

The Role of Mass Communication in Seeing Ethical and Legal Issues of The Press in The Digital Era (Case Study: The Death of The Press in Greece)

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Abstract

The development of the digitalization world is currently growing massively and cannot be controlled. The speed of digitalization has greatly impacted the change of traditional mass communication to digital. With the speed, interactivity and accessibility of the digital era, everything that happens is unhindered by place and time. The challenge of maintaining credibility and accuracy amid the rapid flow of information is a special study in the world of the press. This will also affect the professional ethics of a journalist. The comparison of press regulations in the traditional and digital era will also change. Issues related to defamation, hoax news and hate speech are in the spotlight today. The role of mass media in disclosing ethical cases is important. This research uses case analysis of press law cases in the digital era. The method used is a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. The results showed that the life of journalists' professional rights in the Greek state was almost extinct, they could not defend their rights as journalists. Even the state in its government system cannot do much. Therefore, the code of ethics of the journalist profession contained in Law 40 of 1999 must be realized properly and correctly. With the revelation of this case in Greece, it has made the wider community understand the function and role of the media as it should be. Therefore, everything if it has entered the realm of digital footprints will last forever and cannot be avoided. The "Death of the Press in Greece" case reflects a number of violations of fundamental press ethics, such as press freedom, editorial independence, journalist safety, and information integrity. These issues highlight the enormous challenges faced by the media in carrying out their role as watchdogs and purveyors of accurate and objective information amidst severe political and economic pressures.

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of communication technology in today's globalized world is something that cannot be stopped. All aspects of technology, information and communication run dynamically. As technology progresses, the communication process also follows. Mass communication is one type of communication that utilizes technological aspects. Mass communication is a type of communication that uses modern technological mass media that is able to spread messages widely (mass) and can be accessed by a wide, anonymous and heterogeneous audience. Mass communication that used to use conventional (traditional) media has now changed to modern or digital media. Many communication technologies that cannot keep up with technological developments and the times will eventually become extinct or die. Some characteristic aspects of digital media are speed, interactivity and wide accessibility. This makes the movement of space and time faster and becomes a challenge in maintaining the flow of information. The ethical use of social media is also the responsibility of a journalist. Journalists are faced with dilemmatic problems related to privacy and information rights in the digital world. Press law regulated in the law is a

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comparison of traditional and digital press regulations. The law regulates digital content and its influence on press freedom. Then with the existence of the law, issues related to defamation, the spread of hoax news and hate speech began to emerge. The case presented by the author is related to how the mass media reveals cases of ethical violations. On April 9, 2021, at 2pm, Gigorgos Karaivaz was found dead from gunshots at his home in the Athens suburb of Alimos, just as he was returning home from a daytime show on STAR TV. Karaivaz was a well-known crime reporter who had worked for decades for Greek newspapers and broadcast media and ran his own website, www.bloko.gr. Following this incident, Greek authorities promised to prioritize the case and make every effort to bring the perpetrators and masterminds to justice. Two years passed since the murder, but there was no progress at all from the police. On July 31, 2024, the court found the two men who committed the murder not guilty and released them, leaving the case unsolved. This was a sting in the tail for the Greek press, as on July 30th, the Greek Supreme Court ruled out the possibility of lawsuits against the state and its security services over the 'Predatorgate' illegal wiretapping scandal. Now the press and journalists are under pressure. Because with the Predatorgate scandal buried under the rug, and the murder of Giorgos Karaivaz not seeing the light of day, there is no telling what other forms of injustice they will be subjected to. Karaivaz's murder proves one thing. The fear of uncovering corruption by the authorities and the collapse of official power makes people use all kinds of means to stop investigations that will reveal everything. Illegal wiretapping, physical attacks on journalists, and the practice of Strategic lawsuits against public participation, a strategy that intimidates and silences critics by burdening them with legal defense costs, make the press and journalists in Greece live in fear. This makes the author interested in writing a research with the title "The role of Mass communication in seeing Ethical and legal issues of the Press in the Digital Age, Case Study: The death of the press in Yunnani".

Author Wulan Sondarika with the title Ancient Greek Civilization. The results of this study suggest that Greece is the oldest center of civilization in Europe. The high level of Greek civilization was influenced by several factors, namely its natural conditions, its population and so on. The Greek region is located at the southeastern tip of the European continent. Most of the islands in the Aegean and Ionian seas belong to Greece. To the north, Greece borders Albania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Turkey in mainland Europe. To the east, Greece is surrounded by the Aegean Sea, to the south by the Mediterranean Sea, and to the west by the Ionian Sea. Greece has a pleasant Mediterranean climate. The Greeks were a mixture of immigrants from the steppes around the Caspian Sea and the indigenous people who cultivated agriculture. The immigrants were of the Indo-Germanic race. They were known as the Hellas people consisting of the Durians, Achaeans, Aeolians and Ionians. During the heyday of Greece (476-338 BC) many temples were built in the Doria style. Athens Athenian governance was outlined by Solon (549 BC). This statesman made several reforms including abolishing slavery and restoring civil rights. If in Sparta the citizens had an obligation to serve the State fully, then in Athens the rights of citizens were guaranteed by the State. The activities and attention of every citizen of Sparta were only devoted to the tasks of government and national defense, while Athenians were very concerned with the advancement of arts, sports, science, and philosophy.

II. METHODS

A research is an attempt to answer the problems in the research, it is required to go through a series of activities carried out by downloading various stages in detail. As is the case in cultural research, this process uses the following stages (1) Data collection stage, (2) Data revision stage, (3) Data reduction stage, (4) Data analysis stage, (5) Data presentation stage, (6) Conclusion drawing stage, and (7) Research result writing stage, regarding data collection methods and techniques in this study carried out with the data sources used.

1. Data Collection Stage The techniques used in order to collect data are not always the same between other data sources, this is adjusted to the type of data source used and it is possible to make it easier for researchers to collect data sources to be used in research
- a) Primary Data Sources Primary data is data obtained from sources. The data from this study were obtained from interviews and observations.
- b) Secondary Data Sources Secondary data is data obtained from other parties that are not the main source, usually secondary data is obtained through written sources. In this study, secondary data was obtained from literature studies.

2. Data Revision Stage After all the data is complete, revision or improvement is continued by: a) In-depth observation b) Choosing ideal validity c) Repetition
3. Data Reduction Stage After being revised, proceed with reducing the data, by means of data collected and recorded in field notes then summarized and selected. Summarizing and selecting data is based on the focus of the category.
4. Data Analysis Stage After the data is collected and researched, the next step is to analyze the data.
5. Data Presentation Stage The data presentation stage is the process of presenting the data that has been obtained, revised, reduced, and analyzed into a systematic report
6. The conclusion drawing stage is drawing conclusions from the results of the research that has been done.
7. Research Result Writing Stage The most recent stage in a study. All data that has been concluded will be written into a paper that is in accordance with the systematics of writing scientific papers.

III. RESULTS

CASE “ DEATH OF THE PRESS IN GREECE “

“ On April 9, 2021, at 2pm, Gigorgos Karaivaz was found dead from gunshots at his home in the Athens suburb of Alimos, just as he was returning home from his daytime show on STAR TV. Karaivaz was a well-known crime reporter who had worked for decades for Greek newspapers and broadcast media and ran his own website, www.bloko.gr. Following this incident, Greek authorities promised to prioritize the case and make every effort to bring the perpetrators and masterminds to justice. Two years have passed since the murder took place, but there has been no progress at all from the police. No arrests were made by the authorities nor were any suspects released to the public. Then in April 2023, two men, a brother and sister, aged 48 and 40, were named as suspects. They were detained and conducted a hearing on May 3, 2023, and the case was brought to court on June 26, 2024.

According to the prosecutor, he suspected Karaivaz's death was related to the journalist's alleged disclosure of the operations of organized crime networks in the country. Karaivaz had ties to the Greek underworld and the corrupt police officers associated with it. He was a key witness in the National Intelligence Agency's 2015-2017 investigation into police officers' involvement in mafia gangs profiting from brothels and illegal casinos. Also, it was revealed that he had ties to several figures linked to the Predatorgate Case, a wiretapping scandal in which the Greek intelligence agency (EYP) conducted illegal surveillance of journalists. Karaivaz exchanged text messages with two key figures who resigned over the scandal, Panagiotis Kontoleon, former director of the Greek intelligence agency (EYP), and Grigoris Dimitriadis, nephew and former secretary general of the Greek prime minister's office. Evidence in the form of a CD containing the conversation was about to be presented in court, but suddenly, it was said to have been destroyed by a stapler. On July 31, 2024, the court found the two men who committed the murder not guilty and were acquitted, leaving the case unsolved. This was a sting in the tail for the Greek press, as on the previous July 30, the Greek Supreme Court ruled out the possibility of lawsuits against the state and its security services over the 'Predatorgate' illegal wiretapping scandal.

ETHICAL ISSUES

“The Death of the Press in Greece” Issues of Ethical Violations discussed in this research include Press Freedom Suppressed Issues: One of the main issues in the “Death of the Press in Greece” case is the restraint on press freedom by the government and power groups. The press in Greece faces strong pressure, including censorship and threats against journalists who try to report on critical issues, especially those related to politics, economics, or corruption cases. Ethical Issues: Freedom of the press is a fundamental principle in journalistic ethics. Without this freedom, the press cannot effectively fulfill its watchdog role, leading to the undermining of democracy and information disclosure.

Media independence issues: In Greece, many media outlets are controlled by a handful of owners with political or business interests. This dependence on media owners affiliated with political forces or oligarchs undermines editorial independence and reduces public trust in the media. Ethical Issues: Journalistic ethics require the media to maintain independence from the influence of external parties, including government, business or political groups, so that the information conveyed remains objective and unbiased. The influence of media owners in determining editorial direction is a violation of this principle.

Journalist Safety Matters: Cases of threats and violence against journalists in Greece, including the murder of investigative journalist Giorgos Karaivaz in 2021, have become one of the central issues in the deterioration of press freedom in the country. These incidents show that working as a journalist, especially those covering sensitive issues such as corruption or crime, is increasingly dangerous. Ethical Issues: The safety of journalists is an essential component of press ethics. If journalists are intimidated, threatened or attacked for their work, not only is press freedom jeopardized, but also the public's right to be properly informed.

The Impact of the Economy on Issue Journalism: The prolonged economic crisis in Greece has had a significant impact on the media sector. Many media organizations have been forced to close or reduce their budgets, leading to staff cuts and decreased quality of journalism. Media dependence on advertising or funding from government and business entities also increases the risk of bias in reporting. Ethical Issues: Heavy economic dependence can compromise the integrity of the media and make it difficult for journalists to report the truth critically. Press ethics require the media to maintain transparency and avoid conflicts of interest that could affect the independence of reporting.

Censorship and Issue-Controlled Reporting: There is evidence that the Greek government is involved in controlling the media narrative through direct or indirect control over what can and cannot be reported, especially regarding sensitive issues such as government policies, the refugee crisis, and corruption. Critical media are often silenced or suppressed, either through economic pressure or legal threats. Ethical Issues: Censorship is a gross

violation of journalistic ethics. The media should be free to report the truth, including when it involves criticizing governments or institutions of power. Without a free press, society cannot make informed decisions.

Misinformation and Disinformation Issues: With weak oversight of the quality of journalism in Greece, there are concerns that misinformation and disinformation may flourish. Many stories may be created to benefit certain parties, or not adhere to proper journalistic standards. **Ethical Issues:** Misinformation and disinformation violate journalistic ethical principles that require the dissemination of true, accurate and responsible information. Media outlets have a responsibility to ensure that the information they publish is reliable and verifiable.

Declining Public Trust in the Media Issue: The combination of political and economic pressures, censorship, and the apparent bias of the Greek media has led to a decline in public trust in the media. Many Greek citizens feel that the media is no longer an objective and credible source of information. **Ethical Issues:** One of the main functions of the press is as a guardian of democracy and a conduit of information for the public. If the public loses trust in the media, then the media has failed to fulfill its ethical function. The press must always work with transparency, integrity and dedication to the truth to maintain public trust.

Right now, the press and journalists are under pressure. With the Predatorgate scandal buried under the rug, and the Giorgos Karaivaz murder case not seeing the light of day, there's no telling what other forms of injustice they will experience. The events that have befallen the press in Greece are ironic. It is sad to see that the authorities who are supposed to protect and nurture citizens, as well as the law and the government that are supposed to defend citizens, cannot be found at all in this case in Greece. It is no wonder, therefore, that Greece ranks 107th in 2023, and 88th in 2024 according to the Reporters Without Borders (RSF) World Press Freedom Index, making Greece the lowest in Europe. Karaivaz's murder proves one thing. The fear of uncovering corruption by the authorities and the collapse of official power makes people use all kinds of means to stop investigations that will reveal everything. Illegal wiretapping, physical attacks on journalists, and the practice of Strategic lawsuits against public participation, a strategy that intimidates and silences critics by burdening them with legal defense costs, make the press and journalists in Greece live in fear. If the state cannot protect the press, where should they turn for help? If an individual who wants to expose the evils of a proven system is silenced, how can the country progress?

Until now, the Greek government has never given a definitive response to the cases that have occurred, starting from the murder of Karaivaz, as well as the Predatorgate wiretapping. This problem in Greece has unfortunately also gone unnoticed by the European Commission. The Rule of Law 2024 report published by the European Commission lists and acknowledges problems with the independence and resources of media regulators, the independence of public service media, access to information, persistent threats to the safety of journalists, and the potential chilling effects of strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs) and harassment, including by politicians. But, the report does not delve into how serious these problems are if left unchecked. The report highlights some positive developments and legislative changes such as the decriminalization of simple defamation offenses, but does not reflect the chronic flaws with the implementation of past reforms and the deep-rooted systemic problems that continue to erode media freedom.

JOURNALISTIC CODE OF ETHICS LAW NO. 40 YEAR 1999

Law No. 40 of 1999 on the Press states the following:

1. Freedom of the Press - The press has the freedom to carry out its functions as a medium of information, education, entertainment and social control without interference from any party (Article 2). - The right to seek, obtain and disseminate information is guaranteed as part of press freedom (Article 4).
2. Protection of the Press - A guarantee that the press is free from acts of censorship, banning, or prohibition of broadcasting by the government or other parties (Article 4 paragraph 2). - In carrying out their journalistic duties, journalists cannot be punished for critical reporting, as long as they do not violate the journalistic code of ethics (Article 4 paragraph 3).
3. Functions, Rights and Roles of the Press - The press functions as a means of information, education, entertainment and social control and plays a role in developing public opinion based on precise, accurate and correct information (Article 3). - The press has the right to seek, obtain, and disseminate ideas and information to the public (Article 6).
4. Obligations and Responsibilities of the Press - The press is obliged to comply with religious norms, decency, and a sense of public decorum, and to promote objective and balanced journalistic principles (Article 5). - The press must also respect the human rights of every person and maintain the principle of presumption of innocence (Article 5 paragraph 2).
5. Right of Reply and Right of Correction - In the case of news coverage that is detrimental to a person or group, they have the right to request a right of reply and right of correction, which the press must publish (Article 5 paragraph 3).

6. Journalists' Obligations - Journalists in carrying out their journalistic duties must adhere to the Journalistic Code of Ethics, which is regulated by the Press Council (Article 7). - The press has an obligation to provide news that is true, balanced, and not in bad faith.
7. Press Council - The Press Council is tasked with protecting press freedom, establishing and supervising the implementation of the Journalistic Code of Ethics, and mediating disputes related to press reporting (Article 15).
8. Sanctions - The Press Law does not directly regulate criminal sanctions. If a violation occurs, the resolution mechanism is carried out through the Press Council, unless it violates other criminal laws outside the press provisions. With the existence of Law No. 40/1999, the press in Indonesia gets legal protection in carrying out journalistic duties, but also balanced with the obligation to maintain ethics and professionalism. In this case, the press in Greece globally violated Article 4 paragraph 2 related to "PROTECTION OF THE PRESS".

THE ROLE OF MASS MEDIA IN MONITORING AND DISCLOSING ETHICAL CASES

Mass media has become important in the world of digitalization, with the power of the internet and the movement of society making it easier for all information to spread massively and quickly. One of the roles of the mass media in this discussion is to monitor and reveal violations or cases and issues that must be known to the public. The power of mass media in terms of reporting, criticism and presentation on digital platforms is able to influence public opinion at large. With the media, all cases or issues can be dismissed, can be extended and perhaps can be kept secret. The supervision in this case is how a journalist's code of ethics is questioned in the case of "The Death of the Press in Greece".

There are several functions of mass media, namely: 1) Social Control Mass media acts as social control by revealing ethical violations committed by individuals, institutions or organizations. With extensive coverage, the media places perpetrators of violations in the public spotlight, thus providing social pressure for these violations to be handled immediately. 2) Disseminating Information Mass media is a means of disseminating information related to ethical cases. Through in-depth investigations and reports, the media helps the public understand the context of ethical violations, their impact, and the parties responsible. 3) Advocacy for Transparency and Accountability The media often acts as a spokesperson for society, pushing for transparency and accountability, especially in cases of ethical violations involving the public and private sectors. They can raise issues that do not receive attention or are deliberately hidden by certain parties. 4) Building Public Opinion Through opinion articles, interviews and discussions, the mass media builds narratives that influence public perceptions regarding ethical issues. The media can direct public attention to the importance of ethical standards and moral values in everyday life, as well as in political or business decisions. 5) Mediating Public Discussions Mass media provides a platform for public discussions regarding ethical violations. Through news coverage, talk shows and opinion columns, the media opens up space for the public to share views, discuss and find solutions to ethical problems that occur. 6) Revealing Hidden Facts Investigative media are often the first to reveal hidden facts regarding ethical violations.

They carry out in-depth investigations which often uncover cases of corruption, abuse of power, or other scandals that violate ethics. With the increasing use of digital media, the role of mass media is increasingly important in uncovering and monitoring ethical cases, although they also face challenges, such as information manipulation, hoaxes, and political or business pressure. This journal reveals that one of the roles of the mass media that we can feel strongly is that the case in Greece is digital evidence that cases have been suppressed so that they cannot be disclosed in the public domain. However, despite this, this case was still exposed by the media.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE DIGITAL ERA

The rapid development of technology and information also has a serious impact, especially in terms of challenges and opportunities faced by society and the media itself. In the digital era, mass media face a number of challenges and opportunities that affect the way they operate and their role in society. Here are some of them: 1) Challenges of Mass Media in the Digital Era of Fake News (Hoaxes) and Disinformation. The ease of disseminating information in the digital era makes it easier for fake news or disinformation to spread widely. This threatens the credibility of traditional mass media which has to compete with social media which often disseminates information without verification. 2) News Velocity vs. News Content Quality Digital media demands speed in disseminating news. Sometimes, the pressure to be the first to break the news comes at a cost to the accuracy and quality of the content. Mistakes in reporting hastily can damage the media's reputation. 3) Competition with Social Media Traditional mass media is now competing with social media platforms that allow users to create and distribute their own content. This reduces the media's exclusivity in delivering news, and reduces their market share and advertising revenue. 4) Monetization and Advertising Revenue Many digital media depend on advertising as a source of revenue. However, this business model faces challenges as users become increasingly accustomed to accessing news

for free. Additionally, many advertisers now prefer platforms such as Google and Facebook which offer more specific target audiences. 5) Security and Privacy In the digital world, mass media must also be more careful regarding cyber security and protecting the privacy of their sources. Data leaks or cyber attacks can damage public trust and impact journalists and news consumers. 6) Trust Issue Losing public trust in mass media is a serious challenge. Many people now have more trust in social media or certain figures on the internet, which can affect the credibility of mainstream media. 7) Mass Media Opportunities in the Digital Era Wider Reach The digital era provides the opportunity for the media to reach a global audience more easily. With internet access, media can expand their news coverage to various parts of the world, and serve a more diverse audience. 8) Technological Advances Technology such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data, and analytics enable mass media to better understand audience preferences, create more personalized content, and even increase efficiency in the news production process. 9) Closer Interaction with Readers In the digital era, mass media can interact directly with their readers through comments, surveys and social media.

This creates a more open dialogue between the media and the audience and allows for fast feedback. 10) Content Diversification Mass media can now produce various forms of content, including videos, podcasts, infographics and interactive multimedia articles. This makes the delivery of information more interesting and accessible to various audience segments. 11) Subscription and Donation Revenue The revenue model through paid subscriptions and donations is now an increasingly popular alternative to replace dependence on advertising. Many media outlets are starting to offer premium content or exclusive services to subscribers who are willing to pay. 12) Collaboration with New Technologies Collaboration with technology platforms such as social media, podcasting, or video streaming allows mass media to take advantage of new trends in news consumption, such as the increasing popularity of on-demand news and the consumption of multimedia content. 13) Data and Investigative Journalism Digital technology provides access to very large volumes of data, which the media can use to conduct data-based investigative journalism. This allows for more in-depth and weighty disclosure of the problem.

THE ROLE OF MASS COMMUNICATION IN INCREASING DIGITAL LITERACY

Mass Communication also plays an important role in increasing digital literacy, in the current era digitalization is one of the goals of the Indonesian nation towards becoming a developed country. So digital literacy is also needed in disseminating information related to changes from traditional technology to digital-based technology. In this case, the following is an explanation of the role of mass communication in the digital era. 1. Disseminating Information about Technology and Digitalization Mass media functions as a platform to provide information about technological developments, digital applications and the latest technological devices. Media such as television, radio, online news sites, and social media help people understand the use of digital tools, social media platforms, apps, and other technologies. Example: News programs or articles explaining the latest technology trends, such as artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, and how to use digital tools effectively. 2. Education about Digital Security Mass media plays an important role in increasing awareness about digital security, including privacy protection, cyber threats, and how to keep personal data safe in cyberspace. Through various educational campaigns, the media can teach how to recognize phishing, online fraud, and other privacy threats. Example: News articles or television programs that educate the public about how to avoid phishing attacks or protect personal information on social media. 3. Encourage the responsible use of digital media. Mass communication teaches ethics in the use of social media and digital technology. This includes awareness about fake news (hoaxes), hate speech, and online communication ethics.

Mass media also encourages discussions regarding responsibility in sharing information in the digital world, as well as the importance of being critical of circulating information sources. Example: Campaigns or programs that teach the importance of thinking critically before sharing information or comments on social media. 4. Provide Access to Digital Learning Resources Through online news sites, applications and social media, mass media can provide tutorials, guides and learning information about how to use digital technology effectively. Media can also work with educational institutions to provide access to training and resources that support increasing digital literacy. Example: Online training programs advertised in mass media or digital platforms to help people learn digital skills, such as coding, software use, or graphic design. 5. Facilitate Public Discussions about Digital Literacy Mass media can be a public space to discuss various issues related to digital literacy, such as the digital divide, skills needed in the digital era, and challenges in accessing technology. Talk shows, opinion articles, or public debates in the mass media can build awareness and deeper understanding of the importance of digital literacy in various levels of society. Example: Panel discussions on television or podcasts discussing the importance of increasing digital literacy in schools or rural communities. 6. Reducing the Digital Divide Mass media helps reduce the digital divide by providing access to digital information and knowledge for people who may not have direct access to technology.

Mass media can be a link for rural or less connected communities to obtain information about how to access digital technology or the opportunities available in the digital world. Example: Special programs on radio or television designed for people in remote areas that provide basic knowledge about the internet and digital technology. 7. Raise Awareness about Hoaxes and Misinformation Digital literacy is not only about the use of technology, but also about the ability to sort true and false information. Mass media has a crucial role in educating the public on how to recognize hoaxes and misleading information. Mass media can also act as an information monitor that helps check facts (fact-checking) and clarify fake news spread on social media. Example: Rubrics or special television programs that verify viral news to prevent the spread of hoaxes. Mass communication plays a key role in increasing digital literacy through disseminating information, education, and creating awareness of the importance of security and ethics in the digital world. By utilizing the power of mass media, society can be more prepared and critical in facing the challenges and opportunities that arise from developments in digital technology.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The case of "Death of the Press in Greece" reflects a number of violations of fundamental press ethics, such as press freedom, editorial independence, journalist safety and information integrity. These issues highlight the major challenges faced by the media in carrying out their role as monitors and conveyers of accurate and objective information amidst heavy political and economic pressures.

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