

## **Modeling for Public Sphere Optimization at Local Commercial Radio Program to Enhance Public's Accessibility and Participation for Public Services in Indonesia**

Muhtar Wahyudi dan Surokim  
Department of Communication Sciences ,  
Faculty of Social and Cultural Science, University of Trunojoyo, Madura Indonesia  
Email: mochtarkom@yahoo.com

### **ABSTRACT**

Radio as a broadcasting media has a strategic role in promoting improved quality of public services. Through its interactive broadcasting program, radio media can build public sphere where people can express and deliver their aspirations, interests, and needs. By optimizing the sphere, radio can be an interactive media mediating public discuss from the aspirations, needs and interests of citizens regarding quality of various types of public services organized either by governmental or private. Interactive broadcasts between community and public service providers are mediated by professional gatekeeper provided by management of radio. Interactive program between citizens and providers can take place in a rational, objective, accountable, equitable, free of domination, and solution. To build the system, particularly in shaping healthy media sphere for interactive dialogue process, the radio management should prepare the infrastructure and superstructure, especially information systems, technology, and human resources regarding support the quality of broadcasting program. The system is making in professional and has to give attention to public importance and public need based on exciting, innovative, educate, and entertaint.

**Keywords:** *Commercial Media, Radio Broadcasting, Public Sphere, Interactive Program, The Public Service*

### **Background**

The phenomenon of local media in Indonesia seems to be odd reality. The local commercial radio designed as business media taken a role as a public media that actually become a main concern of public and community radio. This fact occurs in many cities of Indonesia. Many commercial radios develop their program to support the public needs in particular in public service. It may happen because the composition of local media between commercial, public, and community radio was in contrast and not in ideal condition. Radio type was dominated by commercial radio both in quantity and quality.

There is an interesting phenomenon that occurs in the metropolitan city such as Surabaya related to public service. People preferred to deliver their complaints regarding a public service by reporting to the commercial radio i.e. Voice of Surabaya Radio (SS). People choose to report to SS radio rather than to a public service provider directly. Not surprisingly, people report anything to the radio such as they loosed the vehicle, they will report first to the SS rather than to the police hotline. This is similarly to the complaint of education, health, and other urban problems occurring in the big cities. According to the research division of SS radio (2009) that such condition was caused by quickly response that they got. People immediately get a response and answer directly and not required the complex procedures through which an easy and directly forward.

Local radio can handle the public complain and anything related to the public services by airing the complaint and contacting the provider to answer and explain regarding the complaint. Furthermore, there is two way communication between them and can give solution to the problems. As an interactive program, people also can report the traffic jam minute to minute.

This is media become a place where people can inform and practice the citizen journalism as a volunteer to report the public need via radio. In many cases, most of vehicle in town such as Surabaya always monitor the radio to know the traffic jam. They choice the broadcasting radio media because they can get immediately feedback and response from the service provider. Complaints about public services such as transportation, electricity, water, education, health, including the issue of crime in an interactive broadcast and urban communities have a solution quickly, cheaply, and effectively.

Until now, the conditions of public services in many developing countries are still poor and tend to be a closed system. Access of information is monopolized by service provider. People do not have enough information and access to deliver the needs and aspirations. They also cannot ask the problems regarding public service that are affected to their lives.

Actually, many developing countries face various social problems such as poverty, unemployment, passive and lack of ability that effect to citizen participation minimally. Service providers in many cases change to become an institution that must be served. People are in asymmetric position that are unequal level and has to face head to head with the public service provider. People always be in weak position.

Public services, especially those organized by the government as Wahab notes (2000) is still far from ideal types of excellent services that are not required with aspects of responsibility, responsiveness, and representation in line with the demands of society. If we need data that showed the poor of public services we can detect it by collecting public's complaint published at many mass media such as daily newspaper and on line media. Every day the mass media both print and electronic opens a hotline and receives numerous public complaints on a variety of public service. Almost in everyday people complain and report the poor condition of quality of public services from common minor things such as citizen ID cards, driving license, and license that should be taken from government bureaucracy. Public criticism is usually not far from the problems of poor performance and professionalism of the bureaucracy, administration procedures are complicated, and the occurrence of illegal charges (extortion) in all lines of bureaucracy.

This condition is actually more complex and not just caused by a single variable, but the range of variables or a variable combination of economic, political, social, and cultural. Not surprisingly, in many sectors, public services run unwell without the clear direction. Conditions of public services such as health, education, transportation, licensing administration in government agencies is still not satisfy to the public. Public institutions do not have change the paradigm public service yet to improve the quality of caring. This could happen considering the various matters related to public services are still in government monopoly. Public service providers are being felt not to have competitors that they do not feel in competing with others. As a result, people have no choice and accept such conditions as an ordinary. This condition is different from public services that provided by private sectors where people can choose the service as they want. They can also change to others provider when they feel unsatisfied. The mechanism of giving reward and punishment can implement directly to the provision of public services.

From the management perspective, we can make a simple that there are two kinds of public service management. Firstly, the management of public service that is profit, usually administered by state or Regional Company (Perusda/PD) such as PLN, Telkom, Damri, Pelni, PDAM, etc. Secondly, the management of public services that are non-profit (nonprofit), administered by the government, among others, the service ID / KK, IMB, land certificates, social facilities, and a variety of licensing.

The main problem that occurred in the nonprofit public service is difficult way to access and take long procedures when they take care of a particular license. People need long time to follow the procedures, the cost is not clear, and the practice of extortion. At the level of executive officers in particular who work in front liner that directly communicate with consumer, they look less responsiveness, no caring, and no empathy, and even no willing to hear complaints / suggestions / aspirations of the community. This condition is according to Agus Antara (2005) are compounded by discrimination against particular groups of service, especially people who are poor. Not surprisingly, if poor people got difficulties in accessing excellent public service. Conversely, for those who have the much money will be very easy to get easy service

by giving a bribe. In the end, the public service did not become effective, inefficient and high cost. Public service units are less responsibility, responsiveness, and are not representative in accordance with the demands of society. Public service managers were deemed to be less responsive in responding to public complaints and did not comply with minimum service standards that should be done.

Implementation of the Public Service regard to reformation era tend to be good and would erase the bureaucratic inefficiency of the service, by making the standard of operational care, such as procedures, time of service, cost of services, product services, facilities, personnel competence of service providers, internal control, handling complaints, suggestions and input, and the guarantee of service.

Radio media has an opportunity to promote equal relations between service providers and the community through mutual respected interaction. Radio can also be a medium that brings a variety of solutions with a view to acquire related to public service. It is quite possible considering radio as a medium that has the characteristics: fast, easy, and unexpensive. Media such as radio also has an advantage and the extent of the penetrating power, attractiveness, and thus more actual direct, intimate, imaginative, and also mobile.

However, not all radios can play a role like this type of ideal. Many radio programs that are not qualified, have a low appetite, duplication, low vision, and short-term dimension only and are not able to generate criticism to educate the public.

This condition is also disturbed by many illegal radios that aired in amateur broadcasting that tends to jump and using illegal frequency. They operated a radio just as a hobbies, and just simply be the entertainment media radio. During this interactive program developed at the request they just stuck songs and romantic greetings through the air and they did not improve the empowerment of public.

### **Radio for Publicsphere**

Public sphere as note Ashadi quoted by Habermas (1962) is basically a condition or situation met with state and public interactions, which take place in physical space (public space) and non-physical space or civil society system (public system). The space is built upon individuals who are collectively referred to articulate the interests of public or community needs through the state.

Ideally, public space is expected to be independent and neutral zone within which the dynamics takes place in the life of the personal / individual, freedom for expressing idea and interest with no hegemonic power from the state, market and collectivism (communalism). In other words, the idealization of public life is the life of citizens, in the process of personal interaction on the basis of culture. Characteristic of such interaction is based on the presence of persons who have the autonomy and independence. Social interaction is characterized by personal position in bargaining (negotiations) in the process of public discussion (public discussion) on the basis of rationality and intelligence, not on the basis of the dominance and hegemony of violence (physical or psychological force).

Radio media can be a healthy public space to mediate between the interests of the citizens (the public) and the state. Radio as an extension or extension of public space can guarantee the public sphere idealization of the power of attraction as well as a medium of learning together toward the good fortune this public. It should be emphasized given the public position is always in an asymmetric position of the country. Radio media can play a role for equal positions.

If the conditions can be encouraged through an intelligent and egalitarian dialogue via radio, then the condition of public services will be expanded from time to time. Public service can be pushed into a better direction with the principles of transparency and public accountability.

Creating this space through radio broadcasts do not often as easy as imagined. Space is not free and sterile from the interests of power. The domination from some group in society should be observed, including domination on producing the meaning of reality. It seem not be objective. Radio media should be encouraged in order to be able to produce an interactive program that has the weight and importance to the public interest (public interest).

In this context the radio as a broadcast media can mediate realities associated with the implementation professional Public Service. Radio can be the stimuli for 1) public policy-making

process (which includes participatory or no, transparent or no; oriented to the public or to other interests), 2) the implementation of public policy (running or no, transparent or no, accountable or no) 3 ) Supervision over the implementation of public policy (running or not). All parties should be aware that public service is basically the essential obligations of public entities. Public space is intelligently constructed, equal, and do not forget the aspect of public decorum and civility. These data can be critical original complaints from the public can be heard and obtained submitted directly by the public.

### **Best Practice Radio SS Indonesia**

Radio Suara Surabaya (Surabaya Voice) is is one of popular private radio that constructed as radio information and has brand news and interactive solutions. Radio Suara Surabaya (SS) is known as one of a number of radio listeners in Surabaya's largest and most expensive advertising rates in the private radio station to another. According to Arifin (2010) SS radio is radio news focusing on the production of information with an interactive model of a meaningful pattern of multidirectional communication and impact-oriented or solution-based broadcast beneficial for the citizens.

Radio is known as one of the pioneers of radio journalism citizen media (citizen journalism) in Surabaya. Arifin (2010) recorded up to 2009 that the number of SS listeners who became a voluntary reporter and informant reached 330,000 people. Through interactive broadcast program, the SS could be the mobilization of public participation, the source of the solution of public problems and also the inspiration for the various types of urban policy. SS has become a favorite complained media and built as Public Square, where the city can communicate various issues being faced today. In addition, the SS also held a variety of activities such as off air program. Then, follow-up by activities on the air as a form of social responsibility to meet the needs of city residents, especially relating to public interest.

SS broadcast program is not only be known, but it can also make interactive. Listeners do not simply become know, but they can also express the aspirations and solutions for the common good of citizens. Society dare to complain and express their opinions without any pressure, but remained in the corridor charge, solution-based, and respect for diversity and tolerance.

### **Public Services & Interactive Program**

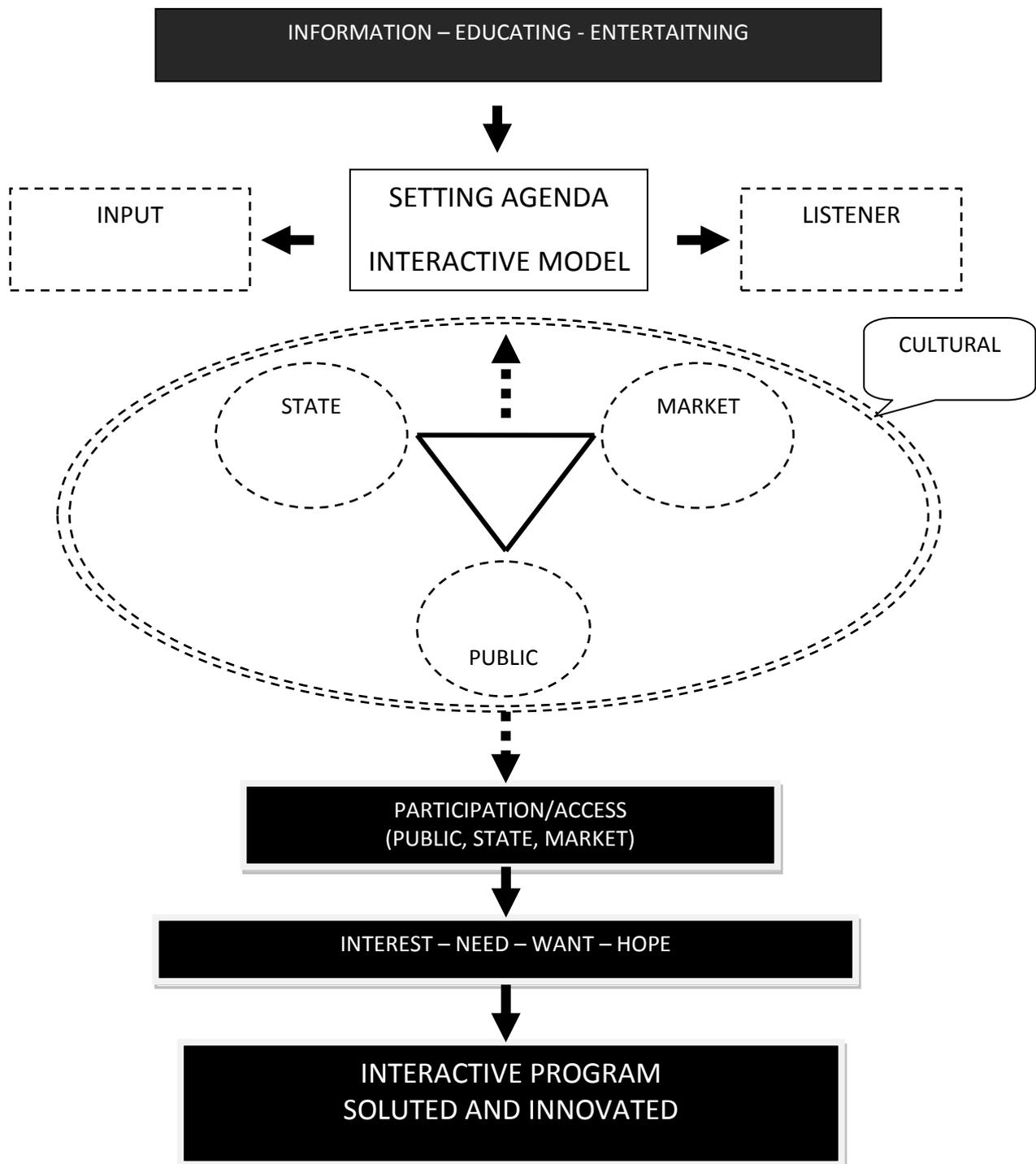
Through this interactive program, the various interests can be reconciled. Radio can be a problem mediated. These issues can be discussed, requested responses, and also find solutions together. Listeners can share information and help each other.

There is a risk that must be faced by the managers of radio media through interactive programs. In order to an interactive program does not become a means of slander and berate each other. So the role of broadcast programmers, including in the broadcasting and gatekeeper become important. To guarantee that discuss can run well, the gatekeeper created a layered filter through the gatekeeper to the announcer as the last bastion. At least as SS radio experience there must be values that hold together the processes of communication and dialogue that occurs based on the principles of empowerment and intelligence as a venue for community empowerment. Community are trained to be able to distinguish clearly where the dimensionless diatribe dialogue and improvement. Management must be able to confirm the role of radio as a guide, steering the search for solutions.

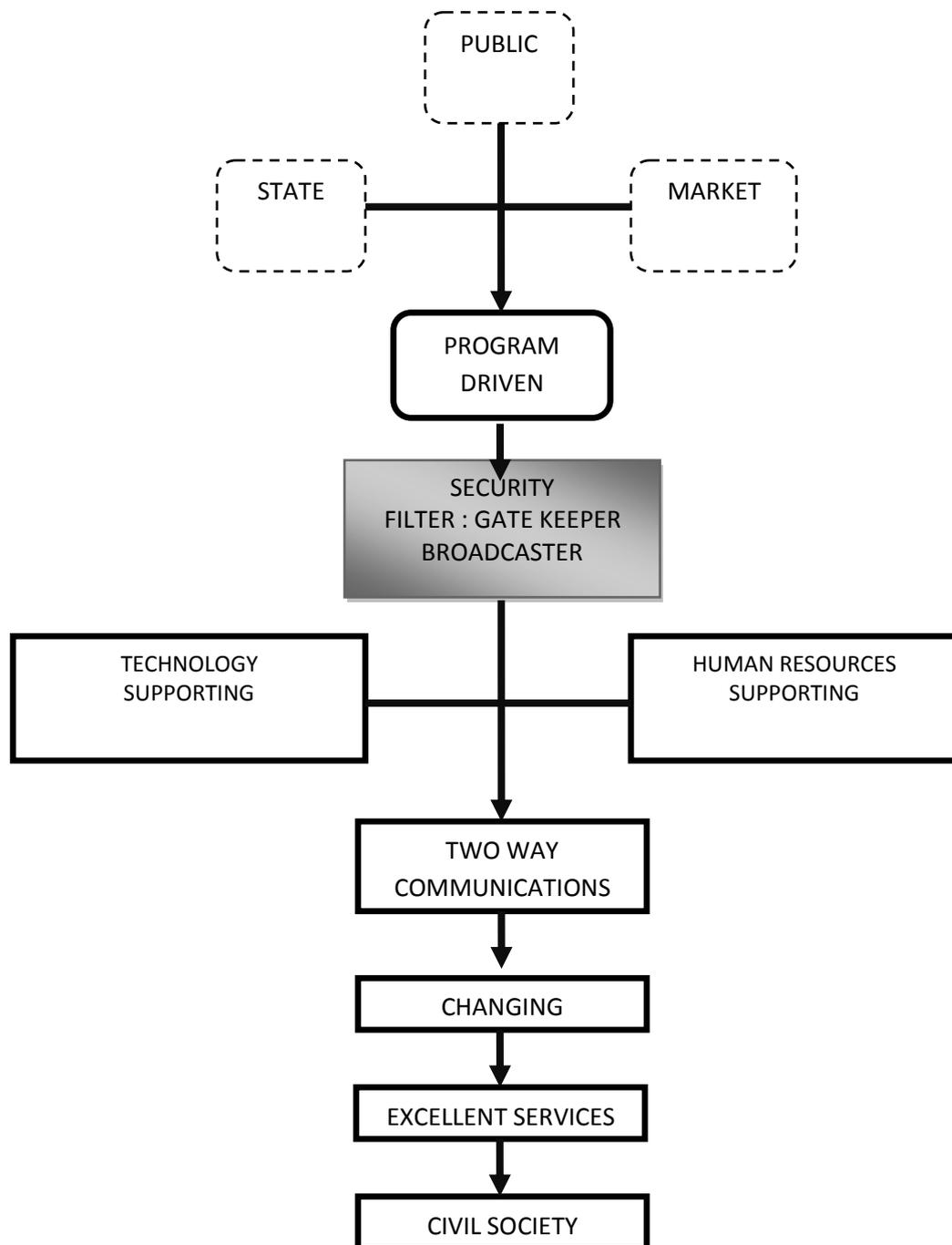
Access and participation becomes an important key to develop the system. People who trained as volunteer reporting also can make people open mind, educated, optimistic, excited, and dared to speak, and develop checks and recheck. This process also requires the public's willingness to hear and appreciate the opinions of others. Valid and reliable information also become a turning point to create public space via media. Radio may invite government officials, private agencies that deal with the original media to be open. Slowly and surely they are in motivation, given the chance, taught communications related to public service complaints. The public will ask, and then connected with the service providers so they can respond directly and obtain information as soon as possible.

Radio can reduce the construction of negative attitudes such as anger, hatred, suspicion, dissatisfaction, and disbelief. Through mutual learning by broadcasting radio communities can enhance confidence in the sling can grow awareness, mutual help, and realize the importance to live together.

### Interactive Radio Broadcast Design



### Public Sphere Toward Accountable Broadcast For Public Services



The basic model is adopted from Errol Jonathan (2009) and is modified by the Author

Radio media, base on Arifin noted (2010) provide a significant role as the public sphere of citizen to enhance participation in public service. The system designed as a powerful, big, and tough that if a word is shortened represented in the service of a professional. Radio must have sufficient ability and could become a mainstay in the complaint received through various channels of communication given the radio has the advantage of actuality and speed.

As audio media, through radio broadcasts can be an excellent word of information and dialogue between communities without barrier to find solutions to any problems that occur in

society. Radio can be a source of inspiration and educate citizens to be a civilized society, fully tolerance, and mutual respect. Sphere should not be reduced to a narrow spots that are not able to push the public to think critically and give solution.

Radio can educate people to achieve a better life, behave better, work more effectively and avoid destructive behavior and tend to be uncaring. Radio management must take the social role by making a variety of filters to the process of dialogue in public spaces took place in smart, elegant, civilized and the various issues can be discussed are not just it be wanted but also be needed to the public.

### **Conclusion**

Local media such as commercial radio can develop the interactive program to enhance the quality of public services. Management of radio has to build the system professionally to make two way communications between the people and service providers. The system has to design in simple procedures and quick response. To encourage public participation in creating quality public services, the system has to design in familiar way using the communication means such as hand phone, etc. Sphere is constructed in a professional manner so that the dialogue can take place in a smart, objective, mutual respect, and responsible. Radio management also needs the technology supporting and qualified human resources as a gate keeper that can filter and guarantee of security for public sphere. Through the excellent design, radio can prepare a variety of innovative interactive professionally. Radio has to manage that the sphere was free from hegemony and the discussion held in equal position. Interactive broadcasts between community and public service providers mediated by broadcaster held in a professional manner and could take place in a rational, objective, accountable, equitable, and free of domination, mutual respect and solutions. Radio management should prepare the infrastructure and superstructure, especially information systems, technology, and human resources in order to support the public sphere in radio program become more interesting, innovating, educating and entertaining.

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