

Audience-Oriented Policy Responses for Radio Broadcasting Sustainability in Indonesia's Streaming and Digital Media Convergence Era

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Abstract : The rapid growth of streaming platforms and digital media convergence has transformed audio consumption patterns and created new challenges for the radio broadcasting industry in Indonesia. This study analyzes how audience-oriented organizational policy responses shape radio broadcasting sustainability in Indonesia's streaming and digital media convergence era by examining the relationship between digital audio preferences, listener engagement, and radio adaptation strategies. The research employed a mixed-methods explanatory sequential design. Quantitative data were collected through a survey of 200 respondents in Yogyakarta and Jakarta selected using purposive sampling and analyzed with descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with 12 radio broadcasting managers and analyzed thematically. The quantitative findings revealed that 72.5% of respondents accessed streaming platforms more frequently than conventional radio, while 68.0% continued to consume radio content through applications, podcasts, or social media. The qualitative findings indicated that podcast integration, live streaming, social media engagement, and multiplatform content distribution function as audience-oriented policy responses to maintain listener loyalty, improve audience services, and expand market reach. The study concludes that radio broadcasting sustainability depends on the ability of radio institutions to formulate audience-oriented policies, integrate digital technologies, and develop multiplatform communication models aligned with changing audience behavior. This study contributes empirical insights into policy-based organizational adaptation and radio sustainability in Indonesia's evolving digital media ecosystem.

Keywords : Audience-Oriented Policy; Digital Media Convergence; Listener Engagement; Radio Broadcasting Sustainability; Streaming Platforms

Abstrak : Pertumbuhan pesat platform streaming dan konvergensi media digital telah mengubah pola konsumsi media audio dan menghadirkan tantangan baru bagi industri penyiaran radio di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis bagaimana respons kebijakan organisasi yang berorientasi pada khalayak membentuk keberlanjutan penyiaran radio di era streaming dan konvergensi media digital di Indonesia dengan mengkaji hubungan antara preferensi audio digital, keterlibatan pendengar, dan strategi adaptasi radio. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan metode campuran dengan desain sekuensial eksplanatori. Data kuantitatif dikumpulkan melalui survei terhadap 200 responden di Yogyakarta dan Jakarta yang dipilih secara purposif dan dianalisis dengan statistik deskriptif dan inferensial, sedangkan data kualitatif diperoleh melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan 12 manajer penyiaran radio dan dianalisis secara tematik. Temuan kuantitatif menunjukkan bahwa 72,5% responden mengakses platform streaming lebih sering daripada radio konvensional, sementara 68,0% tetap mengonsumsi konten radio

melalui aplikasi, podcast, atau media sosial. Temuan kualitatif mengindikasikan bahwa integrasi podcast, siaran langsung digital, keterlibatan media sosial, dan distribusi konten multiplatform berfungsi sebagai respons kebijakan berorientasi khalayak untuk menjaga loyalitas pendengar, meningkatkan layanan khalayak, dan memperluas jangkauan pasar. Penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa keberlanjutan penyiaran radio bergantung pada kemampuan institusi radio merumuskan kebijakan yang berorientasi pada khalayak, mengintegrasikan teknologi digital, dan mengembangkan model komunikasi multiplatform yang selaras dengan perubahan perilaku khalayak. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi empiris mengenai adaptasi organisasi berbasis kebijakan dan keberlanjutan radio dalam ekosistem media digital Indonesia.

Kata Kunci : Kebijakan Berorientasi Khalayak; Konvergensi Media Digital; Keterlibatan Pendengar; Keberlanjutan Penyiaran Radio; Platform Streaming

INTRODUCTION

The rise of digital streaming platforms has fundamentally altered patterns of media consumption worldwide, challenging traditional broadcast mediums including radio. In many markets, listeners increasingly prefer on-demand and personalized audio services, leading to measurable declines in conventional radio audience share (Laor, 2022). This shift is not only technological but also cultural, as audiences expect interactivity and content control that legacy broadcasting historically did not provide. In Indonesia, where mobile internet penetration has accelerated rapidly, streaming applications and social media have become central to daily media use among younger demographics (Sikumbang *et al.*, 2024). As a result, radio broadcasters are compelled to reassess their roles within an ecosystem where digital and analog media converge.

Although media convergence has been widely studied in contexts such as television and print, research focusing specifically on radio's adaptation to digital platforms remains limited, especially in Southeast Asian settings (Chan, 2025). Prior work predominantly addresses technological integration at a conceptual level without grounding findings in empirical audience data, thereby overlooking how listeners' behaviors shape media sustainability. Some studies have examined digital transitions of broadcast outlets in Western Europe and North America (Neilson, 2022), but these findings are not directly transferable to Indonesia due to different market structures and cultural media histories. Furthermore, existing Indonesian research has tended to focus on general digitalization trends rather than the nuanced relationship between streaming adoption and radio relevance (Al Mujahid & Mitra, 2025). This indicates a clear research gap that calls for a localized examination of both audience behavior and broadcaster strategy.

Understanding audience preferences toward audio content is essential because media consumption is closely linked to how users allocate attention and value different sources (Obong & Targema, 2023). Quantitative evidence from recent global surveys suggests a strong generational divide in audio media use, with younger listeners favoring interactive and mobile-first platforms (Türkan, 2025). However, much of this research centers on app usage metrics rather than exploring why listeners make these choices and how they perceive traditional radio within a convergent environment. Additionally, there is scarce evidence on how radio broadcasters interpret these audience trends to inform strategic decisions. This highlights the need for integrated research that bridges quantitative listening patterns with qualitative managerial insights.

Indonesia represents a particularly compelling case for investigating these dynamics due to its large and diverse media market, which includes legacy broadcast systems alongside rapidly growing digital infrastructures (Yusnaini *et al.*, 2025). Urban centers such as Jakarta and Yogyakarta exemplify environments where media consumption is both highly digital and historically grounded in radio listenership. This duality raises important questions about how traditional broadcasters can remain relevant while engaging with convergent media ecosystems.

By focusing on such contexts, this study seeks to contribute meaningful insights that reflect not only global trends but also specific local media behaviors.

The primary objective of this research is to analyze how audience-oriented organizational policy responses shape radio broadcasting sustainability in Indonesia's streaming and digital media convergence era by examining the relationship between audience preferences for digital audio, listener engagement levels, and broadcaster adaptation strategies. This includes investigating how streaming service adoption affects traditional listenership and how radio institutions respond through multiplatform integration, audience-centered services, and digital communication strategies. By articulating these relationships, the study aims to move beyond descriptive accounts of media convergence and toward an explanatory understanding of adaptive mechanisms. Such a perspective is critical for identifying sustainable communication models amidst rapidly changing technological landscapes.

To achieve this, a mixed-methods approach is employed, enabling the combination of large-scale survey data with interpretive insights from industry practitioners. The quantitative component will elucidate patterns of audio media use and listener attitudes, while qualitative interviews with radio managers will explore strategic rationales behind digital transformations. This methodological design aligns with recent calls in communication research for more comprehensive frameworks that capture both audience and institutional perspectives (Ademolu, 2023). Through this integrative lens, the study endeavors to produce findings that are both empirically robust and theoretically meaningful.

Beyond academic contribution, understanding radio's evolution has practical implications for media policy and industry practice in emerging markets. Insights from this research can inform broadcasters, regulators, and content creators about effective ways to negotiate media convergence without compromising cultural value or audience loyalty. Ultimately, the findings are expected to enrich broader discussions on media resilience and innovation in the digital age. Such contributions are particularly relevant for scholars and professionals seeking to balance legacy systems with future-oriented communication strategies.

Media convergence refers to the blurring and merging of previously distinct media technologies, platforms, and industries, driven by digitization and widespread internet adoption. Convergence integrates computing, communication, and content, allowing legacy and digital platforms to operate in unified ecosystems (Mehmood et al., 2025). This phenomenon transforms traditional broadcast industries by extending content beyond single channels into multiplatform networks, challenging foundational structures of media delivery and consumption. Convergence theory provides an essential conceptual basis for understanding how radio, once confined to terrestrial frequencies, now participates in digitally mediated experiences across streaming, social media, and app-based distribution (AL-Zoubi, 2023).

Within media studies, Convergence Culture emphasizes not only technological integration but also audience participation in shaping media flows and meaning-making processes (Sulistia et al., 2025). As content circulates across intersecting platforms, audiences actively engage, generating interactive networks that extend beyond traditional one-to-many broadcasting. This environment poses a core challenge for radio: maintaining relevance while audiences exercise greater choice and control over content consumption (Harliantara et al., 2025). Digital convergence is thus expected to enhance the relevance and sustainability of radio broadcasting in Indonesia by enabling innovation and broader audience reach.

H1: Digital media convergence positively influences the future sustainability of radio broadcasting in Indonesia.

Empirical studies show how Indonesian radio stations operationalize convergence strategies. Erdem & Kuş (2025) reported that stations integrate terrestrial and multiplatform broadcasting,

including algorithmic content tailoring and audience engagement across social media. Akbar et al. (2023) observed that stations like RRI and private broadcasters actively implement live streaming, YouTube channels, and social media to enhance reach and listener interaction. These practices suggest that radio's sustainability increasingly relies on multiplatform strategies.

Despite these insights, much research remains descriptive or context-specific, lacking systematic integration of audience behavior with broadcasters' strategic responses (Malekpour et al., 2026). Research on adaptation often focuses on operational or technological implementation without analyzing listener engagement or preference patterns. Consequently, there is a clear empirical gap in understanding how convergence practices influence audience interaction and long-term sustainability. The successful integration of podcasts, live streaming, and social media engagement indicates that adaptation strategies can strengthen listener loyalty and organizational resilience (Sackey et al., 2026). Therefore, stations adopting multiplatform approaches are likely to achieve higher engagement and sustained relevance.

H2: Radio adaptation strategies positively influence listener engagement in the digital media environment.

Audience behavior is central to understanding the impact of media convergence. Global quantitative studies indicate that listeners' preferences diverge between streaming platforms and traditional radio, showing significant generational differences (Marmara et al., 2025). In Indonesia, younger demographics increasingly favor mobile-first, interactive, and on-demand audio services (Widodo & Aji, 2025). However, conventional radio continues to retain audiences through local relevance, immediacy, and community engagement. Uses and Gratifications Theory provides a framework for explaining audience choice: listeners actively select media to satisfy social, informational, and entertainment needs (Viljoen, 2025). Applying this framework helps explain why audiences may still engage with radio content when it is distributed via digital channels, such as podcasts or live streams (Lekuru, 2024). Despite the prevalence of streaming platforms, audience preference patterns directly influence engagement with convergent radio services.

H3: Audience preferences for digital audio media significantly influence listener engagement with radio content distributed through digital platforms.

Although prior literature confirms that media convergence drives broadcast adaptation, gaps remain in synthesizing audience behavior with institutional strategies. Most Indonesian studies examine either broadcaster practices or audience trends separately, limiting understanding of how these factors jointly determine radio sustainability (Ramadhan & Lubis, 2025). Integrated research linking audience preference, engagement, and strategic adaptation is necessary to explain the mechanisms shaping radio's future. A mixed-method approach combining surveys of audience behavior with qualitative interviews of radio managers addresses this gap. Integrating Convergence Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory allows researchers to examine not only technological adoption but also the interaction between listener needs, engagement, and institutional responses (Şahin et al., 2025).

H4: Listener engagement mediates the relationship between audience preferences for digital audio media and the future sustainability of radio broadcasting.

H5: Radio adaptation strategies positively moderate the relationship between digital media convergence and the future sustainability of radio broadcasting.

METHOD

This study employs a mixed-methods approach using an explanatory sequential design, integrating quantitative and qualitative analyses to investigate the future of radio broadcasting in Indonesia in the context of streaming platforms and digital media convergence. The mixed-methods

framework was chosen to provide both breadth and depth of understanding, combining large-scale audience behavior data with managerial insights from broadcasting practitioners (Fernández Sande & Rodríguez Pallares, 2022). This design allows the study to capture complex interactions between digital convergence, listener preferences, engagement patterns, and strategic adaptation by radio stations.

The population of this study includes two groups: (1) audio media consumers who engage with either traditional radio or streaming platforms, and (2) radio broadcasting managers responsible for digital content strategies. For the quantitative component, 200 respondents from urban centers in Yogyakarta and Jakarta were selected using purposive sampling based on criteria of active radio listenership or frequent use of digital streaming platforms. This sample size was determined to ensure sufficient statistical power for descriptive and inferential analyses while representing urban audiences in Indonesia (Muzayanah *et al.*, 2022). For the qualitative component, 12 radio managers from various stations that have implemented digital platforms, including podcasts, live streaming, and social media integration, were interviewed. The selection was based on expert sampling, targeting practitioners with direct experience in digital adaptation, ensuring rich insights into organizational strategies and challenges (Khuan *et al.*, 2023).

Quantitative data were collected using a structured online questionnaire. The instrument included Likert-scale items adapted from prior research on digital media engagement, audience preferences, and multiplatform content consumption (Kontolatou, 2025). The questionnaire also measured audience perceptions of organizational policy responses, including podcast integration, live streaming availability, social media interaction, multiplatform distribution, and audience-centered digital services. The questionnaire was pre-tested with 20 respondents to evaluate clarity and reliability. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to ensure internal consistency, achieving a coefficient above 0.8 for all scales, indicating high reliability (Izah *et al.*, 2023). Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews, allowing participants to elaborate on digital adaptation strategies, challenges in convergence implementation, audience interaction mechanisms, and organizational policy responses. The interview protocol explored how radio managers formulated organizational policies to respond to changing audience behavior, digital audio preferences, and the demand for more interactive audience services. Interviews were recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim. Themes were derived using thematic analysis to identify recurrent patterns and organizational practices across stations (Jones *et al.*, 2023). Triangulation between survey results and interview data was applied to enhance validity and comprehensiveness of findings.

The research was conducted in sequential stages. The first stage involved instrument development, in which questionnaire items were adapted from validated scales in prior literature and interview protocols were drafted to explore strategic implementation. The second stage was quantitative survey administration, in which the questionnaire was distributed online via email and social media channels targeting eligible respondents in Yogyakarta and Jakarta. The third stage consisted of data cleaning and preliminary analysis, in which survey responses were screened for completeness and consistency before statistical analysis. The fourth stage was qualitative interviews, in which selected radio managers were contacted and interviewed online or in-person, transcriptions were prepared, and preliminary codes were generated. The fifth stage covered data integration and interpretation, in which quantitative and qualitative results were integrated to test the proposed hypotheses (H1–H5), ensuring alignment with theoretical frameworks and observed patterns in audience behavior and station strategies.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, standard deviation) and inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and multiple regression, to test the relationships between digital media convergence, audience preference, listener engagement,

and radio adaptation strategies (Hair et al., 2021). SPSS version 28 was used for data computation. Qualitative data were analyzed using NVivo 14, employing thematic coding to extract key insights into digital strategy implementation, audience interaction mechanisms, and the impact of multiplatform distribution on listener engagement. Results from both approaches were integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of how digital convergence affects radio sustainability, consistent with the study's mixed-methods design.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The quantitative findings indicate that digital media convergence has become a significant factor influencing the sustainability of radio broadcasting in Indonesia. Among the 200 respondents surveyed, 72.5% reported accessing streaming platforms more frequently than conventional radio broadcasts. However, the findings also revealed that radio content remains relevant when distributed through digital channels. A total of 68.0% of respondents stated that they still consume radio-related content through mobile applications, podcasts, websites, and social media platforms. These results suggest that the decline in traditional radio listening does not necessarily imply the disappearance of radio as a communication medium; rather, it reflects a transformation in the mode of content delivery and audience engagement.

Table 1. Audience Perceptions of Digital Media Convergence and Radio Sustainability (n = 200)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Frequently use streaming platforms	145	72.5
Still access radio content through digital platforms	136	68.0
Believe radio should integrate digital technologies	171	85.5
Consider podcasts as an extension of radio content	158	79.0
Believe radio can survive in the digital era	149	74.5

Source: Processed by the researchers (2026)

The data presented in Table 1 demonstrate a strong acceptance of digital transformation among audio media consumers. The finding that 85.5% of respondents support the integration of digital technologies into radio broadcasting indicates that audiences no longer perceive radio solely as a traditional broadcasting medium. Instead, radio is increasingly viewed as a flexible content provider capable of operating across multiple digital platforms. Furthermore, 79.0% of respondents considered podcasts to be a natural extension of radio programming, suggesting that audiences are willing to follow radio content beyond conventional frequency-based broadcasting. These findings provide preliminary evidence supporting Hypothesis 1, which proposes that digital media convergence positively influences the future sustainability of radio broadcasting in Indonesia.

To further examine the relationship between digital media convergence and radio sustainability, a regression analysis was conducted. The results revealed that digital media convergence significantly predicted perceptions of radio sustainability ($\beta = 0.614$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 37.7% of the variance in sustainability perceptions ($R^2 = 0.377$). This finding indicates that audiences who perceive greater levels of digital integration are also more likely to believe that radio has a sustainable future. The strength of this relationship suggests that convergence is not merely a technological trend but a strategic mechanism for maintaining audience relevance and market competitiveness. Consequently, the statistical findings provide strong support for Hypothesis 1.

The qualitative findings further reinforced the quantitative results. Radio managers consistently described digital convergence as a necessity rather than an optional innovation. Most

participants emphasized that audience behavior has shifted significantly toward mobile and on-demand media consumption, requiring radio organizations to expand their digital presence. Several informants highlighted that younger audiences rarely interact with conventional radio frequencies but remain engaged with radio content when it is available through social media, streaming applications, or podcast services. These observations indicate that convergence enables radio stations to maintain visibility and relevance among digitally oriented audiences.

As explained by one participant: *"Honestly, many young listeners don't even know our FM frequency anymore. They know us from Instagram, YouTube, or Spotify. If we're not there, we practically disappear from their daily media habits."* (P3, Interview, January 14, 2026). Similarly, another informant stated: *"Radio today is no longer just about broadcasting sound. We have to think like digital content creators. The audience expects us to be everywhere and available anytime."* (P7, Interview, January 18, 2026). Supporting this perspective, another manager remarked: *"Podcast content has helped us reach listeners who never listened to conventional radio before. In some cases, podcast audiences are actually larger than our live broadcast audience."* (P10, Interview, January 24, 2026). Likewise, an informant explained: *"The challenge is not competing with streaming platforms. The challenge is learning how to coexist with them. We use those platforms to distribute our content and strengthen our brand."* (P12, Interview, January 28, 2026).

The interview findings reveal that digital convergence is viewed as a strategic adaptation process rather than a threat to broadcasting institutions. Rather than perceiving streaming platforms as competitors, radio managers increasingly regard them as complementary distribution channels capable of expanding audience reach. This perspective reflects a transition from platform-based broadcasting toward content-centered communication models. Moreover, the interviews suggest that radio sustainability is closely linked to the ability of organizations to integrate traditional broadcasting strengths — such as local information, credibility, and live interaction — with the accessibility and flexibility of digital media environments.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that digital media convergence plays a critical role in shaping the future sustainability of radio broadcasting. The quantitative evidence confirms a significant positive relationship between convergence and sustainability perceptions, while the qualitative findings illustrate how broadcasters operationalize convergence through strategic digital integration. The novelty of this study lies in its ability to combine audience perceptions and managerial experiences within a single analytical framework, revealing that radio sustainability is increasingly determined by content accessibility across multiple platforms rather than by the persistence of conventional broadcasting infrastructure alone. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is accepted, confirming that digital media convergence positively influences the future sustainability of radio broadcasting in Indonesia.

The second objective of this study was to examine the influence of radio adaptation strategies on listener engagement in the context of digital media convergence. Quantitative findings revealed that radio stations implementing digital adaptation strategies, including podcast production, live streaming services, social media interaction, and multiplatform content distribution, were perceived more positively by audiences than stations relying primarily on conventional broadcasting. Among the respondents, 81.0% stated that they were more likely to engage with radio content when it was available through multiple digital platforms. Furthermore, 76.5% reported regularly interacting with radio content through social media features such as comments, live chats, polls, and content sharing. These findings suggest that adaptation strategies significantly contribute to strengthening audience engagement in contemporary digital environments.

Table 2. Audience Responses Toward Radio Adaptation Strategies and Listener Engagement (n = 200)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Prefer radio content available on multiple platforms	162	81.0
Frequently interact with radio through social media	153	76.5
Listen to radio podcasts regularly	141	70.5
Follow radio accounts on social media	157	78.5
Feel more connected to radio through digital interaction	164	82.0

Source: Processed by the researchers (2026)

Table 2 demonstrates that digital adaptation strategies significantly enhance audience participation and interaction. The highest percentage was recorded for respondents who reported feeling more connected to radio through digital interaction (82.0%), indicating that engagement extends beyond passive listening. Similarly, 81.0% of respondents preferred radio content that could be accessed across multiple platforms, highlighting the growing importance of content accessibility and convenience. The findings further reveal that social media has become a crucial channel for maintaining audience relationships, as reflected in the 78.5% of respondents who actively follow radio stations online. Collectively, these results provide strong preliminary support for Hypothesis 2, which proposes that radio adaptation strategies positively influence listener engagement.

To test the proposed relationship statistically, multiple regression analysis was conducted. The results indicated that radio adaptation strategies significantly influenced listener engagement ($\beta = 0.658$, $p < 0.001$). The model explained 43.2% of the variance in listener engagement ($R^2 = 0.432$), suggesting that adaptation strategies constitute one of the strongest predictors of audience involvement in the digital broadcasting environment. Among the adaptation indicators, social media engagement and podcast availability demonstrated the highest standardized coefficients, indicating their importance in attracting and retaining audiences. These findings confirm that radio organizations adopting innovative communication strategies are more successful in maintaining meaningful relationships with listeners. Therefore, the quantitative findings provide substantial support for Hypothesis 2.

The qualitative findings reinforced the quantitative results by revealing how radio managers perceive adaptation strategies as essential mechanisms for sustaining audience engagement. Nearly all participants emphasized that digital platforms have transformed the relationship between broadcasters and audiences from a one-way communication model into an interactive communication ecosystem. Radio managers explained that listeners increasingly expect opportunities to participate, comment, share opinions, and engage directly with presenters through digital channels. As a result, adaptation strategies are not merely technological innovations but also communication tools designed to strengthen audience relationships. This perspective highlights the growing importance of engagement-oriented broadcasting models in the era of media convergence.

As explained by one participant: *"Nowadays listeners don't just want to listen. They want to reply, comment, react, and even help shape the conversation. Social media gives them that opportunity."* (P2, Interview, January 11, 2026). Similarly, another informant stated: *"When we upload podcast clips on Instagram and TikTok, people start discussing the topic even before listening to the full program. That kind of interaction never happened in traditional radio."* (P5, Interview, January 16, 2026). Supporting this perspective, another manager remarked: *"Live streaming changed everything. People can listen from anywhere, but more importantly, they can interact instantly. Engagement becomes much stronger than before."* (P8, Interview, January 21, 2026). Likewise, one participant explained: *"Our audience retention improved after we introduced*

podcasts. Some listeners who missed the live program could still access the content later, which keeps them connected to our station." (P11, Interview, January 27, 2026).

The interview findings indicate that successful radio adaptation extends beyond technological implementation and involves the creation of participatory communication experiences. Social media platforms, podcasts, and live-streaming services function as engagement mechanisms that facilitate continuous interaction between broadcasters and audiences. These strategies enable radio stations to maintain audience attention despite increasing competition from streaming services and other digital media platforms. Furthermore, the findings suggest that engagement is increasingly driven by accessibility, interactivity, and content flexibility rather than by traditional broadcasting schedules alone.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that radio adaptation strategies significantly contribute to listener engagement within the contemporary digital media environment. Quantitative evidence confirmed a strong positive relationship between adaptation strategies and audience engagement, while qualitative findings illustrated how broadcasters operationalize these strategies through participatory and multiplatform communication practices. The novelty of this study lies in its identification of listener engagement as a direct outcome of digital adaptation strategies, highlighting that successful radio transformation depends not only on technological adoption but also on the capacity to foster continuous audience interaction across multiple platforms. Consequently, Hypothesis 2 is accepted, confirming that radio adaptation strategies positively influence listener engagement in the era of streaming platforms and digital media convergence.

The third objective of this study was to examine the relationship between audience preferences for digital audio media and listener engagement with radio content distributed through digital platforms. The quantitative findings revealed that audience preferences have shifted considerably toward digital audio services, particularly among younger and technologically active users. Among the 200 respondents surveyed, 72.5% reported using streaming platforms more frequently than conventional radio, while 77.0% stated that convenience and on-demand accessibility were the primary reasons for choosing digital audio services. Despite this trend, a substantial proportion of respondents continued to engage with radio content when it was available through podcasts, mobile applications, and social media channels. These findings suggest that audience preferences do not necessarily indicate the abandonment of radio but rather a transformation in how radio content is accessed and consumed.

Table 3. Audience Preferences for Digital Audio Media and Listener Engagement (n = 200)

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Prefer streaming platforms over conventional radio	145	72.5
Value on-demand audio accessibility	154	77.0
Listen to audio content through smartphones daily	171	85.5
Continue accessing radio content through digital channels	136	68.0
Engage with radio content because of convenience and flexibility	148	74.0

Source: Processed by the researchers (2026)

The findings presented in Table 3 indicate a substantial transformation in audience listening behavior. The highest percentage was observed among respondents who reported daily consumption of audio content through smartphones (85.5%), demonstrating the central role of mobile technology in contemporary media use. Additionally, 77.0% of respondents identified convenience and on-demand accessibility as key factors influencing their media choices. Although

streaming platforms were preferred by most respondents, 68.0% continued to access radio content through digital channels, indicating that radio remains relevant when integrated into audiences' preferred media environments. These findings provide preliminary support for Hypothesis 3, which proposes that audience preferences for digital audio media significantly influence listener engagement with radio content distributed through digital platforms.

To further assess this relationship, a regression analysis was performed. The results showed that audience preferences for digital audio media significantly predicted listener engagement ($\beta = 0.587$, $p < 0.001$). The model explained 34.5% of the variance in listener engagement ($R^2 = 0.345$), indicating that media preferences represent an important determinant of how audiences interact with radio content in the digital era. Respondents who preferred digital audio platforms were more likely to engage with radio content when it was delivered through formats compatible with their consumption habits, such as podcasts, streaming services, and social media clips. This finding demonstrates that engagement is increasingly influenced by platform compatibility and user convenience rather than by the traditional characteristics of broadcasting alone. Therefore, the statistical evidence supports Hypothesis 3.

The qualitative findings provided deeper insights into how audience preferences shape engagement patterns. Radio managers consistently observed that audiences increasingly prioritize flexibility, personalization, and accessibility when selecting audio content. Several participants reported that listeners were no longer loyal to a particular platform but instead followed content that could be accessed easily through multiple channels. This shift has encouraged radio organizations to redesign content distribution strategies to align with evolving audience expectations. Consequently, broadcasters have become more audience-centered in their approach to content production and delivery.

As explained by one participant: *"People don't really care whether the content comes from radio or streaming. What matters to them is whether they can access it easily whenever they want."* (P1, Interview, January 10, 2026). Similarly, another informant stated: *"Our listeners are still there, but they consume content differently now. Many of them prefer listening through Spotify podcasts or YouTube rather than tuning in live."* (P4, Interview, January 13, 2026). Supporting this perspective, another manager remarked: *"The younger audience likes flexibility. They don't want fixed schedules anymore. That's why on-demand content has become very important for us."* (P6, Interview, January 17, 2026). Likewise, one participant explained: *"When we started distributing short content clips on social media, engagement increased significantly. Audiences discovered our programs through those platforms first."* (P9, Interview, January 23, 2026). Another participant added: *"The audience follows content, not platforms. If our content is relevant and easy to access, they will continue engaging with us regardless of where they find it."* (P12, Interview, January 29, 2026).

The qualitative findings reveal that changing audience preferences have fundamentally reshaped radio consumption patterns. Rather than replacing radio entirely, digital platforms have altered the mechanisms through which audiences discover, access, and interact with radio content. Listener engagement increasingly depends on the ability of broadcasters to align content distribution strategies with audience expectations regarding accessibility, convenience, and personalization. These findings suggest that radio stations must continuously adapt to evolving media preferences if they wish to maintain audience relevance and competitiveness in the digital environment.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that audience preferences for digital audio media significantly influence listener engagement. Quantitative results confirmed a positive and statistically significant relationship between digital media preferences and engagement levels, while qualitative findings highlighted the importance of flexibility, accessibility, and content

relevance in shaping audience behavior. The novelty of this study lies in its identification of audience preferences as a strategic driver of engagement within convergent media ecosystems, demonstrating that the future of radio depends not only on technological adaptation but also on the ability to align content delivery with contemporary audience expectations. Consequently, Hypothesis 3 is accepted, confirming that audience preferences for digital audio media significantly influence listener engagement with radio content distributed through digital platforms.

The fourth objective of this study was to examine whether listener engagement mediates the relationship between audience preferences for digital audio media and the future sustainability of radio broadcasting. The quantitative findings revealed that audience preferences alone were insufficient to directly explain perceptions of radio sustainability. Instead, the influence of audience preferences became substantially stronger when mediated through listener engagement. Respondents who actively interacted with radio content through podcasts, social media, mobile applications, and live-streaming services demonstrated significantly higher levels of confidence in the future relevance of radio broadcasting. These findings indicate that engagement serves as a critical mechanism connecting audience preferences with long-term broadcasting sustainability.

Table 4. Mediation Analysis of Listener Engagement (n = 200)

Relationship	β	t-value	p-value
Audience Preferences → Listener Engagement	0.587	9.214	<0.001
Listener Engagement → Radio Sustainability	0.542	8.631	<0.001
Audience Preferences → Radio Sustainability (Direct Effect)	0.241	3.874	<0.001
Audience Preferences → Listener Engagement → Radio Sustainability (Indirect Effect)	0.318	5.926	<0.001

Source: Processed by the researchers (2026)

The results presented in Table 4 demonstrate that listener engagement significantly mediates the relationship between audience preferences and perceptions of radio sustainability. The indirect effect ($\beta = 0.318$) was stronger than the direct effect ($\beta = 0.241$), indicating partial mediation. This suggests that audience preferences influence radio sustainability primarily when they are translated into active engagement behaviors. In other words, merely preferring digital audio media does not automatically contribute to the sustainability of radio broadcasting; audiences must also interact with, consume, and participate in radio-related content distributed through digital platforms. These findings provide strong empirical support for Hypothesis 4.

Further analysis revealed that highly engaged listeners were more likely to perceive radio as adaptable, innovative, and capable of surviving in the era of streaming platforms. Respondents who frequently listened to radio podcasts, followed radio social media accounts, or participated in digital discussions reported significantly higher sustainability perceptions than those who consumed radio content passively. This finding indicates that engagement functions as a bridge between evolving audience expectations and institutional resilience. Consequently, radio sustainability appears to depend not only on attracting audiences but also on maintaining continuous interaction with them. Such results reinforce contemporary communication theories emphasizing participation as a key determinant of media longevity.

The qualitative findings further supported the statistical results. Radio managers consistently emphasized that audience engagement has become more important than audience size alone. Several participants noted that digital platforms allow radio stations to build stronger and more

continuous relationships with listeners compared to conventional broadcasting. Rather than measuring success solely through listenership numbers, broadcasters increasingly focus on indicators such as comments, shares, subscriptions, and audience participation. This shift reflects a broader transformation from audience reach to audience engagement as a strategic objective.

As explained by one participant: *"Having a large audience is good, but what really matters now is whether they interact with us. A smaller but highly engaged audience is often more valuable than a large passive audience."* (P2, Interview, January 12, 2026). Similarly, another informant stated: *"When listeners comment on our posts, join discussions, or share our content, they become part of the radio community. That's what keeps them connected to us."* (P5, Interview, January 15, 2026). Supporting this perspective, another manager remarked: *"Engagement tells us that people are not just consuming content. They are investing their attention and time, which is much more important for long-term sustainability."* (P7, Interview, January 19, 2026). Likewise, one participant explained: *"The future of radio depends on relationships. Digital platforms help us maintain those relationships every day, not only during live broadcasts."* (P10, Interview, January 24, 2026). Another informant added: *"Listeners who actively engage with our content are the ones most likely to stay loyal. They become advocates who help promote our programs to others."* (P12, Interview, January 30, 2026).

The interview findings indicate that listener engagement functions as a strategic asset that strengthens audience loyalty and reinforces organizational sustainability. Engagement transforms audiences from passive receivers into active participants who contribute to content dissemination, brand visibility, and community development. These dynamics are particularly important in digital environments where competition for audience attention is increasingly intense. Consequently, broadcasters that successfully cultivate engagement are better positioned to sustain relevance and competitiveness in convergent media ecosystems.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that listener engagement plays a significant mediating role between audience preferences and the future sustainability of radio broadcasting. Quantitative evidence confirmed a significant indirect effect, while qualitative findings illustrated how engagement contributes to audience loyalty, participation, and long-term relationships. The novelty of this study lies in demonstrating that audience preferences alone are insufficient to ensure radio sustainability. Instead, sustainability emerges when audience preferences are translated into active engagement behaviors through digital interaction and multiplatform participation. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 is accepted, confirming that listener engagement mediates the relationship between audience preferences for digital audio media and the future sustainability of radio broadcasting.

The fifth objective of this study was to investigate whether radio adaptation strategies strengthen the relationship between digital media convergence and the future sustainability of radio broadcasting. The quantitative findings revealed that digital media convergence alone contributes significantly to sustainability; however, its impact becomes substantially stronger when supported by effective adaptation strategies. Radio stations that actively implement podcasts, live-streaming services, social media engagement, and multiplatform content distribution reported higher audience retention and stronger perceptions of future viability. These findings indicate that adaptation strategies function as an enabling mechanism that allows broadcasters to translate technological opportunities into sustainable organizational outcomes. Consequently, radio adaptation strategies appear to play a critical role in maximizing the benefits of digital media convergence.

Table 5. Moderating Effect of Radio Adaptation Strategies on the Relationship Between Digital Media Convergence and Radio Sustainability (n = 200)

Relationship	β	t-value	p-value
Digital Media Convergence → Radio Sustainability	0.614	8.972	<0.001
Radio Adaptation Strategies → Radio Sustainability	0.531	7.843	<0.001
Convergence × Adaptation Strategies → Sustainability	0.284	4.912	<0.001
R ² Before Moderation	0.377	—	—
R ² After Moderation	0.518	—	—

Source: Processed by the researchers (2026)

The results presented in Table 5 demonstrate a significant moderating effect of radio adaptation strategies. The interaction term between digital media convergence and adaptation strategies was positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.284$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that adaptation strategies strengthen the influence of convergence on sustainability. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination increased from 37.7% to 51.8% after the moderating variable was included, suggesting a substantial improvement in explanatory power. This finding implies that convergence alone is insufficient to guarantee sustainability. Instead, radio organizations must actively develop adaptation mechanisms that enable them to capitalize on emerging digital opportunities. Therefore, the quantitative findings provide strong support for Hypothesis 5.

Additional analysis revealed that podcast integration and social media engagement emerged as the most influential adaptation indicators. Respondents who regularly interacted with radio content through podcasts and social media platforms demonstrated significantly stronger perceptions of radio sustainability than those who relied solely on conventional broadcasting. Similarly, stations perceived as innovative and digitally responsive received higher evaluations regarding their future relevance. These findings suggest that successful adaptation requires not only technological adoption but also continuous innovation in content delivery and audience interaction. Consequently, strategic adaptation has become a key determinant of radio resilience in the digital era.

The qualitative findings further reinforced the moderating role of adaptation strategies. Radio managers consistently emphasized that technological convergence creates opportunities, but those opportunities only generate meaningful outcomes when accompanied by strategic implementation. Several participants explained that simply having digital platforms is not enough; broadcasters must continuously develop engaging content and foster audience participation. Others highlighted that adaptation is an ongoing process requiring organizational flexibility and a willingness to experiment with new formats. These perspectives indicate that adaptation strategies transform digital convergence from a technological phenomenon into a sustainable communication practice.

As explained by one participant: *"Everyone can create a podcast today. The real challenge is creating content that people actually want to listen to and come back to. Technology alone doesn't guarantee success."* (P1, Interview, January 9, 2026). Similarly, another informant stated: *"We realized that launching digital platforms was only the first step. What keeps listeners engaged is how consistently we provide relevant and interactive content."* (P4, Interview, January 14, 2026). Supporting this perspective, another manager remarked: *"Convergence opens many opportunities, but adaptation determines whether those opportunities become real results. Without adaptation, digital platforms are just additional channels."* (P6, Interview, January 18, 2026). Likewise, one participant explained: *"Our station experienced significant growth after combining podcasts, social*

media, and live streaming into a single strategy. The platforms work best when they support each other." (P8, Interview, January 21, 2026). Another informant added: *"The future belongs to stations that are willing to evolve continuously. Audience expectations change very quickly, so adaptation has to become part of organizational culture."* (P11, Interview, January 27, 2026). Furthermore, another participant emphasized: *"What matters is not whether radio goes digital, but how effectively it uses digital platforms to create meaningful audience experiences. That's what determines long-term survival."* (P12, Interview, January 30, 2026).

The interview findings reveal that adaptation strategies serve as the operational mechanism through which digital convergence contributes to sustainability. Broadcasters view adaptation not as a one-time technological adjustment but as a continuous process involving innovation, audience responsiveness, and organizational learning. This perspective highlights the importance of strategic flexibility in navigating rapidly changing media environments. Moreover, the findings suggest that stations capable of integrating multiple digital channels into a coherent communication strategy are better positioned to maintain relevance and competitiveness.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that radio adaptation strategies significantly strengthen the positive relationship between digital media convergence and the future sustainability of radio broadcasting. Quantitative evidence confirmed a significant moderating effect, while qualitative findings illustrated how adaptation strategies enable broadcasters to transform digital opportunities into sustainable audience relationships and organizational resilience. The novelty of this study lies in identifying radio adaptation strategies as a critical moderating mechanism within the convergence–sustainability relationship. Unlike previous studies that primarily focused on technological adoption, this research demonstrates that the effectiveness of convergence depends largely on broadcasters' ability to implement innovative, audience-centered adaptation strategies. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 is accepted, confirming that radio adaptation strategies positively moderate the relationship between digital media convergence and the future sustainability of radio broadcasting.

The findings of this study demonstrate that digital media convergence has become a fundamental factor influencing the future sustainability of radio broadcasting in Indonesia. The significant positive relationship between digital media convergence and radio sustainability supports the assumptions of Media Convergence Theory, which argues that media organizations must integrate technological, content, and communication systems to remain relevant in evolving digital environments (Albadri, 2023). The finding that 85.5% of respondents supported the integration of digital technologies into radio broadcasting indicates that audiences increasingly perceive radio as a multiplatform content provider rather than a frequency-based medium. This result is consistent with the argument of Ceccotti et al. (2025) who emphasized that digitalization transforms media institutions by extending audience access beyond traditional distribution channels. Similarly, Cuel et al. (2024) found that media sustainability in digital ecosystems depends on organizational capacity to integrate content across multiple platforms. These findings indicate that radio sustainability is not merely a result of digital technology adoption but also depends on audience-oriented organizational policies that guide how stations design services, distribute content, and maintain listener relationships across digital platforms. However, unlike previous studies that primarily focused on technological adoption, this study demonstrates that audience perceptions play a critical role in determining the sustainability of radio broadcasting, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of media convergence in emerging markets.

The results also confirm that radio adaptation strategies significantly influence listener engagement. The strong effect of adaptation strategies on engagement ($\beta = 0.658$, $p < 0.001$) suggests that technological innovation alone is insufficient without corresponding changes in communication practices. In this context, radio adaptation strategies can be understood as

audience-oriented organizational policy responses because they reflect managerial decisions to improve audience services, expand digital access, and strengthen interaction with listeners. This finding aligns with Audience Engagement Theory, which emphasizes that meaningful interaction and participation strengthen audience relationships and media loyalty (Pérez-Latre, 2026). According to Kim (2024), audience engagement increasingly depends on opportunities for interaction rather than passive content consumption. Likewise, research conducted by Mustofa et al. (2024) found that Indonesian media audiences demonstrate higher loyalty toward organizations that actively facilitate digital participation through social media and interactive content. The present study extends these findings by showing that podcast integration, live-streaming services, and multiplatform communication collectively contribute to stronger listener engagement. Therefore, adaptation strategies should be viewed as audience-centered communication policies and service innovations, rather than merely technological responses to industry disruption (Cosa, 2024).

Another important finding concerns the relationship between audience preferences for digital audio media and listener engagement. The results indicate that audience preferences have shifted toward flexible, personalized, and on-demand audio experiences, supporting the assumptions of Uses and Gratifications Theory (Habes et al., 2025). According to Blasiak et al. (2022), digital media users actively select communication channels that maximize convenience, accessibility, and personal relevance. The present findings support this argument, as 77.0% of respondents identified convenience and on-demand accessibility as key factors influencing their media choices. Similar conclusions were reported by Baltimore (2025), who found that platform-based media consumption increasingly prioritizes user autonomy and personalized experiences. However, this study also reveals that audiences continue to engage with radio content when it is distributed through platforms compatible with contemporary consumption habits. This means that audience service in radio broadcasting must be redesigned around accessibility, flexibility, interactivity, and platform compatibility. This suggests that radio is not being replaced by streaming services but is instead being reconfigured within a broader digital audio ecosystem, representing a significant contribution to ongoing debates about media displacement and adaptation (Sheikh & e Mustafa, 2024).

The mediation analysis provides further insight into the mechanisms underlying radio sustainability. The findings indicate that listener engagement partially mediates the relationship between audience preferences and sustainability, suggesting that audience preferences alone are insufficient to ensure organizational resilience. This result supports Relationship Management Theory, which argues that long-term sustainability depends on the quality of interactions between organizations and stakeholders (van Zyl et al., 2025). Gupta & Gambhir (2025) emphasized that engagement transforms audiences into active participants who contribute to organizational legitimacy and continuity. Similarly, Mohamed et al. (2024) reported that audience participation strengthens media resilience by fostering emotional attachment and community development. The present study contributes to this literature by demonstrating that engagement functions as a strategic bridge connecting changing audience preferences with perceptions of future sustainability. From a policy perspective, this finding implies that radio organizations need to formulate audience-oriented policies that prioritize relationship building, responsive content delivery, and continuous digital interaction. Consequently, broadcasters must prioritize relationship-building activities alongside content distribution strategies.

The moderating effect of radio adaptation strategies represents another important contribution of this study. The increase in explanatory power from $R^2 = 0.377$ to $R^2 = 0.518$ indicates that adaptation strategies substantially strengthen the positive influence of digital convergence on sustainability. This finding supports Dynamic Capabilities Theory, which suggests

that organizations must continuously reconfigure resources and competencies to respond effectively to environmental changes (Cristofaro et al., 2025). Browder et al. (2024) argued that organizational survival in rapidly changing industries depends on adaptive capabilities rather than technological resources alone. Similarly, Suhendra & Jermisittiparsert (2026) found that media organizations capable of integrating innovation with audience-centered strategies are more resilient in digital environments. However, the present study extends these findings by demonstrating that adaptation strategies operate not merely as organizational responses but as strategic moderators that determine the effectiveness of digital convergence initiatives. This also confirms that organizational policies oriented toward audience service strengthen the ability of radio stations to transform digital convergence into sustainable communication practices. This highlights the importance of combining technological innovation with continuous audience-oriented adaptation.

The overall findings contribute both theoretically and practically to communication studies. Theoretically, this study integrates Media Convergence Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, Relationship Management Theory, and Dynamic Capabilities Theory within a single analytical framework, providing a multidimensional explanation of radio sustainability in the digital era. Practically, the findings suggest that radio broadcasters should prioritize multiplatform content distribution, audience engagement mechanisms, audience service innovation, and continuous adaptation strategies to remain competitive. Unlike previous studies that examined technological convergence, audience behavior, or adaptation strategies separately, this research simultaneously analyzes the interactions among these variables using a mixed-methods approach. The novelty of this study lies in demonstrating that the future sustainability of radio broadcasting is shaped by an interconnected process involving digital convergence, audience preferences, listener engagement, audience-oriented organizational policy responses, and organizational adaptation. Consequently, the sustainability of radio in the era of streaming platforms depends not on preserving conventional broadcasting models but on developing integrated communication ecosystems capable of responding to evolving audience expectations and digital media dynamics.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that radio broadcasting sustainability in Indonesia's streaming and digital media convergence era is shaped by audience-oriented organizational policy responses, digital media convergence, listener engagement, and strategic adaptation initiatives. The findings reveal that 72.5% of respondents access streaming platforms more frequently than conventional radio, while 68.0% continue to consume radio content through digital channels such as mobile applications, podcasts, and social media. In addition, 85.5% of respondents support the integration of digital technologies into radio broadcasting, 81.0% prefer radio content distributed across multiple platforms, and 82.0% report feeling more connected to radio through digital interaction. The quantitative results further indicate that digital media convergence significantly influences radio sustainability ($\beta = 0.614$, $p < 0.001$), radio adaptation strategies positively affect listener engagement ($\beta = 0.658$, $p < 0.001$), and audience preferences for digital audio media significantly influence listener engagement ($\beta = 0.587$, $p < 0.001$). Moreover, listener engagement partially mediates the relationship between audience preferences and sustainability, while radio adaptation strategies strengthen the positive effect of digital convergence on sustainability, increasing the explanatory power of the model from $R^2 = 0.377$ to $R^2 = 0.518$.

These findings contribute to communication studies by providing empirical evidence that radio broadcasting sustainability depends on the integration of digital technologies, audience-oriented organizational policy responses, listener engagement, audience-centered services, and continuous organizational adaptation. The study also shows that radio institutions need to

formulate policies that respond to changing audience behavior, digital audio preferences, and the demand for more interactive multiplatform services. However, this study is limited by its focus on respondents from Jakarta and Yogyakarta and on radio stations that have already implemented digital platforms, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research is therefore recommended to involve broader geographical regions, employ longitudinal designs to capture changes in audience behavior over time, and examine additional variables such as media regulation, artificial intelligence-based content personalization, and emerging audio technologies that may further influence radio broadcasting sustainability in increasingly convergent digital media environments.

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