

The Existence of Radio as Supporting Media for Elections in Aceh (Case Study of Three Radio Stations in Aceh)

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ABSTRACT :

In the past, radio was a tool of struggle that was able to inform news to all corners of Indonesia. Even though this broadcasting tool has become a second alternative due to the impact of the internet, many communities still use it. In Aceh there are radio stations that actively inform election updates and politicians take advantage of this opportunity. This research explains the existence of radio in the implementation of elections both as an educational and campaign media. This study focuses on the role of radio in Aceh in the implementation of elections which ultimately confirms the existence of radio in supporting all stages of the election. The approach used is a case study approach based on field data obtained by researchers. This research involved two local private radio stations and one public radio station, RRI. The research results show that radio has a role as a supporting media for elections by presenting accurate and balanced information so as to reduce hoax issues that have the potential to arise during the election period. Furthermore, radio also acts as a bridge between prospective voters and legislative candidates and political parties. Radio plays a role in strengthening democracy in Aceh. The existence of radio is maintained in the current disruptive era because radio stations in Aceh are converging media from conventional to digital by utilizing technology and digital media platforms. In this way, the existence of radio remains relevant and contributes to providing content that is local, current and useful for the people of Aceh.

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INTRODUCTION

Radio has an important role as a medium for conveying messages and/or news through electromagnetic waves that pass and propagate in the air (Gagliarducci et al., 2020; Russo et al., 2020). In the current era of digitalization, the use and utilization of radio has become more flexible, namely anytime and anywhere, especially when it can be accessed via mobile phone (Kameli et al., 2020; Nillasithanukroh, 2023), different from the past when we had to use special tools in the form of radio devices. Public information is increasingly easily accessible via radio media, almost without boundaries of space and time, even across regions globally. This means of information and electronic media is able to reach levels of society in a short period of time and with a number of audiences that cannot be determined as social mobility.

In the midst of rapid mass media competition, radio media can still maintain its existence as a medium that channels public information. One of them is about elections and the ongoing political process in Indonesia (Hollander et al., 2008) and in Aceh in particular (Saputra & Syam, 2018). When compared with other mass communication media channels, radio has the advantage that its implementation costs are relatively cheap and practical (Zhao et al., 2020), radio can be heard or accessed by all segments of society in any part of society. In addition, apart from having benefits as a source of public information, radio also functions as a relevant public entertainment medium. The existence of these two general benefits from radio is what makes people still use radio today. Therefore, radio can still maintain its existence amidst the competition in the current era of digitalization.

Laor (2022) and Okinyi (2019) mention radio as the "fifth power" or the fifth estate after the executive (government), legislative (parliament), judiciary (judicial) institutions, and the press or newspapers. In this context, radio has power as a supporting medium for the implementation of elections (García-Gil & Zamora-Martínez, 2023; Heywood, 2021a). General Elections or what are often referred to as Elections are a process of selecting leadership candidates who are elected directly by the people. The meaning of elections according to Law no. 7 of 2017 article 1 paragraph 1 of the Law states that elections are a means of popular sovereignty to elect members of the People's Representative Council (DPR), members of the Regional Representative Council (DPRD), President and Vice President, and to elect members of the Regional Representative Council (DPD), who implemented directly, publicly, freely, confidentially, honestly and fairly within the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia.

As stated in Article 2 of Law Number 7 of 2017, elections have six important principles, namely, direct, general, secret, honest, free and fair. Then, in article 3 of the same Law, eleven principles are also stated in participating in elections, namely, independence, honesty, fairness, legal certainty, orderly, open, professional, accountable, effective, and also efficient. The objectives in holding elections are to strengthen the democratic and constitutional system, realize fair and integrated elections, ensure consistency in election system arrangements, provide legal certainty and prevent duplication in election arrangements, and finally, realize effective and efficient elections. In Indonesia, elections are held by the General Election Commission (KPU) which refers to Law Number 7 of 2017 which states that the KPU is an

election organizing institution that is national, permanent and independent. Election participants themselves consist of political parties for the election of members of the DPR-RI, members of the provincial DPRD, members of the Regency/City DPRD, as well as individuals for members of the DPD, and also pairs of candidates proposed by Political Parties or combinations of Political Parties for the Presidential Election and also Vice President.

The election process and stages are now carried out not only in open spaces but also involve digital-based mass media, such as radio, social media and television mass communication (Fadillah et al., 2019; Heywood, 2021b; Parveen & Safiullah, 2021). In line with developments in increasingly modern times and the era of digitalization, the implementation of elections must also follow all existing developments, such as election outreach has begun to be carried out on local and network television and radio. Radio is considered to be helpful and capable in carrying out its role in conveying information about elections and politics to the public.

In Aceh there are several radio stations that are still active and operating well. Several radios in the Banda Aceh region as the capital of the province, the center of political, economic, academic and cultural activities, namely Djati FM, Flamboyan FM, Nikoya FM, Three FM, Serambi FM, OZ Radio FM, Toss FM, Megah FM, Radio Qu FM, Baiturrahman FM, Kontiki FM, Antero FM, Radio Lima FM, Rumoh PMI FM Radio, As-Salam Community Radio, Suara Lawas Community Radio, and of course the one that provides the most updated information about the Election is the Public Broadcasting Institution (LPP) RRI Pro 1 Banda Aceh.

These radios actively provide information on election updates to the wider community. Politicians in Aceh are currently also using radio facilities to introduce themselves to constituents with the various programs on offer. Radio is considered a strategic medium for conveying political information. As reported by the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission or KPI (2014), RRI supports RRI as an independent election radio. Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) is one of the radio stations that supports the election through radio (Saifullah et al., 2017). KPI also fully supports RRI in carrying out these independent elections, because mass media, especially broadcast media, is very strategic in being used as a medium for information on political education for the wider community. RRI has an important role in providing information on elections and the dynamics that occur to all segments of Indonesian society, even to people in border areas of neighboring countries.

Based on a Nielsen study regarding media consumption by generation Z, it turns out that 33% still listen to the radio. Nielsen is of the view that all generations are now exposed to the internet and digital media at the same time as conventional media, namely multiscreen habits (Munsch, 2021; Taylor, 2018). Radio plays an important role in socializing political processes and stages. Radio is a means of political information that is needed by the public because radio's reach is deeper than other mass media. Radio itself also has many functions, namely political functions which are divided into two: the voter education process so that they understand the ongoing election process, and also political education to direct the community's political perceptions and attitudes.

Politicians in Aceh have been using radio to introduce themselves to constituents with the various programs they offer. Radio is considered a strategic medium in conveying political information, for example during the holy month of Ramadhan, in Aceh it has certain characteristics. Before the sound of the drum or sirine to break the fast, the people of Aceh are treated to sentences or remarks from politicians such as "I am Fulan from party A wish you a happy breaking of the fast, or Happy Eid Al-Fitr Year 1 Shawwal 1444 H, apologize physically and mentally". The same thing is also done at the time of sahur with the sentence "I am Fulan from party X, wishing you a happy fast, and so on". Usually this content is played on the radio repeatedly for several minutes. This kind of thing is meant as an effort to penetrate the message to the audience to introduce themselves to the public using radio at a time that is considered valuable (prime time). Apart from that, there are also interactive dialogue programs that connect constituents with politicians on radio broadcasts which can ultimately form public opinion, or clarify issues that develop around the election by the election organizers.

The main problem in this study is the role of radio as a supporting media for elections in Aceh. This has an impact on the use of radio by political actors, political parties and the government who use radio as a supporting medium to educate the people of Aceh about the importance of participation in voting in the elections. The reason the researcher raised the issue of "the existence of radio in Aceh as a media supporting elections" is that with the development of technology to become more modern, the media that can be used to support elections are also increasingly diverse, one of which is radio.

In addition, similar studies have never been documented for the local context of Aceh. Researchers found several issues regarding the use of radio as a media to support elections. An example is the news about Bawaslu of Semarang City collaborating with USM Jaya radio for the 2024 Election published in semarangkota.bawaslu.go.id (2022). The Role of Strategic Radio in Preventing Misuse of Information in the 2024 Election was released on the website news.republika.co.id (2023). Aceh online news portal Dialeksis.com (2023) released the Aceh Independent Election Commission (KIP), Radio RRI and FISIP USK to Hold 2024 Election Education for first-time voters. We consider these issues interesting to find out more about the role of radio in Aceh as a supporting media to support the implementation of elections in Aceh. However, no one has tried to explore the role of radio, including the Public Broadcasting Institution (LPP) RRI Pro 1 Banda Aceh, in supporting election activities in Aceh. Therefore, research is urgent to fill this gap.

RESEARCH METHOD

The data used in this research is qualitative data, namely in the form of information and detailed information from radio managers in Aceh related to the implementation of the 2024 Election. The approach to this research is a Case Study, where the researcher attempts to analyze the existence of radio in Aceh as a media supporting the Election. The subjects in this research are the managers of 3 (three) radio stations consisting of 2 (two) local private radio stations, namely Djati Radio 103,6 FM with informant Yayan Zamzami, position as Broadcaster, and Antero Radio 102 FM with informant Uzair, position as Director and 1 (one) public radio,

namely RRI Pro 1 97.7 FM Banda Aceh with informant Tisi, as an announcer. The primary data source was obtained by interviews, while the secondary data source was supporting data from social media of radio and mass media news. This approach was chosen because it was considered comprehensive in developing a deep understanding of the existence of radio as a media supporting elections in Aceh. This data collection technique was chosen because it was deemed appropriate for focusing and digging deeper into related data (J. W. Creswell, 2007; J. Creswell, 2013). After the data has been collected thoroughly, the next step is to analyze the data so that conclusions can be drawn. Milles and Huberman (1994) said that data analysis is carried out continuously. This data analysis technique is a process of simplifying data into a form that is simpler to understand and apply (Akinyode & Khan, 2018; Lester et al., 2020). In this research, researchers used interactive data analysis techniques proposed by Milles, Huberman and Saldana (2018) where there are four main points in this data analysis technique, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Djati Radio 103,6 FM Banda Aceh

a. Initiative to Communicate the Elections

Djati Radio 103,6 FM took a bold step to be actively involved in reporting the election even though this decision did not always have a direct financial beneficial impact for the radio station as a business entity. However, this decision was taken as radio's contribution to supporting the implementation of elections in Aceh. This was revealed in the following interview with Yayan Zamzami.

"Even though it was not officially requested by the Election Organizing Institution in Aceh, with our own awareness, we took the radio initiative. We think that information about the election is important for the community, don't let the public get caught up in hoax issues, negative issues about the election, regardless of from the existing chaos, it is an inevitable dynamic" (Interview with Yayan Zamzami, Djati Radio 103,6 FM, March 4, 2024)

Djati Radio 103,6 FM believes that as an effort to ensure the democratic process in Indonesia runs well, the step is to ensure the election process runs well too, Djati Radio 103.6 FM supports the government in continuing leadership regeneration and of course to obtain good leaders we need maximum efforts, one of which is presenting broadcast programs that support the ongoing democratic process by offering good election literacy programs without being bound by the interests of anything or the interests of the election organizers themselves.

b. Growing Political Awareness in the Family Environment

Djati Radio 103,6 FM started reporting very intensely about the election at the beginning of February 2024 and always includes news sessions about the election in its broadcast

program, for example the "*Sarapan Pagi (breakfast)*" program starts at 07.00 a.m. until 09.00 a.m. In between these programs, radio also provides election education. Meanwhile at 10.00 a.m. there is a "*Sketsa Keluarga (Family Sketch)*" program which is broadcast every Monday to Thursday.

"Our radio in the current context has the tagline Building a Country from the family, so all the information available, what we want to discuss starts from the family, so if it's not from there people will definitely get wrong information, if there's a lot of information directly from outside without filter. Many things should be discussed and discussed at the family level first so that good literacy can be created at the lowest level, namely the family. The name of the program is Family Sketches, Monday to Thursday starting from 10 to 12 noon. We are more targeting the family segment because in our opinion all news and outreach about elections starts from the family, from home, if the people at home understand it well, it is hoped that mothers, for example, can provide good explanations to their families and children, including when dealing with hoax information, misinformation and election disinformation" (Interview with Yayan Zamzami, Djati Radio 103,6 FM, March 4, 2024)

In this program there is a Family *Talk Show* which also contains socialization with themes about the election, which is then related to the family, meanwhile, specifically on Thursday there is a family theme of *relationship* problems, here the radio also includes election issues, for example election hoaxes, what are the roles of female election officials, how do we become good and productive election "*spies*".

c. *LIVE* from *TPS* (polling place) on the D Day as an Effort to Provide Updates to the Public

To support election activities, Djati Radio 103,6 FM radio carries out socialization of the election program and has been going on for a long time before the campaign period. Djati Radio 103,6 FM includes information about elections and education on the sidelines of non-election programs. It's just that it will be carried out more intensely from February 1, 2024.

Interestingly, on the day of the voting, Djati Radio 103,6 FM also broadcast *live* coverage at various polling stations in Banda Aceh. Radio reporters provide reports that are broadcast *live* at polling stations so that listeners can find out the atmosphere of the voting process at many polling stations. In this case, the public or other listeners are also given the opportunity to report *updates* from their respective polling stations regarding the implementation of ballot paper voting so that many election dynamics are revealed.

d. *LIVE* from Abroad with *PPLN* Kuala Lumpur

Djati Radio 103,6 FM also collaborates with Overseas Election Officials (*PPLM*). In this case specifically with *PPLN* Kuala Lumpur in the form of a *Live* Broadcast with *PPLN* in

Malaysia to find out the picture of the elections taking place in overseas electoral districts as revealed in the following interview.

"For example, listeners will know whether or not the implementation is orderly or how to carry out elections abroad. It turns out that they had already voted, why did they vote earlier because voters' schedules were very tied to their work, while elections in Indonesia are designated as national holidays. Then the obstacles and challenges are related to time and voting mechanisms, there are those who use postal services, there are those who come directly to the TPS, so voting is done by post from February 11 to 13, then the calculation will be on the D day on the 14th at the same time. count Indonesia." (Interview with Yayan Zamzami, Djati Radio 103,6 FM, March 4, 2024)

Djati FM Radio also plays the role of informing the results and process of elections in overseas electoral districts by maximizing cooperation with election organizers abroad. This method makes the public aware of the technical implementation and results of the election taking place in the foreign electoral districts.

e. Providing Publication and Campaign Space for Legislative Candidates

Djati Radio 103,6 FM also fairly and proportionally provides publication space. Legislative candidates and Political Parties only use radio programs during the campaign period, they also use radio advertisements. They carry out personal branding, convey ideas, but radio also ensures that everything is carried out according to the rules of the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPI) and the rules of the General Election Commission (KPU), as revealed in the following interview.

"We are the media so we have to be neutral too, outside of advertising we make sure that there is no space provided that violates the rules of the game. We also asked the Banda Aceh Independent Election Commission (KIP), another name for the KPU in Aceh, about what mass media can and cannot do, the duration of content and content materials and other things to maintain signs. "Everything was done on the initiative of the radio station to ensure compliance with the rules" (Interview with Yayan Zamzami, Djati Radio 103,6 FM, March 4, 2024)

During the election process, radio as a public space that can be easily accessed by the public and it has provided space for anyone who wants to carry out campaigns and personal branding openly, but while remaining neutral, impartial and adhering to *PKPU* guidelines. This was done by radio based on the initiative of the radio management itself, meaning that radio had played a role in contributing to the success of the democratic party voluntarily.

f. Good Listener Response

The public response to Djati Radio 103,6 FM was classified as very good and enthusiastic, in fact in the end the radio was able to find out that the listening public also really needed correct and accurate information regarding the stages and process of the election, then radio also has social media which provides information to the public such as on the Djatifm Instagram and djatifm Facebook accounts.

g. Program Challenges

Regarding radio obstacles and challenges in running programs around the election, it is acknowledged that there are challenges in dealing with interactive questions with broadcasters, especially junior ones, as seen in the following explanation.

“Obstacles and challenges are generally internal regarding interactive questions with listeners and broadcasters, broadcasters must answer wisely, fellow broadcasters are always briefed first to have a straight understanding of the election. There are relatively no big challenges, only the quality and abilities of broadcasters, sometimes we need extra attention, but we can back up. We focus on straightening out hoax information, not on blowing up events or chaos and disputes” (Interview with Yayan Zamzami, Djati Radio 103,6 FM, March 4, 2024)

To ensure the quality of the program for the public, the radio announcer is given a briefing before the pitch. The strategy used by this radio is to overcome obstacles and challenges during broadcasting of the election process.

RRI Pro 1 Radio 97,7 FM Banda Aceh

a. Program Gerakan Cerdas Memilih (GCM) or Smart Voting Movement

On RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM Banda Aceh there is an election program called *GCM*, namely *Gerakan Cerdas Memilih* (Smart Voting Movement). The name of this program is actually a national *brand* program throughout RRI throughout Indonesia, only the implementation in the field varies and the creativity of the broadcast content is appropriate to regional conditions and background. From the beginning of the election stages, RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM Banda Aceh always broadcasts programs in the form of news, interactive dialogue and national programs including GCM. There were 4 (four) GCM sessions, namely visits to campus aimed at conducting outreach to educate novice voters, namely students, and this also carried out *live on-air* coverage from the event location. The first session of Smart Voting Movement (GCM) was held on May 3, 2023 at the Hermes Hotel Banda Aceh City, the second session was held on September 3, 2023 at Taman Ratu Safiatuddin, then the third GCM session was held on November 27, 2023 on the Iskandar Muda University campus, and finally the fourth was held on November 15 2023 at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP), Syiah Kuala University (USK). The following is documentation of the implementation of these GCM activities.



GERAKAN CERDAS MEMILIH



Gerakan Cerdas Memilih II



GERAKAN CERDAS MEMILIH 3

236 x ditonton 4 bln lalu #rri ...selengkapnya



Source: (Youtube RRI Banda Aceh Official, 2023)

Figure 1 Activity photos *Gerakan Cerdas Memilih*

Apart from GCM, policies that are no less important are regional contributors. To maximize the provision of information from the regions, RRI Pro 1 Radio recruits and provides letters of assignment for contributors, namely resources from external to RRI who are tasked with reporting from locations at polling stations regarding election-related events, as illustrated in the following informant's statement.

"The difference with the 2019 program is that we use Quick Count. Not this year, but what we do is update information from morning to midnight from various points, so the involvement of contributors provides information about the process and stages in the field, the vote count is there but we don't focus on the numbers, but more on the events, unique and interesting things in the field. This year we are not focusing on Quick Count because to maintain sensitive matters and it is also a form of our neutrality" (Interview with Tisi, RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM, March 5, 2024)

In the 2024 election, RRI Radio focuses on educational programs for the public on how to become smart voters so that leaders who meet their expectations and

only broadcast events during the election process. RRI does not carry out the Quick Count directly to maintain neutrality.

b. Independence and Neutrality of Radio

During the election, RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM Banda Aceh was very careful in running the program, bringing the event including the use of color in the *flyers* used on social media. As much as possible not to display a dominant color that shows political bias, RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM always ensures that it carries out instructions from central RRI to maintain neutrality. Below are some of the *flyers* used and the color choices for the *flyers* that reflect the neutrality of the radio medium.



Source: (Youtube RRI Banda Aceh Official, 2023)

Figure 2 Use of Color in the RRI Pro 1 97.7 FM Banda Aceh Activity Flyer

Likewise, with balanced coverage, RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM is very concerned and ensures balance and fairness in reporting opportunities for election contestant candidates, especially the Presidential Election, as stated by the following informant.

"RRI's policy is that reporters are also not allowed to provide unbalanced coverage, especially during the campaign period, for example yesterday we covered 1 (one) presidential candidate, which means we also have to cover all the presidential candidates who are campaigning, as well as the legislative candidates. Covering one legislative candidate, we also have to cover the other legislative candidates. We are determined to be very neutral in carrying out the election program" (Interview with Tisi, RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM, March 5, 2024)

RRI Radio is the largest public broadcast radio in Aceh, most of politicians and political parties always have the desire to influence the media to produce news that benefit them, or just cover their activities. Therefore, RRI as professional media continues to maintain neutrality when carrying out all election programs.

c. A Concern to Educating on Election for the Public

RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM Banda Aceh in its broadcast program emphasizes the importance of election education for the public. For interactive dialogue, the election stages are carried out from the beginning of the election process in collaboration with election organizers, but for political parties and legislative candidates, new spaces are

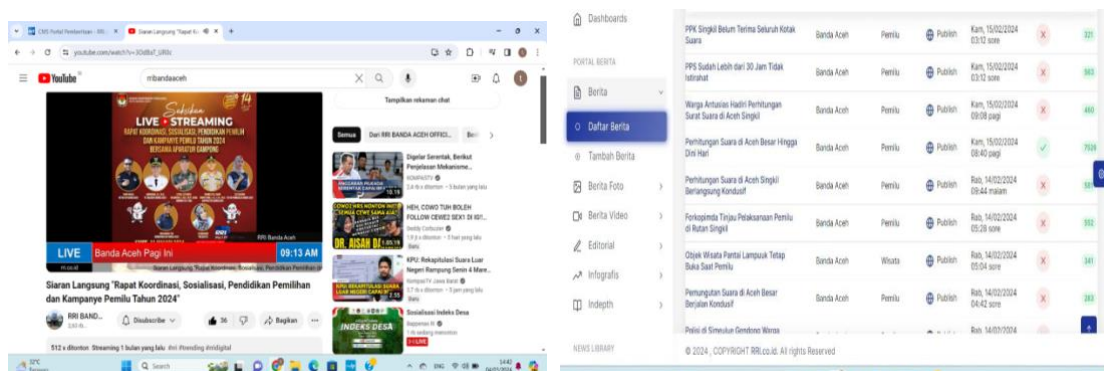
opened starting from January 21, 2024 during the campaign period, as revealed in the following interview.

“Usually programs are available in the form of monologues or dialogues, and they are given equal portions. Most of them choose the monologue method, so if the dialogue is 1 hour, everyone has the same opportunity but through the editing process, the fear is that they will convey sensitive things or there are things that need to be cut first. “We are more into a real election education program” (Interview with Tisi, RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM, March 5, 2024)

The are two facilities offered by RRI to provide election education including personal branding, namely through dialogue and monologue methods so that everyone can participate in the election.

d. Social Media Platform Friendly and High Public Participation

The distribution of RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM Banda Aceh broadcasting is not only via radio frequency but is also available on *YouTube, Instagram* and *Facebook* accounts which publish RRI broadcasts. This is considered to be very effective, meanwhile the Interactive Dialogue and participation of callers is also quite large, then it can also be seen from the viewers of news readers, on voting day the viewers reached more than 7,000, netizens who were interested in accessing election news were more than other news content. The people of Aceh responded very well to the programs presented during the elections. The following is some screen capture evidence of election publication activities on RRI Banda Aceh’s social media.



(Source : rri.co.id Banda Aceh, 2024)

Figure 3 Netizen Enthusiasm and Participation in Election News on RRI Pro 1 97.7 FM Banda Aceh

e. Cross-Sector Collaboration

RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM also collaborates with the government, academics, the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission Aceh, election organizers such as the KPU (General election commission) and Bawaslu (General election supervisory) as well as the TNI (Indonesian National Army) and Polri (Indonesian Republic Police) security forces. Most of RRI runs programs from the Headquarter, Jakarta, but there are also programs whose scheme is from RRI Pro 1 97.7 FM Banda Aceh, as revealed in the following interview.

"There are almost no challenges in implementing partnership because the response from the parties we ask to be sources, for example, is also quite good and responsive, our reporters are also quite optimal in providing understanding down to the bottom, and to guarantee the neutrality of our news, fortunately at RRI There is an editor, so if news comes in first through the editor, there is a team that determines whether this can be published or not. "So the challenge is more internal to ensure the neutralization of news, this can be covered and this should not be covered" (Interview with Tisi, RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM, March 5, 2024)

RRI as a professional journalism media has high integrity values. In term of editorial integrity and media neutrality, values related to independence in political coverage, including election coverage, RRI continues to strives to be independent from the interest of the state and political parties. RRI viewers and listeners can trust RRI's editorial decisions are not influenced by political and commercial pressures, nor are they influenced by individual interests.

f. Providing Proportional and Fair Campaign Space

To carry out their own *personal branding*, legislative candidates are given the choice of a Monologue or Dialogue program during the campaign period. RRI Pro 1 97.7 FM Banda Aceh invites and notifies all Political Parties, including DPD candidates. Everything is done when entering the campaign period, outside this period no space is provided for legislative candidates and politicians for the reason of ensuring the neutrality of radio as a public broadcasting medium.

Antero Radio 102 FM Banda Aceh

a. Having a Concern in Political Education

During the election period, Antero Radio 102 FM is very concerned with providing political information and education through two programs every day, in the morning starts from 07.00 a.m to 09.30 a.m, the program names are *Selebrasi Pagi* (Morning Celebration). In addition, for the second program calls *Selebrasi Sore* (Afternoon Celebration) starts at 16.00 p.m until 17.30 p.m. This program discusses various current issues related to the implementation of elections to provide listeners with an understanding of the ins and outs of elections.

b. Focus on Gen X

The programs offered by Antero Radio 102 FM tend to target the segmentation of listeners from Generation X. This is because Gen X is considered more effective as radio users as revealed in the following interview.

"We think it is quite effective to target Gen X as the main listeners, they are active as listeners and radio users. They are relatively well-established groups and on average have private cars and tend to access the radio from private cars. Their response was also very good to radio programs, that's why we chose the Gen X. Generally they access the radio in private cars and the most effective time is in the morning when going to work and in the afternoon before returning from work, they are also a

generation that is logical in digesting issues, sees issues more substantively and this is different from Gen Z who happy with the usual political gimmicks" (Interview with Uzair, Antero Radio 102 FM, March 3, 2024)

Based on interview with Antero Radio FM manager, this strategy was chosen because it was considered more effective and accurate by targeting a special segment that has high mobility and the majority of whom use private cars for their activities. Generation X is believed to access the radio more often than other generations.

c. The importance of Providing Education Regarding the Track Record of Legislative Candidates

Antero Radio 102 FM also has a high concentration in educating listeners and the public at large to truly recognize legislative candidates and regional representative senators who will be elected in the 2024 elections. One of them is emphasizing whether their track record has been involved in corruption cases and/or caught in a crime or other criminal act. Antero Radio 102 FM considers it very important to inform the public that legislative candidates who are ex-convicts or former corruptors should not be re-elected, even though by law they have the political right to be elected.

d. Opportunity to Develop *Personal Branding*

Antero Radio 102 FM also provides space for all legislative candidates to carry out personal branding using radio during the campaign period. Antero Radio 102 FM even actively contacted several potential legislative candidates who were deemed willing to use radio broadcasts for their personal branding purposes as stated in the following interview.

"We identified several legislative candidates who we considered to be potential in the sense of having adequate logistics to work together. However, it turns out that unfortunately many of them do not respond when they are offered cooperation that requires costs. Many legislative candidates hope for free publication cooperation, this is not possible because radio also requires operations. Even though the role of radio is still very vital, legislative candidates rely a lot on social media, while radio actually still plays a role and can be synergized with social media. "We always ensure that we have to maintain the rules, there are restrictions on campaign platforms on radio and social media" (Interview with Uzair, Antero Radio 102 FM, March 3, 2024)

Radio Antero has its own initiative in inviting potential legislative candidates logistically to develop themselves and carry out personal branding, but no one responds well because it is related to financing, even though in fact that radio has a vital role as a personal branding medium for legislative candidates.

- e. Cooperation with Election Organizers and Low Radio Advertising Spending
Regarding cooperation with election organizers, Antero Radio 102 FM is also exploring cooperation with the Aceh Independent Election Commission (KIP), which is another name for the KPU in Aceh. The results of the activity agreement were in the form of *sharing* socialization programs for the DPD and party candidates participating in the election in the form of 3 spots each with a theme of 1 day for 20 days.

"Election organizers spent massively on advertising and election outreach on non-radio media. The reason is that the institution has determined such a policy. In the regions, a handful of radio media have succeeded in obtaining funding for cooperation with Election Organizing Institutions, if at all due to good relationships and a personal approach. Sadly, when several legislative candidates were invited to use radio media and wrote to their parties, but not many responded, in the end we had the initiative to give space to fellow legislative candidates who we considered to have a good vision but were hampered by logistics and campaign funding, so they can carry out campaigns during the campaign period for free but also pay attention to the rules of the KPI and KPU" (Interview with Uzair, Antero, Radio 102 FM, March 3, 2024)

Based on the radio manager's statement, it appears that opportunities for cooperation between Election Organizers and radio are still relatively minimal and the cooperation that exists is relatively limited due to the personal approach and good relations between radio and Election Organizers as acknowledged by radio parties. This illustrates the enormous challenges for local radio, especially in obtaining partnerships that are financially profitable for radio to support their operation.

The Existence of Radio in Aceh

In order to provide a broad understanding to the public, especially regarding the process and stages of implementing elections in Aceh in 2024, several radio stations continue to exist in Aceh with various programs broadcast. Stations that are still actively broadcasting information related to the 2024 Election include Djati Radio 103.6 FM, Antero Radio 102 FM, and RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM Banda Aceh. Even though there are many radio stations in Aceh, these 3 (three) radio stations appear to be paying more attention in supporting the implementation of the 2024 election. Even though information technology and social media are increasingly dominant, radio in Aceh has managed to maintain its existence and continues to provide diverse and relevant content to its loyal listeners. With the existence of these stations, radio in Aceh maintains its important role in conveying entertainment, information and building relationships with people in urban areas to inland areas.

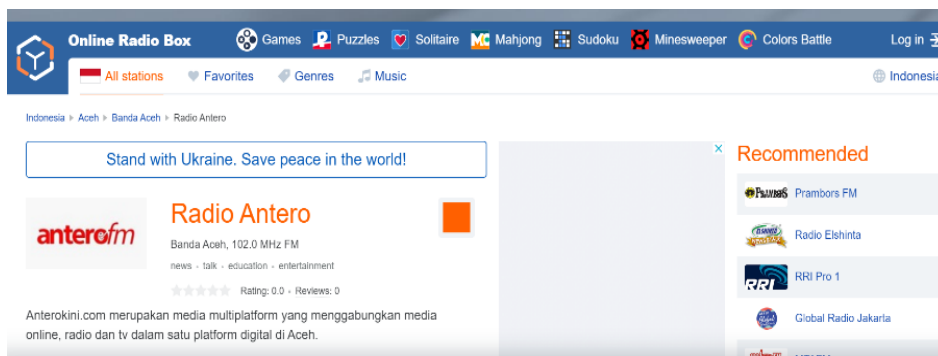
Radio in Aceh also utilizes online streaming and internet-based radio applications to remain present and accessible to listeners wherever they are. Listeners can access live radio broadcasts via their devices, including smartphones, tablets and computers. This gives listeners the flexibility to listen to radio programs in Aceh without being limited by geographic distance. Apart from that, radio in Aceh is also active in utilizing social media as a means of interacting

with listeners. They have social media accounts such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter which are used to share content, convey the latest information, and interact directly with listeners. In this way, radio in Aceh can continue to build close relationships with listeners, maintain their loyalty, and respond to requests and feedback directly through digital platforms. The following is a *streaming* view of the three radio stations in Figure 4 and 5.



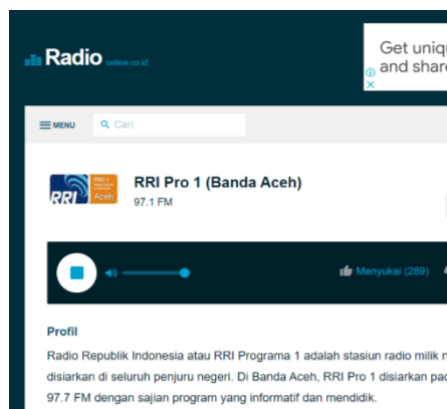
Source: (radio.net, 2023)

Figure 4 Streaming online Djati Radio 103,6 FM Banda Aceh



Source: (onlineradiobox.com, 2023)

Figure 5 Streaming online Antero Radio 102 FM Banda Aceh



(Source : rri.co.id Streaming Banda Aceh, 2023)

Figure 6 Streaming online RRI Pro 1 Radio 97,7 FM Banda Aceh

In an effort to maintain its existence in a disruptive era, RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM, for example, has adopted a media convergence strategy by combining conventional media, namely radio, with digital media in Figure 6. Apart from being able to be listened to via traditional radio channels, RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM also provides access via their *live streaming* website. This radio actively uses social media as a means of interaction and dissemination of information to listeners. Through their accounts on social media platforms such as *Instagram* and *Facebook*, RRI Pro Radio 1 97.7 FM provides main information regarding the context of political education as well as additional current programs and hit songs being played. They also interacted directly with listeners during the broadcast by holding a *Gerakan Cerdas Memilih* (Smart Voting Movement) Talk Show featuring the Chair of the Banda Aceh DPRK, the Banda Aceh Police Chief, the Chair of the Panwaslih and Members of the Aceh KIP (Permana, 2023).

RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM Banda Aceh also utilizes live broadcasts of coordination meetings, election education outreach and the 2024 election campaign via *live YouTube streaming* as seen in the following Figure 7. By implementing this strategy, RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM aims to maintain its existence in a disruptive era and strengthen the bond between listeners and their radio station. This was also adopted by other radio stations in Aceh.



Source: (Youtube RRI Banda Aceh Official, 2024)

Figure 7 Live Streaming YouTube RRI Pro 1 FM regarding 2024 Election Activities

Another radio that also supports the 2024 election is Djati Radio 103.6 FM. This radio broadcast collaborates with the Department of Communication, Informatics, (Diskominfo dan Sandi Aceh) to hold a Talk Show by presenting Panwaslih Aceh, Head of Diskominfo and Syiah Kuala University academics in a public space by utilizing the YouTube Streaming convergence strategy, Facebook and the Djati FM Instagram account discussing the issue of Hoaxes and Facts 2024 Election as seen in the following activity flyer in Figure 8.

This radio also collaborates with Bawaslu Aceh Besar regarding the role of the family in participatory election supervision. The program is in the form of a talk show which examines how politics in the family responds to differences in political views and choices. Meanwhile, Antero Radio 102 FM routinely broadcasts political education programs by selecting a special listener segment from generation X, The program offered is 2 (two) sessions every day, namely

Selebrasi Pagi dan Selebrasi Sore (Morning and Afternoon Celebration). Antero Radio 102 FM also collaborated with KIP Aceh in 2023 for a Political Party outreach program to the regions.



Source: (Instagram @djatifm, 2023)

Figure 8 Flyer Djati Radio 103.6 FM regarding Talk Show *Ngopi (Ngobrol Seputar Opini)* (Chatting About Opinions)

This radio also collaborates with Bawaslu Aceh Besar regarding the role of the family in participatory election supervision. The program is in the form of a talk show which examines how politics in the family responds to differences in political views and choices. Meanwhile, Antero Radio 102 FM routinely broadcasts political education programs by selecting a special listener segment from generation X, The program offered is 2 (two) sessions every day, namely *Selebrasi Pagi dan Selebrasi Sore* (Morning and Afternoon Celebration). Antero Radio 102 FM also collaborated with KIP Aceh in 2023 for a Political Party outreach program to the regions.

Overall, radio in Aceh has succeeded in maintaining its existence by utilizing technology, digital platforms and producing various flagship programs. Their existence remains relevant and contributes to providing locally based, up-to-date and useful content for the people of Aceh. Even though the challenges of digital media continue to grow, radio in Aceh remains a reference source of information, entertainment and an important means of communication for its loyal listeners in the Aceh region.

Radio in Aceh as a Media for Political Education

In the context of the 2024 election, radio in Aceh plays an important role as a social communication media that can be relied on to provide political education for listeners through news and various mainstay programs. Radio encourages healthy political discussion and debate. Through *talk show* programs or interactive discussions with election organizers, radio has provided an educational forum for listeners from various angles of study and arguments on existing issues. This open and constructive discussion can help the people of Aceh understand relevant political issues and make better decisions as voters, as reflected in the views of Yayan Zamzami from Djati Radio 103.6 FM.

"In all our news programs we include election segments, the election process and information on the stages. However, our radio policy is not to contain content on the chaos and dynamics of electoral activities, we prioritize educating listeners about

elections so that an opinion is formed in our society that it is important to participate in elections and why people need to participate. Then we also straighten out if there is hoax news regarding the election. "From the beginning of February 2024 until the day before the voting, there will always be news." (Interview with Yayan Zamzami, Djati Radio 103.6 FM, March 4, 2024)

Based on the mechanisms and things conveyed, radio in Aceh has played a role in educating the public, providing information, the process and stages of the elections. This aims to form public opinion regarding the importance of community involvement in every stage of the election. Another informant from the management of Antero FM radio also conveyed the same thing. Uzair as follows.

"During the election period we concentrate on two interactive programs with listeners, to provide information about election facts and political education in essence, in the morning from 7 to 9.30 a.m there is a Selebrasi Pagi and Selebrasi Sore (Morning Celebration and an Afternoon Celebration) for the second program. The programs that we present are targeted at the generation X, which we think is quite effective, they are active as listeners and radio users" (interview with Uzair, Antero Radio 102 FM, March 3, 2024)

Radio in Aceh can be an effective communication channel in conveying information to the public. The *Talk Show* program that is broadcast aims to provide space for the public to access information, convey and provide reports and the latest developments, suggestions and constructive criticism. The aim is to provide political education to the community and build opinion among the community that it is important for the community to be involved in elections.

One of the challenges in accessing information via radio is the limited distance of broadcast distribution coverage where Aceh's geographic coverage is quite wide. However, despite its wide geographical coverage, radio in Aceh is also able to reach people in various regions in Aceh who may not have been reached by digital media in the form of broadcast *relay* cooperation with radio stations at the district level. Radio has also played a role in increasing political awareness and participation. community by providing educational programs and interactive discussions that involve listeners. Thus, radio in Aceh plays a crucial role in strengthening democracy while encouraging increased active community participation in the election process in the digital era.

Liaison Between Political Parties and Society

Communication is an important element in all aspects of society, including politics. Radio in Aceh has a crucial role as a bridge connecting the community with legislative candidates and political parties during the election process in Aceh. Through its programs, radio provides opportunities for legislative candidates at the DPR-RI, DPRD, and DPD levels as well as political parties themselves to interact directly with the public, this is done in the form of programs

both dialogically and monologues, as explained by the broadcaster of RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM Banda Aceh.

"For interactive dialogue, we carry out the election stages from the beginning of the election process in collaboration with election organizers, but for political parties and legislative candidates themselves new spaces will be opened starting from January 21 2024 specifically during the campaign period, usually in the form of monologues or dialogues, and they are given the portions are the same. "Most of them choose the Monologue method, so if the Dialogue is 1 hour, everyone has the same opportunity, but through the editing process or we agree on the context first, the fear is that later they will say sensitive things or there are things that have to be cut first" (Interview with Tisi, RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM, March 5, 2024)

Legislative candidates can present themselves in interviews, *talk shows* broadcast on radio or by using the Prologue and Monologue methods, thereby giving listeners the opportunity to listen and get to know more closely the vision, mission and work programs promoted by each legislative candidate.

As a media liaison between Political Parties, legislative candidate members and DPD member candidates in conveying information messages related to the election, radio also has an independent, neutral attitude and of course maintains the rules of the game, namely print, electronic and online mass media advertising starting on Sunday, January 21, 2024 to February 10, 2024. Starting from Presidential and Vice Presidential Candidates, Legislative Candidates to DPD RI candidates can campaign by placing advertisements in the media as a whole as stated in General Election Commission Regulation (PKPU) number 15 of 2023 concerning election campaigns from articles 39-45. Regarding this, an informant from RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM also said the following.

"During the election, we were also very careful in carrying out the program, carrying out the event, including setting the color of the flayer that we used on other social media. For example, it can be seen during activities at FISIP USK, we did not display colors that showed partiality, to that extent we carry out instructions from the Headquarter Office to maintain our neutrality" (Interview with Tisi, RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM, March 5, 2024)

This is what RRI Pro 1 Radio 97.7 FM Banda Aceh is doing as an independent radio in the context of the 2024 simultaneous election. They emphasize their determination to convey information related to the election process objectively and without any particular political influence or tendencies.

Radio in Aceh functions as a vital bridge between the community and candidates and political parties during the election period by providing a space for dialogue, direct interaction and the delivery of objective information. Radio helps increase political participation, public awareness and understanding of the election process in Aceh.

CONCLUSION

Radio in Aceh has been proven to exist in building and maintaining democratization. This is reflected in the fact that radio stations in Aceh can adapt to developments in digital technology by converging conventional media to digital. During the election period, radio had quite a role as an effective communication channel for conveying information to the people of Aceh. The use of radio as a medium for legislative candidates and political parties to convey their political messages. Radio also allows people to participate in elections. In some programs, the public is given direct opportunity to ask questions to legislative candidates or political parties. Radio also plays a role in strengthening democracy in Aceh by conveying political information, encouraging participation and strengthening the political awareness of the Acehnese people. Even though radio has a place for its loyal listeners and remains a *platform* that exists in the digital era, radio must create programs in a format that is as attractive as possible and in accordance with the wishes of contemporary society. Radio is also required to be active in fighting false information or *hoaxes* related to politics that are widely developing in the world. digital media also continues to encourage the participation of the Acehnese people in elections to realize complete democracy in Aceh.

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