The Relationship Amid Audiences and Radio Media to Propagate Information

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ABSTRACT

The research aims to reveal how the audience both in providing and propagating the traffic information and urban neighbourhood experiences. This study explains that the media equation theory still work to figure out audiences and media relations, even though many people access the mainstream media less. The information process is the very conventional way through the Gatekeeper team. The distinguishment is the additional process to broadcast in multi platform social media such as Facebook and Twitter. This study was conducted using depth interviews among the audiences, gatekeeper team of Suara Surabaya FM in order to collect data. After that we had observed how the information have been propagated in social media. The conclusion is that the audience and media relations in sharing and propagating information on the "Kelana Kota" Program on Radio Suara Surabaya FM took place every day and the audience also participated in providing the information they received around Surabaya and the sub urban area. The main crucial finding why the program in propagating urban traffic information does exist amid the smartphone mobile application is that the radio has power to interact and communicate as human-friend. Whilst listening to some information as well as favourite music plays on, the audience can experience well entertained. To compare, the audience prefers radio rather than smartphones traffic applications as additional information.

Keywords: *Audience relations, radio, media-equation theory, traffic information, smartphone applications, Suara Surabaya FM*

INTRODUCTION :

The use of roads and the mobility of citizens are the main problems that require fast, accurate and precise information. Smartphone-based applications have also begun to fulfill offers in the application market such as Waze, Google Map API, ViaMana, Qlue, Zurich and even applications that provide disaster-related information such as Inarisk, SiagaFlood, and applications for the spread of Covid 19 when someone is out of the house.

Since events are scattered everywhere pervasively and road users want to know the current conditions around them and their destination, it is imperative to find ways to retrieve, share and disseminate information. However, the problem is that because this

application is computer-based, the level of user trust or Human Computer Trust must be optimized (Kulms & Kopp, 2018).

Several studies have stated that communication related to environmental conditions such as traffic jams and accidents, places prone to disasters and crime, as well as zones prone to the spread of disease infections are mostly obtained from navigation applications on smartphones (Jourdy, 2017; Robiarsyid, 2018). Although the offer of applications for smartphones is abundant and ubiquitous, not all users are familiar with applications for smartphones. This happens because sometimes compatibility with conventional media becomes important and not everyone has the capacity to afford and operate a smartphone that can download many applications. Conventional radio, which is now up to date with multi-platform, is the right choice. Conventional radio that already has loyal listeners will have higher trust compared to navigation applications on smartphones (Bijsterveld & Dieker, 2015; Dieker, 2018; Heddebaut et al., 2013; Javid et al., 2013).

In the case of Surabaya as a metropolis, the radio that has the capability to provide and disseminate information about city and traffic events is Radio Suara Surabaya. Radio Suara Surabaya FM or SSFM is a mass media that have broadcasted since June 11, 1983 up until now. It uses a broadcast format with the motto news-interactive, and is a solution with a composition of 80% news and 20% music. The news broadcasting is a primary focus of beneficial impact. The interactive concepts adopt how to produce the multi-directional and solution-oriented communication pattern. SSFM is a radio broadcast that combines word broadcasts and entertainment broadcasts, in the form of music programs.

The main objective of SSFM is to present actual and valid information. SSFM also positions itself as a radio station that provides information for the benefit of citizens, especially in the Surabaya area and its surroundings.

As a mainstream mass media, SS has reporters to convey information to the audience. In 1994, SSFM began to adopt journalistic-based interactive broadcasting which was born to accommodate the wishes of most SSFM audiences who want to participate in providing input and sharing information with other audiences or listeners (Arifin, 2010). SSFM initiated the participation of listeners or audiences in reporting events they know to radio broadcasters and gatekeepers on duty.

The advantageous position of its existence is the "January effect", namely Radio SSFM is the first radio station to develop using an interactive concept (Arifin, 2010). Radio Suara Surabaya has a very famous program, which is not applied by other radios. The program is Kelana Kota that specifically provide the citizen reports

interactively via telephone. This two-way communication boosts listeners the opportunity to be more active in providing information and expressing their opinions. This participatory concept in reporting information and then reporting it to the broadcaster whose job is to become an important point in fostering a sense of belonging, a sense of being a friend and a sense of being part of a good citizen. SSFM is a bridge that connects and monitors people's daily life issues to enter the public space. A space where people interact with each other in providing issues, ranging from traffic, crime, vehicle theft, public services, legal policy implementation and announcement, as well as city government political policies and issues, both locally and nationally. The listener is not only the object of media exposure, but this concept creates a two-way relationship, namely between listeners and broadcasters and listeners with fellow listeners.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the concept of two-way communication adopted by radio in Indonesia was very rare other than requests for favorite songs or radio games. This model is the basic capital for forming listeners' identity and trust in radio, not only as a source of information but also as a friend. Interaction is no longer one way traffic, namely one-way information, from the mass media to the audience, but multi traffic can occur, namely the interaction of opinions or sharing of

information between one listener and another.

For approximately two decades, the formation of this identity has benefited SSFM when media technology disruption occurred (Santoso & Wardhani, 2018). Broadcasting technology which was originally analogue has changed to di gital technology which has forced many broadcasting agencies from radio to television to change their platforms. This flagship program of Kelana Kota has continued to exist to this day with loyal listeners by adding social media platforms as an extension of impressions and propagation of information either through social media, streaming radio or by listening the radio during the event.

Meanwhile, in the mid-1990s Byron & Nass had produced a theory of media equality where the assumption of this theory is how someone treats communication media, whether it be magazines, newspapers, radio, pictures or television as friends like humans and social actors who can bring some impact and life change in all fields (Lewis, 1997; Nass et al., 1996). There are four points found in all types of research on this media equation; the first is etiquette in interacting, personality, emotions and social roles. In explaining manners, among others, is how someone sometimes behaves well and treats the media as human friends. While personality is someone who will assume that the media has personality characteristics that are similar to those of him. So that by

providing a reflection of personality that is almost the same as the personality of the audience, this will become an important link in preferences. Next is about the value of emotions, namely responses to the reality of life and the surrounding conditions, both positive and negative. The last is how the media becomes an important social actor that contributes to significant changes in various fields (Weiss, 2009).

Therefore, this article will discuss how the relationship between the audience and the media in the process of sharing the information that has been obtained from the audience who reported various events they know about? And what is the audience's opinion about the information obtained from smartphone navigation and traffic applications when compared to how the SSFM Radio broadcasts through its multiplatform channels?

RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, the media equation theory is used as the main analytical tool. The respondents selected were listeners from taxi-bike drivers, public transport drivers, and road users from workers and students. Meanwhile, interviews with radio management and reporters were brief.

As a reference, several previous studies are using phenomenology and netnography methods to provide characteristics and interactions between the audience and radio listeners at SSFM (Astuti & Aritonang, 2019; Krisnawati & Harnita, 2018; Syafrida, 2018). The theory used in previous research is Computer-Mediated Communication which focuses more on the social effects of using computers as a means of communication. The difference is, this article focuses more on the problem of audience treatment of radio media as human friends.

The stage in this research is to collect empirical data in the field by interviewing listeners and reporters. Then from the results of the interview, the suitability and shortcomings in previous research were sought. The basis of the questions in the interview is referring to the four assumptions of media equivalence theory.

The first part asks how the audience reacts to the dissemination of information and what are the ethical values in interacting on radio. The second part asks about the personality similarities between the media and listeners. This question is crucial for determining the axes in the media equation. The third part is a question about the response of listeners and reporters when they are interacting and sharing information. In addition, he also asked for responses regarding the function of entertainment value in SSFM radio. The last part is asking about the involvement of SSFM radio as a social actor who contributes to become a

bridge for public services. Of these four sections can be a discussion to direct the results as a media equation analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Manners

Previous research also discussed the typological characteristics of SSFM listeners both on multiple platforms (Astuti & Aritonang, 2019; Hadi, 2013; Krisnawati & Harnita, 2018). The results obtained, among others, explain how interactively there is a typology of listeners, namely the types of information requesters, information conveyers and good and bad controversialists and commentators.

In this study, the problem of placing manners or ways and attitudes in doing things are vital points. In this case, the problem of politeness in conveying opinions and information is in accordance with the values of politeness. Although it's not just about radio as a medium here, it's the point why the listener is polite and doesn't offend. The answer given by listener respondents is that they would feel important when they spoke about their report and be listened by hundreds of people at the same time.

On social- media platforms, all the information they share and trust is almost entirely stated that they believe that the information generated from SSFM radio broadcasts is reliable. High enthusiasm can be seen from the spontaneous answers. When compared to navigation applications on smartphones, respondents stated that the application was only to confirm the information. They did not fully accept the information in the application which were limited to navigate directions. Like *waze* and *inarisk* applications (both are smartphones applications) that only provide general information and directions. There is no detailed information to direct users to recommend doing something. For actions and decisions, such as a flood inundation or an accident causing severe traffic jams, they are more likely to refer to radio broadcast monitoring. At the same time, when listening, or disseminating information, they can immediately cross-check information and make decisions to act. Respondents stated that this is what makes them feel connected to "human radio" because it is not a machine that answers but can interact with other humans too.

For the gatekeepers, reporters and broadcasters, sometimes it takes patience and a high level of community service to share this information. In the process, sometimes they also have to cross check in the field with traffic officers and are required to always be at the forefront. This is necessary to deal with false information that seeks to mislead other listeners. If this

happens, it is not uncommon for reporters and broadcasters to control their emotions so as not to argue inappropriately on air. Oftentimes, there are unscrupulous listeners who provide false information with the aim of being irresponsible to create public upheaval. To fend off this, reporters try to stay under surveillance and cross-check information with other sources near the location (Hadi, 2013; Syafrida, 2018).

Personality

On personality, listeners will feel the connection with the face of the media itself. If in the early days of mass media radio appeared, then in the era of technological disruption, the audio power must also be supported by facial representations that give the expected personality or character effect. Therefore, the listener will also continue to play with his imagination that the radio he hears has personality characteristics that are similar to his personality. For example, a dominant person will perceive the personality of a dominant computer or media. It could be the language used and the affirmations are very strong. This personal nuance is also related to the preferences of programs on radio media.

For respondents from the upper middle class, even though he works as a taxi driver, the preference for the type of music played, the style and the way of expressing opinions is

very distinctive. Similarly, the listeners of the working class and even bureaucrats in providing reports and information that he has, very much depends on the basic personality of SSFM radio. Another reason found during interviews with listeners is that they feel they are treated the same as citizens of Surabaya, which is typical egalitarian in communicating in the public radio space. They as citizens of Surabaya, in reporting to the relevant agencies tend to feel as the same citizens, even though different social classes. Egalitarian is a typical characteristic of the people of Surabaya which is different from other typical urban residents. This potential actually strengthens the relationship between the personality of SSFM radio media and its listeners.

It's just that another study found that in terms of characters that are considered to reflect the public interest and the similarity of the characters of Surabaya residents, SSFM radio journalism has actually changed its function into a place for public complaints about bureaucratic services or public services (Sampoerno et al., 2018). Of course, to prevent this from happening, it is a big challenge for the radio itself to remain consistent in maintaining its face and personality as a friend of the citizens of Surabaya, not changing its function as customer service. It is not easy for broadcasters if this happens. It is a huge challenge to serve complaining citizens as well as to

keep nice relationships even though they do not offer solutions.

Respondents interviewed stated that the personality possessed by SSFM radio when compared to their own was the desire to immediately solve problems and not hesitate and be assertive in conveying ideas and information.

Emotion

The results of interviews with respondents showed interesting things when asked about emotional outlets on radio media. They revealed that sometimes their annoyance when stuck in traffic on the road or when they encountered conflicts with officers was vented to the radio. That way they seem to have made themselves relieved to have vented negative emotions. As a result, these negative things tend to be attracted to them and remember as a catharsis. In addition, our respondents also enjoy some arguments when there is conflict information broadcast. They consider a mirror of their experience and discuss the issue with friends.

Our respondents also revealed answers to the question of the possibility of positive emotions when sharing information. They assume that when they experience something on the road and they think that it is important for people to know, then they feel they have become a good person. Appearing as a very contributive witness for the good of others is also part of the existence of loyal listeners.

On the other hand, what we observed was the response of the announcer and the gatekeeper team in responding to the listener's emotions, by listening wisely. Even though the broadcaster and gatekeeper team must also decide to reduce conflict issues so that they would not only accommodate complaints From many negative issues, conflicts or negative events, the broadcasting team will select which ones should be suppressed and which should be followed up.

We found from previous research that instead of being a medium of information and radio journalism, SSFM shifted its function as a medium for public complaints (Sampoerno et al., 2018).
This proves from our findings that it matches how emotional problems initially become a mirror for expressing complaints about unsatisfactory public services. Starting from the frequency of broadcast content that accommodates complaints, it will result in the shift from public-information radio to become the public-complaint radio.

Social Role

From all the findings related to the problems of manners, personality and emotions to finally shape the role of radio social media for the people of Surabaya. Negative responses regarding issues and

conflicts are a reflection that SSFM radio is also considered for its role as an agent of change as well as control over the imbalance of understanding. The agent of change in question is SSFM whose broadcast content continues to monitor the dynamics of change and development.

At this point, the control of audience misleading opinion is when the role of the broadcasting team decide to reduce potential conflicts. The broadcasters urge to implement the principle of balance information. They always have to repeat scrutinizing the facts with several connected sources. They have been doing this consistently to avoid information bias.

It is these crucial roles that make SSFM still needed by its listeners. Based on respondents' answers when asked about the need for a SSFM radio compared to other navigation applications, they answered that they had hope for radio by connecting their aspirations with public service agencies and the government. Although they did not expect a solution from the radio, at least their ideas and wishes were conveyed through radio broadcasts. They feel significantly through the feedback they hear from the broadcaster.

Relationships or alliances with many government institutions as part of SSFM radio station networking make this social role even more

reckoned with. The trust of government institutions and other public institutions in the management of SSFM radio makes this radio also considered as an extension to reach the wider public. This is a big social capital to gain high social trust for Radio Suara Surabaya. Moreover, many radio stations in Surabaya may not achieved this reputation.

CONCLUSION

We conclude that the relationship between the audience and Suara Surabaya radio media in the process of sharing information is closely related to the way in which audiences treat SSFM radio as a "human friend of radio". This is in accordance with the results of research findings that prove that media with features that can be used as "human friends" are those that can still provide direct interaction, such as when dealing with friends and can even make decisions to act at once. Unlike the navigation application obtained from a smartphone, it only functions as a place to find information. From the analysis of four things media-equivalence theory, we conclude four things. First, the manners of the audiences still treat SSFM radio as a friend and uphold the value of politeness when delivering messages. Even though they argue controversially, they are still limited to the prevailing norms. Second, the personality of the audience, which is typical of Surabaya's egalitarian

society, high openness that demands the resolution of problems not to drag on, becomes in sync with the face of SSFM radio broadcast content as a place to solve problems. Although the solution is not immediately obtained, the listeners are satisfied feeling feedback from radio broadcasts. It is how the problem has been conveyed and monitors the progress of follow-up by the responsible institution. Third, from the emotional point of view, listeners have already imaged that SSFM radio broadcasts are part of the listener's emotional catharsis. On the negative side, there are a lot of complaints from listeners which in turn shift into public complaints radio. On the other hand, this radio is also cathartic for listeners who want to be good citizens by sharing information. However, the challenge for the gatekeeper team and broadcasters is to be sensitive in adjusting the level of urgency of the issue so that it does not become biased or worse. Finally, the social role of SSFM radio has become a social capital that is relied on by both listeners and government and private stakeholders as an extension of the public's reach.

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