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Transformation of Radio Technology in The Digital Age

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ABSTRACT

Radio transformation is a step to maintain existence. Innovation and adjustment to the rapid development of new media and exacerbated by the Covid-19 virus pandemic requires radio to transform into the digital era. This article aims to see the existence of RRI in transforming radio media in the digital era and Covid-19. The change of radio to the digital era is a demand in facing the challenges of progress and growth of information. This research uses descriptive qualitative method. The results show that the segmentation of radio listeners in the small category is caused by listeners who prefer and seek social media information. RRI's strategy to uphold its existence in the digital era is to update technology and cooperation. The transformation carried out during the Covid-19 response period gave rise to an increased character for the information that was broadcast.

Keywords: Transformation, technology, digital, Covid-19

ABSTRAK

Transformasi radio menjadi langkah untuk mempertahankan eksistensi. Inovasi dan penyesuaian dengan perkembangan media baru yang pesat serta diperparah dengan pandemi virus Covid-19 mengharuskan radio melakukan transformasi ke era digital. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk melihat eksistensi RRI dalam melakukan transformasi media radio di era digital dan Covid-19. Perubahan radio ke era digital merupakan tuntutan dalam menghadapi tantangan kemajuan dan pertumbuhan informasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa segmentasi pendengar radio kategori kecil diakibatkan faktor pendengar yang lebih menyukai dan mencari mencari informasi sosial media. Strategi RRI menegakkan eksistensi di era digital, adalah memperbarui teknologi dan kerjasama. Traspormasi yang dilakukan selama masa penanggulangan Covid-19 memunculkan karakter yang meningkat terhadap informasi yang disiarkan.

Kata Kunci: Transformasi, teknologi, digital, Covid-19

INTRODUCTION

The development of modern adult broadcast media has allowed people all over the world to communicate with each other. Broadcast media is an organization that disseminates political or economic information, the culture which is part of a wider social system (Agus, 2002). Theories regarding the relationship between media audiences mainly emphasize individual and group effects as a result of interaction with the media. (Morissan, 2015). One of the strategies for this change is to carry out media convergence, namely media technology that allows the convergence of media, telecommunications and computer technology

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(Straubhaar, J. & LaRose, 2012). The main key to this media convergence is internet-based media. Meanwhile, Vincent Mosco offers three important concepts to approach the political economy of media, namely commodification, spatialization and structuration (Mosco, 1996). The number of radio listeners has increased by 21 percent from 2017 to 2021. And also radio reaches 22.759 million people per day in 10 cities with an average listening of 120 minutes per day or more than 2 hours. (<https://radioindonesia.co.id/>)

Technological developments have also brought about changes in the relationship between radio and its listeners. Listeners can listen to radio broadcasts *online*, through interactively interwoven social media (Nasrullah, 2017). The results of the poll of the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), in 2020, illustrates that the number of internet users in Indonesia grew by 17%. Overall, in 2020 as many as 175.4 million people or around 64% of the Indonesian people of the total 272.1 million Indonesian population, are connected to the internet. The number of internet users shows that Indonesian people today tend to switch to using new media, making some changes to traditional media (McQuail, 2011)

Based on data compiled by APJII, the number of internet users who use the internet to listen to radio still has a small percentage compared to the consumption of other content on the internet. Radio has become a more personal medium for individual consumers (Innayah, 2017). Radio is still able to survive amidst the onslaught of new media to this day, because radio is at the forefront of delivering actual and factual information. Radio is also the messenger of information free from hoaxes that often appear in new media. In the process of radio news, the source is generally delivered directly in the form of a live broadcast or recorded (sindonews.com, n.d.).

Based on data compiled by APJII, the number of internet users who use the internet to listen to the radio still has a small percentage compared to consumption of other content on the internet. Radio is a transmitter of information that is free from hoaxes that often appear in new media. Radio has an *incremental* (always increasing) and continuous nature, and is carried out based on the point of view of what customers expect in the future (Sugiya, 2012) It can be seen from the fact that the potential for the spread of Covid-19 or corona intensity and spectrum is expanding, the socio economic activities of the community are getting weaker, the Imogen Communication Institute (IGI), December 2020 conducted a survey of 140 media in ten major cities in Indonesia. The result is that 70.2 percent of Covid-19 has an impact on the media business, especially on revenue (IGI, 2020). The media must carry out a strategy to exist in the era of bias with various ideas in the form of media convergence.

Technological developments have brought about changes in the relationship between radio and listeners, resulting from the existence of new media on media that already existed and were used by humans (Severin, Werner J. & James W. Tankard, 2011). *First*, Radio Pre television, which is characterized by a large national network, today's radio is dominated by the format, a certain sound characteristic of a local station. Second, Radio Post-Television is characterized by local, fragmented, special, personal and mobile through personal mobile devices on mobile phones, cars or ipods and even through computers/laptops listeners can hear news and music (Tamburaka, 2013). The stages of media development are then grouped into the principles of mediamorphosis, namely the principles of coevolution, convergence and complexity.

The principle of coevolution is a concept of mediamorphosis which is dominated by language. The language which means signs, symbols, codes is used by the messenger as a form of communication change. Henry Jenkins in 2006 in his book entitled *Convergence Culture Where Old and New Media Collide*, explains that Media Convergence blurs the boundaries between the media, even between post, telephone and telegram, and mass media such as television, radio and the press. If the digital revolution paradigm suspects that new media (*new media*) will replace old media, a convergence paradigm appears which assumes that old media and new media will interact in a more complex way. Five stages of media convergence: (a) Economic Convergence (b) Social Convergence, (c) Technology, combining various technologies in digital form. (d) Cultural Convergence (e) Global Convergence. (Jenkins, 2006)

Media convergence is the phenomenon of joining various media that were previously considered different and separate, which includes both print and electronic media into one single medium. Internet media convergence also combines three processes or is also called 3C, namely computing, communication and content (Ma'rifah, 2018).

Complexity relates to problems in the communication process. The complexity of this concept means the complexity in the communication process associated with chaos theory. This theory deals with the chaos that arises because of a person's sensitive nature. Fidler argues that the complexity in the mediamorphosis will have an impact on the transformation of the media and provide new ideas in animating mass media systems. When the technology discussed is employed, it becomes a threat to survival by destroying individuality, autonomy and the foundations of a free society (Sætra, 2019).

The new discoveries in communication media are unpredictable. Complexity also occurs due to internal and external pressures in the communication process (Pakarkomunikasi.com,

2017). Internet technology has become a human need ranging from the need for socializing, information, entertainment to knowledge. With the emergence of broadcast radio technology via the internet, it has created new problems in the world of mass media, which are broadcasting and telecommunication frequencies are very limited so it needs to be regulated by the government. The public has not realized that the frequencies used by commercial radio and television stations are natural assets that must be managed for the benefit of the people. But, unfortunately, since this republic there has been government intervention in the public interest that has dominated and always rests on the interests of the authorities. The frequency in government plots for parties who are economically and politically strong, without considering the public interest (Rihartono, 2015). The development of the digital era has caused the number of listeners of conventional radio broadcasts to experience a decline (Innayah, 2017).

Barriers to transformation to digital radio; first, radio organizations are not able to adapt to the development of the digital age in the technology-based era, both internal and external changes. Second, the barriers to digital transformation are security issues and cyberattacks. Third, the lack of a workforce with digital skills, fourth, the absence of the right technology partners, and the uncertain economic environment. Fifth, the lack of government policies and supporting information and communication technology infrastructure.

The characteristics of online media and social media are different from conventional media. (Santoso, 2018). The innovations made are growing (Lathifah & Ismandianto, 2021). The development of radio gave rise to a *spiral of* radio silence as an alternative media in the digital era (Hapsari, 2018). Communication technology contributes to thinking about the transformation of the characteristics of mass media communication from conventional to digital. (Gushevinalti et al., 2020). Elaborating the convergence culture in the end also tried to be applied by local broadcast media (Ningrum & Adiprasetyo, 2021)

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a problem-solving procedure method which is investigated by describing or describing the condition of the subject or research object (Nawawi, 2003). Analysis of research data using narrative analysis. Riessman (1993) in Denzin (2009) states that narrative analysis is an analysis that is not standardized, almost always intuitive from the researcher himself. Narrative analysis usually rests on the point of view of the storyteller and not of society. The results of the interview which had been coded were narrated again in the language of the researcher. In case there is a sentence that has a strong message, then the direct sentence from the informant is written.

The concept of narrative analysis is to narrate the results of this study from the point of view of people who experience what kind of conditions are being explored in the research. In this case the selected informants are asked to narrate and clearly disclose what kind of convergence they face in their work environment. According to Johnston (2005), in narrative analysis data is treated as in other qualitative research, namely the coding process is carried out. However, it is somewhat different because data collection techniques was carried out by direct observation, in-depth interviews and documentation in coding process. In this study, primary data will be obtained by observing and interviewing informants. Secondary data will be obtained from references in the form of text documentation, photos and graphics related to the research. Informant retrieval techniques carried out in this study are based on research objectives, the informants of this study are leaders, broadcasters, and listeners. It is based on model of Miles and Huberman (Moleong, 2005).

The data collection method was carried out by in-depth interviews with informants by asking questions about the research with the intention of clarifying the information that had been obtained from previous interviews (Afrizal, 2015). Field observation is conducting a field review of the place to be studied by examining existing phenomena, then recording these phenomena.

DISCUSSION

Radio Transformation the Republic of Indonesia

Radio turns out to be a communication medium in which messages in the form of sound are converted into sound signals, transmitted from a source with a transmitting antenna, without any cables, via electromagnetic waves, then received by the receiving antenna on the receiving device, which converts the sound signal into a message in the form of sound Return (Wibowo, 2012). Changes in content undergo a deep transformation with technology (Pavlik 2010:231).

The adaptability of the world's changes makes broadcast radio still exist in carrying out its function as a medium of information, education, entertainment, and persuasion. Broadcast radio gets the nickname as the fifth force, this is because broadcast radio can also perform socio-economic and political control functions such as newspapers in addition to these four functions. The changes occur in various ways of communicating will shape human existence itself.

An important point in the broadcast radio management strategy is planning the broadcast format with the scope of (1) broadcast production (2). Broadcast personality (3). Broadcast programs from a marketing perspective are used to target listeners. Radio has adapted to the changing world by developing mutually beneficial and complementary relationships with other media (Ardianto, Elvinaro., 2007).

Basically digital radio with digital TV has the same process. Digital radio listeners need a special radio box to receive digital-based sound to broadcast using conventional technology while still being done in analog. In terms of digital radio quality, it plays sound into a digital signal for transmission and then records it to the listener, so that the resulting sound output is of compact disk quality. Digital radios are easy to adjust and find the strongest frequencies. The listener chooses a station with the menu name automatically to the selected frequency so that in any condition the sound results are still good.

Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI) is the oldest radio as a public broadcasting institution that has carried out media transportation or convergence, unifying information and communication technology. The form of transformation that has been carried out by RRI is to create a website that can be accessed by RRI listeners through rri.co.id, the RRI Play Go application, RRI broadcasts *podcast* that can be listened to through RRI's website and Spotify application, and interacting with listeners through social media. New media that have sprung up and are supported by technology, will be a very large part of presenting various news (Knight, J. & Alexis, 2009).

The media convergence carried out by RRI is different from other radio stations. The convergence between online and offline media is one of the innovations (Vincent, 2021). Apart from being able to listen to radio *streaming* through *the website* rri.co.id and the RRI Play Go application, users of the RRI Play Go application can also enjoy live broadcasts from RRI Net with the feature *radio picture* which is only owned by RRI. In 2015, RRI Play Go received an award as the first winner for the application category *Green Broadcasting Engineering Award 2015*, in Istanbul, Turkey in *the Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) Forum*.

Rapid technological changes create new demands in the management of radio broadcasters and need to be properly anticipated to maintain and fulfill public trust. According to (William L River , 2004), media changes due to the development of a democratic country, industrial and technological revolutions, and the emergence of new cities.

Radio broadcast stations have collaborated using internet technology. This facilitates the management of radio broadcast data systems. Any computer hardware found in a radio broadcasting station or software program system. Internet technology is currently more easily accepted by computer users around the world because they work together as a single system used from any computer platform (Harliantara, 2016).

The mass media underwent various changes which caused their use to shift from one form of mass media to a newer form of mass media with their respective advantages. Broadcast radio, which includes conventional electronic media, certainly does its own way to continue to exist as a mass communication tool that functions as an intermediary for messages.

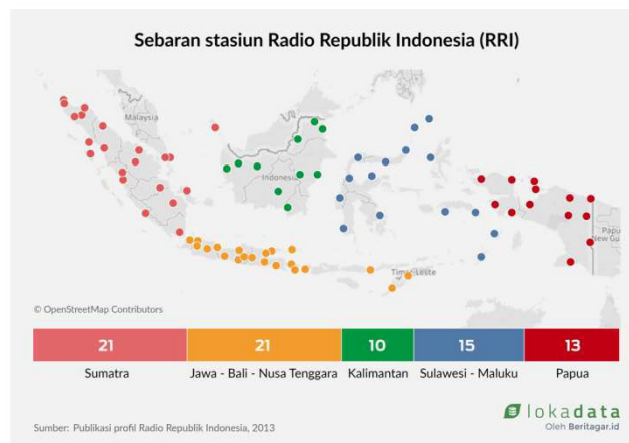


Figure 1. Distribution of Republic of Indonesia Radio Stations
Source: Radio Republik Indonesia, 2013

The RRI station has the slogan “once in the air, stay in the air” already has 85 stations throughout Indonesia. With the largest number of stations, RRI works optimally to produce various innovations to follow the pattern of broadcast developments according to the times. The characteristics that can be seen from broadcasting in the digital era are: scattered (talking a lot to many), two-way communication, avoiding state control, democratization: facilitating universal citizenship, participants are seen as being able to maintain their individuality, influencing individual experiences of time and space (Harliantara, 2016).

The convergence of radio broadcasts via the internet, of course, uses technology that is always updated. RRI as state-owned radio has also adopted a new form in the world of broadcasting. This new form consists of *the websites*, applications, and social media that

can be accessed by listeners. This step is a way to keep up with technological developments and also the times. The importance of a website in forming an impression and the website's quality can change the impression of the website and the entire institution online (Kirana, 2021)

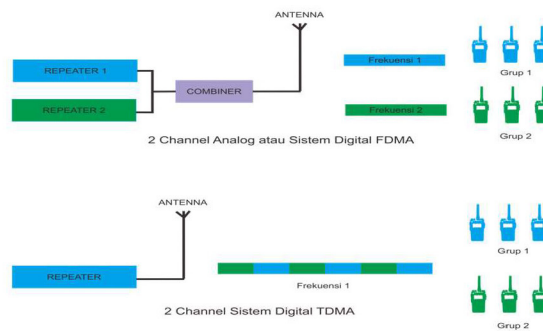


Figure 2. Radio Features Increase System Capacity
 Source: radiokom communications.co.id

The digital radio features increase system capacity, spectrum efficiency (frequency), integrated data communications and clearer voice communications compared to analog products. There are two main standards available on this digital radio technology, namely: Digital Mobile Radio (DMR) and Digital Private Mobile Radio (dPMR). These two systems exhibit different characteristics and both have their own advantages and disadvantages. One of the main benefits of digital radio in these two technologies is the ease with which it is possible to combine networks that are far apart using the Internet. It is now very easy to create a multi-site network quickly and cost-effectively across multiple locations. There are also various third-party software applications designed to take advantage of technology.

The advantages of digital radio are better quality than conventional radio. The sound it produces is resistant to sound interference from other radio signals, so it is impossible to overlap one channel with another. *First*, the sound quality is good and clear, like a CD. *Second*, digital radio is also equipped with interactive and ubiquitous services, which means anytime, anywhere, and with any means. Listeners will find it easier to follow voting events and competitions held by radio stations, including activities in a discussion or talk show. *Third*, the frequency on digital radio has a Single Frequency Network, so that one channel can be filled by five to six radio programs. *Fourth*, the signal spectrum on digital radio is also more stable than that of conventional radio. Digital radio also has transmit power efficiency and infrastructure efficiency, so as to minimize production costs. Meanwhile, there is no

significant additional income that can be enjoyed from appearing amateur journalists' works on various different platforms (Noor, 2010).

Research in Japan states that this digital broadcast system can be maximized as a means of disseminating information on potential disasters, or Emergency Warning System (EWS). With this system, all digital devices such as digital radios, digital televisions, PDAs, computers connected online, message receivers on digital phones, digital portable DVD players, can be used to disseminate information about the disaster to the public.



Figure 3. Website Appearance rri.co.id
Source: RRI.ac.id

Radio Republik Indonesia can be accessed through rri.co.id streaming. The contents of various news are always updated every day according to developments and events in society. Listeners can choose broadcasts from RRI stations throughout Indonesia. *The website* is both static and dynamic, which forms a series of interconnected buildings, each of which is linked by a network of pages (hyperlinks) (Ali Zaki, 2009). With streaming, radio can reach a broad market or audience throughout the world.

RRI Play Go application

The direction of communication is one of the changes that radio is currently experiencing. In addition to the direction of communication, the idea of content has also changed so that it can be broadcast on the internet into a new mass media that integrates the delivery system for media with the help of rapid technological developments, digital media that combines text, audio, video, using computer technology (Biagi 2010:231)

RRI Play Go is an application for listening, reading, or watching all RRI broadcasts in several feature options. RRI Play Go application can be downloaded at the Google Play store for Android users and on the App Store for iOS users.

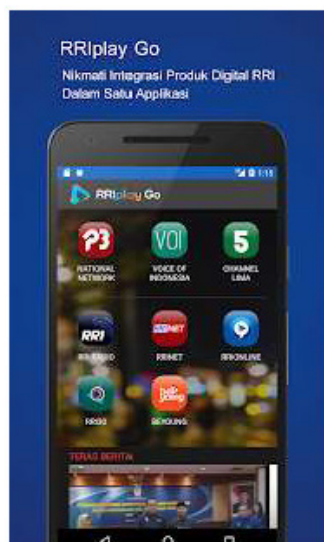


Figure 4. Display of the RRI Play Go application

Source: RRI, 2020

RRI Play Go in the era of globalization makes it easier for people to get radio broadcast information from big cities and small corners of urban areas to remote villages, young and old. The application contains several programs such as National Network, Voice Of Indonesia, Channel 5, RRI Radio, RRINET, RRIONLINE, RRI30, BEYOUNG, Primagz, and the last one is RRIplay Go.

RRI YouTube live Broadcast and Instagram

YouTube as a medium for searching, viewing and sharing original videos to and from all over the world via a web (Budiargo, 2015). An application that presents written and video content, capable of providing information from various fields. The implication of YouTube for radio media itself is very large, where YouTube allows citizens to distribute video information which at first was only dominated by television media. Even today, YouTube is a reference for users to see extraordinary events that have been recorded by residents. Google still dominates the ranking of the most visited sites in the world, YouTube is next, and Facebook is in third place. Of the total time surfing in cyberspace, world internet users spend about 2

hours 16 minutes interacting on social media. Especially for online video penetration, every month is watched by 92 percent of the world's internet users (tirto.id, 2019). YouTube as information presented to the public, according to (Littlejohn 2009). Individuals are believed to be greatly influenced by media messages, because the media are considered very powerful in shaping public opinion.



Figure 5. Views of the YouTube Channel During Live Broadcast
Source: RRI, 2020

RRI uses YouTube to keep interacting with its listeners. YouTube was chosen as the main social media for RRI because YouTube is one of the favorite audiovisual media for young people because it is easy to access and listen to at any time, and a social media that has clear storage compared to other social media. The direct impact felt by Programa broadcasters on the changes made, made broadcasters more focused because there was the addition of new media, namely cameras.

In addition to YouTube media, RRI also provides information using Instagram media. Instagram is one of the applications resulting from the advancement of the internet which includes social media used by the community, especially the younger generation. Instagram application users are growing rapidly because of the advantages offered in the form of convenience when uploading photos via the camera, being able to directly use the coloring effects the user wants. Instagram has various features that can make photos look beautiful, artistic and become better (Atmoko Dwi, 2012).

Instagram is a tool used by Programa RRI Pekanbaru to promote upcoming broadcast schedules. Now humans like to connect and communicate with each other virtually through the social media they have (Jones, 1997). In addition, the voting feature on Instagram is also

used to vote on listener’s song choices. The number of listeners can also be seen through the insight feature on Instagram. Programa 2 RRI Pekanbaru can see where the viewers come from who saw the story posts shared by Programa 2 RRI Pekanbaru.

All changes to the program of new internet media have not made radio lose, but have sharpened the uniqueness of radio. The personal factors and the intimacy that radio has successfully built in order to connect with its listeners. New radios emerged, some old radios were left out, but not a few survived (Astuti 2008:14).

Radio Technology Digital and Covid 19

The success of radio stations in adapting to change makes radio still exist in carrying out its functions as a medium of information, education, entertainment, and persuasiveness. Radio is included as the fifth power, because radio can perform socio-economic and political control functions. With the advent of broadcast radio communication technology via the internet, in the end, the government had to make plans for the development of digital radio. This Action Plan includes 3 main processes, namely regulation, delivery of information to the public and field/product trials. In addition, an important point in the radio management strategy is to plan the broadcast format with the scope of (1) Production (2). Personality (3). Programs from a marketing perspective (Lewis B O’. Donnel 1990)

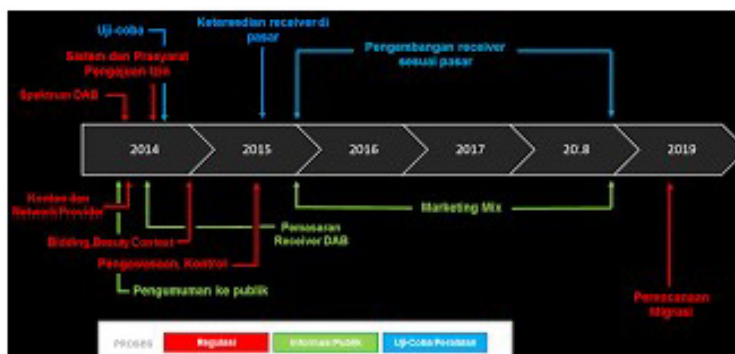


Figure 6. Action Plan for Digital Radio Implementation and Development
Source: DG PPI, 2013

Digital radio programs have listener segmentations from various circles, parents and young people using Zoom to broadcast programs. Multiplatform, of course, in the end will also have an impact on the patterns, habits and viewing times of everyday people (Burton, 2005).

The entire transformation that takes place in the media industry sector essentially reflects a shift from state regulation to market regulation, where the operations of the media industry are no longer based on state intervention, but are largely determined by market power mechanisms (Moeco, in Effendi Gazali et al 2003). This was done when the Covid-19 pandemic prevented community activities due to distance restrictions, causing radio management to broadcast using Zoom and also broadcast via Youtube. Streaming video is prevalent in the internet world and live internet broadcasts (Hastjarjo, 2007).

Young listeners of the Republic of Indonesia radio use new media technology, which are live streaming and Zoom. The program that is made also adapts to pandemic conditions. One of the learning and work activities that has been turned into something virtual has made radio innovating with the RRI learning program. Radio management measures such as the RRI Pekanbaru undertook to further introduce online classes by collaborating with the Riau Provincial Education Office and Pekanbaru City Education Office.

With this convergence of media, RRI's internal is demanded to be more technologically literate. However, after the pandemic, many broadcast programs involving the public were not implemented. The internet offers the opportunity to build fun communities with like-minded individuals, allows people to redefine work as desired, and information disclosure (Romli, 2012).

The new mass media that RRI has recently applied also have a negative impact which constrains the broadcast process. Constraints faced when operating new technology include a lack of manpower for the broadcast process. This resulted in broadcasters being required to multitask. Besides being able to become a broadcaster, they also get additional tasks to operate the Zoom as well as being connected via youtube The digital technology used by RRI Pekanbaru is also not fully the answer, because there are still errors felt by broadcasters.

The negative impact of the change towards digital, especially during the Covid 19 period carried out by RRI Pekanbaru did not become a problem for broadcasters. This is because the broadcaster continues to work as usual. The difference occurs in the addition of tools such as cameras for live streaming.

CONCLUSION

Radio Republic of Indonesia transparency to maintain existence in the digital era and Covid-19, by following technological developments, usage, websites, YouTube, radio streaming, Instagram and the RRI Play Go application. Steps were taken to increase the number of listeners during the Covid-19 period, one of which was at the City or Provincial

level Education Office to reach young listeners. The transformation or convergence carried out with more positive impacts. The positive impact on broadcasters has been that the easier it is to measure with a large audience.

By using RRI Play Go application, listeners can listen to radio broadcasts from various places. Through Zoom Meetings, broadcasters can be carried out with many people or sources directly via YouTube. The media convergence that is being carried out is intended to facilitate interaction and dissemination of information, so that the negative impact is not felt by broadcasters. The suggestion for the Republic of Indonesia Public Broadcasting Institution is to maximize the use of technology in order to increase listeners. The program at Programa is even more creative so that young people are interested in watching RRI. Listeners, especially young people, must be more active in the broadcast process.

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