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# THE ROLE OF JOURNALISTS IN UNCOVERING THE MURDER OF BRIGADIER JOSHUA

By

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# ABSTRACT

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This research aims to determine the role of journalists as part of the supervisory pillar of the authorities, in reporting on the murder case of Brigadier Joshua. Journalists play a role in providing accurate information regarding the actual situation, in this case uncovering the murder of Brigadier Joshua. So that the tangled thread of the murder case of Brigadier Joshua committed by his superiors can be revealed. To answer this problem, researchers used qualitative research methods and conducted in-depth interviews using a phenomenological approach. The results of the research show that the initial information conveyed by the Indonesian National Police (Polri) regarding the death of Brigadier Yosua gave rise to skepticism among journalists so this information was not immediately accepted. Regarding this matter, journalists stimulate the public by using diction, for example with the word "irregularities". Journalists who initially only conveyed information and tended to be passive, became active players through verification and independent investigations carried out to take various angles or framing of the case in question so that they were able to move the parties to react and make this case an important issue within the National Police that must be resolved immediately, and demands the government to enforce the law as fairly as possible.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Monday, July 11 2022 is the beginning of a change in the face of the National Police institution. Right on that day, a piece of news appeared published byTribunJambi.com entitled "Brimob Member from Jambi Killed After Shootout in Jakarta" left question marks from Brigadier Yosua's family members because of the confusing explanation from the Police. This sparked the curiosity of Indonesian citizens because the media began to report on the odd events at the house of Ferdy Sambo, who at that time was still a high-ranking National Police officer. Tuesday, 12 July 2022 The Head of State of the Republic of Indonesia (Kapolri) formed a special team to reveal the facts of the shooting incident that occurred at Ferdy Sambo's house [1]

In the initial process, Bharada E was named the main suspect because he was involved in a shootout that took the life of Birgadir Yosua, but Bharada E's confession changed on August 5 2022 and the defendant was willing to provide honest and open information. Apart from that, Bharada E also asked for protection from the Witness and Victim Protection Agency (LPSK) to become a justice collaborator [2]. This case eventually became a major case because it was suspected that someone with great influence was involved in taking a role, especially as public suspicion was directed at the Inspector General of Police (Irgenpol) Ferdy Sambo, who initially denied being involved in the murder of Brigadier Yosua. As far as a squirrel jumps, it will fall too is a quote to describe what Ferdy Sambo experienced because, on August 9, 2022, National Police Chief General Listyo Sigit Prabowo announced that Ferdy Sambo and three other people were named as suspects.

With the murder case of Brigadier Joshua, there is the potential for injury to civilian supremacy. Police officers who arbitrarily use their power and access to weapons can seriously threaten civilians who are considered a

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nuisance [3]. This is where a civilian role as supervisor of the National Police is needed. In order to maintain a democratic atmosphere, the armed forces who have monopoly power over the use of violence must be under civilian supervision [4]. One of the civilian parties who was the key actor in starting the commotion as a result of the case involving one of the National Police's top officials, namely the Press.

Nowadays, the development of information and communication technology has entered New Media (New Media). Denis McQuail (in Lintang Muliawanti, 2018) explains that New Media is a condition where there is interconnected access to individual audiences as recipients and senders of messages, interactivity, diverse uses as an open character and its ubiquitous nature [5]. Through reporting on the irregularities in the death of a police officer as an implementation of information disclosure in New Media, journalists indirectly took part in uncovering a major case of the murder of Brigadier Joshua. To be able to uncover the murder case of Brigadier Yosua, journalists need shrewdness to observe everything and journalist integrity in carrying out the Journalist code of ethics.

Reporting on the murder of Brigadier Joshua was not without problems, the pressure actually came from the police. According to Aryo Tondang, a Jambi Tribune journalist when interviewed on the channel Youtube Suryatv – Indonesia Latest News with the title "Live Tribunjambi - Journalist Opens the Murder of Brigadir Yosua", Right after the Jambi Tribune published the news entitled "Brimob Member from Jambi Dies After Shootout in Jakarta", Aryo Tondang was contacted by the Regional Police's Directorate of Security Intelligence (Ditintelkam) Jambi advised the Jambi Tribune not to make noise, but Aryo Tondang replied that the voice of the victim's family must be continued.

Not only did the Jambi Tribune experience intervention from police officers, the pressure was also felt by two journalists CNN Indonesia.com and 20Detik. Thursday afternoon, June 14 2022, when the two journalists were in the process of searching for sources, they met the cleaning staff at the housing complex at the scene of the murder of Brigadier Yosua. While they were on their way to the source's house, they were approached by 3 police officers without identification who forcibly took the cellphones of the two journalists and deleted the investigative recordings [6]. Pressure after pressure is felt by journalists, this makes it possible for journalists not to carry out the journalistic code of ethics if they fall into temptation or obstacles and hinder the process of conveying the truth.

The faster dissemination of information, the sensitivity of journalists who are quick to cover a case and the integrity of journalists who refuse intervention from police officers, have made the murder incident of Brigadier Yosua a very big matter and have made many institutions including the President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, highlight the steps taken by the National Police to thoroughly investigate the case and tidying up myself to complete some of the homework that arose when the Ferdy Sambo case was revealed as revealed by Sugeng Teguh Santosa fromIndonesia Police Watch (IPW) in an interview with Narasi, explained that there is a mafia group within the National Police. Apart from that, Forensic Psychologist Reza Indragiri Amriel, assessed that there is a code of silence attitude within the National Police, namely an attitude to cover up criminal cases involving the Police.

Not only do they have to complete their own duties, the National Police is also responsible for restoring the trust of the Indonesian people. Based on data obtained by the Indonesian Survey Circle (LSI), the level of public trust in the police decreased after news of the murder of Brigadier Yosua. In 2019, the level of public trust in the National Police was 72.1%. The survey was again carried out on 11-20 September 2022, namely after the Ferdy Sambo case emerged. As a result, the level of public trust in the National Police decreased to 59.1% [7].

Based on the description above, the author decided to find out more about the role of journalists as part of the supervisory pillar of the authorities, in reporting on the murder case of Brigadier Joshua.

# 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This type of research is descriptive. Descriptive research is a form of research that aims to describe the phenomena that occur. According to Furchan, descriptive research is research that is organized to obtain information on the status of a symptom while the research is being carried out [8]. Furthermore, to explain the perceptions of the research sample, the researcher must understand the sample directly [8]. Therefore, this research uses qualitative methods, namely research used to examine audiences, history, behavior, organizational functions and social activities [9]. The approach used to maximize research is a phenomenological approach, namely explaining the meaning of concepts or phenomena experienced by several individuals [10]. In phenomenological research, researchers attempt to answer questions about how someone interprets the events or experiences they experience. The focus of phenomenological research is basic things, fixed structures, the essence of life experiences and human groups.

The key informant in this research is Muhammad Akbar Wijaya (News producer at the Narasi News Agency) and the informant in this research is a journalist who has published journalistic works. The collection technique is carried out in several ways, namely, interviews, namely data collection techniques through verbal communication with questions and answers between the researcher and the research sample, the aim is to understand the meaning or point of view of the sample regarding the topic being researched; observation, carried out

required is news sources that reported on the murder case of Brigadier Joshua.

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systematically and deliberately through the observation process. The observations made in this research were unstructured observations, that is, they were not prepared; and documentation, namely the collection of a number of documents needed as reference information data in accordance with the research problem. The documentation

#### 3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The awareness that journalism is a profession that is directly responsible for the truth in the public must be reason enough to make journalists act as supervisors of the authorities. In previous research written by Irman Syahriar (2019), journalists were described as being like coins that had two sides. The first aspect is that journalists are a noble profession because their duties and responsibilities are to determine policies and decisions required by certain parties [11]. However, on the other hand, journalists are faced with important values when carrying out their profession, namely, the value of responsibility, the value of integrity, the value of honesty and a simple value that needs to be considered is the value of prudence in work. When carrying out their work, journalists must be serious because with just one mistake, they will immediately face the law and code of ethics through the Press Council. Journalists must have sensitivity to the tasks they carry out, because information is the main aspect used as reference material by all parties in determining their attitudes. Akbar Wijaya as the key informant in this research believes that journalists must be the eyes and ears of the public, which means that everything that happens, especially regarding the interests of the public, means that the information should be disseminated and known.

Furthermore, Akbar Wijaya said that even if a journalist is faced with a situation that encourages or forces him to change the substance of the news, it is the journalist's obligation to refuse and choose the public interest. Therefore, journalists must have legal protection and have broad access to obtain information that may not be known to the general public. To guarantee this, it is necessary to pay attention that press institutions in Indonesia must be affiliated with the Press Council, namely the institution which has the task of providing legal protection to the press while carrying out journalistic duties. The Press Council was given the mandate contained in Law No. 40 of 1999 concerning the Press in article 15, namely paragraphs (1) and (2), which read: 1) In an effort to develop press freedom and improve the life of the national press, an independent Press Council was formed; 2) The Press Council carries out the following functions, a. Protecting press freedom from interference from other parties; b. Carrying out studies for the development of press life; c. Establish and supervise the implementation of the Journalism Code of Ethics; d. Provide consideration and seek to resolve public complaints regarding cases related to press reporting; e. Developing communication between the press, society and government; f. Facilitate press organizations in formulating regulations in the press sector and improve the quality of the journalism profession; and g. Registering press companies [12].

In terms of principles, according to informant III, the duty of journalists as supervisors is proof of maintaining democracy in a country. Supervision is carried out on every aspect of the three main institutions in Indonesia, namely the Executive, Judiciary and Legislative. With the supervision carried out by journalists, the authorities who have more authority cannot act as they please and commit fraud because the public eye carried out by journalists watches their every move. A similar thing was stated in one of the studies by Abdul Halik in his article entitled Atmosphere of Press Freedom, one of the two pieces of evidence that determines that a country is a democratic country is that there is freedom to express opinions and the existence of opposition, meaning, in a democratic country, the government/general authority criticized, given advice or even supervised in depth [13]. Furthermore, in an article written by Kristina and Benni Setiawan, Irman Syahriar in an article entitled "The Function of the Press as a Cause of Information in Law Enforcement in Indonesia", argues that the Parliamentary System, which appears to be a system of legislative control over the executive, will become weakened because in In a condition where the presence of a political party or coalition that becomes too dominant will disrupt the work of the legislature as executive controller. What's worse, there is a possibility that this control will be reversed, namely that the executive will control the legislature. Here journalists can take on a rolethe fourth estate whose job is to carry out checks and balances through criticism and management of public opinion [11].

Supervisory duties will not run as they should if journalists do not hone their skills to support them in their work. According to Akbar Wijaya, through sharp writing and presenting interesting news, it is hoped that it will not only attract the attention of those who enjoy the work but will be able to move the audience to react. Therefore, Akbar Wijaya stated that training and competency tests are activities that must be carried out by journalists. Informant III stated that journalists must have the ability to see broadly, not just focus on a case, more than that understand the impact of the case in the future. Informant II added that journalists are not only careful in writing and other soft skills, having sharp instincts can also help process and develop information.

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In practice, efforts to search for and report the truth to the public do not always run smoothly. The possibility of getting pressure or intervention from other parties is very large. Therefore, journalists are one of the civil parties who have investigative authority with protection regulated by law. However, monitoring efforts cannot only be limited by external parties. Editors/sponsors/financiers have the opportunity to select news that is deemed to have no selling value, thus reducing the chance of the truth reaching the public. According to Informant I, there are 3 parties who regulate editorial content, namely the authorities, capital owners and advertisers. Sometimes, these three elements intervene in the news content which can limit journalists' movements. In the provisions of the press law regarding unlawful acts based on Article 4 Paragraph (2), the national press is not subject to censorship, banning or prohibition of broadcasting [14]. This provision illustrates that intervention in any form against the national press is a threat to the independence and freedom of the national press. According to Munir Fuady, restrictions on press freedom are part of anti-democracy which includes press restraints, press bans, censorship, or prohibitions before publication [12]. Nowadays, due to the development of information technology, there are more and more ways to threaten or intervene, one of which is hacking carried out by parties who want to thwart efforts to disseminate information.

Judging from the many challenges and obligations faced by journalists in the process of becoming the ears and eyes of the public, it is ironic that many journalists have not had their welfare taken care of. According to Informant III, with very high working hours and demands, unfortunately the welfare of journalists is often not paid attention to. In summary, there is a phenomenon that often occurs which is feared to affect the supervisory role of journalists towards the authorities, namely the practice of bribery. Gemuh Surya Wahyudi in his article entitled Journalism Code of Ethics: A Dilemma for Journalists, argues that the reason to justify this practice is to build relationships with sources and for the welfare of journalists themselves. According to Wahyudi, there are several factors that cause the practice of bribery, such as the weak commitment of individual journalists and the influence of press company "bosses" in industrial competition which makes journalists' duties multiply, but this is not balanced with journalists' income [15]. However, there is a contradiction between the opinions of Wahyudi and Akbar Wijaya. Wijaya believes that building relationships with authorities (sources) is a must because that is where information is obtained, but Wijaya further believes that when faced with a situation that encourages journalists to change the substance of the news, journalists must firmly reject it. Informant II stated that it becomes another dilemma when journalists refuse bribes because of their low level of welfare, whereas in the journalist element, according to Bill Kovach, truth is the main thing. On the other hand, Wijaya and the three informants agreed that journalists' duty to supervise is important to ensure that public interests are maintained.

Efforts to monitor journalists in the Ferdy Sambo case were very large. Because from the start of the case, journalists took part in stimulating the public to think skeptically about the police's initial statement. Initially, journalists acted as news reporters, but changed to become important parties in pushing cases. If previously journalists reported information based on what the police explained, then they used a skeptical attitude, namely writing using the language style of "case irregularities", assumptions and mysteries that moved the public to urge the large institution of the National Police to move to provide the clearest and most straightforward explanation possible.

"Initially only limited to conveying news, then journalists became an important aspect of the case process because the verifications carried out triggered journalists' skepticism which changed the journalist's role from passive to active.." – Akbar Wijaya (Key informant)

"It takes courage. We also don't necessarily believe the arguments of the police, we have to be diligent in confirming information and looking for evidence ourselves and even have to contact neighbors to see CCTV. All of this was done to facilitate the flow of news that would enable this case to proceed." – Informant II

"This case is a very exclusive case because it reports on internal police issues. I think the only parties who can and legally seek information are press journalists because their responsibilities have been written down and are protected by the state. Therefore, mainstream journalists played a big role in raising this case so that it could become this big." – Informant III

Informant II stated that even the President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, reacted to this case because he was asked by a fellow journalist while carrying out activities. Through questions from journalists who had the right to ask these questions, President Joko Widodo ordered the National Police Chief to investigate thoroughly and provide transparent information to the public. The four subjects have one voice, namely, if this case was just passing around on social media or just word of mouth, then this case would not have become as big as it is today. Information broadcast via social media cannot be said to be the truth. According to Nuraeni and Sugandi, social media is only used for initial ideas or information for reporting, journalists are obliged to investigate the truth and validity of information before reporting it to the public [16]. This case is proof of the skepticism of journalists who do not easily believe even a single fact of the police's investigation into the case. Furthermore, Informant I and Informant II stated

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that with successive reports the formation of a team of journalists specifically highlighted this case and presentation. The extensive coverage of the case sparked the public to follow the entire plot of the case which made the case continue and put Ferdy Sambo under threat of the death penalty.

If the reporting of the Ferdy Sambo case does not involve journalist intervention, it will be difficult for the case to continue. This is due to the ability of journalists to directly verify information with related parties due to the protection provided by law. In this case Akbar Wijaya stated that the way journalists work to confirm information, public trust in whether news is true or not can only be carried out by journalists. Infoman III conveyed a similar thing, stating that only party journalists are able to legally seek information because it is written down and protected by the State. Verification discipline is a key aspect to show what actually happened. By going through the verification process, both primary and secondary data can be explored in depth and comprehensively [17].

Fact testing can be done in many ways, such as taking advantage of internet developments, looking at other media, searching for informants, conductingcover both sides ormultiple sides and avoid using anonymous, unverified sources [18]. According to Arif, when information is received, the information must go through a testing process, namely logical verification, and followed by physical verification to determine whether the data is true or not [19]. In the world of journalism, an original and open reporting process is the pillar of successful verification [20]. Infoman III conveyed a similar thing, stating that only party journalists are able to legally seek information because it is written down and protected by the State.

However, there are several things that journalists need to pay attention to when carrying out verification, namely what is the right method or method. According to Kovach and Rossentiel, there are 6 standard methods for verifying data: 1) Skeptical editing, skeptical attitude determines the direction of the news flow. This step is necessary to produce a balanced and in-depth journalistic product. Examination line by line, sentence by sentence, and carried out by instilling a critical attitude towards data; 2) Checking accuracy, one way to check accuracy is to use a list of questions. List of questions raised by data supporting the main news, source tracing, completeness of material, identification of actors, partiality and judgment, shortcomings and accuracy of quotations; 3) Don't make assumptions, a journalist should not immediately trust official sources; 4) Conduct fact checking; 5) Be careful with anonymous sources, with clear information sources, will increase the validity of the news and gain more public trust; 6) Journalists must remain committed to the interests of public truth [21].

With a case of this magnitude, Andi Wijaya believes that there is no information that has not been disclosed because he sees that reporting on this case is carried out continuously. So it can be concluded that the data verification process is often carried out by journalists to obtain information that actually happened. Even though the supervisory task carried out by journalists is very important and requires special accuracy and abilities, according to Informant III, there is a possibility that journalists report news only based on what the Editor-in-Chief orders, which means, there is still a possibility that journalists do not actually use the appropriate supervisory abilities and skills. supports duties and functions to supervise. However, the duties and functions of journalists in the Ferdy Sambo case remain important because they continuously put pressure on the defendant who is able to change the direction of the investigation which was initially provided by the police, with journalists' skepticism, the right to obtain verification from the parties involved and legal protection for journalists. carry out an investigation, then this case can continue to roll out and reveal the truth to the public.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The supervisory role of journalists towards the authorities is an obligation as a form of representation of a democratic state where journalists as civil parties, become the 4th pillar in the government system, tasked with supervising the other pillars (Executive, Legislative & Judicial) and a form of journalist's responsibility to the public as ears and public eye. Journalists are tasked with not only providing information, more than that, through the content presented, journalists are expected to be able to move the public to react to what is presented. Therefore, skills in situation analysis, case investigation, information processing are initial capital that must be possessed. Furthermore, journalistic hard skills are able to increase supervision by journalists because with good quality journalistic products, public attention increases. The supervisory role of journalists towards the authorities is likely to be hampered due to internal factors, external factors and other factors. The internal factor referred to is the incomplete information provided by journalists to the public due to low journalistic skills. External factors such as the work environment, intervention or threats from outside parties to change the substance of the news, bribery or the closeness of journalists to authorities who have potential make journalists soften when writing news about these authorities and whose income is not in line with job demands. Other factors, such as weak protection for journalists and regulations that have the potential to limit journalists' supervisory duties to the authorities.

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The initial information conveyed by the Indonesian National Police (Polri) regarding the death of Brigadier Yosua gave rise to skepticism among journalists, so this information was not immediately accepted. Regarding this matter, journalists stimulate the public by using diction, for example with the word "irregularities". Journalists who initially only conveyed information and tended to be passive, became active players through verification and independent investigations carried out to take various angles or framing of the case in question so that they were able to move the parties to react and make this case an important issue within the National Police that must be resolved immediately, and demands the government to enforce the law as fairly as possible.

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