



RRI Play Go: Revolutionizing Radio Broadcasting Through Media Convergence

Yusran Akbar¹, *Muzakkir², Samwil³

¹⁻³Universitas Teuku Umar, Meulaboh

*email: muzakkir@utu.ac.id

Abstract

The development of information media in line with global advancements has facilitated access to communication and the exchange of information for individuals worldwide. Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI), as a public broadcasting medium, has adapted to the changing media landscape through the implementation of the RRI Play Go application. This study aims to analyze the development and implementation of RRI Play Go, focusing on RRI Meulaboh. A qualitative descriptive method was employed, involving direct observation and interviews with RRI Meulaboh employees. The findings reveal that RRI Play Go, as a digital radio platform, provides user-friendly features such as location-based broadcasts, access to educational content, live streaming, and interactive communication. Media convergence, facilitated by digitalization, has enabled RRI Meulaboh to maintain its relevance, expand its reach, and continue its mission of providing informative and educational content to the public.

Keywords: *Media convergence, RRI Play Go, Digital Radio, RRI Meulaboh*

Abstrak

Perkembangan media informasi seiring dengan kemajuan global telah memfasilitasi akses komunikasi dan pertukaran informasi bagi individu di seluruh dunia. Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI), sebagai media penyiaran publik, telah menyesuaikan diri dengan perubahan lanskap media melalui implementasi aplikasi RRI Play Go. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perkembangan dan implementasi RRI Play Go, dengan fokus pada RRI Meulaboh. Metode deskriptif kualitatif digunakan, melibatkan observasi langsung dan wawancara dengan karyawan RRI Meulaboh. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa RRI Play Go, sebagai platform radio digital, menyediakan fitur yang mudah digunakan seperti siaran berbasis lokasi, akses ke konten pendidikan, siaran langsung, dan komunikasi interaktif. Konvergensi media, yang difasilitasi oleh digitalisasi, telah memungkinkan RRI Meulaboh untuk tetap relevan dan memperluas jangkauannya, serta dapat melanjutkan misinya untuk menyediakan konten yang informatif dan edukatif kepada masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: *Konvergensi media, RRI Play Go, Radio Digital, RRI Meulaboh*

A. Introduction

The development of information media is increasingly progressing in line with global advancements. Many individuals strive to create new and easily accessible instant things (Chhabra and Rahman 2011; Choudhary 2012). Many mass media actors participate in various sectors of development, including telecommunications. Considering that communication is crucial for human interaction, whether direct or indirect, the advancement of modern communication media, particularly the internet, has facilitated access to communication media for people worldwide, enabling them to exchange information and communicate effectively. This development can be attributed to the increasingly sophisticated communication technology used as a communication medium for everyone. With the continued growth of communication media, it serves as feedback for mass media users, as it can be easily accessed and utilized anytime and anywhere.

As we know, we are currently in an era that greatly relies on communication and information technology. Humans have been facilitated by the advancements in information and communication technology, allowing them to interact and obtain information quickly without the need for direct physical meetings (Dr. Huma Nisar 2021). Technological advancements have provided a vast array of information and communication resources beyond what was previously available to humans (Ahmad 2012). According to Amar Ahmad (2012), information is recognized as a commodity that can be sold, shared, copied, created, misinterpreted, distorted, and even stolen. Simply put, many people understand and conceptualize the nature and ownership of basic resources, aside from material and energy potential. Therefore, similar to material and energy, information is of no practical use unless it is operationalized, and information can only be operationalized through information.

Citing various references, it is evident that information media has undergone rapid development, adapting to human needs for effective, practical, and efficient information (Yang 2021). In 1945, precisely after the independence of the Republic of Indonesia on September 11, 1945, Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) was established. With the emergence of RRI amidst a society in need of information at the time, it became the number one radio in Indonesia. RRI was the only radio station that used the name "Indonesia." Currently, RRI is 77 years old, just like the age of the Republic of Indonesia. Radio Republik Indonesia was founded by Joesoef Ronodipoero, Abdul Rahman Saleh, and several colleagues (indonesiadefense.com 2020; Raditya 2020).

Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) is a mass communication tool in the form of a public channel that serves as a medium for conveying information, culture, young people's creativity, religion, and more. RRI is a public broadcasting medium that plays a significant role in providing information and entertainment programs that cater to the creativity of young people in the current digital era (Gozali 2020). Radio is an auditory medium, meaning it can only be heard and not seen by its audience. With the advancement of technology, particularly mass media, radio faces its own challenges, especially RRI. Nowadays, RRI has a presence on almost every social media platform. Radio listeners

who were previously limited to auditory experiences can now also see the broadcasts on social media. With technological advancements, RRI must continue to be present in society and be perceived as capable of providing up-to-date and fast information. RRI is the only radio station that bears the name of the country, and its broadcasts are intended for the benefit of the nation and state. As an independent, neutral, and non-commercial Public Broadcasting Institution, RRI serves the purpose of providing informative broadcasts, education, healthy entertainment, social control, and maintaining a positive image of the nation internationally, as demonstrated in the RRI Tri Prasetya. The emergence of New Media radio is expected to compete and continue to contribute to broadcasting. This is due to the support provided by the internet, which is easily accessible to users at any time. Therefore, RRI has developed an application called "RRI Play Go." Now, radio exists in the era of media convergence, and radio listeners can not only listen but also see the broadcasts at any time through the RRI Play Go application.

RRI Meulaboh has two programs, namely Programa 1 (97.0 FM) and Programa 2 (90.3 FM). Programa 1 focuses on community empowerment, broadcasting about issues in RRI Meulaboh's working area, such as Aceh Jaya, Aceh Barat, Nagan Raya, Aceh Barat Daya, Aceh Selatan, and Simeulue. Programa 1 also broadcasts about regional economy, politics, culture, sports, and other issues. Additionally, Programa 1 includes religious broadcasts, such as Islamic sermons aired every Friday. Programa 2 focuses on the development center of young people's creativity, broadcasting about youth lifestyle and current music. RRI Meulaboh also has Programa 3 managed by RRI headquarters, which usually broadcasts news from the central region and sports news.

RRI Play Go is an application owned by the RRI station, allowing users to choose, listen, read, chat, and enjoy broadcasts from all RRI stations with various features. RRI Play Go has also received awards, including the Green Broadcasting Engineering Award 2015, where it won first place in the application category, presented at the Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) Forum in Istanbul, Turkey (Lathifah and Ismandianto 2021). As a state-owned public broadcasting institution, RRI keeps up with technological advancements by introducing digitalization on all platforms through the RRI Play Go application, enabling everyone to access Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) broadcasts using their smartphones. The goal is to become the largest networked broadcasting institution, providing the most accurate and fastest information from all corners of Indonesia, whether through live streaming or online news. The purpose of RRI Play Go is to facilitate the audience in listening to RRI broadcasts at all times. RRI Play Go is particularly suitable for easy and instant access, making it convenient for users, especially since it adjusts the available broadcasts based on the user's location. For example, if someone is in Aceh Barat, the broadcast that appears will be RRI Meulaboh's. RRI Play Go also allows customization of music, chatting, streaming, and more. Over time, the RRI Play Go application has undergone upgrades and updates (Junaidi Ariansyah, Head of News, RRI Meulaboh).

Based on previous research by Lathifah and Ismandianto (2021) titled "Media Convergence in Maintaining Existence in the Digital and Covid-19 Era," it is evident that

radio listening culture has declined in popularity. Therefore, RRI currently represents radio in Indonesia as a pioneer of digital radio. So, this research explains how to maintain radio as a medium present among the community, serving as both an information provider and an entertainer. The purpose of this research is to analyze the development of RRI Meulaboh in implementing RRI Play Go. RRI Meulaboh converges by leveraging social media and mass media advancements. RRI now has an application that supports all programs throughout Indonesia. RRI Play Go is an application owned by RRI, capable of accommodating all programs from RRI stations across Indonesia.

B. Method

This research employs a qualitative descriptive method with data collection techniques that include direct observation and interviews with RRI Meulaboh employees. Direct observations are conducted at the research location with the aim of observing available sources of information. In addition, interviews are conducted using two methods, namely direct question-and-answer sessions and online interviews through social media platforms. These interviews focus on the topic of RRI Play Go and involve informants selected by the author based on their understanding and expertise regarding RRI Play Go issues. By utilizing these methods, this research aims to gain a deep understanding of RRI Play Go from the perspectives of RRI Meulaboh employees involved in its development.

C. Result and Discussion

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary explains that the general concept of convergence refers to the act of merging and moving towards unity or uniformity (Gusna, Fatih, and Salsabila 2021). It can also be interpreted as the ability to deliver different media channels through a single digital platform, leading to current technological advancements. Rheingold elaborates that advancements in technology enable convergence technology, which in turn has social side effects as the virtual, social, and physical worlds collide, merge, and coordinate. The era of convergence in the field of information and communication technology has transformed the industrial landscape and brought about changes. These changes pertain to the development of technology in order to accommodate technological advancements and innovations for future progress (Shim et al. 2016).

RRI Play Go is an Android-based smartphone application. The first version of RRI Play Go was launched in 2013 under the name RRI Play. RRI Play Go has undergone several changes in terms of its interface and usability. It is a program that digitizes radio broadcasting, allowing users to listen to various broadcasts from RRI stations across Indonesia. This application enables digital innovation by providing a visual representation of the radio content being listened to through the selected channels on the RRI Play Go app. RRI Play Go offers several features, including:

- Listening to broadcasts anytime and anywhere.
- Adapting broadcasts to the user's location
- Playing favorite songs.

- Obtaining accurate and fast information
- Accessing engaging content
- Watching the live streaming of RRI stations throughout Indonesia.
- Accessing educational content
- Providing regional, national, sports, and international news
- Offering an online magazine.
- Catering to young audiences with specific content.
- Broadcasting the Voice of Indonesia, a service for international listeners.
- Chatting with other RRI Play Go users and adding friends
- Featuring five channels: Program One (1), Program Two (2), Program Three (3), Program Four (4), and Program Five (5)

RRI Play Go provides user-friendly services to ensure a comfortable experience for its users. Traditional radio media now face various changing media landscapes due to digitalization. Taking advantage of the easily accessible internet network for online media users, people now prefer accessing online media to obtain information quickly and conveniently, leading to the growing popularity and continuous evolution of online media. The first version of RRI Play, released in 2013, analyzed the development of new media techniques. With the aim of optimizing the VPN network in RRI, which was previously used for internet purposes, concrete changes and plans were made, resulting in a unified streaming connection for all of Indonesia. This led to the development of the RRI Play product. In conjunction with RRI's 74th anniversary, RRI launched the RRI Play Go platform as an update to the RRI Play application. RRI Play Go improved upon RRI Play by addressing bugs, resolving errors, and implementing several user-suggested features (Sapari, Manshur, and Kamaludin 2022).

The programs implemented by RRI Meulaboh at RRI Play Go consist of educational content for the community. Some of the programs conducted by RRI Meulaboh at RRI Play Go are as follows:

- RRI Meulaboh broadcasts radio programs, including Program One (1) and Program Two (2). RRI Meulaboh airs educational broadcasts, such as the RRI Menyapa program, which discusses local issues and developments and features knowledgeable speakers familiar with the region. The speakers invited to this program include government officials and community members involved in relevant fields. Additionally, Program Two (Pro2) features notable programs like Numpang-Numpang, which supports youth development and addresses issues related to youth. The invited speakers for this program are accomplished individuals with unique perspectives to discuss.
- RRI Meulaboh's regional news program extends beyond RRI Play Go and includes its own website. RRI Meulaboh effectively utilizes RRI Play Go, making it easier for users to access available information. Not only does the community receive local news, but they also have access to news from outside the region and even international news.

- RRI Play Go provides entertainment options, allowing users to listen to music as well as Program One (Pro1) and Program Two (Pro2) broadcasts.

The key to media convergence lies in digitalization, as all forms of information and data are transformed from analog to digital formats and transmitted in binary digit units (BITS). Since the transmitted information is in digital format, convergence leads to the creation of applicable products capable of performing audiovisual and computational functions simultaneously. RRI Meulaboh has embraced convergence to receive feedback, considering the increased development of digital radio. Digital radio, also known as internet radio, operates online. Digital radio has a wider and limitless reach, presenting an opportunity for RRI to utilize digital radio based on applications (Lathifah and Ismandianto 2021).

The development of media communication necessitates individuals adapting to the advancements in communication media (Medoff and Kaye 2021). Communication serves as a bridge between people. In other words, without the presence of media developments, communication among individuals would not occur, as media advancements act as connectors between individuals and even within oneself. Hence, RRI Play Go is designed to meet the needs for information, communication, and more. RRI Meulaboh utilizes social media by being present on various platforms to ensure widespread access.

1. Radio RRI Meulaboh Convergence

Media convergence refers to the integration of various telecommunication media with similar objectives. It involves the flow of content across multiple media platforms and collaboration within the media industry (Yin 2014; Yoon 2014). Media convergence has emerged as a result of advancements in digital technology and new media. It enables faster and more flexible access to information for the public. The goal of media convergence is to facilitate easier access to information for the community by fostering cooperation among different media outlets (Mansell 2016; O'Sullivan and Fortunati 2021). A notable example of media convergence is Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI). RRI, which was previously a radio station limited to audio broadcasts, now utilizes platforms like YouTube and RRI Play Go to showcase its activities. RRI Meulaboh, for instance, utilizes YouTube and RRI Play Go to publish programs such as "RRI Menyapa" (RRI Greetings) and various other programs.

Based on data collected by the author at RRI Meulaboh, the employees expressed satisfaction with the presence of RRI Play Go. They find it user-friendly and easily accessible. RRI Play Go can be used anytime and anywhere, allowing RRI broadcasters to have better control over their audience. The content presented on RRI Play Go focuses on education and benefits the community. The data obtained by the author also indicates that users of RRI Play Go find it highly effective. The application provides updated news at the local, national, international, and sports levels. As a radio broadcaster, RRI is recognized as a trusted and reliable source of accurate information, thus serving as an institution that delivers precise information to the public.

The media convergence approach adopted by Radio Republik Indonesia sets it apart from other radio stations in Indonesia. Listeners can stream RRI broadcasts through the rri.co.id website or the RRI Play Go app. Users of the RRI Play Go app can also enjoy live broadcasts from RRI Net. The unique feature of "radio picture" is exclusively available through RRI. The evolutionary stages of this media development are categorized into the principles of mediamorphosis, which include coevolution, convergence, and complexity. The principle of coevolution focuses on the language used as signs, symbols, and codes that undergo changes in communication (Lathifah and Ismandianto, 2021).

To keep up with the era of mass media development, RRI Meulaboh must utilize various platforms to reach its users, both visually and through applications. RRI Meulaboh aims to expand its reach to minimize existing limitations. Therefore, RRI Meulaboh makes use of RRI Play Go, which is easy to use and accessible anytime and anywhere. Users of RRI Play Go can enjoy a variety of programs available on the application. The management of radio is no longer just a hobby but has become a professional management practice. This can be seen through the segmentation in the radio industry.

A program within RRI Play Go that provides live streaming of radio broadcasts from all RRI stations in Indonesia. Users can listen to the radio broadcasts of Programa 1 (Pro1), Programa 2 (Pro2), Programa 3 (Pro3), Programa 4 (Pro4), and Programa 5 (Pro5) from various RRI stations across Indonesia without being limited to a specific station's coverage area.

- Pro 1, also known as the inspiration channel, offers content on local information or issues, culture, entertainment, and RRI's greeting programs.
- Pro 2, known as the creativity channel, provides content related to the lifestyle of young people, entertainment geared towards young audiences, and discussions on youth development. Progama Dua also features live music and the Numpang Nampang program, which highlights the achievements of young people.
- Pro 3 focuses on national news programs.
- Pro 4 primarily highlights regional culture and regional music. It is managed by RRI with a type B classification.
- Pro 5, also known as Channel Lima, features the latest music.

With the variety of programs offered on RRI radio, RRI Play Go users and radio listeners from various regions can be entertained. People trust RRI radio because the information conveyed or broadcast is factual rather than mere opinion. With the development of mass media, RRI has successfully adapted to social media platforms, ensuring its presence among users who frequently use social media..

2. RRI Play Go Content

RRI Play Go is a smartphone application that offers various content options for users, including information, music, and learning materials. It is user-friendly and familiar to use. The application provides a wide range of educational content, one of which is the program called "Numpang Nampang," aimed at supporting the achievements

of young people. The entertainment content broadcasted on RRI Play Go is always on-topic and devoid of elements that may harm or degrade individuals. The information disseminated through RRI Play Go is accurate and does not involve any form of personal attack or mockery.

RRI Play Go Podcast

This content focuses on regional development, local issues, and regional concerns. Its purpose is to contribute to the growth of regions and provide information to the public. The podcast features influential speakers who have played a significant role in the development of specific areas. For example, local government officials may serve as speakers to provide information directly to the public. The broadcasters hosting the podcast are knowledgeable individuals who can effectively discuss the relevant issues pertaining to their respective regions.

News content in RRI Play Go

The news content in RRI Play Go consists of news from all RRI radio channels throughout Indonesia. For instance, RRI Meulaboh broadcasts news related to the west-south coast of Aceh. The news primarily covers issues concerning the region. Users can access the desired information and obtain news updates related to both local and national events. International news is also available for users to access.

RRI Net

RRI Net is a TV broadcast that retains the essence of radio as it transmits RRI programs live through television. Users can enjoy live streaming of radio broadcasts in the form of video streaming. The RRI Net content allows users to access previously missed radio programs listed for their convenience.

Voice of Indonesia

Voice of Indonesia, also known as Suara Indonesia, is a service provided by Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) for users residing outside the country. It operates through RRI's international channels and aims to serve users worldwide. The Voice of Indonesia program stimulates positive developments in various sectors, including geopolitics, economics, society, and the environment, on a global scale (Sapari et al., 2022).

Based on research conducted at RRI Meulaboh regarding the convergence efforts undertaken by RRI, it can be concluded that RRI Play Go's strategy enhances the digital quality of a visual radio platform. Insights gained from discussions and interviews with RRI Meulaboh employees and users indicate both positive and negative impacts within the organization.

The positive impacts resulting from the use of RRI Play Go include widespread acceptance and appreciation of this media convergence by the community. The convergence represents a significant advancement, facilitating listeners of RRI Meulaboh in obtaining information and accessing radio broadcasts. With RRI Play Go, users can listen to all radio broadcasts conveniently. Data obtained by the author indicates that the community finds it easier to use the RRI Play Go application, which can be accessed anytime and anywhere without the limitations of traditional broadcasting range. The progress generated by RRI Play Go programs is evident, as broadcasters can determine

the number of listeners tuning in to specific radio programs. This development aligns with current trends, allowing RRI Play Go users to effortlessly enjoy radio broadcasts. This convergence marks a strategic breakthrough for RRI, transforming it from an audio-only medium to a rapidly evolving visual radio platform. Dadang Sugiana highlighted that radio is one of the oldest forms of electronic mass media that continues to be favored due to its inclusion of music and spoken words, along with its wide-reaching capabilities that transcend distance and time (Gusna, Fatih, and Salsabila, 2021).

D. Conclusion

The development of information media, particularly in the form of radio, has undergone rapid advancements and transformations to adapt to the needs of the digital age. Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) has embraced media convergence and introduced the RRI Play Go application, which allows users to access RRI broadcasts anytime and anywhere. This application serves as a bridge between traditional radio and online media, providing a visual representation of the radio content and offering features such as personalized music, chat, and live streaming. RRI Meulaboh, a radio station in Aceh, has successfully implemented RRI Play Go and utilizes social media platforms to enhance its reach and engage with the community. The convergence of media has enabled RRI to remain relevant in the digital era and continue its mission of providing informative and educational content to the public.

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