The Role of Community Radio in Participation of Development of Various Fields in Rural Communities

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Abstract

The preliminary study proved that disaster information has not reached the community evenly; people do not understand the actual and factual information from sources they should trust. Dissemination of information only uses the participation of community leaders who provide further information derived from information disseminated by local governments and their staff. Inter-institutional cooperation that has not yet been implemented explains that other media are needed, namely media closer to the community, namely community radio. This study aims to analyze the role of community radio on community economic development in rural areas of West Java. This study used a case study. While data analysis used the Miles-Huberman interactive model of five radio communities in rural areas of West Java. Various types of development in terms of ideology, politics, economy, social, and culture are used to illustrate this study. This study found that the presence of community radio in rural areas is vital as part of village development, especially during difficult times such as the Covid-19 Pandemic. Community radio can be helpful for the government, especially local governments, always assist parties who support government programs such as community radio in designing, implementing, and supervising development. In this regard, community radio has illustrated the principle of the community for the community.

Keywords: community radio; communication development; social approach; Non-formal education; communication network.

INTRODUCTION

Media is a tool for absorbing and disseminating information from various parties, so that could be used as each respective usage (Berger & Chafee, 1987; Braddock & Morrison, 2020; van der Meer & Jonkman, 2021). From the assumptions of this theory, in reality, the wider community still relies on essential sources of information on the mass media, especially local newspapers (Kearl & Webster, 2021). Because the proximity of local media is a consideration for the community to review the information promulgated by local media, the media can disseminate information on natural disasters to local communities (Sjoraida et al., 2019). Theoretically, the factors that strengthen the impact of mass media can be identified, namely: exposure (media reach); credibility (level of trust); consonance (no significant difference in message content between mass media); significance (concerning the interests of the crowd/public); sensitive (concerning sensitivity to certain things); critical situations (instability/collapse); and interpersonal communication support on media content.

Then this study also assumes that there is already available information in various forms and considerable amounts in society. Information is produced, distributed, stored, and received. At the same time, it will become increasingly difficult for individuals to find relevant information. This condition leads communication experts to understand how people seek information. Literacy education is one way to develop this type of media literacy. Media literacy is assumed to be taught in a planned manner to specific community groups. Media education provides tools to help audiences critically analyze media messages to detect propaganda, censorship, and bias in news and programs related to public life and understand the structure of media institutions, such as media ownership and funding (Degand, 2020). Media literacy, then, communicating and obtaining information responsive to changes in society's messages (Anwar et al., 2017). Its concrete manifestation is the individual's ability to collect data and produce it according to life itself.

In addition, within the scope of this third definition, media literacy is a broad term that unites individuals' three stages of empowerment when dealing with media. The stages are as follows: The first stage is understanding the importance of accessing media messages or one's media "diet," making choices and reducing the time spent accessing all types of media for the benefit of the broader individual. The second stage is learning specific critical skills, learning to analyze and question how messages are constructed. This type of skill is understood better through the practice of directly observing the media and now producing media messages. Meanwhile, the third or final stage is the stage that explores something more 'deep'. For example: who creates the media messages accessed? For what purpose? Who benefits? Who is harmed? And who decides? This stage is a stage related to the social, political, and economic context. This stage is related to how someone interprets media messages in the context of their social life. The last step often leads to advocacy or something broader.

Residents seem to have no choice; one of the reasons is that they live outside the constant flow of information scattered in many media. Citizens who are reported may not necessarily access the reported information, which is very likely to be vital to them. Various information and news that are spread or broadcast are more consumed by people far from the scene. Residents who bear the direct risk of threats and government policies are even more ignorant.

How far is the role of the media in reporting the condition of residents who are threatened by disaster for the residents themselves is a question. Can the media play a role in filling the gap that people who have been only news objects actually need information? They also need the media to voice their opinions.

The data proves that disaster information has not reached the community evenly; people do not understand the actual and factual information from sources they should trust. Dissemination of information only uses the participation of community leaders who provide further information derived from information disseminated by local governments and their staff. Inter-institutional cooperation that has not yet been implemented explains that other media are needed, namely media closer to the community, namely community radio.

So far, community radio still relies on volunteers as information filler. Human resources are indeed one of the obstacles faced by community radio. However, residents have started to participate by donating information via SMS or telephone, then broadcasting it on the radio. By collaborating with institutions that handle disasters in the region, the community can actively access basic and factual information through community radio.

Community radio can overcome communication barriers to convey information quickly and efficiently to the community. The lack of local content and information presented from electronic media (Radio) accommodated problems related to entertainment alone. Things that came into contact with small communities were still far from expectations. With the birth

of Law No. 22, which provides opportunities for the implementation of Community Radio broadcasting, it can expand the segmentation in disseminating educational information, in this case, political education that can be accessed directly by the public to reduce hoax news that is not true.

Community Radio was established to be a communication medium, deliver citizen information and community education media, and actualize the local community's creation, creativity, and culture through broadcasting. The utilization of community radio has a mission to develop community potential, especially in West Java. This study seeks to map and implement social media (community radio) in social, cultural, and educational contexts to create a development equipped with a security structure to create a safe, comfortable, and productive city environment

Community radio presents the themes that residents need; often, the language used by broadcasters follows the local dialect and local speaking habits. The thing is different; many private radio radios tend to follow the speaking style of city people (Jakarta) to make it look modern and slang. Community radio in Indonesia began to develop in 2000. Community radio is the fruit of political reform in 1998, marked by the disbandment of the Ministry of Information as the sole media-controlling authority in the hands of the government. The existence of community radio in Indonesia is getting stronger after the enactment of Law No. 32 of 2002 concerning Broadcasting.

Community radio is a social process or event where community members design various programs, produce, broadcast them. The emphasis here is on the ownership of multiple development efforts and democratic efforts by the community members concerned themselves through media, radio to achieve these goals. In all its aspects, this is participatory communication or involves all parties and not programs made by others about the community (Anderson et al., 2020; Shannon et al., 2020).

Currently, in Indonesia, there are more than 300 community radios (Maryani et al., 2021). These community radios are spread throughout Indonesia. Some have organized themselves in the Indonesian Community Radio Network (JRKI), Community Radio Independent Network (JIRAK Celebes), Bandung Campus Radio Forum, and others. Many experts have put forward concepts of community radio.

Community radio refers to radio broadcasting stations established by and for a particular community, which are not commercial and whose content is mainly about the dynamics and needs of the community itself (Cibin et al., 2020). The society operates community radio, and its operations depend primarily on community-owned resources. The program is based on community access and participation, reflecting the community's specific needs (Ratten, 2020). Community radio is a form of radio created to serve the community (Tufan et al., 2021).

Have these goals been achieved by community radio? Let us follow his explanation by taking the case of community radio information networks, namely on community radios in West Java.

METHODOLOGY

Research is a series of processes carried out in a planned and systematic way to solve problems or get answers to specific questions. The research process must be harmonious and mutually supportive of having adequate weight and providing undoubted conclusions (Nichols et al., 2020; Simione & Gnagnarella, 2020). The selection of community radio was made deliberately, namely the choice due to information-rich cases (Powell et al., 2021).

This research used a case study in which it selected community radios in West Java: Pass FM of Bandung Regency, Rasi of Garut, Abilawa of Tasikmalaya, Kujang of Sumedang, and Sportif FM of Cirebon. In addition, the checklist was used to get an overview of the state of community radio and to fulfill the desire for data triangulation. The informants for

this study consisted of three main groups: (1) Groups of people on community radio, namely managers, broadcasters, and employees. (2) Community groups consisting of official leaders (village heads and sub-district heads), informal leaders (community leaders), and laypeople (farmers, traders, laborers, employees, and so on). (3) Community groups related to community radio, namely listeners and beneficiaries.

The selection of informants was determined by choosing subjects based on categories that were considered to exist in the population (Simione & Gnagnarella, 2020), namely based on the distribution in various regions that were uniquely different. The Radio study was conducted as an in-depth evaluation using an interactive model (Miles & Huberman, 2013) combining literature study and field visits. In particular, data were collected on broadcasting as an educational tool to promote traditional culture for information sharing, entertainment, and income promotion through focus group discussions. In total, ten focus group discussions were held (twice in each community).

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Education and Improving Living Standards

Among rural communities, community radio has been utilized to raise awareness and knowledge of solutions to community development problems in several sectors, including culture and rural development, education, hygiene, sanitation, agriculture, and local governance. There has been an increase in school activities assisted by community radio Bandung despite the Covid-19 Pandemic, which has eliminated face-to-face schooling.. Likewise, young girls continue to work in their homes while listening to community radio in Cirebon. For farmers in Tasikmalaya, community radio increases fertilizers' use. This finding, in particular, applies good and modern agricultural practices that rural radio effectively increases the sharing of agricultural information by farming communities in remote

rural areas (Ele & Frank, 2021). There was also a rise in the sample communities' understanding of the need for sanitation and cleanliness, as well as a greater sense of friendliness and a decrease in violence. In addition, radio has allowed listeners to expand their knowledge base by transmitting national and international news.

The economic activities of its clients in and around the community have been boosted by community radio (Malik, 2020). Since then, small and medium-sized businesses have grown as a result (SMEs). An affordable advertising platform for small businesses in West Java has been given through community radios in the area. Some community radio businesses in Garut and Tasikmalaya promoted segment airs for two hours daily between 08:00 and 10:00 a.m. from Tuesday to Friday. SMEs and craftspeople can use this time for general advertising and promotional efforts. They learned how to talk about their products and services to potential customers in the Job Training Center. Business owners claim that radio advertising leads to an increase in sales and revenue. This area is a new phenomenon since small-business owners have had to travel door-to-door to get consumers and clients. A credit merchant, AK (29 years old), has felt the benefits of community radio because it is easy to create awareness in the community about his products. After all, he only needs to contact the community radio. He asserted that,

"The message spread everywhere as soon as Community radio got it. Radio has increased my income; I can advertise my services as an herbalist, increasing my daily sales by 90%. It used to take me about three days to send messages to several villages, but now it only takes seconds. Community radio has brought me better living conditions".

Local people who are listeners of community radio become more empowered in influencing local policies by actively speaking on community radio (Mhagama, 2015).

Information Sharing

Community radio in Tasikmalaya had become an essential link between other needed sectors

in society such as BPBD (Regional Disaster Management Agency), BKKBN (National Family Planning Coordinating Board, Community Health Centers (Puskesmas), and others, thus, had promoted other sectors very well. Each community radio has its listener club, which has a significant role in designing and running the program.). In addition to listening, they can track programs and provide feedback on what should be encouraged or changed. As a result, it promotes community involvement and ownership of the program. The listener club is a good indicator of how well a show is received since people identify with it. In this case, Community Radio gives listeners a platform to express their opinions and contribute to the programming (Demuyakor, 2021). Indeed, community radio has a significant impact on the lives of its listeners. It is through community radio that rural communities can find important information, especially information on health and education (Keefer & Khemani, 2014).

Community radio programs are popular, and listeners are inspired to improve the daily lives of their families. It is mainly seen from the response from the community, and listeners who have direct radio access are found to capture listeners' priorities. Most people feel that community radio programs are more concerned with their lives than other radio programs because they identify well with hosts and programs created directly from and for the community.

Community radio has a lot of influence. It informs people about what is happening in all sectors of the industry. It would be challenging to know what happened without the radio. Radio serves as a foundation and markets other sectors. For example, an opinion leader in Tasikmalaya, MK (45 years), said in a one-on-one interview that "we now know more about development in other communities and how to get development itself"..

To further serve its listeners, Community Radio has expanded its services to include morning newspaper reviews. Listening occurs in groups, and people pay attention to what is being said while also calling in to express their own

opinions. In a focus group discussion in Cirebon, one of the participants, AH (34 years old), told how the benefits of community radio were. He said,

"It tells us what's happening in the entire area; local officials, regional organizations, etc. It gives us a link to outside the area as well. The news made us aware of what was going on in our district as well as at the West Java level" (Radio Cirebon, 2020).

In terms of sharing information, this also includes the prevention of hoaxes. For example, in the early days of the Covid-19 Pandemic, there was a lot of news milling about. So, the community radio is careful, vigilant, and immediately re-issues the news's validity. It was felt by the public that this community radio had helped calm the panic during the early days of the Pandemic, which brought the sudden cessation of community activities. Community radio in Garut also provided convenience with the on-air market at that time, where buyers and sellers could interact. The traded goods could be delivered while still following the health protocol.

Village Administration

Community radio activities have given further meaning to development in rural areas. An appropriate medium has been created to facilitate encounters between task bearers and rights holders. The interactive sessions provided by the station for local authorities to explain government policies and programs are a clear case of promoting accountability and transparency. People get the opportunity to question particular actions and commissions from sources through "listener commentary" sessions, a means to gather feedback from listeners. For example, in response to a question about how task-bearers relate to the masses, a female leader, IN (48 years old), explained as follows: "We can now talk to our Village Representatives over the radio. We now know that village representatives exist for development; they could no longer deceive; they too must bring development to our communities".

The traditional decision-making process at the family level in the study area has limited space for women's voices. As the income of women engaged in productive activities has increased with the help of the promotion of Community Radio, there has been an increasing acceptance of women's opinions on matters that affect not only the family but also society. Daily programs broadcast on community radio have helped "soften" the reasons for women's voices to become village heads, for example.

Promotion of Culture and Entertainment

Radio has established itself as an important cultural and educational institution in rural areas (Prahmana et al., 2021). In West Java, its strength continues to grow with increasing revenues in rural areas of Bandung, Garut, Tasikmalaya, Sumedang, and Cirebon. The attraction is powerful in rural areas because they can listen to their daily activities, which on average are physically active, be it farming or making food products and handicrafts. Due to modernity, traditional fairy tales and communal entertainment are quickly being replaced by modern forms of entertainment for young people. Therefore, these community radios are reviving conventional forms of entertainment that bring people together in the countryside.

In describing the relevance of radio, a community youth leader, IH (24 years), who participated in the group-level discussion, observed that "what makes Community Radio unique is that it has made life better and more meaningful. Everyone loves it and gets worried every time the radio doesn't work. Community radio is a station without equal".. Radio broadcasts, especially in the local language (Sundanese), serve the interests of most listeners because they promote local culture, both traditional and modified. Another advantage is that it encourages school participation considering that there are still illiterate children and promotes media literacy.

Community radio is indeed a vehicle for cultural promotion and entertainment. But these two things do not make community radio into commercial radio. Radio is a part of society. So, in terms of organizing culture and entertainment, radio is an inseparable part of society. As a radio worker, AK (40 years), in Sumedang said:

"Community radio is not for profit. The funds are used for community life. The community is not only the radio, but the large community and uses community radio as its medium. What is still up to now is like a celebration; if many guests have lots of festivals, they can get all kinds of red packets. So get on the radio, join, we are involved in the party. And for that, we are the experts".

Social Cohesion

Programs that are designed with topical issues increasingly make community radio more popular. The community radios involve resource persons and local officials as guests in the program, and they can explain and clarify points in their area of expertise and responsibilities. Key areas, including family life, moral education, gender and social inclusion, domestic violence, conflict resolution, development programs, etc., had their experts presenting the problems, analyses, and solutions. 'Leadership Walks to the Village' program done by Radio Rasi of Garut is the program designed to promote social cohesion between local officials and the community.

A listener in Sumedang, DW (50), gave a lot of praise for what community radio is doing in his area and shared his satisfaction with the moral education session of the program as follows:

"Through the moral education program, community radio educates us very well; it brings peace to the family. Most women who misbehave go from bad to good by listening to community radio. This program gives us advice and how to live happily together at home and in society. As married men, we have a responsibility, and Community radio continues to tell us, adults, our role".

In the same tone, AG (35 years old), in a discussion, said that "family life sessions talk about women's issues that make us behave well at home. The Friday Ngaji (Islamic teaching) program makes me morally good".

Through its sports program, community radio has also contributed to peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the study area. Respondents said that they benefited a lot from community radio sports activities. One FGD participant summed up this point by saying that, "sports programs have brought us together. Before, we fought a football game, but nothing more. Community radio has enlightened us, and this will bring development. Football is very beneficial for young people; it unites us and engages us in the dry season" (SB, 33 years old, Radio Cirebon).

Practical radio activities can make significant changes in people's lives (Maye et al., 2020). Through community radio activities, people are encouraged to coexist peacefully at the family and community levels. People can now carry out their daily social and economic activities in a peaceful and happy atmosphere. Community radio continues to try to remain apolitical and non-partisan while remaining democratic in delivering services (Ntshangase, 2021). Effective management and leadership are essential in ensuring the performance of any community radio organization (López Franco et al., 2020). Leadership is the key to mobilizing resources, directing program activities, and evaluating program impacts.

This study also shows that community radio is not only a transmitter of news, including development news. But it turns out that community radio is also a community builder (Anderson et al., 2020). It appears that this community radio is like an NGO (Non-Government Organization) that participates in building society in various aspects, be it ideological, political, economic, social, cultural, and defense, and security. It is a community for the community (Sjuchro et al., 2021). In terms of development, community radio is also a vehicle for planning, implementing, and supervising development (Sjuchro & Andung, 2020; Ullah, 2020). Community radio is not just a passive organ waiting for news from the community. Instead, community radio became the source of information itself. More than that, community radio has proven to have played a role as an instrument for civil society in strengthening

inclusive democratic practices (Dahal, 2013). Although the development of digital-based technology continues to penetrate various aspects of human life, the presence of community radio is still relevant. Moreover, community radio is more trusted as an alternative media in line with the declining public trust in mainstream media and new internet-based media (Guo, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Community radio has functioned as one of the communication channels for rural communities in West Java, encouraging target communities to participate in program activities and imitate the skills acquired. Community radio must continue to play its role well by pressing the listening community in West Java to trust and support them. Community radio has a social, economic, political, and cultural impact on the program area. These radios have been largely used as a tool for integrated rural development. These radios have been operating following their mandate as community radios with a social responsibility to provide community news bulletins, breaking news, sports, culture, and health programs.

There is very high listener participation in the program, and rural audiences love to hear themselves and their neighbors. Although listeners in West Java say they have a limited choice of radio services, community radio has become a popular radio station for many. The community highly praises community radio for its role and continuity in broadcasting development information. In terms of ownership, community members feel part of the ownership because their suggestions or recommendations have been heeded by radio staff. They also participate in the program by making public service announcements and advertisements.

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