

## Collaborate to Innovate: Collective Action Between Broadcasting Institutions (A Qualitative Case Study in Indonesia)

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**Abstract:** Indonesian broadcasting commission have been managing national broadcasting issues is facing dilemmatic situation, since, its central authority is only limited to monitoring broadcasted content. Broadcasting administration and licensing are still under government's scope, although, licensing depends on KPI's recommendation. The study use qualitative approach under case study method to study organizational related and managerial processed in the media and broadcasting contemporor cases in Indonesia. Data were collected by interviews as primary data and external documentation as secondary data. Data were analysed use Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) tools and use steps are data display, data reduction and data verification. Findings are grouped into general them that we called it as 5 pillars.

**Key words:** Media, broadcasting, collective actions, collaboration, indonesia, qualitative data analysis

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### INTRODUCTION

Recently, the concentration of media ownership has become a major issue of society and media. There is no general pattern in concentration occurs as every market has its characteristic. Media oligopoly has been created by eliminating business competitors to remain the domination of business. When it happens, it probably influences media integrity in serving the public interest and need.

Media oligopoly has forced the industry to duplicate the highly rated program and claimed that content duplication represents the people's need. It shows that the civil rights to engage with credible media have not yet been fully exercised (Nugroho *et al.*, 2012).

There is a need to overcome this problem, since, the highest media penetration in Indonesia is broadcasting. Latest statistical data shows that the current situation in Indonesian media, television has the largest number of audiences which the percentage of media penetration was 92%. In the second place, radio penetration was 47% which is double of newspaper's penetration. The internet and magazines had the lowest number of penetration which was 17 and 13%, respectively.

The ability of media to nurture the democratic life will be at high risk if the media owners have a close relation with politics. Moreover, since, media become an entity business, they give loyalty to the advertiser and seek maximum profit. Therefore, the mass market media which

should be a free market of idea platform has been transformed to the monopoly of information platform. It leads to change to toothless media which focus on infotainment. Thus, citizenis exposed to limited range of information (Tapsell, 2012).

In the context of Indonesia, the information gap is not only caused by geographical condition and accessibility but also the power of elites to control the information which shifts it to be more exclusive privilege. This study specifically discusses broadcast media in regards to the content and ownership which does not illustrate the diversification (Siregar, 2014).

The dilemmatic problem of broadcasting is competing in reaching the audience through ratings and shares. If the rating and share become a reference in the preparation of the agenda, it will be more of television text which features a low-quality content with full of entertainment elements. Even news programs that should promote the ideals aspects, positive values and norms are focusing on rating and share by modifying news content to entertain further and reach an audience as much as possible.

The considerable number of entertainment in broadcasting reassures that media is not supporting pillar in regards to their role as the fourth estate. Based on research gaps and phenomena explained above, then, we propose the research question is: how mass media relates to transmission and accessibility of information between different groups of people?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Broadcasting content:** Social perceptions are then 'steered' appropriately and a certain social consciousness is formed through exaggerated journalistic accounts such as facial expressions, dramatic body music and a highly emotive rhetorical language, supposedly venting the already present but actually just then created public demand requiring those in power to do something about this (McRobbie and Thornton, 1995).

There are three basic arguments why broadcasters should be systematically organized. First, broadcasters use the public domain. Therefore, it should be strictly regulated and credentials should be utilized as much as possible for the prosperity and welfare of the people. Secondly, radio frequencies of which they use to broadcast is public space. Demand for frequency channels is significantly larger than the available frequencies. Despite the advances in technology which capable of making more utilized frequency broadcast channels, they remain limited in terms of accessibility. Thirdly, it is pervasive. Programs aired by electronic media can access private spaces, expanded and spread rapidly to other spaces uninvited.

**Broadcasting ownership:** Gramsci *et al.* (1971) has detailed this process as preserving the cultural and ideological 'hegemony' of elite groups in society which in turn will ensure the stability of the capitalist system and impede socioeconomic change. As such, mass media can be perceived as tools used by the upper classes and by extension the state, to forge common consent over polarizing issues by actively intervening in public space and shaping public opinion.

Media owners concentrate on 12 large groups including broadcasting, print media and online media. Businessmen-turned-politicians control half of these media. This condition is particularly the case with some media owners who are intimately connected to politics. The current media oligopoly has endangered citizen's rights to information as the media industry has become profit-led and media companies represent a profitable business which can be shaped by the owner's interests and is thus highly beneficial for those seeking power (Nugroho *et al.*, 2012).

The cause of broadcasting issue has been the subject of intense debate within the media and political scholars. Tapsell (2015) has already drawn attention to the main cause of this complicated situation which is the lack of clear broadcasting regulations and the fact that media watchdogs are not properly performed their role.

**Broadcasting mission:** The developments could not have been accomplished without the influence of mainstream mass media. The media have long been embedded in society's fabric and social reality is experienced through the cultural dynamics of language, communication and imagery (Gamson *et al.*, 1992). Social meanings are inextricably interconnected with representation and thus, accounts of reality are already representations of meaning-construction processes which people activate to form perceptions of what the 'real issues' are (McRobbie and Thornton, 1995).

There are three issues that must be addressed and translated into legislation, namely ownership restrictions and coverage range of private broadcasters, strict rules where private broadcasters are to broadcast nationally, they should be networked, for democracy, centre of network should not be only stationed in Jakarta but can spread throughout Indonesia. Therefore, these developments could not have been accomplished without the influence of mainstream mass media.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Broadcasting content:** Public radio programs were dominated by music 37.14% and news 34.29%. Private radio stations also have featured programs include 73.3% of music and 10.23% of news. Public television had 80% of news and information programs that become the flagship of public television shows and 20% of religious programs. Meanwhile, private television news seeded the news program by 51.43% and the film or soap by 20%. Broadcasted programs such as soap operas and football matches are the programs that are likely to get high ratings (Komunikasi *et al.*, 2012). A media practitioner, said:

"TV is still a reference point for the community. TV programs such as football matches, F1 and soap operas always get high ratings. These programs can easily achieve a rating of 20-25 from Nelson and are assured to get at least 15 of rating. Rating is an advertisement. Advertising is money. It is very contradictory to the process of educating the public. Talk shows, just obtain a rating of 7, although, this program is a positive form of journalist" (Interview, 2013)

The uncertainty in the industry of broadcasting caused a decline in the quality of the broadcast. Various broadcast programs on air are not based on the eligibility criteria of a broadcast. Mostly high rating programs violate broadcasting code and receive complaints by

society. Broadcasting activities are geared to attract advertising and determine the feasibility of the programs through market tastes and rating. The rise of mystical shows, obscene shows, infotainments and a reality show is the dominant impact of market considerations in determining the broadcast material.

**Broadcasting ownership:** Many of the media owners become the political party leaders. The media suffers an inevitable bias due to the deliberate interventions of media owners which include favouring government and corporate policies when creating content and distributing it to the audience.

Comparing with some countries, the ownership and broadcast coverage area are confined, so that, diversity of ownership and content can be controlled. In the United States, a person or legal entity can own as much as possible as long as the broadcaster range does not exceed 39% of the nation's TV homes or TV's household. While in Australia, restricting the range based on the population that is covered by the broadcasting organizations, i.e., a maximum of 75%.

Currently, private broadcasters are much more dominant than their public and community counterparts. Public broadcasters do not receive adequate support from the state, so that, they have shown the weak transformation from government station into the public station.

**Broadcasting mission:** Broadcaster from RRI says:

“RRI does not have a radio station at the borders. This radio station was built with what it is in the border area. What is happening today is a competition to raise the frequency in Indonesia's border” (Interview, 2013)

The revitalization of a public company should be conducted immediately by Indonesia's government, due to the current public broadcasting is under quality, so that, Indonesia does not have the best mark in the public broadcaster as other countries. Media expert, said:

“We do not have the best mark because we do not have enough quality of public broadcasters. Consequently, public broadcaster revitalization agenda becomes necessary” (Interview, 2013)

Communication expert, said:

“The road map of media development in Indonesia, no one preaches control resulting in an influential authority. Now people are looking for information on Google. The media especially television are cheating. It would be great if media industry can provide 5% of public frequency to broadcast an announcements or advertisements about national character, space for media empowerment by airing or publishing advertisements with messages of the national character” (Interview, 2013)

The development of digital technology is inevitable and clearly will provide a challenge for broadcasting in Indonesia. Therefore, it is necessary to study and conduct mapping of digital-related issues in Indonesia to be then used in refining the legislation for the broadcaster. In this case, digitization should remain for the public interests and prevent the concentration of broadcast ownership.

From the previous explanation above, media oligopoly treats Indonesian audience as consumer instead of people who own their rights. Nugroho *et al.* (2012) say that, this condition is alarming, so, it is needed civil society to control and improve it.

National coalition for broadcasting reform is a good illustration of collaboration institutions, since, it consists of over 160 academics and practitioners as well as 20 civil society organizations which concern on broadcasting issue. They have made the first step to tackle the issue of the broadcasting bill. Creating website and facebook to raise public awareness on media and communication problems, publishing their opinion in press and also conducting stakeholder discussions are meaningful action that should be appreciated.

Although, it seems too early to evaluate their performance, there is strong possibility that the situation will improve in the long term with more collaboration institutions and real collective and connective actions. The rapid changes of digital technology need more determination to control it by empowering citizen to participate in the public sphere.

The 5 pillars must make efforts to empower the broadcast media industry in Indonesia. The actions shall be undertaken by them such as firstly, the revitalization of public broadcasting institution (LPP). There should be effort, process or means to Revive and Reactivate LPP such as TVRI (Television) and RRI (Radio). In this regard, Indonesia can follow the efforts of Scandinavian nations in creating LPP that educate and empower the public.

Defragmentation is a process to re-arrange the broadcast range of the share ownership and irregular

private companies. This process applies to all private broadcast media companies both television and radio to minimize the occurrence of conglomeration and concentration of media ownership.

The endorsement of community broadcasting institution (LPK) is conducted by optimizing the functions of LPK and providing facilities to support their activities. By implementing these actions, they can listen to the needs of local communities and disseminate the information equally. There is a successful case study in India which the government supports community radio with the internet facility to strengthen public access to information.

Science and technology in the broadcasting industry should be enhanced. The development of digital technology is a challenge for broadcasting in Indonesia. The existence of research conducted specifically to examine media, information and communication (inbox) and other multidisciplinary research related to broadcast media (outbox) is expected to respond to these challenges. Thus, these actions will probably transform Indonesian broadcast media landscape to become free and air, synergy, innovative and civilized.

The broadcast media industry overview will become the role model in the broadcast media industry. This concept is said to be suitable because it contains freedom which is up-to-date without abandoning the values of religion, culture and national spirit.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on explanation above then, we concluded that the underlying issue is not only dealing with reassuring the people to get access to civilized broadcasting landscape. But it is also dealing with the collective actions by a collaboration of institutions. The civil society organizations and research agency should not be underestimated and need to be strengthened to make power balance of communication and media bodies.

### **LIMITATIONS**

Limitations of this qualitative study are only based on informal interview as primary data and external

documentation as secondary data and not been much collects and analyse multi sources of data such as observation, artefact, internal documentations.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

For future research, these 5 pillars need to be discussed more deeply to optimize the significant role of the media as an effective watchdog, public sphere, the fourth estate, mirror of the society, information superhighway and market of ideas. And future research may use quantitative approach or mixed method will be obtain better findings.

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