions asking about work responsibilities of TV news workers. When asked, 'Do you work differently than a few years ago?', 81 per cent percent (n = 671) of the respondents answered 'yes'. A follow-up question asked, 'If you work differently, how so?' The question elicited 626 responses. The top responses included a reference to social media/online (Web, online, Twitter,

Facebook, digital, mobile) and 'doing more with less,' which included more work with less time, pay and resources. Social media/online and doing more with less accounted for more than 250 responses each. Of course, these are not mutually exclusive. Oftentimes respondents discussed having more to do and less time to do it, which was the result of social media or online obligations. For instance, one respondent wrote: 'It has actually been said that getting our story on the web is more important than the TV story we're supposed to be working on... and we're in TV news!!!' Another wrote: 'Update the web, tweet, facebook, more shows to prepare for than just the 6 and 11 now. More food on the plate, yet still just using one fork'. And another wrote:

There are more responsibilities for everyone with the expansion of media on the internet and social sites. We now have a system for breaking news: post to Facebook and Twitter, then the website, then worry about getting it ready for a newscast.

Several respondents discussed how they are obligated to recast the same story in many different formats because of two-screen and even three-screen platforms. One respondent summed it up by writing, 'With the internet and now mobile I must produce content for three different beasts and try have (sic) unique content in each version of the same story'.

Beyond social media and airtime increases, compounding the 'more-with-less' issue is staff cuts. Layoffs and attrition had many of the respondents writing about multiple job responsibilities as the workload has grown. Perhaps representative of the TV newsworker's job multiplicity, one respondent wrote:

I am no longer just a reporter. I shoot, write, edit and will soon have to set up my own live shots. I have had to produce shows. I also anchor on days I am reporting. No one does just one job anymore.

Not surprisingly, as talk of increased workloads and smaller staffs resonated throughout the responses, quality of work emerged as a disconcerting issue. Although the survey did not include open-ended questions about quality, 66 respondents spoke of it specifically. One respondent wrote: 'CRAPPY STORIES DOMINATE. MY STATION GIVES ALL THEIR RESOURCES TO THE SALES DEPARTMENT. STATION CARES MORE ABOUT *FACEBOOK... THAN ACTUAL STORIES ONLINE' (e.g.: emphasis original). Another wrote: 'its meatball journalism now. No time is taken to make it great. It's all about what you can do in the next hour'. After writing about dissolving the graphics department, absorbing editing responsibilities, and a restrictive automated newscast production system, one newswriter wrote:

All of these were cost-cutting moves and they have each added a significant amount of extra work to our jobs that has little to do with actual journalism. Fact checking and finding good stories has become far more difficult as a result.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine broadcast TV news workers' perceptions of quality of work in light of organizational support, workload, job satisfaction, and autonomy. Similar to newspapers, local TV news has undergone tremendous change during the past decade. Unlike newspapers, however, the

holistic staff cuts (down 30 per cent since 2000) and drastic advertising revenue losses (down 7.3 per cent in 2012; six consecutive years of decline) (Edmonds, Guskin, Mitchell and Jurkowitz 2013) haven't taken nearly the toll on TV newsrooms. Nonetheless, the migration to multiple-screen production has clearly created downward pressure on rank-and-file television employees.

The results of this study demonstrate that there are countermeasures to the downward pressure. Receiving assistance from the organization, achieving satisfaction in the work being produced, and autonomy to conduct work he or she desires, provide stability among employees during chaotic times. In fact, in this study about 25 per cent (n =223) of news workers demonstrated that organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy were predictors of work quality, a measure that examined the news workers' perception of the work they produced. Work overload, however, had negative correlation to the other four variables.

Being overworked became a primary theme in the open-ended responses, as did social media obligations. It's no surprise that the two were co-conspirators in prompting news workers to complain about poor work quality. While other studies have applied a variety of methods to measure TV news quality (Rosenstiel, Gottlieb and Brady 2000; PEJ 2003; Spavins, Denison, Roberts and Frenette 2002; Scott, Gobetz and Chanslor 2008), this study avoided a subjective measure of news quality. Instead, this study was designed to allow news workers to broadly evaluate the quality of their work and the issues that influence quality. Ultimately, for a great many of them, quality is being sacrificed for audience interaction and additional content for use on multiple screens or additional newscasts.

This study is not without limitations. Attempting to manage sample size or especially sample type in an Internet survey is difficult. Although the survey was sent directly to TV news workers' emails, there are no assurances the recipients provided the responses to the survey instead of an imposter. Also, respondents sometimes try to provide the 'correct' answer and not the honest answer.

Nonetheless, this study shows that for TV news journalists, a time famine (Parkes and Thrift 1980) has taken hold. The results of this study support Barnhurst's (2011) notion that the time famine has depleted TV news workers of journalistic essentials such as investigative journalism or even proper editing of their work. The non-linear, multi-screen format of producing information for a local television station presents a certain amount of chaos that exchanges expediency and quantity for quality. Chaos theory tells us that while an organization cannot holistically be mired in chaos, some chaos allows for innovation and growth. Chaos such as deadlines, breaking news and evolving job responsibilities are inherent to journalistic work. However, if organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy are depleted, quality of work will suffer. When that happens, chaos will not cultivate innovation. It will simply be chaos in lieu of quality in TV newsrooms.

References

- Altheide, D. (1976). *Creating reality: How TV news distorts events*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Beehr, T.A., Walsh, J.T., and Taber, T.D. (1976). 'Relationship of stress to individually and organizationally valued states: Higher order needs as a moderator'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 61: 1, pp. 41-47.
- Belt, T. L., and Just, M. R. (2008). 'The Local News Story: Is Quality a Choice'? *Political Communication*, 25: 2, pp. 194-215.
- Berkowitz, D. (1992). 'Routine newswork and the what-a-story: A case study of organizational adaptation'. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 36: 1, pp. 45-60.
- Barnhurst, K.G. (2011). 'The problem of modern time in American journalism'. *KronoScope*, 11: 1-2, pp. 98-123.
- Cammann, C., Fichman M., Jenkins, G.D. & Klesh, J. (1983). 'Assessing the attitudes and perceptions of organizational members'. In S.E. Seashore, E.E. Lawler III, P.H. Mirvis, & C. Cammann (Eds.), *Assessing organizational change: A guide to methods, measures, practices* (pp. 71-138). New York: John Wiley.
- Edmonds, R., Guskin, E., Mitchell, A. and Jurkowitz, M. (2013). 'Newspapers: Stabilizing, but still threatened'. *The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism: The State of the News Media 2013*. <http://stateofthemediamedia.org/2013/newspapers-stabilizing-but-still-threatened/>. Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., and Sowa, D. (1986). 'Perceived organizational support'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71: 3, pp. 500-507.
- Fishman, M. (1982). 'News and non-events: Making the visible invisible'. In J.S. Ettema and D.C. Whitney (Eds.), *Individuals in media organizations: Creativity and constraint*, pp. 219-240. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Gans, H.J. (1979). *Deciding what's news: A study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time*. New York: Pantheon.
- Greppi, H. (2003). 'Study raises hackles'. *Electronic Media*, 22: 9, pp. 4-6.
- Hofstra University (2012). 'Latest RTDNA/Hofstra Survey Shows Increase in Local TV News Content and Jobs', press release, 16 July. http://www.hofstra.edu/Home/News/PressReleases/07162012_PapperRTDNAsurvey.html. Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Kiel, L. Douglas & Elliott, E. W. (1996). *Chaos theory in the social sciences: foundations and applications*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

- Jurkowitz, M., Hitlin, P., Mitchell, A., Santhanam, L., Adams, S., Anderson, M., & Vogt, N. (2013). 'The changing TV news landscape'. *The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism: The State of the News Media 2013*. <http://stateofthemediamedia.org/2013/the-changing-tv-news-landscape/>. Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Lucking, R. (1991). 'Chaos theory: Chaos – the origins and relevance of a new discipline'. *Project Appraisal*, 6: 1, pp. 23-32.
- Mendte, L. (2012). 'Philly's TV news is outdated as hell, and we're not taking it anymore'. *Philadelphia Magazine*, April. http://blogs.phillymag.com/the_philly_post/2012/04/16/local-philly-tv-news-outdated-dying/. Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Moses, L. (2003). 'Profiting from EXPERIENCE'. *Editor & Publisher*, 10, 3 February. <http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA97895446&v=2.1&u=ksstatelibraryofpa&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w>. Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Murphy, P. (1996). 'Chaos theory as a model for managing issues and crises'. *Public Relations Review*, 22: 2, pp. 95-113.
- Papper, B. (2012a). '2012 TV and Radio News Staffing and Profitability Survey'. *Radio, Television, Digital News Association*. Part I: TV news staffing soars to 2nd highest level ever with more hiring projected; profitability rises again. <http://www.rtdna.org/uploads/files/vv1.pdf>. Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Papper, B. (2012b). '2012 TV and Radio News Staffing and Profitability Survey'. *Radio, Television, Digital News Association*. Part II: A Record Amount of TV News...Again. <http://www.rtdna.org/uploads/files/vv2.pdf>. Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Papper, B. (2012c). '2012 TV and Radio News Staffing and Profitability Survey'. *Radio, Television, Digital News Association*. Part III: TV news business isn't limited to just TV. <http://www.rtdna.org/uploads/files/vv3.pdf>. Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Parkes, D. & Thrift, N. (1980). *Time, space, and places: A chronogeographic perspective*. New York: Wiley.
- PEJ Project (2003). 'Does ownership matter in local television news: A five year study of ownership and quality'. *Project for Excellence in Journalism*, 29 April. <http://www.journalism.org/node/244>. Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Plamondon, A.L. (2003). 'Proposed changes in media ownership rules: A study in ventriloquism'? *Communications & Law*, 25: 2, pp. 47-94.
- Potter, D., Matsa, K.E., & Mitchell, A. (2013). 'Local TV: Audience decline as revenue bounces back'. *The Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism: The State of the News Media 2013*. <http://stateofthemediamedia.org/2013/local-tv->

- [audience-declines-as-revenue-bounces-back/#fn-12978-3](#). Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Potter, D., Matsa, K.E., & Mitchell, A. (2012). 'Local TV: Audience rise after years of decline'. *The State of the News Media 2012*.
<http://stateofthemediacommission.org/2012/local-tv-audience-rise-after-years-of-decline/>. Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Powers, A. (1993). 'Competition, conduct, and ratings in local television news: Applying the industrial organization model'. *Journal of Media Economics*, 6: 2, pp. 37-44.
- Reinardy, S. (2007). 'Satisfaction vs. Sacrifice: Sports Editors Assess the Influences of Life Issues on Job Satisfaction'. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 84: 1, pp. 105-121.
- Reinardy, S., (2012). 'Job security, satisfaction influence work commitment'. *Newspaper Research Journal*, 33: 1, pp. 54-70.
- Rosenstiel, T., Gottlieb, C., & Brady, L.A. (2000). 'Local TV news project 1999: Quality brings higher ratings, but enterprise is disappearing'. *Project for Excellence in Journalism*, 1 March. <http://www.journalism.org/node/387>. Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Scott, D.K., Gobetz, R.H., & Chanslor, M. (2008). 'Chain versus independent television station ownership: Toward an investment model of commitment to local news quality'. *Communication Studies*, 59: 1, pp. 84-98.
- Spavins, T.C., Denison, L., Roberts, S., & Frenette, J. (2002). 'The measurement of local television news and public affairs programs'. *Federal Communications Commission*, 1 September. <http://www.fcc.gov/working-papers/measurement-local-television-news-and-public-affairs-programs>. Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Steinberg, B. (2008). 'The end of network news as we know it?' *Advertising Age*, 79(17), 28 April, 12.
- Strupp, J. (2007). 'What gives?' *Editor & Publisher*, 140: 5, pp. 36-44.
- Thietart, R. A., & Forgues, B. B. (1995). 'Chaos Theory and Organization'. *Organization Science*, 6: 1, pp. 19-31.
- Thorson, E. (2003). 'What 35 Years of Academic Research Tells Us', 7 April. <http://www.poynter.org/uncategorized/9600/what-35-years-of-academic-research-tells-us/>. Accessed 28 July 2014.

- Trigoboff, D. (2003). 'Network O&O newsies slam report slamming them'. *Broadcast & Cable*, 133: 11, p. 6.
- Tuchman, G. (1978). *Making news: A study in the construction of reality*. New York: Free Press.
- Weaver, D.H. & Wilhoit, G.C. (1986). *The American Journalist: A portrait of U.S. news people and their work*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Weaver, D.H. & Wilhoit, G.C. (1996). *The American Journalist in the 1990s: U.S. News People at the End of an Era*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Weaver, D., Beam, R., Brownless, B., Voakes, P., Wilhoit, G.C. (2007). *The American journalists in the 21st century: U.S. news people at the dawn of a new millennium*, Knight Foundation. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Waldman, S. (2011). 'The information needs of communities; the changing media landscape in a broadband age'. Washington, D.C.: *Federal Communications Commission*. <http://www.fcc.gov/document/information-needs-communities>. Accessed 28 July 2014.
- Yanich, D. (2011). 'Local TV news & service agreements: A critical look'. *Local TV News Media Project*, October. <http://www.udel.edu/ocm/pdf/DYanichSSAFINALReport-102411.pdf>. Accessed 28 July 2014.

Table 1.

Correlations for variables used in this study

	Work Quality	Job Satisfaction	Organizational Support	Autonomy	Work Overload
Work Quality N = 819	--				
Job Satisfaction N = 844	.533**	--			
Organizational Support N = 829	.705**	.666**	--		
Autonomy N = 825	.581**	.574**	.754**	--	
Work Overload N = 828	-.341**	-.231**	-.254**	-.232**	--

** Significant at 0.01

Table 2.
Multiple linear regression predicting perception of work quality through organizational support, job satisfaction and autonomy.

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized		Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1. (Constant)	3.721	.765		4.863	.000
Org Support	.278	.021	.550	13.081	.000
Job Sat	.177	.055	.109	3.240	.001
Autonomy	.144	.050	.110	2.887	.004