

## Questioning the Independence of Media Coverage in the 2019 Elections

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### Abstract

This research is motivated by the Television as a news media easily and quickly disseminates information. The formulation of the problem in this study is how to implement the independence of television media coverage of the 2019 Presidential Election? The theory used contains the theory of distributive justice Aristotle (Grand Theory), Election theory (Middle Theory) and Agenda Setting theory Communication (Applied Theory). The research method is empirical normative method with inductive qualitative analysis. The results of this study are the implementation of an independent television media coverage of the 2019 Presidential Election for the 2019 Presidential Election television media proving the existence of a conflicting principle of impartiality. This is not in line with Article 5 letter i of Law Number 32 of 2002 concerning Broadcasting transferred to broadcasting intended to provide balanced information. News which is a product of broadcasting programs in the form of journalistic work becomes a Press dispute is the authority of the Press Council. Juridical coverage of media coverage which is not independent by juridical also opposes because it is not in line with Article 6 letter d of Law Number 40 of 1999 concerning supervising, supervising, correcting, and advising on matters relating to general issues, not the owners of television media the partisan.

**Keywords:** *Independence; Television; Elections.*

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh televisi sebagai media pemberitaan dengan mudah dan cepat melakukan penyebaran informasi. Rumusan masalah dalam penelitian ini yakni bagaimana pelaksanaan independensi pemberitaan media televisi terhadap Pemilu Presiden 2019?. Teori yang dipakai meliputi teori keadilan distributif aristoteles (*Grand Theory*), teori Pemilu (*Middle Theory*) dan teori Komunikasi Agenda Setting (*Applied Theory*). Metode penelitiannya yakni metode normatif empiris dengan analisis kualitatif induktif. Hasil penelitian ini adalah pelaksanaan independensi pemberitaan media televisi terhadap Pemilu Presiden 2019 menunjukkan bahwa pemberitaan media televisi pada Pemilu Presiden 2019 membuktikan adanya pelanggaran prinsip tidak berpihak. Hal ini tidak selaras dengan Pasal 5 huruf i Undang-Undang Nomor 32 Tahun 2002 tentang Penyiaran yang memerintahkan bahwa penyiaran diarahkan untuk memberikan informasi yang berimbang. Pemberitaan yang merupakan produk program penyiaran berupa karya jurnalistik menjadi sengketa Pers merupakan wewenang Dewan Pers. Pemberitaan media pertelevisian yang tidak independen secara yuridis juga bermasalah karena tidak selaras dengan Pasal 6 huruf d Undang-Undang Nomor 40 Tahun 1999 yakni melakukan pengawasan, kritik, koreksi, dan saran terhadap hal-hal yang berkaitan dengan kepentingan umum, bukan pada pemilik media televisi yang partisan.

**Kata kunci:** Independensi, Pemberitaan, Televisi, Pemilu, Presiden.

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## Introduction

Television as a news media disseminates the knowledge with ease and pace. Viewers are so fond of the advantage in terms of pace because it doesn't skip details, rather than waiting for the newspaper to read. The real benefit is actuality and the seen motion pictures. (Heru Efendi, 2008,) The strategic position of television as the press is also in the sense of social control which prevents abuse of power by the three other pillars. Departing from this situation, misuse of power must be recognized as a problem, and human beings as homo sapiens are given the capacity to interact in solving various problems in their environment (Amelia Sri Kusuma Dewi. 2015).

Since conducting the 2014 General Election or General Referendum, broadcast media has been emphasized as an political reporting tool in terms of its freedom. This style of coverage that appears to take sides is really catching the spotlight. Even the world's largest news agency, such as BBC News, publishes news that makes Indonesia's political life sound so bitter. BBC News assesses that during the 2014 presidential election, two major television news outlets, namely TV One and Metro TV, became propaganda mouthpieces. (2019 bbc.com). The method of information handling carried out by means of television media reporting is in reality an application of Article 28 F of the Republic of Indonesia Constitution of 1945.

The need for information is not only a personal need but also a state society. Throughout today's global age, the nation state needs knowledge as a place of contact to solve the problems of life in social spaces. "The need for nation states to respond effectively to the challenges of globalization stipulates a common use of the capacity of these countries to address the problems of living in a globalized social space, while maintaining diversity "(Karamyshev, D. Society finds that TV media that are pro to one partner have a propensity to constantly show the opposing party's negative sides without the news balance. While television media have to prioritize data and evidence and uphold transparency. Siding media can present statistics and evidence but sadly lack the news balance that is far from transparency to the general public. Obviously, this situation is very far from the order of Article 6 letter e of the Press Law which requires the press to fight for justice and truth.

The above trend is something terrible for the potential growth of Indonesian TV journalism. There should be an attempt to prevent this idealism being overridden by the dark side of the press industry. Journalism activities by news media coverage like this will of course be kept away because it affects the public interest. In the field of television media, legal rehabilitation is required to deal with the challenges faced in the practice of television journalism. It appears that the presence of sanctions governed in Article 75 of Regulation No 02 / P / KPI/03/2012 of the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission did not deter the poor practice of television media broadcasting in the presidential election of 2019. This paper will address and challenge the application of the integrity of media coverage, based on the issues previously raised. Television vs Presidential Election 2019.

## **Research Methods**

The type of research used in compiling this research is normative legal research. Normative legal research is more focused on literature study, which is collecting data from various literatures both from libraries and elsewhere. (I Gusti Ayu Ketut Rachmi Handayani, Lego Karjoko, Abdul Kadir Jaelani, 2019) This normative legal research focuses on Indonesia's positive law that regulates the issues to be studied. (Soerjono Soekanto, 2018) This research uses secondary data. Secondary data collection tools in the form of books relating to the theory and concept of research objects, related articles, scientific writing literature and so on through literature study (Maria SW. Sumardjono, 2014). Analysis of the data used in this study is a qualitative analysis which is then presented in a descriptive form. Qualitative analysis is done through categorization based on the problems studied and data collected. (Suharsimi Arikunto, 2018)

## **Discussion**

### **1. Television Media Coverage of Presidential Elections**

The insurance media until now still attracts interest in the news facilities because in Indonesia there are various kinds of media, 523 is television. The total media in Indonesia reaches 47,000 and represents the country with the highest number of media, 2000 of the total is print media, 43,300 online media, 674 radio media, and 523 are television media. (M Djufri Rachim, 2019) Furthermore, from the number of television media based on the data above, it is not surprising that the pairs of candidates for President of Indonesia in 2019 are using television media.

Then the media should in practice be able to sit as a neutral organ and advance truth and justice in order to provide political teaching and understanding for the community. One theory of justice offered by Aristotle, an ancient Greek philosopher, is distributive justice. In principle, distributive justice is proportional equality. (Rian Saputra, 2019) With this kind of justice, everyone can claim what is rightfully proportionately. In the life of the nation and state the fulfillment of the rights of citizens is a basic right that must be fulfilled. In this context distributive justice becomes relevant because the determination of rights and their equitable distribution is closely related to the relationship between the people and the people as well as the people and the state.

The world of journalism is also inseparable from the theory of distributive justice. Because in journalistic work is to find factual truth. Such truth must be accompanied by data and facts, without data and facts journalism is not truth. So that the truth in journalism will be proportional if supported by data and facts. Indeed modern journalism is very closely related to efforts to find the truth through facts and data. This is in line with Election theory which argues that it is based on research and findings, supported by data and arguments regarding

general elections. On the other hand, the meaning of "Democracy" is the (form or system) of government in which all people participate in governing by means of their representatives; people's government. (<https://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id/entri/demokrasi>, 2020)

General Election, hereinafter referred to as Election, is a means of implementing the people's sovereignty which is carried out directly, publicly, freely, confidentially, honestly and fairly in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. (Article 1 paragraph (1) Law Number 8 of 2012) Elections are carried out effectively and efficiently based on the principle of direct, public, free, confidential, honest, and fair. In Moh's view. Kusnardi and Hermaily Ibrahim (Moh. Kusnardi and Hermaily Ibrahim.1978), Election is one of the basic principles of citizens rights. Because in the context of the implementation of Islamic rights is a necessity for the government to carry out general elections. In accordance with the principle that the people are sovereign, then all of that must be returned to the people to determine it. It is a violation of human rights if the government does not hold elections, or slow down elections without the consent of people's representatives.

In an electoral agenda, a presidential candidate certainly tries to get television media support to display the positive image that is available to him. According to communication theory, agenda setting as part of communication science places television in which editors and broadcasters will contribute positively in shaping social reality. This is what the candidate expects as a result of the support of television media reporting. The positive image of the presidential candidate pair as a social reality that is formed is expected to attract the sympathy of many people who in the end the community becomes familiar with the figure concerned as a presidential candidate pair. The existence of news value and sell value in the presidential election is the power to grab people's attention. Television media coverage that attracts the public's attention will determine the merits of a presidential candidate pair by itself becomes one of the elements that determines his election as well.

## **2. Independence of the 2019 Presidential Election Television News Media in a Perspective of the Press.**

As we know, the election of the United States President in 1968 was the starting point for the development of a political agenda setting theory that later developed based on the findings of work by Maxwell McComb and Donald L. Shaw. This hypothesis was presented in 1972 by both of them in a paper called *Public Opinion Quarterly*, "The Agenda Setting Role of The Mass Media." (B. Bungin.2006) Both researchers prove that editors and broadcasters have a

significant role in shaping a social reality. This role is seen in their work activities when highlighting a message. The public will consider the extent of the importance of the issues raised as described in the mass media. (Hari Wiryawan.2007)

According to the persuasion theory setting agenda, a presidential candidate's preference should be decided by the pros and cons of coverage by a media on a campaign agenda. This is not shocking that the belief that "controlling the media is the same as controlling the public" has an effect. This way, media influence is directly proportional to political control of the press. Because it is acknowledged that, according to Article 42 of Law No. 32 Year 2002, it is specified that "Broadcast journalists in carrying out electronic media journalistic activities are subject to the Journalistic Code of Ethics and the relevant laws and regulations." Therefore, as far as coverage of the 2019 Presidential Election TV media is concerned, broadcasters are broadcasters of journalists.

The question of the independence of television media reporting in the Presidential Election is very important to the appeal made by Yosep Adi Prasetyo, Chairman of the Indonesian Press Council (2016-2019), which effectively states that political party owners may not participate in news reports handled by the editorial committee. According to him, journalists in the 2019 elections are not part of the electoral process but should be both a judge and a monitor. Journalists will write as accurately as possible, including critiques that need to be communicated. The journalist represents the general public interest. By being one of the contestants he lost credibility as a champion of the public interest. People who work in the Newsroom need to pay careful attention to journalistic laws. "We appeal to media owners, especially those with political parties, not to press the newsroom and control journalists' independence because it is a violation" (<https://dewanpers.or.id/video/start/,2019>)

In the context of the 2019 Presidential Election television media reporting that what is said by Yosep Adi Prasetyo's journalist must be translated as broadcast journalist as Article 42 of Law No. 32 of 2002 on broadcasting. That is because the media only includes broadcast journalists who are also subject to journalistic laws as well as its related legislation, such as Law No. 40 of 1999. Yosep Adi Prasetyo's statement "According to the Journalistic Principles" above for the 2019 Presidential Election must be in line with Press Council Regulation No.6 / Regulation-DP / V/2008 on Ratification of Press Council Decree No. 03 / SK-DP / III/2006 on the Journalistic Ethics Code. Article 1 Regulation No 6/Regulation-DP/V/2008 of the Press Council states: 'Indonesian journalists are independent in producing accurate, balanced and not bad news' (Article 1 Press Council Regulation No.6 / Regulation-DP / V/2008).

One of the details for building up the claims of political parties and state bodies is reliable reporting. It has a link with the stability and strength of a democratic state, as does work on constitutional debates in the Georgian parliament, a nation in Europe. "The higher the degree of argument-based discussions in a country's political organizations and state institutions, the more stable and stronger the state of democracy is"(Vladimeri Napetvaridze, et.all. 2020). The news expressed by having a non-partisan stance does not automatically have to be burdened by knowing who will be harmed and who will benefit from the coverage. The autonomous approach is to teach, without intervention or influence from other sources, incidents or evidence with a conscience as stated in letter a. Article 1 Regulation No.6 of the Press Council / Regulation-DP / V/2008

## Conclusion

Implementation of the 2019 Presidential Election's freedom of television media coverage reveals that television media reporting in the 2019 Presidential Election proves that the principle of impartiality is in violation. This is not consistent with Article 5 letter I of Law No. 32 of 2002 on Broadcasting which states that broadcasting is intended to provide balanced information. The Press Council's jurisdiction is News that is a result of broadcasting services in the form of investigative work is a Press conflict. Political, non-independent television broadcasting is also problematic because it does not comply with Article 6(d) of Law No. 40 of 1999, which is to supervise, critique, correct and advise the party on matters relating to the public interest, not the owners of television media.

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