

## Crime Reporting on the Online Media Lampost.co: An Analysis of the Journalistic Code of Ethics

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### Abstract

This research analyzes the implementation of Article 5 of the Journalistic Code of Ethics in reporting crime on the online media Lampost.co. The Journalistic Code of Ethics is a moral guideline that guides journalists in carrying out journalistic duties with high professionalism and ethics. Lampost.co, as part of the Lampung Post General Daily, co-media has a vital role in maintaining the quality of reporting, especially in the context of crime news. This research uses a field research method with a qualitative descriptive approach. Primary data was collected through purposive sampling from five informants: Chief Editor, one Editor, and three Journalists. Secondary data sources come from photo documentation during news production and relevant theoretical references. Data collection techniques include interviews, observation, and documentation, while data analysis is carried out through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The results of the research showed that there were violations in the application of Article 5 of the Journalistic Code of Ethics in two news stories from the 84 crime stories in the November 2023 edition, where there was a mention of the identity of a minor victim of immoral violence and the face of a minor perpetrator of immoral crime was shown. However, both news have been corrected on the Lampost.co website. Lampost.co explained that the violation was caused by a technical error in the editing process due to pressure to broadcast the news immediately. Meanwhile, other crime news in the same edition complies well with Article 5 of the Journalistic Code of Ethics.

**Keywords:** Journalistic Code of Ethics, Online Media, News, News Production, Lampost.co.

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### Introduction

Freedom of the press is one of the rights of journalists as regulated in Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 40 of 1999 concerning the Press to consider the rights obtained by press members to carry out their duties as a link between society and the latest conditions occurring around them. In carrying out their duties, journalists must still refer to the rules that have been made, even though the right to freedom of the press is granted absolutely. These rules are written in the journalistic.

The Indonesian Press Council established a code of ethics, one of which requires journalists to report accurately. This

means that the published writing must have been tested for truth (Silalahi & Susanto, 2020). Based on Law Number 40 of 1999 concerning the Press, the Journalism Code of Ethics is the main guideline for journalistic practitioners in carrying out their duties. High work ethic and professional ethics are absolute prerequisites for the Indonesian press. Responsible for press freedom and upholding professionalism (Suryawati, 2011).

Every profession has its moral foundation, and journalists are no different. Journalists carrying out their duties to disseminate information and news must apply a moral basis. The moral

foundation journalists must adhere to and apply is often called the journalistic code of ethics. In the press world, codes of ethics play an important role, namely as guiding values for journalists in carrying out their duties. The main goal of journalism is to provide information to the public. Therefore, every journalist must comply with the journalistic code of ethics established by the Press Council.

Journalistic ethics are not only a standard of behavior and moral rules for journalists in carrying out their work. They also protect or prevent the public from possible detrimental impacts from the actions or behavior of the journalist concerned (Christi & Farid, 2020).

As a journalist who is an intermediary between information and humans, you have to play a part in covering the news. Because journalists are often tested by making crime news, whether a journalist understands and applies the Journalistic Code of Ethics (Oktavia & Sukri, 2022).

The journalistic code of ethics is a moral reference that regulates a journalist's work procedures. It also touches on ethics, namely knowledge, which discusses measures of goodness or decency in human behavior in society. Ethical orientation is knowing how to act or do something (Jufrizal, 2019).

The journalistic code of ethics is a guideline of values that are very important for a journalist. This code of ethics is used as the main guideline for a journalist to determine what activities are suitable and should not be carried out. So, a journalist must understand the journalistic code of ethics. However, it turns out that not all journalists in Indonesia work correctly according to journalistic rules.

On the other hand, journalists are also personally charged with various responsibilities by the media that give them work. These tasks include covering news, searching for news, and submitting news based on the tasks given. Apart from that, the greater burden is being accountable for the news to the public, the editorial government, and media owners (Syahid, 2021).

The Journalistic Code of Ethics is a guideline that regulates journalists' behavior and actions in carrying out their journalistic duties. One of the crucial articles in this code of ethics is Article 5, which regulates respect for human rights. In the context of criminal reporting, the application of Article 5 is very important, considering the potential for violations of the rights of victims, suspects, and other related parties.

Article 5 of the journalistic code of ethics, which regulates not mentioning and broadcasting the identity of victims of sexual crimes and children who are perpetrators, has a crucial role in reporting cases involving minors because it protects children's rights. After all, children have greater privacy rights. Higher than adults, sharing a child's identity can invite social stigma, bullying, and long-lasting psychological disorders. Children involved in legal cases have the right to start a new life without being haunted by the past. As for the principle of presumption of innocence, children accused of committing a criminal act also have the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty in court. Publication of identities can judge children before the legal process is complete. Apart from that, online media has a social responsibility not to spread content that is harmful to children because widespread and detailed publication of child crimes can trigger imitation actions by other children (Husen, 2021).

The outline of freedom of information and the crucial role of information in the development of science has encouraged the acceleration of information dissemination. In response to this demand, various mass media compete to present informative and easily accessible news via digital platforms. Consequently, cyber media is experiencing rapid growth and has become the public's leading choice because it offers speed and ease of access.

The chairman of the Research, Data Collection and Ratification Commission of the Press Council, A Sapto Anggoro, said that currently, there are 1,800 verified media in the Press Council. A total of 1,015 were cyber media, 377 television, 18 radio, and

442 print. From the geographical distribution, research data shows that the concentration of media growth is in the western part of Indonesia, namely Sumatra and Java (Dewan Pes, 2024).

UMN researcher Ignatius Haryanto stated that data obtained from media associations/Press Council constituents (AMSI, SMSI, JMSI, ATVSI, ATVLI, PRSSNI, SPS) showed that Lampung Province had the most cyber media, 417. The results were stated in the map of the media industry in Indonesia (Dewan Pes, 2024).

Online media has now become a tool and means for obtaining information and entertainment. Online media and the Internet cannot be separated. The Internet supports the performance of online media. The emergence of the World Wide Web (www) is also among the most exciting. The web here gets attention from certain parties and ordinary people (Winda Kustiawan et al., 2022).

Online media has become one of the main sources of information for the public, including crime reporting. The massive presence of online media has changed the landscape of news consumption, where the public can access information quickly and easily. However, this easy access also brings its own challenges, especially related to the quality and ethics of news delivery.

News media in Lampung Province have implemented online media reporting in Indonesia. One of these is the Lampung Post General Daily, which has media online, namely Lampost.co, which reports information and events in the economic, political, criminal, educational, arts, entertainment, and other fields that occur in Lampung Province on a massive scale and in real-time. Criminal reporting is a type of news that focuses on events and issues related to crime and law violations.

Lampost.co, one of the leading online media in Lampung Province, plays an important role in shaping public opinion. Therefore, it is essential to analyze how much Lampost.co applies Article 5 of the Journalistic Code of Ethics in reporting crimes involving minors.

That's what the media is for online. They should do their best to convey the news by the applicable journalistic code of ethics in terms of news quality and written language.

This research aims to reveal Lampost.co's journalistic practices in presenting crime news and identify the extent to which the reporting complies with the principles set out in Article 5 of the Journalistic Code of Ethics. Lampost.co consistently covers crime news, as evidenced by a special crime section on their site. Even so, some of the criminal reports they presented still found violations of the rules of the journalistic code of ethics.

This research is relevant for several reasons. First, crime reporting often becomes widely consumed by the public and can significantly impact public perception of an event. Second, violations of Article 5 of the Journalistic Code of Ethics in reporting crime can cause various problems, such as stigmatization, discrimination, and even legal violations. Third, by analyzing the Lampost, it is hoped that it can improve the quality of journalism in Indonesia, especially crime reporting.

In this research, we analyze crime news on Lampost.co, focusing on the November 2023 edition, which shows violations of Article 5 of the Journalistic Code of Ethics. Two of the 89 news stories studied revealed the identity of the victim of sexual violence and showed the face of the perpetrator, who was still a minor. This practice contradicts the principles contained in Article 5 Journalistic Code of Ethics. Both online media and journalists covering events should always comply with a professional code of ethics.

A study of the November 2023 edition of Lampost.co's criminal reporting found indications of violations of article 5 of the Journalistic Code of Ethics. Two news stories that reveal the identities of victims of sexual violence and show the faces of minor perpetrators of crimes are empirical evidence of these findings. This phenomenon shows a discrepancy between Lampost.co's journalistic practices and the

principles contained in the Journalistic Code of Ethics.

Previous research has become a reference for implementing a journalistic code of ethics among journalists from the Indonesian Journalism Alliance, Lampung Province. Research from Ahmad Syahid 2021 focuses on the journalistic code of ethics article 6 and explains that AJI journalists fully comply with Journalistic Code of Ethics article 6 (Syahid, 2021).

Other previous research is based on the journal "Between Clarity and Novelty Implementation in Indonesia Online Media According to the Principle of Journalists." Mariko Rizkiansyah, Muslikhin, and Margana Wiratma from Bina Nusantara University, Indonesia, wrote this journal. This research investigates the balance between actuality and accuracy in the work of Indonesian online media journalists.

This research completes an understanding of the challenges faced by online media journalists in Indonesia in presenting accurate and up-to-date information. However, this research has not analyzed the impact of the imbalance between actuality and accuracy on media credibility and public trust (Rizkiansyah et al., 2020).

Previous research then examined the application of the journalistic code of ethics to journalists, discussing what journalists should and should not do in carrying out their journalistic duties. This research method is qualitative. Previous research shows that journalists must understand and apply the journalistic code of ethics when carrying out news searches. Hence, journalists are often dishonest in their work and reporting. Therefore, someone who can limit every journalist's work as a journalist gatekeeper on the media online is needed. KomunikaSulut is the editor-in-chief and editor of people who understand the newsworthy concept of the media in which they work (Takalelumang et al., 2019).

This research provides a clearer picture of applying Article 5 of the Journalistic Code of Ethics in crime reporting on Lampost.co. The results can also provide input for media practitioners,

press institutions, and other stakeholders in efforts to improve the quality of journalism in Indonesia.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Conceptually, a code of ethics is a set of ethical principles compiled or formulated by professional group members, which reflects decisions and morals and is used as a standard for deciding and carrying out professional actions. Journalists are professionals who operate in the field of journalism.

According to Bertens, ethics have two meanings: practical and reflective. As a practical matter, ethics means good moral values and norms that are either practiced or not practiced, even though they should be practiced. Ethics as practical means the same as morals or morality, namely what should be done, should not be done, is appropriate to do, and so on. Ethics as reflection is moral thinking. According to *Webster's Dictionary*, Etymologically, ethics is a scientific discipline that explains what is good and bad, what moral duties or obligations are, or it could also be about a collection of moral principles or values (Pratiwi & Zakiah, 2022).

Etymologically, journalism comes from the word *journal*. In French, a journal is a note or newspaper. Stick refers to the term aesthetics, which refers to the science of beauty. In the journalism dictionary, it is defined as the activity of conveying, editing, and writing for newspapers, magazines, or other periodicals (Al-Fandi, 2021).

Briefly and generally, the Journalistic Code of Ethics means a collection of ethics in journalism created by, from, and for journalists themselves and applies only to journalists. The existence of a journalistic code of ethics and how it is implemented can be a measure of journalists' professionalism in carrying out their journalistic duties. In fulfilling a responsibility and carrying out the goals of a journalist, journalists must need a journalistic code of ethics for self-evaluation purposes and to gain public trust in the journalist's work. If journalists follow these guidelines, then high ethical standards

will be upheld, and the credibility of their work will not be in doubt.

News is all reports, whether verbal or written, that originate from the reality of everyday life. Some forms of news reports must contain factual events. Information conveyed as news material must also be considered important and exciting to many people (Syamsul, 2012). In his book entitled "Journalism Online", media online is media based on telecommunications and multi-media (computers and the internet) which is included in the media category online is a portal website (websites, including blogs and social media such as Facebook and Twitter), radio online, television online and email.

One of the media designs online. The most commonly applied in today's journalistic practice is in the form of online news sites. A news site or information portal is an information gateway that allows information accessers to obtain various technological facility features online and in the news. Media online is new media, a simplified term for forms of media outside conventional mass lines. So, media reporting online is a reporting process that disseminates information via the Internet.

According to Widjaja (1997) the journal Communication and Public Relations, media functions online include information, socialization, motivation, discussion and debate, education, cultural advancement, entertainment, and integration.

With the statement above, the function of media online is not far from the function of mass media, which is shown as a source of information, socialization, motivation, discussion and debate, education, advancing culture, entertainment, and integration. Because the nature of media is not fixed and continues to develop, new media emerges in the form of media online, which does not eliminate its main function.

This research uses one of the 11 articles of the journalistic code of ethics. The leading theory is Article 5 of the Journalistic Code of Ethics, namely Article 5: Indonesian journalists do not mention and broadcast the identities of victims of social crimes,

immoral crimes, or perpetrators of crimes (Dewan Pers, 2017).

Interpretation: (1) Identity is all information data relating to a person, making it easier for others to track him; (2) A child is someone who is less than 16 years old and is not married (Wahyudi, 2022).

Article 5 of the journalistic code of ethics is critical because it builds trust by protecting the identity of news sources; journalists build trust so that more people are willing to provide information, maintain the quality of journalism by being careful in disclosing the identity of sources, journalists can ensure the accuracy of news and avoid spreading incorrect information, respecting Human Rights. This article is in line with human rights principles, namely the right of every individual to be protected from detrimental actions (SARI, 2023).

The journalistic code of ethics also provides legal protection for journalists from various negative actions by other parties who try to threaten or intimidate them. Therefore, Journalistic Code of Ethics is a way to discipline the journalist's character if it is actualized as well as possible. The press is free to function as the fourth pillar of a democratic state, but everything must be based on applicable regulations.

## **Materials and Methodology**

The type of research used in this research is field research (*field research*). This research applies qualitative methods, according to Sugiono, often called naturalistic research methods, because the research is carried out in natural conditions. Qualitative research is based on the post-positivism philosophy used to research the condition of natural objects, where this research is the key instrument, data collection techniques are combined, data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and qualitative research results are more emphasized, which means rather than generalization (Sugiyono, 2015). With a descriptive approach, using humans as research instruments, observation, and interview methods are applied. Primary and secondary data sources obtained by

researchers are compiled into material that provides an overview of a research case. The primary data sources in this research are the Chief Editor, the Editor, and three Journalists.

An interview is a communication between two or more parties, which can be face-to-face. One party plays the role of interviewer, and the other parties play the role of interviewee, with a specific purpose, for example, to obtain information or collect data (Fadhallah, 2021).

Interviews are an important research method because they can provide in-depth and contextual data from direct sources. Interviews with the editor-in-chief, editors, and journalists of Lampost.co allow researchers to understand Lampost's perception and understanding regarding the journalistic code of ethics, especially article 5, and the efforts made by Lampost. Co to maintain professionalism and journalistic ethics.

Other methods were used in this research, apart from interviews, namely, the analysis of online news texts at Lampost.co, literature reviews about journalistic codes of ethics, and documentation studies at Lampost.co. Interviews were chosen because they are the most effective method for obtaining in-depth and contextual data about implementing Lampost's journalistic code of ethics.co. Interviews also allowed researchers to understand journalists' perspectives and direct experiences at Lampost.co.

The research location is at the Lampung Post Office Jalan Soekarno Hatta No. 108 Rajabasa, Bandar Lampung, Lampung. Research time is from March 20, 2024, to March 31, 2024.

## **Results and Discussion**

The Indonesian press is responsible for carrying out its functions and roles in society in a correct and measurable manner. To realize this, a journalistic code of ethics was born as a derivative rule from the Press Law, including journalists, editors, and media editors in chief. *Online* as well as the media *online* itself.

News media journalists online To carry out journalistic activities, search for, collect, select, and disseminate information through the mass media, guided by legal instruments, namely the journalistic code of ethics and cyber media behavioral guidelines. These two legal instruments serve as operational guidelines for journalists to conduct their work professionally.

The journalistic code of ethics generally contains 11 articles regulating journalism, from searching, collecting, and processing to disseminating information through mass media. Based on the author's interviews with journalists, editors, and editor-in-chief of media reports online, Lampost. In this case, the author refers specifically to one article in the journalistic code of ethics, article 5.

Article 5 can be interpreted to mean that the identity in question relates to all information that makes it possible for someone else to know about the victim of sexual immorality or the child of the perpetrator of the crime. Article 5 Journalistic Code of Ethics is an essential foundation for the journalism profession. Journalists can maintain professional integrity and produce quality and responsible news by understanding and implementing this article.

News Media Online Lampost.co implements Article 5 of the journalistic code of ethics, most notably by keeping the names of victims and perpetrators of underage sexual crimes confidential. Apart from that, do not mention the name of the place of residence, the name of the school, or the names of the parents; this can make it easier for other people to track down victims or perpetrators of underage sexual crimes.

The editor of Lampost. Co also ensures that if there is news about underage crime, it needs to be there to check and recheck data and facts for journalists. But news online Lampost.co implementation of the journalistic code of ethics article 5, the author found violations of the journalistic code of ethics article 5 in 2 stories out of 84 news stories in the November 2023 edition of Crime, 1.79% of the news. Some errors

cause gaps between theory and findings, namely errors made by the news media online Lampost.co in 2 news in the field of crime, November 5, 2023 edition, Lampost.co broadcasts the villages and sub-districts of underage victims. Apart from that, in the November 17, 2023 edition of the photojournalism news on Lampost.co broadcast the identity of the image the faces of underage perpetrators of immoral crimes clearly without being covered up by Lampost.co.

These two things make Lampost.co's application of the journalistic code of ethics article 5 less than optimal, but the editors of Lampost. I have corrected this again, but it has been removed from the Lampost.co website in the November 17, 2023 edition.

No	Article 5 Journalistic Code of Ethics: Indonesian journalists do not mention and broadcast the identity of victims of immoral crimes and do not mention the identity of children who are perpetrators of crimes	
	Violation of Article 5	Completion
1	 <p>Lampost.co's crime report Tuesday, 05 November 2023 edition with the title "A Tubaba Teenager Harassed a Central Lampung Vocational School Girl 15 Times" The journalistic photo in the news shows a perpetrator of sexual violence with the initials A who is 16 years old, where 16 years is the age for the child category. The photo in the news clearly shows the perpetrator's face from a sideways position without blurring the face.</p>	<p>Researchers confirmed that there was an error in two online news stories from Lampost.co in the November 2023 edition to Lampost.co. Based on an interview the researcher conducted on Thursday, March 28 2024 with Adi Sunaryo as Editor of Lampost.co, he explained that there was a technical error in the news " If there is an error regarding news about underage victims of violence and underage perpetrators, it is usually a technical error. Sometimes the assistant editor is chasing the productivity of the broadcast news, it is usually a technical error. If our department (Editorial Team) also usually tells journalists to revise the news, at the Lampung Post there are three filters before going up to the website starting from the assistant editor.</p>
2	 <p>In criminal reporting on November 17 2023 with the news title "Truck Driver in East Lampung, Has the Heart to Molest Underage Students" The content of the news contains the sentence: "It is known that the initials of the perpetrator who worked as a truck driver were AV (21), a resident of Rejo Binangun Village, North Raman District,</p>	<p>In this news, researchers confirmed to Adi Sunaryo as Editor of Lampost.co, According to the editor of Lampost.co, sometimes there are still errors in crime news involving minors, such as writing down the victim's address and a picture of the perpetrator's face. This can be edited as soon as possible by the editor. Apart from that, Adi continues to always relate every news story "For Lampost.co media, we always review whether every news narrative that a journalist creates violates the journalistic code of ethics or not. If it is violated, the editor reprimands the journalist and then reviews the news again so that it complies with the provisions of the Press Law."</p>

	East Lampung Regency. "Meanwhile, the victim is DS (16), a student from Rejo Binangun Village, North Raman District, East Lampung Regency." Based on this news, journalists stated that the victim was a student who lived in Rejo Binangun Village, North Raman District, East Lampung Regency.	
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Source: Analysis Results in Lampung Post 2024

The author, namely Lampost, obtains several findings.co-journalists still have less than optimal implementation of article 5, but the news media online Lampost still needs to be improved.co did not carry out correct news checks; only technical errors occurred in the final checking process by the editor because he was chasing news broadcasts. In this news production process, the author can analyze how the journalistic code of ethics article 5 is implemented in media reporting *online* Of Lampost.co.

Lampost.co's way of resolving errors in the news that has been published is to correct the news via the website while keeping the identities of victims and perpetrators of crimes against minors secret. This is in accordance with the journalistic code of ethics, article 5. Apart from that, Lampost.co reprimands journalists who make news and editors who check the news.

Based on the research results that the author found, a journalistic code of ethics was implemented in media reporting online at Lampost.co could have done it optimally. Journalists must always apply the journalistic code of ethics even though, in journalistic practice, journalists accidentally violate the journalistic code of ethics due to technical errors because journalists are chasing news broadcast time. In this way, the journalistic code of ethics is a reference and guide for everyone who works as a journalist.

Based on this, journalists must pay attention to the applicable regulations when implementing the journalistic code of ethics. Likewise, when a journalist sends or provides news, the editor must be careful and check it carefully and carry out checks and rechecks of information with news sent by the editor to ensure they comply with the journalistic code of ethics.

## Conclusion

The author can conclude from the description and discussion outlined above regarding implementing the Journalistic Code of Ethics for Online Reporting at Lampost.co.

Researchers found that there were violations in the implementation of article 5 of the journalistic code of ethics in 2 news stories out of 89 criminal news stories in the November 2023 edition, namely that there was mention of the identity of a minor victim of immoral violence and the face of a minor perpetrator of the immoral crime. However, the website Lampost has corrected these two criminal news stories.

Lampost.co stated there was a technical error in the editing process due to catching up on news broadcasts. However, other crime news in the November 2023 edition has implemented the journalistic code of ethics article 5 well. The journalistic code of ethics must be implemented so the media *online* Lampost.co is still known and trusted by the public.

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