Media and the vulnerable in Indonesia: Accounts from the margins

By:

Yanuar Nugroho
Leonardus K. Nugraha
Shita Laksmi
Mirta Amalia
Dinita Andriani Putri
Dwitri Amalia

Report series:

Engaging Media, Empowering Society:
Assessing media policy and governance in Indonesia through the lens of citizens' rights

A joint research project of:

CIPG CENTRE for INNOVATION POLICY & GOVERNANCE

Hivos people unlimited

MANCHESTER 1824 Manchester Business School

Funded by:

FORDFOUNDATION

November 2012

This report is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 License.
Some rights reserved.
creative commons

Media and the vulnerable in Indonesia: Accounts from the margins

By:
Yanuar Nugroho
Leonardus Kristianto Nugraha
Shita Laksmi
Mirta Amalia
Dinita Andriani Putri
Dwitri Amalia

Report Series
Engaging Media, Empowering Society
Assessing media policy and governance in Indonesia through the lens of citizens' rights

A joint research project of

CIPG CENTRE for INNOVATION POLICY & GOVERNANCE

Hivos people unlimited

MANCHESTER 1824 Manchester Business School

Funded by
FORDFOUNDATION

Except where otherwise noted, content on this report
is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 License
creative commons

Centre for Innovation Policy and Governance, Jakarta;
HIVOS Regional Office Southeast Asia; &
Ford Foundation, Indonesia Office, Jakarta

November 2012

Media and the vulnerable in Indonesia: Accounts from the margins

Published in Indonesia in 2012 by
Centre for Innovation Policy and Governance
Jl. Siaga Raya (Siaga Baru), Komp. Bappenas RT 01/006 No. 43A
Pejaten Barat, Pasar Minggu, Jakarta Selatan 12510
Indonesia

Cover designed by Rachmat Affriadi Anggara and Dinita Andriani Putri

Except where otherwise noted, content on this report
is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 License



Some rights reserved.

How to cite this report:

(Nugroho, et al., 2012) - Nugroho, Y., Nugraha, LK., Laksmi, S., Amalia, M., Putri, DA., Amalia, D., 2012. Media and the vulnerable in Indonesia: Accounts from the margins. Report Series. Engaging Media, Empowering Society: Assessing media policy and governance in Indonesia through the lens of citizens' rights. Research collaboration of Centre for Innovation Policy and Governance and HIVOS Regional Office Southeast Asia, funded by Ford Foundation. Jakarta: CIPG and HIVOS.

Acknowledgements

The research was funded by the Ford Foundation Indonesia Office and undertaken by the Centre for Innovation Policy and Governance (CIPG), Jakarta and HIVOS Regional Office Southeast Asia

Contract No. RO SEA 100371 and RO SEA 100374

Principal Investigator	:	*Dr. Yanuar Nugroho, University of Manchester*
Co-investigator (CIPG), Coordinator	:	*Mirta Amalia*
Co-investigator (HIVOS)	:	*Shita Laksmi*
Researchers (CIPG)	:	*Leonardus Kristianto Nugraha* *Dinita Andriani Putri* *Dwitri Amalia*
Academic Advisors	:	*Dr. B. Herry-Priyono, STF Driyarkara, Jakarta*

Throughout the research, the team received huge support and assistance from numerous Indonesian civil society contacts and partners, and individuals who participated in our study through the survey, interviews, focus group discussions and workshops. We particularly owe thanks and gratitude to Firdaus Mubarik, Perkumpulan 6211, Karlina Supelli, Sri Agustine, Ardhanary Institute, Kristien Yuliarti (Misionaris Awam Vincentian), Sapto Nugroho (Talenta), Ipung Purwanti, all participants of the CREAME (Critical Research Methodology) training, and the intern at CIPG: Anindyah K. Putri, who has been a big help during the research.

The cover of this report was designed by Rachmat Affriadi Anggara and Dinita Andriani Putri. Kathryn Morrison proofread and edited this report.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this research is to map the implication of the political economy dynamics of the media on citizens' right to media from the perspective of citizens, in particular those who are vulnerable and weak(ened). By providing four case studies from vulnerable groups, we aim to map the bigger picture on citizens' right to media. In order to support a more democratic society, we believe that what is needed today is the protection of citizens who have a limited area of freedom in media, such values which are declared in 'Article 19' of the UDHR[1].

1. Since the 1998 Reform, the Indonesian media business has grown rapidly and fifteen years later, media oligopoly has occurred as an inevitable consequence of the capital interest that drives the development of media industry in the country. Since the media policymaking processes are in favour of the media businesses, rather than the public interest –and that the implementation of existing media policies is not lawfully enforced— the interest of citizens who already owned a limited area of freedom in media is reduced to its minimal level. The 'marriage' of the current media oligopoly and the poor implementation of policies has endangered citizens' rights to information since the citizens have been left in the confinement of consumers' seats, merely enjoying what is available in the media channel with nearly no chance to engage and have active discourses. The severity of the condition has hampered the dream of a 'public sphere' that supports public engagement in the context of democracy.

2. Our research finds that while the notion of equal access to telecommunication infrastructure has not been met yet, the access to conventional media –printed media and television in particular– is still an issue for citizens in the least developed and border areas. In terms of the vulnerable and minorities, the effect of having limited access to media (both conventional and the Internet) has been multiplied by the poor quality of representation. In this case, mainstream media tend to use single communication rather than an interactive one that allows the citizens to co-create content and to actively engage in discourse.

3. While the government seems to fail in guaranteeing the protection, enforcement, fulfillment and advancement of human rights – as stated in the UU No. 39/1999 – the media are then expected to provide the means to defend the rights of the minorities. Despite stories on how the media are rigorously making such attempts, the general portrayal of minorities and the vulnerable seems to tell the opposite story. In this regard, the poor access to the media has potentially bound the minorities and the weak(ened) in their attempts to strive for their rights: in exercising the freedom of religion, in terms of employment, in gaining education, in receiving proper treatment in health and public service, amongst others.

[1] The Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

4. One of our findings indicates the way media portrayed the violent case against Ahmadiyya: instead of constructing a healthy public discourse on Ahmadiyya's protection, it actually increased the severity of the labelling of the community as a 'deviant' one. While the persecution is blatant and should be easy to tackle in terms of law, the Ahmadiyya communities suffer from the poor understanding in the wider society due to the 'deviant' labelling amplified by the media. The impacts are fatal. The Ahmadiyya communities are struggling hard to exercise their basic rights in various sectors. In fact, today we can still find the Ahmadis being prosecuted as criminals instead of being treated as victims of violent conduct.

5. While Ahmadiyya suffers from such labelling, the Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender (LGBTs) are suffering from controversial stereotyping – especially concerning moral and religious beliefs. Such reproduction of unfavourable images hurts the dignity of LGBT and puts them at risk of insults and defamatory views in the wider society. While there are various factors at play– for example the perception that the LGBT seem afraid to 'come out' and the discriminatory regulations such *sharia perdas*– the vicious circles are continued due to the reluctance of media to give an opportunity for LGBT people to represent themselves properly in the media. The situation has a serious impact on how they exercise their civil, political and social rights.

6. Similarly, the 'diffable' (those with 'different abilities') often suffer not only from unfair treatment in the media, but also more importantly from poor representation and understanding in the wider society. While the access to media becomes the very topic of diffability – due to their weaknesses, the diffable do not have many options to access various media since each type of diffability needs a specific tool to engage with such media. Media meanwhile continues to cover diffability issues only in the medical sense. Such an approach creates a dichotomy regarding what is considered 'normal' or 'abnormal'. In some cases, such distinction creates discriminatory conduct towards the diffables.

7. Indonesian women and children are still being discriminated against on day-to-day basis in many sectors such as education, employment and healthcare. To address this problem, the media are expected to take a more active role in the construction of public discourse on women and children in Indonesia. However, with some parts of media system biased towards a particular interest, the plea is seemingly left unanswered. Instead of speaking up for this group, the media tend to exploit women and children for business purposes by using them merely as commodities to attract common interest and women and children suffer from unhealthy representation in the media, thus marginalising them in terms of their access to media.

8. In terms of the poor media content, the implication for the vulnerable and weak(ened) communities/groups is huge, since such stereotyping and misleading representation has raised concerns over the idea of citizenship itself. Such representations – which imply 'uniqueness' for being different – endangers the exercise of the rights of these groups in daily life, since the majority public tend to see them as 'abnormal', 'ill', 'sinful', or even 'deviant'. This condition mournfully jeopardises the possibility of 'shared life'. The promise of a civilised society in which rights are guarded by state –

and where each individual is treated “equal in dignity and rights” (art. 1 UDHR) – now seems to be an empty utopia.

9. Our research suggests that it is necessary to provide space for different interpretations or narratives to emerge. If the mainstream media cannot provide this, the Internet could provide the space. In order to facilitate this, Internet infrastructure is obviously a prerequisite. When access is not available for every citizen then equality in exercising media rights is far from reality. In addition, since the poor representation of the vulnerable exists due to misunderstanding from a human rights perspective, it is recommended that journalists or media industry staff check on the constitution in their practices, so that the human rights perspective is discussed and hopefully implemented.

Access to information, is essential for self-determination, for social and political participation, and for development. However, due to the effect of the contemporary political economy of media in Indonesia, the premise of equal citizens’ right to media has not yet been met. Business-powered media tend to prioritise the concerns of the majority over those of the minority. Since the existence of media remains vital to the society, it is essential that the media (industry) should first serve the interests of society, in particular in providing for the needs of minority groups and the vulnerable.

List of abbreviations

AJI	*Aliansi Jurnalis Independen* / Alliance of independent journalists
APJII	*Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia*/ Indonesian Internet Service Provider Association
ATVSI	*Asosiasi TV Swasta Indonesia*/Association of Indonesian Private TV Broadcasters
BPS	*Badan Pusat Statistik*/ Central Bureau for Statistic
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DI/TII	*Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia* (Islamic Nation/Islam Army of Indonesia)
ELSAM	*Lembaga Studi dan Advokasi Masyarakat*/ Institute for Policy Research and Advocacy
FKP	*Forum Keadilan Perempuan*/ Justice Forum for Women
FPI	*Front Pembela Islam*/ Islam Defender Front
GAI	*Gerakan Ahmadiyah Indonesia*/ Ahmadiyya Movement of Indonesia
ICRP	Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace
JAI	*Jemaah Ahmadiyah Indonesia*/ Indonesian Ahmadiyya Congregation
KPI	*Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia*/ Indonesian Broadcasting Commission
KUHP	*Kitab Undang-undang Hukum Pidana* / Criminal Code
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
MUI	*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*/ Indonesian Ulama Council
Perda	*Peraturan Daerah*/ Local Regulation
PERSIS	*Persatuan Islam*/ Islam United
Pekka	*Pemberdayaan Perempuan Kepala Keluarga*/ Women-led Household Empowerment
MAVI	*Misionaris Awam Vincentian Indonesia*/ Indonesian Vincentian Lay Missionaries
MNC	*Media Nusantara Citra*
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PP	*Peraturan Pemerintah* / Government regulation
PWI	*Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia* / Indonesian Journalists Union
RCTI	*Rajawali Citra Televisi Indonesia*
RRI	*Radio Republik Indonesia* / Radio of the Republic of Indonesia
SCTV	*Surya Citra Televisi Indonesia*
SKB	*Surat Keputusan Bersama*/ Joint Ministerial Decree
TVRI	*Televisi Republik Indonesia* / Television of the Republic of Indonesia
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UU	*Undang-Undang* / Law
YPMA	*Yayasan Pengembangan Media Anak*/ Children Media Development Foundation

Contents

Acknowledgements 3

Executive Summary 4

List of abbreviations 7

Contents 8

Figures and Tables 10

1. Citizens' right to media: An introduction 11
- 1.1. Background and rationale 13
- 1.2. Objectives 14
- 1.3. Questions and research undertaken 14
- 1.4. Protecting the rights, civilising the media: A preview 15
- 1.5. Structure of the report 15

2. Understanding media and citizens' right to media: Some theoretical perspectives 16
- 2.1. Media: Between the medium and the message 16
- 2.2. Political economy of media: What matters? 20
- 2.3. Media industry in Indonesia: What drives the rapid growth? 23
- 2.4. Media policy in Indonesia: For whose interest? 27
- 2.5. Citizens' right to media: Some basic notions 31
- 2.6. Protecting the right to media, protecting civility 33

3. Citizens' right to media in Indonesia: Constructing the case study 36
- 3.1. Approach 36
- 3.2. Methods 38
- 3.3. Constructing the case: Strategy and data collection instruments 38
- 3.4. Limitation 39
- 3.5. Data profile 40

4. Case 1: The Fatal Labelling of Ahmadiyya 42
- 4.1. Ahmadiyya in Indonesia: History and background 43
- 4.2. Ahmadiyya and the media 47
- 4.3. Ahmadiyya in the media 49
- 4.4. Policing Ahmadiyya? The role of media 53
- 4.5. Religious minority groups in the media 58
- 4.6. Valuing the difference: Media matters 59

5. Case 2: LGBT – Under the veil of moral and religious beliefs 61
- 5.1. LGBT in Indonesia: History and background 62
- 5.2. LGBT and the media 67
- 5.3. LGBT in the media 72
- 5.4. Public image of LGBT: The role of media 76
- 5.5. Vulnerable groups in the media 79
- 5.6. Beyond sexual orientation: Media matters 80

6. Case 3: The stereotypisation and discrimination of the diffable 82

6.1. Diffability in Indonesia: History and background ... 83
6.2. The diffables and the media ... 86
6.3. The diffables in the media ... 89
6.4. Stigmatising diffability: The role of media ... 91
6.5. Vulnerable groups in the media ... 93
6.6. Promoting equal access for the diffables: Media matters ... 94

7. Case 4: Exploitation of women and children ... 96
7.1. Women and children in Indonesia: Background ... 97
7.2. Women and children and the media ... 100
7.3. Women and children in the media ... 103
7.4. Stereotyping women and children: The role of media ... 107
7.5. The weak in the media ... 109
7.6. Protecting women and children: Media matters ... 110

8. Exercising rights, civilising ourselves: Synthesis and challenge for policy ... 112
8.1. Political economy of media: Promises and perils ... 112
8.2. Citizens demand more spaces: Some media content analysis ... 114
8.2.1. TV coverage on the issues of minority groups ... 114
8.2.2. Online and print media coverage on the issues of minority groups ... 116
8.3. Citizens' right to media: An empty promise or a utopia? ... 119
8.4. The future of media, the future of citizens' rights ... 122
8.5. Protecting the rights, protecting our civility ... 123
8.6. Future agenda ... 124

References ... 126

Appendix 1. Interview: Protocols and instruments ... 130
Protocol ... 130
Instrument ... 130

Appendix 2. Interview respondents ... 132
A.2.1 Interview Respondents ... 132

Appendix 3. Media coverage on the vulnerable ... 133

Figures and Tables

Figures

Figure 2.1. From rating to content duplication 25
Figure 4.1.Cases of Religious Violation in Indonesia 54
Figure 5.1. Citizens' usage upon media in Indonesia: Percentage of population of 10yr and above 70
Figure 6.1. One example of media coverage on diffability 92
Figure 8.1. Coverage of the bulnerable issues on broadcast media 115
Figure 8.2. Coverage of Ahmadiyya issues on online media 117
Figure 8.3. Coverage of LGBT issues on online media 117
Figure 8.4. Coverage of the Diffable issues on online media 118
Figure 8.5. Overall coverage of the vulnerable issues on online media 119
Figure 8.6. How the media (can) manipulate our view point 121

Tables

Table 2.1. Major media groups in Indonesia: 2011 24
Table 4.1. Fatawa against Ahmadiyya in Indonesia 45
Table 4.2.Victims of Religious Intolerance 2011 54
Table 5.1. Some of regulations that are discriminative towards LGBT in Indonesia 64
Table 5.2. Rising intolerance, levels of popular hostility toward minorities 66
Table 7.1. Literacy Rates in Selected High Sending Districts by Gender 99
Table 7.2. Daily use of media platforms for news 102

1.
Citizens' right to media: An introduction

I think the media play a huge role here, and in the context of representation [toward certain groups] as well. When the media start to control the way of thinking, at the same time they actually also construct the desire. In the ideal world, the very essence of media is not only to provide information, but mainly to educate public on public matters; yet it is now just being confined to the matter of taste, of desire.
(Karlina Supelli, Driyarkara School of Philosophy, Interview, 03/04/2012)

In February and March 2011, most of the news channels in Indonesia were dominated by reports of an attack on Ahmadiyya in Cikeusik, West Java. The disturbing video of the attack appeared numerous times on television, across various news programmes. Yet, the reports rarely explained the full nature of the attack or the nature of Ahmadiyya itself as an organisation. Rather than discussing the violation of human rights that had occurred, the reports were more concerned with covering on how the views of Ahmadiyya differred from those of Islam; or presented Ahmadiyya as a 'deviant' group; separate from Muslim groups. As result, the Ahmadiyya group then had difficulties in representing themselves in the media, as they found themselves somewhat stigmatised. This has also been the case for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) groups in Indonesia; where media attention has focused on their 'differences' as compared with other groups, rather than any rights they might be entitled to. Similarly, other groups, for example, those made up of women and children, and people with disabilities are often depicted in the media as people who are dependent and only rely on help.

While such stigmatisation has clearly created more difficulties for groups like these in exercising their right to media in a broader sense, the most pressing questions remain: what has caused this to happen? What is the implication of this on the role of media in society, and ultimately, on our civic life? This research aims to address these concerns.

In media representation, there are sets of criteria that determine how salient a media programme is in a media channel. Some channels have their own specific criteria, but the bottom line can be quite similar, i.e. that a programme must contain a number of aspects that can make it 'interesting'. These can include being dramatic–including tears, sorrow and joy and being informational/educational by having unique facts and figures to attract common attention. Materials that do not meet these criteria could be barely present in the display. Unfortunately for the vulnerable and the minorities, their issues and interests are often considered as less interesting as compared to other issues under such criteria. Regrettably, they often attract more interest, only when they are turned into 'jokes'. Such approach in structuring the criteria for media content, in addition to more sensationalism (and ad-led consumerism) rather than news value has, to some extent, limited the opportunity for

vulnerable citizens to be properly heard and represented in the media. The implication for the exercise of their rights as citizens is huge.

We investigate this issue further by focusing on the four vulnerable groups to help shape the research and strengthen the case: (1) women and children, (2) Ahmadiyya, (3) people with different abilities (sometimes referred to as 'diffable'), and (3) the LGBT community. The selection of these groups as cases in this study aims to provide an in-depth, nuanced understanding of the dynamics, rather than full representativeness[2]. We also look at the structure and the internal logic of media industry, which often gives more attention to sensational news rather than the provision of facts-based information. It is no surprise therefore, that the vulnerable groups face difficulties in presenting themselves in the media, as most information about them is 'formulated' in such a way that leads to stigmatisation. Sensational news items such as the video on Ahmadiyya attack, and the Moslem hardliners attack at the Q! Film Festival[3] once became the most watched news; not because of their information value, but because they were presented in a sensational way. The notion of Freedom of Expression sometimes does not apply for these groups for they have limited coverage in the media –both quantitatively and qualitatively. For groups like LGBT and Ahmadiyya, most media sensationalises news surrounding these groups according to the popular perception of the majority; rather than concerning itself with explaining the facts and circumstances of these groups and events. Only a small number of media are willing to present fact-based news and clarification from the perspective of these groups. From the policy perspective, existing media-related policies do not clearly state the right of the citizens to information; most policies focus on regulating the industry rather than the role of media industry in society.

In this report we focus on how the four minority and vulnerable groups exercise their right to media. On the concept of citizens' right to media, we borrow what UNESCO has conceptualised (Joseph, 2005)[4] and use it to examine how these minority and vulnerable groups exercise these rights through three aspects: (a) citizens' access to information; without which they will be excluded from the development and transformation of their own lives; (b) citizens' access to media infrastructure; without which access to information and other media content is impossible; and (c) citizens' access to the means of influencing the regulatory framework, without which citizens will be left out of the decision-making process which affects their lives. We also extend the understanding of citizens' right to include the perspectives on media ethics, media watch, access to information and information infrastructure, and discourse of the role of the media in society. What we look at here, through our four case studies, is the extent

---

[2] See Chapter Three for fuller explanation.

[3] Members of the Islam Defenders Front (FPI) staged a rally at the Goethe Institute German cultural center and the French Cultural Center in Central Jakarta; then raided the Erasmus Huis Dutch cultural center in South Jakarta on Tuesday, 28th September 2010 to demand an end to a gay film festival. http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2010/09/28/fpi-raids-cultural-centers-demands-end-gay-film-festival.html Last accessed 16/11/12

[4] See also http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/world-press-freedom-day/previous-celebrations/worldpressfreedomday200900/themes/empowering-citizenship-media-dialogue-and-education/

to which these minority and vulnerable groups could exercise and fulfil their right to media in the current industrialisation process, how the media sector perceive these groups, and how this impacts upon these groups as citizens.

1.1. Background and rationale

Access to information, one of the main channels of which is the media, is essential for self-determination, for social and political participation, and for development (Samassékou, 2006). That is why a new awareness that citizens do have a stake in the media has arisen; for the media, to a certain extent, is a prerequisite of democracy. The power of mass media can enable participation of the governed in their government – hence, it becomes a cornerstone of democracy (Arnstein, 1969). In addition to this, the huge power of mass media is very significant not only in disseminating information and knowledge, but also in shaping values and norms, moulding attitudes and behaviour, and influencing the very process of living. In regard to the vulnerable groups, the same access and power will enable them to exercise their rights and to take part in civic engagement for they have channels which could amplify their weak voices.

However, in contemporary Indonesia, the main actors in democracy i.e. the civil society groups and communities, are consumers at most. The right to access the media, both in terms of infrastructure and content, has been severely limited. Citizens have been put in the confinement of consumers' seats, merely enjoying what is available in the media channel with nearly no influence whatsoever to shape the content. The same situations apply to the vulnerable groups since their access to media is being compromised.

The unpleasant situation experienced by the vulnerable groups with regard access to the media cannot be separated from the contemporary situation of Indonesian media industry. As the progress of the media industry everywhere is closely attached to the political economy system (Mansell, 2004), such is the case in Indonesia. Any change in the political and economic situation in the country will affect the media industry. Therefore it is understandable that the 'marriage' between politics and business in the media has transformed the citizens merely into voters in terms of the dynamics of politics and as consumers in regard to business interest. The media no longer provide the citizens with a 'public sphere' (Habermas, 1989) where each citizen can engage and exchange discourses.

If the media lose their ability to mediate the public and to play a central role in helping an infant democratic society to mature, then the fulfilment of citizens' right to media is at stake. In these case studies we even find that a number of vulnerable citizens' groups in the country are unable to exercise their right to media due to their poor representation in such media.

1.2. Objectives

The purpose of this research is to map the implications of the political economy dynamics of the media on the citizens' right to media from the perspective of citizens, particularly the vulnerable and weak(ened). Based on four case studies of such vulnerable groups, we aim to map the broader implication of the citizens' right to media – in Indonesia, and perhaps beyond.

We should firstly insert an important note. In investigating the problem, we try to use a perspective of citizens' right to media, which is a form of response to most research of media that refers to the 'Article 19' of the UDHR[5]. Such studies mostly defend media rights in terms of freedom of press institutions, but we believe that what is more often needed is protecting citizens who own a much limited area of freedom in media. Such study on the importance of citizens' right to media in relation to the political economy of media in Indonesia is still a rarity. In discerning citizens' right to media, we underline three dimensions: the right to access trustworthy information and to generate information – which requires access to media infrastructure – so that the citizens are able to exercise the third dimension, i.e. take an active participation in the decision-making processes in matters related to their citizenship.

1.3. Questions and research undertaken

This study aims to find the answers to the following questions:

> To what extent and in what ways has the political economy of Indonesian media affected civil society, particularly vulnerable citizens groups, in exercising their right to media? How has this affected the decision-making processes in the democratic society? What are the implications of this?

In answering these questions, the study combines primary data gathering through in-depth interviews with the representatives of vulnerable groups (which took place from December 2011 to May 2012) and secondary data collections (through a desk study to scrutinise the political economy of media and the idea of citizens' right). In the inception phase, we worked on several readings and documents to give a general view on the citizens' right and political economy of media. Then, we continued the investigation by interviewing respondents to give in-depth views on how a number of minority citizens' groups in Indonesia exercise their right to media.

Chapter Three will elaborate on the methodology and data collection in more detail.

[5] The Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

1.4. Protecting the rights, civilising the media: A preview

The advancement of media technology and industry gives hope that the media will be in the right position to provide citizens with the spaces they need to engage amongst themselves – and hence create a more democratic society. However, the hope seems to be unanswered since the trend seems to be in the wrong direction – toward more and more messages, from fewer and bigger producers, saying less and less (Gamson, Croteau *et al.*, 1992). What results from such circumstances is that citizens become merely 'customers' who must accept whatever programmes are performed, rather than citizens with rights. This situation has hampered the dream of the 'public sphere' (Habermas, 2006, Habermas, 1989) which supports public engagement in context of democracy.

The implication is even bigger for the vulnerable and weak(ened) communities/groups since they are left far behind in terms of content by being stereotyped and even victimised. The treatment of the vulnerable groups even has raised concerns about the idea of citizenship itself. The disproportional space available for minority groups, created by the market-driven media has played a part in damaging the rights of certain groups as citizens.

In a broader context, the limited participation of the groups –due to the poor access and representation– has created a kind of social exclusion. Recounting the four stories of minorities, it is apparent that violations of civil, political and social rights do happen due to this lack of media access. Since there is not enough room for the minority groups, they experience a sense of 'marginalisation'. The promise that in a civilised society, rights should be guarded by state – and where each individual is treated "equal in dignity and rights" (art. 1 UDHR) – now seems to be an empty utopia.

1.5. Structure of the report

Following this introduction, *Chapter Two* features the theoretical perspectives used to explain why understanding Indonesian media landscape and citizens' right to media is a gateway to a more democratic society. The framework is then used throughout the study to stress the essence of the media and the urgent need to ensure the exercise of citizens' right to media. *Chapter Three* then provides the methods used to gather data in this study and the limitations of this. The findings of the study are then presented in the next four chapters. *Chapter Four* seeks to reveal the affairs from the Ahmadiyya community and their engagement with the media, from their own perspectives. *Chapter Five* scrutinises the dynamics of the LGBT movement and how the groups are being represented in the media. *Chapter Six* explores the relationship between the diffables and the media, while *Chapter Seven* discusses stories about women and children and the media. *Chapter Eight* summarises the findings by identifying the implications of media representation on the vulnerable groups to the citizens' right. In conclusion, the chapter proposes future agendas to be addressed.

2.
Understanding media and citizens' right to media: Some theoretical perspectives

If we speak about media, actually there are two important aspects. The media are not present solely as source of information. In its progress, the source of information and whole eco-politic battle are riding in the same vehicle. Here, if we see the theoretical progress, what is affected by the media is not only a logic of thinking, but the desire of someone to access certain media. Sometimes, what is controlled is not the way of thinking, but primarily the desire, the emotion.
(Karlina Supelli, Driyarkara School of Philosophy, Interview, 03/04/2012)

Citizens' participation in governance, for a long time, has been considered as the cornerstone of democracy (Arnstein, 1969). Moreover, a real democratic society lies upon an informed society making political choices. Therefore, access to information is not only a basic right of citizens, but also a prerequisite of democracy itself (Joseph, 2005). In this regard, the media play a very important duty in protecting and enabling citizens to exercise their rights by retaining their public character and providing space for civic engagement. But nowadays, citizens' right to information – and freedom of expression as well– are being threatened precisely because, at present, it is almost impossible to acquire independent media which is detached from any interest group or economic or political interest. In addition, it is even harder for the minority and vulnerable groups to channel their voices in the public sphere since they possess limited power in the media. This situation means that the interests of these 'voices from below' (Habermas, 1989) are not represented; and as a result, these citizens are unable to participate fully in crucial decision-making processes.

The reduction or loss of active channels, in turn, hampers citizens' access to governance in determining policies and/or discourses related to their lives. Since the exercise of citizens' rights requires the right to media, the protection of citizens' right to media needs to be ensured. A fundamental basis of the public charachter of media is that citizens have access to it. Thus, we feel it necessary to devote a section in this report to review theories on why citizens' right to media needs to be protected.

2.1. Media: Between the medium and the message

Media plays a central role in our society today. Through media, information, views, ideas, and discourses are exchanged – with which the society continues to progress. In modern society, media is deeply embedded in societal life: there are no social affairs that do not involve media. The term 'media' comes from a Latin word (singular: *medium-ii*) which means something 'in between'. As such, it also means something that 'appears publicly', 'belongs to the public' or 'mediation'; and hence refers to a space that is public --a *locus publicus*. The essence of the

media cannot therefore be separated from the connection between the private and the public spheres, which often is problematic. The media mediate the two in order to seek for possibilities (or impossibilities) of a shared life[6]. In this sense, what constitutes the media spans quite widely from physical spaces such as courts, plazas, theatres and meeting venues, to non-physical ones like newspapers, radio, television, Internet, and any space for social interaction. It is the latter constitutions that we will mostly refer to in this report[7].

With such *raison d'être*, the purpose of the media is to provide a room in which the public can freely interact and engage over matters of public concern. This idea traces back to the view of Habermas on the public sphere (1987, 1984). He defines the public sphere as *a gathering of private individuals discussing matters of common concern* – and with the power of media, private ideas can quickly become public opinion. This thought is central not only in understanding how public rationality could be 'manufactured', and that there should be more careful attention paid to the border between the private and public spheres; but also hints that what is 'public' is always closely connected with politics (Habermas, 1989)[8]. In regard to the minority groups, what is relevant to the whole idea is the protection of the rights of the minority groups as part of the public. As the public sphere is a place for every citizen to discuss, deliberate and eventually form public opinion; the minority groups also have the right to take part. Marginalising the minority leads to the 'tyranny of the majority' and hence excludes the former from society. To ensure a well-functioning public sphere, access for minority voices is considered essential (Ferree, Gamson *et al.*, 2002).

Habermas emphasises the importance of the availability of channels of 'undistorted communication' (1984) which are central emancipatory tools for participation in the public sphere (1989) – in which individuals interact with society at large. No doubt, the provision of objective and impartial channels would help the minority to exercise active engagements. In other words, 'undistorted communication' will empower the minority to claim equal positions and therefore equal rights. Referring back to Habermas, an ideal concept of the public sphere is that it should be non-institutionalised and must be accessible to everyone, and has an autonomy which cannot be intruded, or claimed by the state or the market. It is important since such claims tend to threaten the equilibrium and push the interest of society, particularly the minority, to the edge of the public sphere. Furthermore, public space is not unitary in nature: there is no one single public sphere, but several (Habermas, 1984). Since the public space characterizes the plurality of the society itself; then in its nature, the same public space also should accommodate the variety of opinions in the society.

Related to Habermas' thought, in his renowned work, '*Understanding Media: The extensions of man*' (1964) Marshall McLuhan proposes an idea to 'provide' an indirect representative government – through the emerging media technology – to broaden a new form of

---

6 This paragraph is largely based on a summary presentation delivered by Dr. B. Herry-Priyono, SJ., in Yogyakarta, during the *Critical Research Methodology* (CREAME) training, as part of the project to which this report belongs, on 5/10/11.

7 We also refer to this understanding in our previous reports (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012:20-21, Nugroho, Siregar *et al.*, 2012:19)

8 We refer to this central idea, too, in our previous report (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012:21)

participation in which everyone can be involved. He considers the importance of the representation because the affairs of state and society are altogether too numerous, too complicated, and too obscure in their effects to be comprehended by private citizens[9]. Hence for McLuhan, the emerging media technology not only make the whole world accessible locally; but also create a new form of participation in which anyone can be involved in any global issue. To some extent, this potentially impacts upon the rise of people's social awareness – since they begin to react to global issues and their implications in local problems – although McLuhan has also warned that the phenomenon potentially can bring blindness toward local issues (McLuhan, 1964).

It is fair to say that the ability of media in enabling a new form of participation is supporting the spreading of democracy to the farthest corner of the world (Castells, 2010, Mansell, 2004). But, it is not without problems. One of the basic problems of the media in a democracy is the accuracy of news and the protection of sources (Lippmann, 1922), the lack of which will intensify the defective organisation of public opinion. Furthermore, Lippmann (1922) stipulates that the media's role in democracy has still not achieved what is expected of it[10], and that the 'creation of consent' still exists:

> The creation of consent is not a new art. It is a very old one; which was supposed to have died out with the appearance of democracy. But it has not died out. It has, in fact, improved enormously in technic, because it is now based on analysis rather than on rule of thumb. And so, as a result of psychological research, coupled with the modern means of communication, the practice of democracy has turned a corner. A revolution is taking place, infinitely more significant than any shifting of economic power (p.87).

Herman and Chomsky (1988) further take on this issue. As a tool to mediate the private and the public, the media form a powerful means for propaganda due to their ability to manage public opinion. Although the function of the media is not solely to produce propaganda, it is a very important aspect of their overall services.

> The "societal purpose" of the media is to inculcate and defend the economic, social, and political agenda of privileged groups that dominate the domestic society and the state. The media serves this purpose in many ways: through selection of topics, distribution of concerns, framing of issues, filtering of information, emphasis and tone, and by keeping debate within the bounds of acceptable premises (Herman and Chomsky, 1988:xi).

It seems that to Herman and Chomsky, the media are always at risk of being manipulated and used by the 'privileged groups', which are more powerful than others in society[11]. Such manipulation blatantly endangers the equilibrium of the public sphere. While the more powerful sides earn a lot of advantages, the weaker sides lose their privilege as active actors in

---

9 The statement is from Walter Lippmann's *The Phantom Public*;(Lippmann, 1927), cited in Levinson (1999:72)

10 To Lippmann, this problem arises from the expectation that the media (press) can make up for or correct deficiencies in the theory of democracy. Here, the media (newspapers) are regarded by democrats as a panacea for their own defects, whereas analysis of the nature of news and of the economic basis of journalism seems to show that the newspapers necessarily and inevitably reflect, and therefore, in greater or lesser measure, intensify, the defective organisation of public opinion.

11 We also refer to this important idea in our earlier report (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012;22) p. 22

the public sphere. The interest of the society, in particular that of the minorities, is left abandoned since the primary aspiration is to defend the domination of the powerful in society.

In responding to the problem, Levinson (1999, who extends the argument of McLuhan, 1964) suggests the necessity of public's role in controlling the media by redefining 'the medium as the message'. Using this phrase, Levinson resonates with the warning of McLuhan that the social implications of the 'medium' should be identified, rather than solely interpreting the messages they bear (McLuhan, 1964). The redefinition is important for our quest in exploring the links between media and the society – in particular minority groups – since audiences tend to focus on the content (e.g. soap operas) but largely fail to notice the structural elements (e.g. illusive obsession of Java-centric lifestyles) which bring huge implications on the realms of social, political, economic and cultural life.

In today's capitalist world, what McLuhan suggests resonates well when we think of the current practices of the media as an industry and as a sector of society. As the progress of the media has tremendously transformed our society into an 'information-thirsty' society (Castells, 2010), the accumulation of profit has always been the aim of today's media; rather than serving the 'civilising content'. What is referred as 'civilising content' is a cluster of materials to help the public to mature and reflect in depth upon public concerns and discourses; for instance: that content should reflect the diversity of society and that minority groups deserve a fair coverage and accurate depiction in the media. Since the accumulation of profit has changed the media into a channel of mass production, they are also being controlled by actors involved in that production. As Castells argues:

> Only very powerful groups resulting from alliances between media companies, communication operators, Internet service providers and computer companies, will be in a position to master the economic and political resources necessary for the diffusion of multimedia (Castells, 2010:397).

What Castells suggests highlights the grave concern about the media as a mediator – which promises to guard societal interest or 'explore the possibility (or impossibility) of shared life'. Since there is a shift of actors in the public sphere, from citizens to certain powerful groups, the citizens' active engagements are actually at stake. This condition undoubtedly has rendered some citizens powerless. Particularly for the minority groups, the possibility of shared life can be evaporated since the media industry tends to worship the 'tyranny of the majority' due to profit motives and rating systems – which has gone some way towards 'crushing' the public character.

Evidently, the media continually shape and reshape the way in which individuals, societies, and cultures learn, perceive, and understand the world. With the help of technologies, the media are able to amplify information at a single point in time to a mass audience. The media is so powerful that it can even impose 'assumptions, bias, and values' (McLuhan, 1964). As such, the media play a central role in the development of our society, and consequently become contested. Controlling the media has become more and more synonymous with controlling the public in terms of discourse, interest, and even taste (Curran, 1991). They who have power over media will gain advantages, while the weak(ened) one will always remain voiceless because they have no power to push in. The basic tenets of the media, both physical and non-physical, have shifted from being a medium and mediator of the public sphere that enables the critical

engagement of citizens (Habermas, 1984, Habermas, 1987, Habermas, 1989), to being tools for power to 'manufacture consent' (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). This notion is important to understand the dynamics of the media today – particularly mass media in any form – and also to understand how media portray/represent the minority/vulnerable.

Having outlined some basic ideas of the roles of the media in society, one aspect is clear: that the workings of the media relies heavily not only on its economic interest, but also its political influence. Hence, the understanding of the political economy of the media is important in order to reveal how power relations in media work and how economic motives drive them. This will help prevent the media from losing their social function and so, their very *raison d'être*.

2.2. Political economy of media: What matters?

If media are to bear their very *raison d'être*, they have to preserve their public character and function: to mediate relations between the private's interest and the construction of shared life and common good. In short, media have a social and public function in civilising the society. In the media policies (e.g. Broadcasting Law) in Indonesia, it is stated that the broadcasting media have an important role in shaping society, be it in the social, cultural, economic or political sectors. Media have the freedom as well as responsibility to inform, to educate and to provide entertainment to the public.[12] However, a closer look at the works of media sector reveal that since the media have a huge role in constituting value in the society, the very essence of media is threatened by both economic and political interests from various groups and transforms the media into tools of 'consent manufacturing'. Such findings resonate with the argument of Herman and Chomsky (Herman and Chomsky, 1988) that economic and political interests are seemingly ahead of that of social and public function.

As the primary sources of messages that reach people's minds, the media have a huge capacity to determine value-making processes in the society. In Castells' term, as *value is, in fact, an expression of power*: the media also holds power and therefore decides what is considered as value(able) (Castells, 2009). Politics therefore is primarily the politics of the media (Castells, 2009). In addition:

> Messages, organisations, and leaders who do not have a presence in the media do not exist in the public mind. Therefore, only those who can convey their messages to the citizens at large have the chance to influence their decisions in ways that lead to their own access to power positions in the state and/or maintain their hold over political institutions. (Castells, 2009:194)

Furthermore, since communication is the sharing of meaning through the exchange of information, the reproduction of meaning always embraces the media as a technology of

[12] In the preamble of Broadcasting Law (UU No. 32/2002), in particular point D, it is stated that "broadcasting institution is a mass communication media which have important role in social, cultural, political and economic lives, have freedom and responsibility in running its function as media of information, education, entertainment, also control and social cohesion."

communication. While the stronger one tends to have certain ability to fabricate meanings and to build consents over specific issues (to legitimise what is good/bad? What is valuable?) thereby constructing certain beliefs, the minority/vulnerable groups have a little access to create their own meaning, let alone the ability to 'reproduce' meanings. The media are pivotal in power making. Moreover, the advancement of technological innovation helps the media to broadcast more messages and share information all over the world in a matter of seconds. Castells, in his own words, points out the role of media as a power maker:

> The media constitute the space where power relationships are decided between competing political and social actors. Therefore, almost all actors and messages must go through the media in order to achieve their goals. They have to accept the rules of media engagement, the language of the media, and media interests. (p. 194)

All of this points out that (real) power in the society is communication power (Castells, 2009). In other words, those who control the medium will clearly have the power to control the content and value; hence the media has become an arena for power struggles. The converse also applies: as the minorities possess very little, if any, power to convey the messages to the other citizens at large, their voices will remain ineffectual and they will become 'second class citizens' who are barely active in civic engagements.

However, if we consider the media primarily as a tool of business and industry, then the logic of profit-making becomes paramount in its role in society. As the political economy of media becomes more apparent in the contemporary global media scene, Castells argues:

> Corporate media are primarily businesses, and most of their business is entertainment, including the news; but no doubt that they also have broader political interests, as they are directly invested in the dynamics of the state, a key part of their business environment. So the rules for political engagement in the media will depend on their specific business models and their relationship to political actors and to the audience (Castells, 2009:195).

Media policies and their enforcements have played a pivotal role in our shared life. By ensuring that the 'media as public sphere' becomes the core of policy orientation, media policies are guaranteeing that the mainstream media has a noble duty as a public guardian to voice public interest and to enhance social bonds between citizens. Healthy communal engagement is only possible through healthy policies. Since media have become tools for swaying public opinions instead of providing 'neutral' space and therefore are losing their public character, public media policies are needed to guard public interest and maintain the ideal of *bonum commune*. Indeed, policies must be about people's interest and the common interest defined in the public sphere (Habermas, 2001). This approach can also be applied in regard to the interest of minority groups. Since these groups are prone to non-representation in the media, media policies could be used to protect their interests for the sake of the common good. By ensuring that minority groups are represented equally and properly in the media, media policies can provide opportunities for these groups to improve the defence of their rights in various sectors.

The guarding of media through public policies is also important, as the dangers of media mergers and cooperation arises. Whilst the media are losing their public character and may be on the brink of collapse in their role of providing a public space for discourse, it is therefore

imperative that specific interventions are carried out by all concerned stakeholders to ensure that media retains its public character.

Castells (Castells, 2009:56) notes several major trends in the growth of media industry in the last two decades. They are the widespread commercialisation of the media in most of the world; globalization and concentration of media business through conglomeration and networking; the segmentation, customization and diversification of media markets, with emphasis on the cultural identification of the audience; the formation of multimedia business groups that reach out to all forms of communication, including, of course, the Internet and increasing business convergence between telecommunication companies, computer companies, Internet companies and media companies.

Those trends show that the dynamics of today's media industry have seemingly skewed towards market-logic as the primary driver. Convergence both in the type of the medium and in its management have characterised current developments. In Indonesia in particular, such circumstance is marked by the phenomenon of media conglomeration (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012). The diversity of ownership and information is consequently affected, if not threatened, because the giant media owners can do anything they want through their media outlets and content platforms (Cranberg, Bezanson *et al.*, 2001). Similar expression comes from Giddens: "*the growth of giant multinational media corporations means that unelected business tycoons can hold enormous power*"[13]. Another consequence of this market-logic is the negligence, if not abandoning of, citizens' right and public interest, which directly endangers the process of democratisation. With regard to minority groups, since the uniformity of content (due to the rating system) tends to reflect the 'tyranny of majority'; the minority groups suffer from limited representation –or even non-representation– in the media. In addition to this, the 'commercial model' taken by the media makes media products "*... often commodified and designed to serve the needs of the market, more than of citizenship*" (Joseph, 2005) p. 14).

Herman and Chomsky (1988) further suggest that the media serve and propagandise on behalf of the powerful 'privileged groups' which finance and control them. The media corporations are business entities subject to business competition for profit. As in order to succeed they need to prioritise profit, bias is inevitable in the media scene. In suppressive regimes, often the government presents as a substitution of business entity in Herman and Chomsky's 'propaganda model' of media. Such circumstance, of course, has put the societal function of media aside. In order to prevent the manipulation of public interest, particularly with regard to minority groups, the media need to ensure they maintain the role in civilising society, by providing content that educates the public and to provide them equal space for engaging in the deliberation process. The susceptibility of media to be manipulated and controlled, therefore, demands that public participation takes a more central role in controlling the media. By controlling the media through regulation over ownership, content and boundaries the public character of the media will be re-strengthened. Two principles are central here: the

[13] Anthony Giddens, 1999, "Runaway World", *1999 Reith Lectures: Democracy*. Accessible at http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/events/reith_99/week5/week5.htm, last accessed 6 September 2011; as quoted by Werner A. Meier, "Media Ownership – Does it matter?" in *Networking Knowledge for Information Societies: Institutions & Intervention* (eds. Robin Mansell, Rohan Samarajiva and Amy Mahan), 2002, Delft University Press.

diversity of content and the diversity of ownership. Only by guarding the two principles that protect the *raison d'être* of media as *locus publicus*, the protection of the minority groups' right to media –in terms of access and representation- will be guaranteed.

What we see above is a set of impacts caused by the rise of private media conglomeration, which has seemingly allowed the media companies to operate based on the market logic; leaving citizens' rights and public concerns behind. These tendencies, in light of Habermas' thoughts (1984, 1987, 1989, 2006), show the clear and present danger of our media today; which are losing their societal and public character. As the media industry grows rapidly and becomes a profit-oriented business, the public interests and needs seem likely to be forgotten. The impact is obvious: the profit-motivated media industry has put citizens merely as consumers and threatened their rights. In regard to the minority groups, the limited access to- and the representation in- media impact directly upon the exercising of their rights in various sectors and in turn, threaten their status of citizenship.

2.3. Media industry in Indonesia: What drives the rapid growth?

The media industry in Indonesia has evolved since the late 1980s. At that time, most media were an extension of the government and the content was mostly about the government's activities and institutions. Other media which opposed the government were most likely to be banned (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012:36). The Soeharto's New Order regime reduced much of the public sphere, including strict limitation on press freedom, formal and informal censorship, and the monitoring and control of journalists through a state-sponsored journalists' association – PWI (McCargo, 2003).

The situation changed dramatically after the fall of Soeharto's administration in May 1998. Permits to establish a media company –particularly print media– were granted much more easily (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012:36); the number of printed and electronic media increased rapidly. Since then, the Indonesian media industry became highly liberalised. Prior to 1998, there were 279 print media and just five private television stations. Within less than a decade, the numbers have doubled for private television broadcasters – excluding some 20 local television stations – and tripled for print media (Laksmi and Haryanto, 2007). During the period 1998-2000 the government granted almost 1,000 permits for newspapers, although in the long run only a few survived, mostly by expanding their coverage or being taken over by other, larger groups. Twelve major media conglomerates at least exist in Indonesia at the moment. See Table 2.1.

No	Group	TV	Radio	Print Media	Online Media	Other businesses[a]	Owner
1	Global Mediacomm (MNC)	20	22	7	1	Content Production, Content Distribution, Talent Management	Hary Tanoesoedibjo
2	Jawa Pos Group	20	n/a	171	1	Paper Mills, Printing Plants, Power Plant	Dahlan Iskan, Azrul Ananda
3	Kelompok Kompas Gramedia	10	12	88	2	Property, Bookstore chain, Manufacturing, Event Organiser, University	Jacob Oetama
4	Mahaka Media Group	2	19	5	n/a	Event Organiser, PR Consultant	Abdul Gani, Erick Thohir
5	Elang Mahkota Teknologi	3	n/a	n/a	1	Telecommunication and IT solutions	Sariatmaadja Family
6	CT Corp	2	n/a	n/a	1	Financial Services, Lifestyle and Entertainment, Natural resources, Property	Chairul Tanjung
7	Visi Media Asia	2	n/a	n/a	1	Natural resources, network provider, Property	Bakrie & Brothers
8	Media Group	1	n/a	3	n/a	Property (Hotel)	Surya Paloh
9	MRA Media	n/a	11	16	n/a	Retail, Property, Food & Beverage, Automotive	Adiguna Soetowo & Soetikno Soedarjo
10	Femina Group	n/a	2	14	n/a	Talent Agency, Publishing	Pia Alisjahbana
11	Tempo Inti Media	1	n/a	3	1	Documentary making	Yayasan Tempo
12	Beritasatu Media Holding	2	n/a	10	1	Property, health services, cable TV, Internet service provider, University	Lippo Group

Table 2.1. Major media groups in Indonesia: 2011
[a] These are businesses run by the same owner/group owner.
Source: Nugroho, Putri *et al* (2012:39)

Table 2.1. shows that the landscape of contemporary Indonesian media industry is controlled by twelve large groups whose survival was made possible by expansion and conglomeration – not monopoly, but seems to lead to oligopoly (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012). However, despite the groups' vast expansion, this is not parallel to the expansion of media content; but they are growing with similar content. For instance, it is common that one news item on a channel appears on another media channel under the same company (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012). In addition to, but also to support, diversification and expansion, mergers and acquisitions (M&A) have become another strategy to maintain the business.

The current media oligopoly has endangered citizens' right to information as the media industry has become profit-led, and media companies represent profitable businesses which can be shaped by the owner's interests and are thus highly beneficial for those seeking power. Such condition resonates with Bagdikian's concern over concentrated ownership of media, which inevitably narrows the range of information and imagery that is disseminated. It creates

grave consequences for democracy (Bagdikian, 2004). The following argument of Bimo Nugroho points rightly to the problematic nature of media business:

> Conglomeration in the media industry is a logical consequence. [It is] a logical consequence where it [the media business] became spread out and then became concentrated. Business will always be like that. But that is not the most important part. What matters is how the media industry could help us to become better human beings. (B. Nugroho, *KompasTV*, Interview 10/12/2011)

Since the media have became a part of other businesses which are primarily driven by profit interest rather than the intention to accommodate space for citizens' engagement, the dynamic of media tends to surrender to the market logic; and the content of media is the commodity. With regard to the idea, media companies use news and other programming as commodities to attract an audience which they can then sell to advertisers (Gamson, Croteau *et al.*, 1992). The need to attract advertisers induces programmers and editors to produce content that is likely to create a 'buying mood' (Gamson, Croteau *et al.*, 1992). In the Indonesian context, the country's advertising net revenue is among the highest in Asia[14], while in South East Asia, it has the highest advertising expenditure, which increased 24% from USD 1.7 billion in 2010 to USD 2.1 billion in 2011.[15]

In regard to rating system, while it is understandable that ratings lead to the advertising that keeps the media industry – especially television – alive, the ratings show that the most watched types of content are drama (soap opera or *sinetron* and entertainment-talkshows in regard to television) and sensational news (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, basing the rating survey solely on one agency, Nielsen, obviously does not resemble the citizens at large[16]. Such a rating system, which mostly exalts sensationalism, is very important in determining content production. Figure 2.1.explains how the rating system does participate in the making of content duplication in media.

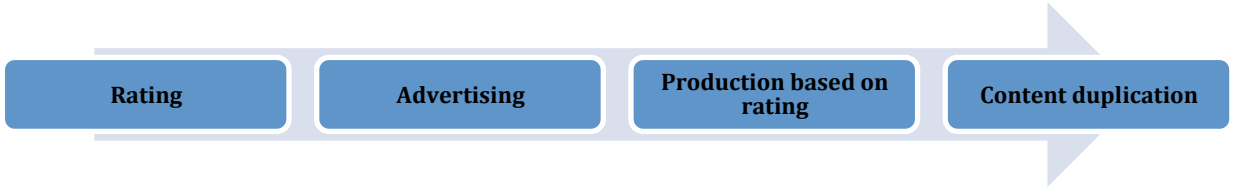


Figure 2.1. From rating to content duplication
Source: Authors

[14] See *Nilai Tertinggi, RI Juara Belanja Iklan* (Having the Highest score, Indonesia is the champion in Advertising Expenditure)http://economy.okezone.com/read/2011/12/20/320/544917/nilai-tertinggi-ri-juara-belanja-iklan. Last accessed 12/01/12

[15] See *Indonesia Tertinggi di Asia Tenggara* (Indonesian advertising expenditure is the highest in Southeast Asia) http://bisniskeuangan.kompas.com/read/2011/12/20/14403449/Belanja.Iklan.Indonesia.Tertinggi.di.Asia.Tenggara

[16] Despite debate on the sample size and possible biases derived from the methodology that the rating company uses, the dependency on only one source for rating creates more fundamental problems in the dynamics of media industry as there is no other comparable references or benchmarks.

By valuing rating more than retaining its social function duty to civilise the society, the media have sacrificed the public concerns for the sake of profit. Since in the process of content production, another business dictum is applied – the mass production of the content in order to keep the overall cost low – the media are thereby significantly reducing the diversity of content which is imperative in maintaining the public function of the media. As a result, the media are potentially limiting spaces for citizens' active engagement and hence, are harming citizens' rights.

While starting a type of media business seems easy, maintaining the business is very hard work. The media business finds one of its oases in the advertisers who are supported by the existence of a rating system. In order to maintain the advertisement's support, there is no other way that media need to 'manufacture the desire of the audience' and present it as 'audience's need'. Here, rating has become a new sacred norm. Then, it is not just about business *per se*, it turns out, but also because from the beginning the media have become a key tool for manipulating consumer's needs. This makes it difficult for a media business to survive if it does not entertain advertisers' interests as much as it does its business ones. To a certain extent, controlling the media is not only about profit; it also has become a tool of 'manipulation' (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012:36).

Since the 'curse' of rating leads to the uniformity of content – and media-generated images are used to construct meaning of realities – the media portrayal on certain issues has certainly impacted upon the reality itself. Since the lens through which people receive the images is uniform, the invisible social construction is built around similar assumptions and views. In relation to minority rights, the rating system has the potential to commodify certain senses towards certain groups, for instance the sense of 'pity' (towards diffables) and sense of melodrama (towards women and children). Such commodification evidently has the potential to construct certain stereotypes about individuals/groups.

The media, as the 'Fourth Estate' (Carlyle, 1840:392, Schultz, 1998:49) are supposed to play a pivotal role in an infant democracy such as in Indonesia. But as the market logic and business interest are ahead that of the societal one, the Indonesian media industry barely left a shared room for the citizens to engage. Despite the problems, the development of new and alternative media in the country has opened up a new space where citizens can express their voices freely. The arrival of Internet and the rise of community media provide opportunities for citizens to discuss public concerns that could have been provided by conventional media – however the Internet-enabled public sphere is not free from contestation. The public interest, which is not contained in traditional media, spills over into the new media: blogs, wikis, *Twitter*, and *Facebook*, among others (DD. Laksono, interview, 21/09/2011). Furthermore, some minority groups such as LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) in Indonesia have a large number of groups on *Facebook* as an alternative sharing media (Agustine, discussion, 24/07/2012). While it is quite possible for the vulnerable groups to appropriate the new media as they can really tame and modify as they like, it is quite difficult for them to do the same thing to the mainstream media since they can find themselves being stereotyped or victimised.

Since the current business practice in the media industry is characterised by conglomeration, M&As, profit-driven logic, blinded obedience to owner's interest and limited care to the citizens' interests, the existence of *res publica* is at stake. The room for the public to deliberate

over public concerns is diminished, or even being obliterated – for *res publica* is not identifiable with public, rather with the industry. Citizens' right to access the media, both in terms of infrastructure and content, are also being severely limited. Citizens have been put in the confinement of consumers' seats, merely enjoying what is available in the media channel with very limited influence to shape the content[17]. In the least developed areas, this is worsened by the unavailability of access to infrastructure. How can we talk about human rights issues if – quoting John Dewey– "*big business rules the life of the country through its control of the means of production, exchange, the press and other means of publicity, propaganda and communication*"?[18] When the profit-driven logic marks and blurs the contrast between what people were thought to want and what they might be induced to accept, the gap between citizen and consumer already exists. In addition to this, since the law of supply and demand tends to serve to the need of the majority– and now is adopted by the media as a business entity – the minorities' voices are likely to be neglected.

It seems therefore that the media tend to treat the citizens merely as potential consumers for the industry. As a logical consequence, the government needs to step in with an appropriate media policy. The absence of a media policy that adequately governs the media business will in turn create serious consequences: decreasing access of citizens to media infrastructure and the quality and diversity of media content. The opportunity for the minority groups to be involved in media policymaking processes is also decreased due to the impacts. Therefore, protection of *res publica* and the fulfilment of citizens' right to media should be continued by enabling a regulatory framework, i.e. media policy. In that way, the development of media industry will allow citizens to exercise their right to media infrastructure, content and participation in policymaking. However, in the context of Indonesia, is the media policy system capable of doing so?

The emergence of media conglomerates with a global market has led to an unprecedented integration of multiple media, which can simultaneously market the same message in multiple forms through a dazzling array of new technologies.

2.4. Media policy in Indonesia: For whose interest?

Tracing the history of Indonesian media and press uncovers that they had been identified with resistance from the early days. From *Medan Prijaji*[19] to the resolute *Indonesia Raya*– by Mochtar Lubis – newspaper, the Indonesian media has demonstrated characters of courage and critical. The term '*Pers Perjuangan*' (press for the political fight) in Soekarno's administration also symbolized the role of media as a 'tool of revolution' – while in the same time served as Soekarno's tools to control his political agenda. Despite the long history, it was not until 1966

[17] We acknowledge the recent trend with the advent of the Internet and social media that enables interaction between the audience and the media. However we also realise that such interaction at large neither represents nor indicates influence of the former to the latter.

[18] As cited in (Meier, 2002)

[19] *Medan Prijaji*was established by RM Tirto Adisoerjo during colonial imperialism.

that Indonesia had its first formal policy on press and media, i.e. the *Basic Press Law* UU No 11/1966 which clearly stipulated the use of media as an ideological tool. When General Soeharto took power and started his 32-year presidency – the New Order regime – the media were strictly censored although did enjoy a slight improvement in terms of cultural expressions (Hill and Sen, 2000). The main policies governing the media during this period are the *Press Law* No 21/1982 and the *Broadcasting Law* No 24/1997.

The advent of *reformasi* in 1998 indisputably provided a crucial turning point in the promise of democratisation. In regard to media, the reformists was moved to ensure that the ideals of a free and independent Fourth Estate (Carlyle, 1840, Schultz, 1998) would attain legal assurance in the form of a new Press Law. As a result, the House enacted *Press Law* no 40/1999 – and the *Broadcasting Law* No 32/2002 three years later. It provides journalists, press companies, and journalist organisations with a legal framework in which they conduct their work. The law also stipulates the necessary rules in managing press organisations and assures the least amount of state interference in order to establish a purely independent press atmosphere. At this point, the promises of democratisation and freedom of the press were seemingly granted.

Since then, there are two regulations which have been seen together as the 'umbrella law' governing the media in Indonesia: the *Press Law* No 40/1999 (*UU Pers 40/1999*) and the *Broadcasting Law* No 32/2002 (*UU Penyiaran 32/2002*), on which other national media policies are based. These media regulations, particularly related to broadcasting, have gone through several revisions. The Press Law has been revised three times since 1967; and the Broadcasting Law has also been revised three times since 1982 (Nugroho, Siregar *et al.*, 2012).

These Laws, normatively, are in the right direction in terms of ensuring the basic precondition for citizens to practice the freedom of expression and speech, though the notion 'citizens' referred to in the law is left blurred. In terms of vulnerable groups, the Laws do not specifically accommodate the minority groups. However, when it comes to implementation, the story is different. Media policies have failed to regulate the media *as an industry*. Existing policies are incapable of mitigating the excessively profit-driven logic of the media. As such, policymakers and state officials have failed to set a clear limitation between monopoly and oligopoly. In regard to broadcasting, many of the television-based media companies even neglected the new reform-inspired Broadcasting Law as the concept of '*siaran berjaringan*' (the Network-based Broadcasting system for television)[20] is considered threatening, since they would lose their share of advertisements to local television – and therefore lose their revenues too (Armando, 2011:57).

As a matter of fact, even Government Regulation PP 50/2005 on private broadcasting contributed to the emasculation on KPI's role (*Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia*/Indonesian Broadcasting Commission) as an independent regulator who represented the interests of the

[20] The concept of Network-based Broadcasting requires TV broadcasters with national coverage to relinquish the use of their allocated frequency in their coverage areas to local TV broadcasters. If the broadcasters located in the capital city (Jakarta) want to have their programmes being received in certain areas, they have to cooperate with the local broadcasters in the areas. The basic spirit of the scheme is to promote local wisdom, and the diversity of ownership and the diversity of content as well.

public. Rather than KPI, the industry[21] demanded that the role of the broadcasting regulator was returned to the state in the hands of the Ministry of Communication and Informatics. With the PP 50/2005, the industry started to gain more space and 'freedom'. Some regarded it as a drawback to Soeharto's regime (e.g. Laksmi and Haryanto, 2007:72). In addition to this comes Permen Kominfo (the Minister of Communication and Informatics Decree) No. 17 /2006 on the Procedures of permit adjustment for existing private broadcasters (*Tata Cara Penyesuaian Izin Penyelenggaraan Penyiaran Bagi Lembaga Penyiaran Swasta*), which permits an exception for already existing media companies to implement the network-based broadcasting system. The problem lies in the fact that the regulation has given privileges to existing media companies to continue to air without having to reduce their broadcast as obliged by the Broadcasting Law. Inevitably, the Broadcasting Commission, who was initially given a mandate to rule over the scheme, has lost their authority to the Ministry. Another defect from the Government Regulation No 50/2005 also apparent on the failure to pick up on the problem of cross-ownership (*kepemilikan silang*), although Broadcasting Law No 32/2002 inserts limiting variables in Article 18 and prohibits the action (Nugroho, Siregar *et al.*, 2012).

As depicted above, we can see that the dynamics of the media industry have strong links with the development of policies in the media sector. Evidently, the changing economic and political circumstances that have been reflected in the changes in policies have in turn affected the development of the media, and *vice versa*. For instance, the enactment of Press Law No 4 in 1967 triggered the expansion of print media in the following years, and the enactment of Foreign Investment Law No 20 in 1994 has been a way for franchise magazines to start evolving in Indonesia (Nugroho, Siregar *et al.*, 2012). Apparently, the trajectory of media policy in Indonesia has shown us the bitter facts: that the state is powerless before the media industry; that the media policymaking processes are in favour of the media businesses, rather than the public interest; and that the implementation of existing media policies is not lawfully enforced.

While the existing media policies are not lawfully enforced, a similar situation also happens in terms of other citizens' rights, especially those of the vulnerable and minority groups. In the Constitution (UUD 1945, in particular article 28), it is stated that every Indonesian citizen posses the same rights: in defending the right as citizens, in equally standing before the law and in exercising the freedom of religion amongst others. It is stated also in the UU No. 39/1999 on human rights that protection, enforcement, fulfillment and advancement of human rights are the responsibility of the government. At a glance, it seems that the government has made certain efforts in guaranteeing the exercise of the rights of the vulnerable. However, the implementations are not as ideal as what might be expected.

The appearance of various unjust regulations has endangered some basic rights of the minorities. *Perda* of DKI Jakarta No. 8/2007 about public order (*Ketertiban Umum/Tibum*), for

[21] At that time, the industry was represented by six associations, i.e. the *Ikatan Jurnalis Televisi Indonesia* (Indonesian TV Journalist Union), *Persatuan Radio Siaran Swasta Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian National Private Radio Union – formerly led by Siti Hardijanti Rukmana, first daughter of former president Soeharto), *Persatuan Perusahaan Periklanan Indonesia* (Indonesian Advertising Companies union), *Persatuan Sulih Suara Indonesia* (Indonesian Voice Over Union), *Komunitas televisi Indonesia* (Indonesian television community) andATVSI (*Asosiasi TV Swasta Indonesia*, or Association of Indonesian Private TV Broadcasters), with ATVSI acting as an informal leader of the industry.

instance, criminalises informal working activities carried out by poor urban citizens. In addition to this, the creation of categorisation in job vacancies has forced the LGBT to choose (or not to choose) certain work, e.g. the transgender should work at a beauty salon and not as a secretary. The other forms of discriminatory regulations are the *sharia perdas* which is in most cases, gender biased. At the national level, the controversial 2008 Anti-Pornography Law has provided discriminatory clauses against minority groups in Indonesia, which is primarily based on ethnic traditions, sexuality and gender.[22]

Bearing in mind that the media have capabilities to provide channels to amplify messages, thus the media also have the potential to ensure that the vulnerable groups have their voices heard in public, and hence help them to maintain their rights. The idea resonates with the view of media centrality in ensuring that society can preserve the principle of free communication (Habermas, 1987) as this is a requirement of justice in any form. In other words, it is only possible to pursue the betterment of community and societal life if the media functions properly in mediating the society with the state. This is inherent in the argument that media needs to be governed by public policy.

In addition to the abovementioned notion, public policy, in principle, is a participatory process and as such must be made in consultation with the affected society (Edelenbos, 1999). In contemporary Indonesia, unfortunately, the participatory process is to a large extent absent from the highly-centralised public policy. The study conducted by YAPPIKA found that the level of society engagement in local governance is merely on 'information and consultation' not yet on 'citizen control' (YAPPIKA, 2006: p. 21). Based on this research, YAPPIKA suggests that the abovementioned issues are strongly influenced by the lack of citizens' access to local governance. In regard to the increased tension between media industry and the policy, Heike Jensen argues,

> Simultaneously, the tension between media as commercial enterprises and media as potential public resources or public service providers has intensified, so that new models of regulation are needed to balance the two. (Jensen, 2006:238)

Clearly, policies, or the lack thereof, in the media sector in Indonesia not only affect the development of the media industry including its infrastructure and content, but more importantly impact upon the society in that the regulatory frameworks fail to ensure the public character of media. From a citizens' right perspective, this concerns the decreasing access of citizens to media infrastructure, the quality and diversity of media content, and the ability to be involved in media policymaking processes (Nugroho, Siregar *et al.*, 2012).

It is obvious that the media play a pivotal role in ensuring every citizen, in particular those who are vulnerable, to exercise their rights. However, since the enforcements of Indonesian media policies seem to be powerless before the media industry, the public interest is treated severely. Therefore, the spirit of the policies needs to be regained, so that the public character of media could perform stronger. In such a way, the vulnerable and minorities are assisted in earning more active roles, whether in civic engagement or in decision-making processes.

[22] http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/home/anti-porn-statute-to-remain-law-of-the-land-in-indonesia/365771

2.5. Citizens' right to media: Some basic notions

Democracy starts with citizens. A real democratic society depends upon an informed populace making political choices. Therefore, information and communication are integral to democracy. By the same token, the democratisation of communication is a prerequisite of democracy. The issues of citizens' right to media, in particular citizen participation in policymaking or in news-making itself, have long been discussed both locally and globally. It is because citizens across the globe are slowly but surely waking up to the notion that they have a stake in the media, even if they are not always recognised as stakeholders by the powers that be in governments and media organisations. The new awareness is based on the understanding that, in today's world, the mass media are increasingly playing the role once played by family, community, religion and formal education: not only disseminating information and knowledge, but also shaping values and norms, moulding attitudes and behaviour, and influencing the very process of living. A growing number of people everywhere are coming to the conclusion that it is important for the public to be critically aware of the media – not only in terms of programming, but also with regard to various determinants of policy, such as institutional structure, funding and regulation (Joseph, 2005).

The idea of citizens' right is always agreeable to all related stakeholders in the media field. It is similar to the idea of citizen participation. Participation of the governed in their government is, in theory, the cornerstone of democracy – a revered idea that is vigorously applauded by virtually everyone (Arnstein, 1969). Citizens' right to information, on the other hand, is just one aspect of the whole issue of citizens' right to media that should be fulfilled (Joseph, 2005). The media have a duty to protect and enable citizens to exercise their rights by retaining their public character and providing space for civic engagement.

In this study, we refer to 'rights' as the values written in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[23]. Most media activists have often used the 'Article 19' of the UDHR[24] to defend media rights (in this case, press institutions and or journalists) but often what is more needed is to protect the citizens who have a much narrower and limited area of freedom in media. We therefore expand this argument by asserting that it is not just the media rights *per se* but should also include access – something that defines citizenship (in contrast to consumership) in the media landscape. As such, we focus our attention on the notion of 'citizens' right' in the following three areas[25]:

First: Citizens' access to information. Access to information allows the most vulnerable groups to be involved in human development with the potential to transform their lives. There

[23] See http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml.

[24] The Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

[25] The three dimensions are largely based on the frame of the project, as being stated in the proposal and the Terms of Reference.

are two aspects of rights here: (1) access to trustworthy information, and (2) ability to generate information. Without specific information on, for example, rights to health, housing and work, citizens are not able to exercise these rights. It can also be considered as a way to empower citizens –not necessarily just those who are vulnerable—for trustworthy information can help citizens to make a right decision about their own lives or to get involved in the decision-making processes in the matters that relate to their citizenship. Likewise, the rights of citizens to generate information should be protected as this enables them to create content that can be shared among citizens to empower themselves. Often, bottom-up user-generated content leads to the creation of bottom-up trustworthy information. However, this requires another access, i.e. the access to infrastructure that enables content creation.

Second: Citizens' access to media infrastructure. Access to media for citizens assumes and requires equal availability and access to the infrastructure. In the Indonesian case, most of the media and telecommunication infrastructure is unequally distributed. While radio has reached most of the country, followed by television (mainly state-run), quality media infrastructure, particularly and including high-speed cable that enables Internet-based media, is concentrated in Java-Bali and the western part of the country. With the advancement of user-generated content in Internet-based media, this situation hampers citizens' capacity to produce and distribute content of their own (Nugroho, 2011).

Third: Citizens' access to influence the regulatory framework. Public policy, and in general regulatory framework, must be made in consultation with citizens. However, uninformed and unempowered citizens cannot participate in such an important process –which is very much the case in Indonesia. It is imperative therefore to empower citizens in order to ensure their participation in decision making processes, specifically which relate to their rights –in this case the rights related to media.

The fulfillment of the above rights is central in a modern society whose life is predominantly characterised by the use of various media. The fulfillment of these rights is pivotal to empower certain individuals and communities so they can play a bigger part in society. Through creating, disseminating and sharing information and knowledge; each individual, community, or society may develop and empower themselves. Seizing this opportunity requires openness and the ability to embrace and reflect on a number of different perspectives and realities, but at the same time also provides an enormous learning opportunity for all of us (Samassékou, 2006).

The fulfilment of citizens' right to media also strengthens the very core of human rights itself, in which the dignity, integrity and vulnerability of each individual are considered. Therefore, as we are fulfilling the right to media, celebrations of the existence of people and their rights are also in the making: the right to a decent standard of living and to a life lived in freedom, without hunger, violence or suffering as well as the right to participate in society, to voice opinions and to be free from arbitrary intrusions or restrictions by the state and/or certain parties. In the Indonesian context, where there is sometimes a certain degree of ignorance about human rights issues, the promotion of citizen's right to media is a gateway to improve the enforcement of many other economic and political rights. However, the exercise of minorities' rights, in particular with regard to media, seems to be lacking. Ahmadiyya, diffables, LGBTs and women-children are continuously being misrepresented in the media and

have a very limited access to co-create the content. Therefore, if we acknowledge access to media as an important condition for democratic participation and development –and for exercising freedom of expression– it is reasonable to argue for a positive state obligation to secure citizens' access to information in the media (Jørgensen, 2006). The abandonment of citizen's right to media would bring severe impacts, not only to the process of democratisation, but also to the lives of citizens. The abandonment of the rights of the vulnerable and minorities, therefore exacerbates any damage. While the securing of citizens' access to media is a must, the protection of the vulnerable right to media should become priority, given their weak position in society.

It is within these contexts that we present a series of case studies of citizens'rights to media. As public engagement is pivotal and such engagement needs full support from the media as the chief of public sphere, the case studies will deliver stories on how citizens – particularly those who are weak (or being weakened) in society – access the infrastructure and content, and how they are being represented in the media. While most citizens barely enjoy the civilised content, proper infrastructure and the opportunity to take part in decision-making through media, we will see how vulnerable groups are being portrayed and served by the media in comparison with other citizens. It is hoped that these stories will uncover the 'bigger picture' about what kind of 'citizenship' they are enjoying.

2.6. Protecting the right to media, protecting civility

The media is present in order to create or to find possibilities for moving towards a shared life. As a central element in the development of society, the media are supposed to provide room in which the public can freely interact and engage over matters of public concern: the public sphere (Habermas, 1987, Habermas, 1984). In the context of an infant democracy like Indonesia, the media evidently have a pivotal role, i.e. as the 'Fourth Estate' (Carlyle, 1840:392, Schultz, 1998:49).

Media have been mandated to ensure their practices follow these ideals. Yet, the development of the media industry, heavily driven by market logic, has to some extent contributed to the changing character of the public sphere, which has now become more pragmatic. The absence of media policy that is presumed to regulate the media industry makes the circumstance grow bleaker. Although the issue is raised, we find that the media have become less civilising in their programmes and can create serious consequences for citizens' right to media infrastructure, content and participation in policymaking.

In terms of how many minority groups in Indonesia exercise their right to media, what we see is a saddening picture. From our case studies with the Ahmadiyya, LGBT groups, the diffable communities and women and children, we identified at least four types of basic problems regarding their right to media: (i) victimisation – due to the deviant labelling (in the Ahmadiyya case); (ii) *stereotype-ing* – continuously being stereotyped (in the LGBT case); (iii) *discrimination* (in the diffable case); and (iv) marginalisation (in the women and children group). The way these groups are presented in the media has undoubtedly had a huge impact

upon their daily lives. Such a condition is clearly far from ideal in a modern civilised society where each individual is supposed to be treated "equal in dignity and rights" (art. 1 UDHR).

Since it is almost impossible to acquire independent media that is detached from any interest group or economic and political stimulus, the minority and vulnerable groups –which are unfortunately considered less significant than the larger majority– will face serious obstacles in trying to channel their voice in the public sphere. Such a condition means that the interests of the minorities or the 'voices from below' (Habermas, 1989) are not properly represented and does not provide a channel for these citizens to participate fully incrucial decision-making processes.

These circumstances ultimately endanger not only the democratisation processes, but also the exercise of citizens' rights – in both political and daily lives. Since the media tend to prioritise certain interests over public concerns, the discussion of public matters is often 'bottom of the list'. These conditions hamper the exercise of citizens' right since they lose spaces in which they can participate in determining policies and discourses related to their lives. As conglomeration and concentration of ownership grow rapidly, there seems no urgent action from the government to protect the function of media to provide a public space for discourse. Instead, the government barely takes a role in setting up an appropriate mechanism to ensure the citizens' right are fulfilled. An interesting definition on citizenship comes from sociologist T.H Marshall:

> A status, which is enjoyed by a person who is a full member of a community. Citizenship has three components: civil, political, and social. Civil rights are necessary for individual freedoms and are institutionalized in the law courts. Political citizenship guarantees the right to participate in the exercise of political power in the community, either by voting, or by holding political office. Social citizenship is the right to participate in an appropriate standard of living; this right is embodied in the welfare and educational systems of modern societies (Marshall, 1994:54)

Marshall's definition suggests that an individual bears the status of a citizen only if s/he is given the chance to participate in the democratic process of their community/society. Based on that idea, removing media rights from an individual or group could therefore be categorised as an act of theft of an element of one's citizenship. In a civilised society, the fulfilment of media rights is necessary to protect civility itself, as access to information (of which one of the main channels is the media) is essential for self-determination, for social and political participation and for development (Samassékou, 2006). That is why we can say that human rights, democracy and development are intertwined, and conversely the renunciation of such rights leads to the banality and denigration of citizens. Following the idea that civil society's right to media is an important asset in democracy and civilisation (Joseph, 2005), the protection/guarantee of citizens' right to media is a way to protect the civility itself. However, the whole idea is threatened since the media industry tends to put audiences as merely consumers, rather than citizens with rights.

Because citizenship is also regarded as a fundamental plank of democracy, stealing one's media rights means depriving democracy itself. In addition, genuine democracy demands a system of constant interaction with all the people, accessibility at all levels, a public ethos which allows conflicting ideas to contend, and which provides for full participation in reaching consensus

on socio-cultural, economic and political goals. Media rights, in this context, enable all those dreams.

Recently the media seemingly prioritise the interest of majority due to the market logic and as a result the exercise of minorities' rights or the interest of the vulnerable is hampered. By solely presenting the interest of the majority, the media apparently considers that minority issues as less relevant. This raises a grave concern since the idea of full public participation to maintain a democratic society is not even met. Instead of providing a diverse view of public dynamics, the media tend to provide single dominant 'culture', i.e. the one controlled by the tyranny of majority. Therefore, in the Indonesian context, if there is a period when faces and dreams of diversity began to fade on the television screen, to disappear in the newspaper, or to decline in other media; actually the jargon of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* is about to perish. For without the fulfillment of every citizen's rights – or the ability to take part in democratic processes, the ideology of nationality has no meaning.

In the following chapter, before delivering the case studies, we outline the methods used in this study.

3.
Citizens' right to media in Indonesia: Constructing the case study

The reason we use [an] intellectual approach [in voicing women's voices] is that, in our belief, in order to gain [the] truth we need a scholarly/intellectual work. Without journasl, we perhaps could make alternative media except the likes of Femina and sinetron [soap opeas]. However, scholarly works are needed to ensure the truth comes [out]. That's why we conducted gender studies, feminism, and theoretical approaches in our analysis. For the truth cannot be compared with myths/folklores. If we do not do this [using intellectual approaches], people will say that we are delivering the same myth. But, we want to say that this is not a myth, this is a fact; that there are women who are poor, who are beaten, etc.
(Mariana Amiruddin, Jurnal Perempuan, Interview, 05/07/2012)

Despite the context, what is stated by Mariana above reflects that the amplification of the vulnerable voices may be acheived by carrying out some scholarly works. In regard to the research, several studies (e.g. Hill and Sen, 2000, Piper, 2009, Wagstaff, 2010, AJI, 2009, amongst others) have outlined the journey of media in Indonesia. However, a publication on media and human rights – one that embraces both political economy as well as cultural aspects of media, in regard to citizens' right to media – is still rare. Constructing a case study of four vulnerable groups to portray citizens' right to media in Indonesia, therefore, is a challenge for us.

In designing the research, we have carefully considered a rigorous yet practical methodology that would enable us to provide in-depth stories of several vulnerable groups and to mould a conceptual explanation for it. As such, we use certain instruments for data collection following an approach that is suitable for addressing the complexity of scrutinising the exercise of citizens' right to media. We detail our research strategy briefly below.

3.1. Approach

This study aims to reveal the exercise of citizens' right in Indonesia – particularly the vulnerable groups as the weak(ened) ones in the society. As such, it is imperative that we adopt an interpretivist, qualitative approach (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Following Cassell and Symon (2004), using this approach enables us to focus on processes, mechanisms, details, and insights onthe practice of media rights. Furthermore, as we are concerned with the implication of contemporary media industry and policies on the ways in which citizens exercise their right to media, such an approach will help us in offering our own reflections on the findings alongside the research process. In addition, qualitative approaches such as this enable us to see a phenomenon primarily from the 'insider's view' (Bryman and Bell, 2007) – allowing an enriched perspective that otherwise may not be seen.

We further recognise that a qualitative method is beneficial when researching a complex, unique and dynamic subject (such as that in our case) as it involves an in-depth exploration and explanation. This approach is also helpful when dealing with a topic which needs to be approached using certain conceptual frameworks which are still developing (Creswell, 2003), or needs the combination of different strands of theory (Cassell and Symon, 2004). In this case, this is a combination of the understanding of citizens' right to media (Joseph, 2005, Jørgensen, 2006), theoretical perspectives on political economy of the media (Herman and Chomsky, 1988, McChesney, 1999, Mansell, 2004), and media studies in regard to creating public sphere (Habermas, 1989, McLuhan, 1964, Habermas, 1984, Habermas, 1987).

Here we need to pronounce that the context is of central importance as it is both unique and dynamic. Consequently, while it is powerful in terms of giving meanings to findings as well as building an explanation, such a context makes qualitative study difficult to replicate. Hence, approaching the citizens' right study from a qualitative perspective requires a thorough and detailed contextualization. As the qualitative approach rules, we do not assume the existence of a single 'truth' which is 'out there', waiting to be revealed. Taking context and insiders' views seriously into account, this report considers the participants' accounts not as a purely subjective representation of reality that hinders objectivity but, rather, as a crucial aid to advancing a more robust argument that objectivity should not exclude the insiders' views and experiences (Cassell and Symon, 2004). Such an approach may appear excessive for this research, however it is designed to ensure rigor, as we are aware that different epistemologies will result in different interpretations of 'truth' from the same single reality (Cassell and Symon, 2004).

From previous reports on the political economy of Indonesian media landscape (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012) and the Indonesian policies (Nugroho, Siregar *et al.*, 2012) we found most Indonesian citizens have been put in the confinement of consumers' seats and the politicisation of areas have largely threatened citizens' right to media, with the vulnerable groups being the ones that suffer the most. It is therefore, important to look further at how the vulnerable groups are exercising their right to media.

As stated previously, we have chosen four groups (the Ahmadiyya, the LGBT, the diffable, and the women and children), so that our investigation can be carried out at significant depth. We have based the selection of these groups on the notion of equality, which is a central part of human rights. Equality is the main ingredient when we envisage a shared life as a nation and is what is lacking when we examine any disadvantaged groups in society. In matured societies, equality is guaranteed under laws or acts as it constitutes a central tenet for the public participation of all individuals as citizens, 'to have vision to live together as a nation.'[26] Equality, broadly encompasses the protection of citizens against any discriminations including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Considering the limitation of this research, we chose four vulnerable groups that may reflect four most relevant contested aspects of equality in Indonesia, i.e. disability, sex, religious or

[26] This is an example of the UK http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/ and for the UK Equality Act http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/4

belief and sexual orientation. They are: (i) Ahmadiyya (representing religious minority groups); (ii) LGBT (picturing people with different sexual orientation); (iii) diffable people (exemplifying those with disabilities and different abilities); and (iv) women and children (characterising age and gender reassignment). We use the four to look at the 'big picture' of how the dynamics of media industry and media policy in Indonesia have impacted upon certain minority groups.

We now put the approach into action by listing our choice of methods, and the data collection strategy employed.

3.2. Methods

A qualitative approach can use any single or combination of various methods for data collection, from interviews, focus groups, workshops, ethnography, observation, or documents/texts, among others (Cassell and Symon; 2004, Creswell, 2003). For the purpose of this study, we gathered the secondary data from desk researches, and primary data from in-depth semi-structured interviews.

Our secondary data sources come from previous studies including papers, presentations, books or even grey literatures. The data collection through desk study was used to capture the big picture on the realms of media policy, media industry and particularly the extent to which the two has characterised the exercise of citizens' right to media. To gather a more detailed and nuanced understanding on how the exercising of citizens' right to media –in particular, those who are vulnerable and weak(ened)– we conducted text analysis by using legal documents, annual reports, papers and news articles. Meanwhile, the primary data was collected by conducting in-depth interviews with representatives of the vulnerable groups, activists and academics. In addition, we also studied the representation of vulnerable groups in certain printed and electronic media. What we consider pivotal here is the representativeness of the vulnerable groups themselves. In ensuring that the vulnerable groups have representatives, we mainly chose individuals who had been quite deeply involved in the groups' movements for a long time – or in regard to violent conduct, those who were the victims. In addition, considering the disparities of development in the country, we aimed to ensure that our respondents varied geographically, covering areas inside and outside of Java. However, some respondents were having objections being recorded or even if agreed, only in very limited duration.

We devised our strategy and prepared the instruments to collect the data as outlined below.

3.3. Constructing the case: Strategy and data collection instruments

Understanding the actions of a number of vulnerable citizens groups in the country requires three important aspects, i.e. (i) identifying the vulnerable groups and their concerns; (ii) determining the impact of media industry and media policy ontheir lives and rights; (iii)

carrying out the analysis of the stories. These were the main considerations in our strategy when scanning the array of secondary data available to us. As such, we paid attention to the historical aspect and the political economy context, in order to gauge a nuanced understanding of the lives of those vulnerable groups. This secondary data was mainly gathered through desk-study.

We chose four vulnerable groups for the national case studies in regards to their right to media as explained above. Our choice was largely guided by widespread impressions that these four groups have been marginalised in Indonesian society. This report aims to show the extent to which this alleged marginalisation is concomitantly reflected in their marginalised rights and access to the media. In the case of the Ahmadiyya, we consulted the spokesperson of JAI and the victims of certain attacks. We also consulted an expert on religious dialogue to scrutinise the problem. The LGBT respondents selected constitute mainly those who are LGBT activists and have a deep understanding regarding the groups' movements and the efforts to fight for the rights. With regard to diffable groups, we chose certain diffable activists to portray the problematic relationship between diffability and the media, including some from outside of Java. Representatives from the women and children groups comprised a combination of activists, scholars and mothers to gain a nuanced understanding of the complex problems faced by these groups.

In order to gain firsthand stories from these groups we conducted a number of interviews with representatives of the vulnerable groups; either the common citizens who are part of these communities; those who fought for their issues (the activists); or academics who have a deep understanding on the issues. The details of these respondents can be seen in **Appendix 2**. Our interviews with these respondents focused on finding answers to the following key inquiries: (i) the main problems of the groups in terms of social, economic and political life; (ii) how the group accesses and uses the media to amplify their own voice; and (iii) the extent to which the (mass) media represent the group/community in the public at large. In addition, we also conducted simple observations of a selection of media to provide evidence of how these programmes/materials represented the vulnerable groups.

We follow the common best practice in rigorous qualitative research to process the data generated from the collection phase (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, Cassell and Symon, 2004, Creswell, 2003). Accordingly, upon consent sought from the respondents, we recorded all the conversations and transcribed them. We then arranged the qualitative data for content analysis. (See Appendix 1 for the interview protocols.)

3.4. Limitation

Despite the rigour applied in this study, we acknowledge some limitations. First, though we have endeavoured to ensure that our research design covered the broad scope of the specified groups, it was almost impossible to collect data over the length and breadth of the archipelago. To overcome this methodological constraint, we discreetly made sure that the respondents we chose primarily possessed enough knowledge on the issues and represented the voice of the group/community.

Second, we recognise that access to data, whether it comes in form of statistics or historical documents, is quite limited in Indonesia. Data for media consumption all over Indonesia for example, is often not fully representative, since the agencies do not carry out national surveys. This is also a critic on the Nielsen method and the like, from whom we did not purchase data, despite our needs: there is a methodological constraint in which households surveyed are only based in certain cities –in Nielsen's case, only 2,423 households in 10 cities– and therefore do not fulfil the expectations of a general portrait. Our response to this is to purchase data that is affordable to us (within our research budget limit). Moreover, limited data has been a problem to those CSOs we engaged with. To respond to this, we take a loose approach: we use whichever data is available and accessible to us and analyse it all.

Third, among the groups themselves, different responses to the issue were applied. There were some respondents who have huge interest in the issues, while others are less critical or even ignorant of some issues. In some cases, some respondents refused to tell us the 'full story' as they had strong negative experiences related to similar interviews in the past. This was mainly the case with Ahmadiyya. Apparently, the interviews they have conducted in the past sometimes put their lives at risk. Despite the anonymity and 'off-the-record' options that we offered when seeking their consent prior to the interview, some candidates still chose to remain silent. Taking this into account, the degree of depth for the four case studies we conducted may vary: one case study may be analysed in much greater depth than another. However we try our best to put them into perspective in our attempt to capture the dynamics of Indonesian media rights.

3.5. Data profile

As discussed, our data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Here, we present briefly the profile of our data for quick assessment. Firstly, for the primary data we have interviewed, in total, 20 respondents, of which 5 are the representatives of Ahmadiyya, 5 from the LGBT groups, 5 are the diffability activists, 4 are from women and children groups (activists and scholars) and an academic who is also a media ombudsman. On average, interviews were about 42.25 minutes long, ranging from 17 to 114 minutes. In total, we recorded 14 hours and 5 minutes of interviews, which were then transcribed and as result we have approximately 76,092 words of text for our content analysis. In addition to the interviews, we also conducted a sampling experiment from four TV channels[27] to analyse how TV represents minority issues. In a similar vein, we also conducted an analysis on how *Kompas*, *Republika*, *Tempo.co* and *detik.com* provide certain reports in regard to Cikeusik attacking[28], the

[27] The four TV channels are SCTV, MNC TV and Trans 7, who were the top three channels with the highest share from the period mid-April until May 2012 (according to AC Nielsen), and TV One as one of the influential news channel in Indonesia. The date/time of the observation span from 5th to 22nd June 2012 during the two 'prime time' slots; morning from 9 am to 12 pm and evening from 7 pm to 10 pm.

[28] The observation spans from the 7 to 14 February 2011, around the time of attack on Ahmadiyya in Cikeusik.

Q! Film Festival[29] and the ASEAN Para Games 2011[30]; in order to see how the print and online media present the faces of the vulnerable in their news entries.

Our secondary data was gathered from various sources. From media, we consulted *Kompas*, *Tempo*, *Vivanews*, *Beritasatu*, *ANTV*, and *TransCorp*. This data ranges from 2008 to 2012. We also used specific data from related CSO and/or official bodies on special issues, like AJI, KPI, ICRP (Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace), The Wahid Institute, JICA, Arus Pelangi on LGBT issues and Komnas Perempuan on women and children issues, amongst others. Both primary and secondary data are stored in our database and some is available for audiences upon request, subject to the copyright conditions that are attached to some particular data.

We now turn to the case studies: to explore the exercise of four vulnerable citizens groups in Indonesia; arranged in sequence: Ahmadiyya, LGBT people, the diffable people and women and children.

[29] The observation spans from 24, 27 – 30 September, 1 and 4, 29 September to 8 October 2010; during the *Q! Film Festival* event in Jakarta that aroused FPI to protest on the festival.

[30] The observation spans between 15 – 20 December 2011 and 26 January, 7 to 21 Dember 2011 during the ASEAN Para Games which were held in Solo, Central Java.

4.
Case 1: The Fatal Labelling of Ahmadiyya

"The effort to build an Indonesian society which is more democratic, peaceful and promote the values of plurality is the duty of every element in the society, including the media. Media, which are one of democracy's pillars, should take a more proactive role in impelling the creation of a more democratic and plural Indonesia.
In fact, the media have not fulfilled the hope yet. On the contrary, [the media] often provoke hate and hostility toward certain groups because [the media] provide provocative news, for instance taking part in giving stigmas [such as] 'aberrant' and so on. Thus, instead of muffling anger, [the media] provoke. It could be, such action is being committed solely because of incomprehension, but not set on purpose."
(Musdah Mulia, ICRP, Interview, 04/05/2012)

On 6 February 2011, an Ahmadiyya community in Sub-district Cikeusik, Pandeglang, Banten Province, West Java was attacked by a group of suspected Moslem hardliners. At least three members of this religious minority groups were killed.[31] The killings occurred when reportedly over a thousand people surrounding a house where a group of Ahmadis were gathered. The mob surrounded the house and demanded the Ahmadis to disperse. The mob then charged inside the home, wielding rocks, swords and spears, attacking and killing three Ahmadis. Several more Ahmadis were reported seriously injured and two were missing. Then, the mob burned the house down, as well as the car parked there. Today, we can still find the Ahmadis being prosecuted as criminals instead of treated as victims of violence. The case of Hasan Suwandi, a guardian of the Ahmadiyya Cipeuyeum mosque in Cianjur, could be an example.[32]

In regard to the Ahmadis persecution, the media seems to choose to exalt the deviance of Ahmadiyya instead of covering the violent acts that occured. Even if the media reported the case of Ahmadis as a victim of violent conduct, the deviance of Ahmadiyya was always added; as if 'legalising' the act to punish the group. Since the media mediates what is possible and impossible in our shared life, every depiction made by the media will make an impression upon the general public. Such depictions would therefore have a significant impact upon the public opinion of Ahmadiyya.

---

[31] There are several versions about the victims. Spokesperson of Ahmadiyya, Mubarik Ahmad stated there were four members killed; state-run news agency *Antara* reported there were six villagers killed, while *KontraS* (*Komisi untuk Orang Hilang dan Korban Tindak Kekerasan*/Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence) reported there were three members killed and five seriously injured.

[32] Hasan Suwandi is now on trial at the Cianjur district court, for criminal defamation. The police brought the charges after a statement Hasan made to the local newspaper in which he alleged that Khan Hafid Iskandar, the Bojong Picung police chief, had given permission for the Ahmadiyya mosque to be reopened. http://www.kbr68h.com/berita/nasional/26864-penganut-ahmadiyah-di-cianjur-divonis-4-bulan-penjara

The violent case against Ahmadiyya above is complex in nature. While the violence is blatant and should have been easy to tackle in terms of law, the public discourse about it, and about Ahmadiyya, was complicated to say the least. Being a minority group, as well as labelled as dissenting to Islam, the Ahamdis suffer not only from unfair treatment, but also more importantly from poor representation and understanding in the wider society. Here is where the media play an important role in the construction of public discourse on Ahmadiyya in Indonesia. Two aspects are pivotal in the discussion: first, how the Ahmadis engage with media; and second, how they are being represented in the media and how does this impact upon society.

This chapter therefore seeks to reveal the affairs of the Ahmadiyya movement and its engagement with the media, from the point of views of the Ahmadis themselves. The chapter starts by briefly laying out the history and background of Ahmadiyya in Indonesia to understand their *raison d'etre*. Though this study attempts to capture the stories of Ahmadiyya in Indonesia through a holistic approach, we feel that it is appropriate to acknowledge that the majority views came from *Jemaah Ahmadiyah Indonesia* (JAI), the major Ahmadiyya group in Indonesia.[33] Then, it examines the relations between the Ahmadis and the Indonesian media, particularly how they are perceived and represented in the media. The next part builds the discussion around the case, emphasising the role of media in policing and valuing the rights of minority groups like Ahmadiyya, before the chapter concludes.

4.1. Ahmadiyya in Indonesia: History and background

To their followers, Ahmadiyya is considered to be a revival movement within Islam (Al Islam, 2012). According to the Al Islam of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's website, Ahmadis believe that "*the long-awaited Messiah has come in the person of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad*." Declared in 1889 in Punjab (British India), the movement has now spread across the world, including to Indonesia. In Indonesia, there are two factions of Ahmadiyya known as *Gerakan Ahmadiyah Indonesia* (GAI), the Lahore branch; and *Jemaah Ahmadiyah Indonesia* (JAI), the Qadiani branch. Today, Ahmadiyya claims to have established over 300 branches with 300,000 to 400,000 followers across Indonesia. The Ministry of Religious Affairs, however, estimates that Ahmadiyya has approximately 80,000 followers in Indonesia. This number is relatively small compared to the 204 million Muslim population in Indonesia.[34]

According to JAI (Firdaus Mubarik, JAI's public relations, interview, 02-Feb-2012), the history of Ahmadiyya in Indonesia began in the 1920s when three young aspiring scholars from Sumatera Tawalib – a prestigious boarding school in West Sumatra – decided to continue their studies overseas. They were Abu Bakar Ayyub, Ahmad Nuruddin and Zainin Dahlan who followed their

[33] According to Iskandar Zulkarnain, the Qadian branch is more success as a sectarian organisation, while the Lahore branch is more influential as scholarly tradition whose ideas intermingled in some parts of Islam groups. The Qadian branch is mainly developed in Java, Sumatra and other areas while the Lahore branch is mainly developed in Yogyakarta and surroundings. See (Zulkarnain, 2005)

[34] From various sources. Also see http://www.pewforum.org/The-Future-of-the-Global-Muslim-Population.aspx

teachers' suggestion to study Islam in India instead of Egypt that was renowned as the centre of Islamic studies. These three scholars later visited Qadian in India and pledged spiritual loyalty to Ahmadiyya leader Hadhrat Haji Mirza Basyiruddin Mahmud Ahmad. As the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community website (www.alislam.org, 2012) claimed the pledge would later "*change the face of Islam in Indonesia*".

At the request of those three scholars, in 1925 Basyiruddin sent Maulana Rahmat Ali to propagate Ahmadiyya teachings to the East Indies. Maulana's first stop was Tapaktuan in Aceh. Then he continued the trip to Padang, where he founded several followers and finally established Ahmadiyya as a legal organisation. But actually, the spreading movement of Ahmadiyya began to make significant progress when it made its way to Jakarta.

In 1930, Ahmadiyya's pioneer moved to Jakarta and gained more followers. In 1935, Jakarta was declared the centre of Ahmadiyya movement in Indonesia before being moved to Parung, Bogor, in 1987. From Jakarta, Ahmadiyya spread its teachings to West Java: Bogor, Tasikmalaya, Garut and surroundings. Those are the sites where Ahmadiyya are most welcomed. From 1930 until today, West Java is deemed to be the biggest Ahmadiyya base in Indonesia.

As with any other history tales, there exist several versions of the Ahmadiyya's movement in Indonesia, in particular the island of Java. One version mentioned that, when Ahmadiyya first came to Indonesia, it enjoyed a period of acceptance with mainstream Islamic groups that were already established. At that time, Ahmadiyya was considered as an ideal partner in supporting Islamic efforts to resist the missionary works of the Christians. This collaboration, however, was short-lived in the late 1920s. A different version suggested that, despite the acceptance of Ahmadiyya in the island of Java, the resistance from local Muslim clerics who accused them of deviating from the orthodox Islam began to rise.

> This is about ideology. There is, [let us] say ideological war, because Ahmadiyya is considered [as] giving a new interpretation to the orthodox Islam. [Ahmadiyya] is considered [as] giving a more modern interpretation. Inthe beginning, Ahmadiyya's thinking, not its teachings, was welcomed by intellectuals and politicians. But there were some wars of ideology which were strong enough, with PERSIS, and later with Masyumi. But, it always ended in ideology-thinking level. Violence never happened. (Firdus Mubarik, 6211, JAI's public relation, Interview, 02/02/12).

What Firdaus states above seems to explain the fact of history that an 'ideological fight' is behind the reason of Ahmadiyya's dynamics in Indonesia. This explanation is proven by the fact that there was no persecution until the 1950s when hard-line Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia rebels killed a group of Ahmadis in West Java for refusing to denounce their faith. Although there were some murders of Ahmadis committed by DI/TII, those killings never spread to other areas. But the condition began to change when MUI (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia* - the Indonesian Ulama Council)[35] issued a fatwa[36] against Ahmadiyya. The dictum of the fatwa of the MUI 5/1980 listed that MUI, based on data found in nine books of Ahmadiyya, declared that

[35]MUI is an *ulama* organisation founded by the government in 1975, is designed to be the national authority of Islam. This organisation functions as a forum to discuss problems related to the duties of *ulama*. See http://www.mui.or.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=49&Itemid=53

[36] A fatwa is a legal pronouncement in Islam, issued by a religious board on a specific issue.

Jemaah Ahmadiyya was a non-Islam group, heretical and deviant. Some Ahmadis believed that the fatwa opened the gate to the next phase of national anti-Ahmadiyya movements.

> A more national, organised, non-reaction anti-Ahmadiyya movement actually began after the 1980s, when MUI declared a fatwa that Ahmadiyya is deviant toward Islam. Since then, I see that there was an organised movement nationally and systematically to proclaim hate speech toward Ahmadiyya. From that moment on, violence and persecution against Ahmadis communities began to emerge. But because of the suppressive Soeharto regime, the anti-Ahmadiyya movement found it difficult to express violence openly. (Firdus Mubarik, 6211, JAI's public relation, Interview, 02/02/12)

While the next phase of national anti-Ahmadiyya movements are marked with the dictum of the MUI 5/1980, there is actually a collection of other *fatawa* since the arrival of Ahmadiyya in Indonesia. The following table shows the list of *fatawa*[37] against Ahmadiyya in Indonesia[38].

Date	***Fatwa***
Nov 2007	Fatwa of the MUI on guidelines to determine whether a teaching is deviant.
Jul 2005	Fatwa of the MUI 11/MUNAS VII/MUI/15/2005 on Ahmadiyah.
1995	Fatwa of the Syuriyah Pengurus Pusat Nadhatul Ulama 1995 on Ahmadiyah.
20 Oct 1994	Fatwa of the Forum Ukhuwah Islamiyah Indonesia (FUUI) 1994 on Ahmadiyah Qadiani.
1994	Fatwa of the MUI of Riau 1994 on Ahmadiyah Qadiani.
1984	Fatwa of the Ulama Council of Aceh 1984 against Ahmadiyah Qadiani.
1980	Fatwa of the MUI of North Sumatra 1980 on Ahmadiyah.
1 Jun 1980	Fatwa of the MUI 5/1980 on Ahmadiyah.
1965	Fatwa of the Ulama of East Sumatra 1965 against Ahmadiyah Qadian.
1929	Fatwa of Muhammadiyah stating that there is no prophet after Muhammand and if someone claims there is, they are *kafir* (unbelievers).

Table 4.1. Fatawa against Ahmadiyya in Indonesia
Source: Authors

The great impact of hate speech dissemination (*syiar kebencian*) was seemingly ready to rattle. After the fall of the New Order in 1998, violence began to spark. In 1998 until 2000, there was violence conduct in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. But it was still localised and had not yet become 'nationalised'. Until 2005 the Ahmadis found safety in the democratic rule of the late Abdurrahman Wahid and his successor, Megawati Soekarnoputri. Both of them had refrained from banning Ahmadiyya.

The peace did not last. From 2005 onwards, under the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono presidency, the resentful actions to ban Ahmadiyya began to move into Java island, starting from

---

[37] *Fatawa* is a plural form of *fatwa*. According to Hooker, M.B. (2003) and Hosen (2003), MUI is one of four main sources of fatawa in Indonesia. The others being Persatuan Islam (Persis), Muhammadiyah and Nadhatul Ulama (NU).

[38] This table was compiled from the Department of Religion, (2007:8), Majelis Ulama Indonesia (2005), and the authors' own collection of fatwa. See Melissa Crouch, *Indonesia, Militant Islam and Ahmadiyah: Origins and Implications*. Downloaded at http://lindseyfederation.law.unimelb.edu.au See also Lilik Rofiqoh, *The MUI's View on Ahmadiyah and The Dispute Surrounding It.*

Kuningan, West Java and surroundings. The MUI, backed by hard-line Muslim groups, pronounced Ahmadiyya as heretical. The fatwa led to a series of attacks on Ahmadis bases. Bogor, Cianjur, Sukabumi, Tasikmalaya, Garut, Ciamis, and Kuningan are still facing terror and challenges. The most recent attack happened in Singaparna, Tasikmalaya on 20 April 2012.

The release of the Joint Ministerial Decree on Ahmadiyya (*Surat Keputusan Bersama*/SKB) produced by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Attorney General's Office on 9 June 2008 – a week after the 'National Monument (Monas) tragedy'[39] – worsened the persecution towards Ahmadiyya communities. The decree instructed Ahmadis to stop "*interpretation and dissemination activities which deviate from the principal teachings of Islam*". A maximum sentence of five-year prison would be given for those who violated the decree.

In addition to this, the Joint Decree No. 3/2008 also explicitly infringed the 1945 Constitution (UUD 1945) article 28E: "*Every person shall be free to choose and to practise the religion of his/her choice…every person shall have the rights to the freedom to believe his/her faith…in accordance with his/her conscience*." Hence, the Decree and the supports given by the *fatawa* have brought a very serious consequence for Ahmadis to exercise their rights, especially in practising their faith.

> So, there are two main problems for Ahmadiyya's issue. The first and main problem is hate speech which is long lasting and broadcasted and the second is violence against Ahmadiyya communities. (Firdus Mubarik, 6211, JAI's public relation, Interview, 02/02/12).

The above account displays the two main problems for Ahmadis, which reflect the discrimination and even persecution suffered by Ahmadiyya communities. The proclamation of the Joint Decree has exacerbated the condition. The way in which the Ahmadiyya have been persecuted has even attracted the attention of the international community. Human Rights Watch of New York, for instance, expressed their protests against the series of violent acts conducted. They reminded people that Indonesia had ratified International Covenant on Civil and Political Rightsin February 2006. Article 18 of the treaty declared, *"[n]o one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice."* Furthermore, article 27 stated, "*… persons belonging to … minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion. "*In addition to this, countries attending the 2012 UN Universal Periodic Review – at the UN Human Rights Council on May 23, 2012 – have even criticised and urged Indonesia to take the problem more seriously.[40]

---

[39] When the National Alliance for the Freedom of Faith and Religion (AKKBB) activists planned to commemorate the 63rd year of Pancasila at the National Monument (Monas), they were confronted and attacked by members of the Islamic Defenders Front (*Front Pembela Islam*/FPI); leaving about thirty persons injured.

[40] For further information about 2012 UN UPR's process and highlights, please seehttp://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/Highlights23May2012am.aspx and/or please check following web to watch the process http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/webcast/2012/05/final-remarks-upr-report-of-indonesia-13th-universal-periodic-review.html

In some cases, Ahmadiyya followers have seemingly lost their status and rights as citizens. Various violent tragedies that took the lives of Ahmadis, for example the Cikeusik tragedy in February 2011, make the dialogue about Ahmadiyya of urgent concern. The apparent nature of the violence against Ahmadis also clearly indicates the failure of law enforcement in Indonesia. Even now, persecutions towards Ahmadiyya are still occurring.[41] Both the Qadiani branch and the Lahore branch share the same concern. The following tweet reflects the bizarre circumstances faced by each Ahmadis believer in Indonesia today:

> Ahmadiyah Lahore: in Jogja, school under GAI [Gerakan Ahmadiyah Indonesi] until today is being intimidated by radical group #wistful (@DenResza [Resza Hartono], RT by @ulil Thursday, 03 May 2012 8:46 am)
>
> *Ahmadiyah Lahore, di Jogja sekolah di bawah GAI sampai sekarang diintimidasi kelompok radikal #prihatin (@DenResza [Resza Hartono], RT by @ulil Thursday, 03 May 2012 8:46 am)*

The persecutions against Ahmadiyya above are complex in nature. Being labelled as dissenting to Islam, the Ahmadis suffer from poor representation and understanding in the wider society. This is where the media should play a central role in the construction of public discourse on Ahmadiyya in Indonesia.

4.2. Ahmadiyya and the media

The Ahmadiyya followers in Java commonly inhabit the remote villages in West Java; around districts of Bandung, Cianjur and Sukabumi.[42] In the village we visited, there are about 600 Ahmadis (from five Ahmadiyya branches) living as farmers and small merchants. Being in a remote village, it seems inevitable that media options are very limited to the villagers. In terms of newspapers, the village is within the distribution range of some local newspapers like *Pikiran Rakyat*, *Metro Puncak*, *Cianjur Ekspres*, but the villagers do not have access to national newspapers. Despite having access to some newspapers, the villagers rarely read these because they cannot afford to buy them, let alone to subscribe to them. It is no surprise that the names of the newspapers we mentioned earlier are strange to their ears, even the local ones.

Access to electronic media like radio and television is a different story. Years ago, the villagers used the radio, though mostly for listening to music and folk tales, not for accessing the news. As such, when the new technology of the mp3 player entered the village, the villagers started to abandon radio. They seemingly do not mind to replace radio despite the consequence of further limiting their access towards the news.

---

41 According to JAI, since President Yudhoyono issued a decree in June 2008 to restrict religious activities of Ahmadiyya, there were more than 180 attacks on the community's properties; in which 80 percent of these took place in Java.

42 Generally, the Ahmadiyya followers live in groups as a'closed' community. Usually, they live surrounding the Ahmadiyya's mosques and share their lives.

Unlike the radio, television is still widely accessed in the village. Unfortunately, although most of the villagers have television at home, they rarely turn it on. At first, we found this phenomenon to be quite odd. However, we later found out that most of Ahmadis kept their TVs off because they were very much distressed by the news reports in television about Ahmadiyya. The following account explains the reason of such phenomenon:

> After one of us [Ahmadiyya's member] showed up on TV, I can make sure that in the following days we [followers who livein the village] will receive unpleasant conduct from our neighbours, from our colleagues, from our superiors at work. Even our children will be bullied by their friends at school. It seems that we are not allowed to live here anymore. ... No matter where and when [the persecutions towards Ahmadiyya happens], if it is shown on TV we will receive cruel treatment in the following days. I can guarantee it. ... [It is happen] because we are portrayed merely as 'aberrant' on TV. We are rarely portrayed as victims of amok and violent conducts. Even if on an occasion we are portrayed as victims, the word 'aberrant' is always added in the end of the news (Anonymous, Interview, 2012).

The above statement indicates that the Cikeusik tragedy, followed by numerous persecutions on Ahmadi members around West Java, has indeed created severe traumas for Ahmadiyya's followers. Most of them cannot trust the content of television anymore. For them, reading or watching news reports on Ahmadiyya from any type of media will sadden them. Refusing to become more miserable, the villagers were happy to simply turn their televisions off and merely keep them as a decoration in their living room (direct observation, 2012).

In regard to telecommunication infrastructure, like other remote villages in Indonesia, the Ahmadi villages also suffer from poor access. Unlike the other cities in Java, the village has poor access to cable telephone connections. For daily communication usage, most villagers use mobile phones instead; although there is a huge concern regarding the quality of signal provided. This is a common problem in such remote locations.

Despite the poor telecommunication connections, the younger generation of Ahmadis in general – as is common with most Indonesian youths – are quite familiar with the use of the Internet. However, they barely use the Internet as an alternative to complete and/or to correct the content of mainstream media about Ahmadiyya, but tend to use it for internal and social purposes among themselves. The following quote evidently shows us that the Ahmadis usually use the Internet mainly for email purposes andto share news, issues and concerns with Ahmadi members in other places.

> Blog? [We barely use it because] we are weak in blogging. Further, for blog we need to have an adequate skill in writing. *Facebook*? I used it in the past, but now I've shut it down for special reasons. Maybe *Twitter* for now, although I access it rarely; [we are using it for] email for internal sharing purposes, reading bulletins. … [We do access] TV, meanwhile [accessing] the newspaper is lacking. Recently, we began to access the Internet, although the signal is still a serious problem. These [past] few months, the signal is very poor (Anonymous, Interview, 2012).

The above account shows that while the Ahmadis find the Internet very helpful for them – at least for internal purposes and to strengthen the bond between them – the poor infrastructure they suffer from has greatly limited them. In regard to access to infrastructure, some Ahmadis even argued that it would come as no surprise if similar conditions also occured in other Ahmadis villages in West Java, or even outside Java – since they live as a community in certain

remote villages (discussion, 2012). With theses depictions, it seems fair to say that majority of the Jemaah Ahmadiyah in Indonesia – who generally live in the remote villages – are very restricted in terms of access tomedia infrastructure.

While subscribing to newspapers seems to be too luxurious for Ahmadis members, the radio seems to be a tool with which to seek entertainment only. On the other hand, the advent of the new media, i.e. the Internet, has not answered the plea for cheap information sources, due to the poor infrastructure provided. In terms of content, since the style of reports on the Cikeusik tragedy and others tends to impact negatively upon the Ahmadis' daily lives, the members are also becoming 'victims' of the content presented.

4.3. Ahmadiyya in the media

It seems fairly obvious that the media plays a significant role in presenting the news, facts and events taking place in our surroundings. Such a role is closely intertwined with the possession of control over what can be seen, read or listened to by the members of the society (in our case, the citizens). One of the primary issues here is whether or not the interest of the wider public is fully conveyed. In many cases the answer is no. The media controls the content of the news. In brief, what is being reported to the public depends on what the media consider to be relevant and important.

This phenomenon is likely to occur in the case of Ahmadiyya in the media. What is reported about Ahmadiyya mostly, if not always, leans towards the agenda and interests of majority, presented only from their seemingly narrowed perspectives.

> The media often provide a different story tothe truth [that] happened in the field. It seems that media wants to satisfy the crowd who are majorities. [On the other hand] *jemaat* [Ahmadiyya's followers] are only a few. ... The news are dominated bythose who are majorities while *jemaat* are left abandoned. ... If the news is mistaken, it is difficult to make it right. The media accepts our protest, but stops there. [Our protest] has never been broadcast. The broadcasting is monitored by the crowd. Maybe, the media are afraid to lose their audiences.(Anonymous, Interview, 2012).

Content has been an essential issue in many aspects of the media from production to distribution. However the core of the issue of content might relate back to the very reason for the existence of the media, i.e. to provide public spaces for citizens to engage in a democratic and rational society (after Habermas, 1984, Habermas, 1989). But today, instead of providing public spaces to engage and educating and 'civilising the public' through its content, media content has become highly dependent upon "ratings".

The media tends to refer to the ratings mechanism in order to produce the content. This condition leads to content duplication among the profit-driven media. As a result, citizens are exposed to a further limited variety of information. It is obvious that the media tends to operate on the logic of manufacturing people's desire and later claiming that it is what the public need. This mechanism leads to the shaping of public opinions.

Recalling our Ahmadiyya case, we asked them to comment on how they are being represented in the media. Most of the Ahmadis would answer that the stigma 'deviant' has been put in front of everything.

> I think most of [the] media are being trapped. These media are trapped bythe big issue [brought by groups who declare hate speech]. The groups who make hate speeches [depict] Ahmadiyya's issue as [being] 'deviant': that Ahmadiyya is a *kafir* (unbeliever), it has different institution [compared to orthodox Islam], the teachings are like this...and unfortunately media are provoked. Most media failed to see [things] from the perspective of victim. That is the problem. So perspectives of media are wrong from the beginning. Thereafter, they will put [forward] the wrong reporters to cover the issue. Because the reporter has no victim perspective, he will make a bad [portrayal of] the victim. Then the reportage is finished and it is time for the editorial desk to do their job. But, likethe others; the editorial desk also has a poor victim perspective. The cycle goes like that. ... The Ahmadis will always be depicted as 'deviant' if the perspective [has] never been changed (Firdus Mubarik, 6211, JAI's public relation, Interview, 02/02/12).

Firdaus' comments points out that the representation of Ahmadiyya may be influenced by the common opinion about Ahmadiyya. Due to this perspective and the fact that journalists have limited time to collect data, the representation of Ahmadiyya is often wrong. But, how do Ahmadiyya actually see themselves as represented in the media? The following quote answers this question:

> In general, the coverage [of Ahmadiyya issues] both in electronic and printed media is unfair. What I mean here is they [the media] tend to prioritise the majority opinion while neglecting information from the [Ahmadiyya] source; thus the reporting of the media about Ahmadiyya is not trustworthy. There are a lot of incorrect facts or [those that] do not even come from the original source, but [are] merely based on general assumption. For example, once I read in the newspaper about the activity of Cianjur's Regent. [The newspaper reported that] he had a discussion with several figures from Islamic organisations and stated that they had to repent Ahmadiyya believers because their activities were aberrant and so on. Meanwhile, if Ahmadiyya is considered aberrant, they must clearly tell us where exactly the aberration is. Then there are more people including the police who askthe same [about the aberration of Ahmadiyya]. So, why today are there are a lot of riots concerning Ahmadiyya? Because Ahmadiyya has failed to execute the Ministerial Decree, they said. So, tell us, what point on it do we break? Thus, the media also make their own conclusion upon Ahmadiyya, or they write about the common opinion [instead of ours] (Anonymous, Interview, 2012).

The above quote is representative of a common response from Ahmadiyya believers: that they are stigmatised by such labelling. They are aware that the representation in the media is not always a complete and thorough one. Instead of giving a holistic representation of Ahmadiyya, rather they present one that is full of prejudice and assumption and therefore discredits the Ahmadiyya as a group; ensuring that they remain voiceless. In addition, the partial representation made by the media has had a direct impact on the *jemaah*. The Ahmadis were forced to be more careful in socialising with others and even sometimes to close their doors when accepting strangers (human rights activists, researchers or journalists) so as to not attract suspicion from the neighbours.

The story about Ahmadiyya is dominated by the labelling of the group as 'deviant'. It seems that 'deviance' and 'defamation' are the hot topics. Media stereotyping of Ahmadiyya as 'aberrant' is found in almost every media. This common depiction has impacted upon the life

of Ahmadis and the aberration tends to invite people to 'approve' the violence towards the group. In addition, the common depiction of the group as 'deviant' is rarely followed by another story with a different perspective. Is it reasonable to say that the labelling is considered profitable for the media because it is what the majority of people tend to watch – or in the terms of Herman and Chomsky; serves the elite opinion in the society (Herman and Chomsky, 1988).

Withregard to the incident of Cikeusik, five of the largest newspapers –*Jawa Pos*, *Kompas*, *Republika*, *Suara Merdeka* and *Pikiran Rakyat*– in Java, and two Indonesian news channels made in depth reports about it. In general, the printed media used the term 'bentrokan' (clash), instead of 'attack', in reporting the events (Harsono, 2011). It gave the impression that it was a fair fight, which was contrary to the actual incident. The same thing happened in the news channels, which broadcasted the action –showing mobs fighting and throwing stones– but failed to show the killing (Harsono, 2011). On the other hand, the international media, for instance, BBC, CNN, Al Jazeera and ABC Australia used 'attack' in their stories and broadcasted the scene – although blurred the brutal part.

Box 1. Media Reports on Ahmadiyya – the Case of Cikeusik 7-14 February 2011

KOMPAS (printed)

Kompas' reports after Cikeusik attack incident are quite numerous. There are 22 news/reports during the whole week; from 7 to14 February 2011. The coverings are found in various columns: *Tajuk Rencana* (editorial), *Opini* (opinion), or news section in general.

In reporting the incident, *Kompas* takes human rights views and the presents the weakness of the State in protecting the rights of citizens. The opinions published are quite neutral, impartial, but rigorously question the existence of the State, the government's firmness in handling the case, and the value of plurality, which is embedded in *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* – but barely present in public life. Several reports on Ahmadiyya's persecution are also linked with other riots in Temanggung, Central Java, and portray them as social violence issue. Such reports urge the State to be firm in handling those cases as forms of violation ofhuman rights.

Kompas also conducts surveys to rate the satisfactionlevelsof the society on the State's performance Reports on Ahmadiyya are often presented as headline news and presented as main the issue ofthe week.

DETIK.COM

Detik.com covered the incident extensively. In one week there were more than two hundred news entries about the incident, either on the progress of investigation or other related issues. It presents the chronology of events and correlates it with human rights issue and the government's response (or a lack thereof) to the event. There are several long articles that include in-depth discussions about how the government were slow, or even ignorant, in handling the situation.

*Detik.com*provides a publication of critiques on thegovernment, from the perspectives of civil societies, political parties and even individual politicians. In addition to this, italso provides clarification from the authoritiesand the government in terms of the slow progress and the lack of anticipation. By presenting statements from various parties, including Ahmadiyya, MUI, and other Islamicorganisations, *detik.com* is quite balanced in reporting the incident. Most importantly, *detik.com* sees the incident as a violation ofhuman rights, rather then solely towards certain members of the religious community.

REPUBLIKA

During one week, stories about the attack on the members of JAI were given frontpage coverage. There are a number of reports that reported how Ahmadiyya had already been declared as 'deviant' and/or as a 'forbidden organisation' by the government before the incident happen. One of the headlines mentions the

assessment of Komnas HAM commissioner that the incident had been triggered by the Ahmadiyya's arrogance in provoking the masses. The reports continued by providing several chronologies: by the police, by the JAI and followed by government's clarification ofthe incident.

Some articles seemingly re-write the government's opinions about JAI: (1) that JAI should become an independent sect and seceded from Islam; (2) that JAI should repent and reunit with the 'true' Islam; (3) that Ahmadiyya should be dispersed.

Interestingly, *Republika* has a section entitled 'pro-kontra' which discussed the incident of Ahmadiyya. The section is designed to presentthe Ahmadiyya' case from several views, but unfortunately what is reflected is actually unbalanced views and opinions.

In delivering the story, *Republika* barely relayed the incident as an issue of human rights violation or reported on the impact on theplurality and unity of the society, instead discussing stories about Ahmadiyya's history, Islam in general and the reaction of government towards Ahmadiyya.

TEMPO.CO

In general, the media coverage on the Ahmadiyya incident is extensive. Based on the quantitative measures, there were 180 news entries within a seven-day period.In qualitative terms, *Tempo.co* presented wide-ranging reports, including chronological eventsof the incident, an annual overview of the victims of every Ahmadiyah case, governmental response on the issue and also reports on how the citizens coped with this unfortunate event. They also covered issues of human rights and how this incident is said to be a serious violation to basic citizens' rights, especially the right to hold any religious belief. *Tempo.co* also criticised the government on how they responded to such discriminative incidents They demand the President to be more involved in these kinds of issues, such as going to the crime scene and engaging with the people in the area. They believe this would help President's image as a leader in a time when he was losing popularity with the citizens.

Through this selected coverage, *Tempo.co* has shown their attempts to raise the awareness of minority groups in Indonesia.

Source: CIPG's observation 2012

Analysing these different types of portrayal of Ahmadiyya, the Indonesian media seemed to fail in making a thorough, detailed review of the case. With regard to the Cikeusik tragedy what is presented is a 'model' on how Indonesian mainstream media are discriminatively portraying Ahmadiyya and fail to take theside of the victim. Fortunately, there was an alternative viewpoint from media like KBR68H, which gave balanced stories on Ahmadiyya and even presented the untold story of Ahmadiyya, for instance the story of how Ahmadis refugees survived for the last six years in West Lombok – the kind of story which was barely present in the mainstream media – since the eviction.[43] However, the alternative media like KBR68H do not have as vast a coverage and as strong an influence as well as the mainstream one.

> I remember backin 2005 [when there were several attacks onAhmadiyya's mosques in West Java], a lot of journalists from various media came to our village. I accompanied some of them, [from] RCTI, I think. We became familiar with reporters and journalists [because they often came to make reports about the attacking] ... We understood that media are important for us. On the other hand, we realised that we are not good in communicating ideas. We do not make blogs [alternative media] because we cannot make them. Theyneeds special skills and unfortunately we do not have these [the skills to write and organise ideas]. ... We hope that media will help us to make [the] condition better. ... Most of the time, the reporting is unbalanced because they always asked us why we chose to be 'deviant' (Anonymous, Interview, 2012).

[43] The story of Ahmadis refugees survived for last six years in West Lombok can be read also at http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=10150119347559915

The quote above confirms that the Ahmadiyya's followers in the village and surroundings are merely objects for the mass media to use in order to create 'sensational' news. The mass media use them to gain and to create stories; with their own version of events. The limited access to media, to some extent has contributed to the troubles suffered by the Ahmadis in exercising their rights as citizens astheir efforts to make an impact upon mainstream news has also been limited.

Ideally, the media should be educating and 'civilising the public' through its content. However, this is not always the case, at least in the Indonesian context. Instead, media content has become very dependent on ratings and sensationalism. On the Ahmadiyya issue, such reportage occurs frequently and the media content does not cover both sides of the stories. Ahmadiyya's followers therefore feel that the media continuously treats them unfairly by not taking their perspective into account in the reports. Of course, the suspicion of media system's poor sense of the victim raises a deep concern that media has begun to lose its very essence to form and guide a civilising and educated society.

> [The contemporary condition of media] is not educative. [And it still lasts] until today. If we let media work with this kind of performance, it will harm the society. .... In our experience, media will perform [to a] maximum if we as citizens guide and watch them actively. What I mean here, if they are about to make [a report], we guide them; we give them various information, and make sure that they listen to our perspective. We do not dictate to them, but we make sure that they get enough information. ... There is a period when some of Ahmadiyya's communities become so closed and do not give a space to media. Sometimes, in return, they get the wrong reportage because they do not give coverage from their side. ... My experience says that good reporting is successfully delivered only if there is a man who guides the reportage (Firdus Mubarik, 6211, JAI's public relation, Interview, 02/02/12).

The above quote suggests an alternative response to the media's poor sense of the victim: the citizens actively guide the media coverage of certain events. By actively guarding the flow of information in the media, the likelihood of gaining more valid information from the source/citizen to the publicis probably increased. The implication of this is also related to the democratisation process itself. By actively becoming media watchdogs, the citizens are indirectly trained themselves to take more responsibilities for guarding the public sphere. In the long run, these kind of responsibilities are good for the preservation of the public sphere, so that guiding the space is not merely the responsibility of the media but also the duty of the public to keep the sphere healthy, objective and open for all. When the media system seems to fail in educating the society, perhaps members of the society can take actions to help the media – as pillars of the public sphere – reforming and healing their 'illnesses'. However, this further begs the question of whether the citizens are ready to undertake such a role.

4.4. Policing Ahmadiyya? The role of media

According to ELSAM, during 2011, there were 11 Regional Regulations that conflicted with freedom of religions; 9 of them are related to Ahmadiyya and 2 regulations are related to

sects/beliefs, which are allegedly deviant.[44] ELSAM has also predicted that the local governments will not stop producing these kinds of discriminative policies. In addition to the rise of controversial regional regulations, the Wahid Institute noted that during 2011, there was a significant increase in violations toward religious freedom.

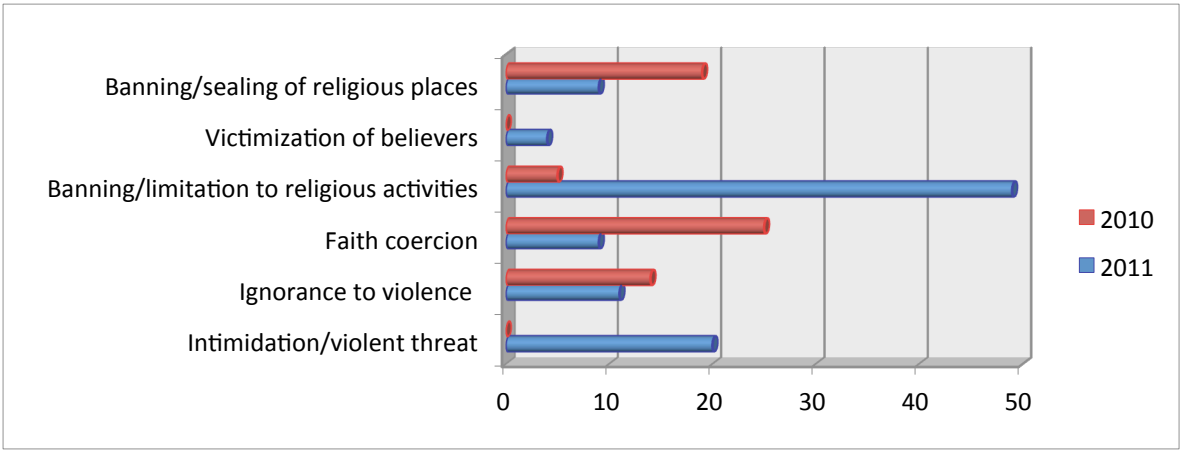


Figure 4.1. Cases of Religious Violation in Indonesia
Source: Authors, compiled from The Wahid Institute's Annual Report on Religious Freedom (2010 and 2011)

During 2011, the Wahid Institute noted that there were 93 cases of violation toward religious freedom (Wahid, 2011). This number was an 18% increase on the previous year, which had 64 cases. There were 49 cases of prohibition and limitation to religious activities; 20 cases of intimidation and violent threat; 11 cases of ignorance to violence; coercion and religious place sealing (9 cases each). Another violation was criminalisation or victimisation of believers (4 cases).

No	*Victim*	*Quantity*	*%*
1	Ahmadiyya's followers	47	50
2	GKI Yasmin community	13	14
3	Other Christian community	12	13
4	Deviant-labelled community	8	9
5	*Syiah*	2	2
6	*Millah Abraham*	4	4
7	*Jamaah Masjid*	1	1
8	*Aliran Nurul Amal*	1	1
9	*Aliran AKI*	2	2
10	*Aliran Bedatuan*	1	1
11	*Aliran Islam Suci*	1	1
12	*Padepokan Padange Ati*	1	1
		93	100

Table 4.2. Victims of Religious Intolerance 2011
Source: (Wahid, 2011, pg. 3)

[44] See ELSAM, "Mendorong Pemajuan Hak Asasi Manusia dan Penguatan Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia:Kertas Posisi Koalisi Masyarakat Sipil untuk Hak Asasi dan KOMNAS HAM" http://www.elsam.or.id/downloads/1333610170_Kertas_Posisi_OMS_KOMNAS_HAM_dan_HAM_2012.pdf Last accessed 23/06/2012

Table 4.2 shows that 47 of Ahmadiyya's followers were victims of religious intolerance during 2011, which is around 50% of the total recorded. The group was the main target of religious intolerance last year, suggesting that obviously, at least during 2011, they barely enjoyed the rights of religious freedom. The attacking of some of Ahmadiyya's community in West Java and other areas showed us how 2011 became a bitter experience for Ahmadiyya in exercising their rights; not only in the freedom of religion, but also in the freedom of assembly and the other basic rights. In this sense, Ahmadiyya is truly a vulnerable group.

Do the media represent Ahmadiyya correctly? To what extent do the media pay attention to them? These are some fundamental questions that are bombarding the media mainstream. Most media rarely covered Ahmadiyya as victims of violence. Instead of mentioning Ahmadiyya as a victim of violence conduct, most media tended to label Ahmadiyya as 'deviant' or 'aberrant' (*sesat*). It is common that in the discourse of the media, the terms 'defamation' and 'deviant' are used to depict certain (Muslim) groups which are regarded as having a 'controversial' perspective. This kind of biased content seems to be used by some groups to legitimate their persecutions on Ahmadis people. Those kinds of content maybe interpreted as: "...because Ahmadiyya is deviant, [they] deserve to accept those cruel treatments" (Anonymous, Interview, 2012).

> Post-reporting impact always makes our lives more miserable. If before the reporting there are only [a] few people who hate us, after the reporting it multiplies. ... Even if the reporting has no direct connection with us who lived here, [for example] Cikeusik or Singaparna, the impact always hits us (Anonymous, Interview, 2012).

Issues of Ahmadiyya's followers are barely treated as important by most mainstream media. Plenty of Ahmadiyya stories remain untold in the media. There is even a tale about the media's reluctance to report the victimisation of Ahmadiyya outside Java. Furthermore, the story of how Ahmadiyya refugees in Lombok suffered is hardly ever covered. Here, the citizenship status of these refugees has been tacitly removed, due to the loss of fundamental social, political and economic rights and their difficulties in renewing or obtaining the National Identification Card (*KTP*).[45] Stories like these are in fact crucial to the issue of the upholding of citizens' rights. Yet, this kind of human rights violation issues seem less significant to the media when compared to the coverage given to celebrity gossips and the like.

Why is this all important? As Herman and Chomsky (1988) stipulate, worthy victims feature prominently and dramatically in the media; they are humanised, and their stories are constructed with a level of detail and context that generates reader interest and sympathetic responses. In contrast, unworthy victims merit only the slightest amount of detail, minimal humanisation and little context to excite and enrage the audience (p.35).

> Today's media industry [in Indonesia] is elitist. There is no single form of the media that is oriented towards the public interest, defending citizens, defending labourers and peasants. We simply cannot find it now. (A. Armando, Former KPI member, Interview, 27/10/2011)[46]

---

[45] For the full story, please read the 'saga KBR68H' at http://www.kbr68h.com/saga/77-saga/4066-ahmadiyah-warga-tanpa-perlindungan; also at http://icrp-online.org/022012/post-1414.html.

[46] See our earlier report (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012:80).

Armando's comments illustrate how Indonesian media have lost their sense of being a public medium. Certainly this is not what we expect to happen. This is not how the media is supposed to work.

Quantitatively, even if some media argued that they gave enough coverage to Ahmadiyya's issues, their followers felt that the representation was not accurate. For some Ahmadiyya, the issue is that even if the media raised the quantity of coverage but left the perspective behind, it would make no change at all; as the following quote highlights:

> As if they [the media] have made interview with the victim, with the Ahmadiyya. But it was actually fake. Still, the perspectives were not well transferred. Technically they may say that they have done their job. One said they said doublechecked, [and that was] just enough [for them]. But they never checked the perspective. These media have failed to get a deep access [to Ahmadiyya's followers]. They just interviewed the same person over and over. They never sought other figures. So, there were no various opinions. This is what I call 'figures journalism'. ... They were in a race against time. Most of time, the journalists were given two or three days to write reportage about Ahmadiyya. In two or three days, it was impossible to get the depth. ... The problem was how long they wished to give their time [for the victim].

> Most established mainstream media did not represent our perspective. It was difficult. The one that was good enough was *Tempo*. But in my opinion, *Tempo* is still too short in terms of data collecting; not deep enough. It must be finished in a week. I was quite disappointed. With their quite adequate perspective, they could givea deeper coverage. *Tempo* and *Gatra* were good for printed media. *Kompas* was playing too safe. *Jakarta Globe* and *Jakarta Post* were good. In TV, the worst [channel] was *TV One*. *Metro* [TV] was pretty fair. Then, the new channels, like Tempo TV or Elshinta, actually they have the potential to make a good story because they dare to give extra time to gain depth (Firdaus Mubarik, 6211, Interview, 02/02/12).

The quotes above imply that it is very important to have journalists who have a victim perspective, someone who has a deep understanding of the issue. For that reason, journalists need extra time to gain depth. Unfortunately, as the media tends to prioritise speed rather than depth, they sacrificed the most fundamental aspects of the story, e.g. Ahmadiyya: a victim perspective. This condition seems to justify some of Ahmadis' assessments that Indonesian media lacks depth and tends to report superficially. While the journalists are urged to use empathy and to capture the reality of the victim's perspective, bias is still evident in the journalism. The recent study on 'Indonesian journalists' perception' conducted by Washington State University and *Pantau* (Pintak and Setiyono, 2010) even found that there was a self-censorship mechanism to limit the actual reporting of Ahmadiyya's persecution. In regard to Ahmadiyya's banning, the study found that 64% of the 600 surveyed journalists agreed to the action.

The combination of journalists' unprofessional behaviour and the demand from the news company –to produce more news in a shorter timeframe– allegedly becomes the source of this culture of superficiality. The following comments implicitly points to this.

> It is unprofessional because the journalists do not do their job well. They are not competent [enough] to seek for information. They do not make sufficient research before doing reportage. They do not make data confirmatory [after gaining data from the field]. This is annoying because there is a lot of false information about Ahmadiyya caused by hate

> speeches. Journalists in this case, are not sceptical towards those kinds of information. This is unprofessional. This is worsened by the editorial mechanism which 'change' [purposely edit] the information in the field. This is bias. (Firdaus Mubarik, 6211, Interview, 02/02/12).

This culture of superficiality raises an issue about the professionalism of journalists. Journalism is a profession that has a social function: journalists convey the news and information to citizens as the audience. Journalists have an influence on what citizens are informed about, and therefore what they engage with (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012). But as much as the Ahmadiyya questions the professionalism of journalists, it is unfair to blame them because actually they are not well supported by internal media systems.

> [Towards Ahmadiyya's issue] Why do the media use the word 'aberrant'? Is it their rights to judge a group as 'deviant'? Why do they seem to justify MUI's fatwa alone [without criticising and questioning it]? Why do they not raise an issue about human rights, equal rights in exercising religious freedom? ... [This poor perspective happens because] This media do not have experts who excel in issues of religion. Secondly, the media do not have enough understanding about pluralism, tolerance and [religious] harmony. Without a deep understanding about issues of religion, they tend to grab MUI's fatwa arbitrarily (Musdah Mulia, ICRP, Interview, 04/05/12).

The statement of Musdah Mulia (Chairperson of Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace - ICRP[47]) shows us that the absence of religious experts in media bodies makes a significant contribution to the journalists' poor perspective on Ahmadiyya and in turn, results in biased reportage.

Things become worse if we regard the media conglomeration (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012). With mergers and acquisitions (M&A), media groups further endanger the diversity of content. Although media channels and platforms are indeed expanding, this is not parallel with the expansion of media content. It is common that one news item on a channel appears on another media channel under the same company. We can imagine how severe the depiction for Ahmadiyya will be if more and more channels offer a similar depiction of Ahmadiyya as being merely aberrant. With no other version of content, the condition really endangers the citizenship of Ahmadiyya's followers.

> If we talk about content, we have to look deeper- not only see something [like] Nazaruddin [a whistle-blower politican from the ruling party Democrat], or Papua conflict [appear in all channels]. What is the [unique] perspective [in each channel]? When they [the media] broadcast about Papua [or other issues] they tend to see it from the same perspective. With this kind of nature, we cannot have a deeper understanding of one topic; we only focus on what we see on the surface. (I. Haryanto, Interview, 26/10/2011)[48]

Haryanto points rightly to the problematic nature of Indonesian contemporary media. Today, the media lead the society to see an issue only from narrow, single perspective; and worse, served superficially. If this problem continues, ultimately there will be no place for plural

[47] ICRP is a non-sectarian, non-profit, non-government and independent organisation that works in interfaith dialogues. ICRP, whose birth was inisiated by inter-religions figures, aspires to spread dialogue in developing a more plural and humanistic religious life in Indonesia.

[48] See our earlier report (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012:40)

public space, because the public only share a single narrow-minded 'truth'. Is that what we want?

4.5. Religious minority groups in the media

The media are central to the development of society for the media are expected to provide a place in which the public can freely engage over public concerns. Using Habermas' term, it is the creation of a 'public sphere' (Habermas, 1984, Habermas, 1987) that makes public engagement so instrumental in democracy. However, there is no 'public' without minority groups. Therefore, public engagement includes the involvement of the minority groups too. The non-involvement of the minority groups in the media indicates that media tend to serve elite opinion – as Herman and Chomsky (Herman and Chomsky, 1988) stipulated, of the majority groups – be it in terms of ethnicity, religion, politics or ideology.

While there is a growing concern that the rise of religious fundamentalism is threatening to minority religions, the market-driven media has also compounded the situation. By pushing the profit-engine motive to its limit, the media tend to make an instant, 'budget' reportage, instead of deep and thorough one. The case of Ahmadiyya reflects that in general media have not had a thorough understanding about the issue, nor creativity to tell the other side (non-mainstream) of the story. Most of the time, the narrow-minded perspective did not provide an opportunity for plurality. By merely presenting a story shallowly from one angle the media – unintentionally – are reducing the reality into one single 'truth' (aspect).

> Our media are driven by [the] market. Actually, there are a lot of things that can be reported aboutreligious minorities, not only their 'deviance'. For example, the media can report about the hierarchy of Ahmadiyya, how they are very well organised. Even NU or other Islamic groups are not as organised as them. Or we can learn from Lia Eden about openness. Or how Ahmadiyya's followers are willingly give 16% of their earnings to the community. There are other positive [aspects that could be reported] ratherthan blaming and judging the 'deviance'. ... Why do the media expose merely the 'deviance'? How about their suffering of being refugees? How about Ahmadis children who are mocked and bullied at school because [they are] labelled as 'aberrant'? Can not they try to report on it?
>
> It is time for the media to stand up for the efforts to build peace through the presenting of religion issues, which are more hospitable. There are a lot of potential views to be revealed in covering issues related to religion. For instance, revealing a historic aspect of certain religious group: why they are able to survive, what is their contribution to the society, etc. Or [the media can] make a story from an anthropological view by explaining certain behaviour of religious followers, so the difference between one and the other is clear. (Musdah Mulia, ICRP, Interview, 04/05/12).

In terms of Ahmadiyya, Musdah Mulia's account tells us how there are many aspects to report about religious minorities, instead of merely reporting the 'deviance'. As well as the poor 'creativity' of the media in terms of taking various angles in reporting religious minority activity, Musdah's quote also implicitly points to the poor understanding of religious issues. Having a shallow understanding about religious issues, the media are actually quite dangerous for the development of society because of the tendency to grab certain religion's dogma as their basis to make a 'judgement' about minority groups. That is why Musdah also suggests

media should have an expert who is open minded, pluralist and also inclusive on religious issues in the team; so that the media are able to provide a more hospitable approach in covering religious issues. By providing a different kind of coverage that prioritises the element of peace and is also more accommodating towards human values, the media actually have the potential to take part in creating a more democratic and open society.

If media are still considered as the guardians of democracy in which every citizen – especially the minorities – will be treated equally, then the democratisation processes areat stake as media hesitate to defend the rights of the minorities. Instead of doing that, media choose to reproduce false opinion for the sake of majority-public satisfaction. Furthermore media have cheated the public by providing narrow-minded content, and have also endangered the possibility of shared life, where everyone is treated equally without labelling him/herself as part of the majority or minority.

4.6. Valuing the difference: Media matters

Pancasila, as the nation's way of life, idealises the promotion of justice, equality, unity, democracy, openness, human rights and harmony. This noble commitment, however, has not been followed in recent years in terms of protecting minority groups. Instead of protecting and ensuring the rights of these groups, the rise of controversial laws and local bylaws continually endanger their rights. The media were supposed to speak on behalf of the vulnerable groups since they were not able to speak on their own, but unfortunately, instead of doing this, the media remained silent. Worse, the media have even taken advantage of them by continually pleasing the majority and leaving the minority voiceless. The religious minorities such as Ahmadiyya are among the victims of this poor media attitude.

The religious minorities are restricted to the position of being 'consumers'. They do not have enough space to express themselves in the media – or are misrepresented when covered in the media. Since the influence of moral and religious veils is a specific problem in the country, the religious minorities are prone to unfair treatment and from deviant labelling, because they differ from the majority. The latent implication of this problem comes when being different is considered as a form of deviance; or when 'unity' *per se* must be identical with 'uniformity', and 'equality' is identical with 'homogeneity'. Here, a question is raised: "If there is a must (precondition) for commonalities in managing diversity, then where is the place for the uncommon/particular? In other words, if the only legitimate action/effort is to find the same, then is there any place for thosewho are different?

To support democracy and a humane world means to respect others, even when others are 'different'. The politics of multiculturalism does not stop at equal respect, but also recognises the equal value of the different one; "not only let them survive, but acknowledge their *worth*" (Taylor, 1994). As the media are supposed to play the role of mediator, standing 'in between' to accommodate the possibility (or impossibility) of shared life, the preservation of those who are different is a must. If the media refuse to preserve the space, then actually the media has betrayed its *raison d'etre*. By ensuring the media provides a place of mediation, the concern regarding the above questions could be addressed.

Ensuring that diversity is presented to the public means protecting human dignity itself. As diversity is in our nature –be it the culture, religion, political belief, custom, language or ethnicity– we cannot neglect nature and make everything homogenous. This is the purpose of the media. They are obligated to bring the diversities into dialogue, and thus take part in shaping a democratic human civilisation.

In summary …

We have outlined the struggle of Ahmadiyya since its earliest days in Indonesia up to the most recent development. As minority group, the Ahmadiyya actually enjoyed a period of acceptance within the established mainstream Islamic groups in its arrival in Indonesia in the 1920s. But, soon after the Javanese Muslim clerics accused Ahmadiyya of deviance toward orthodox Islam, the harmony was disrupted. However, there was no serious violence and persecution towards the Ahmadis until the declaration of the fatwa of the MUI 5/1980 – declaring that Jemaah Ahmadiyya was a non-Islam group, heretical and deviant – which opened the gate to the next phase of national anti-Ahmadiyya movements.

Today, in regard to the Ahmadis persecution, the way media portray the violent case against Ahmadiyya has tended to focus on the severe labelling ofthe community rather than constructing a healthy public discourse. Since the media mediate what is possible and impossible in our shared life, every biased depiction made by the media will make a fatal impact on Ahmadiyya. The Ahmadis are struggling to exercise their basic rights in various sectors. In certain cases, the Ahmadis are being prosecuted as criminals although they are actually victims of violent conduct.

5.
Case 2: LGBT – Under the veil of moral and religious beliefs

Everybody knows that Indonesia is the biggest Moslem country. Further, Indonesia is alsoknown as a tolerant and appreciative country to any form of diversity: people, ethnicityc, etc. Yet, Indonesia did not admit diversity in theform of sexual orientation and gender identity. Moreover, while fundamentalism has increased in the past 5 years, the state did nothing to prevent it. All of us clearly understood these issues. For we are still using religion as a basis to determine/rate everything: believer or unbeliever, entering the heaven or the opposite, etc. Everything is intermingled.
No need to speak about LGBT, for example, for a 'different' Moslem believer, it is almost definite that he will not enter the heaven. Everything is intermingled. ... Further, [in regard to policies] it must be interpreted as morally correct or not. All are based on religious norms; so why must we make policies if it always ends like this. ... In addition, policies should be non-negotiable, but in the end, all must surrender to the religion.
(Yulita Molyganta, Arus Pelangi, interview, 14/04/2012)

The discussion and book launch of Canadian activist Irshad Manji in Salihara Community, South Jakarta, on 4 May 2012 raised a number of issues. The discussion itself was ruined due to disruption by local residents and mass groups.[49] The mob disbanded the activity because of Irshad Manji's identity as a lesbian and (assumed) as being part of a liberal Moslems group. The public's reaction was mixed. Some local CSOs and NGOs condemned the action as the infringement of freedom of expression, but some others agreed to the disbanding. In the following days, the media – whether printed, electronic or online – were full of reports and discussions about the incident; some were quite neutral, while some others tended to be provocative regarding Manji's sexual orientation.

While there were many reactions from public, one thing was obvious: Manji's sexual orientation was always mentioned and discussed in the media. To some LGBT[50] (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) groups, the story put forward by certain media was annoying since the discussions tended to judge them as the ones who were morally wrong and mentally ill. Such judgement and stereotyping made by the media made a real impact on the daily lives of certain individuals. The stereotyped LGBT person may then find him/herself struggling in life, heavily burdened, becoming withdrawn and prone to unpleasant treatments in society: in the form of mockery, insult and even violent conduct.

The case against LGBT people is complex in nature. Being a minority group, as well as being labelled as sinful, 'abnormal' and psychologically ill, the LGBT people suffer not only from

---

49 See http://megapolitan.kompas.com/read/2012/05/05/11204885/Ini.Kronologi.Pembubaran.Diskusi.di.Salihara

50 Activist estimates that Indonesia has 4 to 6 million LGBTs. See http://ajw.asahi.com/article/asia/south_east_asia/AJ201208090015

unfair treatment, but also more importantly from poor representation and understanding in the wider society. Here is where the media play an important role in the construction of public discourse over LGBT in Indonesia. Two aspects are central to the discussion: first, how the LGBT groups deal with media; and second, how they are being represented in the media and how this impacts upon society.

This is what this chapter is all about. It seeks to capture the stories of the LGBT movement and its engagement with the media, from their own perspectives. The chapter starts by briefly presenting the history and background of the LGBT movement in Indonesia. Then, it scrutinises the relations between the LGBT and the Indonesian media, in particular how they are perceived and represented in the media. The next part assembles the discussion around the case; emphasising the role of media in policing and valuing the rights of minority groups like LGBT people, before the chapter concludes.

5.1. LGBT in Indonesia: History and background

The LGBT movement in Indonesia started in the early 1980s when several LGBT activists began to voice the existence of LGBT in Indonesia. Lambda Indonesia and GAYa NUSANTARA, among others, were the first LGBT friendship organisations in Indonesia. The organisations were focused on the social networks among the LGBT people. But, in general, the movement was individual and unorganised. Then in the 1990s, along with the increasing concern about HIV/AIDS and PLWHA (People Living with HIV/AIDS), LGBT organisations began to blossom. The organisations took oncommon issues such as health and HIV/AIDS mitigation but did not coverhuman rights issues. The boom of local LGBT groups actually started in the 2000s. Whilst the initial groups still existed, some new faces appeared: cultural groups such as *Q! Film Festivals*[51] and performing arts and also human rights-based movements, whichwere fighting for rights advocacy and policy reform. Yet, the majority of LGBT persons have not actively participated in any of these groups since they still live behind closed doors and are afraid to come out.

As the LGBT organisations and groups have been blossoming and providing a place for LGBT to gather and share dialogue, the next danger is about public revelation. On 1st January 2001, Indonesia began to implement a new policy of regional autonomy after decades of performed centralised national governance. The UU No. 22, 1999 on Local Government has delegated central government authorities to local government in almost all government administrative realms. One of the impacts of this decentralisation was the rise of local regulations which discriminated against minority groups in general and women and/or LGBT people in particular (Pelangi, 2010).

[51] *Q! Film Festivals* is an annual event, started in 2002, held by Q-Munity, a non-profit organisation in arts. *Q! Film Festivals* offers alternative movies, differ from those in commercial cinemas; and also has a mission to share LGBT issues to the public as well. Since 2002, *Q! Film Festivals* has screened more than 800 movies and gained more than 160,000 in audience.

Since then, a trend has developed that has led the national and many local governments – mostly in Java, Sumatra and Sulawesi – to adopt more hard line laws which contained ill-interpreted *syariah* principles concerning gender, sexual orientation and improper conduct[52]. Many of these 'ultra-conservative' laws are specifically focused on the societal position of women, ethnic and sexual minorities. In most cases, these kinds of regulations outlaw homosexuality, put curfews on women and apply restrictions on women's freedoms, including Islamic dress.

There are still some disputes in regard to the exact quantity of this kind of *perdas*. However, Setara Institute notes that up to 2012, there were 154 sharia *perdas* spread across 76 districts/municipalities in Indonesia.[53] The number had increased since the 2008 study conducted by Robin Bush, who found 78 regional regulations in 52 districts/municipalities – after compiling data from various sources, including *Komnas Perempuan* and The Wahid Institute (Bush, 2008). Within these, *Arus Pelangi*, a Jakarta-based organisation who promotes the rights of LGBT, noted a list of discriminatory regional regulations (*Perdas*) that outlaw homosexuality. For example in Palembang; the regional regulations (*Perda*) mention acts of homosexuality and lesbianism – together with sodomy and oral sex – as forms of prostitution (Pelangi, 2010). Thus, being homosexual or lesbian is more than enough to be arrested by police without evidence of illegal acts.

Another discriminative regulation was applied in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam. In late 2009, the former Aceh legislative council approved the *qanun jinayat* (Adultery Bylaw). It legalises caning – even stoning to death – for the offenders. Homosexual acts are indictable by a maximum of 100 lashes[54]. Only after a coalition of various CSOscondemned the regulation, was the governor of Aceh persuaded not to sign the *qanun jinayat*; hence forming it a dead law. But it did not stop the Shariah Police from arresting people. At the national level, the controversial 2008 Anti-Pornography Law was believed to provide discriminatory clauses against minority groups in Indonesia; based on ethnic traditions, sexuality and gender.[55] The following table shows some of the discriminatory (religion-based) *perdas* and/or regulations in Indonesia, in regards to LGBT groups.

---

52 See the case in Aceh http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2010/01/20/gays-lesbians-face-discrimination-sharia-aceh.html or recently in Tasikmalaya, http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/06/06/activists-and-lawmaker-slam-headscarf-bylaw.html

53 See http://www.bbc.co.uk/indonesia/berita_indonesia/2012/06/120606_tasiksyariah.shtml

54 Seehttp://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/09/15/aceh-council-passes-bylaw-stoning-adulterers-death.html

55 See http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/home/anti-porn-statute-to-remain-law-of-the-land-in-indonesia/365771

Year	Event
1974	UU No. 1/1974 about marriage declares that a legal marriage is a marriage committed by two heterosexuals.
2002	*Perda* of South Sumatra Province No. 13/2002 about fighting against obscenity (*Pemberantasan Maksiat*). This *Perda* discriminates LGBT people by categorizing them as part of prostitution.
2004	*Perda* of Palembang No.2/2004 about fighting against prostitution. The *Perda* categorizes LGBT people as a part of prostitution.
2006	The House of Representatives approved a law on Civil Administration, UU No. 23/2006. Later, PP No. 37/2007 about the implementation of UU No. 23/2006 was released. The law only acknowledge the trans-sexual identity and failed to acknowledge transgender (*waria*) requiring special attention. As a result, it is always difficult for transgender people to get a National Identity Card (*KTP*). They cannot be insured under *Jamkesmas* (health insurance for the poor) also.
2007	*Perda* of DKI Jakarta No. 8/2007 about public order (*Ketertiban Umum/Tibum*). This *Perda* criminalises informal working activities done by urban poor citizens. LGBT people who have such informal working activities will be affected.[56]
2008	The anti-pornography Bill's definition of pornography was misleading, vague and open to various interpretations. The definition[57] leads to the tendency to limit the rights of women and minority groups.

Table 5.1. Some of regulations that are discriminative towards LGBT in Indonesia
Source: Authors

Table 5.1. shows that since the regional autonomy was enacted, the wave of anti-LGBT sentiment has gained strength in its legal weapon, i.e. bylaws (*perdas*); even at the national level. In other words, homophobia has gained a foothold in the legal system in some regions, in which the government enact bylaws that aspire to toughen moral values – often based on conservative Islamic interpretations. The regulations, in some cases, reflected the decreasing protection of the minority rights and put the minorities at the edge of citizenship, also potentially triggering the intolerance towards LGBT groups.

Since those kinds of regulations have created a legal standard for increased intolerance towards LGBT people, numerous cases of human rights violations against LGBT communities have occurred. Some of the notorious cases even involved one of the hard-line groups, the FPI (*Front Pembela Islam*/Islam Defender Front). FPI's attack on ILGA[58] Asia conference (Surabaya,

[56] In addition to this, the categorisation of job vacancies, whether directly or indirectly – e.g. formal or informal, that transgender should work ata beauty salon and not as a secretary – is already a form of discrimination toward LGBT people and most importantly contravenes ECOSOB rights. (Widodo Budidarmo, Arus Pelangi, Interview, 14/04/2012)

[57] Pornography is "sexual material made by people in the forms of pictures, sketches, illustrations, photos, writings, voice, sounds, motion pictures, animation, cartoon, poems, conversations, body movements and other forms of communication through various mass media or public displays which can arouse sexual desires and/or violate public moral values."

[58] ILGA is an acronym for the International Lesbian and Gay Association.

March 2010) and on human rights training for transgender/*waria* (Depok, May 2010), and hard line Islamic group protests against Q! Film Festival (Jakarta and Yogyakarta, October 2010) are some examples of how the increasing intolerance towards LGBT people was influenced bythe rise of discriminative regulations. Such attacks, at least threaten two kinds of LGBT's rights, i.e. freedom of assembly and freedom of expression since the activities are among LGBT's tools to engage with one another and with the public as well. In addition, the attacks were commonly based on the proclamation that such meeting would be 'very embarrassing' and correspond with 'legalising the practise of such sexual deviations'.

Although the attacks have gained negative responses from both national and international audiences, the attacks have not stopped. Recently, the mob disapproved the activity of a book launch and discussion by Canadian activist Irshad Manji. On Friday, 4 May 2012, Manji was escorted out of Salihara venue in South Jakarta just because a number of protesters (FPI among them) complained about Manji's lesbian identity[59]. The Salihara incident by FPI completed the series of intolerance conducts towards LGBT.

These series of events have threatened the rights of LGBT people as human beings. The harassment and assault at LGBT gatherings jeopardized (especially) the freedom of association and freedom of expression. The protection of these freedoms guaranteed under the ratified ICCPR should not only apply to the 'conservative' groups. As a minority group which is susceptible towards violations and aggressions from the intolerant, the rights of LGBT people should be more protected. This idea is in line with the Yogyakarta Principles[60] which states that the protections should also apply to LGBT people. Regrettably, the law enforcement is still ambivalent. This condition causes intolerant groups to exercise more hostility.

> [In regard to the dominant issues of LGBT] The dominant one is religion; this is the most dominant in society. In regard to governance, the government considered LGBT as socially ill. The two things are the most crucial in this context, since the government through one of its ministries and the arrangement of the budget; has put the LGBT, especially the transgender, in suffering [in terms of] of social welfare. It is obvious that the mainstream [position] of the government is this [considering LGBT as problem]. In the end, this leads that public agreement that [LGBT] especially transgender is the cause of social problems. This [view] is crucial. Third [problem regarding LGBT], there is no protection but there is criminalisation [towards LGBT]. Meanwhile, the law is the peak of the right and obligation for citizens. [Our activities] were always on the basis of law – be it social, political or economic access, there must be standardization about the rule. [Since LGBT suffered from criminalization] it was clear that we were being discriminated but we did not get any protection (Widodo Budidarmo, Arus Pelangi, Interview, 14/04/2012).

Widodo's account indicates that the intolerance of LGBT groupswas not instant and was not simple in nature. The issue is a complex one. As Widodo states, the reinforcement of moral values through religious dogmas, the poor perspective of the state and poor law enforcement are elements that significantly contribute to this problem.

---

59 See http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/05/04/irshad-manji-ushered-out-after-book-launching-event-halted.html

60 The Yogyakarta Principles is the guideline for the implementation of international law on gender identities.

A recent survey conducted by Yayasan Denny JA and LSI (JA and Indonesia 2012) not only reaffirms that intolerance of minorities is growing, but also indicates that LGBT is suffered from high level of hostility. In its poll, the survey finds that 80.6 percent of its sample population objected to having LGBT as neighbors - increased significantly from 64.7 percent in 2005. The following table[61] shows the result of the survey:

Category	2005 (%)	2012 (%)	Change (%)
Homosexuals	64.7	80.6	15.9
Ahmadiyya	39.1	46.6	7.5
Shia	26.7	41.8	15.1
People of different faiths	8.2	15.1	6.9

Table 5.2. Rising intolerance, levels of popular hostility toward minorities
Source: The Indonesian Survey Circle (Lingkaran Survey Indonesia), 2012

The number even shows that the level of acceptance toward LGBT is even lower than to groups of different religions or ethnicity. The misportrayal from the media outlets and the advent of the radical Islamist groups are considered as 'probable causes' that drive the growing homophobia. If the trend continues, the growing homophobia could worsen injustice against the LGBT.

There is another explanation as to why large sectors of society are reluctant to accept LGBT people equally. The very reason is that the majority of society is still hiding under the veil of moral and religious beliefs. In accordance with this reason, it is understandable why LGBT people have been targeted by various fundamentalist groups, which are flourishing in recent years. As most Islamic fundamentalist groups[62] designated them as 'immoral', a 'threat to Islam' and 'a contradiction to the morals of the nation (*moral bangsa*)', the LGBT people have become more prone to attacks, intimidations and violations. Related to this, the eastern values embraced by the majority of Indonesians might also be a significant factor in determining the treatment of the LGBT. The phenomenon of LGBT is not considered in accordance with the eastern values. Meanwhile, it is considered acceptable in modern society that respects the uniqueness of human choices. Here, we can see a tension arise between the so-called 'universality' of values in modern society and the 'particularity' of eastern values. In an Indonesian context, the two are not always compatible.

While there is a huge dispute about the moral reinforcement ofLGBT groups, one thing is clear: that every discrimination and act of violence towards LGBT groups should be stopped. Several years ago, countries around the world began to voice this concern. In 2009, the UN passed a

[61] As reported at http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2012/10/22/homophobia-rise-survey-says.html Last accessed 22 October 2012. The survey was conducted from 1 until 8 October 2012 and interviewed 1,200 respondents as sample.

[62] Especially those who are conducted by FPI (Front Pembela Islam/Islam Defender Front), MMI (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia), HTI (Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia), FBR (Forum Betawi Rempug) and KAMMI (Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia/Indonesian Muslim Students' Unified Action)

(non-binding) gay rights declaration.[63] In 2010, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called for countries around the world to abolish laws discriminating against gay and lesbian individuals.[64] Finally, in June 2011 the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) passed the "Human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity" resolution to end sexuality discrimination worldwide.[65] The resolution itself voices grave concerns about violence and discrimination towards people because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identities. Spain and Switzerland even asked Indonesia to take discrimination cases against LGBT groups more seriously in the 2012 UN Universal Periodic Review.[66]

In Indonesia, whilstit is imperative to defend the rights of each individual regardless of their race, religion, culture, sexual orientation or gender identity; the atmosphere of moral reinforcement seems to contradict this aim. Ideally, the media should take a stance in providing a balance of ideas or at least provide a room for discourse about the possibility (or impossibility) of shared life. But unfortunately, in most cases; the media, as the significant ingredient in the democracy and public sphere, has mostly chosen to remain silent. In some cases, the media even perpetuate –whether intentionally or unintentionally– the representation of LGBT groups under the veil of moral and religious beliefs through their portrayal of them alongside these campaigns. Such choices taken by the media are possibly threatening the LGBT in exercising their rights as citizens, standing equally side by side to the other 'mainstream' citizens[67].

5.2. LGBT and the media

Some people believe that proper access to media infrastructure is the precondition to democracy and to development (Samassékou 2006, Jorgensen 2006, Greenstein and Esterhuysen 2006). Appropriate access to media infrastructure will help the citizens to grab all means necessary to access content and produce and distribute it, and hence have the opportunity to shape information, knowledge and culture. If realised, this will enrich the culture, communication, and democracy, which can be essential in improving individual and

---

63 The statement was supported by 67 countries, although there were still a large numbers of countries who were against the idea. See http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/03/18/un-gay-rights-declaration_n_176231.html

64 See http://jurist.org/paperchase/2010/09/un-sg-urges-abolishment-of-anti-gay-laws.php

65 The resolution was passed with a vote of 23 countries in favour, 19 against and 3 abstentions. See http://jurist.org/paperchase/2011/06/un-rights-council-passes-first-gay-rights-resolution.php. Indonesia has not adopted the resolution yet.

66 For further information about 2012 UN UPR's process and highlights,seehttp://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/Highlights23May2012am.aspx and/or please check following web to watch the process http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/webcast/2012/05/final-remarks-upr-report-of-indonesia-13th-universal-periodic-review.html

67 See 'Protecting LGBT rights' by UNhttp://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=40743&Cr=discrimination&Cr1= or here: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/06/17/un-gay-rights-protection-resolution-passes-_n_879032.html

communal lives. While the premise about equal access to infrastructure has not yet been met, the majority of Indonesian citizens are finding that access to media is still lacking. With regards to the Internet, despite the high growth of users, reaching 31 million in 2010[68], the access to telecommunication infrastructure is largely available in Java-Bali and Sumatra, leaving other parts of Indonesia suffer from poor infrastructure[69]. The LGBT groups, as part of Indonesian society, are facing the same problem.

Where are LGBT groups and/or communities in this media picture? In brief, they are consumers at most. Their rights to access the media, whether in terms of infrastructure or content, has been severely limited. The LGBT people have been put in the confinement of consumers' seats, merely enjoying what is available in the media channels with nearly no influence whatsoever to shape the content. For LGBT people in the least developed areas, this is worsened by the lack of access to infrastructure. This is a negative situation because LGBT groups actually do need access to the content to promote their stories and to support their movements.

> In one hand, LGBT people feel that access to the media is necessary to socialise, to give information [clarification upon something], or to speak for their rights upon many aspects. But, very little portion is given by the media to the LGBT; [for example] LGBT people are indeed invited to the press conferences, but there is not enough attention given to them. They [LGBT people] are just asked to come to the press conference, and that's it. I even think that they [the journalists and the media] do not have an interest in reporting LGBT issues. (John Badalu, founder Q! Film Festival, Interview, 19/07/2012).

John's account above shows that actually LGBT people do need a room to express themselves. They need the media to speak on their behalf, but this does not take place. The lack of access to infrastructure and to content has made them voiceless. In addition to this, LGBT's concerns are seemingly rarely well treated by the media. Box 2 illustrates how LGBT representation in the media is based on certain conditions.

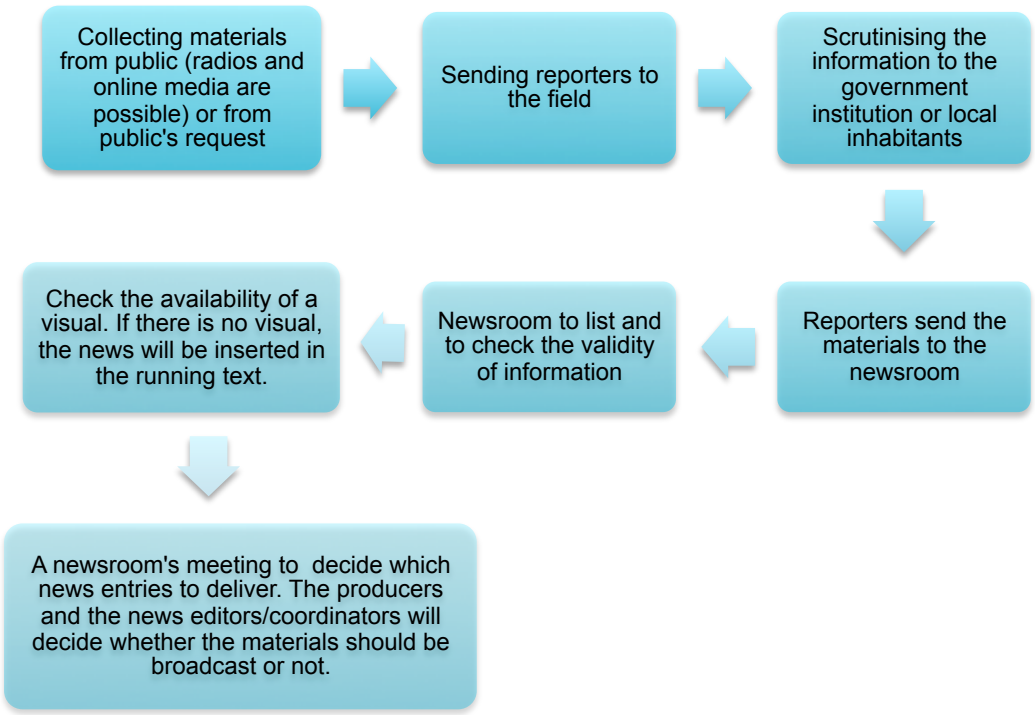
---

68 Seehttp://www.apjii.or.id/dokumentasi/statistik.php

69 Komunikasi dan Informatika Indonesia: Whitepaper 2010, *2010 Indonesia ICT Whitepaper*. Pusat Data Kementrian Komunikasi dan Informatika, Jakarta.

Box 2. How is news produced?

The news production process for television starts by collecting material from public - radios and online media are possible – or from public's concerns. Responding the request, the reporters are sent to the field to scrutinise the information. The materials then are sent to the newsroom where the newsroom has the responsibility to select and check the validity of the news. A newsroom's mechanism then decides which news entries to deliver in a meeting attended by the producers and the news editors/coordinators.



In addition to this, there are several extra criteria for the LGBT to be displayed on screen as illustrated by Yuke Mayaratih, *ANTV*'s news producer. Certain news entries of LGBT can be depicted in the television screen if it is packed within the 'news peg'[70]. If there is no 'news peg' [e.g. Ryan cases or international HIV/AIDS day], it is almost impossible to display something on a LGBT issue. In addition to this, the story must present dramatic aspect, information/educational aspect or certain unique facts and figures. It seems that it is the nature of TV – to contain all of these aspects. It seems that 'drama' should be included in the criteria because TV assumes people want to see 'entertainment, news, uniqueness and tears' in one package

The news production process for online media is surprisingly similar to news production for conventional media. First,the field reporter sends news to the newsroom, via email or another form of communication. Second, the newsroom has the responsibility to select and check the validity of the news. Third, the selected news items are then reviewed and, if necessary, re-written by the Editor. Fourth, the editor uploads the selected news item to the CMS (Content Management Sharing) so that the CMS editor can re-check and proofread the news. Lastly, news that has been processed by the CMS editor is ready to be published.

Source: Interview with Nezar Patria, vivanews.com, 12/10/11 and Interview with Yuke Mayaratih, ANTV's news producer, 08/05/2012

While the access to infrastructure and to content has not met expectations yet, the poor portrayal of LGBT people in the Indonesian media has also created an atmosphere of reluctance

[70] A news peg is a set of information that is worthy of a selling point. For example: the news on LGBT only will become viral if they are related with other sensational news, such as crime or same-sex marriage

among the LGBT themselves to access mainstream media. Both printed and electronic media are no longer popular for them as tools to gain information.

> I am a person who is always not in the mood to read the media, especially Indonesian, because for a long time I've known that they were never objective. For at least fifteen years, I have not read *Kompas*. There is no curiosity anymore about the headlines. The same case happens with television. I never watch TV [for news]. I use TV for watching movies, for entertainment purpose. I am always reluctant to look for news in the media, because every time I watched [or read or listened] they, [the images shown in it] always made me furious. (John Badalu, founder Q! Film Festival, Interview, 19/07/2012).

The quote above is among the common reactions of some LGBT people to the media usage. The poor portrayal of LGBST in the media has led to many of them becoming reluctant to access media for information at all.

However, general trends indicate that mass media consumption has decreased overall in recent years, as shown in Figure 5.1.

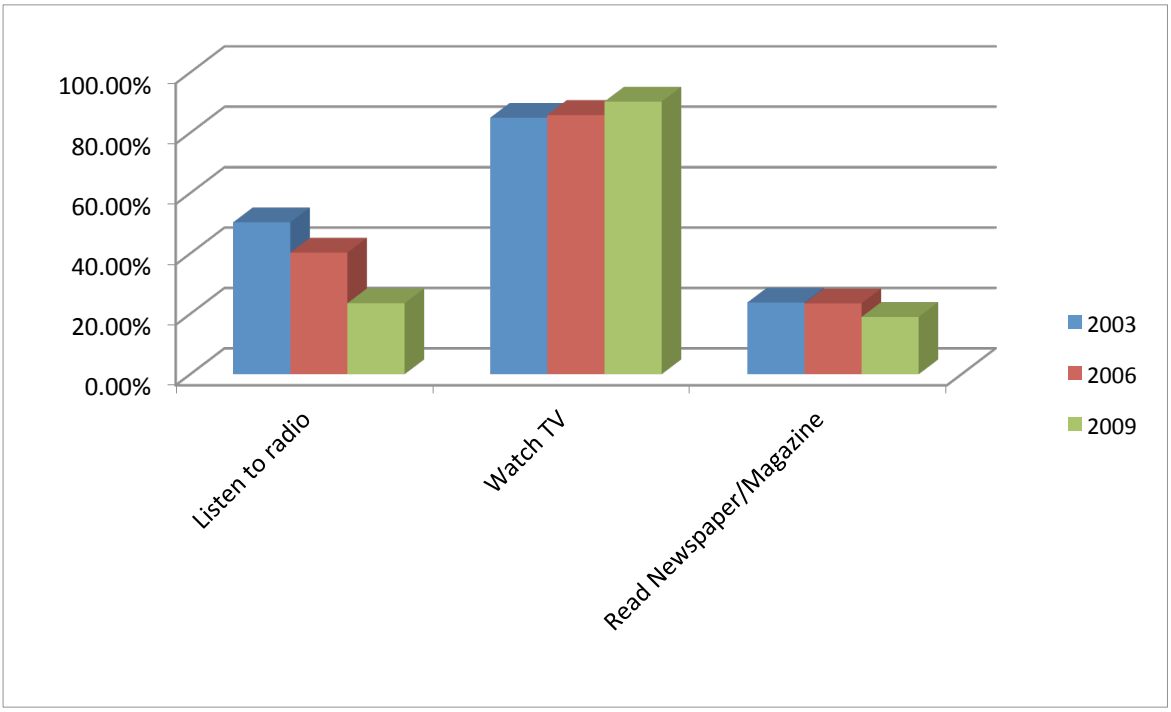


Figure 5.1. Citizens' usage upon media in Indonesia: Percentage of population of 10yr and above
Source: BPS - National Census, 2009

Figure 5.1. above shows that while TV's usage has increased since 2003; the opposite is true in the case of radio and printed media. This indicates that television has developed into the primary media. As radio has been replaced by mp3 players as a tool for entertainment, and printed media has lost readers due to the reluctance of many to read; TV is now a big player in spreading information. This is the case with many LGBT groups too; as part of society. Although there are concerns about their portrayal on television (i.e. derogatively); it is still the most common form of media used (Agustine, Ardhanary Institute, discussion, 24/07/2012)

whether for information or entertainment purpose. Meanwhile, nowadays radios are used solely for listening to music and folk tales; while reading newspaper/magazines seems quite a luxury for Indonesians at large due to their cost.

LGBT's appropriate access to media not only requires having the necessary infrastructures and means through which to access content, but also to make sure they are able to produce and distribute content; and hence have the chance to produce information, knowledge and culture in their own contexts – and beyond. Whilst the emergence of community radio and local television broadcasters were officially acknowledged in 2002 and community radio stations in particular have boomed in Indonesia[71]; the LGBTs havenot used community broadcasting, both radio and television, as a medium to amplify their voices, to shape their own news or information or to take an active part in the decision making processes (Hartoyo, Our Voice, discussion, 14/05/22012). But, knowing the importance of the alternative media, *Our Voice* presents an answer to fill the gap:

> We have to write our own stories. Thus, we made website ourvoice(dot)or(dot)id, which accommodates writings, autobiography, documentary [and] reportage. So, we record news entries which have a correlation to our experiences, whether politically e.g. Dede Oetomo, transgender who became a candidate of Komnas HAM's commissioner or socially, our daily experiences in dealing with they who are weak and vulnerable; they wholive on the edge of society. We [publish] stories on website, we make videos with simple tools. We also translate foreign news and LGBT's news, which is good to motivate our fellow LGBT [people]. (Hartoyo, Our Voice, Interview, 14/05/22012)

While community broadcasting is still at the embryonic level, this is different if we talk about the usage of the Internet and social media. Since most LGBT people are still living in their own comfort zones – having not yet 'come out' – it seems that the Internet is used as a tool to socialise with other LGBT people. The Ardhanary Institute, a Jakarta-based organisation advocating LGBTs, claims that there are more 70 (closed) groups – some of which have more than 2,000 members – of LGBT on *Facebook* (Agustine, Ardhanary Institute, discussion, 24/07/2012). Here we can see that LGBT groups are using social media as a tool to communicate. The same case applies to blogs; some activists have even begun to use blogs as a tool to promote LGBT voices.

In general, LGBTs access to media infrastructure and media does not differ dramatically to that of other citizens. Those who live in Java-Bali and Sumatra enjoy better infrastructure than those who live in the other parts of Indonesia, but, as stated previously, LGBT communities are actually consumers at most; solely enjoying what is available in the media channel, but with nearly no influence to shape the content. The advent of the Internet, to some extent, has changed their interaction pattern. However, the usage of the Internet is still limited solely to sharing stories. It has not reached yet reached the stage of promoting their stories and supporting their movements. *Our Voice* is an example of a LGBT organisation that aspires to address this isue in order to provide a voice for the voiceless LGBTs.

---

[71] Though, compared to other Asia Pacific countries, according to Suman Basnet, the coordinator of the Asia Pacific Region World Association of Community Broadcaster (AMARC) Indonesia is way ahead. See Laksmi (2006)

5.3. LGBT in the media

The media serve as a system for disseminating information and messages to society. As media content has become very dependent on ratings; the interest of the public is not fully conveyed yet. This is the also the case with LGBT people. What is reported to the public about LGBT depends on what the media consider to be significant and relevant. Unfortunately, the LGBT issues have been packed with sensationalism over and over again.

Issues of violation towards LGBT's rights are barely treated as important issues by most mainstream media. These kinds of human rights violations seem less significant than sensationalist stories such as robbery, corruption, cannibalism, murder and mutilation. That is why the media tends to report LGBT issues with sensationalism. Without a sense of sensationalism, the LGBT people rarely appear on the screen. The notorious case of Ryan[72] might be considered a good example of this. When Ryan's case began to attract national debate, not a daypassed without TV's and newspapers covering the case. Opinions in favour and against have risen up and soon, the opinion of psychologists, criminologists and other academics appeared on screens and in papers.

Some of the most negative depictions were uttered by Mr. Erlangga Musdiana and Mr. Dadang Hawari. *Tempo* magazine quotes Erlangga Musdiana, a criminologist of the University of Indonesia: "*....that homosexuals commit sadistic killings should not surprise us if we know their world. People with sexual deviant behaviour are usually close to criminal world. This group [use threats] if somebody who is invited to intimacy refuses their request.*"[73] Dadang Hawari, a well-known psychologist, often depicts homosexuality as "*a deviant sexual behaviour and a form of illness.*" Then, he adds, "*their aggressiveness is beyond normal.*"[74] Thus, the media is in a big advantage to capitalise on the fact that the criminal comfortably adopts homosexuality, a character that is still considered a taboo in the society, which imposes attraction to the viewers. This condition is compounded by the tendency to mis-report and to blur the boundaries between fact and fiction; between news and entertainment.

> Most of information about LGBT is misleading. Unfortunately, this is disseminated by the media. [The Information] is judgmental and full of assumptions and prejudices. For example, many people still consider LGBT as a psychological illness while the PPDGJ III [*Pedoman Penggolongan dan Diagnosis Gangguan Jiwa*/Diagnostic Classification on Mental Disorder Guidelines] from the Kemenkes [*Kementerian Kesehatan*/Ministry of Health] states that homosexuality or transgender is not a mental disorder. It is not an illness, but it is a diversity of sexuality. ... this should be thestarting point atwhich media refer to it. But, in reality the media representation [on LGBT] neglectsthe correct understanding. Thus, the media chose to reproduce the same products, and refer to the idea that homosexuality is deviant as well

[72] The case of the murder and mutilation of Heri Santoso whichhappened in 2008 in Jakarta, has become a national debate. The murder, Verry Idham Henyansyah also known as Ryan, confessed to killing 10 people and was sentenced to death by the Indonesian criminal court.

[73] Tempo magazine, 21-27 July 2008, p. 117

[74] As uttered by a group of LBT activists based on their observation of TV and their own experiences when attended the TV's talkshows.

> [and that it] deserves to be laughed at, to be mocked, to be marginalised, and to be accused for various reasons. (Hartoyo, Our Voice, Interview, 14/05/22012)

Hartoyo's account above clearly points out that the media has misrepresented the LGBT community. Worse, in several cases the media choose to emphasise the 'incorrect' (derogatory) portrayals, just to create an atmosphere of dramatic and sensational news. In this context, media frequently present LGBT as a form of illness; and in turn create a fake belief that LGBT groups are aform of social illness – hence, they deserve to be laughed at, to be mocked, to be marginalised, and to be accused.

Since the LGBT people have been misrepresented by the media as psychologically deviant, the LGBT people have also found themselves merely the material of jokes, especially on the screen.

> LGBT people in TV are mainly joke material. Exploitation. Full stop. Those feminine males are good material for laugh. I can mention programme*Tahan Ketawa* [Restrain Laugh] as an example. *Tahan Ketawa* in TransTV is [a mirror of] a complete uncreative Indonesian to use physical attack as a material of joke; using symbols of feminine males: dressed up, transgender-like. (Hartoyo, Our Voice, Interview, 14/05/22012)

Hartoyo's comments represent the view that LGBT people feel that they are treated merely as objects of comedy. By attaching a feminine stereotype to (especially) gays and transgender people, the media have perpetuated the derogatory portrayal of LGBT people. What is Hartoyo implying with these comments? While the media – through the programmes – on one hand have marginalised LGBT and reproduced discriminations towards them; on the other they have also exploited the LGBT individual as an 'ironic' character to make profit, based on ratings. Similar views were apparent in discussions with several LGBT activists of *Arus Pelangi* (discussion, 2012).

While there were hopes that the opening of more democratised canal in 1998, following the suppression of Soeharto's regime, would bring about a change in the representation of minority groups, this never materialised.

> [In regard to media's portrayal on LGBT] I can guarantee that today's media reality is more exploitative. Because of the [misunderstood] freedom, also because people need more entertainment, there are a lot of media and programmes that are exploiting LGBT groups. Perhaps, there were some [similar cases] in Soeharto's regime; but people were usually more reluctant. Now, LGBT groups are indeed acknowledged by the public, but unfortunately [we are treated] with some despising. In the past, although LGBT people were barely presented in the media, people chose to be careful because of the suppressive era. Nowadays, actually it is a good opportunity since the ideal of freedom [supporting the minority to express themselves]. However, people are seemingly reluctant to think sharply to find a creative way in producing a good programme/writing for LGBT. (Hartoyo, Our Voice, Interview, 14/05/2012)

Hartoyo's comments suggest that the dynamics of Indonesian media in regards to LGBT could respond to the changes in society. Although the opening of more democratised canals promised to bring a more civilising, caring and humane atmosphere in regard to the minority, it seems that the notion did not work for the LGBT. The LGBTs are still finding themselves as object of derision, which has impacted upon the general public's views of them.

Some media (especially television) are however trying to present LGBT on screen as resource persons, although they still suffer from poor judgment and portrayal.

> Since 2007, when Ardhanary became established, we were often asked [to show up in the television]. Then we called and offered the invitation to our gay friends, "Want to show up on the screen?" [but they were responded] "Ah, no way [because] I have often been bullied and mocked, [also later] my friends would be mad at me." [They refused to show up in the television because] the presenter would conclude that they [LGBT] were abnormal in the final session. Such conclusion was always made. But, for me, at least we spoke [to the public about who LGBTs are, through the television/media] (Sri Agustine, Ardhanary Institute, LBT activist, Interview, 17/01/2012).

Agustine's comments above at least indicate that not all media are completely ignorant about LGBT stories. However, the poor perspectives are still serious barriers to reporting the cases accurately and accordingly. Because of the media depiction of them, many LGBT people are afraid to 'come out' and in fact makes them retreat further. Such a combination of negative media portrayal and the inferiority of the LGBT has played a huge role in maintaining a vicious circle. This resonantes with the views of Hartoyo who states that:

> Ironically [on one side] the media marginalise LGBT, reproduce discrimination towards LGBT, but on the other side the media exploit the LGBT. Thus, if there is a story on LGBT, the media seem to have great news, seem to get an easy target. The transgender is shown like a show, being laughed at. There is even a programme *Be A Man* and this becomes material for *Tahan Ketawa* [Restrain Laugh]. They are exploited. Olga [a TV presenter], for example; his identity seems to be much exploited. Olga is permitted to act and speak at his own will for the sake of rating. It is a form of exploitation and this kind of exploitation does have significant effect in reproducing discrimination towards LGBT communities. (Hartoyo, Our Voice, Interview, 14/05/22012)

While there are misrepresentations of LGBT in various mass media, quantitatively the stories on LGBT itself do not attract the attention of mass media. Issues of violation towards LGBT's rights, for example, are barely treated as an important issue by most mainstream media. Box 3 below offers several media reports on the attacking of *Q! Film Festival* 2010 that was held from 22 September to 3 October 2010.

Box 3. Media Reports on LGBT – the Case of *Q! Film Festival* 29 September-8 October 2010

KOMPAS (printed)

Kompas' reports on Q! Film Festival's discourses are limited. During the week, there were only 2 reports on the issue. The first report is on tension of gender relation which seems not only happen in the society, but also in bureaucracy of the government. The tension in bureaucracy of the government is shown by the view of Kemenkominfo [the Ministry of Communication and Information] that the ministry refuses to support the Q! Film Festival. The later report then is linked with the issue of gender mainstreaming.

On the content, *Kompas* discusses gender discrepancy where gender mainstreaming in the society becomes the main topic. The imbalance between the male and female role is very clear, which is shown by the percentage of women instate institutions: 10% in DPR [Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat/People's Representative Council] and 12% in MPR [*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat*/People's Consultative Assembly]. The quota is far from the 30% 'ideal' figurestated by the law.

In regard to content, *Kompas* prioritise the issue of gender inequality rather than providing an in-depth

report on the attacks on the Q! Film Festival by FPI [*Front Pembela Islam*/Islam Defender Front]. Such reports on the issue are not headlines; placed on page 38. In addition to this, *Kompas* also reports one release on the screening situation of Q! Film Festival screening in Malang, East Java; and put it on page 8.

DETIK.COM

During the week of *Q! Film Festival* and 5 days following that*, detik.com* provides a number of stories about the event, especially after the FPI's attack and protests to the festival that occurred on 28 and 29 September. FPI considered the films shown at the festival to contain pornographic materials, by the use of obscene words and the blatant illustration of bisexuality. *Detik.com* also writes about the statement from the Cultural and Tourism Minister Jero Wacik, who said that any film that goes on festivalsshould pass the censorship, complying to Indonesian norms and values. In total, *detik.com* provides 17 news entries on the issue of *Q! Film Festival*

Detik.com quotes several statements and responses from young filmmakers and civil society who support the event as they deem it harmless and promoted by the State. Meanwhile, *detik.com* also picks on the news of the FPI and student organisations protests, both of which considered the festival to be responsible in the decline of the nation's moral values.

Detik.com's coverage on *Q! Film Festival* is delivered from several points, hence it is quite able to provide explanation on the controversy; why contradictions occur, and why they should not happen.

REPUBLIKA

There is a report on the FPI protest, but it does not promote any kind of defense of human rights issues. *Republika* clearly mentions that Q! Film Festival does not fit with any religious values and is therefore legitimated from being banned.

TEMPO.CO

During the sampling date, *Tempo.co* published 3news entries on LGBT. Twoof these wereabout the protest on the film festival. *Tempo.co* mainly reported on the implications of the attack onthe festival itself.

As the underlyingissue of the attack is the public 'concern' over the LGBT community's power to influence citizen's sexual orientation, *Tempo.co* does not seem to promote any kind of defense on the human rights issues violated by the protest. In comparison to *detik.com* as its fellow online media, *Tempo.co* produced relatively less coverage on the LGBT issue.

Source: CIPG's observation 2012

The box above clearly shows that there is minimum attention paid toward LGBT issues. Though some media try to cover the story, some of them are seemingly misleading. While LGBT heavily suffer from the misleading or sensational portrayal about themselves, they almost cannot do anything since they have limited access to create stories on their own, through their own channels. The problem is exacerbated when LGBTs find themselves prohibited from access to the international LGBT websites, as the websites are banned by *Kemkominfo*. The Indonesian Ministry of Communication and Information shut several international LGBT websites down because the websites were considered to contain eroticism and pornographies.[75] Such discriminatory action has called several NGOs to decry the move as an attack on freedom of expression. As one *Arus Pelangi* member stated: "*Even we were forced not to access our own alternative media. It is extraordinary, right?*" (King Oey, discussion, 2012). As the ban hinders the ability of LGBT people to access the web for dialogue on LGBT's basic rights issues, some activists are still trying to accommodate the needs by creating alternative rooms, for instance blogs and mailing lists. However, the narrow scope of these alternative spaces cannot compete

[75] See http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/home/indonesian-operators-ban-access-to-lgbt-advocacy-web-site/497021

with those who have bigger scope, and thus have a bigger power in constructing and/or manufacturing public's 'consent'.

Through being a minority group, as well as being labelled as 'abnormal' and psychologically ill, the LGBT clearly suffer from poor representation in the media. Such representations construct LGBT's face in the wider society which in turn leads to unfair treatment. The problem of limited access to media content is also increased by the lack of tools to counter this.

5.4. Public image of LGBT: The role of media

> [I]f we talk about news, television broadcasters only allocate a small portion [of time] for it, except [in] a news channel. But apart from that, we can see how media content, including its news broadcasting, is moving towards commercialisation, [and] sensation. [Many] important public issues are being neglected since they are less interesting and less commercial. In the end it is all about ratings; and ratings have degraded public interest and taste. (I. Haryanto, LSPP, interview, 11/10/26)

Haryanto's quote reflects on the condition of Indonesian television broadcasting today. Indonesian media is full of commercialisation and sensationalism. Worse, apparently audiences prefer drama to news, unless the news is exaggerated. Although some TV stations broadcast news and investigative reports that cover social issues, these attract a smaller audience than *sinetron* or entertainment/ talkshows. The percentage of audience share of *sinetron* is significant to say that the programme is a popular one (MPA Analysis, 2011, Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012).

As implied in the previous sections, while the canals of openness have been unlocked since the *Reformasi* and news and feature about LGBT have increased in numbers and scope; the ill-treatments towards the groups has even increased. A worrying problem has arisen, in which LGBTs are stereotyped as psychologically ill and morally damaged. The lack of gender perspective and the misunderstanding about LGBT identity means they are often presented in a misleading or negative way and, in addition, the market-driven motive also results in LGBT groups being 'sensationalised'.

As TV broadcasting prefers to provide *sinetron* as their main content and leave relevant public issues less addressed; the reproduction of discreditable images of LGBT is also continuously maintained. Like TV, the printed media also rarely portray LGBT people as victims of discrimination and violations. Instead they mention them as victims of intolerance and tend to label them as 'sexually sick and deviant'. In most common cases, the media use derogatory terms to depict the LGBT people. For example, it is common that in the media portrayal; the derogatory terms as '*banci*' or '*bencong*' – which have a similar meaning with pejorative 'fag(got)' – are used, instead of transgender.

The images of LGBT provided on screen and in printed media are oftenused as a 'joke'. While most of *sinetron* tend to present imitative transgender (*waria jadi-jadian*) as a joke material, the reproduction of unfavourable representation is continued in society. This condition hurts the dignity of LGBT people andopens them up to insults. Things become worse because the media

have been seemingly reluctant to give an opportunity for LGBT people to represent themselves properly in the media.

> [Concerning access to media] It was started in 2007, when Ardhanary began to be established. We began to be asked [to show up onthe screen]. Our friends [usually] rejected the offer, "I do not want to be televised, I do not want my friends angry with me". [There was another reason actually] because the presenter always concludes that we are abnormal at the end of the show. Such conclusion is always made. But we never give up. We tried to persuade our friends, "At least we have a chance to speak to the public". Then we began to build bargaining power with the media. .... [But] sometimes, we felt the media cheated on us. At the beginning they said that they had a deep concern with LBGT issue. But then, when we were there [at the show], there was Mr. Dadang Hawari or someone else [a psychologist] who would confront and counter our perspectives. Usually, they were given more portion than us so we seemed to be the one [who was judged and] who was wrong. (Sri Agustine, Ardhanary Institute, LBT activist, Interview, 17/01/2012).

When Ryan's case[76] became a national issue, some media portrayals repeatedly pointed on his sexual orientation. News portal *detik.com*, for example, represented Ryan as '*pria kemayu*' (a coquettish guy).[77] The media rarely resisted the opportunity to mention the 'different' aspect of the LGBT people's sexual orientation. Over and over, the media tend to exploit this difference by giving an exaggerated headline or content instead of giving a voice to the weak and to enabling the vulnerable to take an active part in the decision making processes.

> Since the media continuously reflect the reproduction of discrimination and marginalise the LGBT groups [through the derogatory images and portrayals], then ECOSOC [LGBT's rights on economy and social] would be the [indirect] impact. We are losing our ECOSOC and *Sipol* [*Sipil dan Politik*/Civil and Politic] rights. However, media always refused to be blamed. [This assumption] was not ours only. I think [the other Indonesian] people already knew that [one of the functions of] [mass-] media was as an education tool for society. That is the ideal. Perhaps, it is the public's responsibility, but state also has huge responsibility [in ensuring and guarding the essence of media], through the KPI for television and [through] *Dewan Pers* for printed media. It should be their responsibility to give education over and over, or to give warnings to the media so the media did not reproducemarginalisation or discriminate [against] the LGBT [and other marginalized] groups again. (Hartoyo, Our Voice, Interview, 14/05/22012)

Hartoyo's account above points to the indirect implication of misleading coverage and the stereotyping of LGBT people in the media. Based on their experience, Hartoyo and friends found that the reproduction of derogatory images in media have primarily hurt them as a person and has threatened their rights as citizens (discussion, 2012).

How the media depicted homosexuality is important because, as Herman and Chomsky (1988) postulate, word usage and headlining determines the construction of stories and whether

---

[76] The case of the murder and mutilation of Heri Santoso, which happened in 2008 in Jakarta, has become a national debate. The murder, Verry Idham Henyansyah also known as Ryan, confessed to killing 10 people and was sentenced to death by the Indonesian criminal court.

[77] For example, see entries 16 March 2009 at http://news.detik.com/read/2009/03/16/140918/1100135/10/ryan-normal-pantas-dihukum and 6 April 2009 at http://news.detik.com/read/2009/04/06/131028/1110962/10/jelang-vonis-ryan-nyanyi-untuk-novel

individuals are humanised or not. The slightest amount of detail can affect reader interest and sympathetic responses (p.35).

> [About the implication of such portrayal] It is very significant. For example, we can refer to the assault at the ILGA congress in Surabaya. At that time, all media seemed to take a perspective that pleased majority groups only. [It seemed to say] "That immoral group made such an event, they were gathering somewhere and the FPI came and kicked them out." Always, and always depicted like that. Actually, they who portrayed us like that were the ones who did harm to us. They took our rights to come together with others and collectively express our interests. But it [that we are immoral, etc.] is always told [to the public]. (Sri Agustine, Ardhanary Institute, LBT activist, Interview, 17/01/2012)

If democracy means that every citizen –including the minorities– is treated equally, and the media are the guardians of the democracy; then the democratisation processes are at stake as the media tend to 'play safe'. The above quote illustrates the condition. Instead of defending the rights of the minorities, the media chose to play safe and provided a depiction that pleased the pseudo-public. Under 'public' excuse, the media seem to ignore the fact that there is injustice happening. The media chose to reproduce such negative portrayal. Certainly this is not what we expect to happen.

> [Since 1998 reform] People claimed that contemporary media were more open and liberal. But at the same time, the media began to be more phobic; homophobic. But I felt that they were more supportive before 2000. ... Although media today are more open and more human-rights-driven; but [paradoxically] when we try to become more visible and more open to the society, the process of marginalisation [towards LGBT people] becomes stronger too. The media played a significant role here. How people can understand us and their opinion [about certain topics] is always determined by the media. Take Ahmadiyya's case for the example. It is media who plays an important role informing opinion, to judge that they were wrong and also to build hatred. [It happened] because the media merely interviewed the FPI, but not the victims. In our cases, when attackshappened here and there; more than often the media only interviewed the FPI. They rarely interviewed the others. There were some transgender (*warias*), but they were placed in a little column, not in the headline. Headline and the little column are absolutely different. (Sri Agustine, Ardhanary Institute, LBT activist, Interview, 17/01/2012)

The above quote affirms that the media rarely 'cover both sides', especially the issue relates to minority groups. Balanced news is never enough because media also functions as an educative instrument for the society, besides providing information and entertainment. As a tool for civilising the society, supposedly the media are urged to build a positive construction of minority groups. So, the media are not meant to promote a specific sexual orientation, but promote social control for the sake of civilising the society. The article 3 UU No. 40/1999 on 'foundation, function, obligation and role of the press' clearly states this stance.

Commonly, Indonesian media share a uniform ideology about LGBT. Most of them address LGBT behaviour as a deviant sexual behaviour. In every programme or column in all media outlets, especially on health or relationship issues the resource person give a similar view that homosexuality and/or bisexuality are deviant sexual behaviours. Worse, *sinetron* (soap opera) as the most popular programmes on TV (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012) give the same stigmatisation towards LGBT. As a result, the media accidentally form a common consciousness that affect the belief, logics and values of the society. This single 'truth' is formed and constructed in the society through the day-to-day depictions of the media.

Since sensationalism, for the sake of ratings, has taken over the substance in most media – especially television programmes with its *sinetron*– the media have seemingly forgot their public duties. The media are no longer responsible for educating and civilising the society. Rather, the media chased after profit (advertising) by producing more and more programmes that contain superficial sensationalism. Ironically, the LGBT image was one of the tools used to achieve the goal. By reproducing a kind of sensationalist image of LGBT, the media gain more and more profit. Such reality is a form of deviance toward an ideal public sphere in which the public can freely interact and engage over matters of public concern (Habermas, 1989, Habermas, 2006). LGBT groups should, through the power of media, have enough space to voice their concerns, and thus to create ways to protect their rights. The lack of media access, on the contrary, will eliminate the chance to amplify their voices and limit the opportunity to take an active part in the decision-making processes.

5.5. Vulnerable groups in the media

As a minority group, LGBT people are viewed differently by the majority of society. Despite the fact that some individuals and/or groups believe there is nothing wrong being a LGBT, some still believe it is immoral, unethical and dishonest. With these contradictory viewpoints dotted about, stereotypes on LGBT people can be noticed everywhere. As the media has an enormous effect on manufacturing LGBT's representation in public, whether intentionally or unintentionally, the reproduction of LGBT's dehumanisation has also seemingly become one of media's responsibilities. The case concerning LGBT groups shows that the media present quasi-room for the minority groups. Rather than informing the public about their concerns as citizens and minorities, most of the media package them as an object of entertainment.

If media is still considered as the guardian of democracy in which every citizen –especially the minorities– will be treated equally, then the democratisation processes areat stake as media hesitate to defend the rights of the minorities. Instead, media choose to reproduce degrading imageries for the sake of pseudo-public satisfaction. Not only have the media cheated the public by providing irrelevant and uneducative contents, they also have dehumanised minority groups and individuals as impersonal, for business interest (in terms of ratings) over public interest.

There is no 'public' without minority groups. Public engagement therefore includes the involvement of the minority groups too. The non-involvement of the minority groups in the media indicates that media tend to serve elite opinion – as Herman and Chomsky (1988) stipulate. That is why using media perspectives are not enough to present minority issues. Since 'public' character is highly associated with majority character and since the 'publicness' of the media is often used to legitimise a certain majority group –be it ethnic, religion, ideology, politics or others– it needs other perspectives, i.e. a human rights perspective. The undertaking of a human rights perspective in media (studies) enables us to promote the neglected rights of (especially) the minority groups – and hence promotes the dignity of humanity itself.

5.6. Beyond sexual orientation: Media matters

By ratifying two International Human Rights Covenants on 31 September 2005[78], the Indonesian government has committed to uphold the rights of all Indonesian citizens inaspects of public life. The ratification substantiates the ideal of *Pancasila* as the nation's way of life to promote justice, equality, unity, democracy, openness, human rights and harmony. In the Indonesian constitution (UUD 1945), in particular Article 28, as a nation, Indonesia should protect its citizen to be able to live and to defend his or her life and existence (article 28B) and shall have the right to live, to grow and to develop and shall have the right to protection from violence and discrimination (28B, point 2). Unfortunately, the noble commitment hasnot been followed by the creation of any new laws aiming to protect the minorities. Instead of preserving the rights, the national laws and *perdas* continually discredit the rights of minorities. Things become more complicated because the media also remain silent. As the media tend to chase ratings instead of taking the side of the minorities, the minorities remain voiceless. Being a minority, the LGBT community cannot avoid this circumstance.

LGBT groups are portrayed as controversial, especially with regard to moral and religious beliefs in Indonesian society. The problem has increased since the media presented LGBT as impersonal, formed an opinion about them and 'taught' the audiences about what should be done about it. While the influence of moral and religious veils becomes a certain problem, the uniformity of the media's portrayal of LGBT has exacerbated the problem. Commonly, the citizens are constantly being served with homogenous representation of LGBT, which leads one to ask: is this is the correct portrayal of LGBT people? The absence of alternative information does not help. Therefore, when Ministry of Communication and Information (Kemkominfo/*Kementrian Komunikasi dan Informasi*) decided to block any websites related to LGBT issues[79], the hope of diverse and alternative information vanished. The hope is that by providing different portrayals generated through various media contents; the citizens can gain a better understanding about LGBT. But, if the existence of this single 'truth' which is driven by 'quasi'-moral and religious beliefs continues, LGBT people will still find it difficult to exercise their rights.

Perhaps, some media's depictions of LGBT are not completely wrong. Perhaps, some of them are correct portrayals. Some gay men may in fact be feminine and some lesbians are masculine. But the same condition applies to both heterosexual men and women as well. There is no single uniform reality. In all groups, there is complexity concerning the correctness of their stereotypes. After all, we can see that there are various personalities, attitude and behaviours within every element of society. Even in a small unit of family, there is diversity. Therefore it is very degrading to disparage a group of society –by stereotyping them over and over– merely because of their uniqueness.

---

[78] In 31 September 2005, the Indonesian government has ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

[79] The Indonesian Ministry of Communication and Information shut several international LGBT websites down because the websites was considered to contain eroticism and pornographies. Some LGBT activists regret the action since the LGBTs are prohibited to access their internal websites. Please see http://www.ourvoice.or.id/2010/09/menyikapi-pernyataan-kominfo-tentang-q-film-festival/.

Regardless of the diversity among the LGBT themselves, one thing is obvious; that the derogatory images which in turn creates stereotypes have threatened the dignity of LGBT people as human beings and legal citizens. As human beings, LGBT people have basic rights that should be respected and protected. The violations towards these rights are a violation upon humanity itself. As citizens, LGBT people deserve rights equal to all citizens. In regard to media, since the media tend to 'use' LGBT for gaining profit and barely speak about LGBT concerns from a 'healthy' perspective; the LGBT groups are powerless in terms of the media scene. In a wider context, the derogatory images created by the media have put the LGBT groups at the edge of citizenship. Their rights are threatened, as people tend to believe what is served in the media. Considering these aspects, the larger implication is on the idea of citizenship itself. If citizenship includes the idea of civil, political and social aspects (Marshall, 1994:54), then the failure of one aspect automatically cancels the whole idea. In this sense, the failure to exercise the LGBT's right to the media has indirectly impacted upon the rights of civil, political and social spheres – therefore on citizenship itself.

In summary …

In early 1980s, several LGBT activists began to voice the existence of LGBT in Indonesia. Since then, the efforts to defend the rights of LGBT began. However, since the blossoming of 'ultra-conservative' laws in 2000s that discriminate against LGBT, the efforts met a serious obstacle. The reinforcement of moral values through religion dogmas, the poor perspective from the state and the poor law enforcement add the complexity to the efforts of LGBT.

In regards to media, instead of providing a proper room for the LGBT to defend their rights, the media are using certain controversial stereotypes of LGBT, which hurt the dignity of LGBT. The reproduction of unfavourable images includes the usage of the stereotypes as materials of joke for the sake of rating increment. Such reproduction hinders the LGBT from proper acceptance in the wider society. This kind of situation seriously impacts upom how the LGBT groups exercise their civil, political and social rights in society.

6.
Case 3: The stereotypisation and discrimination of the diffable

Personally, I hope that the media can change [their way in reporting something] because the media is very important; like a torch [showing light] for the society. If the torch is wrong [in giving the right direction]; absolutely society's understanding [on certain topics] will be misleading.
(Luh Riniti, Bali Sruti, Interview, 03/03/2012)

Since 29 March 2010, a new situation-comedy (sitcom) titled "3 Mas Ketir" previewed Indonesian TV. The sitcom tells the story of the fraternity of three diffables (the blind person, the deaf person and the mute person) whose limitations cause problems - and therefore are considered as humorous. After several episodes, the sitcom received a lot of criticism for delivering uneducative content and mis-representing the diffable community.[80] There was even a *Facebook* movement urging KPI to ban the programme.[81] KPI, being urged by several diffable organisations, reprimanded the TV channel to stop the screening of the sitcom. The TV channel responded well and officially shut the sitcom down on 8 June 2010. In addition, the channel also apologised to the diffable in a meeting mediated by Komnas HAM.[82]

The above story is perhaps one of the monumental 'victories' of the diffables against the media. Over the years, diffable people –people with different abilities– have been marginalised in the media. The media continually treat the diffable as the one who is not complete as an individual. The focus of diffable media portrayal is merely on the impairment more than the person. In some cases the media have even portrayed the condition of diffability as a direct consequence of sin in the past.

Being a minority group, let alone labelled 'abnormal' and sinful, the diffable suffer not only from unfair treatment, but also more importantly from poor representation and understanding in the wider society. The media are supposed to present and take a more significant role in the public discourse over diffabilities – but whether or not they do it is a different matter. Two aspects are pivotal in the discussion: how the diffable deal with media, and how they are being represented in the media and the implications of this in society.

---

80 It is noteworthy to explain here that we use the term 'diffable' because this term is advocated by the communities themselves, but more importantly to stop the stigma and negative connotation of the terms '*disable(d)*'.

81 See http://hiburan.kompasiana.com/gosip/2010/05/10/stop-penayangan-sitkom-3-mas-ketir-di-global-tv/

82 See http://www.kpi.go.id/component/content/article/14-dalam-negeri-umum/2046. Also check http://bertunet.blogspot.com/2010_07_01_archive.html

This chapter starts by giving a historical background of diffable movement in Indonesia and then moves onto a discussion of the relations between diffables and the Indonesian media: how they are perceived and represented. Then, the next part assembles the discussion around the case emphasising the role of media in policing and valuing the rights exercise of minority groups like the diffable, before concluding.

6.1. Diffability in Indonesia: History and background

The term 'disability' often meets with the term 'disabled'.[83] The United Nations and English-speaking countries use 'disability' to name those who have different needs and abilities. This is reflected in various documents: Americans with Disabilities Act (United States of America, 1990); Disability Discrimination Act (United Kingdom, 1995); Ontarians with Disabilities Act (Canada, 2002); National Policy for Persons with Disabilities (Pakistan, 2002); and Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities (UN, 2006). But recently, in the Indonesian context, the disabledpeople –especially the activists– tend to use 'diffability' and 'diffable' (*difabel*) instead of 'disability'; in order to stop the stigma and negative connotation attached to the term'disabled' (or '*cacat*' in Indonesian).

The diffable movement in Indonesia has a very long history that can be traced back by tracking the metamorphosis of the term 'diffable' itself. Long before the term 'diffable' was coined, 'disability' was the term being used to mention those with different needs. The term 'disability' was firstly used by doctor Soeharso when he built the Rehabilitation Centre (RC) Solo in 1946. At that moment, 'disability' refers to '*penderita cacat*' (a person who is physically ill) according to Dr. Soeharso's medical approach.

In the 1970s, several activists proposed '*penyandang cacat*' (a person with physical deformity) as a new term to replace '*penderita cacat*'. The reason was the former refers to illness, while some of them felt that their 'imperfectness' was neither a form of suffering, nor a burden. But, in the mid 1990s, the term was changed again. On their reflection, the same activists felt that '*penyandang cacat*' did not suit them anymore, because the combination between '*penyandang*' and '*cacat*' was contradictive. In bahasa Indonesia, '*penyandang*' refer to them who earns an achievement in specific sector, while '*cacat*' refers to deformity. By accepting those two reasons, they decided to find an appropriate term to be declared. It was in 1996-1997 when the new term was finally found. With the late Mansour Fakih's suggestion, the new term was 'people with different ability'. The term was then re-formulated in Indonesia as '*difabel*'. Since then, the new humanised and non-derogatory term 'diffable' (*difabel*) was popularised.

The first Indonesian law that regulates diffability was the UU No. 4/1997. The law still used '*penyandang cacat*' as the term. The using of this term, whether knowingly or unknowingly has

[83] In the International Classification of Impairment, Disability and Handicap, the WHO (1980) defined three aspects of disability: impairment, disability and handicap. Impairment is any loss of abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function. Disability is any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. Handicap is a disadvantage, for a given individual, resulting from an impairment or disability, that limits or prevents the fulfilment of a role that is normal, depending on age, sex, social and cultural factors.

formed an opinion that the diffable people need help, are unable to do the 'normal' activities that others (non-diffable) do and deserve pity. Then things began to change as the UN released resolution no. A/61/106 about the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 13 December 2006. The convention was later signed by the Indonesian Government on 30 March 2007 and was ratified on Wednesday, 19 October 2011. The law that legitimated the convention was the UU no. 19/2011. Based on the law, the term 'disability' was used as a replacement for '*penyandang cacat*'. While there are some disputes about the usage of term 'disability' and 'diffability', recently most of diffability movement choose to use 'diffability' rather than 'disability'. They choose the term because it is connotatively positive. The 'diffable' starts from perception that the person is firstly human in its very essence. Therefore, other attributes are subsidiary to the 'humanity'. In short, the 'diffable' sees the person as a whole human being, regardless the attributes. Meanwhile, 'disabled' sees the person from the function, whether it is working or not. The same reasoning also applied to the research. This research follows the term 'diffable' instead of 'disabled' because the term is better nuanced.

Diffable empowerment is the lasting issue of the movement. Long before Dr. Soeharso[84] built the Rehabilitation Centre (RC) in Solo, the serious effort to increase the dignity of the diffable, by increasing their independence, has begun. There were medical services provided to 'cure' the diffable. Even so, based on Dr. Soeharso's experiences, providing medical help alone was not enough to help a diffable become independent. So, the establishment of the Rehabilitation Centre was meant to help with this aim. By providing supporting tools and skills training, the diffables were helped to cope with their inadequacies and become independent. The skills-training was provided as a gateway to expand working ability more extensively. Unfortunately, the government and the caretaker of charitable institutions often became entrapped with a very narrow mindset.

> Mr. Harso [Dr. Soeharso] once thought that if the diffables had artificial limbs, they would be autonomous. But then he knew that artificial limbs alone cannot make the diffable autonomous. … An idea rose up. [dr. Soeharso thought], "Because there were a lot of spare time, how about if thesepeople [the diffable] are provided with practical skills which were fast and easy to learn. Then, they could develop their skills themselves. … This skill is just a gateway, but an eagerness to work must be understood more broadly. Unfortunately, the caretaker of the RC never understood this. Neither did the government. (Sapto Nugroho, Yayasan Talenta Solo, Interview, 14/12/2011)

The above quote seemingly affirms the contemporary situation in which diffables are continuously mistreated. Instead of giving them a wide opportunity to perform their talents, most of them are directed to do certain activities. The narrow mindset leads to the opinion that the diffable is suitable only for certain employment. For example, as we can often see today in Indonesia, being a masseur or a tailor is usually labelled as the job for a diffable, i.e. the blind, as they are being trained merely on those limited skills.

> After providing the diffable with skills, Mr. Harso built Yayasan Sheltered Workshop (YSW). At that time, Mr. Harso got a lot of orders to make helmets and army suits. The workers were a mixture of diffables and non-diffables. ... The mixture was meant to build a genuine social

[84] Prof. Dr. Soeharso (1912-1971) is an orthopedist, Indonesian national hero and the founder of Rehabilitation Centre of Professor Doctor Soeharso in Surakarta (Solo), which is a place to take care people with physical defect.

> interaction. But soon, the effort was defeated [again]. Now, the remnants [of the YSW] will be hired by McDonalds. (Sapto Nugroho, Yayasan Talenta Solo, Interview, 14/12/2011)

As indicated above, in addition to the training, an effort to create a genuine social interaction between the diffable and non-diffable was made too; so that dichotomy between 'normal' and 'abnormal' can be erased. Although the attempt has lost because of different interests, at least Solo, through the YSW of Dr. Soeharso's, an attempt was made.

Box 4. Indonesian diffables quick assessment

Based on 2011 Ministry of Health's data, the diffable people in Indonesia were estimated at around 6.7 million (3.11% of thetotal population). But, the number would be raised by up to 10 percent of total population if UN's strict standards were applied (WHO 2007). It means that the actual number is around 20 million.

Official statistics state that out of the total disabled population, 40.3% have locomotor disabilities, 17.0% are visually impaired, 13.4% are intellectually disabled, 12.0% are hearing impaired, 7.2% have a speech impairment, 6.8% come under the category of mental illness and 3.2 % constitute people with multiple disabilities (Cheshire, 2010).

According to the Indonesian Statistic Centre Agency (2001), there is a huge gap in regard to the number of persons with different abilities in urban and rural areas; 65.71% diffables live in rural areas while 34.29% of them live in urban areas.

In dealing with diffables, there are two approaches in exercising social rehabilitation: institutional and non-institutional. Dr. R. Soeharso Orthopedic Hospital is an example of the 38 public institutions for diffables and is the only national reference hospital for orthopedic cases(JICA, March 2002).

Concerning education and employment, while there are special schools for persons with different abilities; those who live in remote areas have limited access to these educational facilities(JICA, March 2002). According to National Census (BPS 2003), there are 361,860 children with special needs (age 0 to 18), with only 14.4% of them receive formal education at special schools (*Sekolah Luar Biasa*/SLB). It means the rest 85.6% do not have access to formal education. In 2009, the numbers of them who are going to school increased to 85,645. The majority of them -70,501 children– receive their education in special schools, while 15,144 children go to inclusive ones.

In terms of employment, persons with different abilities frequently face obstacles when seeking job opportunities due to policy-related obstacles, employer-related obstacles, and self-imposed constraints (JICA, March 2002). Such conditions are worsened by the lack of a qualification and certification system for job skills of diffables.

Source: Authors, from various resources

Although the diffability number in Indonesia is quite significant (See Box 4), the diffable people in Indonesia are still facing huge problems concerning public services. They are being discriminated against on day-to-day basis in many aspects: education, employment, public facilities, transport and various accesses to civil services. In education, while the school specification (separation) of diffabled and 'normal' children is still an issue, schools for special needs are very limited in terms of number. The parents of diffabled children find it very difficult to exercise their rights to enrol their children at school as access is also difficult. The Central Statistic Agency (*Badan Pusat Statistik*/BPS) in 2003 noted that only five percent of 1,480,000 diffabled people were eligible to receive any formal education.[85]

[85] See http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/lifeandtimes/how-schools-are-failing-disabled-students/313698

In transport and public facility, the local governments have not provided enough accessible transportation facilities. Improper ramps and stairways, muted traffic signals, broken sidewalks and pothole riddled streets will endanger the diffable people. The scant access in public places is also evident at train stations, airports, bus stations and shelters and buildings. In other realms, diffable people are continuously been discriminated against in job-seeking or higher education seeking processes. As these barriers exist, the diffable arenot able to exercise their rights.

Being equally treated and not being discriminated against is a human rights issue, a right that iswritten in the Indonesian Constitution, article 28 C:

(1) that every person shall have the right to develop him/herself through the fulfillment of his/her basic needs, the right to get education and to benefit from science and technology, arts and culture, for the purpose of improving the quality of his/her life and for the welfare of the human race;
(2) every person shall have the right to improve him/herself through collective struggle for his/her rights to develop his/her society, nation and state.

Considering this – and also that the media is an instrument incivilising society – it is imperative to urge the media to defend the rights of diffable as they are pleading for fair access to societal resources. However, assome parts of the media system are obviously biased towards particular interests, the diffable's pleas are left unanswered. Instead of speaking up for the diffable, the media tend to use the diffable as a commodity for their own benefits.

6.2. The diffables and the media

Being incapable of operating 'normal' tools because of their weaknesses, the diffable do not have much option to access various media as well. The various types of diffability itself have made the problem more complex. Each type of diffability needs its own media 'treatment'. For example, since sign language was no longer used by television, the deaf people struggled to receive the news. The unavailability of Braille media also made it difficult for blind-deaf people to access information. The complexity of media access and tools – in which different type of diffability requires specific media – becomes a major issue in exercising diffability's right to media.

> Diffable's access to the media is very minimal. There was sign language [for the deaf people when watching TV], but now it is changed with [running] texts, which are unfortunately completely different from what is being [visually] offered. So, my friends who are deaf are sometimes confused why the pictures differ from the text [because they considered the text as the explanation of the picture]. So, what does it mean? They are suffering [to understand the information], as the deaf people usually [use] visual [tools]; both texts and pictures (Sapto Nugroho, Yayasan Talenta Solo, Interview, 14/12/2011).

Sapto's account clearly points out that the disabilities characterise the access; that being disabled has something to do with media access. Unfortunately, the media are seemingly unaware and fail to adequately address the need. Sign languages are no longer present in TV programmes, neither is the alternative text for audio broadcast. With Braille, even though some are still trying to offer the tool, it is still limited and costly. As such, access is severely

limited and therefore there is a significant implication on diffable's access to information. For some parties, the advent of the Internet was expected to bridge the information gaps it enables people to get information in various and much affordable ways.

However, while most people claim that the cost of obtaining information becomes lower and lower because of the Internet, the diffable does not find it so. The Internet is not as cheap as promised because the majority of diffable people are still not familiar with computers and/or the Internet. Even if some diffables are able to operate the computer, the lack of diffable-friendly software – for example, software to convert texts to voices for the blind people – is still an issue. The following comments affirm the situation:

> … [Braille is expensive because] one ordinary page becomes four Braille pages. The paper material is also different. … [After Braille, the blind people] could use spoken book ['*buku bicara'*, a printed media packaged with audio CD]. But, the media that serve this kind of packaging are very few. [It is] very rare. …This information media [in this case, the internet] is not accessible for the diffables, except for thosewho have high intelligence. For the one like Ismail [one of GERKATIN activist] who is literate in the Internet, the information is very cheap. [They can perform this] because they have the ability. But the others cannot take advantage of the Internet access [because] the JAWS [Job Access with Speech, one of screen reader software] is rarely available in the internet kiosk [*warung internet/warnet*]. Therefore, the access to information could be very expensive for them. If they can have and use the software, they can listen to and gain information cheaply. … But, unfortunately, this bridge is not available so they cannot access the information. As the media tend to be market-oriented, they will choose any option which is profitable to them. If the market is minimal, they will not make any programme, right? (Purwanti, InterAksi Solo, Interview, 14/12/2011).

Regarding content, the condition is not much different. Any content related to diffability is limited or irrelevant. As one of the respondent clearly states below:

> Related to diffable and diffabililty, the information served by [especially] television is very far from what we deem ideal. We are expecting the media to make healthy coverage on the diffable, [for instance] how people with diffability could live with his/her own imperfection. That kind of angle is good. But [the media] did not do that. [The show] has always been dramatised. For example a diffabled parking man, a programme from Trans TV or TV 7 [now becomes Trans 7]. The programme merely exposed a pitiful point of view of his live, but never seen that he can survive in his difficult times. But, [instead of portraying the struggle, the media] displayed the misery, his povery, and any other negative things. This [kind or portrayal] makes the society thinks that "Hmm…if so, how poor the diffabled then". Just like that. There are a lot of similar television programmes (Purwanti, InterAksi Solo, Interview, 14/12/2011).

Purwanti affirms that fact that relevant content about diffability is very limited. If there is any content related to diffability, the content becomes out of context. The aspect shown in the media is merely exposing the dramatisation of diffability. The focus is always on the miserable and pitiful diffable. The heroic, thankful, and other positive aspects of being diffable are never exposed. Because the media continuously feed the public with the negative aspect of diffability, it comes as no surprise that the public never sees the strength behind the imperfection of the diffable.

The Indonesian media rarely provide special coverage on diffability deliberately. The media are seemingly reluctant to cover diffability issue if not based on certain remembrance or a special day to honor the diffable. The very basic intention is not the desire to lift the diffable up, but more to provide a 'package'. The media coverage on diffability is more 'by chance' than based on intended purpose. The following comment strengthens the circumstance faced by the diffable.

> If we observe the media, whether printed media or electronic; diffability issues are highly covered [this] December. Every December, usually 4-6 December [coverage about diffability] emerges. The media talk about the diffable only every December 3 on International Disability Day. There is no coverage on the other days. [If there is, it is] very little. But I think it has happened because the media are not independent. There are many interests [of] industry and so on. Perhaps, the diffable does not have a selling price and are not attractive enough. (Sapto Nugroho, Yayasan Talenta Solo, Interview, 14/12/2011)

As the media tend to be somewhat 'unfriendly' towards diffability, some activists are moved to make diffable community radio. In Solo, a group of diffables established Diffable's Voices Radio (*Radio Suara Difabel*) in 2005 to provide an interaction room for diffables in Solo and surrounding areas. Through the radio, the diffable shared a common room to access and produce information, particularly that which meet their needs. But finally, after running for about 4 years, the radio was temporarily paused due to a lack of budget and the difficulty to obtain a permit. The following comments from Purwanti highlight the difficulties:

> At this time, the radio's activity is still paused. It is difficult [to continue the broadcasting] because the permit is too difficult to obtain. How can community radio use the same standard as broadcast [private] one. The standard is too high … Meanwhile, the permit allowance demands standardisation: we must have our own tools [hardware], programmes, and management. This is too difficult. Once, we joined with the network of Indonesian radio to manage the permit. But we did not pass on the standardisation: for the equipments and the programmes. … The local government never supports us financially. (Purwanti, InterAksi Solo, Interview, 14/12/2011)

While the community radio is the embodiment of the citizens' initiative to get involved in accessing and producing alternative information, the permission for community radio is still difficult to obtain. The tight regulation notes that only established and financially healthy radios are allowed to obtain the permit. This problematic regulation has created abarrier for the diffable to exercise their rights in media-hood. As access is still lacking, the diffables found themselves being trapped in vicious circle of marginalisation: socially, economically and politically.

With these depictions, it seems fair to say that the diffable people in Indonesia are still very restricted in terms of media access. Because of the wide ranging of types of diffability, each type of requires a specific kind of media. Unfortunately, the specific tools to access the information are often unaffordable. Worse, the media are still reluctant to provide coverage of diffability because the issue is considered less marketable than other topics. Without specific packaging, the issues of diffabililty seem to have very little space in the media.

6.3. The diffables in the media

Stereotyping is a simplifying process that considers all different components of a group to be the same, despite each uniqueness and complexity. In most cases, this is explicitly true as persons with different ability appear in media. Without doubt, the diffable people are being portrayed in the media stereotypically, again and again. Perhaps, the most common stereotype of diffable people is the victim, a figure who is depicted as a weak, helpless subject begging for empathy. The victim stereotype may also be found in comedy: using the diffabled character – such as someone's blindness or stammer – to put them in a ridiculous circumstance.

> [Compared to foreign movies which provide a more human depiction about diffability] our movies are terrible. Like Bolot's movies [one of Indonesia's senior actors], they are terrible. Actually, he is not deaf. But, this is our societal education. The *hidayah* movies are the same. A lot of *hidayah* movies and the like, especially in MNC TV, tell story that someone is ends up using crutches [because he is disabled] because of his deeds. … [Such stories] will perpetuate societal understanding that the diffability is a result of a sin (Purwanti, InterAksi Solo, Interview, 14/12/2011).

Purwanti's comments articulate that the main problem of diffability in media, especially television, is that the media constantly present improper and misleading views about diffability. There are many soap operas '*hidayah*', which imply that diffability is an impact of a disgrace/sin. Beside soap operas, diffable people are being targeted as objects in comedy shows. The message is obvious, that diffable is a catalyst to laughter. Those kinds of programmes are found everywhere and seemingly legitimate common opinion that the diffable deserves to be laughed at.

> The news on diffability is very rare. Moreover, our friends [diffable people] have a very poor access. This is from accessibility point of view. From the information aspect, regarding diffable and diffability, again, it is still very far from the humanistic display. Why dothe media not expose the beautiful aspect? … [The coverage on diffability] is too dramatised. (Purwanti, InterAksi Solo, Interview, 14/12/2011).

Purwanti's comments articulate that while the news and/or content allocation on diffable and diffability is very rare, the inhuman display is presented in the day to day broadcasting. The common representations of diffability in the media as helpless victim begging for sympathies, as sinful disabled characters and even as villains (e.g. in movies, fictions and comics), strengthens the formation of images of diffability in the public arena. Intentionally or not, the media play a great role in constructing the public's perception of diffability.

> [Regarding the reason of the media in presenting the diffable as ridiculous and inhuman] When *InterAksi* had collaboration with friends in media, making networks, we held a national seminar for journalists. The answer is the market. Because of the market [the content] seems to be comfortably consumed by the society; they made such content. (Purwanti, InterAksi Solo, Interview, 14/12/2011).

The above comments affirm the suspicion of some diffability activists that the very limited news and/or content allocation is merely an impact of a market-driven media strategy to increase the ratings. Because the media tend to prioritise ratings over providing the society with more civilising content in their programmes, the diffable find it difficult to exercise their day to day rights, as the society tend to judge them by what they see in the media. The

production of less civilising content is impeding the diffable in having space for equal civic engagement. Such a condition affirms a premise that the noble duty of media to enable citizens in exercising the rights is often ignored due to the business interest that drives the media industry.

Box 5. Media Reports on Diffable – the Story of ASEAN Para Games 2011 7-21 December 2011

KOMPAS (printed)

Kompas' stories on ASEAN Para Games tend to give more space in telling the polemic of the event rather than covering the whole dynamic of the event. *Kompas* gives a very little coverage of the dynamic of each sport, a snapshot of chronology, or specific report on the Para Games' matches/races.

More attention is given to the controversies of the tournament and the difficulties suffered by the committee and diffable athletes in Para Games' preparation. The lack of government's attention to the event becomes the most dominant issue covered. One suchreport tells of the improper bonuses received by the diffable athletes as the bonuses are very little compared with the bonuses received by the SEA Games athletes. Other reports reveal the miscommunication between the local and the central committees and also the poor facility of the venues – which were below the international standards.

The reports on ASEAN Para Games are mainly presented in sports sections, page 28-29; while report on the Menpora's [*Menteri Pemuda dan Olahraga*/Minister for Youth and Sports Affair] bonuses for the gold medalist is put on page 5.

The way *Kompas* presented the stories shows *Kompas*' concern aboutthe government's lack of attention to the Para Games event and to the athletes. In short, *Kompas* gives a great amount of space in voicing the voices of the diffable athletes and the insufficiency of the government's response.

DETIK.COM

During the ASEAN Para Games, *detik.com* reports 12 articles on various angles: updates of medal count/standing, the achievement of Indonesian athletes and hopes from the participants for no more discrimination towards the diffable in regard to work opportunities and chances for sport competition. *Detik.com* giveslittle attention tobothreporting the polemics of the event or the concerns of the athletes in terms of bonuses and the poor standard of the venues and facilities. *Detik.com* is more focused on the 'positive' stories of the event.

REPUBLIKA

There is no report on the event.

TEMPO.CO

There is minimal coverage on the ASEAN Para Games 2011 in Solo. During the six-day sporting event, *Tempo.co* published only 6 news entries in total. The news mostly covered Indonesia's failure on this ASEAN-level competition – be it on the technical side such as the inadequate sporting instruments that were used by the athletes and the outcome of the matches such as Indonesia's loss in badminton. Out of the 6 days of sample data, there is no report on the diffable community itself – much of the news was about the disputes of the games, exposing theflaws of the organising committee and Indonesia's Vice President's opinion about the event.

The discrimination issuethat is common in the diffable community is not adequately covered let alone openly discussed – a major fault for one of the most respected media channels as established as *Tempo*.

Source: CIPG's observation 2012

Our simple observation of several media (see Box 5) reaffirms the notion that such reports on the diffable are mostly built on certain events. However, the coverage of the diffable themselves is given very little attention. As illustrated in the above box, the four mass media had very few reports on ASEAN Para Games 2011 in Solo. While quantitatively the reports are

few, in regard to the content, some reports also reflect poor quality in covering diffable concerns. The reports continuously focus on the performance of the event rather providing a deeper reflection on the concerns of diffable athletes. In addition to this, the reports are mainly put in the sport section and seem to be overshadowed by other international sport agendas.

Despite the fact that media coverage is still concentrated on International Disability Day and the day after, there are some groups of diffable who are quite content with the coverage provided by the mass media. Despite the very narrow coverage, thegroups appreciate the effort of journalists to put them in special reports. Commonly, such groups feel content because such reporting enables people to know them better.

> [Concerning the report from the media] We from Senang Hati Foundation have a positive opinion because so far, the media helped us to promote [our organisations] by reporting our activities. If we had a birthday celebration or any other events, the media were very interested to make stories about our activities. With such reportage, our celebration became more colorful (Sang Ayu Ade, Senang Hati Gianyar-Bali, Interview, 27/02/2012).

Sang Ayu's account points out that there are certain diffable groups, which are seemingly satisfied enough to be presented in the media, however the more critical diffable groups are more concerned about the quality of the content. However, scrutinising the comment from Sang Ayu, it seems obvious that media coverage on diffable issues is largely based on special events. Meanwhile, the common content presented by the media is far from ideal, with the focus being oncertain physical defects – which in turn, puts them in subordination. As Scott Bremmer once said, "Although 4.4 millions – one in seven people – has a disability, we're conspicuously absent from popular media. When we do appear, it's often in roles that are stereotypical or degrading."[86]

6.4. Stigmatising diffability: The role of media

There are two approaches to understand diffability: the medical model and the social model (McLean and Williamson, 2007). The medical approach demonstrates that the reason for diffability lies within the person. In other words, the condition of diffability was caused merely because of a disease and other health problem that requires medical cattention. This model is criticised because it constructs diffability as an aberration that needs to be fixed, hidden or even removed.[87] Also, the model raises a dichotomy between 'normal' and 'abnormal'. On the opposite, the social approach[88] sees that the social root of diffability lays on the failure of society to accommodate the need of the diffable people. It is the society whichmakes the diffable people disabled. As the society tends to isolate and exclude they who are different, so

---

86 See Bremmer (2008)

87 See Swain, French *et al* (2003:81)

88 The social model of diffability/disability was disseminated by Paul Hunt, Mike Oliver, Vic Finkelstein, etc. Please see the discussion at UPIAS (1976:14)

the society limit the diffable – the physically impaired – from full participation in the society. Therefore, the diffable are the oppressed group in the society.

As the stereotyping continues, the society does not realise that the assumption actually has no clear basis. As Barnes states, the stereotypes of diffable people are usually based on superstition, myths and beliefs from previous less enlightened ages (Barnes, 1992). The only reason why the assumptions are inherent in today's culture is because the assumptions are continuously reproduced through the media, as is the casewith the racist or sexist attitudes.

> …TV gave a less educative material about the diffable, as the dissemination of an idea that "people become diffabled because of sin" blossoms out. That opinion was worsening the stigmatisation towards the diffable. … The comedy show becomes very wretched and presents diffability as an 'interesting' show. [For example,] Azis Gagap [the stammer Azis]. Such shows make the public feel that diffability is funny and deserves to be laughed at. … [Such kind of product] is the hot commodity. (Purwanti, InterAksi Solo, Interview, 14/12/2011)

Purwanti's comments show the stigmatisation produced by the media. The media seems to sustain a belief that diffability is formed from an act of sin. While the belief still exists, the media is worsening the situation by making jokes on diffability. Such media influences the conscience of the society. What the public hear, see and read in the media determines what the public thinks about certain topics.



Figure 6.1. One example of media coverage on diffability
Source: Authors

The assumption and stereotypes about the diffable that are inherent in certain cultures are reproduced through communication media. Media tends to use the medical approach, in which the diffable are seen as a 'patient' who needs a 'cure'. The consequence is obvious: compared to the able-bodied person, they who are physically different (imperfect) are seen as less worthy and therefore become the lower class in society. Once again, this message is repeated through the media.

> [Regarding media/journalist understanding on diffable issues] But there are also journalists who are wrong. When we were diving [running water flag ceremonies for independence remembrance], Metro TV were reporting us live from the sea. But, there was another journalist who did not dive; he just sat there on the surface. He just took pictures from above. [As the result] the story became different. Then I asked him: "Why does the story turn like this?" [and the journalist replied]: "I am sorry. I cannot swim". So, he made stories from a picture he took [from above] then after that he constructed a story of his own. (Sang Ayu Nyoman Puspa, Senang Hati Gianyar-Bali, Interview, 27/02/2012)

The above account shows that while the common media tend to use certain 'news pegs' in reporting the diffables, the poor quality of journalists also contributes to misrepresentation and stereotypisation.

The combination of the minimum attention from the media, the tendency to use the medical approach in covering diffability stories and the poor quality of journalists has made the stereotypisation on diffables even stronger. Such a combination has endangered the rights of diffable in terms of content because they have to bear the result of the misleading information provided by the media. While in terms of infrastructure, the diffable still face the problem of accessibility – each type of diffability needs special media – the same case happens in terms of content where the diffables are forced to accept the severe treatment from the society who continuously receive a misleading belief that diffability is formed from an act of sin. Alongside this is the notion that the diffable are the there to be laughed at.

6.5. Vulnerable groups in the media

As market-driven interests have influenced the contemporary media in terms of presenting materials, the media tend to give limited attention to relevant societal content. Instead of promoting societal issues, the media tend to produce less significant programmes in order to chase ratings and profit. By leaving little time for relevant content to be relayed to the public, the media have not seen the citizens as legitimate stakeholders (Joseph, 2005). The non-involvement of the public in the media is a fact faced by contemporary Indonesian media. While most citizens have little chance to participate, the vulnerable groups have suffered even more.

It is obvious that diffable people, as a minority, are often viewed differently by the majority in society. Despite the fact that the majority agrees that the diffable deserve equal treatment, the reality is different. Stereotyping and unfairness is present in almost every aspect. As the media has a huge effect in forming the image of diffable people, the unfair portrayal of diffable people in front of public also becomes one of media's responsibilities. Any derogatory portrayal of diffable indicates that the media present a pseudo-public sphere for the minority. The media seems to chase profit by putting the diffable as an object of laughter rather than lifting promotingthe dignity of diffable by presenting a more human and fair portrayal.

While the media are expected to provide a proper 'public sphere' in which the civilisation of the society takesplace, the unfair coverage made by mainstream media has left some citizens abandoned. Instead of providing a respectable place for the minority to perform and to

exercise their rights, the media tend to manage them merely as object of entertainment. If public still believes that the media play role as the guardians of democracy in which every citizen will be respected fairly and equally, then the democratisation processes are at stake as media tend to make use of the minorities for the sake of profit. Not only have the media cheated the public by providing such materials, but also the media have dehumanised minority groups and individuals as impersonal for business interests (in terms of ratings) over public interests.

As the media are given 'public' mandate, the media are encouraged to give a balanced story on public concerns – which might differ to the concern of the majority. In other words, the media should address the needs of all groups in society - both majority and minority groups. The non-involvement of the minority groups in the media indicates that media tend to serve elite opinion (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). Therefore, by excluding – or giving imbalanced coverage to – the minorities' issues, the media actually has neglected their very essence as a public tool for constructing possibilities (or impossibilities) of shared life.

6.6. Promoting equal access for the diffables: Media matters

Media, with its wide-reaching coverage and its deep influence on societal norms, has a great power in injecting belief in what the society perceives to be 'normal'. Ironically, such injection is often gained by declaring what is abnormal. The tendency to create sensationalism makes the situation worse. The dissemination of a depiction of what is considered normal and abnormal is growing fast. Based on that idea, media is a great disseminator of stereotyping diffability.

Since media, for the sake of ratings, has put the diffable as a commodity to attract common interest; the rights of diffable become less discussed in front of the public. The result is obvious. The diffable find it difficult to exercise their basic rights in various realms: education, employment, civil services and accessibility. The society tend to judge the diffable as the one who needs pity, help and even deserves to be laughed at because of the common media depiction of these people.

What are the implications of all of this on the diffable's rights and their rights as common citizens? In a broader context, the derogatory images created by the media have put the diffable on the edge of society. By concentrating on the '(dis)functionality of organ' point of view, apparently the media are participating in the construction of idea that the diffable is less competent, and is therefore 'second class' in society. Considering these aspects, as the majority of people tend to believe what is served in the media; the larger implication of this is the idea of citizenship itself. The absence of the promotion of equal, fair access and/or depiction toward the diffable will push them to the subordination of citizenship, while the promotion of more equal and fair depiction will help them to live their citizenship more fully and humanely.

In summary …

We have outlined the story of Indonesian diffability movement since its earliest days up to the most recent developments. Indonesian diffables still suffer from poor access in public places and services, as well as in job-seeking and higher education seeking processes. The limited access to the aforementioned realms can be difficult for the assurance of diffable's rights as citizens.

Considering these conditions, it is imperative to urge the media, as one of the pillars of democracy, to assist the diffables in gaining proper access to societal resources. However, since some parts of the media system are biased toward certain interests, the diffables' needs are left unaddressed. In fact, instead of providing a healthy environment for public discourse on diffable's issues, the media tend to use the diffables as a commodity for their purposes. Things become more complicated since actuala ccess to media is an important issue with regard to diffability. Therefore, the diffables have very limited options to access a proper media since each type of diffability requires different tools to access the information. These complexities create serious obstacles for the diffables in exercising their rights in the society.

7.
Case 4: Exploitation of women and children

Media are the representation of the society. Who is there in the society? [There are] a lot, including women and children. Who are these women? [They are women] from Jakarta, to Maluku, to Papua and Aceh [who should be] represented in the media. Moreover, they [Indonesian media] declared themselves as national media, and their transmitters [in regard to TVs and radios] reached the whole areas. Thus, it is their obligation to represent information concerning the plural society, but unfortunately not this time. [I'm] sorry [for] Metro TV, for instance, Arab and Chinese identities are the ones which areshown up, to attract interest and rating. TV One, hmm, I never pay attention to it. But, those things are prioritised and being caught as symbols by the society, hence the society assumedthat it was acceptable, oh it was the ideal one, oh it was the real one. They saw media as a fact, but it was not. Actually, what I meant is the contemporary media are covering the society with myths, because they [the society] are not there. [The society] are not represented in the media, thus it is a [form of] myth.
(Mariana Amiruddin, Jurnal Perempuan, Interview, 05/07/2012)

On March 2012, the media – television, radio, printed media and online media – were full with reports on '*rok mini*' (miniskirt) controversy. Due to some incidents of sexual assault in *angkot* (city transportation) and other public transportations – in Jakarta in particular – the Indonesian government planned to ban the wearing of miniskirts in public places. Various reactions arose in response, since the ban tended to blame women (for wearing the miniskirt) as *prima causa* for such sexual assaults. *Forum Keadilan Perempuan* (Justice Forum for Women – FKP)[89] is among those who refuted the opinion that women are the ones who must be considered guilty for causing the incidents. The media, in this regard, were criticised also by FKP for their tendency to judge the incident improperly: instead defending women's rights proportionally, the media presented women as 'naughty' for provoking sexual arousal. Responding to the media's severe treatments, the FKP even asked the government to make sure that the media obeyed the journalism code of ethics for the protection of the victims.[90]

Still on the topic of media representation, on July 2012, several New York young women protested to *Teen Vogue*[91] about the photoshopped 'ideal of women' represented in the magazine which makes young women feel bad about themselves. The magazine, they say, is creating 'unrealistic beauty' on its pages and thus reflecting 'hypocrisy'. The young women

---

89 *Forum Keadilan Perempuan* (FKP) is a citizens' initiative network; consisting of organisations, communities and individuals that have a huge concern with women movements and issues, in particular sexual violence. See their profile at http://www.facebook.com/pages/Forum-Keadilan-Perempuan/355299131174712

90 Please read FKP's statement on the case at http://www.facebook.com/notes/forum-keadilan-perempuan/negara-ikut-memperkosa-perempuan/355362257835066

91 See http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/07/18/the-war-on-teen-vogue-young-readers-fight-for-real-girls.html

then asked the magazine to stop the whole idea of *photoshopping* since the (edited) 'unrealistic beauty' has constructed unhealthy message for young women in their teenage years. The young women asked the magazine to show more 'real girls', arguing that these photoshopped images have led to women becoming diet-obsessed and even anorexic as they feel pressured to acheive the types of body portrayed in these images. Though this is not in Indonesia, it is still relevant since these magazines are freely distributed in Indonesia and this is a concern to young Indonesian women. Being a minority group, women and children suffer not only from unfair treatment, but also more importantly from poor representation and understanding in the wider society. Here is where the media are supposed to play role in the construction of public discourse over women and children in Indonesia. Two aspects are central in the discussion: first, how women and children deal with media; and second, how they are being represented in the media and how this impacts upon society.

This chapter discusses women and children and their engagement with the media – from their own perspective. It starts by giving a historical background of women and children in Indonesia. Then, the next session examines the relations between them and the Indonesian media, in particular how they are perceived and represented in the media. The next section pieces together the discussion, emphasising the role of media in policing and valuing the rights of minority groups like women and children, before the chapter concludes.

7.1. Women and children in Indonesia: Background

The Indonesian population, according to the National Population Census 2010, is 237.6 million with 49.7% being female.[92] Despite making up almost half of the population, Indonesian women have less space to perform in day-to-day lives due to the deep-rooted patriarchal[93] culture. Men predominate at almost all levels in all sectors. Although there are some women present today, in industries, businesses, politics and governance levels; men still dominate. The deep-rooted patriarchy culture, as Lies Marcoes argues, ideologically leads to discrimination of women (Marcoes, 1996). Indonesian women, however, play a huge role in the common household. In 2010, BPS and Pekka (*Pemberdayaan Perempuan Kepala Keluarga*/Women-led Household Empowerment) estimated there were 65 million households in Indonesia, 14% (around 9 million) of which were headed by women.[94] Since the definition of family head was ambiguous, it was possible that the number was higher. This picture has put the women in the middle of two poles: the factual significance in the household and the subordination in regard to the patriarchy system.

Talking about the lasting and recent problems of women and children in Indonesia is not easy. It is a huge and complex question. Although this is simplistic there are at least four main

---

92 Central Bureau for Statistic (BPS): Census 2010

93 The patriarchy's point of view sees that men play more prominent, important and higher roles than women. See Marcoes (1996)

94 See http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/06/30/obedient-wives-club-pekka-says-husbands-should-obey-too.html

common problems. The first problem is poverty. Poverty has a great impact on women and children. The poorest Indonesian women are village housewives, industrial workers and urban poor women. The unequal access to work between men and women, the violation of women's rights – e.g. the right to have maternal leave with full remittance – in the workplace and the lower (unfair) wages than their male workmates are some of the reasons. Opinions that women are not family heads also make them more susceptible tobeing discharged than men. Poverty also makes has other impacts. According to the Indonesian Health Demography Survey (2008), the maternal mortality rate was around 320 per 100,000 births. This figure is the highest in Asia.

The same condition applies to children. As poverty has a great impact on families, often, children are forced to work. The 2009 Working Children Survey (*Survei Pekerja Anak*) notes that there are around 4.1 million working children age 5-17. The National Labor Survey (*Survei Tenaga Kerja Nasional/Sakernas*) in August 2010 notices the same condition; there are 3.2 million children age 10-17 who are working, scattered in all provinces. Health quality is also worrying. The Ministry of Women's Empowerment, based on Baseline Health Research (*Riset Kesehatan Dasar*/Riskesdas) 2010, found that there are 17.9% children under five who suffered from nutrient deficiency (*kurang gizi*); consisting of 4.9% bad nutrition (*gizi buruk*) and 13% lack of nutrition (*gizi kurang*). Based on these figures, it is apparent that "poverty has women and children's faces".

The second problem is education. Most women and children in Indonesia lack education.[95]The female literacy rate (those age 15 and over who areable to read and write) is lower than that of men. The Ministry of Education and Culture (*Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan/Kemdikbud*) in 2009 found that there were 8.3 million illiterate Indonesian citizens (age 15 and over); where 64% of them (about 5.3 million) were women. Women's participation in higher education is also lower. The Central Bureau for Statistic (BPS) in 2009 noted that only 18.59% women who graduated from senior high school and only 2.74% earn a diploma and 3.02% go to university. Meanwhile, the majority (75.69%) of women age 15 and over earn the certificate of the junior high school as their highest qualification.

The absence of proper education is also reflected in Indonesian children's faces. According to Indonesian Children Profile (*Profil Anak Indonesia*) 2011, there are 8.12% children age 5-17 who are not going to school (formal education school) and 9.3% of them never receive any kind of education. Below are the table showing literacy rates in selected in Indonesia.

[95] Education is not free. About 92% of eligible children are enrolled in primary school, a much smaller percentage attends full time. About 44% of secondary school-age children attend junior high school, and some others attend vocational schools. Please compared with http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/indonesia_statistics.html

Province/District	Adult Literacy Rate (%)		Mean years of Schooling	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Indonesia	80.5	90.9	5.6	6.9
West Java	89.2	95.2	6.2	7.3
Central Java	78.4	91.4	5.4	6.7
Wonogiri	68.3	85.0	4.8	6.4
Indramayu	55.2	78.6	3.1	4.7
Sragen	62.5	81.4	4.5	6.2

Table 7.1. Literacy Rates in Selected High Sending Districts by Gender
Source: UNDP/BPS, 2001

The third problem is domestic violence. The 2011 *Komnas Perempuan* (Anti-violence towards Women's National Committee) survey finds that there are 119,107 cases of violence towards women in Indonesia, a 13.32% increase on the previous year. From that number, domestic violence reaches 113,878 cases, in which 110,468 cases are violence towards wives. The same source also notes there are at least 289 reported cases of women trafficking, 105 reported cases of violence against migrant workers and 43 reported cases of violence in the workplace during 2011. The same condition also applies to children. Indonesian children are very susceptible to domestic violence, human trafficking, exploitation and discrimination. Even, UNICEF claims that in Indonesia, around 100,000 children are trafficked every year and 40,000-70,000 children are victims of sexual exploitations. The basic causes of child trafficking include poverty, weak law enforcement and discrimination.

The fourth is quite special, i.e. stereotyping. The stereotypical-traditional role of the Eastern Women goes as follows: reliable in taking care the house, a source of maternal wisdom, a devoted/religious person and one who will surrender to the unquestioned authority of the husband. With this stereotyping, the working area of Eastern Women is in the domestic realm. Although contemporary urban women show that they are capable of doing men's (considered) works, the image is still strong. Maybe, the stereotypes are behind the fact that women are dominantly unemployed. According to the Indonesian Statistics Agency, Jakarta region (2008), 88% of unemployed in Jakarta are women.

Indonesian women and children are still being discriminated against on day-to-day basis in many sectors: health, education, employment and other various basic rights. In education, women and children are lacking proper basic and higher education. In the health sector, women and children are still struggling to get health accesses and proper services because of poverty. In the employment sector, women are continuously been discriminated against in job-seeking or even higher education seeking processes. As these barriers do exist, women and children are struggling hard to exercise their rights.

Being equally treated and not being discriminated against is a human rights issue, in which becomes the very issue of women's liberation movements. Since beginning in the 1970s, the movement has aimed to secure women's right to participate in the society, including the ability to enter into public deliberation, institution building, and other processes associated with citizenship (Byerly and Ross, 2006). One of Indonesian feminists, Gadis Arivia, has mapped the wave of Indonesian feminism into four phases (Arivia, 2006). In Dutch colonisation, the movement demanded education rights; in *Orde Lama* administration the movement voiced a

plea for women involvement in elite politics' policies; in *Orde Baru* the movement demanded 'de-domestication' of women – to give a public place for women's activity, not only a domestic one; while in the Reform era the movement voiced anti-violence to women, both in private and public areas.

In regard to the media, since media are supposed to play a significant role as one of the fundamental elements in civilising society; the media are urged to voice the rights of women and children louder, so they can gain fair access to societal resources – thereby ensuring their citizenship. However, as some parts of media system are obviously biased towards particular interests, the pleas are seemingly left unanswered. Instead of speaking up for this vulnerable group, the media tend to exploit women and children for business purposes.

The global women's liberation movements, perhaps – and the betterment of the efforts to defend human rights – have a pivotal contribution to improve women and children's representation today. However, women and children still experience actual prejudice and discrimination in terms of unequal treatment, unequal pay, and unequal value in real life. So too do these themes continue to occur in media portraits (Byerly and Ross, 2006). The misrepresentation and absence of women and children, in turn, also has a significant impact on their life. With 24/7 news channels and hundreds of satellite and digital services, the media's influence on women and children is apparently greater now than ever before.

7.2. Women and children and the media

At present only one third of the world's population has access to information and communication technologies.[96] The same is true in Indonesia. With regards to the Internet, despite the high growth of users, reaching 31 million in 2010[97], the access to telecommunication infrastructure is very much available largely in Java-Bali and Sumatra, leaving other parts of Indonesia suffering from poor infrastructure[98].

In some parts of Indonesia, women and children have found it difficult to access media infrastructure. As other remote places in Indonesia have a very poor access to media infrastructure, women and children who live in these areas do not have much opportunity to access the media. The same case also applies in some areas along the Borneo border. As a matter of fact, a group of children in the West Borneo hinterland cannot recognise the difference between a book and a magazine and they have never seen a newspaper. A story from Kristien Yuliarti, a lay-missionary who lived there for years, revealed this wretched situation.

> I came to the Serawai district and wasasked to teach English. When there was a topic about newspapers and magazines, I was shocked because the students have no idea at all about what magazines and newspapers are. It was in 2002. … Access to newspaper or magazine

[96] Please see http://www.itu.int/wsis/docs/background/general/reports/26092001_dotforce.htm; consult also Samassékou(2006)

[97] See http://www.apjii.or.id/dokumentasi/statistik.php

[98] See Kominfo (2010)

> was very limited; stopped in Nangapinoh. … If the students found *Hidup* magazines in priest house, they recognised it as a book. They did not know what magazines were. (Kristien Yuliarti, MAVI, Interview, 11/12/2011).

This story made us revise this research assumption. As printed media is very limited and electronic media is highly depended on fuel oil, the citizens are battling to gain access to proper and good information. While the research assumes that the non-technological based media is no longer an issue in Indonesia, the reality indicates the opposite. Although the availability of media infrastructure is still a big issue in some remote areas in Indonesia, there is another concern regarding the derogatory and uncivilising content. The combination of limited infrastructure and the poor quality of content creates a bigger concern, as shown by the story of Borneo border children below.

> For radio, even if we can catch the signal, the available one is the BBC and the like. Those are radios we cannot consume. We will never watch the inhabitants turn on the radio. So, the popular media is television. … In sub-district (*kecamatan*) where the electricity is available from six in the evening until five in the morning, the only entertainment is television. And it is indeed only in West Borneo area, at least after Nangapinoh regency, the television airwaves can only be received if the people use the parabola. … Without using parabola, the inhabitants will only receive local Malaysian television. With parabola, they can access RCTI, Trans and so on. But what can they consume with such limited availability of electricity? It is soap operas, right? The effect [of this situation] indeed needs a lot of concern. (Kristien Yuliarti, MAVI, Interview, 11/12/2011)

The West Borneo's story as uttered by Kristien indicates the common condition of media infrastructure in remote areas: limited printed media and highly fuel-depended electronic media. Because of the insufficient fuel and motivated by the needs of entertainment, the citizens tend to allocate the resource in 'prime time' programmes. Meanwhile, Indonesian television programmes almost always offer soap operas in the prime time. Such a condition is considered worrying and threatening, especially for the youths.

> Such shows [soap operas] are building dreams in children's minds; a dream to go to Java Island. And when they attend Javanese school … they tend to choose to live in Java, because they can enjoy Javanese lifestyle that is comfortable, charming and modern. … The ease in accessing media, including cellular phone and other communication technologies, makes them dream [about living] in Java. And such dreams are continuously pushed by the soap operas. … Java is patron for everything. What is shown in the soap opera is the ideal model. Being boy and girlfriends should follow what is provided by television. There is no education concerning media. … In truth, the actual danger is in there [manipulating desire; providing pseudo-desire]. (Kristien Yuliarti, MAVI, Interview, 11/12/2011)

With these depictions, it seems fair to say that women and children – as with other citizens – in Indonesia are still very restricted in terms of media access. While they continue to suffer from poor infrastructure, they also suffer from being objects of 'manipulative' and derogatory content. The presence of uncivilising content as shown in most 'Java-oriented' soap operas justifies the statement that women and children are treated merely as objects, not as subjects who have spaces of empowerment.

While evidence from the Borneo case shows that printed media is still very rare; the spread of electronic media (especially television) is vaster. Television has reached almost every region of Indonesia, even the hinterlands. A recent survey by BBG and Gallup on media use in Indonesia

finds that majority of citizens in rural areas (85 percent) is using television as the main media platform for news, while printed media are only being used by 4 percent of citizens in rural areas. The following table shows the result of the survey:

Source	Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Total (%)
Television	93	85	87
Friends/Family	43	37	39
SMS	46	32	36
Radio	14	10	11
Newspaper/Magazines	13	4	7
Internet	15	7	9
Social Networking	9	13	8

Table 7.2. Daily use of media platforms for news
Source: BBG and Gallup survey 2012 (BBG and Gallup 2012)

As shown in the above table, the poll also reaffirms that television is still the most important medium by far, in terms of overall reach and as information source. But still, the broad range of television is not parallel with its quality. The poor quality of Indonesian TV programmes is also shown from the critics accepted by the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (*Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia/KPI*). In 2010, the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission accepted 26,489 complaints from the public about the presence of various poor quality TV's programmes on their screens. This number had increased from the 8,089 complaints received in the previous year. The condition also shows that the public is demanding more quality TV programmes.

As the problems of women and children in Indonesia are very complex and related to the common Indonesian problems, e.g. poverty, education, employment and health; Indonesian women and children need every element of the public to participate. Here, media can play a role in covering such issues deeply and in providing a place for public discourses. Unfortunately for the women and children, despite the significance of such discourses, the media are seemingly reluctant to make continuous coverage on the issue because it is considered less marketable than other topics. Without any specific packaging – e.g. the Kartini day, mother's day or National Kids Day – the issues do not have enough spaces in the media. The 2011 study of the Alliance of Independent Journalists (*Aliansi Jurnalis Independen/AJI*)[99] affirms this statement. The study found that women's issues have not been an important aspect for media coverage. The study also points to the media's tendency to follow socio-political trendswhen it does report on such issues.

While women and children still suffer from poor media infrastructure – as other Indonesian citizens have; especially outside Java Island – women and children's exclusion and misrepresentation in the media have hampered their status as citizens. The limited public discourses about certain significant issues for women and children – health, education, employment, poverty, etc – have left women and children treated unfairly. Instead of being

[99] In 2011, AJI conducted a study "News Mapping on Women Issues" (*Pemetaan Berita Bertema Perempuan*) which scrutinised 7 newspapers (*Indo Pos*, *Kompas*, *Warta Kota*, *Republika*, *Suara Pembaruan*, *Koran Tempo* and *Media Indonesia*) from July – August 2010 and four television channels (RCTI, SCTV, Metro TV and TV One) from August – September 2010.

given spaces for empowerment so that they are able to fight for their rights, women and children are given a very small portion of information that is fundamental for certain rights. The limited spaces for women and children to gain quality information from the media have hampered their status as citizens.

7.3. Women and children in the media

The tiny proportion of women working in the media perhaps signals that women are the minority in the media scene. Based on 2009 AJI's database, there are 1,339 male journalists while 234 (equal to 12%) journalists are women. Even so, women are always present in the media; not as active player, but ironically as objects. On every media product, women and children can be seen as a display of advertising, as an object of criminal news reporting or as an object of disaster covering. Thus, women, together with children, indeed are continuously being displayed in the media as commodities. The media scarcely cover important women and children's issues like women's equity, education, child nutrition, abortion and the like.

> [While we can notice that the numbers of] women reporters have increased, also women journalists are developed in number, but when AJI made a detailed observation on it, they reported that the women are used for selling appeal [to attract], to ease them in getting source persons and officials who are male in majority. Then these women showed up on the screen so that people watch them [instead the quality of the content] to raise ratings. Thus, to be a women journalist is to be under the condition of being good looking, [there is] no need to be smart or know journalism well. Then we can see the implication on media's appearance; from how they choose the women journalist, let alone the products. It is allabout the packaging.
>
> [On the implication of such employment] Women's image itself becomes un-ideal for women empowerment. It means that, when you are not pretty [good looking], when you are smart but not pretty as [the constructed image of] women, then you are not the one to work in the media. This alone serves as form of unequality. It means that discrimination does happen to women who actually have potential, while [this condition] does not occur to men. (Mariana Amiruddin, Jurnal Perempuan, Interview, 05/07/2012)

Mariana's comment shows that since the media (especially television) determine their own standard to employ women in their companies, the media has triggered bias from the very beginning. Such bias is threatening the effort of female empowerment because it has created a pre-condition of unequality.

In their study, AJI finds that most media, whether printed media or electronic media (television), have an average interest in women issues (AJI, 2011). Even so, the coverage is not followed by a deep understanding about gender and gender perspectives, so the point of view of the news coverage becomes very limited. Furthermore, any coverage on women and/or children issues was made in relation to ceremonial events as an entry point to the discourse. Meanwhile, many programmes in media still represent women and children merely as objects. A similar study conducted by Komnas Perempuan on certain printed media also found that women's issues were still treated as inferior ones. Around 59% of news reporting on women are put in the secondary column (Perempuan, 2012). The following quote affirms the studies.

> If we are talking about common women representation in media, we can see that representation of women as objects is evident. But, in these last ten years, there are some media who give room for women's issues and give a chance to women to make progress; not merely as objects. But it is very dependent on the specific media (Karlina Supelli, Driyarkara School of Philosophy, women activist, Interview, 03/04/2012)

The same condition applies to the children in television. Often, children consume various programmes that are not designed for children. While the excessive habits in front of the TV[100] hasbecome a serious concern for parents, the content of the media multiplies the problems. Displays of violence aired on TV or other inappropriate contents in various media are one of the reasons. Even if today, there are programmes – especially television – being labelled as kids programme, like *Idola Cilik* (Little Idol) on RCTI, *Pildacil* (*Pemilihan Da'i Cilik*/Audition of Little Islam Teacher) on ANTV, or various animated series/cartoons; the actual messages performed in the programmes do not reflect the issues of children. Various soap operas and shows which feature childstars such Ibrahim 'Baim' Alkatiri, Amel Carla, Umay and Cinta Kuya, are frequently contaminated with adult content material: family fighting, domestic violence and the like. The same case happens with cartoons. As one of the most popular cartoons, *Naruto* is considered to contain a lot of violence. Another popular cartoon, *One Piece*, is also considered to contain adult materials.

In addition to this, children are prone to be the object of poor consumption. The 2010 study of the Children Media Development Foundation (*Yayasan Pengembangan Media Anak/YPMA*) foundthat in every 30 minutes of children programmes, 10 minutes are allocated for advertisements. Meanwhile, advertisements in children's programmes are full of snacks and fast food chain restaurant ads; those kinds of food which contain less nutrition. The absence of strict regulation to control the ads is also worsening the situation. The complex diffusion between the tendency of media to gain profit and the absence of regulation is making the children victims here. The children are seemingly left exploited, with a minimum effort to empower them.

In the context of media industry, children are allegedly not being taken seriously by the media because they are not the primary market. As the media give a very tiny allocation to children's programmes, the children are becoming consumers of mainstream media products that actually are not created for them. As a result, children are prone to access adult/mature material, for example violence and pornography.

Since the media has been believed to have a great effect in forming someone's view of the world, children too cannot resist the impact of the messages they are consuming. The following case of children of Borneo could be an example of how the children, through the media, are being unconsciously persuaded – and so being manipulated – that Java is the 'centre of the world'.

[100] Since the *Reformasi*, the high increasing of media penetration has become a serious problem to children, youth, parents and educators. The 2006 study of Children Media Development Foundation (*Yayasan Pengembangan Media Anak/YPMA*) shows that Jakartan children spent 35-40 hours a week in front of the TV.The tolerated/suggested duration for watching TV for children is 2 hours per day.

> When I deliver my duties in Serawai, the Indian films are very popular. On Sundays, when the electricity is turned on, the roads will be very quiet [because] as far as I know, one of the television stations, i.e. Indosiar, is airing the Indian movies. ... They [the children] are never interested in cartoons, [they rather choose] Indian films and soap operas. As an impact, [the programmes brings serious consequences] on their social relation. For these secluded children, Java [Island] is the patronage for life style. So, what comes in the soap operas, they will try to follow; they will try to look for the clothing. It is very worrying … So, in Menukung district, it is very rare to find people buying tabloids to read. The people also do not feel it important to read and turn on the TV for news programmes. [They do this] because what is served in the media does not bring any impact and/or relevance to their lives (Kristien Yuliarti, MAVI, Interview, 11/12/2011).

The above quotes clearly display that the media, whether unintentionally or intentionally, has a significant role in shaping the dreams of children by depicting Java as the 'best' for them. Through the soap operas and programmes alike, the children's tastes are being pushed to the limit, so that living in Java Island becomes the utmost future dream. Based on this case, it is obvious that more than often the media create a bigger problem for the inhabitants, instead of producing relevant content for them. The disembedded programmes produced by various TV stations are one of the signals that the media are failing to produce materials that are closely related to local issues.

While the television channels are seemingly reluctant to produce any content about empowered women and children; instead they are presenting derogatory images. Unfortunately, other media are still guilty of the same behaviour. Based on observations of seven printed media and four television stations during specific periods in 2011, AJI finds that the media are inconsistent in delivering any coverage on women's issues. The study finds that the media's understanding on gender perspectives is still very shallow. Apparently, media still consider that women's identities cannot be separated from the outer/bodily appearance, a good-looking, beautiful one. In addition, media have presented women as those who are responsible for kitchen duties and have double duties. News/coverage on women's issues is still showing 'binary opposition' by separating the duties of men and women. This has meant that women are being presented in ways reflective of old myths: as those who work in the kitchen, those who do the shopping, who are responsible for domestic things, and should be 'pretty'. So, there is no shock when programmes about markets or food or children always use women as their main focus.

In regard to printed media, text is usually euphemistic. It gives a dramatic impression although it does not fit with the actual meaning. The usage of such 'misleading' terms present in printed media, has been proven by the findings of AJI and Komnas Perempuan's studies (AJI, 2011, Perempuan, 2012). While the printed media are still suffering from the misuse of the term, the advent of visual technology is seemingly strengthening an impression that women are there to 'be looked at' – as if women are a form of show. By constructing an 'ideal' image of women in the media, the media do not respect woman as a whole individual, but merely respect the attributes attached to her, i.e. her (socially constructed) beauty.

Although there is a limited number of news items which are helping to improve the quality of women's lives, some others reaffirm the gender biased point of view. The presence of a rating system is considered as one of factors that contribute to these circumstances.

> Even if some media are seemingly pleased to give room for women's issues, e.g. domesticviolence, the delivery method is still too sensational so that the impression of women as objects is becoming hard to erase. The popular reason for this condition is for the sake of ratings. Then it will be difficult to cover such serious issues with such a shallow perspective. … [Because of the rating], there is not any further follow-up to solve the issues. … This condition is so much different with some printed media that seriously give space for the issue; [they] not only give the problem, but also [allow] ideas and thoughts. But the number [of such media] are not in great quantities yet (Karlina Supelli, Driyarkara School of Philosophy, women activist, Interview, 03/04/2012).

The above comments affirm the impression that the very little content allocation is merely an impact of a market-driven media strategy to increase the ratings. Because the media tend to prioritise ratings than providingthe society with more civilising content in their programmes, the women and children are struggling to exercise their day-to-day rights as the majority of society tend to treat them in terms of how they are shown in the media. The production of less civilising content is impeding the ability of Indonesian women and children to have space for equal civic engagement. Such a condition is seemingly affirming a premise that the noble duty of media to enable citizens in exercising the rights is often ignored due to the business interest that drives the media industry.

While the quantity of women working in the media industry is very small in number, the implication of the industry controlled by majority male players is huge. As the male players are allegedly lacking the women and children's perspective, the products are barely in line with the expected (respectable) coverage. In regard to the ability to co-create the content, women participation as source persons, compared to male respondents, is low. AJI's study found that 54.1% of respondents on 195 news items about women's issues are male (AJI, 2011). There are two possibilities here: thatmen understand women's issues better or that the media are reluctant to use a female resource person.

Box 6. What is the common news about women?

ON NEWSPAPERS

Based on the observation, AJI (2011) finds that out of 195 news items on women issues; 145 news items (74.35%) are based on an incident/occasion and only 50 are idea-based.
Meanwhile, the dominant topic on women coverage is about (sexual) violence with 22.05% (43 items).

A similar study conducted by Komnas Perempuan (2012) also finds that out of 1210 news items on women; the main focus is (sexual) violence suffered by women. This kind of news earns 346 news items.

ON TELEVISIONS
AJI's study finds that out of 124 news items on women, 37(29.8%) of them are about violence.
Meanwhile, 83 (66.94%) are built upon certain occasions/incidents.

Source: (AJI, 2011); (Perempuan, 2012)

What do these findings reflect? While women-themed news has apparently attracted a lot of media, both printed and electronic, women (together with children) are seemingly barely present in accordance with contemporary social political issues. The study even shows that idea-based reporting on women issues is very rare, as is coverage that is based on in-depth

investigation. Women's image is almost always linked to special occasions/incidents, for instance Kartini's Day, Mother's Day, or even as victims of violent conducts, etc. Hence, the image of 'women' presented in the media consists of two areas only: whether she performs as a beautiful (socially constructed) creature or is related to certain acts of violence.

7.4. Stereotyping women and children: The role of media

The media and access to information are central to the development of society. The media are supposed to accommodate a space in which the public can freely interact and engage over matters of public concern. The concept of 'public sphere' (Habermas, 1989, Habermas, 2006) not only makes the media so vital, but also makes public engagement so instrumental in the context of democracy. With the power of media, it is possible to deliver the civilisation processes. With the power of media, women and children also supposedly have enough room to voice their pleas, and so to exercise their rights.

But, do the media represent women and children in a proper sense? To what extent do the media pay attention to it? These are some fundamental questions that are bombarding the media mainstream. While news and features about women and children have increased in years and scope since the *Reformasi*, worrying trends arise. One is the commodification of women's bodies, where women are being reduced to less than a part of their body.

The same condition applies to the television broadcasting. As TV prefers to use ratings as the primary category to decide the main content and leave relevant public issues less addressed; the reproduction of discreditable image of women and children is continuously maintained. Some particular late-night TV programmes even feature overtly sexual content. Sometimes, the programmes also include graphic sexual assaults towards women. The following Haryanto's comments affirm the common situation of Indonesian television broadcasting.

> [While the television broadcasters only allocate a small portion for news,] apart from that, we can see how media content, including its news broadcasting, is moving towards commercialisation, [and] sensation. [Many] important public issues are being neglected since they are less interesting and less commercial. In the end it is all about ratings; and ratings have degraded public interest and taste (I. Haryanto, LSPP, Interview, 26/10/2011).

Since sensationalism, for the sake of ratings, has taken over the substance in most media – especially television programmes with its soap operas – the media seem to have forgotten their public duties. As Haryanto's comments imply, the media are no longer responsible for educating and civilising the society. Rather, the media have chased after profit by producing sensational programmes. Ironically, women and children are often used as tools to achieve the goal. The following statement affirms the opinion that instead of voicing important public issues, the media tend to chase sensationalism – and profit.

> [Several reasons why women's access to media is very lacking are] most of journalists are male and their understanding on women's interest is very lacking. Thus, their concern on the issues is also inadequate. For them, women's interests are not as important as we fight for our needs. The one which is interesting for them is when a criminal act towards children and women [occurs]. Such issues are attractive for them, no need to ask [them to make stories,

> they will go for it]. But, when we fight on how the common policies stand for women - pro-women-they have not given this enough attention yet.
>
> Moreover, today the media are very engaged with commerce. Everything [is calculated] by money. If there is no money, there will not be any news. Sometimes, I doubt which one is the real news, which one is by order. So, sometimes when we want to advocate a certain issue and wish the media to cover it; it seems that we must pay. (Luh Riniti, Bali Sruti, Interview, 03/03/2012).

Apart from some media's claims that they provided spaces for women and children, the 2011 study of AJI points out that any coverage on the issues is merely tied with ceremonial events concerning women and children. The same study also finds that the lack of gender perspective is still colouring the faces of mainstream media. The following statement shows the lack of the gender perspective in the choice of the words used by media in reporting women's issues.

> Primarily, women are represented as objects; as objects of certain report. For instance, in reporting something, from the term/word used, women are indeed [presented as] being an object to despise. When a woman has been raped, for example, [the way media chose and arrange] the language is very awful. The woman as a person is replaced with 'the thing', with certain naming, with certain title. Although [it is] not ethical to mention a victim's name, such expression is painful, as if she is a 'naughty' woman. For example, the use of 'Mawar' ['Rose'; to name the victim]...Such [style of reporting] in turn causes antipathy, not sympathy [toward the victim](Luh Riniti, Bali Sruti, Interview, 03/03/2012).

The lack of gender and respectable perspectives can also be found in the recent media's perspective on the cases of miniskirt[101]. Instead of protecting the rights of women in public places, women are seemingly being blamed for 'provocative' acts. The way in which media cover the issue reflects their poor perspective in framing and defending the victim. Most media seemingly broadcast the same message: women must dress modestly if they are to avoid a sexual assault. The various coverage by media has placed the women as the responsible party; they are the guilty ones – hence, the 'culture to blame women victim' (Perempuan, 2012). A similar case also can be found in news related to children. Male and female children are found being stereotypically reported. Female children are more likely to appear in cases of child abuses, while male children in sport or technology/computer-related content.

The poor perspective is also evident in the frequent framings of women and children in media as victims. Both of them are predominantly represented as vulnerable, passive and dependent on the male. In news about criminal actions or disasters, women and children are presented to invite strong emotional responses from the readers, listeners or viewers. Women and children are repeatedly presented as the weak ones. This depiction of women and children is obvious in soap operas where they are represented as miserable, and always needing protection from men; who are more empowered.

> When we speak about media, there are two important aspects. [In today's realities], the media are present not only as a source of information, but precisely the political economic battle also rides in the vehicle. I thought that the media play a huge role here [to control a

[101] Due to some cases of sexual assault in *angkot* (city transportation) and other public transportations, in March 2012, the Indonesian government are planning to make a ban on the use of miniskirt in public places. Various reactions arise as the government's call for the controversial ban.

> specific way of thinking, taste and emotion]. … Take an example, an impulse of being successful. The impulse is so dominant, that there is a period where any programme, whether Indonesian Idol, Dangdut Idol or any other show that requires SMS (Short Message Service) support [is exploding]. …. Then come another one, i.e. pairing contest and/or column in printed media. There, ten males are about to choose their own dates. There, women's [ideal] images are represented in specific criteria. In the end, it is about educating, that the very essence of media is to educate public on public matters, not only in giving information. But now, it is limited to the taste, desire matters (Karlina Supelli, Driyarkara School of Philosophy, women activist, Interview, 03/04/2012).

Karlina's comments imply that the style of how media present women and children's issues actually shows a kind of shallow 'humanism'. This kind of 'humanism', instead of empowering women and children, tends to place women and children as merely objects/victims. The point of view used by most media is the pitiful one. As most cases of 'national' (private) television broadcasting implies, any programmes and/or news covering the women and children's issues is disembedded from the local context. While most private television broadcasting uses Jakarta's point of view as the main perspective, sometimes the local problems become severely neglected. Regarding the concern, instead of covering the serious local women and children's issues, the media – especially television – use their power to manipulate the taste of women and children and leave them as an object. Such a condition leaves the fundamental questions: *"Where are women and children inthe chaotic public sphere? Is there any proper place for them in the so called 'public sphere'?"* unanswered.

7.5. The weak in the media

By presenting women and children merely as 'weak' or as 'victims', they are not only being sacrificed for the sake of a media marketing strategy, but their status as citizens is also being violated. There is a clear danger here, as the women and children are considered as the 'second class citizens', hence they cannot exercise the same right as others.

What will happen to the other weak groups, for example the indigenous people, the domestic workers, the poor people or even the HIV/AIDS patients if the media continue to portray them arbitrarily? As the groups have poor access to media and the media are seemingly reluctant to empower them through the coverage, the weak groups tend to remain weak: in the media scene and then in the context of equal access to exercise their rights.

The way women and children are continuously presented as 'weak' actually endangers the democratisation processes. As democracy requires equal citizenship, the 'weakening portrayal' is not acceptable. What will happen to democratisation if media choose to further weaken the weaker groups? The implication is huge because it will place the groups in second layer of citizenship and therefore threaten their rights.

In the end, the ways in which women, children and other weak groups are depicted in media send important messages to the public about their places and roles in society. A good and respectable depiction will help them to exercise their rights in economy, social and cultural aspects. On the contrary, the derogatory depiction will push them to the depths of misery. The

choice of media's perspective will determine the future of Indonesian women, children and the other weak groups.

> If we are about to talk about media, the significance is that media relates to the socio-cultural. So if we are speaking about access to media, media's impact; all of it is related to the rights of economy, society and culture. Access to natural resources and economic resources is related to the poverty problem. All those problems are part of the ECOSOC rights where women are frequently being forgotten (Karlina Supelli, Driyarkara School of Philosophy, women activist, Interview, 03/04/2012).

Karlina's comments point to the importance of media in defending citizens' right in every aspect. The media indeed, in particular television with its huge audience share, perform a crucial cultural function, whether in the framing of public issues or in the promotion of specific discourses. As Indonesian's faces are (in this case) reflected in their women and children, the media are responsible for taking part in the effort of the empowerment; starting by presenting a respectable and humanised coverage of them.

7.6. Protecting women and children: Media matters

The media, with its wide-reaching scope and its deep influence on societal norms, have a huge influence in delivering messages to the public about the role and position of women and children in the society. In its very essence, the media also have a huge responsibility to take part in building a society where the principles of transparency, diversity and solidarity do exist. Unfortunately, the dream of a democratic society where all people can exercise their rights to communicate and where people are inspired by equitable gender, cultural and regional perspectives is threatened as the media seemingly fail to carry out their noble function.

As the media, for the sake of profit, has put women and children as commodities to attract common interests; the rights of women and children are at stake. The women and children are struggling hard in exercising their day-to-day rights as the coverage on the issue is very limited, compared to the 'glamorous' side of commodification. The misery of women and children is seemingly hidden under the charming faces of them found in advertising. In addition to this, while the media are seemingly presenting women and children a lot more than before, actually such coverage is not followed with a good basic understanding of their issues. In general, the media are still stereotyping women, which in turn has created discrimination towards women. Apparently, for media, women's identities cannot be separated from the outer/bodily appearance; a good-looking, beautiful one. News/coverage on women's issues still shows 'binary opposition' by separating the duties of men and women.

The portrayal of women and children as mere objects of consumption has placed them in the corner of the media scene. Through the power of media, the stereotypes then have been embedded in women and children's consciousness and this is still happening today. As a result of such absence of promotion of equal access and fair portrayal, in real life women and children are often being treated as if they are not full citizens. The severe condition hurts the very essence of democracy in which every citizen – including the weak and abandoned ones –

will be taken care of equally. Things get increasingly worse as the media, as one of the main pillars of democracy, choose to close their eyes and prefer to sacrifice the women and children for the sake of profit. The commodification of (especially) women's bodies through advertising and various programmes is a gate for money making.

By leaving the women and children in the corner of the media scene, actually the media have neglected the rights of women and children to participate in the public sphere. The implication of this is huge. As women and children undoubtedly are important to society, the ignorance of their participation is injuring the health of civilisation itself. As the making of common good, the *bonum commune*, requires each individual to have an equal opportunity to perform – and the media have a huge role in making this happen. Therefore ensuring that women and children are represented in the public space is pivotal. By providing a fair and equal place for them and by presenting them fairly and correctly, women and children are motivated to empower themselves. This empowerment leads to the protection of civilisation itself since healthy civilisation requires the participation of all its members.

In summary …

Women and children of Indonesia are still being discriminated against on day-to-day basis in many sectors. Women, in particular are prone to becoming the object of voyeurism, personification of domesticity, idealised object of beauty, and victims of domestic violence. The media, instead of taking a more active role in the construction of public discourse over women and children in Indonesia, tend to exploit women and children for business purposes. Although there is an increased amount of coverage in terms of quantity, than in previous decades, actually such coverage is not followed by a good understanding of the issues. Things become more complex as some journalists are lacking in gender and respectable perspective. The unhealthy representation adds obstacles in the efforts of women and children to become more empowered.

8.
Exercising rights, civilising ourselves: Synthesis and challenge for policy

Diversity of channels and programmes does not necessarily mean diversity of content. In the United States..., studies have shown that a typical household only watches 15 channels per week (Mandese, 2007). Much content is reiterative. The capacity to consume sexual and violent movies with similar plots is rather limited. So, the promised viewers' paradise of 100 or 500 channels becomes a downsized reality when confronted with unimaginative content and constrained money and time budget.
(Manuel Castells, *Communication Power*, 2009: 129)

What Castells observed in the United States is happening in Indonesia. One might argue that Indonesia has rather diverse media channels (10 national television stations and more than forty local television stations), but the limitation in terms of the type of entertainment and news are evident. Examples given – whether in previous chapters or those that will be summarised in this chapter – show how minority groups are covered in the national television stations.

This chapter synthesises the case studies ofthe four groups with conceptualisation and deeper understanding, especially in relation tothe advancement of media industry today (along with the poor handling of media policy) and how such circumstance has endangered the citizens' right to media. In explaining the condition, we also present further evidences on how the media has covered minority groups in TV, printed media and online. In brief, this chapter covers the political economy of media matters and the reasons behind the development (or lack of) of citizens' right to media in Indonesia.

8.1. Political economy of media: Promises and perils

The rapid growth of the media industry since the 1998 Reform, although considered as a good signal to support transparency; signalled the emergence ofnew media conglomerates. *Kompas-Gramedia Group*, *Grafiti Pers Group* – the holding company of *Jawa Pos*, *Global Mediacomm* (MNC) *Group* and *Mahaka Media Group* are among the twelve groups that have control over nearly all of Indonesia's media channels (Nugroho, Putri *et al.*, 2012). The practise of current media oligopoly has put the media industry purely as a profit-led one and hence represents a profitable business that can be shaped by the owner's interests and is thus highly beneficial for those seeking power.

Conditions have been made worse by the failure of regulation. The implementation of the 'umbrella law' of media – the *Press Law* No 40/1999 (*UU Pers 40/1999*) and the *Broadcasting Law* No 32/2002 (*UU Penyiaran 32/2002*), on which other national media policies revolve around – have failed to regulate the media *as an industry* (Nugroho, Siregar *et al.*, 2012). Existing policies are

incapable of mitigating the excessively profit-motivated logic of the media industry. Policymakers and state officials have also failed to put a clear qualification between monopoly and oligopoly.

As the 'Fourth Estate' (Carlyle, 1840, Schultz, 1998), the media are supposed to play a pivotal role in an infant democracy context such as in Indonesia. However, a closer look at the works of the media sector today reveal that the very essence of media is threatened by both economic and political interests from various groups and transforms the media into tools of 'consent manufacturing'. This resonates with the argument of Herman and Chomsky (Herman and Chomsky, 1988) that economic and political interests are seemingly ahead of that of social and public functions. As a result, instead of providing a public space to discuss public concerns, the media has positioned the citizens as mere consumers due to its market logic and business interests.

Since the mainstream media apparently surrender to the invasions of neoliberal concepts and the pure logic of business as its driver, one of the intended consequences is content uniformity due to the rating system as a tool of market mechanism. A blatant example is the phenomenon of soap operas (*sinetron*), which are aired across Indonesia, full of metropolitan's lifestyle and problems. This kind of phenomenon uproots the Indonesian audience – especially they who live in remote areas – from their day-to-day existences. The loss of content diversity has apparently creating 'media disembeddedness' (Polanyi, 1957) in which media practices and content are no longer attached to the societal context in which they exist. In addition to content uniformity, another way to attract more audiences is by producing more hyperbolic-sensationalist reportage and/or news. By continuously providing non-educative content, the media are actually banalising the citizens. The impacts of such scenarios will be grave.

As the mainstream media have enormous capabilities to determine value-making processes in the society, the media hold power to decide what should be embraced as value(able) (Castells, 2009). Since the media control the distribution of content and value, the reproduction of meaning in the society is in their hands. The implication of the idea of civilising the society is big if considering the logic that controls media. For profit-logic is the only logic of media industry, the dominant value that lives within is an economic one. And since the economic logic follows "the law of supply and demand" therefore the less profitable topic will be avoided. As a result, the majority's desire is always put before that of the minorities; and the attribute of sensationalism is often one of the primary criteria when making decisions about which stories to report.

What is the unintended consequence of the decrease of (mainstream) media quality as one of the public space providers? The bigger implication actually relates to the people as citizens. Since the trend shows that the mainstream media seems to have moved further and further away from citizens, the market-driven industry has clearly put aside citizens' interests. The audience is considered only as potential consumers for the industry, not as citizens with rights. As the premise – that the media are supposed to be one of democracy's pillars and to accommodate citizens in exercising a range of capabilities which fulfil one's needs and potentials in community with others – does not work properly, the citizens' right are severely hampered. To some extent, the limitations in access to media also have influence on health

care, the education sector, economic-social-political opportunities a sense of cultural belonging, community participation and many more.

In regard to the four groups, the media are expected to be the bridge between the minority groups and the majority public to discuss lasting problems encountered by the minority groups. It is the responsibility of the media to be the bridge; voicing the voiceless of the minority, especially if the problems seemingly have no direct relation to the majority. Neglecting the stories results in the minorities being placed on the edge of society, leaving their voices unheard and their pleas unanswered. The bigger implication is that minority groups suffer from "lack of access to the basic institutions of civil society, a lack of citizenship" (Macionis and Plummer, 2008:255). Basically, this means social exclusion.

The label given by the media is important in shaping the people's consciousness over certain matters. As mentioned in Chapter Four, for instance, the story of Ahmadiyya is dominated by 'deviant' labelling. It seems that 'deviance' and 'defamation' are hot topics. This has had an impact upon the life of Ahmadis. The aberration tends to invite people to approve the violence towards the group. Similar cases also happen with the other vulnerable groups. The LGBT suffers from stereotypisation–stereotyping, the diffable from discrimination, and women and children from marginalisation.

8.2. Citizens demand more spaces: Some media content analysis[102]

8.2.1. TV coverage on the issues of minority groups

To analyse how broadcast media represents the minority issues, we conducted a sampling observation from four TV channels: TV One, SCTV, MNC TV and Trans 7.[103] The length of the observation span from 5 to 22 June 2012 during the two 'prime time' slots; morning from 9 AM to 12 PM and evening from 7 PM to 10 PM. What we found is illustrated below:

[102] This part of report is primarily written by Dwitri Amalia. Observation on TVs is conducted by Anindyah K. Puteri, while Dinita Andriani Putri mainly helps in the analysis on selected printed and online media.

[103] We chose SCTV, MNC TV and Trans 7, who were the top three channels with the highest share at the period mid-April until May 2012 (according to AC Nielsen), and TV One as one of the most influential news channels in Indonesia.

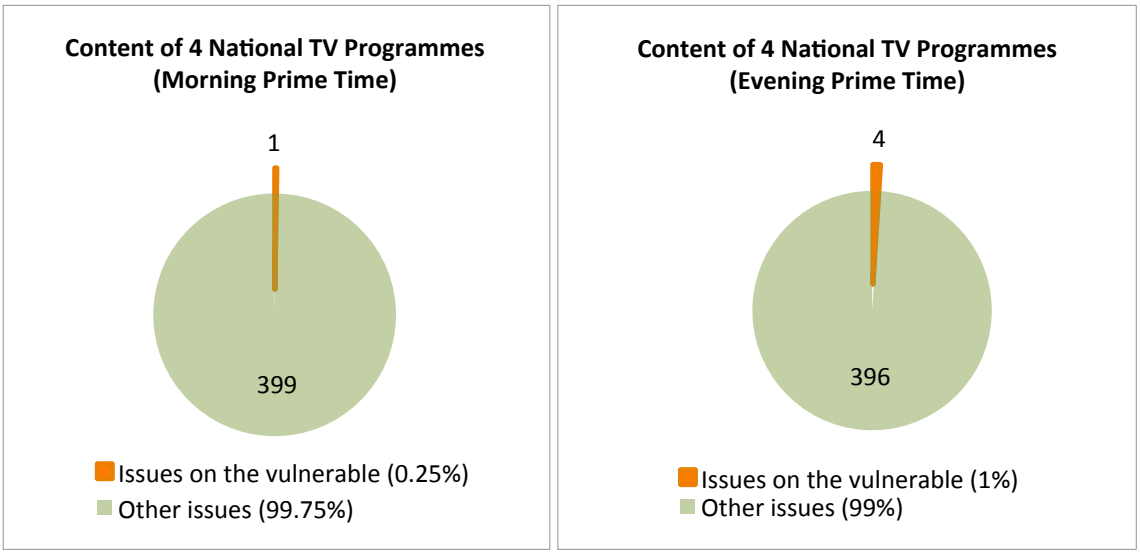


Figure 8.1. Coverage of the vulnerable issues on broadcast media
Source: Authors

Of the morning prime time slot, looking individually at each programme being broadcast from 9 AM to 12 PM, we found that there are two programmes out of 20 that incorporate a concept involving around the issue of minority groups. Both broadcast by Trans 7, the two programmes are *Dapur Cantik* and*Tupperware SheCan*. The first programme runs for 15 minutes while the latter runs for 30. *Dapur Cantik* is packaged as a cooking show that is aimed mainly at women viewers. The lady chef demonstrates a few quick menus and provides tips on how to navigate more creatively around the kitchen – some of the skills that are useful for busy career women. *Tupperware SheCan* is clearly a strong concept that is dedicated for women and their contributions, not only as a TV show but also as a marketing campaign conducted by Tupperware. On TV, each 30-minute episode of this programme covered an inspirational story on one certain woman whose work is felt to be of value within her environment. *Tupperware SheCan* acts as a token of appreciation towards the hard work that these women have done for their surroundings while still retaining the responsibilities as a mother and wife. This show is laden with educative and empowering messages not only towards the already accomplished women but also the aspiring ones.

However, the representation of minority groups during the morning prime time slot is limited to only 2 out of 20 observed programmes (10%), portrayed by the aforementioned two shows taking on the issue of women, across the four local channels. We found no other programmes that covered the topics of Ahmadiyah, LGBT or the diffable community throughout the span of the observation.

Of the evening prime time, there are slightly more programmes touching on the issues of minority groups, such as *Opera van Java* (Trans 7), *Aladdin* (MNC TV), *When I'm 21* (SCTV) and news on TV One. *Opera van Java* isa 60-minute show featuring comedians and upcoming celebrities, showcasing a (supposedly) funny narrative to a shadow puppet master. Alas our observation finds that this show contains many distasteful jokes about the minority groups, mainly insulting women, the LGBT community and the diffable. For example, one of the

characters brought by Aziz depicts a subordinated diffable person by mimicking their nervous body language and the occasional stuttering speech. He also goes by a stage last name "Gagap" which is plainly a mockery towards deaf people. A similar case is portrayed about the LGBT community, where transgender characters are exaggerated in terms of their sexuality.

Aladdin, the hour-long fantasy/comedy series, also contains characters of diffable people. The main stars are two short people who are ironically illustrated to portray children. Both actors are equipped with childlike voices and the behaviour of young children. This is a demeaning exemplification of adult, diffable people as programme producers assume that viewers would find entertainment in the teasing of small people. Another programme, *When I'm 21,* is a series aimed towards teenagers that displays a set of male students being overly dramatised in their "gay behaviour"; shown by the way the characters talk and dress. The programme also pokes fun at transgender issues.

Needless to say, the general climate of the sample programmes suggests that firstly, there is minimal representation in broadcast media ofthe minority groups. Although three out of 12 observed evening prime time programmes (25%) contained issues of minority groups, they are largely based on negative remarks or running jokes and poorly on any educational values. The "news value" – that is educational, factual, non-biased, objective and based on data – is visibly lacking from all the programmes that we sampled. Viewers are infused with many insulting jokes towards the marginalised and exposed to inaccurate images such as how the LGBT community interacts inconveniently with their surroundings and how the diffable community has no place in the active, working world.

In conclusion, our local TV channels have a lot of restructuring to do in terms of producing contents that are laden with information, are educational and responsible to the masses – as regulated in Broadcasting Law No. 32 (2002).

8.2.2. Online and print media coverage on the issues of minority groups[104]

Combining the news entries from two online media: *Tempo.co* and *Detik.com*, we analyse how they represent the issues of minority groups to the public.

Ahmadiyya

This observation spans from 7 to 14 February 2011, around the time of the attack on Ahmadiyya in Cikeusik. The incident led to the death of four people and was deemed as one of the worst violations of Human Rights in Indonesia.

There are 437 news entries related to Ahmadiyya out of the total 6863 news items between both *Tempo.co* and *Detik.com*. This means only 6.37% of their total news is about Ahmadiyya.

[104] In this part, we mainly focused on the three minority groups (Ahmadiyya, LGBT and diffable) since the similar observation on women and children has been conducted primarily by AJI and Komnas Perempuan. See (Perempuan, 2012);AJI, 2011)

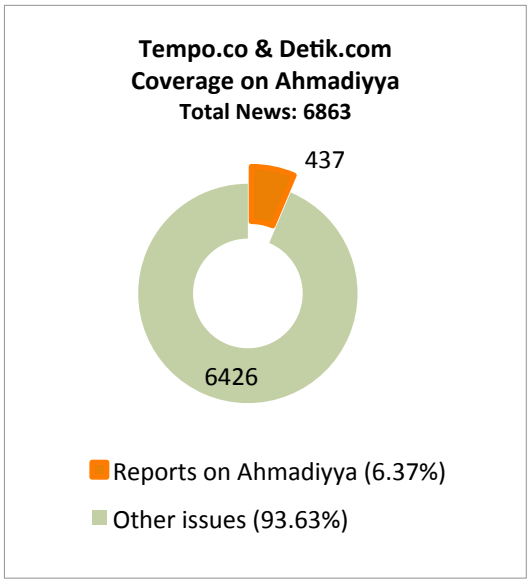


Figure 8.2. Coverage of Ahmadiyya issues on online media
Source: Authors

This observation spans from 29 September to 8 October 2010. This was during the event of Q! Film Festival event in Jakarta that stirred FPI to protest on the festival's much-feared promotion on gay and bisexual living towards the youth.

There are 20 news entries reporting on LGBT issues out of 6905 total news entries between *Tempo.co* and *Detik.com*. This means only 0.29% out of total news covers the LGBT issue.

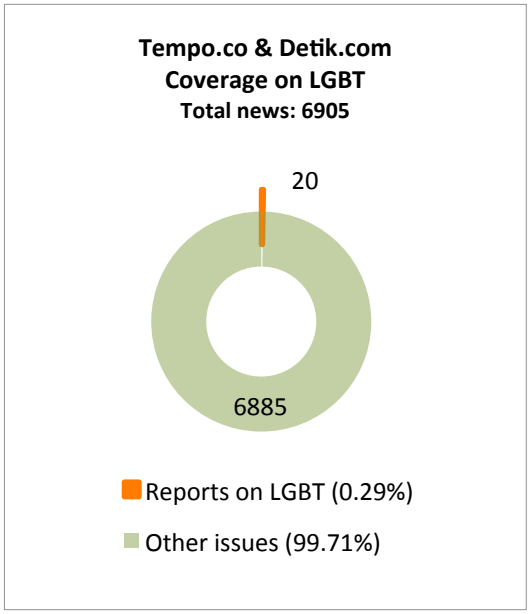


Figure 8.3. Coverage of LGBT issues on online media
Source: Authors

This observation looked at the news entries between 7 to 21 December 2011. This was the time when the ASEAN Para Games was held in Solo, Central Java.

There are 25 news entries covering diffable issues out of total 10159 news entries between *Tempo.co* and *Detik.com* from the observation period. This means only 0.25% of the total news covers diffable issues.

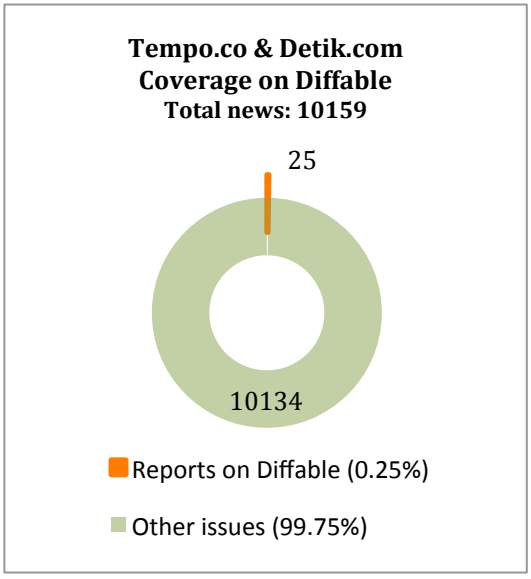


Figure 8.4. Coverage of the Diffable issues on online media
Source: Authors

Overall

According to our observation, we can concluce that there is little proportion of online news that covers the issues of the vulnerable. According to the sample data that we have illustrated, only 2.10% out of all the news from *Tempo.co* and *Detik.com* covers the issues of Ahmadiyya, LGBT, and Diffable.

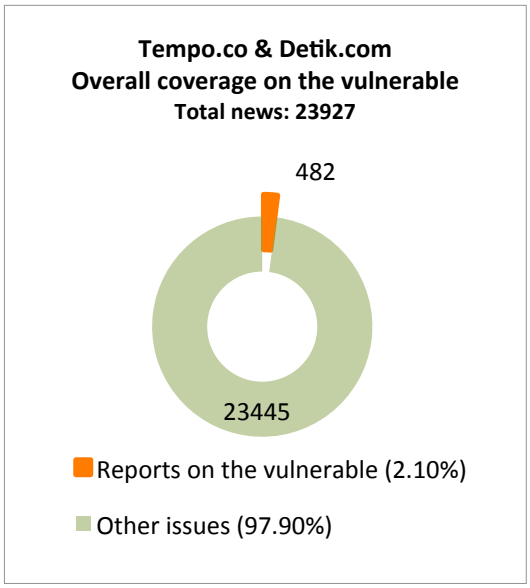


Figure 8.5. Overall coverage of the vulnerable issues on online media
Source: Authors

A similar condition can be found in printed media, *Kompas* and *Republika*. While *Kompas*, both in qualitative and quantitave terms, has done a wide-ranging report in covering the Cikeusik; is still lacked in covering the *Q! Film Festival* and the ASEAN Para Games. However, *Kompas* provides a better option for the vulnerable groups – by inserting the human rights perspectives in the coverages – than *Republika* which seems to be quite minimal in reporting the cases, both in qualitative and quantitative terms.

Overall, the scarcity of reports on the topics of minority groups depicts the unwillingness of our media to cover issues about any of the four groups, unless there is an incident or event happening that needs exposure to the public. If our media industry was operating in line with the basic spirit of the Indonesian media 'umbrella' policies, this would less be likely to happen as there would have been more coverage that is fuelled with substantially more information and educational values, regardless of whether the issue was considered a 'hot topic' or not.

8.3. Citizens' right to media: An empty promise or a utopia?

With the current advancement of the industry, the media is not in the position to provide citizens with the space that they need in order to engage with each other. Running the media as a pure business concern, commodifying news and information and capitalising content; to some extent, has made citizens powerless. The mainstream media generally operate in ways that promote quiescence, voyeurism and cynicism, rather than citizenship and participation. The overwhelming conclusion is that the trend seems to be in the wrong direction – toward more and more messages, from fewer and bigger producers, saying less and less (Gamson, Croteau *et al.*, 1992). In regard to the condition, what remain here is audience/reader/listener as customers (who must accept whatever programmes are presented) rather than as citizens

(with their rights). This condition hampers the dream of the 'public sphere' (Habermas, 1989, Habermas, 2006) to support public engagement in the context of democracy.

In regard to the minority groups, the implication is even bigger. In general, the minority groups can merely access the media but are left far behind in terms of content – even in most cases, being stereotyped and/or victimised. Recalling the previous chapters on the four minority groups – Ahmadiyya, LGBTs, diffable and women-children – we have found that there are continuous biases in the representation of minorities groups: negative stereotyping, lack of background information and broad generalisations.

In Ahmadiyya's case, we can see how the group suffer from poor access to media. They were given a very little space to express themselves or even if being given a space, the media have misrepresented the actual undertaking. Since then, the deviant labelling toward Ahmadiyya that already existed became much stronger in society due to the misrepresentation – intentionally or unintentionally –by the media. When persecutions occurred, the media also barely provided a thorough coverage on the victims. Instead of voicing the voiceless, the media tended to remain silent. The impacts are fatal to the Ahmadis since society tends to believe what is presented by the mainstream media. As a further implication, in day-to-day activities the Ahmadis find themselves struggling hard to live in dignity. The conditions became more complex as the controversial laws and local bylaws continually endangered freedom of religion (primarily), freedom of association and freedom of expression.

In terms of ridiculed and stereotyped images, the LGBTs mainly suffered from derogatory portrayals due to their sexual orientations. Being labelled as sinful, 'abnormal', and psychologically ill, the LGBTs are heavily stereotyped in the media as the media tend to use the pejorative and euphemistic terms in narrating the LGBTs or in visualising them on screen. A similar experience is encountered by the diffable. Being labelled as pitiful, different and even described merely on the '(dis)functionality of the organ', the diffable also suffer from being used as joke material. The "3 Mas Ketir" sitcom was only one example of a programme that hurt the dignity of diffables.

Women and children are also left far behind in context of content. Although they are often presented in the media, women and children are barely present as subject. Instead they are used as a commodity to attract common interest. The commodification is especially, related to women's bodies through advertising and the construction of the 'ideal' woman as (socially constructed) pretty, male dependent, a source of maternal wisdom and a devoted person. The children are also continuously being portrayed and become the object of advertising and violence materials. The (false) construction of women and children identities can make it increasingly difficult for women and children to become empowered.

Bearing in mind that the original meaning of citizenship made reference to a balance of citizens' rights and citizens obligations (Janowitz, 1980); reflecting the four cases above, there is an imbalance and the market-driven media have participated in ruining the harmony and left some minority groups victimised.

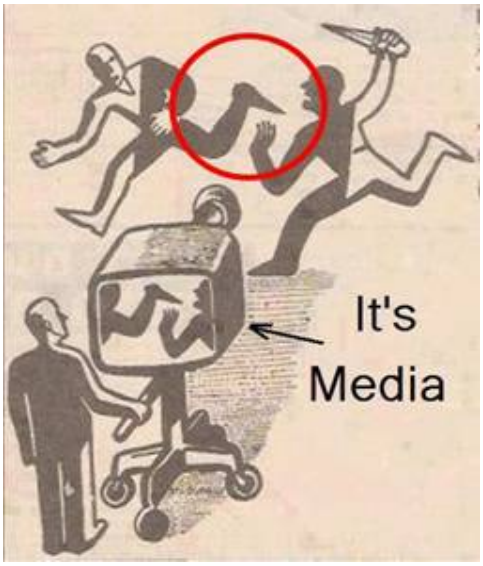


Figure 8.6. How the media (can) manipulate our view point
Source: http://nikolangelo.wordpress.com/2012/07/31/media-manipulation-about-syria/

In regard to the four minority groups, picture 8.1 gives a good illustration of how the media participate in the problems. The media is presented as a mediator who have a potential to manipulate our viewpoint by providing – whether intentionally or unintentionally – a false depiction of certain issues; hence created a pseudo-reality. Instead of creating a thorough coverage and presenting itself as a true mediator, the profit-driven media tend to seek sensationalist packaging of the stories – apparently for the sake of audience share; and hence advertising. Bearing in mind what is served in the media could be different to the actual undertaking; someone presented as a victim in the media, in reality could be the persecutor.

The decrease in media quality which also fails to accommodate proper places for groups in society is potentially ruining any credibility of the media as the Fourth Estate (Carlyle, 1840, Schultz, 1998); hence failing in its public function to assist representative democracy. In regard to the four minority groups, the decrease has a strong correlation with the tendency to chase sensationalist stories instead of providing a balanced report on certain topics. Undoubtedly, such circumstances support the continuation of derogatory and misrepresentations of the groups, as the media have "a tongue which others will listen to" and this can endanger the rights of groups as citizens.

In a larger context, since there is little active participation from the groups – rather there is superficial and passive involvement; to "go with the flow as the majority wants" – there will be a form of social exclusion. By merely serving the majority – thanks to the rating system – the media have slowly killed the pleas of the minority. Since the media see the public as no longer 'public' but rather as a replica of the there seems no more space for the minority in the media. Reflecting on the four stories of minorities, several violations of civil, political and social rights have occurred due to this lack of media access. And, as these violations do exist; the four minority groups suffer from a sense of marginalisation and are pushed to the edges of society. The promise in a civilised society – that rights should be guarded by state, where each

individual is treated "equal in dignity and rights" (art. 1 UDHR) – now therefore seems to be a mere empty utopia.

8.4. The future of media, the future of citizens' rights

As presented in the earlier chapters of this report, a fundamental notion is the role of the media in contributing to idea the living together as a nation. In the idea of having a 'better' Indonesia, when every citizen can live in a better condition and their rights are protected, the mass media plays a significant role. How we identify ourselves is an important component since it colours how we live together as a nation.

The etymology of identity as meaning "sameness, oneness" came from the16th century, from Middle French word *identité* (14c.), from Late Latin (5c.) *identitatem* (nom. identitas) "sameness", from *ident-*, combining form of Latin *idem* "the same". The identity is abstracted from *identidem* "over and over", from phrase *idem et idem*. The earlier form of the word in English was *idemptitie* (1560s), from Middle Latin *idemptitas*.[105]

The term identity is a contested term. When it evolves in society, the meaning of identity comes from two different axes. First, the meaning of identity is the state of being exactly alike or oneness while on the other hand, it is the set of qualities that make a person different from other people.[106] Therefore, in one term, there is a conflict in defining it as 'oneness' on the one hand, and 'uniqueness' on the other.

In a democratic polity, the key and central common identity is the equality of the status of citizenship, and nothing else, be it differences in religious belief (Ahmadiyya), sexual orientation (LGBT), physical and mental ability (the diffable), gender and age (women and children), or socioeconomic differences. In short, the heterosexual and homosexual, or Ahmadis and Sunnis, may differ in their sexual orientations and religious beliefs, but they all are equally citizens of Indonesia, with equal rights (and duties) as Indonesian citizens. The discriminatory treatments suffered by all the four case-study groups are a gross violation of the principle of equality in a democratic polity.

In the context of diffability for example, the people from the community itself are trying to bring different narrative from what majority (might) think. They are trying to show the beautiful side of imperfection that is not presented in media. This is evident in the Purwanti interview in an earlier chapter. She hopes that media could provide room for a different narrative. It is important for them to give different and better narrative based on their needs because this is required to make a better life for the diffable. It is also based on rights that are written clearly in the Indonesian constitution stated (article 28 c), that '*Every person shall have the right to improve him/herself through collective struggle for his/her rights to develop his/her society, nation and state*'.

---

[105] See http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=identity, accessed, September 13, 2012

[106] http://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/identity?show=0&t=1347530913, accessed September 13, 2012

Providing a different narrative is also important for a country that has been diverse from its very beginnings. When national television stations provide content which mainly come from Java, the definition of Indonesia is then defined narrowly. What is good and what is bad in the daily life of Indonesia is defined by what is good and bad in Java, which is reflected clearly in the interviews presented earlier in this report.

The current practice of media, especially the broadcasting media, is supported by toothless policies. Though Indonesian Broadcasting Law (2002) has the values of diversity of content, the implementation totally different (Nugroho, Siregar *et al.*, 2012). It has actually made it more difficult for the citizens to exercise their rights to media. The duty to protect and enable citizens to exercise their rights by retaining their public character and providing space for civic engagement (Joseph, 2005) is not possible.

While at present the media seems to fail to provide the educative programmes, it will be a more serious challenge in the future due to the idea of convergence. With the logic of convergence which dictates that all media channels provide the same content, the media potentially banalise more of the audience with clusters of non-educative programmes. The impact of such a scenario will be grave. Therefore, the public need to guard the media through the enforcement of the media policies so that the media can retain its public character. However, the latest development of online media seems to provide a hope for an alternative room for citizens to make civic engagement if the mainstream media fails to answer the plea. The creation and protection of such alternative channels – including the growing community broadcasting – should be maintained to ensure the citizens' right to media.

8.5. Protecting the rights, protecting our civility

'Article 19' of the UDHR[107], from the perspective of citizens, implies that protecting citizens who own a much limited area of freedom in media is needed in order to support a more democratic society. However, due to the effect of the contemporary political economy of media in Indonesia, the promise of equal citizens' right to media has not yet been met. Business-powered media tend to prioritise the majority over the issues of minorities and vulnerable. In certain cases, the vulnerable are prone to discriminatory and improper representation due to their 'unique' characteristics, in terms of belief, gender, capability and sexual orientation. Such representations, in turn, endanger the exercise of rights in daily lives since the majority public tend to see them as 'abnormal', 'ill', or even 'deviant'. This condition mournfully jeopardises the possibility of 'shared life'.

One important issue can be highlighted here. If this nation is still willing to protect all citizens regardless of their religious, sexual orientation, gender and capability, it is important to provide diverse narratives and have the ability to acknowledge and accept the diversity. The diverse narratives should be reflected well in current media practice. It is important to provide

[107] The Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

diverse narratives with a human rights perspective in current media practices because it can have an impact, direct and indirectly upon our lives. One interview makes this clear:

> [In Sekadau (West Borneo), with the limited time they have in a day to watch] what they are always watching are sinetron [soap operas] which full of rude/strong languages, full of slap scenes. I discussed this with one of my staff members in the organisation who is native in that kampong, what they watch the soaps are pretty much reflected in their behaviour, their relationship with their spouse. Especially for the men, their style in building an affair over their existing relationship, their style in doing domestic violence [slapping and punching] is more or less contributed to by the soaps thatthey watch. (Kristien Yuliarti, MAVI, Interview, 11/12/2011)

In addition to this, since a genuine democracy demands a system of constant interaction with all citizens without exception, accessibility at all levels, a public ethos which allows conflicting ideas to contend, and which provides for full participation on all aspects; the protection of the media rights which could enable all those dreams, is of paramount importance. Therefore, alarm bells should ring if the reflection of full civic participation is not present in the media. When uniform faces – especially which are built upon shallow rating mechanism – have replaced the diverse ones whether on the television screen, in the newspaper or any other media; actually the jargon of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* is about to perish. And, without every citizen being able to exercise their rights or take full participation in democratic process, the ideology of nationality has no meaning.

8.6. Future agenda

In this research, we found out that Internet does bring different opportunities to the current media practice and that it has helped shape the way of communication and how minority groups use media (for instance, in the LGBT case). Internet, as written by Tewksbury and Rittenburg (2012) has been a force for information democratisation because of its structure. It is not just the connections among computers (servers) but also the openness of those connections that has spurred change. However, as mentioned by Tewksbury and Rittenburg, there is no guarantee that a different structural framework would enable the Internet to continue to facilitate citizen involvement with political information.

The structural framework is a duty of the government to maintain. It is always necessary to provide rooms for different interpretation or narrative to emerge. If the mainstream media could not provide that, the Internet can provide the space. And prior to that, infrastructure to Internet is a requirement. When access is not available for every citizen then the equality to exercising media rights is far from reality.

As has been mentioned several time in this research, the human rights perspective is an important one to take into account in media production, be it in the printed, broadcasting or online. Indonesia has its own so-called definition of human rights, which is written clearly in the constitution. The citizens' right, which of course include the rights of the minority, is very clear in this constitution. The constitution was developed based on human rights and the ideals of a nation, not on the wants of the majority. It is therefore recommended that

journalists or media industry staff to check on the constitution in between their work and in between their meetings so that the perspective is discussed and implemented.

References

AJI 2009. Wajah Retak Media (Fractured Face of the Media). Jakarta: AJI and Tifa Foundation.

AJI 2011. Pemetaan Berita Bertema Perempuan dengan Pendekatan Analisis Gender. Jakarta: AJI.

ARIVIA, G. 2006. *Feminisme: Sebuah Kata Hati,* Jakarta, Kompas.

ARMANDO, A. 2011. *Televisi Jakarta di atas Indonesia (Jakarta's TV is above Indonesia),* Jakarta, Bentang.

ARNSTEIN, S. R. 1969. A Ladder of Citizen Participation *JAIP,* 35**,** 216-224.

BAGDIKIAN, B. 2004. *The New Media Monopoly,* Boston, MA, Beacon Press.

BARNES, C. 1992. Disabling Imagery and the Media: An Exploration of the Principles for Media Representations of Disabled People. Halifax: BCODP and Ryburn.

BBG & GALLUP. 2012. Media Use in Indonesia, Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) and Gallup.

BREMMER, S. 2008. Changing Channels: Improving Media Portrayals of Disability. *Abilities.*

BRYMAN, A. & BELL, E. 2007. *Business Research Method,* Oxford, Oxford University Press [2nd ed.].

BUSH, R. 2008. Regional 'Sharia' Regulations in Indonesia: Anomaly or Symptom? *In:* WHITE, G. F. A. S. (ed.) *Expressing Islam: Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia.* Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

BYERLY, C. M. & ROSS, K. 2006. *Women and Media: A Critical Introduction,* Malden, Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

CARLYLE, T. 1840. *Lecture V: The Hero as Man of Letters. Johnson, Rousseau, Burns,* London, James Fraser [Reported with emendations and additions (Dent, 1908 ed.)].

CASSELL, C. & SYMON, S. 2004. *Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organisational Research,* London, Sage Publications.

CASTELLS, M. 2009. *Communication Power,* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

CASTELLS, M. 2010. *The Rise of Network Society. The Information Age – Economy, Society, and Culture – Volume I (2nd Ed.),* West Sussex, Wiley-Blackwell.

CHESHIRE, L. D. 2010. *Country Profile* [Online]. Available: http://www.lcint.org/?lid=3458 [Accessed 1 August 2012].

CRANBERG, G., BEZANSON, R. P. & SOLOSKI, J. 2001. *Taking Stock: Journalism and the Publicly Traded Newspaper Company,* Iowa, Iowa State University Press.

CRESWELL, J. W. 2003. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches,* Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage [2nd ed.].

CURRAN, J. 1991. Rethinking the media as public sphere. *In:* DAHLREN, P. & SPARKS, C. (eds.) *Journalism and the public sphere.* London and New York: Routledge.

DENZIN, N. & LINCOLN, Y. (eds.) 1994. *Handbook of Qualitative Research,* Beverly Hills CA: Sage.

FERREE, M. M., GAMSON, W. A., GERHARDS, J. & RUCHT, D. 2002. Four Models of the Public Sphere in Modern Democracies. *Theory and Society,* Vol. 31, No. 3**,** 289-324.

GAMSON, W. A., CROTEAU, D., HOYNES, W. & SASSONSOURCE, T. 1992. Media Images and the Social Construction of Reality. *Annual Review of Sociology,* Vol. 18**,** pp. 373-393.

HABERMAS, J. 1984. *The Theory of Communicative Action. Vol. I: Reason and the Rationalization of Society,* Boston, Beacon. [German, 1981, vol. 1].

HABERMAS, J. 1987. *The Theory of Communicative Action. Vol. II: Lifeworld and System,* Boston, Beacon. [German, 1981, vol. 2].

HABERMAS, J. 1989. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere,* Cambridge, MA, MIT Press. [German, 1962].

HABERMAS, J. 2001. *The Postnational Constellation,* Cambridge MA, MIT Press. [German, 1998].

HABERMAS, J. 2006. Religion in the public sphere. *European Journal of Philosophy,* 14**,** 1–25, J. Gaines (trans.).

HARSONO, A. 2011. Indonesia's Religious Violence: The Reluctance of Reporters to Tell the Story.

HERMAN, E. S. & CHOMSKY, N. 1988. *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of Mass Media,* New York, Pantheon Books

HILL, D. T. & SEN, K. 2000. *Media, Culture and Politics in Indonesia,* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

JANOWITZ, M. 1980. Observations on the Sociology of Citizenship: Obligations and Rights. *Social Forces* 59**,** 1-24.

JENSEN, H. 2006. Women's Human Rights in the Information Society. *In:* JORGENSEN, R. F. (ed.) *Human Rights in the Global Information Society.* Massachusetts: MIT Press.

JICA March 2002. Country Profile on Disability: Republic of Indonesia. Japan International Cooperation Agency: Planning and Evaluation Department.

JØRGENSEN, R. F. 2006. The Right to Express Oneself and to Seek Information. *In:* JØRGENSEN, R. F. (ed.) *Human Rights in the Global Information Society.* Massachusetts Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.

JOSEPH, A. 2005. *Media matter, citizens care: The who, what, when, where, why, how, and buts of citizens' engagement with the media*, UNESCO. Available online http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/files/19137/11164945435advocacy_brochure.pdf/advocacy_brochure.pdf.

KOMINFO 2010. Komunikasi dan Informatika Indonesia: Whitepaper 2010. *2010 Indonesia ICT Whitepaper.* Jakarta: Pusat Data Kementrian Komunikasi dan Informatika.

LAKSMI, S. 2006. A frequency for the voiceless: 'Blood on their Hands: Infanticide in India and other stories'. Germany: Konrad Adenauer Asian Centre for Journalism.

LAKSMI, S. & HARYANTO, I. 2007. Indonesia: Alternative Media Enjoying a Fresh Breeze. *In:* SENEVIRATNE, K. (ed.) *Media Pluralism in Asia: The Role and Impact of Alternative Media.* Asian Media and Information Centre.

LEVINSON, P. 1999. *Digital McLuhan – A Guide to the Information Millenium,* London, Routledge.

LIPPMANN, W. 1922. *Public Opinion,* New York, Free Press Paperbacks.

LIPPMANN, W. 1927. *The Phantom Public,* New York, MacMillan.

MACIONIS, J. J. & PLUMMER, K. 2008. *Sociology: A Global Introduction*, Prentice Hall.

MANSELL, R. 2004. Political economy, power and new media. *New Media & Society,* 6**,** 96-105.

MARCOES, L. 1996. Diskriminasi: Suatu Indikasi Ketidakadilan terhadap Perempuan (Discrimination: An Injustice Indicator toward Women). *Gender dan Pembangunan: Kumpulan Karangan Materi Lokakarya Penyadaran Gender (Gender and Development: Collection on Materials of Gender Awareness Workshop)* Jakarta: LPPS.

MARSHALL, T. H. 1994. Citizenship. *In:* MARSHALL, G. (ed.) *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Sociology.* New York: Oxford University Press.

MCCARGO, D. 2003. *Media and Politics in Pacific Asia,* London, Routledge Courzon.

MCCHESNEY, R. W. 1999. *Rich Media Poor Democracy: Communication Politics in Dubious Times,* Urbana and Chicago, University of Illinois Press.

MCLEAN, S. A. M. & WILLIAMSON, L. 2007. *Impairment and Disability,* New York, Routledge-Cavendish.

MCLUHAN, M. 1964. *Understanding Media: The extensions of man,* New York, McGraw-Hill.

MEIER, W. A. 2002. Media Ownership – Does It Matter? *In:* MANSELL, R., SAMARAJIVA, R. & MAHAN, A. (eds.) *Networking Knowledge for Information Societies: Institutions & Intervention.* Delft: Delft University Press.

MPA ANALYSIS 2011. Prospektus Awal Visi Media Asia (Initial prospectus of Visi Media Asia). Jakarta: Visi Media Asia. http://www.vivanews.com/appaux/propektus_awal_pt_visi_media_asia_tbk.pdf.

NUGROHO, Y. 2011. Citizens in @ction: Collaboration, participatory democracy and freedom of information – Mapping contemporary civic activism and the use of new social media in Indonesia. Manchester and Jakarta: MIOIR and HIVOS.

NUGROHO, Y., PUTRI, D. A. & LAKSMI, S. 2012. Mapping the landscape of the media industry in contemporary Indonesia *Engaging Media, Empowering Society: Assessing media policy and governance in Indonesia through the lens of citizens' rights.* Jakarta: Centre for Innovation Policy and Governance, HIVOS Regional Office Southeast Asia, Ford Foundation Indonesia.

NUGROHO, Y., SIREGAR, M. F. & LAKSMI, S. 2012. Mapping Media Policy in Indonesia. *Engaging Media, Empowering Society: Assessing media policy and governance in Indonesia through the lens of citizens' rights.* Jakarta: Centre for Innovation Policy and Governance, HIVOS Regional Office Southeast Asia, Ford Foundation Indonesia.

PELANGI, A. 2010. Restricted Freedom of Association and Freedom of Expression for LGBT Groups in Indonesia Jakarta: Arus Pelangi.

PEREMPUAN, K. 2012. Mengampu Pengawal Reformasi: Kajian pemberitaan isu perempuan, khususnya kasus kekerasan seksual di delapan koran cetak pada bulan Maret, November dan Desember 2011. Jakarta: Komnas Perempuan.

PINTAK, L. & SETIYONO, B. 2010. The Mission of Indonesian Journalism: Balancing Democracy, Development, and Islamic Values. *International Journal of Press/Politics,* XX(X)**,** 1-25.

PIPER, T. 2009. Don't shoot the messenger: Policy challenges facing the media. *In:* THORNLEY, A. (ed.). USAID's Democratic Reform Support Program (USAID/DRSP).

POLANYI, K. 1957. *The great transformation,* New York, Rinehart.

SAMASSÉKOU, A. 2006. Foreword. *In:* JØRGENSEN, R. F. (ed.) *Human Rights in the Global Information Society.* Massachusetts Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.

SCHULTZ, J. 1998. *Reviving the fourth estate,* Cambridge, England, Cambridge University Press.

SWAIN, J., FRENCH, S. & CAMERON, C. 2003. *Controversial Issues in a Disabling Society,* Buckingham, Open University Press.

TAYLOR, C. 1994. The Politics of Recognition. *In:* GUTMANN, A. (ed.) *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition.* New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

TEWKSBURY, D. & J. RITTENBERG. 2012. *News on the Internet, Information and Citizenship in the 21st Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

UPIAS 1976. Fundamental Principles of Disability. London: Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation.

WAGSTAFF, J. 2010. Southeast Asian Media: Patterns of Production and Consumption - A Survey of National Media in 10 Countries of Southeast Asia. Washington DC: Open Society Foundations.

WAHID, I. T. 2011. Lampu Merah Kebebasan Beragama: Laporan Kebebasan Beragama dan Toleransi di Indonesia. Jakarta: The Wahid Institute.

ZULKARNAIN, I. 2005. *Gerakan Ahmadiyah di Indonesia (Ahmadiyya Movement in Indonesia),* Yogyakarta, LKiS.

Appendix 1.
Interview: Protocols and instruments

Interviews were arranged with 20 respondents who were selected on the basis of their respective backgrounds and involvement in vulnerable communities-related activities, be it as a member, academician, or activist. The methodology is outlined in Chapter Three. The interviews were designed primarily to provide more detailed information and insights about:

The portrayal and representation of vulnerable groups in the media

The implication of the development of media industry and media policy towards citizens' participation and access to media, from the perspective of the vulnerable groups

The emergence, importance, and impacts of the new media on the citizens' participation in the media

Protocol

Majority of the respondents were initially approached with an email that explained the purpose of the research and how the interview would be used. Following a positive response to our request for an interview, interview questions were then sent by email for the respondent to further consider and to prepare for the interview session. All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim (word by word) by third party assistants. The transcriptions were then sent to the interviewees for checking and further additional information if they felt necessary. Both recording files (.MP3) and transcription were then added to the CIPG-HIVOS database stored both in the Cloud and in the local drives for back-up. In cases where interviewees provided documents (a company profile, etc.) in addition to the interview itself, the documents were also included in the database.

Instrument

The interview questionnaire, in *Bahasa Indonesia*, comprises the following main questions[108]

Persoalan apa yang secara kontinyu menimpa kelompok/komunitas Anda?

Selama ini, sejauh mana peran media massa dalam membantu menjawab/menyuarakan persoalan tersebut?

Sejauh mana media massa merepresentasikan kelompok/komunitas Anda? Representasi macam apa yang paling berpengaruh bagi dinamika kelompok/komunitas Anda?

[108]There are four sets of interview questionnaires, in which representing the four vulnerable groups. The complete set of interview questionnaires, including probing questions, both in English and *Bahasa Indonesia*, are available upon request to the authors/CIPG-HIVOS.

Menurut Anda, sejauh mana perkembangan industri dan kebijakan media di Indonesia berdampak terhadap partisipasi kelompok/komunitas Anda di dalam media?

Sejauh mana kelompok/komunitas Anda mendapatkan akses terhadap infrastruktur dan pembentukan isi media?

Menurut Anda, sejauh mana perkembangan media baru telah dimanfaatkan sebagai media alternatif dalam menyuarakan suara kelompok/komunitas Anda?

The main questionnaire in English reads:

What are the lasting problems of your group/community?

To what extent do the mass media help to answer or to voice your concerns?

How do the media represent and/or portray your group/community? And what kind of representation has the most impact to the dynamic of your group/community?

To what extent do the development of media industry and policy in Indonesia impact to your participation in the media?

To what extent do your groups/communities gain access to media infrastructure and content co-creation in the media?

To what extent do the development of the new media being applied as an alternative media to voice your concerns?

Appendix 2.
Interview respondents

A.2.1 Interview Respondents

No	Name of Respondent	Organisation	Date of Interview	Mode of Interview	Duration
1.	Kristien Yuliarti	Misionaris Awam Vincentian Indonesia / *Indonesian Vincentian Lay Missionaries*	11-12-11	Direct	88’
2	Sapto Nugroho	Yayasan Talenta	14-12-11	Direct	40’
3	Ipung Purwanti	Interaksi Solo	14-12-11	Direct	74’
4	Sri Agustine	Ardhanary Institute	17-01-12	Direct	64’
5	Firdaus Mubarik	Jemaah Ahmadiyah Indonesia	02-02-12	Direct	42’
6	I Nyoman Rudiawan	Senang Hati Bali	27-02-12	Direct	17’
7	Dayu	Senang Hati Bali	27-02-12	Direct	17’
8	Sang Ayu Ade	Senang Hati Bali	27-02-12	Direct	17’
9	Luh Riniti	Bali Sruti	03-03-12	Direct	57’
10	Karlina Supelli	STF Driyarkara, former activist of Suara Ibu Peduli/*Voice of Concerned Mother*	03-04-12	Direct	45’
11	JAI I		20-04-12	Direct	15’
12	JAI II		21-04-12	Direct	34’
13	JAI III		21-04-12	Direct	18’
14	JAI IV		21-04-12	Direct	15’
15	Siti Musdah Mulia	Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace	04-05-12	Direct and via emails	17’
16	Yulita Molyganta	Arus Pelangi	14-05-12	Direct	25’
17	Widodo Budidarmo	Arus Pelangi	14-05-12	Direct	20’
18	Hartoyo	Our Voice	14-05-12	Direct	70’
19	Mariana Amiruddin	Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan	05-07-12	Direct	37’
20	John Badalu	Q! Film Festival	19-07-12	Direct	45’

Appendix 3.
Media coverage on the vulnerable

Ahmadiyyah	Detik.com		Tempo.co	
Date	Total news entry	Number of news on Ahmadiyyah	Total news entry	Number of news on Ahmadiyyah
7/2/11	544	67	289	54
8/2/11	1749	36	311	31
9/2/11	539	36	275	24
10/2/11	551	30	317	28
11/2/11	526	40	257	27
12/2/11	231	6	127	3
13/2011	249	14	160	8
14/2/11	519	28	219	5
	4908	257	1955	180

LGBT	Detik.com		Tempo.co	
Date	Total news entry	Number of news on LGBT	Total news entry	Number of news on LGBT
29/09/10	556	6	253	1
30/09/10	554	1	265	0
1/10/10	453	5	160	1
2/10/10	256	0	117	0
3/10/10	234	0	147	0
4/10/10	549	2	262	0
5/10/10	516	0	256	0
6/10/10	525	1	254	0
7/10/10	554	0	262	1
8/10/10	506	2	226	0
	4703	17	2202	3

Diffable	Detik.com		Tempo.co	
Date	Total news entry	Number of news on Diffable	Total news	Number of news on Diffable
7/12/11	626	0	186	0
8/12/11	587	0	211	0
9/12/11	571	0	149	0
10/12/11	262	0	116	0
11/12/11	226	1	117	2
12/12/11	622	0	199	1
13/12/11	603	0	203	0
14/12/11	614	1	202	0
15/12/11	618	4	189	2
16/12/11	540	2	190	0
17/12/11	226	1	98	1
18/12/11	251	0	104	2
19/12/11	585	1	240	1
20/12/11	594	1	213	1
21/12/11	612	1	205	3
	7537	12	2622	13

Source	On Ahmadiyyah	On LGBT	On Diffable
Detik.com	257	17	12
	total news 4908	total news 4703	total news 7537
	5.20%	0.36%	0.16%
Tempo.co	180	3	13
	total news 1955	total news 2202	total news 2622
	9.20%	0.13%	0.50%

Source	Total news (during the sampling period)	Number of news on the vulnerable	Percentage of news on the vulnerable
Detik.com	17,148	286	1.67%
Tempo.co	6,779	196	2.50%
Overall	23,927	482	2.10%

About the authors

Yanuar Nugroho (born in 1972) is a Research Fellow with the Manchester Institute of Innovation Research (MIoIR) and core member of the Centre for Development Informatics (CDI) at Manchester Business School and School of Environment and Development, the University of Manchester, UK. He holds Hallsworth Fellowship in Political Economy 2010-2012 and was awarded the Outstanding Academic of the Year 2009 by the Manchester Business School. He is also a honorary Senior Advisor of the Centre for Innovation Policy and Governance in Jakarta, Indonesia. Yanuar is the leading author of this report and is the principal investigator of the research into media and citizen rights in Indonesia – a joint collaboration between CIPG, Hivos ROSEA, and Ford Foundation.

Leonardus K. Nugraha (born in 1986) is a researcher with an educational background in Philosophy from the Driyarkara School of Philosophy. Currently, he is a Research Associate in CIPG Jakarta. He has familiarity with case study, semi ethnographic observation and in-depth interview. Nardo co-authors this report and is responsible for gathering the data.

Shita Laksmi is the Programme Officer at Hivos Regional Office Southeast Asia (ROSEA) in the fields related to media, information and communication technology (ICT) and arts and culture. She holds a masters degree fellowship from Konrad Adenauer Centre for Journalism at the Ateneo de Manila University in 2005. In this collaborative research between CIPG, Hivos and Ford Foundation, she is the co-investigator and co-author.

Mirta Amalia (born in 1982) earned an MSc (with Distinction) in Management and Information Systems (M&IS) from Institute of Development Policy and Management, University of Manchester. She is the co-founder of CIPG Jakarta. She conducted reviews and methodological process of this report.

Dinita Andriani Putri (born in 1984) holds a degree in International Relations and Political Science from Parahyangan Catholic University, Indonesia. She is currently a Research Fellow in CIPG Jakarta who is responsible for collecting hard data of this report.

Dwitri Amalia (born in 1987) read Economics in Royal Holloway University of London and University of Canberra. Dwitri is a Research Associate in CIPG Jakarta who is responsible for the quantitative analysis and reviewing of this report.

About the organisations

CIPG is a research-based advisory group that aspires to excel in the area of science, technology, innovation and governance. Evolving from a study group of Indonesian scholars abroad since 2007, CIPG was officially established in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2010.The Centre is considered to be among the first advisory groups in Indonesia with keen interest in building Indonesian research capacities in many sectors. CIPG's excellence rests on the rigorousness of our research process, and on the relevance of our activities to the stakeholders and society established through close engagements. CIPG has intensive activities in Research, Consultancy-Advisory, and Capacity Building in the area of Innovation Management and Policy, Sustainability, Knowledge Management, Technology and Social Change, Supply Chain Management, Corporate Governance, and Civil Society Empowerment

Hivos people unlimited is a Dutch development organisation guided by humanist values. Together with local civil society organisations in developing countries, Hivos wants to contribute to a free, fair and sustainable world. A world in which all citizens – both women and men – have equal access to opportunities and resources for development and can participate actively and equally in decision-making processes that determine their lives, their society and their future. Hivos trusts in the creativity and capacity of people. Quality, cooperation and innovation are core values in Hivos' business philosophy. Hivos has six regional offices and one of the offices is the Hivos Regional Office Southeast Asia (ROSEA). Hivos has been working in the region since mid 1980s in the areas of civil society building with human rights as its main perspective and sustainable economic development which includes renewable energy

FORDFOUNDATION works with visionary leaders and organisations worldwide to change social structures and institutions so that all people have the opportunity to reach their full potential, contribute to society, have a voice in decisions that affect them, and live and work in dignity. This commitment to social justice is carried out through programs that strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, and advance human knowledge, creativity and achievement.