

**PATTERNS AND DYNAMICS OF INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION ON RADIO AQILA  
102.6 FM MEDAN**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The development of digital media has encouraged radio as a conventional broadcasting medium to adapt through interactive communication practices with listeners. This study aims to analyze the patterns and dynamics of interactive communication implemented by Radio Aqila 102.6 FM Medan in building relationships with listeners. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews, broadcast observations, and documentation of radio interactive communication activities, both through on-air broadcasts and digital media. The results of the study indicate that Radio Aqila 102.6 FM Medan's interactive communication takes place in a limited two-way pattern, where radio still holds dominant control over the communication flow. The dynamics of interactive communication are influenced by management policy factors, broadcaster competence, and the use of digital media that has not been optimally integrated. This study concludes that radio interactive communication is not yet fully dialogic and participatory, so a more planned communication strategy is needed to increase listener engagement on an ongoing basis.*

*Keywords: interactive communication, radio, listeners, digital media, organizational communication*

## INTRODUCTION

The development of digital communication technology has driven structural changes in mass media practices, including radio as a form of conventional broadcasting media. Media digitalization not only influences the way messages are distributed but also changes the communication relationship between media and audiences. In the digital era, radio no longer operates exclusively in a one-way linear communication model, but is instead required to develop interactive, dialogic, and participatory communication patterns to remain relevant in the increasingly intense digital media competition. As explained by Harliantara & Prayudha (n.d.), digital developments are driving the restructuring of the broadcast communication model from a single source-receiver relationship to an interactive process that directly involves audiences through digital platforms.

Interactive communication has become a strategic element in radio's transformation because it allows for direct audience involvement in the communication process. Radio's interactivity allows listeners to actively participate in the broadcasting process, enabling the medium to function not only as a message transmitter but also as an arena for social interaction and the construction of shared meaning (Rusmana et al., 2024). From a communication perspective, interactivity reflects a shift in the audience's role from an object of communication to an active subject contributing to the formation of meaning.

However, the existence of interactive channels does not automatically guarantee the realization of dialogic and equal communication. Several studies have shown that the adoption of digital communication channels by local radio tends to focus on audience responses to broadcast content without in-depth interactivity planning, so that listener participation remains limited to momentary responses rather than sustained strategic engagement (Sembiring & Rasyid, 2025). The interactions that occur are often spontaneous, selective, and controlled by the radio, so that listeners remain in a subordinate position in the communication relationship.

This situation indicates a problem with the interactive communication patterns used by radio. Communication patterns refer to the way communication is constructed, directed, and controlled in the interaction between radio and listeners. A dominant and unbalanced communication pattern has the potential to produce pseudo-interactive communication, where listeners are given space to speak but have no significant influence on the direction of the communication or broadcast content. This has implications for the quality of audience engagement and weakens the relational bond between radio and listeners.

In addition to communication patterns, the dynamics of interactive communication are also an important aspect in understanding the relationship between radio and its audience. Communication dynamics reflect the processes of change, negotiation, and tension that occur in the interaction between media and listeners along with technological developments, organizational policies, and audience characteristics. In the context of radio, digital convergence encourages radio to modify on-air communication practices by utilizing digital media to reach a wider audience and create new, more dynamic forms of participation. (Ismandianto, 2021).

Radio's use of digital media expands the space for interactive communication, but also presents new challenges. Media transformation in the multiplatform era demands an integrated communication strategy across all content distribution channels to ensure a consistent communication experience for audiences. Without this integration, audience experience fragmentation can occur due to differences in style, access, and content across platforms (Tripalupi & Irawan, 2025). Radio stations present on various digital communication platforms risk losing strategic cohesion if interactive communication is not managed in a planned and integrated manner. Therefore, interactive communication cannot be understood solely as a technical activity, but rather as part of a media organization's communication strategy.

In the context of local radio, the challenges of interactive communication are increasingly complex. Local radio enjoys geographical and cultural proximity to its listeners, potentially strengthening participatory communication. However, local radio also faces resource limitations, both in terms of technology, management, and human resource competency. This situation impacts how radio manages interactive communication and builds relationships with listeners.

Radio Aqila 102.6 FM Medan, a local radio station, operates amidst the dynamics of digital media and changing audience behavior. This radio station has provided various interactive communication channels, both through live broadcasts and digital media. However, the extent to which this interactive communication is carried out in a dialogical, integrated, and strategic manner still requires in-depth academic study. Analyzing the patterns and dynamics of interactive

communication is crucial to understanding how the communication relationship between radio and listeners is built, negotiated, and maintained.

Based on the above description, this study focuses on the patterns and dynamics of interactive communication at Radio Aqila 102.6 FM Medan. This study aims to examine the forms of interactive communication implemented, identify the communication relationship between radio and listeners, and analyze the factors that influence these communication dynamics. Thus, this study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of interactive communication studies in broadcast media as well as practical contributions to the management of local radio communication strategies in the digital era.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to deeply understand the patterns and dynamics of interactive communication carried out by Radio Aqila 102.6 FM Medan. This approach was chosen because radio communication is a social process that is contextual, dynamic, and influenced by the relationship between broadcasters, management, and listeners. In communication research, case studies are chosen because of their ability to explore interaction processes in specific contexts in detail, allowing researchers to understand the phenomenon of radio interaction in the real lives of audiences (Jamilah, 2023). The research subjects included broadcasters, radio managers, and active listeners, who were selected purposively based on their direct involvement in interactive radio communication.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, observations of broadcast processes and listener interactions, and documentation in the form of broadcast archives and digital radio communication traces. The collected data were analyzed using an interactive analysis model that includes the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and continuous conclusion drawing according to the characteristics of qualitative data analysis (Rahmani et al., 2025). In this context, data validity testing was conducted through source triangulation that considered various informant perspectives to ensure the consistency and credibility of the research findings. Through this approach, the research is expected to be able to accurately describe how interactive communication on Radio Aqila 102.6 FM Medan is built, managed, and interpreted in its relationship with listeners amidst the dynamics of contemporary media.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The research results show that Radio Aqila 102.6 FM Medan implements a two-way and participatory interactive communication pattern, where listeners are not only positioned as message recipients but also as communication subjects actively involved in the broadcast process. This pattern is evident in various programs that open up spaces for direct dialogue through telephone calls, short messages, and digital media-based interactions. This communication pattern reflects the shift in radio's function from a one-way broadcast medium to a dialogical social communication space. This finding aligns with Ismandianto (2021) who explains that in the context of digital media development, traditional radio stations such as RRI Pekanbaru are implementing media convergence by combining on-air and digital broadcasts to maintain their existence in the new media era. In the context of Radio Aqila, this interactive communication pattern functions as a mechanism to maintain emotional closeness with listeners while strengthening radio's identity as a medium responsive to the needs of its audience.

The interaction between broadcasters and listeners on Radio Aqila shows the character of personal, spontaneous, and contextual communication. Broadcasters not only convey messages informatively, but also build conversations that involve listeners' experiences, opinions, and responses to the issues discussed. This form of interaction demonstrates that broadcasters have a strategic role as communication mediators capable of creating a dialogic and inclusive atmosphere. Yahya & Habibi (2023) stated that the appropriately selected broadcaster communication style, including the use of friendly and communicative language and delivery style, has been proven to significantly influence listener interest, reflecting that the quality of communication style can increase audience engagement in radio broadcasts. The findings of this study support this view, where the intensity of Radio Aqila listener engagement tends to increase when broadcasters are able to link broadcast content to social realities and the audience's daily experiences.

The dynamics of interactive communication between Radio Aqila and listeners are fluctuating and influenced by various factors, such as the relevance of broadcast themes, broadcast times, and current social issues. When the themes raised are close to the listeners' social conditions, audience

participation appears more active and responsive. Conversely, interaction tends to decrease when broadcast content is deemed less relevant to listeners' needs. This is in line with the findings of Aditama & Aisyah (2025) who stated that providing radio content relevant to audience characteristics and needs is a crucial factor in increasing audience engagement in digital broadcasting interactions. These dynamics indicate that interactive radio communication is not static, but rather continues to evolve according to the social context and audience needs.

The use of digital media by Radio Aqila 102.6 FM Medan strengthens the interactive communication patterns that have been established through conventional broadcasts. Social media and instant messaging applications serve as advanced communication spaces that allow listeners to stay connected with the radio outside of broadcast hours. This digital media integration expands the space for audience participation and makes radio communication more flexible and sustainable. Gissani et al., (2024) suggest that the integration of digital media such as online streaming and other digital platforms is an adaptation strategy for Radio Ardan in facing changes in people's media consumption patterns in the digital era. In this study, digital media is not only used as a promotional tool, but also as a strategic medium to maintain interaction and build a community of Radio Aqila listeners.

Although Radio Aqila's interactive communication shows positive developments, this study also found several challenges that affect the effectiveness of these interactions. The main challenges include limited human resources in managing digital communication consistently, as well as fluctuations in listener participation influenced by external factors. These findings are in line with Setiawan et al., (2023) who stated that local radio faces complex structural challenges related to adaptation to the digital era, including difficulties in maintaining interactive communication functions sustainably due to limitations in organizational systems and resources. This condition indicates that the success of interactive communication is determined not only by the creativity of the broadcaster, but also by the support of a planned and long-term oriented communication management system.

Overall, the results of this study show that the interactive communication patterns and dynamics of Radio Aqila 102.6 FM Medan reflect local radio's adaptation to changes in the contemporary media landscape. Interactive communication serves not only as a strategy for retaining listeners but also as a means of building stronger social relationships between the radio and its audience. These findings confirm that local radio still has significant relevance if it is able to manage interactive communication in a contextual, participatory, and integrated manner with digital media.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This study concludes that the interactive communication patterns and dynamics of Radio Aqila 102.6 FM Medan reflect the transformation of radio's function from a one-way broadcast medium to a participatory, dialogic communication space. Listeners are no longer positioned as passive message recipients, but rather as communication subjects actively involved in the broadcast process through on-air interactions and digital media. This communication pattern demonstrates Radio Aqila's ability to build more egalitarian social relations with its audience, while also demonstrating the adaptation of local radio to changes in the media landscape and public information consumption behavior. The dynamics of Radio Aqila's interactive communication are influenced by the relevance of broadcast content, the communicative competence of broadcasters, and the support of organizational communication management. The integration of digital media expands listener participation, but also presents challenges in consistent interaction management and resource availability. Therefore, interactive communication needs to be managed strategically and sustainably so that it serves not only as a means of momentary interaction but also as a foundation for maintaining the existence and relevance of local radio in the digital media era.

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