



Public Perception of Television News Coverage on the Vina Cirebon Case: A Case Study of TVOne Broadcasts in RT 006, Gunung Agung, Bandar Lampung

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Abstract: This study examines the public perception of the news coverage regarding the Vina Cirebon case aired on TVOne. The case of Vina, a 16-year-old student from Cirebon, drew widespread attention after a film titled "Vina Sebelum 7 Hari" revived public discussion on the unresolved murder case. Using a qualitative approach, this study explores how viewers in RT 006 Gunung Agung interpreted and responded to TVOne's coverage, including news programs and special segments like "Dua Sisi". Data was gathered through interviews with selected informants using purposive sampling. The findings reveal that viewers formed both positive and negative perceptions. Positive responses include increased public awareness and caution regarding personal safety, while negative responses involve skepticism towards law enforcement and the legal system due to the prolonged nature and inconsistencies in the case handling. These findings suggest a need for more responsible media framing and for the public to maintain a critical but balanced view of media content.

Keywords: Public Perception, Vina Cirebon, Vina Cirebon Case

Introduction

The murder case of Vina Cirebon, which involved the brutal killing and alleged sexual assault of a teenage girl and her partner in 2016, re-emerged as a major public concern in Indonesia following the release of the dramatized film *Vina Sebelum 7 Hari* in May 2024. This resurgence of public attention prompted intense news coverage by mainstream media, particularly TVOne, which aired the case extensively through programs such as *Kabar Pagi*, *Kabar Petang*, *Apa Kabar Indonesia Malam*, and the investigative talk show *Dua Sisi*. The compelling narratives and repeated broadcasts rekindled public interest and emotional reactions, raising questions about justice, truth, and media responsibility.

The presence of mass media in people's lives plays a critical role in constructing social realities. As Fitriansyah (2018) notes, mass communication has cognitive, affective, and behavioral impacts on audiences. In cases involving unresolved crimes or social injustice, media framing can shape how individuals understand events, assign blame, and form judgments about institutions such as the police and judiciary. In the context of the Vina case, TVOne's persistent and emotionally charged coverage contributed not only to informing

the public but also to amplifying emotional responses such as anxiety, anger, and skepticism.

According to Mulyana (2017), perception is a process of organizing and interpreting information based on existing mental frameworks. Media content does not merely relay facts; it selectively highlights certain aspects of reality, often omitting others. This selective presentation influences how viewers make meaning of complex issues. As Pandipa (2019) explains, perception is deeply connected to cognitive processing and is affected by an individual's social experience, emotional state, and exposure to information. Therefore, people exposed to intense media narratives may perceive legal cases not only based on factual knowledge but also on emotional resonance and personal biases.

In addition, media not only provides content but also stimulates interpersonal communication. Media discussions within households and communities often reinforce or reshape individual perceptions, depending on social interactions and shared interpretations. In the case of Vina Cirebon, televised news sparked extensive discussions both offline and online, leading to collective questioning of the justice system and a surge in public discourse surrounding wrongful convictions, institutional failures, and victims' rights.

Despite its informative function, the media's dramatization and repetition of unresolved legal issues can have adverse effects. Without proper media literacy, audiences may struggle to differentiate between facts and narratives, leading to the spread of misinformation or emotional manipulation. Therefore, it becomes essential to investigate how television broadcasts are received and interpreted by viewers in specific communities.

This study aims to explore the public perception of TVOne's news coverage of the Vina Cirebon case among residents of RT 006, Kelurahan Gunung Agung, Bandar Lampung. By analyzing how individuals cognitively and emotionally respond to televised news, this research contributes to a broader understanding of media effects, public trust, and the sociopsychological dynamics of crime reporting. It also highlights the dual role of media as a source of enlightenment and as a potential trigger for fear and distrust within contemporary Indonesian society.

Methodology

This research was conducted using a qualitative descriptive design with a case study approach, aimed at exploring how residents of RT 006, Kelurahan Gunung Agung, Bandar Lampung, perceive television news coverage specifically by TVOne of the Vina Cirebon case. The qualitative method was chosen to capture in-depth, context-rich insights from individuals, allowing the researcher to understand the meaning behind people's experiences, feelings, and interpretations.

Research Design

The study followed a post-positivist paradigm, which acknowledges the subjective construction of reality and the influence of individual perceptions in interpreting mass media. According to Sugiyono (2016), qualitative research is suited for exploring social phenomena where meaning, rather than quantity, is central.

This case study focused on a single community group exposed to the same media content, which enabled an in-depth analysis of patterns, contrasts, and consistencies in perceptions formed from watching TVOne's programs: Kabar Pagi, Kabar Petang, Apa Kabar Indonesia Malam, and Dua Sisi.

Sampling Technique and Participants

A purposive sampling technique was applied to select participants based on specific characteristics relevant to the research question. The sample consisted of ten (10) residents, categorized into:

1. Key informants: community leaders or figures with strong community engagement and media awareness.
2. Main informants: young adults or students who actively consume news content.
3. Supporting informants: general residents who occasionally follow news updates.

The criteria for selection were:

1. Permanent residence in RT 006, Kelurahan Gunung Agung (as verified through KTP).
2. Willingness to participate and give informed consent.
3. Exposure to or familiarity with the news broadcasts about the Vina case on TVOne.

The use of emergent sampling allowed the researcher to refine the selection of informants during the fieldwork, ensuring the relevance and richness of the collected data.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected using the following techniques:

1. In-depth semi-structured interviews: Each participant was interviewed face-to-face using a prepared interview guide (available as Supplementary File 1). Interviews lasted 30–60 minutes and were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia. All conversations were audio-recorded with consent.
2. Field observations: During interviews, observational notes were made about the participants' non-verbal cues, media habits (e.g., TV schedule awareness), and household media environments.
3. Document analysis: Broadcast footage from TVOne's YouTube channel, official news statements, and social media commentary were analyzed to understand how the Vina case was framed in different segments.

Data Analysis

The data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) three-step qualitative analysis model:

1. Data Reduction: Transcripts were reviewed and condensed into thematic units based on emerging patterns.
2. Data Display: Thematic matrices were developed to map connections between informant responses and research variables (e.g., emotional response, trust in legal system, knowledge gain).

3. **Conclusion Drawing and Verification:** Final interpretations were compared against relevant theoretical concepts in mass communication and perception psychology.

Coding was done manually by the researcher, and cross-checked with another peer reviewer to ensure consistency and minimize interpretative bias.

Ethical Approval and Participant Consent

All study procedures were conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines set by the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Bandar Lampung. Ethical clearance was granted by the Department of Communication Studies.

1. Ethical Approval Authority: Program Studi Ilmu Komunikasi, Universitas Bandar Lampung
2. Approval Code: UBL/IKOM/SKR/ETH2025/34

All participants provided informed verbal consent, and their identities have been anonymized in all published materials. No personally identifiable information has been collected or stored.

Trustworthiness and Rigor

To ensure trustworthiness, the research employed:

1. **Triangulation:** Combining interview, observation, and media document sources.
2. **Member checking:** Summaries of responses were read back to participants for confirmation.
3. **Peer debriefing:** Analysis was discussed with academic supervisors for feedback and validation.

Data Availability Statement

All interview transcripts, coding frameworks, and analysis notes are securely stored by the corresponding author. Due to the sensitivity and confidentiality agreements with participants, raw audio recordings are not publicly available. However, anonymized data can be shared for verification purposes upon reasonable request to the author.

Result and Discussion

The data obtained from in-depth interviews with ten informants in RT 006, Kelurahan Gunung Agung, revealed various public perceptions toward the TVOne news coverage of the Vina Cirebon case. The findings were grouped into five major themes: public interest, cognitive and emotional responses, interpersonal communication, media influence, and perceived benefits.

Public Interest in the Vina Cirebon Case

All informants reported following the news due to a strong sense of curiosity, especially after the release of the film "Vina Sebelum 7 Hari". The continuous and dramatic framing of the case by TVOne intensified this interest. Informants cited programs like Dua Sisi and Kabar Petang as compelling sources that prompted them to watch regularly.

"Saya nonton karena penasaran... kok bisa kasus lama muncul lagi dan jadi film." (Informant 3)

Cognitive and Affective Perceptions

Participants exhibited both cognitive and affective responses:

1. Cognitive impacts included increased awareness about the legal system, learning about police procedures, and understanding social risks related to public safety.
2. Affective impacts ranged from empathy to anxiety. Several informants expressed fear and emotional discomfort while watching the reenactments and testimonies aired on TV.

"Saya jadi takut keluar malam, takut kejadian seperti itu bisa terjadi lagi." (Informant 6)

"Dari berita itu saya jadi tahu kalau polisi juga bisa salah menangkap." (Informant 9)

These findings are consistent with Fitriansyah's (2018) categorization of mass communication effects: cognitive (knowledge), affective (emotion), and conative (behavioral).

Perceptions of Law Enforcement and Media Framing

The prolonged unresolved nature of the case led to public skepticism toward law enforcement. Most informants expressed doubts about the fairness and competence of the police and judiciary, especially after the issue of possibly wrongful arrest (e.g., the Pegi Setiawan controversy).

"Kasusnya sudah lama, kenapa sekarang baru ribut lagi? Aneh." (Informant 2)

TVOne's framing of the issue—frequently presenting conflicting views—was seen by some as responsible journalism, while others viewed it as dramatization that might incite distrust.

Interpersonal Communication and Community Discussion

Several informants mentioned that the news coverage sparked conversations within families, among neighbors, and on social media. This interpersonal communication contributed to shaping their perceptions, validating or challenging the opinions formed from the TV broadcast.

"Kita jadi sering bahas di rumah, apalagi sama anak-anak yang juga nonton." (Informant 1)

Perceived Benefits and Behavior Changes

Despite the negative perceptions, many informants acknowledged the positive impact of the news exposure. These include:

1. Increased caution and self-protection behaviors.
2. Enhanced awareness of how legal processes work.
3. Motivation to follow legal developments critically.

"Saya merasa lebih tahu tentang hukum dan jadi lebih hati-hati." (Informant 4)

Table 1. Summary Table of Key Themes

Theme	Key Observations
Public Interest	Curiosity triggered by film and extensive coverage
Cognitive & Affective Reactions	Knowledge gained; emotional responses like fear and distrust
Perceptions of Law & Institutions	Doubts about police credibility and prolonged delay in resolution
Interpersonal Communication	Community dialogue intensified by news reports and shared experiences
Perceived Benefits	Increased awareness of crime prevention and legal literacy

Discussion

The findings of this study show that television coverage particularly from TVOne plays a crucial role in shaping public perception of the Vina Cirebon case. The way media presents information, particularly in high-profile and emotionally charged criminal cases, can significantly influence how people interpret and respond to ongoing legal events. This aligns with Fitriansyah's (2018) view that mass communication exerts cognitive, affective, and behavioral impacts on its audience. These three dimensions were observed among participants: an increase in knowledge about the case and legal processes, emotional reactions such as fear and anxiety, and behavioral changes including increased caution and media engagement.

TVOne's use of emotional narratives, reenactments, and high-profile guests in programs such as *Dua Sisi* intensified the emotional involvement of viewers. As Mulyana (2017) explains, perception is not just about receiving information but interpreting it through one's own mental schemas, often filling in gaps with assumptions or emotional impressions. For many informants, the media coverage constructed a narrative that positioned law enforcement as either negligent or manipulative, especially given the unresolved nature of the case after eight years.

This skepticism towards the justice system was a recurring theme. Several informants expressed doubt about the reliability of the legal process, citing inconsistencies in arrests and a perceived lack of progress in resolving the case. Such reactions reinforce the understanding presented by Pandipa (2019), who describes perception as a cognitive process shaped by external stimuli and emotional responses. The perceived mishandling of the case led to a loss of trust, though not all informants agreed—some preferred to focus on the underlying societal causes of such crimes rather than drawing hasty conclusions about the authorities.

The results also indicate a significant role of interpersonal communication in reinforcing or challenging media-induced perceptions. As the broadcasts gained traction, discussions about the case extended into households, local gatherings, and online spaces. These interactions contributed to a collective interpretation of the event and its implications, illustrating how media prompts further meaning-making within communities.

Furthermore, although the case evoked negative emotions and mistrust, it also had constructive effects. Informants reported becoming more aware of personal safety, legal rights, and the complexities of criminal investigations. This shows that media can

simultaneously inform and provoke, creating both anxiety and empowerment. According to Effendy et al. (2023), this dual function of the media—providing knowledge while shaping emotions—is central to its influence in modern society.

However, the emotional intensity of the coverage also raises concerns. For some viewers, the line between journalism and dramatization became blurred, especially when coverage resembled entertainment formats. Without adequate media literacy, such content can lead to misinformation, overreaction, or distorted perceptions of justice. This study suggests that critical media consumption skills are necessary to navigate emotionally intense coverage responsibly.

In summary, the perception of the Vina Cirebon case among residents of RT 006 demonstrates how mass media, particularly television, acts not only as an information source but as a powerful cultural and emotional influence. The public's response is shaped by both the content of the news and the context in which it is received and discussed. This underscores the importance of responsible journalism and media education in fostering informed and balanced public opinion.

Conclusion

This study reveals that television news coverage, particularly by TVOne, significantly influences public perception of the Vina Cirebon case. Residents of RT 006, Kelurahan Gunung Agung, responded to the coverage with a mix of cognitive awareness, emotional reactions, and behavioral changes. The findings indicate that media can serve as both an informative and affective agent, shaping how individuals interpret unresolved legal cases and the institutions involved in them.

The public's cognitive responses included an increased understanding of legal processes and social awareness of violence and injustice. Affective responses were also strong, with many informants experiencing fear, anxiety, and distrust, particularly toward law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice system. The prolonged and emotionally framed nature of the coverage contributed to skepticism and critical evaluation of the institutions responsible for justice.

Despite these concerns, the study also highlights positive outcomes. Media exposure encouraged greater vigilance, stimulated community discussions, and improved legal literacy among viewers. This demonstrates the dual impact of media: while it may intensify emotional responses, it also offers opportunities for education and civic engagement.

In light of these findings, it is essential for media institutions to adopt responsible and ethical reporting practices, especially in criminal cases that have not yet reached a legal resolution. At the same time, the public should be equipped with media literacy skills to critically assess news content and avoid misperceptions or emotional manipulation. Future research could expand on this study by comparing perceptions across different demographics, regions, and media platforms.

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