

Media Contribution in Raising Human Rights Awareness and Protection

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ABSTRACT

The media has an important role to play in raising public awareness and protecting human rights through reporting and advocacy on various communication platforms. The media functions as a conveyor of information and as a social control tool capable of exposing human rights violations and encouraging policy changes in today's digital era. This role is often faced with challenges, including political pressure, economic interests, and disinformation that can obscure facts and hinder the protection of human rights. This study aims to analyze how the media contributes to the promotion and protection of human rights, and explore the obstacles faced in maintaining objectivity and balance in reporting. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah studi literatur dengan meninjau berbagai jurnal, buku, dan laporan terkait. The results of the literature study show that independent and balanced media can have a significant impact on increasing public awareness of human rights, as well as contributing to overseeing policies that support social justice. Efforts are needed to strengthen press freedom, improve media literacy among the public, and ensure there are regulations that support objective and accurate reporting. The media can continue to be a key pillar through these efforts to fight for human rights and maintain social stability in modern societies.

INTRODUCTION

The media has a very significant role in the growing digital era to shape public opinion and raise public awareness of various social issues, including human rights. Media, both in traditional forms such as television and newspapers and in digital forms such as social media and online news portals, are the main tools for conveying information related to human rights violations and fighting for justice for victims (McPherson, 2018). Its ability to reach a wide audience in a short period of time makes the media function as a social watchdog that highlights acts of human rights violations and pressures the government and authorities to take responsibility (Howard & Hussain, 2013). The presence of the media has also been shown to increase advocacy and encourage faster policy responses to address various cases of human rights violations, both at the national and international levels.

The media has the potential to champion human rights but also faces various challenges to fulfill this role. The media is used as a propaganda tool by the parties concerned to spread biased or misleading information related to human rights issues (Freedman, 2020).

There are still threats to press freedom in various countries, where journalists who expose human rights violations often face pressure, intimidation, and even violence. It is important to understand how the media can effectively promote and protect human rights, as well as identify barriers that need to be overcome in order to optimize their role (Donnelly & Whelan, 2020).

Although the media has great potential to increase public awareness of human rights, various challenges still hamper the effectiveness of its role. One of the main problems is the media's partiality in presenting information related to human rights. Many media are owned by certain groups or have political and economic interests that can affect the objectivity of the news (Freedman, 2020). This risk making the coverage of human rights biased or even omitting some facts that the public should know. The media also face censorship and pressure from the government and large corporations that seek to control human rights narratives, hindering press freedom and the public's right to accurate information (Mearsheimer, 2018). The existence of media co-opted by political and economic forces can also lead to the neglect or even omission of important information.

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The emergence of the digital age and social media brings new challenges in the dissemination of information related to human rights. Social media, with its vast global reach, can be a very effective tool in fighting for basic rights and spreading awareness about human rights violations (Ziccardi, 2012). Social media can be an effective tool to fight for human rights but the spread of unverified information or fake news (hoaxes) often muddies the waters and creates misunderstandings in society (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017). Hoaxes about human rights issues can be used by certain parties to shape false public opinion, divert attention from the violations that occur, or even discredit activists who fight for justice (Hatta, 2020). This poses a major challenge in ensuring that reporting and advocacy on human rights remains viable and effective. Social media algorithms that tend to display information based on user preferences can create a filter bubble, which limits public access to broader perspectives on human rights issues (Pariser, 2011).

Another important issue is the risks faced by journalists and activists who try to expose cases of human rights violations. Coverage of human rights issues often leads to threats to the safety of journalists, whether in the form of physical threats, defamation, or criminalization with fabricated accusations. This situation limits press freedom, and discourages many media outlets from covering human rights cases in depth due to the risks involved (Bunch, 2017). Journalists who feel their safety is threatened often choose to avoid sensitive reports or reduce the depth of their coverage for personal safety (Waisbord, 2011). This hampers efforts to reveal the truth about human rights violations and slows down the accountability process (Andreopoulos, 2018). Without in-depth reporting and transparent investigations, human rights violations that occur in various parts of the world tend to remain hidden, or at the very least, do not receive the attention they deserve.

The role of the media to promote and protect human rights has become increasingly important in the digital era, where information can spread quickly and influence public opinion. The media has great power to shape public perceptions of human rights issues, both through reporting in conventional media and through digital platforms such as social media (McQuail, 2020). Not all information conveyed by the media is objective and accurate. Political bias, economic pressure, or even threats against journalists can hinder the dissemination of truthful information about human rights violations (Mitchell, 2019). It is important to examine how the media plays a role in voicing human rights and identify factors that hinder its effectiveness.

The urgency of this research is heightened by the prevalence of disinformation and the misuse of the media to shape erroneous public opinion about human rights. Certain groups use the media to cover up or even justify human rights violations, which has the potential to worsen the conditions of victims and undermine justice efforts (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017). Journalists and human rights activists often face serious threats when exposing the truth, which impacts press freedom and information transparency (Keeble, 2008). Research can provide insights into how the media can be more effective in promoting human rights, as well as how existing challenges can be overcome to ensure freedom of information and protection for those fighting for human rights.

This research aims to analyze the role of the media to raise public awareness and promote human rights through reporting and advocacy on various communication platforms. Information on human rights can be more easily accessed by the general public with the development of technology and digital media. This research will explore how the media can be an effective tool to spread understanding of human rights issues, as well as how the reporting strategies used can influence public opinion and related policies. The research also aims to examine the media's contribution to protecting human rights by ensuring objective and balanced reporting. The media has a huge challenge to maintain its independence in a world that is increasingly influenced by various political and economic interests. This research will discuss how the media can maintain fair and transparent journalistic principles so as not to be trapped in bias or manipulation of information that can harm human rights.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a literature study approach to analyze the role of the media in promoting and protecting human rights. This approach involved reviewing various academic sources, scientific journals, books, as well as reports from international organizations relevant to the topic. This approach allows researchers to comprehensively identify trends, challenges and contributions of the media to voice human rights issues (Creswell, 2018). The literature analysis was conducted by examining various theoretical and empirical perspectives related to how mass and digital media shape public opinion and influence policies related to human rights. The literature review also includes empirical perspectives that observe the concrete impact of media coverage on the policies of governments and international organizations in addressing human rights violations, thus providing a clearer picture of the role of the media in social change.

The data used in this study came from a variety of verified secondary sources, including scholarly journals published by academic institutions and human rights organizations, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. These secondary sources were chosen for their high credibility and significant contribution to the understanding of human rights issues globally. The analytical technique used was content analysis, which allows researchers to identify patterns and trends in media coverage of human rights issues (Krippendorff, 2019).

The literature review also included an analysis of the impact of social media as a new platform for disseminating information on human rights, given its increasing role in the digital age (Tufekci, 2017). This study aims to provide a broader picture of how media can serve as a human rights advocacy tool while facing challenges to maintain objectivity and press freedom by comparing different sources. This study provides a more comprehensive insight into the media's contribution to public awareness of human rights.

As a validation step, this study evaluates the credibility of the sources used by considering factors such as publisher reputation, research methodology, and citation rate. This approach ensures that the study results have a strong foundation and can be used as a reference in policy formulation and media communication strategies to promote human rights (Bryman, 2016). The study is expected to provide insights into the effectiveness of the media to increase awareness and protection of human rights.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The development of media to promote human rights has shown significant impact, especially with the rapid advancement of digital technology. Media, both traditional and digital, have played an important role in spreading awareness about human rights, providing a platform for activism, and supporting transparency and accountability on issues of human rights violations. Social media, in particular, has become a powerful tool for disseminating information about human rights quickly and widely. Users can share experiences, organize campaigns, and rally support for human rights issues, creating networks of solidarity that cross geographic boundaries (Castells, 2009).

Advances in digital technology have also enabled greater access to information on human rights. People can now easily get news and analysis related to human rights violations around the world, which may have previously been difficult to access.

Information about human rights violations can spread quickly with the internet, raising global awareness and encouraging collective action. The rapid spread of information through platforms allows people around the world to learn about human rights violations occurring in far-flung places, even under conditions of very limited press freedom. Digital technology allows social movements to grow faster and wider, such as campaigns against human rights violations in various countries. People not only become more aware, but also more able to participate in pushing for change, organizing protests, or providing support to victims of human rights violations.

Regional and international initiatives have also developed to protect digital human rights and personal data. For example, ASEAN and the European Union have developed frameworks aimed at protecting human rights in the digital age. Initiatives such as the ASEAN Framework on Digital Data Governance and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in Europe reflect efforts to create better standards for human rights protection. The media has become an effective tool to promote and protect human rights with collaboration between governments, civil society and the private sector giving hope for a more just and equitable future.

According to Kellner (2003), the historical journey of media to promote human rights can be traced back to the era when print media first emerged. In the 18th and 19th centuries, newspapers and magazines began to serve as platforms to voice social injustices and human rights violations. Activists and writers such as Thomas Paine and Frederick Douglass used print media to advocate for freedom, equality and individual rights. Through their writings, they succeeded in drawing public attention to important issues, such as slavery and civil rights, which in turn led to social movements and policy changes. The print media of the time served as a tool to unite critical voices and build support for movements demanding the protection of human rights. The media is not only a conduit of information, but also a driver of profound social change in human history.

In the 20th century, the development of radio and television brought a new dimension to the dissemination of information on human rights. These electronic media allowed for direct and more in-depth delivery of news and information, reaching a wider audience. Important events during this period, such as World War II and the civil rights movement in the United States, received significant media attention. The media played a role in exposing human rights violations, such as the Holocaust and racial discrimination, which sparked global awareness and led to the establishment of international conventions to protect human rights.

Digital media through the rise of the internet in the 20th century has revolutionized the way information about human rights is disseminated. Websites, blogs and social media platforms provide space for individuals and organizations to share information, experiences and advocacy campaigns in real-time. Movements such as the Arab Spring demonstrate how social media can be used for mass mobilization and organizing protests against human rights violations. Media serves as a tool for information dissemination, and as a means to empower people and encourage active participation to fight for human rights (McChesney, 2000).

International organizations, such as the United Nations (UN), also utilize the media to promote human rights. The UN seeks to raise global awareness about the importance of protecting human rights through reports, campaigns and educational programs. The history of media to promote human rights shows a significant evolution, from print media to digital media, which has changed the way people interact with human rights issues and driven broader social change. The media is now one of the key pillars in the global effort to protect and promote human rights around the world.

The Role of Media to Raise Public Awareness and Promote Human Rights through News and Advocacy

The media has a very important role in raising public awareness of human rights through reporting and advocacy on various communication platforms. The media in the digital era functions as a conveyor of information and as an agent of social change that can shape public opinion (Aisyah & Issalillah, 2021). The media can increase public understanding of these issues by presenting news about human rights violations and encouraging concrete actions to uphold justice (Coudry, 2012). The media also provides space for non-governmental organizations and civil society groups to voice their demands, as well as put pressure on governments or corporations involved in human rights violations.

Objective and in-depth media coverage of human rights contributes to shaping public opinion that is more critical of the various rights violations that occur in various parts of the world (Bunch, 2017). While traditional media such as newspapers, television, and radio have a great influence in disseminating information about human rights, digital media such as social media have become the main tool to voice injustice more widely and quickly (Lievrouw, 2011; Wargo, 2021). Bennet and Segerberg (2013) explain that the growing presence of communication platforms also allows people to actively participate in discussions about human rights, strengthening awareness and support for the protection of fundamental human rights.

Advocacy carried out through the media has a very important role in encouraging governments and international institutions to take more decisive steps in handling cases of human rights violations. Human rights organizations often use the media to disseminate reports on human rights violations that occur in various countries so as to attract the attention of the global community and increase pressure on the authorities (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). The success of this advocacy relies heavily on the media which can expand the scope of information and increase the visibility of human rights issues. Consistent coverage of these human rights violations creates significant pressure on the government or state involved. Governments and related institutions are more compelled to act to protect human rights with pressure from an informed public.

The media also has a responsibility to provide balanced and accurate reporting on human rights. Biased or manipulative news can worsen the situation by spreading disinformation that can lead to public confusion or even social conflict (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017). Biased or politically influenced reporting can increase polarization in society, which in turn hinders efforts to achieve just solutions for victims of human rights violations. Journalists are required to prioritize journalistic ethics and verify information before disseminating news about human rights, to ensure that the public receives valid and reliable information (Shaw, 2011). Journalists must also maintain independence in their coverage, avoiding influence from parties who could have an interest in the narrative conveyed. The media can serve as an effective tool in promoting human rights in a fair and transparent manner by maintaining independence and objectivity.

The role of the media to promote human rights also faces significant challenges, especially in terms of press freedom. Journalists who dare to report on human rights issues often face various forms of political pressure, intimidation, or even physical threats that can jeopardize their safety (Carter & Westenskow, 2020). This situation creates an environment that is not conducive to objective and transparent reporting, where journalists may feel compelled to self-censor or avoid reporting on sensitive human rights violations. When the media cannot operate freely, the information that reaches the public is limited and often does not reflect the true reality (Donnelly & Whelan, 2020). This hampers the media's ability to expose human rights violations, and slows down the process of advocacy and justice, as the public is not getting accurate information about the situation.

The powerlessness of the media to report freely can result in impunity for human rights violators, where unethical or illegal acts are not exposed and do not receive the attention they deserve. When journalists are intimidated or threatened, this can create a wider deterrent effect, where their colleagues also feel pressured not to report on the same issues. It is important for the international community, non-governmental organizations, and human rights institutions to support press freedom and protect journalists who struggle to uncover the truth. We can ensure that the media can play its role effectively by creating a safe environment for journalists to promote human rights, provide the information needed to drive social change, and strengthen accountability for violations.

The success of the media in raising public awareness on human rights also depends on the audience's ability to sort out the information they receive. Media literacy is a crucial aspect to ensure that the public can understand, analyze, and critically evaluate human rights news (Livingstone & Van der Graaf, 2008). Without a good understanding of how information is presented and influenced by various interests, the public can easily be manipulated by inaccurate narratives or even propaganda that is contrary to human rights principles. It is important for audiences to realize that the media often does not just convey facts neutrally, but also shapes narratives that can reflect certain interests. Propaganda or the presentation of biased information can often manipulate public opinion, especially if audiences are unable to critically evaluate sources of information. Improving media literacy among the public is an important step to ensure that people can access and process information about human rights wisely, and play an active role in promoting the protection and respect for human rights.

The media has a very significant role in raising public awareness of human rights through reporting and advocacy. Various communication platforms, such as television, radio, newspapers, and social media allow the media to disseminate information that educates the public about the basic rights of every individual, as well as issues of human rights violations that occur at home and abroad. Informative and in-depth coverage can help people understand the complexity of human rights issues so that they are better able to identify violations and participate in efforts to protect human rights. A strong media committed to the dissemination of accurate information can increase public participation in efforts to protect and fight for human rights.

Successfully carrying out this role cannot be achieved without the support of various parties. First, responsible journalists are essential to ensure that the information provided is accurate, objective and balanced. They must be equipped with good investigative skills and a deep understanding of human rights issues in order to report appropriately and sensitively. Policies that support press freedom are also crucial, because without a safe and free environment to report, journalists will find it difficult to expose human rights violations and voice the public interest. Finally, strong media literacy among the public is also needed so that individuals can critically analyze and evaluate the information they receive. They will be better equipped to engage in discussions on human rights and contribute to broader advocacy by improving people's ability to understand and assess news. To create a society that is more aware and concerned about the importance of respecting human rights, collaboration between the media, journalists, policy makers and the wider community is essential. The media can serve as a conduit of information, and as an agent of change that encourages awareness and collective action in the protection of human rights.

Media Contribution to protect Human Rights and Maintain Objectivity and Balance of News Reporting

The media has a very important role in protecting human rights through objective and balanced reporting. One of the main contributions of the media is as a watchdog that reveals various human rights violations that may occur in various sectors of society (McQuail, 2020). The media can hold abusers accountable by transparently reporting on human rights issues. For example, journalistic investigations conducted by various media organizations have uncovered violations of migrant workers' rights in several countries, prompting local governments to improve their policies (Herman & Chomsky, 2002).

The media plays a role in educating the public about the importance of human rights and the rights that must be upheld in the life of the state. Mass media such as television, newspapers, and digital platforms have a wide reach that allows the dissemination of information about human rights quickly and effectively (Curran, 2011). Documentary programs or public awareness campaigns on human rights broadcast through various media have increased people's understanding of the issues and inspired collective action to uphold social justice. According to Joseph (2012), the media not only disseminates information, but also plays a role in creating social momentum to fight for and protect human rights at the global and local levels.

To perform their functions, the media face significant challenges, including political and economic pressures that can affect the objectivity of the news. Some media that depend on funding from certain parties are often caught in conflicts of interest that hinder their journalistic independence, as expressed by Herman and Chomsky (2002). When media receive financial support from sponsors or owners who have a particular agenda, there is a risk that they will present news that is unbalanced or even biased towards certain groups or interests. For example, media funded by large corporations may tend to ignore issues that harm their business interests, or media affiliated with certain political parties may only highlight perspectives that are in line with their political agenda. This situation undermines journalistic integrity, and hampers efforts to protect human rights, as the public does not get accurate and comprehensive information about human rights violations that occur. When news is presented in a biased way, the public becomes less able to understand important issues and take the necessary actions to fight for their rights and those of others (Bunch, 2017).

Political pressure from the government or influential groups can also limit press freedom, where journalists may feel threatened to report facts that do not fit the narrative desired by the powerful. The challenges faced by the media are both internal, and external, requiring attention and solutions from various stakeholders, including policymakers, civil society organizations, and society at large. To ensure that the media can effectively play its role in the protection of human rights, it is important to create an enabling environment for press freedom and journalistic independence, and promote transparency in media funding.

Social media plays a huge role in the dissemination of human rights-related information, providing a platform for individuals and organizations to share news, experiences, and advocacy. Digital platforms are often a breeding ground for disinformation that can obscure the facts about human rights violations, as Wardle and Derakhshan (2017) point out. Fake news and misleading narratives can quickly spread often without adequate verification with the ease of access and speed of information dissemination on social media. This can cause confusion among the public and reduce trust in valid information. Media professionals have a great responsibility to verify information before reporting it. A rigorous verification process involves fact-checking, and analyzing the context and sources of information, to ensure that the news presented is accurate and unbiased. The media can help prevent the spread of misinformation and maintain its credibility as a trusted source of information by doing this (Donnelly & Whelan, 2020).

The media should also play an active role in educating the public about the importance of media literacy so that the public can more critically assess the information they receive from various sources, including social media. Through careful verification and media literacy education, media professionals can contribute significantly to creating better awareness of human rights issues, as well as building public trust in the information presented (Hobbs, 2010). The responsibility of the media to maintain the integrity and accuracy of information is becoming increasingly important in an era where information can be easily manipulated, especially regarding the protection of human rights (Metzger et al., 2003). Media literacy is an important tool to ensure that the public is not easily trapped in disinformation that can harm.

The media must also ensure that the perspectives of the various parties involved in a human rights issue are reported fairly. This means that each report should include the viewpoints of victims, perpetrators, governments, and human rights organizations so that the public can get a more complete picture of an event, as expressed by Schudson (2003). The media provides more comprehensive information, and creates space for dialogue and better understanding among various parties by presenting multiple perspectives. This approach is particularly important in relation to human rights issues that are often complex and involve multiple interests. When the media reports on the voices of victims, for example, they provide a platform for individuals who may not have the power to speak for themselves, thereby raising awareness of the suffering experienced by them. The media has a role to play in raising public awareness, promoting solidarity and fighting for justice for the marginalized.

Engaging with the perspectives of perpetrators and governments is also important to understand the context and rationale behind certain actions, although this must be done with care not to give legitimacy to human rights violations. The media can help prevent the manipulation of information by interested parties who may want to twist the facts for their own benefit in this way (Donnelly & Whelan, 2020). When all perspectives are presented in a balanced manner, the public can be more critical to analyze the information received and make more informed decisions. This approach can also promote accountability, as parties involved in human rights violations will find it more difficult to avoid responsibility when all points of view are transparently expressed. The media plays an important role in creating a fair and accurate narrative on human rights issues, which in turn can contribute to the protection and enforcement of human rights in society.

The media must refer to a strict journalistic code of ethics and apply the principles of editorial independence to maintain balance in reporting (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2014). The principle of editorial independence is essential so that the media is not influenced by external pressures, whether from governments, political groups or business interests (van Drunen, 2021). Several international press organizations such as Reporters Without Borders and the Committee to Protect Journalists have set standards that can be followed by the media to ensure that reporting on human rights is done transparently and responsibly. Transparent reporting allows the public to understand the real situation and recognize the impact of human rights violations. It helps strengthen public awareness and encourages collective action to protect human rights while safeguarding reputation.

The media can continue to contribute to the protection of human rights and be an effective advocacy tool by ensuring objective and balanced reporting. The media has an important role to play in shaping public opinion and influencing policy, so the responsibility to present accurate and unbiased information is crucial. Through in-depth investigations, the media can uncover human rights violations that may not be visible to the wider public, give voice to the marginalized, and highlight pressing social issues. A rigorous information verification process is also essential to ensure that the news delivered is correct, and can be accounted for. The media can maintain its integrity and credibility, which in turn increases public trust in the information presented by adhering to the journalistic code of ethics. When the media commit to reporting facts in a fair and balanced manner, they inform, and create space for constructive dialog and discussion on human rights issues. This can encourage people to be more aware of their rights and to speak out when those rights are violated.

Media that function as advocacy tools can work with non-governmental organizations and civil society groups to fight for social justice, advocate for policy changes, and support recovery efforts for victims of human rights violations. This collaboration can take many forms, from disseminating information about human rights violations to mobilizing public opinion in support of policy change. The media has great potential to uphold social justice and human rights in various parts of the world, provided they carry out their duties with integrity, objectivity and commitment to the principles of journalistic ethics. The media acts as a conveyor of information, and as an agent of change that can influence policy and raise public awareness about the importance of protecting human rights. The media has the power to drive social change, build public opinion in favor of human rights protection,

and put pressure on authorities to act. The media can ensure that their advocacy role truly has a positive impact on social change and human rights globally by maintaining objectivity and prioritizing journalistic ethics.

CONCLUSION

The media has a very significant role in raising public awareness, shaping opinions, and advocating for the protection of human rights. The media, through various platforms such as television, newspapers, online media, and social media, is the main tool to convey information and reveal human rights violations to the wider community. Objective, fact-based reporting that is not influenced by certain interests is an important factor to ensure that the media remains a strong pillar of democracy. The media also faces various obstacles such as political pressure, economic interests, and the spread of biased news or even disinformation that can hinder efforts to protect human rights to the fullest.

To ensure that the media continues to play its role optimally to fight for human rights, strategic steps are needed from various parties. First, press freedom must be maintained and strengthened through regulations that protect journalists and ensure media independence. Second, training for journalists on balanced and responsible human rights reporting needs to continue so that the information conveyed does not contain bias or certain interests. The public also needs to improve media literacy so that they can sort out the right information and contribute to monitoring the media so that they continue to carry out their functions fairly and objectively. The media can continue to be the main force to fight for justice and protect human rights in various parts of the world.

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