



RADIO MESRA FM MEDIA CONVERGENCE STRATEGY IN DEVELOPING DAKWAH IN PAREPARE CITY

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the communication strategy of Radio Mesra FM Parepare City in relation to its Islamic Religious Dialogue (DAI) program. His research focuses include the effectiveness of da'wah programs, the use of technology in the convergence of various media, and strategic management that supports Islamic da'wah. This research employs a qualitative approach, collecting data through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings of the study show that Radio Mesra FM collaborates with social media, online streaming, and other digital platforms as a means to expand broadcast coverage and viewer engagement. In addition, an adaptive communication approach using the Bugis language is the key to attracting the attention of the local community. Despite facing challenges such as competition with digital media and changing audience preferences, Radio Mesra FM has proven to be able to maintain its relevance with innovative management strategies coupled with forms of religious teaching whose preaching is related to the contemporary context. This research contributes to the theory of da'wah communication because it also offers practical recommendations for media managers in optimizing media convergence for religious messages.

Keywords: Da'wah communication; Media convergence; Friendly FM radio

1. INTRODUCTION

The remarkable advancements in digital technology have completely changed the media landscape.¹ The rise of digital technology has profoundly transformed how individuals' access and consume information and entertainment. The advent of the internet and social media has introduced various challenges that contrast sharply with traditional media like radio and television. One notable effect is the declining interest of younger generations in using the radio for information and entertainment.² A similar situation is unfolding in Parepare City, where Radio Mesra FM, with its long-standing history and signature programs like the Islamic Religious

¹ Mochamad Iqbal Jatmiko, "Post-truth, Social Media, and Misinformation: The Turmoil of Political Discourse in the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election," *Jurnal Dakwah Tabligh* 20, no. 1 (2019): 21–39, <https://doi.org/10.24252/jdt.v20i1.9529>.

² Ahmad Soleh, "THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS INFLUENCERS IN THE DA'WAH DIGITAL SYSTEM STUDY OF OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN THE COMMUNITY," *Sharia Economic: Bank, Law & System* (Online: 3031-4143 Print: 3032-0976) 2, no. 2 (2024): 52–74, <https://doi.org/10.17605/v9seb355>.

Dialogue, is experiencing a decline in popularity due to shifting audience preferences. The rise of the internet and social media not only poses challenges to traditional media outlets such as radio and television but also introduces several other issues. One significant challenge is the decreasing interest among younger generations in radio as a source of information and entertainment. Despite its established presence and ability to host engaging programs like the Islamic Religious Dialogue, Radio Mesra FM is now compelled to adapt to the changing audience preferences that increasingly favor digital platforms.

Radio is a form of mass media that transmits messages rapidly. It links various segments of society without geographical restrictions.³ Radio shows, including religious programs, can serve as a vital tool for communicating religious messages to a broader audience.⁴ In today's digital age, the idea of media convergence is particularly significant for traditional forms of media like radio. By means of media convergence, traditional radio can merge with digital platforms such as social media and streaming services, allowing it to connect with a broader audience.

Several communication experts, including Onong Uchjana Effendi, advocate for adaptive communication strategies to tackle the challenges of the digital era. This approach necessitates a blend of traditional media and modern technology to craft more effective messages. Additionally, Asep Saeful Muhtadi raised concerns about the potential risks of an identity crisis in religion stemming from the unregulated flow of information. He cautioned that technological transformation could disrupt local cultural and religious values, as well as weaken community spirituality. Therefore, the integration process within the media must be carefully managed and aligned with religious principles.⁵

The effectiveness of digital technology in expanding da'wah outreach is clear, yet its implementation poses significant challenges.⁶ Numerous prior studies have explored the potential role of digital media; however, none have thoroughly investigated how radio can adapt to maintain its relevance as an effective medium for conveying da'wah messages amid digital transformation. This situation highlights a disconnect between the younger generation's waning interest in radio and the medium's capacity to serve as an inclusive and pertinent tool for da'wah. Thus, a more comprehensive study is essential.

This study investigates the innovative implementation of a media convergence strategy within a da'wah program, specifically focusing on Radio Mesra FM in Parepare. Contrary to previous research that primarily examined general media transformation, this study delves into how traditional radio programs, when integrated with digital platforms, can enhance the effectiveness of da'wah efforts. Additionally, the research emphasizes the importance of employing local cultural approaches, such as the Bugis dialect, which plays a vital role in da'wah communication.

This study aims to examine adaptive communication strategies employed by Islamic missionaries through media convergence at Radio Mesra FM in Parepare. The research seeks to

³ Anastasia Yuni Widyaningrum, "Study of Virtual Communities: Opportunities and Challenges for Studies in the Field of Communication Science," *Komunikatif: Jurnal Ilmiah Komunikasi* 10, no. 2 (2021): 141–52, <https://doi.org/10.33508/jk.v10i2.3457>.

⁴ Firly Annisa, "STATE POSITION AMONG THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PARADIGM: REVIEW OF THE MEDIA LITERACY MOVEMENT BY DIY KPID AND BTKP DIY," *Information* 48, no. 2 (2018): 295–308, <https://doi.org/10.21831/information.v48i2.15873>.

⁵ Reymond Pandapotan Sianturi, "VIRTUAL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY: A New Era of Ecclesia in a Virtual Context and Its Contribution to Religious Freedom in Indonesia," *Echoes of Theology* 38, no. 1 (2014).

⁶ Mellyan Mellyan, "Social Media Marketing; Digital Era Business Communication Strategy (Analysis Study of TaniFund.com Portal)," *At-Tanzir: Scientific Journal of Islamic Broadcasting Communication Study Program*, 2020, 21–44, <https://doi.org/10.47498/tanzir.v11i1.350>.

offer recommendations that can support radio operators in navigating the challenges of the digital age, while also serving as a valuable resource for Islamic missionaries in effectively utilizing media for their outreach efforts. The urgency of this research arises from the crucial role of Islamic missionary work in adapting to significant shifts in media consumption patterns. By implementing appropriate strategies, radio can remain a relevant and effective medium for disseminating religious messages in the digital era.

2. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method underpinned by a phenomenological approach and a field survey style to articulate and illuminate the experiences and perspectives of research subjects concerning Radio Mesra FM's media convergence strategy for advancing da'wah in Parepare City. The research is guided by a postpositivist framework, which facilitates the identification of causal factors influencing the outcomes of da'wah through convergent media.

Primary data were collected through interviews with managers, broadcasting institutions, content producers, and community members from Parepare City. In addition, secondary data were sourced from books, journals, and other relevant publications to bolster the analysis. Data collection techniques involved observation, structured interviews, and documentation to gather first-hand information on the implementation of media convergence strategies and their impact on the effectiveness of da'wah.

Data processing occurs concurrently with data collection, involving data reduction, presentation, and the drawing or verification of conclusions. To aid in the subsequent analysis, data is refined by selecting, summarizing, and identifying key themes from the gathered information. Data presentation entails organizing the filtered content into concise narratives, tables, or relationships between categories, thereby clarifying the interactions between the studied variables across various approaches. Conclusions are drawn progressively, beginning with tentative findings that are corroborated with additional data to ensure their credibility.

The validation of research reports through qualitative methods is achieved via tests of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. To evaluate credibility, techniques such as extended observation, triangulation, or auditing are employed, while transferability tests assess the applicability of research findings to other contexts. Dependability is ensured through audits of the research process, and confirmability focuses on aligning research outputs with the processes undertaken.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Islamic Propagation Program Implemented by Radio Mesra FM, Parepare City

Radio Mesra FM in Parepare City is well-regarded for its Islamic preaching programs, which are delivered in a variety of engaging and effective formats. A standout feature of these offerings is the Islamic Religious Dialogue (DAI), a program that regularly broadcasts to enhance the public's understanding of Islamic teachings. These sessions typically feature speakers who are well-versed in Islamic matters and often address topics pertinent to local audiences, particularly the social and religious issues they encounter.

The planning of DAI's programming is carried out with meticulous attention by the management team and the broadcaster. Each episode typically begins with an internal discussion to identify themes that are relevant to the audience at that particular time. The management then

selects credible sources within their respective fields. Finally, the program's format is designed to promote interaction between the audience and the broadcaster. This careful planning is crucial to ensure that the program is not only engaging but also genuinely beneficial to the community.

The success of the DAI program is evident in its ability to connect with diverse audience segments, spanning both young and old, as well as individuals who may not have engaged with traditional preaching methods. An increasing number of listeners are interacting through phone or social media to seek more information or share their thoughts on the topics discussed.⁷ This interaction shows that viewers feel involved in the broader preaching efforts of Radio Mesra FM. Additionally, greater awareness of deepening religious knowledge correlates with increased effectiveness.

One technique for reaching the da'wah audience is to hold discussion and question-and-answer sessions.⁸ The openness of the DAI program fosters a more interactive experience, allowing listeners to express their opinions on the topics being discussed. Broadcasters are frequently given opportunities to engage their audience through quizzes and activities such as sermons, which encourage active participation rather than passive listening.

Feedback from viewers reflects a high level of satisfaction with the program's offerings. Many listeners have reported that they have gained a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings through the various channels provided by the DAI program. Additionally, numerous participants noted that the program has offered them new perspectives on addressing everyday challenges with a more meaningful religious approach.

To promote greater audience involvement, Radio Mesra FM regularly invites callers to engage in dedicated sessions where they can submit questions or share their thoughts via social media platforms. This approach significantly enhances the interactive feel of each episode. A notable example of this success is the eagerness of the audience to pose questions and discuss topics with the DAI program presenters.

In addition to Islamic preaching, Radio Mesra FM also presents a range of other programs, including lectures and interactive Q&A sessions intertwined with Islamic teachings. These initiatives contribute positively by offering diverse content tailored to individual preferences, enabling Radio Mesra FM to connect with a wide-ranging audience across various demographic groups and age segments.

Radio Mesra FM is committed to continually innovating its da'wah programs. By leveraging digital technology, the station ensures that da'wah services are more widely accessible. Through social media platforms like Facebook, individuals can access DAI programs from outside Parepare City and beyond. This clearly illustrates how Radio Mesra FM effectively utilizes the latest technology to enhance the impact of its da'wah efforts while remaining relevant to contemporary society.

Programs like Radio Mesra FM's DA'I have engaged listeners in radio as a vehicle for preaching. They not only provide information but also offer practical solutions to life's challenges from an Islamic perspective through an interactive approach and the relevance of the topics discussed.

⁷ Budhi Widi Astuti and Bonardo Marulitua Aritonang, "The Interactivity of Suara Surabaya Radio: Use, Function, and Interactivity Model," *Journal of Communication Research* 2, no. 1 (2019): 38–50, <https://doi.org/10.24329/jurkom.v2i1.41>.

⁸ Tuti Maharani, "UTILIZATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A MEANS OF DAKWAH MEDIA FOR DAKWAH MANAGEMENT STUDENTS FACULTY OF USHULUDDIN ADAB AND DAKWAH IAIN KERINCI CLASS OF 2021," *Qawwam: The Leader's Writing* 5, no. 1 (2024): 13–20, <https://doi.org/10.32939/qawwam.v5i1.332>.

Technology Model Used by Radio Mesra FM, Parepare City

Various technologies are being employed to enhance media convergence and improve the effectiveness of broadcast Islamic preaching programs. One such innovation is a streaming radio application, which enables listeners to access live broadcasts over the internet. This feature allows audiences outside of the radio frequency range to enjoy the broadcasts. Additionally, the application includes interactive capabilities through text messaging and phone calls, facilitating a direct connection between the audience and the broadcaster or resource person.

Moreover, Radio Mesra FM actively utilizes other media platforms as collaborative partners in its missionary efforts. These include Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, which serve as promotional tools for its mission and enable two-way communication with viewers. Through social media, viewers have the opportunity to voice their responses and pose questions regarding the topics addressed in each broadcast.⁹ This seeks to improve the engagement between the radio station and its audience, which was formerly limited to one-way communication via radio broadcasts.¹⁰

This technology opens up greater accessibility opportunities and allows viewers to watch and participate in real time.¹¹ Digital technology enables listeners to submit questions or comments, allowing broadcasters or resource persons to respond in real-time. This transformation shifts listeners from being passive consumers of Islamic teachings to active participants in the religious dialogue and discussions presented to them. Consequently, the Islamic preaching experience is enriched by creating a space where the audience can express their opinions and deepen their understanding of the topics discussed.

Radio Mesra FM has faced various challenges, including fluctuations in internet connectivity and hardware issues. The station has implemented a maintenance schedule and established strong relationships with service providers to ensure reliable connections. In addition, it invests in technical training for staff to maintain smooth broadcasts and improve sound quality and interactivity.

Utilizing social media and digital networks for promoting Islamic outreach programs has led to the discovery that these platforms are effective not only for disseminating information but also for creating spaces where individuals can share knowledge and experiences related to Islamic teachings. Users of digital platforms often share outreach content with their networks, facilitating further dissemination of the message.

The integration of technology and digitalization has influenced Radio Mesra FM's approach to da'wah programs targeted at the younger generation. This demographic, being more familiar with technology and social media, finds it easier to connect through these modern methods rather than traditional means. Da'wah programs are sponsored through social media to cater to this audience, which tends to favor dynamic and interactive content. This approach is designed to engage younger audiences in a more effective manner.

Radio Mesra FM management ensures that its technology is regularly updated and relevant to current events, monitoring developments and upgrades for improved broadcast

⁹ Fitria Anggraini Laila, "Religious Moderation in Social Media (Van Dijk Model Discourse Analysis on Najwa Shihab's YouTube Channel)" (IAIN Purwokerto, 2021).

¹⁰ Imam Khalid, "The Potential of Radio in Broadcasting Islamic Da'wah," *At-Tadabbur: Journal of Social and Religious Research* 9, no. 2 (2019): 1–21.

¹¹ Putu Pesa Nugraha, "Implementation of the Marketing 5.0 Model in Wayang Kulit Performances in the Digital Era," *Money: Journal of Financial and Islamic Banking* 1, no. 2 (2023): 122–31.

quality and accessibility. The implementation of the latest technology aims to enhance the quality of Islamic preaching programs and accelerate information dissemination to the public.

The technology employed by Radio Mesra FM serves as an advantage in increasing the effectiveness of its da'wah programs. Transmedia strategies facilitate the adaptation of conventional and broadcast radio advertising into print and digital formats, allowing for a broader reach and improved communication with listeners. As Radio Mesra FM continues to adapt to new technologies, the quality of its broadcasts and the effectiveness of its da'wah initiatives are expected to improve.

Management Strategy Developed and Implemented to Support Media Convergence at Radio Mesra FM, Parepare City

Radio Mesra FM, located in Parepare City, embraces a media convergence policy designed to enhance and broaden the impact of its da'wah programs, particularly its flagship initiative, Islamic Religious Dialogue (DAI). This approach integrates traditional media, such as radio broadcasts, with digital media through streaming applications and social media platforms. The goal is to extend Radio Mesra FM's reach beyond local listeners, connecting with individuals online, including those residing outside the city and even abroad.

One of the significant advancements in Radio Mesra FM's media convergence strategy is the use of technology to facilitate easier public access to recorded Islamic programs broadcast through its transmission facilities. This is achieved through streaming radio applications and social media channels like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.¹² Radio Mesra FM can now reach a wider audience. Listeners who tune in to digital platform broadcasts can interact directly with broadcasters and speakers through comments, messages, or calls, thereby increasing their engagement with each broadcast.¹³

They play a vital role in the media convergence strategy, particularly with the regularly broadcast DAI programs. These programs extend beyond live preaching material to actively engage their audience in digital interactions.¹⁴ Listeners can submit questions or comments about the presenter's topic via social media or messaging apps. This approach also strengthens the radio station's connection with its listeners and enhances the audience's understanding of the topics presented.¹⁵

In pursuit of its objectives, Radio Mesra FM management effectively harnesses the station's capabilities to plan and execute each da'wah program, taking full advantage of media convergence. Collaborative efforts with the management team, broadcasters, and technicians enable the creation of efficient da'wah initiatives that address the evolving needs of the audience. Topics are examined in depth, based on pressing socio-religious issues, with valuable input also gathered from listeners.

Successfully executing a media convergence strategy comes with its own set of challenges, particularly in maintaining consistent broadcast quality standards in the face of advancing digital technology. Radio Mesra FM has encountered obstacles such as internet outages and technical malfunctions. However, through regular maintenance and strategic partnerships with internet

¹² Heri Juanda, "Social Media as a Means of Disseminating Information for the Aceh Government," *Peurawi Journal: Media for Islamic Communication Studies* 1, no. 1 (2017).

¹³ Abdul Adhim, "Communication Strategy in the Interactive Dialogue Program Study of the Book of Targhib Wa Tarhib on Radio Pas FM Pati (Period November-December 2021)" (IAIN KUDUS, 2022).

¹⁴ Nur Hadiid Surachman, Sudirman Tebba, and Alfi Satria, "BR TV'S PROGRAM STRATEGY OF DAKWAH IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL TV INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2024): 36–50.

¹⁵ Surachman, Tebba, and Satria.

service providers, these challenges have been effectively managed. The adoption of the latest technology ensures optimal broadcast quality and facilitates seamless interaction with viewers.

Furthermore, Radio Mesra FM is actively utilizing social media to foster an online community that supports its da'wah programs.¹⁶ Audiences engaged in digital platforms often share this content with friends or family, indirectly expanding the reach of the da'wah message.¹⁷ Interactive da'wah programs delivered through social media, such as quizzes or religious discussions, also attract a segment of the audience, especially the younger generation, who tend to be more familiar with digital platforms.¹⁸

Radio Mesra FM's management ensures that all staff and broadcasters are proficient in utilizing digital technology. They regularly conduct training sessions to enhance these technical skills, enabling broadcasters to deliver Islamic programs through live broadcasts as well as digital formats. This approach allows Radio Mesra FM to swiftly adapt to the rapidly evolving technological landscape and maintain the relevance of its media convergence strategy in response to audience demands.

Overall, Radio Mesra FM's media convergence strategy for developing Islamic preaching in Parepare has proven successful, expanding its outreach and enhancing its effectiveness. All components of this initiative are highly digital, which not only guarantees that all listeners have access to the Islamic preaching messages but also ensures that these messages are relevant, accessible, and effective in fostering positive change in people's lives. Looking ahead, Radio Mesra FM has the opportunity to further refine this strategy and position itself as the most innovative and inclusive medium for Islamic preaching in the digital age.

4. CONCLUSION

Radio Mesra FM in Parepare City has successfully blended technology and media convergence into its da'wah programs, particularly through the Islamic Religious Dialogue (DAI), to reach a broader audience. By utilizing traditional radio broadcasting alongside digital platforms such as social media, streaming applications, and interactive devices, the station has enhanced engagement and expanded its impact, especially among tech-savvy younger listeners. The opportunity for audiences to interact via live calls, commentary, and discussions ensures that the da'wah message remains relevant and compelling.

The station's strategic use of technology not only supports its mission to educate the public about Islam but also cultivates a sense of community involvement in the da'wah process. Despite encountering challenges, such as internet connectivity issues and technical malfunctions, Radio Mesra FM has proactively tackled these obstacles through regular maintenance and staff training, thereby ensuring the continuity and quality of its broadcasts.

The station's dedication to digital innovation enhances its ability to adapt to the evolving media landscape, positioning it as a leader in merging religious education with modern technology. By integrating traditional and digital media, Radio Mesra FM not only broadens the reach of its da'wah efforts but also fosters an interactive and inclusive environment for its listeners, making the station a crucial platform for religious discourse.

¹⁶ Alfauzan Amin and Friti Sulastris, "Utilization of Social Media to Support the Development of Innovation in Islamic Religious Education," *Journal of Education and Instruction (JOEAI)* 7, no. 2 (2024): 530–40.

¹⁷ Fajar Istikhomah and Eilia Tri Wahyuni, "Using Instagram as a Promotional Media for Photography Services on the Account @fearless.creativa," *Komuniti: Journal of Communication and Information Technology* 16, no. 2 (2024): 234–61.

¹⁸ Silvia Riskha Fabriar, *Da'wah in the Digital Era: A Portrait of Nawaning's Da'wah Activities* (NEM Publisher, 2024).

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