

Mass Media Reform and Democratization in the Indonesian Context

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Abstract: The reforms that took place in Indonesia in 1998 were the starting point for community demands for a democratic system. This article is a conceptual article that aims to answer the challenges of democratizing the mass media in the Indonesian context. For 32 years, the Indonesian government system tended to adhere to an autocratic system. The freedom of the mass media or the press is monitored, so that freedom of information and news is limited. So that the information that reaches the public has experienced distortion and is no longer relevant. So strong in autocratic regimes. However, after the 1998 reformation, democracy has made significant progress, with the fulfillment of the rights of civil society, there is a process of transferring authority which previously became the exclusive rights of the state to become the authority of the public. In line with this matlamat, the transition of the broadcast media system system is monitored by a government order that is free from pressure and interference with the interests of power. The mass media or the press is no longer the fourth pillar in democracy, but the mass media or the press is a part that must be guarded, because the mass media or the press represents itself as the main public space and also determines the dynamics that not only function socially and economically, but also function. ideological. Apart from that threats to mass media workers and journalists still occur, even though threats and violence are carried out more by group interests. In fact, democracy actually contains civilization and order in social life which has a very noble goal in running the government. In general, it can be said that a democratic system requires a very dynamic consensus and interaction between the state, the media industry, and the civil society. Because in a democratic system there is no institution that feels more dominant than others.

Keywords: Reform, Challenge, Mass Media Democracy

1. Introduction

The reforms that took place in 1998 demand the dissolution of the New Order government regime which had been in power for 32 years, and the establishment of a democratic system. The demand for reform of laws and regulations of the New Order regime is a particularly strong one. Talking about democracy and its development, it will not be separated from the discussion about the freedom of the mass media or the press. The essence of the mass media or press system is the system of freedom. A mass media or press system was created precisely to determine how the mass media or press should be able to exercise its freedom and responsibility. Freedom of the mass media or the press is not only a blessing or a blessing, but it can be disastrous if it is

not used properly, not used responsibly and discipline. So actually the mass media or press has an important role in supporting the history of the nation within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Especially in a democratic state system, the press tends to be positioned by some groups as the support for the fourth pillar of democracy, after the executive, judiciary and legislature. [7].

In the Indonesian context, the mass media or press freedom system itself is part of a larger system, namely the system of freedom to express oral and written thoughts, as regulated in the 1945 Constitution. This is called "freedom of expression". Freedom of expression is highly valued in a democracy, because freedom of expression is the right of every citizen. Likewise with the public demand for a reduction in government power which has been so exclusive

and strong in regulating the mass media system or the press centrally. However, after the demands for reform took place in all aspects, including political, economic, and legal aspects, the authority policy order went from being autocratic and centralized to a democratic and centralized system. [30]. The reforms that have occurred have increasingly made the public more critical, open, and actively participate in overseeing the democratization process in Indonesia. [31].

Previously, the information and news delivered by the mass media was only one way, gradually becoming a free and open public space to convey interactive information, ideas and ideas [16, 23]. Another progress can be seen with the growth and development of mass media, both print media and electronic mass media, especially broadcast media, which is one indicator of the birth of democracy in Indonesia [12]. Democracy in Indonesia was reviewed during the New Order era in 1968-1998, its tendency was to adhere to an authoritarian system where the freedom of people's human rights was limited, political rights and the right to freedom of expression were curbed. The mass media is limited by laws and regulations, so that the mass media is subject to pressure from the government which adheres to an authoritarian system and news is distorted because all news has to go through a monitoring and filter it. [8]. There is so much control by the autocratic government towards the mass media or the press, the channel of information seems to be tightly locked by the government, as a result the mass media or the press cannot provide accurate announcements. The mass media or the press cannot criticize deviant government policies, criticism is silenced and the opposition political system is prohibited, which ultimately results in corruption, collusion and nepotism, uneven development, increased social conflict. [2]. When the mass media are not free to convey announcements, the public's knowledge about the edicts is left behind. The most visible problem is that the large number of mass media or the press is limited by the permits of the government and the ruling regime. That is how strict the control of an authoritarian autocratic government is on the freedom of public rights and the freedom of the mass media or the press. [25].

With the onset of reform in 1998 brought fresh air to democracy in the context of Indonesia, for politics, the state order system, including the system for the mass media or the press. However, the progress of democracy and freedom of the mass media or the Indonesian press is not without challenges and obstacles, the freedom of the mass media or the press still faces challenges and threats from both internal and external. Seeing this phenomenon, the author is interested in studying the democratization of the mass media and post-reformation in the Indonesian context. [14].

Based on the explanation behind this research, the formulation of the problems in this study are: (a) What is the Condition of the Democratization of Post-Reform Mass Media in the Indonesian Context? (b) Factors Controlling Post-Reform Democracy of Mass Media in the Indonesian Context? (c) What is the Post-Reformation Mass Media Democratization Model in the Indonesian Context?

The research objectives to be achieved in this study are: (a) Knowing the Conditions of Post-Reform Mass Media Democracy in the Indonesian Context; (b) Identifying the Factors Barring Post-Reformation of Mass Media in the Indonesian Context; (c) Formulating a Post-Reform Democracy Model in the Indonesian Context. This means that the content of demands for the democratization of mass media after the reformation that occurred in Indonesia includes several aspects that enable democracy of the mass media to be carried out at a practical level, taking into account the environment in which democracy is carried out; environment will always affect where the mass media is located. What is meant by environment includes political, economic, security, socio-cultural and geographic systems. A mass media democratization system is not necessarily successful in a country with a different environment, but it has failed to be applied in other countries and environments, due to different environmental conditions, and the mass media democratization system cannot be generalized.

2. Literature Review

2.1. *Democracy of Mass Media*

Democracy is the main theme and issue of world change at this time, in which there are various interrelated issues regarding freedom such as civil society rights, community rights in diversity and diversity, value approaches and cultural preservation. In principle, democracy is a political concept, but democracy can be practiced from the perspective and understanding of the economic, social and cultural system Giddens. A. 1993, William Blum, 2013 Therefore, democracy cannot be generalized or generalized, because the concept of democracy in one country will be very different from the concept of democracy in other countries. [9, 24].

Democracy has developed since the empirical definition of Schumpeter (2005) was put forward. The academic debate around democratization gave birth to different definitions of concepts in the academic field. Various studies on democracy in political and social science are carried out from different points of view. Democracy does not have a definite level mark in its measurement because it requires understanding both in the layman and even in the academic sphere. Democracy is a political system that shows that in doing so for the public interest it is determined based on the principles of participation, equality and freedom of expression, individual rights and the right to voice opinions. [22, 36]. Democracy is not a new concept in academic literature as has been discussed for more than 200 years the struggle for democratization began before Johann Gutenberg's invention of the mechanical printing press in 1450 because for several centuries, philosophers and intellectuals had struggled for democratization. The concept of democratization has been discussed by British scholars such as John Milton and John Locke, even before the mass media or the American press began to fight for it for further freedom and before the

drafting of the Bill of Rights in the United States in 1700. Pearson, 2003; Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956. [28].

However, until now, the idea of democracy is still on the agenda of debate around the world, from various nations with various religious, civilizational and historical backgrounds. Generally, they acknowledge that democracy is something new and must be realized in the life of society and the state, even in the current era of globalization democracy has been considered as a global norm. [20]. It is almost impossible to reject democratization today because democracy has become the spirit and development of the times. The concept of democratization initially developed in Greek thought, then gave an impression to the government systems in Europe, America, Africa and including Indonesia.

Democracy is a must now a days because it is considered as the best system of government compared to other government systems, such as autocracy and oligarchy. In essence, democracy is the granting of the right to freedom from the state to citizens. Likewise, economic development which should be democratic can be in line with development progress. This of course can happen if democracy can prevent access and ownership of wealth only in certain elites, while failure or economic success is related to the system and rules applied. If the matter of economic development can go hand in hand with democracy, feelings can be prevented, equitable economic progress does not depend only on certain groups and elites, democracy gives hope for the growth of a new civilized society that has rights to freedom of expression, opinion, politics where people expect an economic climate that is conducive, just, prosperous and equality. To face challenges in bringing this hope into reality, cooperation is needed between community groups and political elites so that the culture of democracy can develop in a better direction. [27, 33].

Another hope in making Indonesia's democratic transition accessible is for the civil society movement to reduce political polarization and create a culture of diversity and tolerance. In this democratic transaction always begins with the fall of an autocratic empire, while the period and period of transition depend on the efforts of the new democratic regime to solve traditional problems. One of the most fundamental problems faced by countries undergoing a democratic transition is the inability to form a culture of good and clean government, namely a system of genuine and responsible government administration. As a result, the trust and support of the community will decrease so that the legitimacy of democracy will be weak. Without strong legitimacy, the new democratic regime will lose its power and influence. [24].

Inglehart and Welzel said that in the long term, democracy is not only based on changes in institutions or the behavior of elites and interests alone, but fighting for democratic practice will depend heavily on the values and beliefs of ordinary people (lay-trust). To realize a democratic practice is not an easy matter because it requires stages that cannot be done at once or generalized and enforced immediately. Democratic requires a process from the old regime in power to the new

regime, besides that there is trust and support from the community and a common will or consensus. [15]. As described in figure 1 below, it shows a process of democratization of a ruling regime. [10].

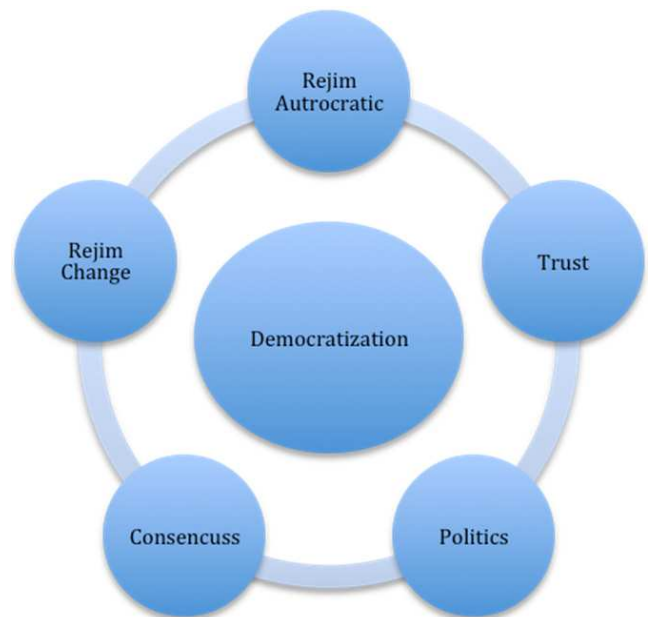


Figure 1. The process of democratization in the ruling regime.

2.2. Mass Media Normative System Theory

In this context, the normative systems theory approach of the mass media by Mc Quail (1987) will be used as the principle of theoretical discussion because so far there has been no theory that specifically examines the democratization of the mass media system. This is because the normative system theory approach of the mass media is considered appropriate to describe the interrelated issues between the mass media system and the social, economic and political systems as well as the cultural system in which the media is located. The normative theory of media applies four categorical patterns of the mass media system to examine the implementation and freedom of the mass media or the press in a country. Therefore, from the spotlight of the work of communication science, the normative theory of mass media is the result of observations using social science methods by S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson & Wilbur Schramm (1986), which is discussed in his book 'Four Theories of the Press' (Severind-Tankard, 2005; [32, 36]. People put their hopes in the mass media in relation to the values of ideas about truth, social media responsibility in fulfilling individual and community expectations and something that should provide knowledge.

This becomes the focal point of normative theory. Sources of normative obligation to the media are in the form of socio-political theory in media professional theory and journalism practice, public opinion as a citizen (public opinion), the public as an audience, the media market (media market), the state and its institutional systems, and interested parties (stake holders) in society influenced by the mass media.

Apart from all the interrelationships of interest above is that the mass media has an obligation to fulfill it to the public. The public interest itself in relation to the mass media is to do a number of things that are considered important, urgent, basic principles governing society, especially those related to justice, democracy and the preservation of socio-cultural values. However, mass media is built, usually the purpose of mass media is to gain profit. [3].

The criteria for mass media to suit the public interest are described in the following paragraphs. The following are the types of problems that have surfaced in debates related to the relationship between the media and society as summarized by Denis McQuail [19] in his book entitled *Theories of Human Communication*. Normative theory can be mapped in terms of issues that arise regarding the structure of the media, the behavior or work of the mass media. They are: Media Structure. The issues that arise around this are about aspects which consist of media freedom. Media must be free from government control or certain interest groups. The media is free and independent in reporting news and meeting the needs of the audience. Freedom is seen in the absence of censorship, license, or punishment for publication which is deemed to violate the law (regulation). [26].

3. Research Procedure

This research was conducted based on research problems, namely knowing the democracy of the mass media post-reform in the Indonesian context. The phenomenon of mass media democratization in the Indonesian context is important to know, considering that after the 1998 reformation and the birth of Law number 32 of 2002, there were very significant advances. Indonesia is ranked 124th out of 180 countries surveyed by Reporters Without Border. [11]. However, post-reform democracy of the mass media is not without challenges and obstacles. If a deeper examination will reveal the important reasons why the democracy of the mass media post-reform still has obstacles and challenges. According to Mc Quail in his book *Theories of Human Communication*. Normative theory can be mapped in terms of phenomena that arise regarding the structure of the media, the behavior or work of the mass media, namely: the paradigm of freedom in expression and communication. [9].

This research is a qualitative research. Creswell said that qualitative research is an interpretive research that places humans as the main subject in this study. So to answer the problem formulation in this study, researchers used a qualitative descriptive approach. This study uses the main research object, namely; Post-Reformation Mass Media Democracy. The data collection methods used by researchers in this study are as follows: this interview is conducted anywhere that is considered to be able to provide and dig up as much information as possible in the research location. Interviews were conducted with the initial informant as well as several other informants to collect the required information and data. Data analysis is an effort to systematically find and obey records of observations,

interviews, etc. to improve the understanding of researchers. In qualitative research, analysis is carried out from the beginning and throughout

4. Discussions Result

The landscape of the broadcasting industry in Indonesia has changed drastically since the fall of Suharto's New Order government in May 1998. Since then the broadcasting industry in Indonesia has become very liberal. This affects all types of mass media including newspapers, magazines, tabloids, radio stations and television as well as Internet media. [1]. Apart from the national broadcast media, international media networks also quickly emerged on the Indonesian market after being banned from operating during the Soeharto regime. By comparison, before 1998, there were 279 print media and only 5 private television stations.

Then the number of private television stations increased and the number of print media also increased. Likewise with radio stations, the increase is not only in terms of number, but broadcast media are also given more space to create and create content, especially news, after decades of the New Order era as an obligation to continue broadcasting information and news from Radio Republik of Indonesia (RRI), and Television of the Republic of Indonesia (TVRI). Along with the democratization and revolution of broadcast media technology, the broadcast media industry has become big by means of share ownership, which aims to be profit oriented, cooperation and monopoly formation by owning tens or even hundreds of broadcast media. [36].

In the New Order era, the TVRI broadcast media was the only single source of public information, because this media could reach all corners of the archipelago, using space communications satellites and used as a mouthpiece for the government and media for power propaganda. Along with the progress of democracy and freedom of information, after the 1998 reform, the government began to open permits to establish private television broadcasting media.

Previously, RCTI had started broadcasting in 1992, then followed sequentially by Surya Citra Television (SCTV) in 1990 and Indonesian Education Television (TPI) in 1991. RCTI and SCTV national broadcasts only started in 1993 then in 1994, ANTV and Indosiar were established. TV. Until now, there are 11 television stations that broadcast nationally, in addition to the aforementioned stations there are Trans TV, Global TV, Metro TV, TV7. TV One. [5].

Advances in technology in the field of information require the mass media to better adapt themselves to these advances, it is undeniable that television broadcasting media that cannot keep up with developments and adjust to progress will be left behind, audience needs must be relevant to various aspects both technology and resource aspects human. The sustainability of a broadcast media in the midst of competition in the other broadcast media industry can be determined more by economic factors and political factors. In the competition and challenges of global media, not all broadcast media can survive, even though the number of

audiences watching popular television media programs is so busy, there are concerns about the concentration of power, this reflects the global trend, namely only a small number of

broadcast media companies actually owning and overseeing the development of the broadcast media industry and having power over content distribution. [17, 37].

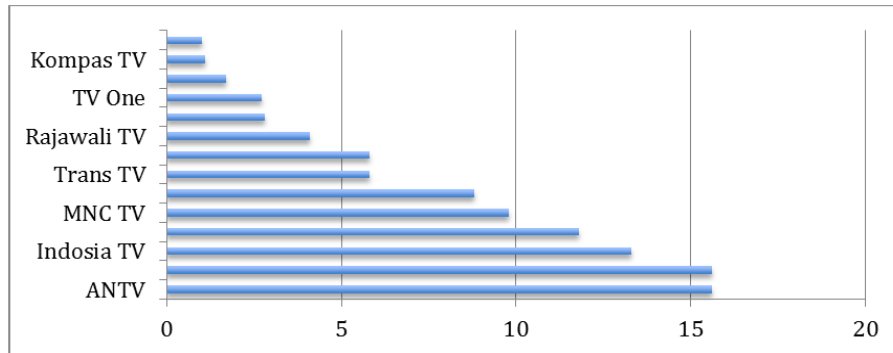


Figure 2. Viewership Rating of 14 Television Stations, Jan-May 2018.

Especially television broadcasting media which grew and developed to be excellent as the choice of society among other mass media including the internet. Television broadcast media is still an option and is popular in modern society. The large number of audiences for television broadcasting media has made it a medium with a great effect on society, culture and also on other mass media. Currently television broadcasting media is the dominant mass media for entertainment and news and information. [12]. Likewise a study conducted by a survey institute AC Nelsen, 2018 & IDN Research Institute, 2019 broadcast media is still the most consumed by audiences including millennials in Indonesia, namely 80%, then online videos, such as youtube and instagram, ranks next with 46%. Meanwhile, millennials read more news and get informants from daily grand letters (27%) compared to on-line news portals (7%), digital newspapers only (2%), radio media (24%) as where table 1.

Table 1. Media of Choice.

| No | Media of Choice | % |
|----|------------------|-----|
| 1 | Media Televisyen | 89% |
| 2 | Video On line | 46% |
| 3 | Daily Newspaper | 27% |
| 4 | Radio | 24% |
| 5 | Film | 8% |
| 6 | Portal online | 7% |
| 7 | Electronic paper | 2% |
| 8 | Newspaper | 1% |

In addition, consumers also spend an average of 5 hours each day consuming content, both through conventional media and through the internet, although the duration of watching television media is still the highest, namely 4 hours 53 minutes per day, the duration of accessing the Internet is the second highest, namely an average of 3 hours 14 minutes per day, followed by listening to the radio for about 2 hours 11 minutes per day, reading newspapers 31 minutes and magazines 24 minutes. It means that the broadcast media is still the main choice for the audience. [12]. Democratization in the life of the nation and state demands freedom of the mass media or the press in reporting. Apart from the pressure

of the powerful socio-culture, politically and economically. In Urofsky's view regarding the government of developed countries that are ideal and can provide for the welfare of their people, the notion of democracy is a system that continues to grow and develop to run a government that is in favor of the public interest as a party that must be served better. This means that democracy in government follows the demands of the times but still stands on good service to the public. [1].

The progress of democracy is not only focused on the growth of broadcast media only, but changes also occur in legislation that receive major attention. In an authoritative system of government, the power is so dominant and in the hands of the ruling government, but with a democratic system there is a process of transfer of power which previously became the exclusive right of the state turning into public authority, the involvement of civil society as public representation. In line with this matter, the management shift to ensure the broadcasting media system is monitored by a government officer who is free from pressure and interference from the interests of power, the interests of certain groups and the interests of broadcast media owners, namely the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission. [4, 29].

The development of democracy in Indonesia is progressing, according to Reporters Without Borders in 2018 stating that Indonesia is ranked 124 out of 180 countries, still in the same rank as last year 2017. With this position Indonesia is still better than Philipina which is ranked 133, Myanmar is in 137 place, Cambodia is 142, Malaysia is in 145, while Singapore is in 151, while Brunei Darussalam is in 153, Laos is in 170, and Vietnam is in 175, is below Timor Leste which is ranked 93. There are 3 aspects that are used as indicators by Reporters Without Borders in giving ratings to assess the condition of a country's mass media or press freedom, namely; legal climate, political climate and economic climate. [11, 40].

The progress of Indonesian mass media or press freedom also received a positive response from the Minister of Communication and Multimedia of Malaysia, Ahmad Shabery Cheek at the National Press Day Symposium on

February 8 2015 held in Batam, Indonesia. He acknowledged that Indonesian mass media and newspaper are freer and more open than Malaysia because they have gone through a separate process so that they have a dynamic nuance. The mass media or the Indonesian press are in a truly free realm so that no one can guard them and each one stands alone. All discussions and discussions have also been carried out in depth. [38]. Malaysia will learn through the natural process of mass media which is more liberal, however in Malaysia itself there are constraints because its people are composed of

various ethnic groups, ethnic groups who have their own sensitivity. [22].

Cases of violence and threats against mass media workers and journalists still occur, although threats and violence do not come from the state, but are carried out externally, rather by individuals or groups. Internally, challenges and threats come from political and business interests. [18]. Alliance of Independent Journalists, 2018. Cases of violence against mass media or press freedom can be seen in figure 3.



Figure 3. Cases of Violence Against Journalists 2009-2018

If we look at the graphic of cases of violence that occurred, not a few media workers or journalists received physical or non-physical threats when carrying out their profession as a journalist. This often occurs due to a source's fear of the information reported through the mass media, coupled with news issues with cases that are currently trending topics. Apart from that challenges and threats also come from the internal mass media itself, namely the commercialization and politicization of the mass media. When the mass media is dominated by commercial and political interests, the independence and independence of the mass media will continue, thus the public's interest for correct information will automatically decline. [6].

With these threats and challenges to the mass media or the press, the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission is a mandate that was formed based on the institutionalization of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia, namely Law Number 32 of 2002. In carrying out its role and power, the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission to protect the rights of the people more thoroughly and fair in broadcasting, guaranteeing the public to get correct and healthy information. [35]. The spark of the spirit of democracy after the 1988 reforms, shows a point of change in managing

broadcast media, where the broadcast media no longer plays a role as the guardian of the (impartial) public space but becomes part of what is mediated between the mass media, the state and society. [14].

This social phenomenon is increasingly germinating in line with the situation of modern society that is ahead of the global edict settlement. A society of edicts is a society that elevates edicts as a characteristic of social modernity and at the same time places them as a commodity. This indirectly makes television broadcast media an agent in planning people's lives in the era of globalization. [21]. When the television broadcasting media enters bringing information into the social space, the television broadcasting media needs to be managed to ensure its contribution to goodness to society, the structure of the agreed upon laws, ethics and rules so that the media and society both get a definite legal guarantee room. This shows that the relationship between the community as a socio-political unit and broadcast media which is a product of the society's socio-political culture can both benefit for good. [15].

In a democratic system, the potential for broadcast media as a major industry must be given space. However, he must adjust and be sensitive to ethical and cultural values in

society. This is because the broadcast media has its features and its distribution system uses public space. Television broadcast media is the dynamic of modern democracy by expanding its functions to include informing, conducting investigations and disseminating announcements regarding exposure abuse, and educating the public. This shows that broadcast media has such a big impact on social and cultural life. [13, 19].

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

5.1. Conclusion

1. Post-1998 reform, democracy in Indonesia has progressed rapidly. Examining the democratization of the mass media and its development, it will not be separated from the discussion about the freedom of the mass media or the press, the essence of the mass media or press system is the system of freedom. The freedom of the mass media or the press grows and develops in Indonesia. However, the freedom of the mass media or the press is not without challenges and obstacles, that the challenges and challenges of the mass media in this democratization era do not come from the authorities, but rather these challenges and threats are more of two economic and political interests. Economic interests will make mass media ownership more and more concentrated towards strong capital owners, while political interests will certainly be more concentrated on mass media owners who are affiliated with the authorities. Thus, the public interest will be neglected;
2. The content and format of broadcast media, which many imitate and buy from the West, are mushrooming in the Indonesian mass media. The role of the mass media or the press in the democratization era can be said to have deviated far from the dream of early reform. The mass media is no longer a supporter of democracy by building a strong public sphere. However, the media weakened it with purely commercialization interests. Currently, the mass media is no longer the fourth pillar of democracy (the four states of democracy). However, the mass media is a part that must be guarded. This is because the mass media are able to represent themselves as the main public space and also determine social, political and cultural dynamics, both at local and global levels. But on the other hand, the mass media also spread or strengthen certain economic and political structures. Mass media not only functions socially and economically, but also performs an ideological function.
3. The presence of a free mass media can be an indicator of the formation of an open and democratic social system. In essence, democracy is the granting of the right to freedom from the state (state) to citizens (civil). Likewise, economic development which should be democratic can be in line with development progress. So democratization gives hope for the growth of a

society with a new civilization, where people hope for an economic, political climate that is conducive, just, prosperous and equal. To face challenges in managing this hope so that it becomes a reality, cooperation and a consensus between community groups and political elites is needed so that culture can develop in a better, more harmonious direction. In a democratic system, no one institution is more dominant than other institutions.

5.2. Suggestion

- (a) For the promotion of mass media post-reform in the Indonesian context, it is necessary to carry out supervision and regulations governing the freedom and diversity of ownership of the mass media system, especially regarding broadcasting institutions, providing space for civil society participation as a representation of society in broadcasting, so that public spaces are not solely used for business purposes.
- (b) It is necessary to strengthen the function of civil society in monitoring content or mass media content so that there is diversity of content, as a supporting factor and minimizing inhibiting factors, including local content in broadcast content.
- (c) Looking for a model of democracy in the mass media system in accordance with the geographic, political, economic, and socio-cultural environment in which the media is located, because the democratization of mass media in another country cannot be generalized to other country systems. There needs to be a mutual consensus between media owners, society and the state, in order to achieve a democracy that is just, harmonious, conducive and equality.

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