



# ETHICS OF JOURNALISTIC COMMUNICATION IN CONDUCTING INVESTIGATIONS FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION

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## **Abstract:**

Every media competes to present information of public interest. Fierce competition between media institutions Current masses sometimes make them not work based on Some regulations written about the role and function of journalists in Indonesian. Disobedience to the rules by workers of journalist agencies can be seen from violations of journalistic ethics. The Code of Ethics for Journalism is a set of rules in the form of a Code of Ethics that binds practicing journalists. Good and true reporting must be in line with journalism ethics by prioritizing responsibility social to serve the information needs of the community. Based on the provisions of Law No. 40 of 1999 concerning the Press in Article 7 paragraph 2, journalists are required to have and obey the Code of Journalistic Ethics. This study discusses how a journalist carries out his duties professionally based on the Code of Ethics in carrying out investigations. The purpose of this study is to find out how the application of the journalistic code of ethics carried out by journalists or journalists in maintaining their professionalism in carrying out their duties. The research method used is qualitative descriptive method. Data collection techniques through interviews, observation, and documentation. The results showed that journalists or journalists in the city of Medan understand and have the same understanding of the journalistic code of ethics as a rule of law in carrying out journalistic duties. Journalists use ethical means when doing work as journalists.

**Keywords:** journalism, ethics, communication, investigation

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the world of journalism there are rules or guidelines that must be imposed by a journalist, namely rules regarding the journalistic code of ethics. The journalistic code of ethics is a very important set of values for journalists. The journalistic code of ethics is the foundation for professional morals and the guiding signs or rules as well as giving direction to journalists about what should be done and what should be avoided in carrying out their journalistic duties. As a code of conduct, this reference limits the good and bad of something to be done in the process of reporting and publishing news [1]. The journalistic code of ethics

is a pledge based on the conscience of journalists in exercising the freedom to express thoughts which is fully guaranteed by article 28 of the 1945 Constitution, which is the constitutional basis for journalists in carrying out their journalistic duties [2].

The implementation of the journalistic code of ethics is an order of the law. Article 7 paragraph 2 of Law No. 40 of 1999 concerning the press reads: *Journalists have and obey the Code of Journalistic Ethics*. This means that journalists who violate the journalistic code of ethics also violate the law. Journalists are required to understand the overall journalistic code of ethics in searching, covering and airing news. So that the news presented is in accordance with the facts, balanced, accurate and avoid things that can violate the application of the journalistic code of ethics [3]. Understanding the meaning of the code of ethics is done with the philosophy of ethics, with an understanding of the philosophy of ethics, professional workers will be able to make a critical assessment of a behavior. This code of conduct was created on the principle that accountability about its observance rests primarily with the conscience of every Indonesian journalist. Conscience is a consciousness that functions autonomously in the individual, not due to any authority outside the self concerned [4]. To have a conscience, by itself, must begin with ethical awareness, that is, by understanding the context of each action with things beyond the action itself. Things that are outside of action can be religious, and worldly.

In general, the Code of Journalistic Ethics contains things that can guarantee fulfillment of the responsibilities of a journalist to the public. Mass media Work based on a number of rules both written and unwritten. The operation of mass media in Indonesia is based on two laws related to the media, namely Law No. 40/1999 on the Press, and Law on the Press No.32/2002 on broadcasting [5]. With the code of ethics, the press establishes its firm stance regarding the scope and limits of press freedom, namely by affirming the limits to which there is a deviation from personal interests, the interests of the state and the public interest. Therefore, it is necessary to have an understanding and application of journalistic ethics. Conceptually, news needs to be based on the principle of prioritizing the interests of the audience. Based on this principle, journalists who cover news are required to mobilize all their resources and establish good communication with sources to report events and statements that will benefit the audience.

Ethics is a staple by journalists because it is seen as a means Orientation for humans to answer a fundamental question [6]. Dalam situasi ini, etika mau membantu kita dalam mencari nilai dan orientasi menyangkut tujuan dan pilihan tindakan agar kita dapat mengerti setiap keputusan tindakan yang kita ambil dan mampu bertanggungjawab terhadap keputusan itu. Ada pelbagai pendekatan ilmiah dalam mempelajari tingkah laku moral seseorang. Pendekatan ilmiah tentang tingkah laku moral dibagi menjadi tiga pendekatan, yaitu Deskriptif, Normative, dan Metaetika [7]. However, the study in this study has a scope at the level of normative ethics. Normative ethics is the most important part of ethics in which the most interesting discussions about moral issues take place. Normative ethics does not act as a neutral spectator but it involves itself and puts forward judgments about human behavior. For example, in the custom of styling, he no longer depicts the custom of styling that has existed in the culture of the past, but he refuses because it is contrary to human dignity. Normative ethical judgments are based on critical norms.

That is, he dared to ask questions and put forward judgments whether the norm was correct or not. Normative ethics examines the moral standards that should be adhered to in order to judge the good or bad of an action and try to provide moral guidelines on good (morally) habits or actions, by involving considerations of the risks / consequences of an action. The normative ethical study approach will set forth the reasons for a Behavioral decisions, good or bad, right or wrong, that ultimately rest on proper ethical norms or principles. Normative ethical approach critically questioning the appropriateness or incorrectness of various moral teachings because questioning what morality should be [8]. As a professional, journalists are required to respect prevailing values and ethics [9]. Ethical rules required by investigative journalists when faced with an unethical case such as corruption. Ethical decisions in The investigative journalist profession has actually been faced with ethical choices, especially when Being in a situation among the difficult choices to make when face a case that harms the public interest, namely whether to preached or vice versa with consequences that eventually return to morals and the journalist's principles.

Referring to the background of the above thinking, there is a need for research on journalistic ethics. Therefore, the author will conduct research entitled "Ethics Of Journalistic Communication In Conducting Investigations".

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses qualitative research methods in order to explain the object to be studied [10]. In the method carried out in conducting this research, the natural state of the object, namely a researcher, is an important part. The data collection process is carried out in a combination, namely a combination of data analysis that has an inductive or qualitative nature and the evaluation of qualitative is very leading to the meaning of conclusions in general. The subject contained in qualitative research is an informant, namely someone who shares information in the form of data and is desired by researchers about what will be researched [11].

Furthermore, in the process of collecting data in this study using the interview method. An interview is a meeting between someone and another person and exchanging opinions, information and ideas through questions and answers to find conclusions from the topic under study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted by researchers based on interview guidelines that had been prepared. Through interviews, it is easier for researchers to understand further information from informants for researchers to interpret circumstances and events that cannot be known through observation or observation. [10]

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION COMMUNICATION ETHICS

Communication ethics aims to provide good and bad guidelines for communicators in all professions. Ethics can be seen from the point: first, ethics in the sense of "moral values or norms being a handle for a person or a group in regulating its behavior", secondly, ethics also means as a collection of principles or moral values, what is meant is a code of ethics, and Third, ethics also means the science of good or bad, has been accepted in community and become a reflection material for a systematic research and Methodical. Ethical orientation is how to act in accordance with rules and can be held accountable for their actions [7].

Furthermore, based on the opinion of K. Bertens above, communication ethics What will be discussed in this study is more directed at the essence of ethics that third. Communication ethics in this case wants to invite journalists in making decisions related to freedom of expression, seeking news, freedom Responsible for determining the good or bad of an action based on his conscience and responsibility to the public for the facts that Preached. In this research analysis, an ethical analysis is considered adequate can always explain the foundation of such analysis as a principle Ethics used by departing from considerations of the complex Problems and risks that must be faced both benefits and Disadvantage.

## ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

### 1. Categorical Imperative Or Deontology

The Moral System of Deontology looks for the exact reason behind every action or statements that occur. This deontological ethic governs either or poor behavior or decisions taken based on morals naturally formed environment. The moral tradition of deontology is inherent directing communication actors. The perspective of deontology is very Pay attention to the terms and processes that make it possible to search goodness or virtue. Born to a German philosopher, Immanuel Kant [12]. Although "Moral Deontology" has differences in meaning with "Professional Deontology", but the two still have something in common which lies in the normative and imperative discourse , which contains obligations, expressed in a good/bad framework. Added Haryatmoko in practice with regard to Moral Deontology, journalists in addition to Relying on his conscience, in his journalistic practice is also directed by Professional Deontology [12].

Categorical Imperative or Deontology emphasizes in practice (process and purpose) journalists rely on conscience, based on processes that form naturally or without coercion and to Getting a good goal must go through a humanist process by means of which is expected but for the sake of the right purpose.

### 2. Utilitarian Or Teleological

This ethic places more emphasis on the principle of purpose, which can be insensitive to ethical demands in matters of procedure or choice of means. This ethic

is based on the benefit principle, which looks at economic trends that influencing like profit and justifying all means for the sake of Exposure to information. Utilitarian or Teleology puts results forward as part of the consequences of responsibility based on sound ethics majority. This ethic is based on the Utilitarian approach proposed by Jeremy Bentham. This kind of ethics overemphasizes the principle of benefit so it can be insensitive to ethical demands. This approach is more emphasis on purpose. In this case the purpose of obtaining information for the sake of general welfare. So, all possible actions of embodiment The general welfare will be considered moral [12].

### 3. GOLDEN MEAN

The Golden Mean is an ethic based on the tradition of Virtue Ethics). Virtue Ethics is seen as the basis for attitude decision making wisely as a central approach to morality. This ethical approach pioneered by among others Confucius, Aquinas and Aristotle [13]. This ethic is used as a middle ground (moderate) between two considerations extreme. Usually, these ethics are also referred to as Middle Voices that taken between Deontology and Teleology. In practice, a journalist sometimes violates borderline lines or making mistakes in

news search for the sake of get the story. All means are even lawful to get news. This condition is what Aristotle said was wrong one example of courages or simply foolhardiness in compulsion [14].

## **JOURNALISTIC PRINCIPLES**

The work of journalists is concerned with the principles of journalistic origination from broad social values and their actuality adapted from values existing social. The above ethical principles were adopted later in Translate to practice in journalism [15] :

- 1) Serve the public.  
Journalists as an extension of the public present information according to public needs. A reliable journalist can position itself as an audience and report information that important to the public. Serving the public is a top priority that must be achieved in a media company.
- 2) Monitor the powerful.  
The media as a monitor of power is not only focused on government but all institutions such as business and religious organizations. Journalists as media workers must always supervise such as: guard dog. Those are the principle conditions journalists must do. Based on this principle, the media can act as a buffer against consequences news that might endanger the public.
- 3) Be balanced and Fair.  
Journalists can see with the same point of view. Objective. Ideally, news that is informed to the public is balanced and Fair, there is no element of defense against either party. The challenge of a Journalists, that is, trying to sort out information that appears to contain contradictions between majority and minority publics.
- 4) Be Compassionate.  
This principle is almost the same as the Humanist value, where A journalist can be kind enough to help someone who is urgent needs his help on site while in the place of coverage. Journalist Can be warm and can prioritize priorities when faced with humanitarian cases.
- 5) Be independent.  
Journalists in carrying out their activities can stand alone in covering the news without fear and pressure.
- 6) Be Courageous.  
Journalists have a brave spirit in fighting the coverage. Courageous journalists can determine wisely which course of action the right and good, where should he think about his safety if covering conflict cases.

## **INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM**

Koszik and Pruys define journalists as the profession of people who related to the collection, review, evaluation and dissemination of information or interpret actual news [16]. Donsbach defines a journalist as someone who involve themselves in shaping the content of the mass media, such as collecting, evaluate, review, process or disseminate information, performances or comment [16]. In gathering facts on the ground, a journalist works in accordance with the basic rules that have been previously determined. Investigation itself is one of the journalistic tools in collecting news. According to Mac Douggal, journalism is the

activity of gathering news, finding facts and reporting events. As a fact-finding tool, investigation has a characteristic in its news search techniques. Journalism activities.

According to Weinberg, Investigative reporting is reporting through one's own initiative and work results Personal matter to readers, viewers and observers. In many ways, The subject of the preached wants that matter that is in The investigation remains uncovered. Investigative journalism will be the way to go in order to correct errors, which relate to a systems or facts that are deliberately concealed from the public [17]. According to Lukas Luwarso, conducting investigations must have persistence and strong sensitivity and analysis. Because doing an investigation is the same opened the door and the mouth was deliberately closed tightly. As a Investigative journalists required a strong stimulation of curiosity about a suspicious events, along with high analytical power, then Such a nature would lead to the dismantling of a deviation. The work of investigative journalists is the work of individual journalists.

Ideas are not copies of other people's investigations. Ideas that arise from individuals Journalists grappling with anxiety about the social, political, economic world, and so on, which may be hidden or even hidden.

According to Lyod, investigative journalists point to other ways to understand the truth, and state false premises of force an modern information sophistication. They don't just describe accuracy or news development, but analyze reportable information to the public. Investigative journalists expose the truth found in field, report errors, and invite/interpret the public to Increasingly critical of the news.

Investigative journalists report more in-depth and lengthy facts, which Presenting more interesting writing from less viewing mainstream media Investigative journalism can improve the quality of journalism work in the media aforementioned. Septiawan Santana said the characteristics of investigative journalism are: Moral Attitude, Dangerous Project, Hidden Area, Docs and Paper, and Investigative Journalist [18].

1) Moral Attitude

Moral Attitude was born, from the beginning journalists decided to do investigative reporting. The values and principles in investigative reporting contain clear moral elements and attitudes, such as exposing depravity and conveying information to the public more correctly and previously never obtained completely and completely. Moral attitudes are also shown in tenacity of persistence and striving for information as accurate as possible. He has high professionalism and integrity in exposing public lies.

2) Dangerous Project

Dangerous Project, a condition that cannot be denied, if indeed some parties are dissatisfied or accept the facts found by investigative journalists. They may resort to various means if they really do not want the correct information to be known to the public.

3) Hidden Area

The activity of journalists obtaining other information data and being more courageous in penetrating important sources makes it difficult to find typical journalists of this kind in public spaces. He went largely unpublicized and entered areas that were not widely attended by the public. It enters a rarely touched source of information. Document

4) Docs and Paper

Old files, libraries, documents that have been stored in various places provide more accurate information, comprehensive, factual, and can expand sources of information. Paper and

Documents are very helpful for investigative work because they can multiply information and help in constructing questions as well as hypotheses.

Investigative Journalist

- 5) Pete S Steffens mentioned several things to be a good investigative reporter, including always wanting to know, being able to find out, being able to understand, being able to tell the public, wanting action, caring about community problems (cares about people also). And in order to have these abilities, journalists have sufficiency: fact knowledge, private conscience / reader, public action, laws against greed (laws/against greeds), social improvement (reform). What Pete S Steffens mentions shows the process as an investigative journalist requires long and continuous struggles and practice.

In the process, investigative journalism sometimes violates ethics because it works more like intelligence. In order to get news, all means done such as spying, supervising or interfering with other people's damage. All of this is done in the public interest where the public deserves to know the fact.

## CONCLUSION

Based on research that has been conducted related to Investigative Journalistic Communication Ethics, so it can be concluded that communication ethics is a moral idea, the idea of conveying thoughts and hearts, so that when we want to convey it to others, polite ethics are needed, good speech, which can be easily understood but not offend others. This refers to the assessment of the Researcher, namely Indonesian journalists are independent, produce accurate, balanced, and not bad faith news. Indonesian journalists take professional ways in carrying out journalistic duties. Meanwhile, the implementation of the Journalistic Code of Ethics for journalists is in accordance with what has been stated in the Journalistic Code of Ethics. And so far, the problem of violations can be solved well.

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