

The Power of Mass Media in Social Construction of the Reform of Indonesia Bureaucracy

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Received September 14, 2021; Accepted December 14, 2021

ISSN: 1735-188X

DOI: 10.14704/WEB/V19I1/WEB19187

Abstract

Mass media development, both in the form of content and technology, has been promoting the implementation of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia during the last fifteen years. In the world, it generally begins with the spirit of transparency, the spirit of accountability, the spirit of participatory, to the spirit of reforming the state bureaucracy. In Indonesia, these four subjects also appear, at least since the reformation era, mass media gives a new color in the overall Indonesian bureaucracy activity since the beginning of the reform to date, both in the central bureaucracy or regional bureaucracy. The main purpose of this study is to observe the role of mass media in constructing the reality of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia. This study provides overview of the mass media role through the social construction of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia, especially how the roles of social construction of mass media in the bureaucratic reforms. It used narrative method to describe the power of mass media social construction of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia. Based on the analysis, it indicated that Mass media shows the strong effect of people power in the state administration with the ideals for the clean executive, legislative, and judicial as well as bureaucratic administration and to perform their duties as excellent as possible.

Keywords

Social Construction, Mass Media, Bureaucracy Reform, Bureaucracy.

Introduction

At the end of July and beginning of August 2012, mass media and news agencies in Indonesia such as *Harian Analisa*, *Bali Post*, *Fajar*, *Waspada Online*, *JPNN.com.*, *Kompas.com*, *Suara Merdeka CyberNews*, *Gatra*, *Kontan*, *Okezone*, *Detikcom*, *Suara Karya*, *Surabaya Post*, *VivaNews*, *Pikiran Rakyat*, *TVOne*, *ANTV*, *RCTI*, *SCTV*, *Metro TV*, and others simultaneously broadcasted the conflict between Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) - Indonesian National Police (POLRI) with a theme *Cicak (House Lizard) vs Buaya (Crocodile) Part II* because there was a *Cicak (Lizard) vs Buaya (Crocodile)* in another case that was broadcasted massively by the mass media.

The spirit of mass media in Indonesia is one of examples of how the mass media is enthusiastic in broadcasting the news related to bureaucratic reform issues in Indonesia, including the eradication of Collusion, Corruption, and Nepotism. Other cases such as *Hambalang*, *Wisma Atlit*, *Century*, and others also show the spirit of mass media. Regardless of mass media participation in this kind of reporting, it is part of mass media's doctrine that "the bad news is the good news", or making the reformation as a source of news that is very salable. However, as part of this nation obviously the reporting of bureaucratic cases in Indonesia has pinned a new pillar in the State of democracy implementation which is inseparable from the bureaucratic reform implementation of modern countries. Mass media is part of community participation, part of community control pillar over the transparent state administration.

The role of mass media in constructing news has become the main instrument to construct the image of bureaucracy both at the central or regional (Rosales-Viray & Versoza, 2018). The good or bad bureaucracy is currently determined by how media constructs the performance evaluation results of the bureaucracy. Thus, the theories of mass media greatly affect the success of bureaucratic duties implementation (Rölle, 2017). Knowing the important role of mass media, the bureaucracy at the central or regional often uses mass media for their interests, and the battle of mass media and bureaucracy interests is at stake against a truth to be conveyed to the public. The mass media should construct transparent news while the bureaucracy wants to be depicted as a good, successful subject, and others.

The tug-of-war of power at social construction level of this mass media resulted in various excesses; 1) the idealist mass media is often victimized by the violence of bureaucratic power, many journalists who become the victim during their works are wounded, killed, and even missing; 2) powerful mass media can use the bureaucratic reform issues as a gold mine for their news. This media can accommodate the sources of news or speakers who

report directly in their live shows, therefore, it clearly visible that it is a powerful mass media; 3) there is also a mass media battle and bureaucracy that must be settled in the court because the two parties cannot find the solution; 4) there are also mass media who want to share "illegally" in order to obtain win-win solution with bureaucracy (Ri'aeni & Sulistiana, 2018). Therefore, mass media can get advertisement and bureaucracy will obtain well image from the media; 5) other excesses, mass media becomes a bureaucratic mouthpiece because it lost to the bureaucracy. These five excesses have colored the mass media and bureaucratic relations, as well as marked the role of mass media in bureaucratic reform in Indonesia.

With the current development of mass media technology, both mass media and bureaucracy do not have a choice but to work professionally because new powers emerges every moment in the society that can control the power relation of mass media and bureaucracy. The role of mass media in constructing the social realities of bureaucratic reform becomes an objective reality because it exists in the inter-subjective reality expected by all parties as an important role of mass media in bureaucratic reform (Indah et al., 2016). Similarly, bureaucratic reform actions are always open to the public, never hiding behind the mass media, and always transparent in accounting for its performance. Therefore, this study aims to observe the role of mass media in constructing the reality of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia that has run as the expectation by the will of reform.

Literature Review

One of the main aspects of public assessment to the bureaucratic reform is dealing with public administration duties related to public policy formulation, policy implementation, and policy evaluation. According to Jun (2006), public administration is a social reality that is constructed by bureaucracy. Therefore, the acceptance or rejection response of the society and other social institutions on the implementation of public administration from planning and implementation to evaluation depends on how the bureaucracy of public administration organizers perform social construction on the public administration reality where it runs.

As Berger and Luckmann (Geger, 2010) argued that social construction of reality is performed through the process of social; institutionalization, legitimacy and familiarization (ILS). The social process of ILS is performed through another simultaneous process of externalization, objectivation, and internalization (EOI). Therefore, according to Berger and Luckmann, social construction of reality is a simultaneous and multi-layered social process through ILS-EOI (Berger & Thomas Luckmann, 1967). Thus, social construction of public administration (Jun, 2006) takes place through the social process of ILS-EOI (Vera, 2016).

The development in communications technology (Burhan, 2010) currently allows every community to be constructed through mass media. There is no current social reality that is beyond the social mass media construction. In other words, social construction of community life realities in various aspects cannot be separated from modern society life today who has chosen communication technology as the main tool in their lives (Litt et al., 2020). It also applies to the implementation of public administration which in fact, involves various aspects of public interest which the assessment of public administration relates to three social realities in the society where public administration is implemented. The three aspects of public administration's reality are the reality of objective public administration, the reality of the subjective public administration, and the reality of the inter-subjective public administration. In fact, the implementation of public administration related to planning, implementation, and evaluation of policy is closely related to these three realities. The administrative bureaucracy of public administration often builds subjective reality of what it performs as a much-needed reality, very clean implementation, and very honest in the evaluation. On the other hand, people often deconstruct the subjective reality of public administration with another reality what is said to be objective reality. Society often speaks of the reality of objective reality seen, witnessed, and experienced in the field. Moreover, these two realities are built based on their respective interests, such as the bureaucracy interests as the public administration organizer and the society interests as the subject of development. Contradictions, disputes, and conflicts often occur in this area, in which each holds firm to how it constructs a social reality which it considers to be true. Therefore, people need to build the reality of truth together that can be accepted by all parties. The reality of truth people need is the third reality, i.e., inter-subjective reality. Bureaucracy as the administrator of public and community administration and social institutions must be able to build together the reality of good and proper public administration in accordance with the existing legislation. In the reality, the quality of public administration related to planning, policy implementation, and policy evaluation is constructed through this inter-subjective reality.

Mass media plays an important role in constructing inter-subjective reality in society through the power of ILS-EOI process. Regardless of the agenda of mass media setting on the interpersonal reality of a public administration, mass media have performed its role as an ILS-EOI machine at any time that continues to work in social and society life to construct an inter-subjective reality against social reality related to the bureaucratic duties.

Research Methods

This research used narrative method to describe the power of mass media social construction of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia. Five bureaucrats and one public policy observer were interviewed to obtain real understanding of mass media social construction power against bureaucratic reform of state administration in Indonesia.

Sampling was used to denote the number of informants selected for in-depth interview. In the selection of informants, the researcher intended to engage in (Marshall, 1996) proposed that "to draw a representative sample of the population, therefore the results of informants can be considered as generalized back to the population". According to (Marshall, 1996) and (Palys, 2008), some were more informed and articulated in terms of quality ideas and information than others, hence, researchers in such cases do not focus on the size, but rather on the richness of information or ideas that would be got from the selected informants in research.

Table 1 Informants profile

Source	Sex	Working Experiences as journalist (year)	Current Position
Informant 1	Female	4	Bureaucracy
Informant 2	Female	5	Bureaucracy
Informant 3	Male	4	Bureaucracy
Informant 4	Male	6	Bureaucracy
Informant 5	Male	4	Bureaucracy
Informant 6	Male	5	Public policy Observer

In this case, the sampling was used to measure the regular patterns of Indonesian journalist's behavior in relation to social construction. This method enabled the researcher to reach a targeted sample quickly, especially in situations where proportionality was not the main focus. The targeted sample in this study (5 senior journalists) selected because they met certain characteristics or they fit into a specific purpose or description, and facilitated in answering the research questions.

The sample consisted of five informants from bureaucrats and one informant of public policy officer in Indonesia. The large sample sizes did not matter in qualitative research; these public policy bureaucrats and observers were deeply understanding the information in Indonesia, therefore they could respond and articulate the social construction power of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia (Marshall, 1996; Palys, 2008).

Based on their position, the bureaucrats and public policy observers determined what kind of social media construction strength items should be selected, hypothesized, and how they were selected as the main choice. Therefore, they play an important role as organizers of agenda, gatekeepers, and intermediaries in information of the mass media social construction power in bureaucratic reform. The purpose of selecting bureaucrats and public policy observers was not to measure the interaction power among them but to complement each other in generating relevant data. For example, bureaucrats would have a better insight into the bureaucracy in their respective position. Public policy observers could analyze it from the outside. Consequently, the information would complete each other. The informants interviewed were taken purposively and proportionally from Surabaya and Jakarta.

Similar as other qualitative researchers, the researchers were more interested in "why certain people or groups perform things in a certain way", and "how their attitudes were built, as well as the roles they play in the dynamic process within the organization". (Palys, 2008) further argued that people in research are not always created equal. He argues that informed and articulating informants will often contribute to a much better research results than randomly selected informants.

The interview was held between February and August 2018. The interview questions were reviewed and refined before the main interview was conducted. The interviews were held at certain locations such as in cafe and office yard in Surabaya. It was a good place to conduct interviews because it provided bureaucrats the "freedom" to express and their privacy was protected.

Therefore, this study used in-depth interviews based on the Theory of Social Construction. It was performed to obtain a deeper understanding of bureaucrats and public policy observers' perspective (Kvale, 1996). To maintain the standard questioning method, the questionnaire that served as the guide was developed based on the (Labov William, 1972). Several questions were also asked to determine what other factors affecting the coverage except the mass media social construction power of bureaucratic reform in Indonesia.

Given that the respondents were strongly refused to be recorded for their job security, then the researcher had to cross out their answers on paper. It did not change or reduce the amount of information provided by the respondents. In fact, they were really quiet that researchers should encourage them to provide reasonable answers. Handwriting transcription could be justified given that there was no standard transcription form of research interview. Transcription depends on how the information makes sense and how

the information is used (Kvale, 1996). Transcription was performed in verbatim. The use of shorthand was used to ensure all words were recorded. Transcriptions were recorded and edited as soon as the interview was over. Each interview occurred between 50 and 60 minutes. Data derived from in-depth interviews would be analyzed and presented on the basis of the following parameters which included relevant questions and other issues to be addressed in detail during the interview. The parameters (below) were helpful in fulfilling the research objectives and developed based on (Labov William, 1972) in which the questions that resulted an answer disrupt the orientation of the news outlet; what made it difficult coverage; coverage evaluation; and the coverage results would be analyzed. The parameters included: 1. The role of mass media, and 2. Social construction of mass media excesses of bureaucratic reform. These parameters were developed based on the model of mass media - social media construction which focused on the expected dimension in generating relevant information to answer the research questions and meeting the research objectives to be selected for analysis. Data that were not related to any of these parameters would be analyzed individually. This parameter was also analyzed the power of mass media social media construction of bureaucratic reform in vis-a-vis.

Findings

The Role of Mass Media

It should be reiterated that the main role of mass media in bureaucratic reform is a power of social control over the bureaucratic reform implementation. It promotes the strengthening of the four main conditions in conducive bureaucracy reform among the bureaucracies both at the central and regional levels, such as transparency, accountability, participation, and the bureaucratic culture spirit of good apparatus.

In the spirit of transparency, mass media has encouraged the bureaucracy implementation in the regional and central to be more open, especially on bureaucratic courage to be controlled by other parties outside the bureaucracy. Although it is still hesitant, mass media continues to encourage the bureaucracy to accept the fact that transparent bureaucratic implementation has had a tremendous impact on the Indonesian bureaucracy progress, especially on the aspect of openness to accept the culture of criticism that never existed.

Various media reports on the development processes and administration of public administration has created bureaucratic transparency in the field of development and administration of the State; 1) The use of State budget. This is an important impact of the current media-driven bureaucratic transparency that mass media that any time can inform the people about use of the State budget including in the development sector which should

be transparent to the people. The transparency is needed for the state administration funds and the development collected from the people through taxes should be actually used with the knowledge of the people as well, for what the funds are used, how much the funds, who uses the funds and what benefits to the people; 2) The development implementation. Development is always implemented on behalf of the people; it means that the subjects of development are the people. Mass media guard the implementation of a transparent State, thus the people know what is happening to their society (both as object and as subject).

The assumptions of mass media on development are that the development undertaken by the State is better if the State and Government explains it transparently, rather than on behalf of the people but the beneficiary is the state or otherwise, still every development should provide value to society and the state; 3) Mass media always encourages that the development implementation should be evaluated properly and the results should be reported to the people. Evaluation of development results and the implementation of bureaucracy is important because the mass media assumes that the community is very curious about the development results that has been performed for current and future interest; and 4) Development transparency and bureaucratic administration guarded by the mass media encourages bureaucracy to be more daring and open to criticism and suggestions from the public. Mass media play communication role to bridge the state and society, and there is no more "lie" between bureaucratic administrator and the communities. Mass media understands that its role encouraging the state bureaucracy transparency has provided spirit of bureaucratic reform as a clean and prestigious new bureaucracy.

Mass media also encourages creating a spirit of accountability in the implementation of bureaucratic duties. Previously, the implementation of various activities seemed improperly implemented. Consequently, it results wasting in state budget, then the social construction of mass social media toward the implementation of current development in various region has encouraged the spirit of accountability to what is implemented by the bureaucracy. Mass media news has encouraged bureaucrats at the central as well as at regional level to be able to account for their duties to the people as the mandate of development to them and the most importantly is their accountability to God. In the early stages of bureaucratic reform, almost all of state bureaucrats are reluctant to assume this responsibility because it is seen as a troublesome and a source of disaster, but, lately, the bureaucrat's confidence has grown and developed in line with the spirit of reform.

That spirit has created at least three aspects, such as; 1) Quality of the public policy and bureaucratic duties implementation increasingly qualified. The impact of mass media coverage on such implementation has resulted in more cautious bureaucracy and attempted

to improve the public policy quality implementation to avoid matters relating to law and to attract public sympathy; 2) Mass media report of the entire development and transparent bureaucracy administration leads to savings in the development and bureaucracy financing which has been extremely wasteful; 3) Mass media coverage on corruption cases has at least resulted a deterrent effect on other bureaucratic administrators who have not or have not been the source of mass media coverage on similar cases; 4) The people are increasingly aware of what is happening in the state development and bureaucracy administration at the central and regional. Mass media coverage has become a social learning material for the wider community towards the implementation of a clean and accountable state, therefore, the people are increasingly aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

Participatory spirit among the current growing bureaucracy is also in line with the role of mass media in encouraging the state bureaucracy openness. The transparent bureaucracy should ultimately accept the roles of other parties outside the bureaucracy in their duties implementations. It comes primarily from society as a major part of the object as well as the subject of the bureaucracy duties implementation. Communities that have been abandoned need to be involved in every activity within the reformist bureaucracy to make the community involvement which has been seen as negative aspect for the bureaucratic duties implementation becomes positive aspect for the development and bureaucratic duties quality.

In addition to encouraging the openness of bureaucracy to the community, mass media also has promoted the potential of the community to participate in the development implementation. Mass media has succeeded in encouraging the huge potential of the community in the economic field, human resources and community empowerment field, politics, health, and others to support the government overcoming various problems of the state. Moreover, mass media has also encouraged the community intellectual potential in participating supporting the state in various fields of life.

The role of mass media through social media construction process has finally created wide-ranging reform in the bureaucracy beyond the four points described. Mass media has blown tremendous spirit on all bureaucratic stakeholders in Indonesia about bureaucratic reform spirit, thus the spirit of bureaucratic reform has been heard among the lower bureaucrats through the creation of a bureaucratic work culture of the state apparatus, in which many people believe that the state bureaucracy never had a good work culture, previously.

Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the benefits of mass media in social construction also give impact on other aspects of current bureaucracy, both beneficial and detrimental. The

advantages aspects such as social construction of mass media have been successful exploring various potentials at the regional level, especially the potential of human resources, therefore the potential that previously could only be utilized by the local interests can be exploited by the state interests at large now. On the other hand, bureaucracy also often utilizes social construction of mass media for creating an image and personal popularity interest that detriment to many people since poor human resources with strong funding capability to finance the image and social construction of mass media can control the bureaucracy in regional as well as at national level. Finally, the goal is only for personal and group interests.

Power of Social Construction of Mass Media in Bureaucratic Reform

In the New Order era, when the mass media was banned, the role of mass media was not as widespread as today. However, at the end of New Order, since press freedom began to open, then the role of mass media at that time continues to grow until today. One of the important roles of mass media is social constructions of mass media in bureaucratic reform.

As social construction explanation of bureaucratic reforms, through social construction of the bureaucratic reform reality, regional image and political figures through mass media are easily performed. A large billboard is emblazoned at Soekarno Hatta Airport gateway about Visit South Sumatera, Visit Banda Aceh, Visit Central Java and others. The goal is not just for information but also to perform social construction of bureaucratic reforms reality which are running in the region.

We can also see pictures of people who portray themselves as public figures on television, newspapers or through outdoor media such as billboards, pamphlets and others in villages, sub-districts, districts, province, up to Jakarta. Before the reform, before mass media developed, billboards, pamphlet, and never existed anywhere in this State. The social construction of mass media has helped the making of image of regions or regional figures in Indonesia which previously were limitedly known in Jakarta or other areas, now they become known through simulacra process.

Since the election in 2004, mass media has played a huge role in creating an image of political figures or political parties participating in the elections. Similarly, in the legislative election at the central as well as regional or head of regional elections throughout Indonesia, the mass media facilitates the shaping of image of political figures and political parties participating the election. Political figures construct self-image and the political parties' image in order to attract the voters. Since then, the campaign paradigm performed on the

road and in the stadium has shifted to mass media promotion and other communication technologies.

Mass media provides many benefits to the paradigm shifting of the election campaign. It can reduce the mass horrors of campaigns that use up the highways, in particular. It can also reduce crimes and violations, reduce the loss of casualties and properties. Massive mass mobilization costs can also be reduced, it means that mass media might help to ensure that the candidates and regional head election are thrifter in the use of campaign funds.

The role of mass media can also take form in bad things such as changing the effect of attacks on candidates against political opponents, thus helping to make effective the adverse effects of attacks on political candidates who are directly focused on the candidates. Racial, ethnicity, and religious issue (SARA issue) of Oma Irama is evidence of mass media playing a new role in attacking political opponent, Foke's jokes to Jokowi broadcasted by the mass media are equally effective.

More broadly, in addition to constructing bureaucratic reform image, mass media also simultaneously deconstruct the bureaucratic reform image. (Derrida, 1987) stated that, it is correct that any social construction can be deconstructed. Therefore, the mass media power to construct image is as strong as the power of deconstructing the image.

In the case of Jokowi, the president of RI, mass media repeatedly construct the image that Jokowi is a pioneer of anti-corruption in Indonesia. There are also public service advertisements about saying no to corruption. Mass media also repeatedly construct images that Jokowi is also the pioneer in saving state financial of the state bureaucracy administration. However, mass media also reported public criticism as social deconstruction of Jokowi's anti-corruption and anti-austerity image. Similarly, mass media often depicts that Jokowi is a polite, honest and kind person, but mass media also deconstructs the image with other figure who is a liar, spend State financial, and evil.

This excess occurs not only to Jokowi as the head of state but also to all regional heads, government institutions, and social institutions in Indonesia as the stakeholders of bureaucratic reform. Mass media plays their roles through the social construction and social deconstruction.

Conclusion

Bureaucratic reform implementation in Indonesia running during the last fifteen years shows a progress. The progress cannot be separated by the roles of mass media who

participate in reporting about bureaucracy reform to the public in every time. Times have changed, the role of mass media becomes very important in the state administration. In fact, it is said that mass media becomes one of the important pillars in the state bureaucracy besides executive, legislative, and judicial. Mass media shows the strong effect of the people power in the state administration with the ideals for the clean executive, legislative, and judicial as well as bureaucratic administration and to perform their duties as excellent as possible.

Social construction as a theory or approach provides a model of mass media action that it is not only providing image to a good bureaucracy administration but also providing another model deconstructing the bureaucratic administration image. The nature of mass media that resembles the nature of the sword becomes another power for the mass media as a pillar of power born from the people.

Mass media is not perfect, it does make mistakes. The main mistake of mass media is as a "double-edged knife". Becoming a tool of bureaucratic reform control is the expected role, but it can also be a killer for bureaucratic reform as the unexpected role. The freedom of mass media and bureaucratic reform grew and developed in the same era under the same political conditions and with the same ideals. If we assume that bureaucratic reform is a woman wooden statue, then the mass media as the knife should not destroy the bureaucratic reforms but rather, to carve it out. Therefore, it would create a statue that is lean, elegant, and valuable.

For further research, the other mistakes of mass media can be observed by including the solution to overcome the mistakes. Moreover, for the future research also possibly analyze mass media function in other social topic.

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