



The Role of Regional Broadcasting Commission in Supporting Media Content Diversity

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Abstract. This study aims to describe the role of the Regional Broadcasting Commission in supporting the diversity of media content during the 2024 regional elections. This is important considering that the media plays a vital role in the growth of a democratic environment since the media can voice information from various groups and individuals, such as news of elections. The media should be able to show the diversity of its content so that the news is not only reporting one particular group or person but should be able to provide content diversity. In Indonesia, the institution that has the function to regulate broadcasting issues is Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia (KPI), Indonesian Broadcasting Commission. This institution has an organizational structure for the provincial regions, which is called the Regional Broadcasting Commission (Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia Daerah-KPID). This institution, as an institution that sets regulations, is expected to be able to support diversity. How this institution supports diversity contents in the media is the issue in this study. This research was conducted qualitatively at the Regional Broadcasting Commission of Central Java (KPID Central Java), Indonesia. Hopefully, this research will show how the Regional Broadcasting Commission's efforts support the principle of diversity in enforcing democracy in the province of Central Java.

Keywords: Broadcasting, Content, Democracy, Diversity, Election, Media,

1. Introduction

Diversity is an important part of a democratic society because everybody should have the same opportunity. There is no monopoly of one or two particular groups to access the media. There should be various news or information in the media contents. Diversity is not the final objective but it is such a tool to achieve democracy [1]. The diversity of media content becomes crucial since there is a concern on the relation between media concentration and abuse of power by over-representation [2]. Therefore, diversity is very important to prevent injustice.

The media has a role as a public sphere, so that's why all groups and individuals actually could access the media. The media plays an important role in many things, including to influence behaviours in the society. When the media merely published contents of certain groups and did not give access to others, the public or

audience will be most likely influenced by the groups, particularly in political events such as general elections.

Television has a huge influence on social, political, and economic aspects. Several televisions are concerned with political and business interests rather than public interests [3]. Therefore, regulations are needed to cover public interests. Electoral volatility is frequently affected by campaign information on television [4]. Politicians often covered by the media will get more attention from the audience or voters ([5]. Hence, they will try to appear in the media as often as possible. It takes a regulation to make a fair accessibility.

Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia (KPI) -The Indonesian Broadcasting Commission is an institution with broadcasting functions. There are regional broadcasting commission institutions in the provincial regions, including Central Java province. Referring to Law No. 32 of 2002 on Broadcasting, regional broadcasting commissions is designated to regulate, control, and develop broadcasting issues. This institution also has a function to ensure the public gets proper and true information according to human rights.

In the 2024 general election, this commission found indications of potential violations in the election process, including the pre-election silence period. The monitoring was conducted on 32 systems of network stations (SSJ) local televisions, and 30 radios [6]. The potential violations are among others the use of public frequency for individual interest, campaign ads, and ads durations that exceed specified time. Broadcasting frequency belongs to the public. Therefore, it must be utilized for the public interest.

The broadcasting condition becomes a reference to observe how the broadcasting of the 2024 regional election (Pilkada) 2024 takes place. The broadcasting media are expected to provide true and fair information to the public. Moreover, there is an indication that the media tends to become the machine of political campaigns for certain groups. The conditions are definitely different from general elections, where the candidates have a national reputation and are covered by national broadcasting media. However, it is necessary to observe regional elections to ensure the media provides true and fair information to the public or audience.

For broadcast media such as radio and television, general elections and regional elections are very attractive to broadcast. Besides, ad portions in the campaign period are also overwhelming. In this context, the candidates who own media or have huge ads budgets will get higher access to media. However, on the other side, the audience or the public needs true and fair information which is not only prioritizing certain groups. Hence, it needs regulation to protect public interests.

This research employed the theory of media as the public sphere (Jurgen Habermas). Events will be called public when they are open to all [7]. As a public sphere, the media should give access to all people without pressure. [8] said that mass media such as radio is a public sphere which is free of economic interest and political pressure. Research that was carried out by Sujoko also showed the role of radio as a public sphere [9].

After the reformation period, the face of the broadcasting institution experienced tremendous change [10]. Today, the number of broadcasting institutions is increasing and varies, not only at the national level but also at the local one. It needs regulation to control the various types of broadcasting media. Broadcasting media are always involved in democracy events such as general election, presidential election, and regional election [4]). In the political campaign period, the media has very

important roles, among others are enabling the candidates to deliver messages to the society, telling people how to use their political rights, monitoring election processes, and reporting the results to the public [11].

The broadcasting media is supposed to broadcast information providing sufficient knowledge so that the voters can elect their candidates independently. Broadcasting institutions hopefully can also give information about candidates who have determination and capability to become leaders [12]. The media is expected to provide information that can educate the audience through quality broadcasting content [13]. News reports in the media could affect perception and behaviors in society. Media news gives information regarding politics, political events, candidates, political parties, and policy of campaign period [14]. Political ads should be a concern. A study showed that political ad regulation is not the same in each country. Political ads are limited in some countries and even not allowed at all in some other countries [15]. Political ads have a firm relation with political attitudes [16].

According to the law of broadcasting, Regional Broadcasting Commissions which is the extension of KPI in the region of Central Java Province has a function in regulating and monitoring broadcasting issues. There are some cases in the region such as ads of political campaigns that violated the schedule, excessive coverage of candidates, and partisanship to certain candidates, and so forth ([4].

Due to the various cases and potential violation, Regional Broadcasting Commissions needs to formulate strategies to protect people's rights. Research conducted by [13] showed that there are diverse perceptions in the community on local television related to elections coverage. There is a positive perception that local televisions could broadcast the election events fairly, however on the other side there is a negative perception that local televisions are partisan and sponsored by election participants. There is also a perception that local televisions have no partisanship.

There are a number of regulations to control broadcasting in the regional election period, among others are Law No 7 of 2017 on Elections, Law No 32 of 2002 on Broadcasting, Law No 40 of 1999 on Press, Elections Commission Regulation No 4 of 2017 on Campaign of Governor and Vice Governor Elections, Regent and Vice Regent Elections, Mayor and Vice Mayor Elections, Journalistic Code of Ethics, and Guidance of Broadcasting Behaviors and Program Standards of Broadcasting (P3SPS).

Besides, there are also regulations related to the function of KPI and Circular Letter of KPI Chairman Number 1 of 2019 regarding News Reporting, Broadcasting, and Ads of the 2019 Elections Campaign on Broadcasting Institutions. Central Java Regional Broadcasting Commission carries out its functions according to those regulations and it needs strategies to do the tasks.

This paper is necessarily carried out to obtain a description on the efforts of Regional Broadcasting Commissions in supporting the diversity of media content in regional elections 2024. The question in this research is how the Regional Broadcasting Commissions plays a role in bolstering the content diversity?

2. Method

This research entitled "The Role of Regional Broadcasting Commission in Supporting Media Content Diversity" employed a qualitative method to find a deep picture about

what the management should do to run its programs properly. According to [17], the qualitative approach will give a thick picture about the researched phenomenon. This paper will result in strategies consisting of several phases, from problem analysis, planning, to program execution. The type of this paper is explanatory research that identifies sources from social behavior, trust, condition, and events. This paper will also give reasons for a phenomenon [18]. These explanations are the eminence of qualitative research. The research was conducted in Central Java Province, with consideration that the province has the largest numbers of broadcasting media (TV and radio), namely 403 broadcasting media.

3. Result And Discussion

Interviews with the commissioners and staff members of the Regional Broadcasting Commissions of Central Java Province showed that they try to present diversity in politics to the audience or the community. According to their opinions, that is a mandate of the current regulations. Informant 1 (regional broadcasting commissioner) said that the Regional Broadcasting Commission tries to support content diversity because it will promote democracy in Indonesia. Democracy placed the public as the owner of broadcasting frequency.

“The process of democracy in Indonesia placed the public as the owner and main controller of the broadcasting field. Therefore, frequency belongs to the public and is limited, so it should be utilized for the public interests as much as possible.” (Informant 1, regional broadcasting commissioner).

Informant 1 explained that everybody should have access to broadcast media, including the regional head elections period. There are several regulations related to the functions of the Regional Broadcasting Commission, among others are Law No 32 of 2002 on Broadcasting, Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Information of the Republic of Indonesia Number 18 of 2016 concerning Requirements and Procedures for Broadcasting Licensing and Broadcasting Behavior Guidelines and Broadcast Program Standards (P3SPS) of 2012. There are also regulations related to regional elections, such as the Circular Letter of KPI Chairman Number 6 of 2024 regarding News Reporting, Broadcasting, and Campaign Ads of the Elections of Governor and Vice Governor, Regent and Vice Regent, and Mayor and Vice Mayor of 2024 in Broadcasting Institution.

The broadcasting institutions mentioned in those regulations are broadcasting operators or organizers, whether public broadcasting institutions, private broadcasting institutions, community broadcasting institutions, or subscription-based broadcasting institutions. In running their tasks, functions, and responsibilities, they are guided by the regulation (Circular Letter of KPI Chairman Number 6 of 2024). In supporting content diversity, there are some points regulated in the circular letter, one of them is the principle of balance or everybody has equal opportunity (point 51j Circular Letter of KPI Chairman Number 6 of 2024). In the point of general implementation, it is said that broadcasting programs must allocate sufficient time for Pilkada coverage. Broadcasting programs must be fair and proportional to all participants in the regional elections. Broadcasting programs are prohibited to be partisan to certain participants of

regional election. With those regulations, hopefully, broadcasting content will vary and will not be partisan.

Informant 2 (regional broadcasting commissioner) also mentioned that the circular letter is already comprehensive enough both on broadcasting production and ad streaming. For instance, point 5d rules that broadcasting institutions are prohibited from producing programs that are unbalanced in selecting sources or reporting materials, such as the elections of the governor and vice governor, regent and vice-regent, and the mayor and vice mayor in one broadcasting program. It also rules the duration of ads streaming and a number of ads in printed media and electronic media. Each candidate pair of regional election only has a maximum of 10 spots with a maximum duration of 30 seconds cumulatively on each television per day. Each candidate pair of regional election only has a maximum of 10 spots with a maximum duration of 60 seconds cumulatively on each radio per day. With those regulations, hopefully, media content diversity will be maintained. If the regulations are violated, there will be a prosecution. Informant 3, who is a staff member of monitoring, said that in the 2024 Elections, he found one case that exceeded the slot limitation. Regional Broadcasting Commission then held a meeting and warned the broadcasting media. The media accepted the warning and it promised not to break the rules anymore.

“Even though it only exceeds one slot, it still violates the rules. That’s why we issued a warning to the broadcasting media. There was also a television station that also violated the rules and we issued a warning. We showed the evidence of monitoring. They accepted and promised not to breach the rules anymore.” (Informant 4, staff member of the Regional Broadcasting Commission).

Regional Broadcasting Commission tries to maintain media content diversity. Each violation, even only breaking a few seconds or one slot, must be warned. A commissioner of Central Java Regional Broadcasting Commission also mentioned that actually there are two principles of diversity based on Law of Broadcasting No 32 of 2002, which: Diversity of Content and Diversity of Ownership. Both principles become a foundation for each policy formulated by KPI. Information service based on Diversity of Content is the availability of diverse information for the public based on program type and program content. Diversity of Ownership guarantees that the ownership of broadcasting institutions in Indonesia is not centralized and monopolized by only a few people or institutions. Diversity of Ownership also guarantees a good competition climate among broadcasting media operators in Indonesia.

In implementing strategies to support content diversity, the Regional Broadcasting Commission always supervises and monitors broadcasting content, encouraging community participation and motivating broadcasting institutions to grow and become good institutions. The monitoring is conducted by a team at the office of Central Java Regional Broadcasting Commission. The team will monitor broadcasting institutions every day. The team will search for allegations of violation and record their findings. They report their findings daily to the commissioner of broadcasting content and afterwards the commissioner will discuss the findings in a plenary meeting. If the allegations were proven to violate the rules, the Regional Broadcasting Commission will take action against the broadcasting institutions that breached the law.

“So far (until the research interview was carried out), broadcasting institutions in Central Java have allocated sufficient time for the regional election coverage and acted

fairly and proportionally to all contestants of the 2024 Elections of Governor and Vice Governor, Regent and Vice Regent, and Mayor and Vice Mayor.” (Informant 3, a staff member of the Regional Broadcasting Commission).

Regional Broadcasting Commission implements other efforts to support media content diversity such as socialization of regulations to broadcasting institutions and the community. The community also plays a role in supporting content diversity. They could participate in monitoring broadcasting programs and reporting actively to that institution. Informant 3 said that, most likely, the community will find allegations of violations related to broadcasting content of the regional election. Reports from the community could be submitted via call center, WhatsApp, and KPID Jateng’s social media. The reports will be forwarded to the commissioner of broadcasting content for follow-up. If the allegations were proven, sanctions will be imposed according to broadcasting regulations.

From the interviews, it found that the media, in this case broadcasting institutions, are encouraged to become a public sphere. The government, in this case a public broadcasting commission that has subsidiary institutions in provinces, has carried out the effort. It is necessary to look after the public sphere to maintain democracy. Supporting diversity will maintain the public sphere. All contestants who are competing in the regional election will have equal rights to media access. Various regulations are imposed to support media content diversity. Some strategies were taken, among others are socialization of media content diversity, monitoring broadcasting content, imposing sanctions if violations were proven, and asking the community to participate in the monitoring system.

4. Conclusion

The diversity of broadcasting media content is very important since the frequency belongs to the public and is limited. Therefore, it should be used for public interests as much as possible, and all people should have access to broadcast media, including during the period of Pilkada (Regional Head Elections). Regional Broadcasting Commission, which has authority in the broadcasting field, makes some efforts to support the diversity of media content, such as enforcing the broadcasting regulations, conducting socialization and monitoring, and taking actions when there is an indication of a violation.

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