

## ETHICAL COMPLIANCE OF LOCAL TELEVISION JOURNALISTS

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### ABSTRACT

Based on the preliminary survey conducted by researchers on a number of local Malang television, this study shows that the journalist's ethical compliance factor only acts as a precondition towards the professionalism of television journalists, because there are three other important components, namely authority, supervision and service. If these three components are "activated", they will become an institutionalized system. So professionalism is a system of relations between authority, supervision, and institutionalized services. Authority is derived from competence, work activities, and organization. This article discusses the extent to which journalists adhere to writing a report. The emphasis here is given to the aspect of the method of examining the objectivity of journalists in selecting news. In reality, the mass media has been controlled by corporations and because of that obscures the meaning of press freedom which has been the most important jargon in the journalistic world. The relationship between media workers and capital owners is no longer merely a functional relationship, but it has shown the dominance that has become a model in various media institutions. Because both capital owners and media workers have the same goal, namely the survival of the media as a business and political institution framed in the name of the role of the media in the life of democracy.

**Keywords:** Ethical Compliance, Journalists, Local Television

### I. INTRODUCTION

In an era with technology that is very fast and balanced by a report that appears with a variety of patterns, it is very unlikely that the community is not exposed to media exposure. Whether consciously or unconsciously, the media with all kinds of activities have provided the content so that it becomes part of human life. At the beginning of the media present, it indeed runs in one direction with the meaning that media lovers can only enjoy the content provided by the media. However, with the development of the media and the community also have media literacy, the connoisseurs can also be active to participate in the media.

The development of the media is not only felt by the people of the capital city, but also the local people can also enjoy using technological sophistication. So that even though they are not in one area, they can also access various kinds of information. In some urban areas, people can easily access online media as a source for knowing developments in their region. Local media have been transformed initially only by analogue, they began to move online. This is because the community needs to fulfill the information they want to know.

The community's need for information is very high, but the public is still not smart to distinguish between news and views. Both of these are information, but in the world of journalism, information is defined as news and views. News is an event report that has news value, with actual, factual, important, and interesting characteristics. While views are opinions about an event or problem.

In a professional media, it must have its own division that has responsibility for information processing. The task of compiling the information is the editorial department, the editor in chief, the managing editor, reporters, journalists, correspondents, and contributors. Mentioning from the highest structure of editorial leaders to contributors is journalists. Because they all carry out journalistic activities regularly, in accordance with Law No. 40 of 1999.

### 1.1 ETHICAL COMPLIANCE

Journalists or the press are jobs that require routine and professional. Because the press is one form of mass communication that conducts journalistic activities routinely including searching, obtaining, storing, processing, and conveying information in the form of sound, images, writing, and sound and images. The media themselves with the emergence of the new order, helped to make up the market in this country. Print and electronic media are emerging and the numbers are very difficult to calculate, this is a great progress in disseminating information. In this discussion, the press was the spearhead of the media, this was felt even to the local media. Where the local community is also in dire need of various kinds of information that occurs around them. Be it economic, sports, social, education, criminal, or other information. The news seekers are also never separated from the name of a mistake, this is inseparable from the limitations of journalists in finding news in the field. So that local journalists still do not know fully how to apply the journalistic code of ethics as a derivative of Law Number 40 of 1999 concerning the Press.

But before discussing the journalistic code of ethics, we will see some obstacles in writing news first. According to Hikmat Kusumaningrat there are several signs and ethics for journalists in writing news. Indeed, the obstacles in collecting news often come from the provisions contained in the Journalistic Code of Ethics which is the profession of the journalist profession. The Journalistic Code of Ethics has undergone several changes and improvements. Thus, the establishment of this professional code relies heavily on the journalist's "conscience" or "conscience". While the journalists' signs in news writing are:

- a. Embargo; is a request to postpone a news with a time limit that has not been determined by the news source.
- b. Off-the-Record; Off the record is an agreement between news sources and journalists not to broadcast information provided by news sources. Both of these terms (embargo and off the record) are contained in the Journalistic Code of Ethics which journalists must respect.
- c. Hide the identity of news sources. Often news sources tell reporters, "Please, if you want to load this news, but don't call me the source." This can be a tactic used by news sources to escape responsibility from the information

provided. Therefore, journalists must be more careful, more careful and careful in placing news sources.

- d. Press Delict. Press offenses are all criminal acts or violations committed through the mass media.
- e. Public Libel. Public Libel is a violation or crime by the press of the state and state officials and the public. Included in the public libel are "divulging state secrets, insulting the president and vice president, humiliating the heads of friendly countries, tarnishing the flag of the state emblem, violating decency or pornography".
- f. Private Libel. Private Libel is a press offense against individuals.
- g. Haatzaai Artikelen. Haatzaai Artikelen comes from two Dutch words. So these words are essays or articles or narratives that contain provocation.

## 1.2 Journalistic Code of Ethics

Journalists often encounter journalists who misuse their status as journalists for personal interests or often do things that cause harm to others. Departing from here, what was born was called the Journalistic Code of Ethics. A legal and regulatory framework to ensure that the press can do work without obstacles. Respecting the rights of the community to objective information, journalists must convey correct information and disclose objective opinions on certain issues. The news must be based on facts and information where the truth can be examined.

Where all journalists are guided by the journalistic code of ethics whether they are in their territory or outside their territory. So there is a standard journalist ethic that issues rules for all journalists or members of the press who are in each region. Without reducing the contents of every regulation made by each country or the mass media, researchers assume that the essence of the entire journalistic ethics code is the same. Which also applies internationally. As a guideline, researchers use the code of ethics of Indonesian television journalists.

To guarantee the freedom of the press and fulfill the public's right to obtain correct information, Indonesian journalists need a foundation of professional moral and ethics as an operational guide in maintaining public trust and upholding integrity and professionalism. On that basis, PWI on its official website wrote and explained the Press Law No. 40 of 1999 that Indonesian journalists set and obey the Journalistic Code of Ethics ([www.pwi.or.id](http://www.pwi.or.id)) :

Clause 1. Indonesian journalists are independent, produce news that is accurate, balanced and not with bad intentions.

Clause 2. Indonesian journalists take legal measures in carrying out journalistic tasks.

Clause 3. Indonesian journalists do not always test information, report in a balanced manner, do not mix judgmental facts and opinions, and apply the principle of presumption of innocence.

Clause 4. Indonesian journalists do not make false, slanderous, sadistic and obscene stories.

Clause 5. Indonesian journalists must mention and broadcast the identity of victims of moral crimes and keep mentioning the identity of the child who is the perpetrator

of the crime.

Clause 6. Indonesian journalists may abuse the profession and not accept bribes.

Clause 7. Indonesian journalists do not have the right to refuse to protect resource persons who are not willing to know their identity or whereabouts, respect the provisions of the embargo, background information, and "off the record" in accordance with the agreement.

Clause 8. Indonesian journalists write or broadcast news based on prejudice or discrimination against a person on the basis of differences in ethnicity, race, color, religion, gender, and language and do not degrading the people of the weak, poor, sick, mentally handicapped or physically disabled.

Clause 9. Indonesian journalists respect the rights of informants about their personal lives, except for the public interest.

Clause 10. Indonesian journalists immediately revoke, rectify, and correct false and inaccurate news accompanied by an apology to readers, listeners and / or viewers.

Clause 11. Indonesian journalists serve the right of reply and proportional correction rights.

The power of the Television Journalist Code of Ethics is morally binding on every Indonesian Television Journalist who is a member of the Indonesian Television Journalists Association (IJTI). Journalists must be responsible to the audience and only to the audience. Journalists cannot be government mouthpieces. That opinion is of course true, but very conditional. That is, the spirit of dedication of the press is indeed oriented towards the community. That is for journalists who have graduated from "professionalism tests", who have achieved high technical and ethical implementation ratings. This is in accordance with the principle of fairness that includes elements of fairness (equity).

Furthermore, journalists must also be able to complete their duties in accordance with the deadline and based on the principle that the press is an agent of social control so that direct news (straight news) is born without opinions and interpretations. This assertion departs from the concept that the reality of life is not a neutral reality, but is influenced by economic, political, cultural and social forces.

In connection with this, press ethics in the critical paradigm are interpreted as part of censorship and journalists' self-control becomes something that must be underlined. Because, basically journalists in their press institutions are separate groups that face other groups, namely editors, capital owners, marketing, advertisers, and readers. Therefore, what happens is dialectical relations between groups and not just professional relations, which will thus be vulnerable to ethical problems. According to Paursen (1976), applied ethics is the result of the transition from micro ethics to macro ethics in relation to the development of science and technology. Micro ethics deals with individuals while macro ethics deals with structures or structures in society.

In the discussion on applied ethics, press ethics can be seen in three dimensions:

- 1) Dimensions of purpose, namely the efforts of journalists in achieving public welfare based on existential freedom and ethical responsibility.
- 2) The dimensions of means, namely those which enable the attainment of objectives by paying attention to the system and basic principles in the

organization of press institutions.

- 3) Dimensions of action, namely the quality of the journalist's morality as a subject that determines the formation of his communication speech acts.

Of the three dimensions above, it can be seen that press ethics contains individual aspects and social aspects. Individual aspects are related to the moral quality problem of the perpetrator, while the social aspect is related to the press ethics reflection on the social order problem.

### 1.3 JOURNALIST

The term new journalists emerged in Indonesia after the influences of communication science tended to be oriented towards the United States. This term then affects the naming of journalistic positions. For example, "redaktur" becomes "editor."

When the Alliance of Independent Journalists was established, there was awareness about the term journalist. According to this alliance, journalists are a profession or naming someone whose work is related to the contents of the mass media. Journalists include columnists, freelance writers, photographers, and editorial graphic design. But in reality the reference to its use, the term journalist refers more to the definition of journalists.

Meanwhile, the journalist, in defining the Indonesian Journalists Association, has to do with writing activities, including searching for data (research, coverage, verification) to complete the report. Journalists are required to be objective, this is in contrast to column writers who can express their subjectivity.

There are several conditions that must be met by a journalist, namely the attitude of a journalist to the news source. The attitude needed by a journalist for a news is:

- 1) Courteous and do not lower the source of the news, or vice versa do not consider the source of the news as "god". "God" news sources will be disastrous for a journalist because it will only make journalists focus on news sources and not on the news itself. In fact, another possibility that happens is that journalists will be regulated by news sources because news sources feel that they have the power.
- 2) Critical. Critical attitude is needed by a journalist to develop sensitivity to a problem or phenomenon that is developing. Like a child who wants to know something, a journalist must have a strong and critical curiosity towards things that are developing and happening in the community.
- 3) Prioritize conscience. When covering and reporting a story, a journalist should prioritize conscience compared to profit for the company and for himself. The meaning of prioritizing conscience here is to use affective sensitivity in reporting a matter by placing humanity as the main thing to protect the good name of the people in the news, or the person who becomes the victim and pay attention to the photos that will be published in a news in accordance with journalistic code of ethics that emphasizes conscience.
- 4) Appreciate the sources of news and information given (with a critical attitude).



The journalist organizations in Indonesia are the Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia, Aliansi Jurnalis Independen, Ikatan Jurnalis Televisi Indonesia, Indonesian Tourism Journalist Association.

#### **1.4 Local Television Media as a Local Information Provider**

Currently local television media is growing quite rapidly. This is because the community is in dire need of reporting about them. For example, in one of the local television stations in Malang, located in the Malang area, this television station provides choices for viewers in the Greater Malang area. Local television stations can benefit the market in the city of Malang, they provide very up to date reporting on the environment in the city of Malang. People who used to see news about the city of Malang very rarely, then local television stations gave news that could function as local news providers.

All of them have certainly been interested in political information, because the media can provide a series of stories or profiles that are useful for community assessment. So that not a few candidates for the election more devote their attention to local media. Because the election activity of the election can provide a value of its own and is a news material for local media. We can get high quality, medium, and sometimes just rumors. As written in the book Press Analysis, the Indonesian press does not need to pretend that it does not want to influence the political process. However, this position cannot be avoided. On the contrary, the Indonesian press needs to make the most of the position. For this reason, the Indonesian press must know about the changing political atmosphere. There is one thing in common with political actors: they always react to political issues that get large coverage of all the press. They feel they have to show their opinions regarding the political issue. As a result, the press can become an agent in establishing a political leader's agenda. For Gadi Wolfsfeld, the press could even become an agent in accelerating decision making. This shows that the press indirectly influences the political process.

From the theory outlined above can be obtained a relationship that is very meaningful for the media and a politics. This is very often the case in political reporting, there is a positive relationship between political information directed to the rise of social movements. This kind of incident has resulted in many people who suspect that the media or local television stations work a lot for one candidate or several candidates. The rise of reporting A candidates exceeds the quota or the time limit provided.

The above facts gave birth to the idea that the Indonesian press could "flirt" with social movements. That is, it is not impossible that there are parties who argue that the Indonesian press can work with social movements to create new political waves. Indonesian press, especially local ones, need to protect themselves so that they do not slide into horses riding certain parties' "rented" social movements.

Political turmoil in the current transition era raises the press a lot by making politics as news. Especially local media, can be a channel for a social movement run by a political party. Because of the desire to expose an activity, the party contacted the media, covering the activity so that it could be arranged for broadcast in a report. Because many local media lack supply in terms of the economy, it is not

uncommon for local media to provide a standard or price standard given to a party. Because of the lack of supervision carried out by KPID on a local media, it becomes an opportunity for capital owners to be able to construct Agas so that it does not look like the purchase of broadcast hours or more support that is raised by the media.

In its position as a developer and bearer of idealism, there is no doubt the position of the press media as a builder of public opinion. Many opportunities are used by figures who want to be famous in certain ways, especially with material rewards (money). Intelligence to utilize the media by raising issues within the frame of idealism is actually very commendable and must be accommodated. However, the interests (precisely the continuity) of the press life embarrass that not all of these ideals can be realized.

The description above gives an understanding that the role of the media in Indonesia, especially local media, is not yet objective. Many people even judge journalists who often cover in an office, because of the relationship of this closeness that causes a lack of control functions. There are also those who argue that the journalist is "the person is Si A". So that those who have certain interests use the press as a tool to promote.

## 2. CLOSING

As an organization, the mass media certainly has a purpose. And that goal often influences the content of the news. Media managers and journalists are not the only ones who determine the content of the news the most. They are only media workers who sometimes have to obey the rules of media companies. Therefore, at the organizational level, there is usually a micro dialectic between corporate interests and journalist idealism.

The journalists should be more subject to the rules written and agreed upon by several professional institutions that have been legalized, not even subject to the media patronage of the media. In this condition, journalist's professionalism cannot be assessed because the journalist is subject to company rules and owner intervention. Commercial aspects can defeat the public aspect.

This ethical compliance can be classified in several ways:

- 1) Protect and respect and respect the dignity of news sources:
  - a. Censorship of the names of perpetrators and victims who do not want to be mentioned.
  - b. Must censor visuals who are victims of immoral acts.
  - c. Provide a clear name and identity if the source of the news wants it.
- 2) Guidelines for ethical behavior:
  - a. The freedom of journalists in covering a story.
  - b. Reporter compliance with KEJ.
  - c. Tone and style of writing do not use words containing opinions.
- 3) Maintaining the truth of the news: The balance of journalists in the news.

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waves. Indonesian press, especially local ones, need to protect themselves so that they do not slide into horses riding certain parties' "rented" social movements.

A professional journalist is a journalist who understands journalistic technical skills and ethical compliance in carrying out his practice. But it is not easy for a person to become a professional. Naturally professionalism in America consists of five stages: the emergence of full-time work; the establishment of a school for training (training school); the establishment of a professional association (professional association); political agitation directed at the protection of the association legally; acceptance of a formal rule.

Local TV Media as a local information provider. This can only be conveyed by journalists who uphold professionalism, namely 1) journalists who have knowledge relevant to their fields; 2) have high ethical standards; 3) have high professional standards. These three things can be realized if the journalists are embedded in the attitude of objectivity.

Journalists must always be aware that their presentation has a big influence on changes in behavior, mindset, and public insight. A dish will grow empathy. The task of the mass media is also to educate the public, so that it is unfair if the filter to examine the meaning of a presentation is left entirely to the public without any responsible selection from the press workers for the presentation. The press is essentially not just a news seller with a menu based on market tastes and allows the market to provide a final and subsequent assessment of their choices.

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