

THE ROLE OF THE PRESS COUNCIL IN ENFORCEMENT OF THE PRESS LAW AND THE JOURNALISTIC CODE OF ETHICS IN THE ERA OF DIGITALIZATION

Indrianti Azhar Firdausi*

Communication Science Serang Raya University, Indonesia

Article history:

Submission 21 June 2021

Revised 22 June 2021

Accepted 23 June 2021

**Corresponding author:*

E-mail:

indriantiazhar@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the role of the press council in enforcing the press law and journalistic code of ethics where digital developments are currently very developed, especially media that utilize new media platforms. Not all online mass media are legal entities and not all news that is conveyed through online media follows a journalistic code of ethics, giving rise to overlapping perceptions and activities due to the lack of understanding of journalists and the public in the midst of easy access to information. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method, data collection is collected through observation and documentation sourced from literature and document studies that examine the phenomenon of digitalization dynamics around press laws and journalistic codes of ethics. There are a number of efforts from the press council, including enforcing the press law on online mass media by carrying out a number of verification processes including administrative verification, factual verification and content verification. The third verification cannot be carried out because of the constraints of human resources and budget. A mass media that receives a report will be handled and mediated by the press council if the mass media is already a legal entity. Meanwhile, the enforcement of the press code of ethics is carried out by first classifying journalism activities based on whether the mass media is a legal entity or not, then screening complaints of violations of the code of ethics and reprimanding the problematic mass media to apologize and clarify the misinformation that has been published.

Keywords: Press law, Journalistic code of ethics, Digitization, New media.

Introduction

Regulation and etiquette are things that are absolutely necessary, especially in the era of globalization which provides humans with easy access to convey information through many channels. With the large flow of information circulating on the internet, it becomes a

challenge for law enforcement in the world of communication.

The development of digital technology provides new opportunities in conveying information and news where the press industry adapts to new media norms. However, the problem is that there is a demand to pursue a

How to cite:

Firdausi, I. A. (2021). The role of the press council in enforcement of the press law and the journalistic code of ethics in the era of digitalization. *Indonesian Journal of Social Science Research*, 2(1), 21 – 25. doi: 10.11594/ijssr.02.01.03

digital platform algorithm score to reach more readers or viewers, often the problem arises from mainstream media or mainstream media that find themselves contradicting the journalistic code of ethics. When this is done repeatedly, the credibility of the mainstream media is questionable.

According to a 2019 press council survey, the conclusion is that people rely on online media or social media as the main source of information. Even to check the truth of information, online media ranks first, then television and then social media newspapers. The social media that is most trusted by the public is YouTube at 51.7% followed by Instagram, this survey shows an anomaly in Indonesian society where they believe more in mass media on the otherhand they also consume information through social media which can also be accessed easily. How the press council responds to this in an effort to enforce the journalistic code of ethics and the application of the press law, especially in the digital realm.

Not all information can ultimately be protected by the press council, while the forms of media are increasingly diverse and out of the box. So that violations of the code of ethics for journalism are increasingly diverse and the enforcement of the press law is increasingly absurd to implement.

According to a member of the press council for complaints and enforcement of the journalistic code of ethics, Arif Zulkifli, said that there were 600-800 reports related to violations of the code of ethics by the media, but some reports contained violations committed by cyber media, namely media that did not use paper but circulated in the cyber world. There are still many violations of the code of ethics committed by online mass media, for example there is a press conference then the journalist writes the entirety of the press release and does not confirm the parties concerned.

The phenomenon that occurs today is that everyone can become a journalist, for example leaving the house to see an accident, then documenting it and publishing it on social media, has become a journalist in a simple sense, but does not meet the criteria for journalistic activities because journalistic activities are based on

Law No. 40 of 1999, one of which is must be periodically and in accordance with the public interest.

According to Arif Zulkifli, the press council had received a complaint, which questioned the status of mainstream media on social media, which discussed news that had slanderous and slanderous forewords. Or another case, for example, a famous singer, call him Anji, who interviewed a doctor who claimed to be able to treat covid. In this case, the ethical element is important whether the public can trust the credibility of the interviewee specifically who is known to be wrong. If the youtuber posts shopping activities, of course it cannot be categorized as a journalistic activity because there is no element of public interest information.

The problem is that they do not meet the press requirements which carry corporal punishment, so they do not receive protection or mediation from the press council.

This study will discuss the role of the press council in enforcing the press law and journalistic code of ethics in the digitalization era with various changes in situations and conditions.

Method

This study uses a qualitative methodology. Bogdan and Taylor define qualitative methodology as a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior (Moleong, 2009). Descriptive research is a study to find facts with the right interpretation, accurately describe the properties of some group or individual phenomena to determine the frequency of occurrence of a situation to minimize can and maximize reliability.

In this study, the researcher used a case study approach to explore qualitative data. A case study is a research strategy to carefully investigate a matter by collecting complete information using various data collection procedures. In addition, case studies are also conducted to gain in-depth understanding and analyze more intensively about an individual, group or situation. (Creswell, 2014). This intensive and in-depth case study research is aimed at obtaining a complete picture of the subject being studied with the scope of the research

covering the whole of life or only certain aspects.

Data collection technique

1. Observation

Researchers used group observation techniques, namely observations made by a group of research teams on an issue that was raised to be the object of research (Bungin, 2007: 117).

2. Documentation

Documentation study is a way of collecting data through archives, including books on opinions, theories, arguments or laws and others related to research problems. The analytical technique used in this research is descriptive qualitative analysis. This data analysis technique describes, interprets and describes the data collected systematically and systematically. To present the data to make it more meaningful and easy to understand is to use interactive model analysis (Huberman, 1992:16).

New media

New media is a term to describe the convergence of digital communication technologies that are computerized and connected to the network. Examples of media that represent new media, namely, the internet, television programs, films, magazines, books, newspapers, and other types of print media do not include new media.

According to Severin in Fachrudin (2019) argues that new media has characteristics, namely:

It has entered the digital era, which then allows the difference in media formats to be blurred as between print and electronic because both can be passed through the same channel.

Have interactive nature

No longer recognize national boundaries. (Werner, 2008)

The emergence of new media is a transformation in the concept and relation between self (selfawareness/entity) and reality materialized through mechanical reproduction and symbolized through technology. (Fachrudin, 2019).

New media, especially the internet, created the idea of a personal newspaper (daily me) where the content was formulated based on individual tastes and desires realistically. The more this happens and can be applied to radio and television, the less mass media will provide a common base of knowledge and views. Some evidence in online news points to trends that are local but potentially global. At the same time there is evidence to suggest that at least in the news there is still an observable need for news reliability and the trust that some news sources and commentators have (Mcquail, 2011).

Results and Discussion

In addition to the regulation of the organization of mass media, it is a law. The implementation of mass media also requires behavioral guidelines, on moral sanctions to regulate humans in interacting with media which has a complex aspect, namely in the form of ethics.

When the mass media is in a social context and consumed by the audience, then at that time the mass media are faced with ethical problems. Thus, it can be said that the mass media are basically not value-free.

The entire process of production, distribution and consumption of communication messages in mass media is the result of the interaction of actors, consumers, and distributors of communication. It is this interaction that inevitably places the communication process within the framework of human action. All forms of good human actions and bad actions are the main points of ethical problems.

In new media according to Mcquail (2014) there are characteristics to distinguish old media from new media from the user's perspective. Among them:

Interactivity as indicated by the ratio of response or initiative from the user's point of view to the source or sender's offering.

Social presence or sociability, experienced by users, means that personal contact with other people can be brought about by the use of media.

Media richness, the extent to which the media can bridge different frames of reference, reduce ambiguity, provide more guidance, involve more senses, and be more personal.

Autonomy, the degree to which a user feels in control of content and use, independent of the source.

The element of play, use for entertainment and pleasure, as opposed to the nature of functions and tools.

Privacy, related to the use of certain media and/or content.

Personalization, the degree to which content and use are personal and unique.

In this case, the mass media that switched from old media to new media underwent a number of changes in their activities and forms of presentation.

The press in the press law number 40 of 1999 is a journalist who works in a media, where the media is a legal entity, clearly, carries out the activities or roles of the press and conveys information that reaches the masses. The limitation of the scope of the press is that it is a legal entity, for people who are active on the youtube channel as youtubers doing talk shows, diligently interviewing on IG stories (instagram), if they are not legal entities then they are questioned about their coverage by other organizations then they do not get protection from the press council.

Where the press law No. 40 guarantees that if there is a violation of the code of ethics committed by the mass media, the media does not receive a corporal punishment but gets an ethical penalty in which the media is asked to apologize or clarify. Meanwhile, if using the ITE Law and then processed by the police, they will receive corporal punishment.

We know that before the reformation, the fate of the press was in the hands of the government, which could do anything to the press, including banning mass media and arresting journalists who were in front of the government.

For this reason, in the formulation of the Press Law No. 40 of 1999, this concern was eliminated, where the press that violates the code of ethics only gets ethical punishment because the press has an important task, namely conveying information so that the public knows information, where in the 1945 law regulates the public has the right to get information. In practice there are still many journalists who violate the code of ethics in carrying out their

journalistic duties, the simplest example of violating the press journalism code is to load a news story and then only appoint one source, even though one of the journalistic codes of ethics in confirming sources is cover both sides, meaning that journalists must confirm both sides. Parties with the aim of producing balanced information.

The press council categorizes four journalism practices in social media, including:

Mainstream media that are legal entities and have channels such as youtube, instagram, for example kompas.com, republica.com, tempo.com, where the social media channels used continue to return information that has been released on the main media through social media.

Journalists from mainstream media who have YouTube channels and create their own talk show programs. Confirming the relevant sources according to the theme based on the journalism code of ethics. The program can be protected by the press council because it is under the auspices of its parent mass media. For example, Budiman Purworejo from Kompas, if certain parties question the content of the program, they can still get protection from the press council.

People who were previously in the mainstream media then independently created social media channels. For example, Karni Ilyas, who was originally active on the ILC TV program, later has his own YouTube channel which is also followed by many followers. Kanal Karni Ilyas Law Club is not affiliated with TV One, so it raises concerns that if there are demands from certain parties, the press council cannot protect these activities.

Parties who are not journalists at all but carry out their duties as journalists, such as Deddy Corbuzier, Gita Wiryawan, who have personal YouTube channels that are followed by millions of followers, therefore they are called influencers. they conduct interviews with interesting, light and flexible content. However, the problem is that if there is a violation of the journalistic code of ethics or a violation of the press law, the press council cannot protect their activities, of course there is an opportunity to receive corporal punishment if it is proven that there is an error in practice.

The press council has collaborated with the National Police in the form of an MoU between the press council and the police. If there is a complaint about the mass media that complains to the police, the police will first delegate the case to the press council for ethical punishment. If the handling has been carried out but the media still violates, then the case will be transferred to the police.

Basically the journalists who formulated the Press Law No. 40 of 1999, the idea was very futuristic that all media were given the freedom to carry out the function of their journalistic activities in meeting public needs with the condition that the media had to be legal entities (PT, Foundation, Organization). Then there are additions that do not change the idea, where there must be verification including:

Administrative verification, so all official media documents are checked by the press council.

Factual verification, media in remote areas received a visit from the press council to verify the practice of implementing journalism and the management system implemented, starting from the management structure to the journalists' salary slips.

Content verification. This verification has not been carried out by the press council due to budget and manpower constraints, where the press council must verify the content of all mass media so that it is properly monitored.

The series of verifications cannot be maximized, especially in content verification. If all three can be implemented, it is hoped that in the future there will be a clear harmonization of information traffic for the Indonesian press.

Conclusion

Basically media ethics is a moral awareness of the obligations of the mass media and recognize the assessment of the mass media is good and bad, right and wrong. Ethics is a joint about moral formation and principles of right and wrong. Media organizations have been regulated by legislation and are also equipped with ethical principles attached to social institutions.

The enforcement of the journalistic code of ethics and the press law in the current digitalization phenomenon creates overlapping perceptions in the presentation and process. People who use online mass media as well as social media to get information do not understand each function, both from the news provider (mass media) and the use of the platform.

Seeing this, the press council seeks to enforce the press law on online mass media by carrying out a number of verification processes including administrative verification, factual verification and content verification. The third verification cannot be carried out because of the constraints of human resources and budget. A mass media that receives a report will be handled and mediated by the press council if the mass media is already a legal entity.

Meanwhile, the enforcement of the press code of ethics is carried out by, firstly classifying journalism activities based on whether the mass media is a legal entity or not, secondly, filtering complaints of violations of the code of ethics, and reprimanding the problematic mass media to apologize and clarify misinformation that has been published. Third, if the mass media makes the same mistake without heeding a warning from the press council, the case will be transferred to the police using the ITE Law which results in the media being punished with corporal punishment.

References

- Bungin, Burhan. (2007) *Penelitian Kualitatif. Komunikasi, Ekonomi, Kebijakan Publik dan Ilmu Sosial Lainnya*. Putra Grafika. Jakarta
- Fachrudin, Andi (2019), *Journalism Today*. Jakarta: Prenadamedia Group
- Creswell, John W. (2014), *Research Design: Pendekatan Kualitatif*. Remaja Rosdakarya Offset. Bandung
- Mcquail, Dennis. (2011). *Teori Komunikasi Massa*. 6th Edition. Jakarta. Salemba Humanika.
- Moleong. Lexy J. (2007). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Remaja Rosdakarya Offset. Bandung
- Severin, Werner J. (2008). *Teori Komunikasi Sejarah, Metode, dan Terapan di Dalam Media Massa*. Jakarta: Kencana-Prenada Media Group.