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**Community Radio and Grassroots Democracy: A Case Study of
Three Villages in Yogyakarta Region, Indonesia**

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Declaration

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted for the degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Signature:

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Date: 20 May 2010

Abstract

It has been argued that the most important factor in creating participation for people at grassroots level is accessibility to the media, both as receivers and producers of content (see Rodriguez, 2000; Fraser & Estrada, 2001, 2002; Tabing, 2002; and Dagron, 2001, 2004). In recent years, community radio stations have been mushrooming in Indonesia as a consequence of the democratisation of the media system in post-Soeharto Indonesia. In Indonesia community radio is used by the civil society at grassroots level to empower people who have little opportunity to voice their interests. The characteristics of community radio - size, proximity and openness to participation - provide both forms of access. By providing a forum for capacity building, community radio enhances people's participation in the decision making process and in the preservation of local cultures in their villages. In fact, at village level the empowerment of people is central to the role of community radio; thus, people in Timbulharjo, Minomartani and Wiladeg have had the opportunity to express their interests. Community radio stations encourage diversity, challenging the tendency of commercial radio to erase cultural differences through their conceptualising of audiences as markets. In this way, community radio accommodates the interests of marginal social groups and draws them into the public sphere.

This thesis is about the way in which the Indonesian people's movement creates grassroots democracy by using community radio as a tool for participating in social communication processes at village level, in particular in Yogyakarta Special Region. The main question is 'how do people at grassroots level use community radio in the democratic transition in Indonesia?' Multiple case studies were used in order to build a comprehensive picture of the use of community radio in Indonesia as a tool for promoting participation in local contexts. To discuss its findings this thesis uses participatory communication and public sphere theories. This thesis also considers the civic role of community radio in its responses to earthquake disaster in several regions in Indonesia, where people used the medium of radio to create solidarity to help affected people.

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Notes on Spelling and Translations

This thesis uses the Indonesian Spelling Standard (EYD) applied since 1972. This standard is followed for Indonesian words, including personal names and titles of publications, with one exception: personal names throughout the thesis are spelled according to the preferences of the persons named, and Indonesian names of authors in non-Indonesian publications are spelled in accordance with the publication. Indonesian sources in the forms of both interviews and publications are cited in English translation throughout the thesis. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine.

Abbreviations

ABRI	Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia (Armed Forces of Republic of Indonesia)
AJI	Aliansi Jurnalis Independen (The Alliance of Independent Journalist)
AMARC	Association Mondiale Des Radiodiffuseurs Communautaires (World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters)
APIK	Arena Pusat Informasi Komunitas (Centre of Community Information Arena)
ARRNet	Aceh Nias Reconstruction Radio Network
ARSSI	Asosiasi Radio Siaran Swasta Indonesia (Association of Private Broadcasting Radio Indonesia)
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BBM	Balai Budaya Minomartani (Minomartani Cultural Hall)
BRV	Bataviasche Radio Vereeniging (Batavia Radio Association)
CIRVO	Chinese en Inheemse Radio Luisteraars Vereeniging Oost Java (Chinese of East Java Radio Association)
CRI	Combine Resource Institution
CSA	Council Superieur de l' Audiovisuel
DPR	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (People's Representative Council)
DPRD	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (Regional People's Representative Council)
EMRO	Eerste Madiunse Radio Omroep (Madiun Radio Association)

FCC	Federal Communications Commission
IAMCR	International Association of Media and Communication Research
ICASA	Independent Communications Authority of South Africa
Jalin Merapi	Jaringan Lintas Merapi (Cross-border Network of Merapi)
JRKI	Jaringan Radio Komunitas Indonesia (Community Radio Network of Indonesia)
JRKY	Jaringan Radio Komunitas Yogyakarta (Community Radio Network of Yogyakarta)
JRK Jabar	Jaringan Radio Komunitas Jawa Barat (Community Radio Network of West Java)
JRK Sumbar	Jaringan Radio Komunitas Sumatera Barat (Community Radio Network of West Sumatera)
JRSP	Jaringan Radio Suara Petani (Network of Farmers Community Radio)
KAMI	Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia (Indonesian Student Action Front)
KBR 68H	Kantor Berita Radio 68H (68H Radio News Agency)
KOPKAMTIB	Komando Operasi Kemanan dan Ketertiban (Operations Command to Restore Security and Order)
KPI	Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia (Indonesian Broadcasting Commission)
KPID	Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia Daerah (Regional Indonesian Broadcasting Commission)

KPU	Komisi Pemilihan Umum (General Election Commission).
KUT	Kredit Usaha Tani (Credit for Farm Enterprise Program)
LSPP	Lembaga Studi dan Pengembangan Pers (Institute of Development and Study of Press)
MAVRO	Mataramsche Vereeniging Radio Oemroep (Mataram Broadcasting Radio Association)
MKPMI	Majelis Keluarga Petani Mandiri Indonesia (Council of Independent Indonesian Farming Families)
MPPI	Masyarakat Penyiaran dan Pers Indonesia (Indonesian Press and Broadcasting Society)
MPR	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (People's Consultative Assembly)
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NCFB	National Federation of Community Broadcasters (US)
NGO	Non Government Organization
NICA	Netherlands Indies Civil Administration
NIROM	Netherlands Indische Radio Omroep Maatschappij (Netherlands Indies Radio Broadcasting Company)
NWICO	New World Information and Communication Order
PDI	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (Indonesian Democratic Party)
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party)
PK2MN	Pakempoelan Kawoelo Mangkoenegaran (Association of Mangkunegara's Retainers)

PPRK	Perikatan Perhimpunan Radio Ketimuran (Federation of Eastern Radio Societies)
PRSSNI	Persatuan Radio Siaran Swasta Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Private Broadcast Radio Association)
PUDI	Partai Uni Demokratik Indonesia (Indonesian Democratic Union Party)
RAPI	Radio Antar Penduduk Indonesia (Association of Communication Radio of Indonesia)
RKW	Radio Komunitas Wiladeg (Wiladeg Community Radio)
RRI	Radio Republik Indonesia (Radio of Republic of Indonesia)
SAV Puskat	Studio Audio Visual Pusat Kateketik (Audio Visual Studio Catechetical Center)
SIAR	Saluran Informasi Akar Rumput (Channel of Grassroots Information)
SRV	Solosche Radio Vereeniging (Solo Radio Association)
TVRI	Televisi Republik Indonesia (Television of Republic of Indonesia)
UII	Universitas Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic University)
UNESCO	United Nations Education Science and Culture Organisation
VORL	Vereeniging voor Oosterse Radio Luisteraars (Radio Association Listeners in Bandung)
VORO	Vereeniging voor Oosterse Radio Oemroep (Association of Eastern Radio in Jakarta)
WTO	World Trade Organization

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General Introduction

Only a small number of systematic studies of community radio in Indonesia have been conducted to date, probably because this medium has only recently emerged in the Indonesian broadcasting system. Since 1998 Indonesia has been experiencing a democratic movement generated in the new political conditions after the fall of Soeharto.¹ The change of political system from authoritarianism towards democratisation has allowed for changes in the media. The emergence of community radio cannot be separated from that change. Civil society groups grasped this opportunity and used it to fill a gap in a broadcasting system in which people at grassroots level had had little hope of expressing their interests in the mainstream media. Article 28F of the Indonesian Constitution 1945, as amended in 1999, states:

Every person shall have the right to communicate and to obtain information for the purpose of the development of his/her self and social environment, and shall have the right to seek, obtain, possess, store, process and convey information by employing all available types of channels.²

This article implies that the free flow of information is a prerequisite for the democratisation of the media, and, through it, of civil society. Democratisation requires a reduction in the role of government in the mass media system. Some measures to reduce the government's control of the flow of information have been brought about through legislative changes since the beginning of the reform era. For example, regulations were enacted during Habibie's administration (1998-1999) revoking the earlier requirement that the press must have a *SIUPP/Surat Ijin Usaha Penerbitan Pers* or publication permit. Then Wahid's administration (1999-2001) shut

¹ Several scholars have provided studies on political conditions in Indonesia in the post Soeharto era; for example, Antlov (2003 & 2004), Manning & van Diermen (2000), Aspinall & Fealy (2003), Bakti (2005), Hidayat (2002), Kitley (2003), Sen & Hill (2000) and Sen (2003).

² This English translation was taken from <http://www.us-asean.org/Indonesia/constitution.htm>.

down the Department of Information, which had played an important role in controlling the mass media during the New Order (Soeharto's administration 1966-1998). During Megawati's administration (2001-2003) the *DPR* (People's Representative Council or national parliament) enacted the Broadcasting Law number 32/2002, which established the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission as the authorised body for regulating broadcasting media.

Based on Article 28F, civil society groups started to press for recognition of community broadcasting in the country's legal system.³ Article 28F guaranteed people at grassroots level their own media, which would provide more opportunities for the people to express their interests. Community broadcasting was seen by civil society groups to fulfil that purpose since it allowed people's participation in media management, message production and media ownership. Civil society groups saw that community radio could be used to break the monopoly of the media by the elite and the government. This perspective saw alternative media as a counter-hegemonic aid in the people's process of development of their cultural life (see Huesca 1995, p. 151).⁴

In the wave of regional autonomy in the post Soeharto era, villages became a focus of attention for the democratic movement. Community radio emerged in parallel with this movement. Activists saw in community radio the opportunity to empower people at grassroots level. The strong civil society would counteract the power of local

³ The term civil society refers to all those social organisations and networks operating outside the official sphere, including professional associations, trade unions, charitable groups, political parties, the press/media, cause orientated movements, social clubs and NGOs (Jones cited in Rudolph 2000, p. 61)

⁴ Counter-hegemonic refers to efforts to break hegemony. On the concept of hegemony, a term popularised by Gramsci, see O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2005). Hegemony is 'the process by which the ruling class shapes the consciousness of the masses.' Since the domination is everywhere, people do not recognise that they are under domination. With the help of mass media, people see hegemony as common sense (Berger 2007, p. 21; see also Waltz 2005, pp. 18-19).

government and enable community participation in the development process (Robinson & Fitzpatrick 2000, p. 255). Among civil society groups in Indonesia community radio has been conceived as part of a social change movement to democratise the political system, something that Antlov (2003, p.73) terms the mechanism of democracy that allows people at grassroots level to be heard.

With respect to the principle of participatory communication in community radio, the mushrooming of this medium in Indonesia increased the people's optimism about democratisation at the village level. This was especially seen in community radio's capacity to bring about an improvement of the people's ability to communicate their interests, to control local government and to be more involved in the decision making process in village governance, a situation which hardly occurred during the New Order since Soeharto restricted the civil society's role in political activities (Robinson & Fitzpatrick 2000, p. 255). As such, the introduction of community radio had the potential to be an important strategy for people at grassroots level to enable the distribution and sharing of information in order to exercise their rights as citizens and to participate in the process of development. However, on the ground this was not an easy task. At the beginning of the community radio movement in the early 2000s, civil society groups faced the fact that the existing Broadcasting Law number 24/1997 did not accommodate people's participation in broadcasting. The Law was seen as a representation of an authoritarian regime that wanted to control freedom of expression (Masduki 2007, pp. vii & 123).

Civil society groups urged the *DPR* to replace this Law, enacted by the Soeharto regime, with a new broadcasting law. In 1998, the *MPR/Majelis Permusyawaratan*

Rakyat (the People's Consultative Assembly) enacted *MPR* Decree number XVII/1998 concerning the area of Fundamental Human Rights. Articles 20 and 21 of the decree established the protection of both the right to communicate and receive information and the right to seek, receive, process, convey and use information. Since the position of an *MPR* decree is only one level below the Indonesian Constitution, this decree can be also seen as a legal basis for the civil society movement to propose new broadcasting laws (Razak 2000, pp. viii-ix).

In their works on broadcasting regulation, Mufid (2005) and Masduki (2007) note that during the process of making the new broadcasting law there were vigorous debates about the government's role in the broadcasting system. The supporters of the old law wanted to preserve the government's role since it had the experience and the mechanisms to 'guide' the media. At the same time, its opponents wanted to reduce the government's role since they saw that the government had a tendency to use its power corruptly as experienced during the Soeharto era. Civil society groups argued that in the reform era people's participation should be a priority (Mufid 2005, pp. 130-131).

The pressure of civil society groups on the *DPR* was important for the enactment of the Broadcasting Law number 32/2002. They pushed the *DPR* to include ideas of diversity of content and of ownership (Mufid 2005, pp.134-135; Masduki 2007, pp. 123-130). The Law fundamentally changed the relations between state and citizens regarding the function of the mass media as a form of public expression. It emphasised the important position of citizens as the owners of radio frequencies.

The Law also recognised various types of broadcasting institutions—including public, commercial, subscriber, and community broadcasting—and redefined the role of citizenry in the national broadcasting system. For the first time in Indonesian history, the existence of community broadcasting was acknowledged by a broadcasting law.

This acknowledgement is important for the protection of community radio, which always faced difficulties on the ground.⁵ The definition of a community broadcasting institution, as stated in article 21 clause (1), is:

a broadcasting institution in the form of an Indonesian corporate body, which is established by a certain community, independent and non-commercial in nature, with low transmission power and limited broadcasting coverage to serve the interests of its community.

This definition clearly specifies that community radio should cover a limited geographical area. Thus community is defined as a group of people living in a small area. *Peraturan Pemerintah*⁶ (Government Regulation) number 51/2005, which concerns community broadcasting, emphasises this limitation, stating that community radio must limit their effective radiated power (ERP) to 50 watt or 2.5 km coverage area.

The enactment of this Broadcasting Law has brought a positive effect in the development of community radio in Indonesia. Previously community radio was illegal and operated underground. Operators could not obtain a broadcasting license and thus were in constant danger of being closed down by the government. Today there are thousands of radio stations established in Indonesia (the total number of

⁵ See Chapter Three for the struggle of community radio movement in pursuing legal acknowledgment.

⁶ The purpose of a Government Regulation is to provide the administrative framework for the implementation of legislation.

community radio stations is not certain since the process of registration is not yet complete).⁷

This thesis examines the manner in which communities participate in decision making processes to create a grassroots democracy through the use of community radio in Indonesian villages, particularly in Yogyakarta Special Region. Responding to the question ‘how do people at grassroots level use community radio in the process of democratic transition in Indonesia?’ the thesis argues that the need of people to participate in the process of communication in local contexts has encouraged them to use community radio as a tool for pursuing democracy from below. In order to demonstrate this claim, case studies were used to build a comprehensive picture of the grassroots use of community radio in Indonesia.

Community Radio Studies

International studies on community radio are often related to democratic communication where the medium of radio has been associated with social change movements (Lewis 2002, p. 52). Rennie (2006, p. 17) points out that community radio studies emerged to investigate the efforts of civil society to “democratize” the media. The first studies of community radio were carried out in the early 1970s, when community radio movements, particularly in Latin America, had attracted the attention of scholars, especially when communication experts in that region started to challenge the domination of the Western paradigm of social communication. This was thirty years after the birth of community radio with the establishment of the first community radio stations in Colombia and Bolivia in the 1940s. At that time, the

⁷ In Chapter Three I present the number of community radio stations, including several Indonesian community radio organisations.

miners' radio in Bolivia and *Radio Sutatenza* in Colombia functioned as alternatives to the mainstream media, which was dominated by the government and the social elites. The opposition of Bolivian miners' radio toward military regimes has inspired studies on self-organised media as a strategy to campaign for better conditions in the community (O'Connor 1990; Fraser & Estrada 2001, p. 6; Hollander, Stappers & Janowski 2002, p. 19; Dagon 2004; Rennie 2006, p. 18).

In the 1970 and 1980s the European movement of community media gave rise to the democratisation of the airwaves and alternative media when Western European countries started to deregulate their broadcasting systems (Carpentier, Lie & Servaes 2003 and Lewis 2006). Explaining the inter-linkage of community radio movements in Latin America and Europe, Fraser and Estrada conclude that while Latin America was the birthplace of community radio, it was in Europe that community radio functioned as 'an alternative to – or a critique of – mainstream broadcast media' (2001, p.6). Then the idea of community radio as a medium for the voiceless was adopted by NGOs, Universities, UNESCO, and other groups around the world in order to assist people at grassroots level to voice their interests.

Regarding the idea of giving voice to the people, communication scholars defined community radio from the perspective of political economy. This perspective is based on the principle that community radio is owned by the people and intended for the representation of people's voices. In this vein, community radio's purpose is to be non-profit and often to provide alternative news to mainstream radio, particularly since community radio focuses on local issues. Lewis notes that people's involvement

in the operation of community radio, including their social role, behaviour and interactions, became a focus of study (Lewis 2002, pp.55-56).

In her study on community radio in Australia (2003), Kitty van Vuuren finds that there are two types of community radio stations: specialist and generalist. A specialist station focuses on a community of interest, such as indigenous, ethnic and religious. This type of community radio has a clear sense of purpose, such as to contribute to giving voice to the voiceless in specific communities. The second type, the generalist radio station, focuses on geographical communities and generally is located in rural, regional and remote communities. In the second type, radio programs were aimed to serve the whole population in the area.

Although many studies of community radio have been conducted in the context of grass-roots communication in Latin America, Asia, Africa (O Connor, A 1990; Dagrón 2001; Naidoo 2002; Kivikuru 2004), Europe, and Australia (Thompson 1999; Dagrón 2001; Forde et. al. 2001), the study of community radio in Indonesia can be considered new, since community radio as a part of the mass media system in Indonesia just started in 2002, during the reform era.⁸ Thus, there have been very few studies examples of research relating to community radio in Indonesia. For example, Lindsay (1997) studies localities of private radio stations in Indonesia. In her study, she uses the term “community” to refer to the audience of private radio. Although she does not mention the existence of community radio, her research is important for the study of community radio, especially in terms of localities. In addition, Lindsay finds that since the Soeharto administration defined radio as a non-political medium for

⁸ Refers to the enactment of the Broadcasting Law number 32/2002.

social communication, radio has tended to focus on entertainment. In their study of radio in the context of the media system in Indonesia, Sen and Hill (2000) examine the development of broadcasting radio and its role in processes of political transformation. Their study, in fact, provides an important basis for understanding radio in Indonesia.

Studies of community radio in Indonesia have been aimed at endorsing the existence of community radio in the media landscape, and have conceived community radio studies as a kind of action research. These studies combine conceptual analysis and practical guidelines on 'how to do' community radio. For example, Imam Prakoso and Nicholas Nugent (2007), sponsored by the World Bank, study the legal framework of community radio and democratisation of the flow of information in Indonesia.

Furthermore, Masduki, Hasanah, Ayuandini (2007) compile case studies of several community radio stations in West Java and Yogyakarta, Indonesia. This compilation, also sponsored by the World Bank, emphasises 'how-to-do' community radio, for example, describing the process of establishment of a community radio, community radio programs, campaign for community radio, and the technology of community radio.

Birowo, Herawati, and Sasangka (2000) carried out a survey research on potential audience of community radio in four villages in Sleman, Yogyakarta. This was preliminary research since in 2000 community radio was just starting to emerge in the post-Soeharto era. This study, which focused on people's perception of the idea of community radio, found that people in some villages in the north of Yogyakarta had no idea of the potential of community radio to enable them to own and manage their

own radio station. Interestingly, the villagers thought that community radio would be similar to other existing radio stations (Radio Republik Indonesia and commercial radio stations). This study suggests that after a long period without community media, people find it difficult to imagine what they should, or could, do with community radio. Unable to imagine that they could be able to manage their own radio station and to have the opportunity to be announcers, villagers were conditioned to a passive position as consumers of state and commercial radio.

Nevertheless, since its emergence in 1998 as a response to the euphoria of freedom of expression in the media, community radio continues to be developed by Indonesians at grassroots level. Radio stations have emerged everywhere in the country, from Papua to Aceh. As a result, numerous studies attempt to categorise community radio in Indonesia. For example, *JRKI* observes that in Indonesia there are four categories of community radio (jrki.wordpress.com/about/). Firstly, there is community radio established by villagers through discussion in citizens' fora or village meetings. This type of community radio is owned and run by residents of a given village, and they mutually assist each other (*gotong royong*) in the establishment of their radio station.

The second category is community radio established by educational institutions, especially universities. Although radio equipment is provided by the institution, the station is managed by student volunteers. The original purpose of this kind of community radio is to be a practical laboratory for a communication department or part of student organisations. However, usually the institution retains the control on this type of radio.

Thirdly, some community radio stations originate from the practice of hobby radio, which is established by a person or group who have an interest in electronic and communication. Thanks to their relations with civil society organisations through workshops and discussion, they change their orientation and use their radio stations as community radio, and invite villagers to participate in the management of the radio station.

The fourth category refers to commercially orientated radio stations that use the community radio label and community radio channels provided by the state. The main aim of the operators of this type of radio is to produce profit rather than to serve a particular community. Hence, in this case community radio is seen as an investment prior to the establishing of a commercial radio. Controversy about the existence of radio in this category can be seen in the debate in *JRKI's* mailing list (jrki_ngobrol@yahoo.com, February 4, 2007). One community radio volunteer in West Sumatra, for example, posted an email about a friend who had spent a considerable sum to establish a community radio as a vehicle to gain profit for volunteers. In the email, the writer wished his friend would soon make profit from the radio station. There were some responses which criticised the content of the email, as it was seen as inconsistent with the spirit of community radio. The responses, in general, stated that community radio should not be used for profit since the radio has a community purpose. This discussion shows that there are different understandings of the concept of community radio among radio activists. It also indicates that the community radio movement in Indonesia has been looking for an identity, which distinguishes it from other types of radio, such as commercial and public radio.

Research by Combine Resource Institution/CRI, an NGO focusing on community media development, found that community radio in Indonesia was mushrooming since people first started to establish their own radio stations. According to this research, community radio can be divided into four types: community, issue/sector, personal initiative, and campus (cited in Rachmiatie 2007, p.84). This research provided information about the types of community radio being used in Indonesia, although in the case of campus radio this categorisation was inconsistent with a prime characteristic of community radio; that it should be non-profit orientated. For example, one campus radio mentioned in this research was *Radio Swaragama*, a commercial radio owned by Gadjah Mada University, a profit-orientated radio. .

Jurriens (2003), who uses Bertolt Brecht's concepts of radio and theatre to analyse community radio in the context of *Reformasi* (Reform), concludes that Brecht's ideas about people's empowerment through the media and the arts have inspired community radio activists in Indonesia to use this medium as 'guerilla radio'. 'Community radio here functions as an alternative to the dominant cultural powers of state and capital, which control public and commercial radio, respectively' (Jurriens 2003, p. 204). Although Jurriens refers to UNESCO's concept of community radio, he does not use it to differentiate between community radio and commercial radio. In fact, in his categorisation, he includes some commercial radio stations, such as *Swaragama* and *Unisi* (owned by Islamic University of Indonesia), alongside community radio. Although the two mentioned radio stations are operated by universities, their aim is to gain profit; this fact makes Jurriens's assessment of community radio problematic. In this context, based on their orientation, we can differentiate radio owned by campus or university into two types: commercial and

community radio. 1) Campus-commercial radio was built by university to gain profit. This radio can accept commercials or advertisings for its incomes. 2) Campus-community radio was aimed to be the for-not-profit station. It is a laboratory for students to practice their skills in radio broadcasting. Since this radio cannot accept commercials or advertisings, so the radio gets financial support from campus.

Sen (2003) studies the role of radio as a democratic medium, especially in terms of articulating local politics. She notes that radio can be seen as framed by a local public sphere, borrowing Habermas' notion, where the focus is on local issues. She argues that radio has the capacity to be participatory media as it enacts the concept of 'many-many' communication, a concept that emphasises participation of more people in the process of message production. Although Sen does not discuss community radio specifically, she emphasises the need to conduct research on radio, especially as a democratic medium for rural people in Indonesia. This is an important study concerning the use of radio by people locally and at grassroots level.

Yo, Listiorini and Birowo (2004) study community radio in Yogyakarta, particularly university based radio.⁹ Their study uses focus group discussion to map campus-based community radio and its description of campus-based radio offers useful information on community radio's pluralism. It also shows that although campus-based radio is a part of community radio, which in Indonesia usually focuses on geographical communities, campus-based radio tends to serve a community defined by interest, especially the students of a given university. Thus, in the context of Indonesia, campus-based radio has taken a different direction from what is outlined by the

⁹ According to Broadcasting Law 32/2002, university based radio or student radio is categorised as a type of community radio.

Broadcasting Law number 32/2002, which defines community as a group of people living in certain area. The Law includes campus-based radio as a community broadcasting institution since its aim is non-profit. Yo, Listiorini and Birowo's study describes in detail this particular category of community radio.

Gazali (2002) studies the development of community radio as alternative media in Indonesia, especially in the post-Soeharto era. This study produces a descriptive analysis of the general situation of community radio in the Indonesian broadcasting system, as it initially was part of a strategy to provide data for the drafting of the Broadcasting Law number 32/2002.

An extensive discussion of broadcasting is carried out by Sudiby (2004). In his study, he finds that the existence of community radio in Indonesia cannot be separated from the economic and political situation of the mass media system in Indonesia. The implementation of the Broadcasting Law number 32/2002 found obstacles in the field since existing commercial radio challenged community radio, particularly in relation to the use of radio frequencies. In this context, according to Sudiby, community radio was labelled as illegal radio. This accusation created a difficult situation for communities, as community radio became a target of government raids. Sudiby's study is helpful in locating community radio in the scope of the political economy of the media.

Herawati, Listiorini and Halomoan (2005) discuss the motivation of audiences of *BBM* community radio in Yogyakarta by applying Uses and Gratification media audience theory. Their study focuses on people's motivation to listen to traditional

drama programs produced by their local radio, which provided historical education about their village. The researchers find that although the drama programs were produced by the villagers' own radio station, they were less attractive than entertainment programs such as Javanese music programs. This study concludes that people's participation in the process of production will encourage people's motivation to listen to community radio programs.

Furthermore, Rachmiatie (2007) studies community radio in the province of West Java. This study, which focuses on community radio in two villages, Cisewu in Garut Regency and Wanayasa in Purwakarta Regency, finds that community radio plays an important role as a medium of information and entertainment in isolated areas.

Rachmiatie also finds that the role of community radio in the selected areas is not optimal for community members because of the influence of top down communication.

Listiorini, Halomoan and Yo (2006) use Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in order to create a map of village-based radio in Yogyakarta Special Region Province. Based on FGD, they describe various aspects of the identities of community radio, such as names, technical aspects and locations. This study constitutes an important effort to provide profiles of community radio stations in Yogyakarta Province. As the researchers assume that the lack of data about community radio has influenced the strategy of development of community radio in Indonesia, their study seeks to provide data with the purposes of supporting community radio development. They find problems in the management of community radio in several villages since people had only just started to learn to utilise community radio.

A further examination of community radio is by Laksmi and Hariyanto (2007), who locate community radio in the context of media pluralism, alternative media in particular. Interestingly, this study provides information about the process of developing the Broadcasting Law 32/2002, which became the foundation of community radio's existence in Indonesia in the post-Soeharto era.

Based on the literature reviewed above, it can be concluded that the study of community radio in Indonesia has grown along with the need for media freedom and democratisation in the political system after the fall of Soeharto. Many publications focus on the issue of 'how to work with community radio,' giving practical guides on how to establish and manage community radio stations. Several studies focus on surface data; for example, profiles of community radio, while others provide macro analysis of community radio. There is a need to engage in deeper and more critical analysis of community radio to fill the gap left by this literature, and by the development of community radio itself.

Therefore, in this thesis, I set out to examine the role of community radio in the development of grassroots democracy in Indonesia, particularly in order to understand how village people in specific areas use their own radio to support democracy in their village. My discussion is undertaken within the context of the two areas of theorisation represented in the literature reviewed above: firstly, the theorisation of the relationship between community radio and grassroots democracy; and, secondly, analyses of the use of community radio at grassroots level to pursue democracy, following the change of political regime in Indonesia.

Research Objectives and Significance

The main objective of this thesis is to explore the role of community radio in establishing grassroots community participation, especially its relevance to democracy in the villages of Timbulharjo, Minomartani and Wiladeg, during the democratic transition in Indonesia. In order to explore the democratic potential of community radio, this thesis focuses on the following themes: firstly the history and position of community radio in the mass media system in Indonesia; secondly, the critical theorisation of community radio on the basis of the concepts of public sphere and participatory communication; thirdly, the use of community radio in democratisation in the above mentioned villages; and, finally, the use of community radio as a civic action media model to deal with natural disasters.

The significance of this thesis is twofold. It contributes new knowledge about the development of the mass media system in Indonesia, especially in what constitutes grass-roots level communication in the transition to democracy. This is important for the wider understanding of mass media and politics in Indonesia and in particular for the study of radio in this country. This thesis is also significant because it uses the perspective of local knowledge as a complementary tool alongside current communication theories, which have been mostly developed in the international context. One can say that the community radio movement in Indonesia is recent compared to the existence of community radio movements in other countries, especially North America, Latin America, Australia, and specific countries in Asia and Europe. Therefore, to study community radio in Indonesia will contribute new knowledge to understand the social use of community radio in the world.

Furthermore, through my participation in several international conferences, the topic of community radio in Indonesia has received attention from researchers in other countries. Community radio in Indonesia has been seen as a recent addition in international academic discussions, as most researchers have little information about the subject. Thus, the existence of community radio in Indonesia, which cannot be separated from the fall of Soeharto's dictatorial regime, provides interesting information regarding the need of people at grassroots level to participate in the development of democracy in their villages.

Research Fieldwork

Yogyakarta is well known as a city of education, with more than 100 higher education institutions (www.kopertis5.org), more than two hundred thousand students and more than twenty thousand lecturers (BPS-Statistics of Yogyakarta Special Region Province 2008). These students and lecturers have established Yogyakarta as a centre of social and political activities in Indonesia. In addition, many seminars, discussions and workshops concerning social and political topics are organised in this city by campuses, social-political organisations and NGOs (see Hadiwinata 2003, pp. 13-15).

A Community Radio Seminar, sponsored by UNESCO, was held in Yogyakarta in 2001 in an attempt to support the community radio movement. This seminar was a stimulant in the development of the community radio movement in Indonesia, in Yogyakarta in particular. For the first time, the prospects of community radio were

discussed in an academic environment and received attention from the wider public.¹⁰ Participants were of various backgrounds, including academics, NGO activists, journalists, radio practitioners and politicians. Because of this seminar, many other seminars, discussions and conferences have been organised to promote community radio in Indonesia. The seminar succeeded in encouraging civil society groups to support the community radio movement. These groups included *Forum LSM* (NGOs' Forum of Yogyakarta), *Lembaga Bantuan Hukum* (Legal Aid Institute), *Wahana Lingkungan Hidup* (Environmental NGOs Forum), *KAPALA* (An NGO involved in community based environment management), *USC Satu Nama* (An NGO focusing on community development), *CRI* (Combined Resource Institution), and *LAPERA* (Research and Community Development Foundation). In order to advocate effectively, they organised a forum, namely *JPRK/Jaringan Pendukung Radio Komunitas* (Community Radio Supporters Network). Their common aim was to establish an independent broadcasting regulatory body and encourage *DPR* (the People's Representative Council) to acknowledge community broadcasting by including it into the broadcasting Law.¹¹

As a strategy to strengthen their power, existing community radio stations were encouraged by civil society groups to unite in the *JRKY/Jaringan Radio Komunitas Yogyakarta* (Community Radio Network of Yogyakarta). As a result, 32 community radio stations joined *JRKY*.¹² As a lecturer in the Communication Department of Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University, I was interested in this movement and my interest in participatory communication encouraged me to get in touch with civil society

¹⁰ In international scope, UNESCO also played an important role in bringing a new awareness and interest in community radio to academics and civil society groups (Rennie 2006, p. 17).

¹¹ Interview with Mart Widie, 11 May 2006. Mart Widie was the secretary of *JRKY*.

¹² Discussion about community radio movement in supporting the amendment of the Broadcasting Law number 24/1997 can be found in Chapter Three.

groups. Through discussions with activists and community radio broadcasters, I have had previous information about the emergence of community radio in Indonesia, Yogyakarta in particular. I followed their meetings and was sympathetic towards their struggle in pursuing legal acknowledgement for community radio. Moreover, my involvement in the committee for establishing *KPID* (Indonesian Broadcasting Commission of Yogyakarta Province) in 2004 has enabled me to establish a more intensive relationship with community radio activists. Their enthusiasm to promote an independent regulatory body for the nation's broadcasting system, along with their motivation to participate in the democratisation of Indonesia through their radio practice, has inspired my interest to study community radio.

Among 55 community radio stations in Yogyakarta Province, I chose three community radio stations as my research locations: *Radio Komunitas Angkringan* (Angkringan Community Radio) in Timbulharjo village, *RKW/Radio Komunitas Wiladeg* (Wiladeg Community Radio) in Wiladeg village and *Radio Radio BBM/Komunitas Balai Budaya Minomartani* (Balai Budaya Minomartani Community Radio) in Minomartani village. These three community radio stations were chosen because they had existed for more than three years and because their location and community characteristics were different, as the following description shows.

Wiladeg is located forty kilometers Southeast of Yogyakarta. Wiladeg village is in Gunung Kidul Regency, a dry, hilly area. The land area of this village is a 695 hectares (BPS-Statistics of Yogyakarta Special Region Province 2008, p. 38). There is an asphalt road which links the village with Wonosari, the capital of Gunung Kidul

Regency. This regency was the poorest regency in Yogyakarta Province.¹³ The population of Wiladeg was 4,806 in 2005. Most residents worked in agricultural as un-irrigated field farmers. Peanuts, tapioca and corn are the main crops grown in this village. Many of the people were also goat and cattle farmers. Others worked outside the village as civil servants, employees of private companies and NGO staff members. The older generation has a low level of education but the younger generation mostly graduated from high school. Many of them graduated from higher education (Data Monografi Desa Wiladeg 2005). People could receive programs of commercial radio broadcast from Wonosari. State television and radio broadcasts from Yogyakarta could be received by people of Wiladeg. For television reception, they had to use a high tower antenna.

Timbulharjo village is located eight km south of Yogyakarta, the provincial capital. This village could be accessed from Yogyakarta through two regency roads, Jalan Bantul and Jalan Parangtritis. The population of Timbulharjo in 2005 was 17,000 dispersed in 16 sub-villages over a 778 hectare wide area (Nasir cited in www.cdsindonesia.org, BPS-Statistics of Yogyakarta Special Region Province 2008, p. 35). Most residents worked as farmers of irrigated fields. The main crops were rice, corn, peanuts and chillies. Several residents raise cattle, goats, chickens and ducks. Other residents worked in handicraft industries, as civil servants and private company employees. Commercial and state radio and television from Yogyakarta could be received by people in this village.

¹³ Gross Regional Domestic Product per Capita in Gunung Kidul Regency 2006 was Rp 6,425,139 (A\$ 818) compared to Bantul Rp 6,507,392 and Sleman Rp 8,829,211 (BPS 2008).

Minomartani village is located in Sleman Regency, five km to the north-east of Yogyakarta. Fifteen years ago this village was a place of fish farms and agricultural irrigated fields. Nowadays Minomartani village is transforming to be an urban village since the mushrooming of housing. This village is close to Condong Catur suburb,¹⁴ in Depok sub-district, the location of several large private higher education institutions in Yogyakarta Province. The population of Minomartani in 2005 was 6,961. Residents worked as civil servants, staff members of private educational institutions, lecturers, entrepreneurs and farmers. There was no difficulty in accessing communication media in this village. Public telecommunication facilities such as internet cafes and public telephone kiosks were available in this village. Commercial and state television and radio could be received in Minomartani. Newsstands were also available in this village. In terms of land area, this village is the smallest of the three villages in this research. Minomartani has a 153 hectare wide area (BPS-Statistics of Yogyakarta Special Region Province 2008, p. 44).

All of my field research was located in Yogyakarta Province. One of the motivations for this was that community radio stations in Yogyakarta are widely known for their dynamic development. In addition, focusing on community radio stations in Yogyakarta province helped me to conduct more intensive interviews and observations, as I could easily arrange interviews with informants—even more than once, if needed..

¹⁴ Condong Catur, located in Depok sub-District, has been growing as an urban area (BPS Statistics of Yogyakarta Special Region Province's classification 2008, p. 43). It is a location of Perumahan Nasional (low-cost housing developed by government) and other real estate developments. This village is also a location of several higher education institutions, including *UII* (Indonesian Islamic University) and *UPN* (National Development University), *AKS Tarakanita* (Social Welfare Academy of Tarakanita) and *STMIK Amikom* (Institute of Informatics and Computer Management of Amikom).

Research Methodology

This research is qualitative in nature and uses multiple case study strategies since I wanted to examine the use of community radio in specific communities.¹⁵ This design is deemed appropriate because the researcher seeks insights and generates interpretations of new trends and patterns for future validation of participatory communication.¹⁶ As a new study in Indonesia, one goal of my research, as suggested by Flick in relation to qualitative research (2002, p.5), was to find empirical material which had not previously been known.

In line with the suggestions of Yin (2003, Chapter Four) and Gillham (2000, pp.13-14), I used various sources for data collection. These included: (i) semi-structured interviews with knowledgeable persons; for example volunteers, community members, government officials, NGO staff members and academics; (ii) observations, which I made in the research locations, related to people's use of community radio in their natural setting; (iii) documents or secondary data collection, including historical records, proposals, brochures, and letters or emails; and (iv) other relevant material, such as comments made by participants in discussion. Participants of discussion were selected from community members who were knowledgeable persons concerning community radio activities included volunteers, listeners, and local dwellers. A volunteer of community radio became a moderator in the discussion. I instead noted the process of discussion. Participants were asked to sit down on the floor of the studio and form a circle in order to have an equal position in the discussion. All participants had a similar opportunity to express their ideas about the topic, namely,

¹⁵ To understand the purpose of case study I referred to Merriam (1991) and Wimmer and Dominick (2003).

¹⁶ Qualitative research is relevant if the researcher seeks understanding about new phenomena in local contexts (see Flick 2002, p. 2).

'people's participation in community radio'. Most questions were open-ended questions, which allowed participants to elaborate on the topic.

All this material is thus drawn on as evidence in my case studies. Additionally, my job as a lecturer at *Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University* and my activities related to participatory communication studies and the ad hoc committee for establishing Indonesian Broadcasting Commission in Yogyakarta helped me to be accepted by my research informants. I conversed with volunteers and groups of monitors, and joined in activities of the three community radio stations. Finally, I used semi-structured interviews to gather in-depth information from participants of community radio, such as audiences and volunteers.

Informants were selected according to their involvement in the stations. To get representative informants, I chose people who could be categorised as founders, volunteers, and community members. They were various in age and gender. I chose them since they were living in the three villages. They knew the daily activities of three community radio stations. They could provide information about their experience with the stations.

To give context to the theme of the development of community radio in Indonesia, I interviewed people who were involved in the community radio movement in Indonesia. They provided information about the macro contexts of community radio stations, for example, the campaign to promote community radio in the Broadcasting Law 32/2002. Snowballing techniques have also helped me in finding knowledgeable informants.

The reason for using various sources is to ensure accuracy and to discover any alternative explanations. The use of different sources of data, or research triangulation, enables the researcher to confirm the validity of the data and improve the quality of the research (Stake cited in Tellis 1997, p.2; Denscombe 1998, pp. 83-86; Gillham 2000, pp.29-30; O'Reilly 2005, p.154). Triangulation helped me to ensure the validity of the collected data through multiple checks. For example, the reports collected from volunteers of community radios were double-checked against one another. During data gathering, I double-checked the information derived from the interviews with informants. I confirmed information obtained from one informant by asking another informant. The purpose of double-checking was to obtain comprehensive data from the field. The use of multiple methods of collecting data was needed in order to improve the reliability and validity of the study. Most case study researchers recommend the use of multiple sources of data (see Wimmer and Dominick 2003).

Furthermore, the data gathered was descriptive in nature. I used non-probability sampling which allowed me to choose three community radio stations. This sampling was not used to answer questions such as 'how much' and 'how often' but to solve qualitative problems, such as discovering what occurs, the implications of what occurs, and the relationships linking occurrences (Merriam 1991, p. 47). Moreover, in order to describe the history and position of community radio in Indonesia, I used documents, archival data and interviews. Documentary and archival data were collected from government documents (Department of Communication and Information, Department of Transportation, Local Governments), *Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia* reports and policies, NGO reports (Combined Resource Institution, USC

Satu Nama, SAV Puskat, Tifa Foundation, and Institut Study Arus Informasi), mass media articles, scientific journals, research reports, monographs on the subject, and other related materials. Interviews¹⁷ involved members of *Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia*, scholars, personnel of NGOs and radio practitioners involved in community radio development in Indonesia. Since previous studies on radio were few, it was difficult for me to gain much insight from them. Rather, I had to trace the history of radio in Indonesia from studies on other topics, such as the development of nationalism in Indonesia, where I found that several nationalist leaders of Indonesia had been involved in radio activities. In addition, several leaders of *Budi Utomo*, which is claimed to be the first nationalist organisation in Indonesia, used radio as their tool of struggle. I also visited the library of Mangkunegaran Palace where I found information about the first native-Indonesian run radio, *PK2MN* and continued by *SRV*.¹⁸

Furthermore, in order to provide data for analysing people's participation in community radio, I used the method of participant observation. Such observation enabled me to watch and to listen to what happens in daily activities related to the operation of community radio in the three villages chosen for my study (O'Reilly 2005, p.3; Yin 2003, pp. 93-96).

I was not a member of the stations in the case study. I was an observer in the operation of the stations. I followed activities of the stations for 9 months. In addition,

¹⁷ I used open-ended questions to allow me to accommodate informants' opinion regarding the actual situation in the field. To gather in-depth information, these interviews were conducted in an informal setting (Neuman 1999, p.36; Gillham 2000, p.63) and were mostly one-to-one interviews. Based on my experience during field research, interviews were used to fill the lack of documentary reports on community radio.

¹⁸ See Chapter 2 for more information about the history of radio in Indonesia.

my previous activities in the process of the establishment KPID (Indonesian Broadcasting Commission of Yogyakarta Province) and training for community radio volunteers , as I mentioned in the previous paragraphs in the general introduction (pp.19 & 23), have helped me in building familiarity with volunteers of community radio. This familiarity gave an advantage in the data gathering process.

In this context, my foci included decision-making processes, message production and financing. To meet this objective, I also used semi-structured interviews with various sources, including participants (audiences and volunteers) of community radio in the three villages. To achieve the objective of assessing the impact of the use of community radio on the democratisation of village governance in the three villages, I used both the methods of interview and observation.

Finally, in this research data collection and data analysis were simultaneous activities. During data collection I used direct notes, voice recorder and camera. I wrote comments and reminders on the data in order to accommodate the situation in the field. The data were coded and categorised into groups and then analysed and interpreted qualitatively. I was the only coder and did not have any problems with intercoder reliability. The coded information was used to find categories and to help me to elaborate on more information during my research. The coding schedule can be found in appendix.

Thesis Outline

As stated above the central proposition of this thesis is that the need of people to participate in the process of social communication at grassroots level in local contexts

has encouraged them to use community radio as a tool for pursuing democracy from below. In order to demonstrate and illustrate this claim the thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 examines the theoretical background of community radio, focusing on the concepts of public sphere, participatory communication and local democracy, which constitute the foundation of the scholarly study of community radio. I begin this chapter with a discussion of concepts of community radio, where I find that since the focus of community radio is the community's interests, theories discussed here tend to explain the function of the media, radio in particular, as that of a device of people's empowerment at grassroots level. Thus, the chapter argues that the definition of community radio cannot be a single, homogenous one, because the characteristics of each community radio station depend largely on the characteristics of its community. In addition, in order to illuminate the understanding of the concept of community radio, this chapter discusses the development of community radio outside Indonesia.

Chapter 2 elaborates on the historical development of the medium of radio, and community radio in particular, in Indonesia. I start this chapter focusing on the history of radio during the pre-independence era of Dutch colonisation. This section is continued with the discussion of the history of radio during the post-independence era, especially in the transition from the Soekarno to the Soeharto regimes. In this section, I discuss the phenomenon of student-run radio at the end of Soekarno's administration and in the early days of Soeharto's (in the mid 1960s). In the third section, I discuss the development of community radio from 1998 until the present. The chapter argues that it was the people's long held desire for freedom of expression, following the downfall of Soeharto, which enabled the emergence of the community radio

movement in Indonesia. The chapter further demonstrates that the efforts of people to use community radio can be traced back to the earliest uses of radio in Indonesia.

Chapter 3 examines the potential of community radio as a medium for the development of citizenship, especially in expanding people's participation and minimising marginality at grassroots level. The chapter discusses the use of community radio in three villages, Wiladeg, Timbulharjo and Minomartani, as an illustration of the effort of people at grassroots level to realise democracy in their communities. The chapter goes on to show that in these villages community radio becomes a form of public sphere for the expression of people's interests. This is seen in relation to three community radio stations, *Wiladeg Community Radio*, *Angkringan Community Radio* and *BBM Community Radio*. The central argument of this chapter is that community radio offers opportunities to people to participate in public dialogue, where they can elaborate their potential as citizens who are aware of both their rights and obligations in society.

Chapter 4 focuses on the problem of how people at grassroots level use community radio in the context of their local culture. I start the chapter with a discussion of the issue of the hegemony of the mainstream media, which is seen as a threat to the existence of local culture. The mainstream media's hegemony is seen to cause an imbalance in the information flow, whereby people at grassroots level have little opportunity to be represented. The discussion continues by addressing the issue of representation. Community radio in this context is seen as a tool for people to interpret their situation or environment from the perspective of their local context. Therefore, the chapter argues that people at grassroots level use community radio for

cultural and political expression, so that their interests are represented in ways which cannot be satisfied by the mainstream media.

Chapter 5 discusses the role of community radio in situations of emergency caused by natural disasters (which occur frequently in many regions in Indonesia). The material for this chapter was written in response to my experience, while conducting field research, of the earthquake that struck Bantul, Yogyakarta Province, on 26 May 2006. This chapter's central argument is that Indonesian people use their media to fulfil their communication needs and to find solutions for their problems, especially during the occurrence of a natural disaster.

Chapter 1

Theoretical Perspectives on Community Radio

1.1 Introduction

The emergence of community radio in Indonesia can be seen as a consequence of the people's need for media pluralism. Media pluralism enables people at grassroots level to access information beyond what is provided by the mainstream media (Masduki 2003, pp.3-8), which is a situation that became dominant during the Soeharto administration in the years 1965 to 1998. In order to contextualise the role of community radio in Indonesia this chapter addresses the question: 'what is the conceptual background of the study of Indonesia's grassroots community radio movement?' For this the chapter broadly examines the theorisation of community radio, focusing on key concepts that are brought to bear on academic discussions, such as the notions of public sphere, participatory communication and local democracy, which constitute the foundation of the scholarly study of community radio. The chapter begins with a discussion of concepts of community radio, where it is found that since the focus of community radio is the community's interests, the theories tend to explain the function of the media, radio in particular, as that of a political instrument for people's empowerment at grassroots level. In addition, in order to illuminate the understanding of the concept of community radio, the chapter also discusses the development of community radio outside Indonesia. Thus, the chapter argues that the definition of community radio cannot be a single, homogenous one, because the characteristics of each community radio station depend largely on the characteristics of its community.

1.2 Defining Community Radio

While there is not just one definition of community radio, most scholars agree that the main focus of this type of radio is the interests of communities, including for example, the need to strengthen social relations among members. Indeed, the cooperative work of community members is essential for community radio to be useful in the development of the community; internal community cohesion is central to the success of community radio (Fraser and Estrada 2002, pp.70-71). Thus, community radio helps community members to have control over the sustainability of their community, while fostering social relations in the community (Howley 2005, p.268; McMurray 2007, pp. 16-17).

1.2.1 Community

The academic study of the concept of community is rooted in the German notion of *gemeinschaft*, which was used by sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies (1855-1936) to define an 'ideal type', or model, of society, where social bonds are personal and direct and there are strong shared values and beliefs (Weil 2005, p.10). According to Tonnies, the motives of individuals to create this social relationship derive from their natural will, which is characterised by familiar, not commercially oriented, small scale and localised societies (1955, pp.16-18 & pp.37-39). In Tonnies' geographical explanation community is related to a specific locale, such as a town, village, district, or island, where a group of people live and are tied by social relationships. He argues that the interdependence of the members of the group creates a shared sense of identity. Through the use of the concepts of social relationship, interaction and

interdependence, he implicitly underscores the important role of communication in making and maintaining a community (see also Scherer 1972, pp.13-15).

Like Tonnies, many other scholars argue that community is conventionally identified with a relatively limited geographical region (see Jankowski 2002, p. 5; Tabing 2002, p.11). This geographical limitation is based on historical and anthropological approaches, which consider the relationship between community and place.

According to these approaches, historically men and women have needed land as their place to live. The limited area enables members of a community to interact with each other intensively. Having more opportunities to interact with each other in everyday life enables them to exchange experiences and create mutual understanding when defining their common problems and identifying ways of solving them.

Defining community purely in geographical terms has, however, attracted critiques which argue that while place is important for social interaction it is only an aspect of community. Clearly, there could also be interest-based communities in a less narrowly defined geographical area. The argument for a notion of interest-based community is made on the grounds that the development of transportation, and information and communication technologies allow people in different locations to interact with each other. The technology helps people with the same interests to overcome geographical barriers. This is what Scherer (1972, p.14) calls 'modern mobility', by which it is meant that people have an ability to experience various environments since they can communicate with people from other places. Thanks to modern technology, people do not need to congregate in one place in order to form a community. This type of community is often called a functional community, since it shares the general

characteristics of all communities while excluding living in a common place (Voth 2006, p.849; Etzioni 1995, p. 24). Thus, interest-based communities have attracted more scholarly attention in recent years.

Community is constructed by people who depend on one another, share ideas, and bring their own individuality (physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and cultural) to their common involvement with their shared environment. As a result, the lives of the members of a community tend to be closely interwoven with each other, as they share common characteristics; yet whereas some of them may live in the same geographical area, others may simply have similar interests. This definition implies that the characteristic of a community is shaped not only by its members but also by its environment. Thus, community can be conceptualised through the notion of ecology, whereby relationships within the community not only connect people to the community, but give back to the community what it needs to sustain itself (McMurray 2007, pp. 9-10 & p.13).

Commonality of interest can be useful to form the conditions of possibility for people to sustain their community. Common interest has been defined as a link between community members who are involved in similar activities and collectively strive to build solidarity in the pursuit of their goals. In this context, a community of interest is generated by a feeling of curiosity or concern about something that makes the attention turn towards it (see Carpienter, Lie & Servaes 2003, p. 4). In other words, community refers to a group of people who have common social or professional identities (for example jobs, cultural orientation, political orientation, gender, hobbies,

or education), such as farmers, fishing communities, traditional artists, or ethnic groups.

Tonnies (1955, pp. 16-18) observes that community is the result of the natural will of a group of people who are linked through emotional relationships, or what Sorokin calls 'familistic ties' (cited by McKinney and Loomis 1957, p.18). In the introduction to Tonnies's English edition of *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (1957), McKinney and Loomis contend that for Sorokin 'familistic relationships are permeated by mutual love, sacrifice, and devotion' (p.18) and that individuals who participate in the community's interactions tend to fuse their ego into a collective 'we' (p. 19), which is a word for commonality. Thus in a community there is a process of negotiation among individuals to maintain their community. This concept, which is encapsulated in the notion of *gemeinschaft*, is contrasted to *gesellschaft*, which refers to complex, impersonal societies, and task-oriented interaction. *Gesellschaft* is based on an idea of rational will, whereby individuals' motives to associate are characterised by consciousness; this kind of social bond is referred to as 'society' (Tonnies 1955, p.17 & p.37). Although the concept of community radio is closely aligned with *gemeinschaft*, the notion of consciousness implied in *gesellschaft* is also used, as discussed below in relation to Freire's theory of 'conscientisation'.

Canvassing various definitions of community in the 1980s, Newby (cited in Hollander, Stappers & Jankowski 2002, p.26; Voth 2006, p. 849) concluded that the majority of definitions have three essential components: an area, a local social system, and a sense of identity. These components are useful to locate the concept of community in relation to media because through their communication channels, people can share

perspectives to create commonalities and build a sense of belonging (Scherer 1972, p.104). The concept of community can therefore equally refer to both geography and interests (see Scherer 1972, p.13).

In general communication studies scholars have accepted both definitions as they have tended to focus on issues of empowerment while discussing the concept of community, which is often related to marginal groups (Downing 2006, p. 829). Members of a minority group do not have power to obtain what they need since they have difficulty making their voices heard by decision makers. As a result, 'the designations community radio and community access television have been ways of defining these media as institutions responsive to demands and priorities from below' (Downing 2001, p.39; Downing 2006, p. 829; see also Lewis 2002, p.52).

Communication from below is an important function of community radio, as it enables people at grassroots level to send their messages up the social ladder.

This social communication function places community radio in the public arena, which in turn contributes to the development of healthy communities. McMurray (2007, pp. 16-17) argues that by participating in decisions that affect daily life, members of a healthy community are able to feel that they have some control over the design and sustainability of the community's current and future potential. A healthy community is recognised by the fact that all its members are given the opportunity to participate in decision making processes. In this way, members feel a sense of commonality or cohesion with others, which benefits all in the community (see Stein 2002, p. 136). This sense of cohesion encourages bonds of trust among the members, which is a form of social capital necessary to sustain the community. This argument

about community is essential to understand how people use community radio to maintain trust and develop solidarity among community members.

The concept of community used in this thesis includes both the geographical and interest-based aspects of commonality. Indeed, these concepts are not mutually exclusive; they can and do overlap.

1.2.2 Community Radio

Despite a plethora of works on community media, including community radio, Bosch (2003, p.144) admits that there is not a global definition of community radio. The word 'community' is frequently attached to certain media communication channels to identify media used in a local context within a limited geographical area, such as village, town or suburb. From an alternative viewpoint, community media can represent people with the same interests (Hollander, Stappers & Jankowski 2002, pp. 22-23).

The use of the concept 'community' in relation to media has its origin in sociology and focuses on social interaction among community members (Lewis, 2006).

Referring to Janowitz's study of the community press in Chicago, Lewis notes the difference between mainstream media (mass media) and community media; the mass media's coverage area is wider and more general than that of a community newspaper. This implies that the mass media tend to focus on general issues. On the other hand, community media is seen as more relevant for its own community since it tends to focus on specific aspects in the life of a community 'which are not given expression in the daily press' (Lewis 2006, p.26). For example, it is unlikely to see the

commercial press covering a village meeting held to discuss the process of organising a traditional event.

The desire to establish community broadcasting covering ‘simple or small issues’ emerged in many parts of the world. As a result, there are various terms related to community broadcasting. The word ‘community’ has been used in Canada since the 1960s in relation to community television and the involvement of local communities in the process of media production and ownership. The term ‘community’ in this context differentiates these media from mainstream media. Similarly, European countries began to use community as a prefix in their community media projects in the 1970s, when community radio started as an alternative to commercial and state radio. In countries such as Italy, Portugal and France, alternative radio broadcasters introduced the phrase ‘free radio,’ which described radio stations that were free from regulation and from the monopolies of centralised state broadcasting organisations (Lewis 2006, Sanchez 2003, p.6). Later on, in France, there was a change of vocabulary. As the French *radio libres* began to be taken over by commercial networks, other terminology was adopted: *radios associatives* became the official label for radio in the truly non-profit sector, and the adjective *communautaire* signified the general type of community radio.

In the USA community radio had originally described itself as listener-sponsored radio (see Howley 2005, p.41), but the term community radio has been used by the National Federation of Community Broadcasters (NCFB) since 1975. In Australia, in the early 1970s community radio was known as ‘public radio’. Then in the early

1990s the name changed to 'community radio' (Thompson 1999, p.23; van Vuuren 2006, p.380).

Jankowski (2002, p.7) and Sanchez (2003, p.6) also note other terms. For example in Latin America community radio is known as popular and educational radio. In Africa it is known as rural or bush radio, which began as media supporting social movements. In Asia community radio emerged as media for participatory communication for social change after the fall of authoritarian regimes in the region (Dagron 2001, p.8). Fraser & Estrada (2001, p. 4) note that 'there have been various terms applied to small-scale radio broadcasting such as 'local', 'alternative', 'independent', or 'free' radio.' In summary, the various terms reflect the different backgrounds, functions, principles and modes of operation of each radio community.

The uniqueness of community radio in different places around the world implies that a single, tight definition cannot be applied to these media (Rodriguez cited in Forde, Meadows & Foxwell 2003). In this sense, AMARC (*Association Mondiale Des Radiodiffuseurs Communautaires*) or World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters does not provide any specific definition of community radio. This organisation, like most scholars, prefers to focus on principles or, according to Librero (2004, p. 1), functions of community radio: media for, about, and by communities. Some community radio stations focus on interest-based communities while other radio stations focus on locality-based communities. Many community media researchers use both definitions. For example, Rennie (2006, p.3) uses a concept of Lewis and Booth stating that community can be defined both

geographically and by interest. In a similar vein, Hollander, Jankowski and Nicholas contend:

In the German literature, the term *lokale Öffentlichkeit* - local public sphere - is used as the conceptualization of an *Öffentlichkeit* that coincides with a geographically based local unit or social system: the municipality, parish, village, or suburb. In Anglo-Saxon communication literature the expression 'community communication' refers to the communication structure in a geographical community or in a community of interest. Usually it is taken for granted that such a geographical unit as a parish or suburb is indeed a community of interest in the sense that there exists a local public sphere where relevant issues are communicated (2002, p.27).

Rather than focusing on terminology, community radio activists agree that it is more important to emphasize participation and access of community members in community radio (Opoku-Mensah 2006, p.856; Rennie 2006, p.22). The principle of participation lies at the heart of community media and it has been mentioned by Berrigan in his 1979 book *Community Communications: the Role of Community Media in Development*. He discusses two-way communication as the identity of media designed for particular groups or communities. The two-way communication allows people in a community to participate in an exchange of views and news from a position of equality, rather than being simple recipients in a transmission from one source to another (Berrigan 1979, p.7-8).

The participation and access of a community in their own media is also argued by Sanchez (2003, p.5), who conducted a study of legislation on community broadcasting in 13 countries. She explains that the basic principle of community radio is that it is not only run by but also serves people who have little opportunity to access mainstream media. The term 'access' in this context refers to active action. People are placed as subjects of the communication process, whereby they can participate in the process of message production.

In terms of the difficulty in reaching agreement about a definition of community radio, AMARC Latin America proposes the following criteria to identify community radio:

Community participation and ownership: the community collectively owns the communication process and makes decisions about it in a democratic participatory manner, covering programming, staffing and resources.

Development of local content: a majority of programming is locally produced and is relevant to the needs of the poorest in the community. This includes the promotion of dialogue and debate on issues of education, health, legislation, human rights and social organisation, among others.

Language and cultural relevance: broadcasting needs to be in languages spoken by the community and that respects local cultural beliefs and practices (AMARC 2008, p.45).

The above criteria refer to the function of community radio as a form of media for elevating the position of marginalised people in the communication process. This objective is mainly derived from the functions of community radio in Latin America, where it plays a role as a social communication medium for the support of mobilisation and resistance movements in order to serve the interests of the community (Sanchez 2003, p.5; Rennie 2006, pp. 17-18).

The above criteria also help to differentiate community radio from other radio stations, arguing that ownership and control are important principles for people at grassroots level to ensure the message of the community radio will represent their interests (Tabing 2002, p. 11). A similar position is also taken by Fraser & Estrada (2001, p. 4). According to them, two principles, being run by the community and owned by the community, distinguish a community radio station from other types of radio, including a radio station owned by and also managed by an NGO, although the latter radio also serves the people (see AMARC 2008, p.46). In radio owned by NGOs, the

decisions on community radio's policies, for example, the role of volunteers and programming, are often made by outsiders. This is because each NGO has its agenda according to its specialty. For example, an NGO focusing on the environment will use its radio as a tool for environmental campaigning, whereas an NGO with a good governance agenda will focus its radio on political issues.

Much debate about community radio focuses on the principles of not-for-profit and independence. In this context, IAMCR's (the International Association of Media and Communication Research) general definition of community media is useful.

Community media, it says:

originates, circulates and resonates from the sphere of civil society...this is the field of media communication that exists outside of the state and the market (often non-government and non-profit), yet which may interact with both. (Rennie 2006, p.4).

Through these principles community radio is expected to maintain its orientation to community and its independence from market interests, which would otherwise limit the community's participation and access, and which in turn would endanger the existence of community radio. Regarding the non-profit orientation, there has been much debate about whether community radio may or may not accept revenue from advertising. Yet, this debate is also extended to the problem of how the daily costs of community radio can be met. On the one hand, community members are expected to sustain their community radio, so that the radio station can remain independent from the market. On the other hand, there is an expectation that community radio will empower the local economy by promoting local business through its broadcasts. In this sense, it is perceived that local business can provide an income to community radio while benefiting from advertising.

1.3 The Public Sphere

In order to situate the study of community radio within the field of communication studies it is necessary firstly to consider the concept of public sphere. This concept refers to the importance of people's access to an open public forum where they can exchange ideas, find a mutual understanding of the problems they want to address, and have an equal position in the communication process. The concept of public sphere, as theorised by Jürgen Habermas, has influenced ongoing scholarly discussions about the relation between media and society. Derived from Habermas's work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989), the notion of public sphere has often been used as a theoretical starting point to examine the relationship between democracy and communication (see Fuller 2007, p.5; Howley 2005, p.19). This notion has also been discussed and used to analyse the media system in Indonesia (see Kitley 2000; Hidayat 2002; Sen 2003; Hill and Sen 2005). However, while Habermas's concept is often deployed in studies of media in general, little is said about how it can inform our understanding of community media, in general, and community radio, in particular.

In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* Habermas analyses the evolution of the practice of discussing matters of public importance by private citizens. In this analysis, he argues that people can influence the political process by forming a public opinion through the open discussion of public issues, while deciding which of them are relevant for their lives. In this sense, the 'public sphere is a space where private people come together as a public' (Hill and Sen 2005, p.8). The public is assumed to be constituted by active citizens with equivalent positions and equal

willingness to participate in public discussion. Within this framework, the public space should be open and accessible to all for rational discussion of public matters (Habermas 1989, p.37). Nancy Fraser interprets Habermas's notion of the public sphere as based on the medium of talk (Fraser 2003, p.84), whereby participants are able to voice their opinions freely. Since the sphere is provided for all without discrimination, the discussion can be seen as part of deliberative activities among concerned citizens. For deliberative processes to be directed to common interests, Habermas proposes that participants cannot be primarily oriented towards their own individual aims, but rather towards conditions that harmonise their interests with a common good. In this vein, participants 'should be willing to modify or change their views as a result of debate and discussion' (Cammaerts 2007, p.3).

The deliberative process is based on two principles. Firstly, the participation of citizens in discussions in the public sphere is independent and separate from the state. Secondly, public discussion is also separate from the market since it is not based on a commercial orientation. Based on these principles, the public sphere is claimed as an arena of civil society,¹⁹ where citizens participate in decision making, especially through building public opinion to influence government policies concerning public matters (see Habermas 1989, p. 74; Jacobson and Storey 2004, p. 102). According to Robinson and Fitzpatrick:

A sufficiently strong civil society may counteract the excesses of authoritarian rule and allow greater community participation to foster a more sustainable development process. (2000, p. 255).

¹⁹ The role of civil society is distinguished from state and corporate sectors. It is independent and works for public interests (Calabrese 2004, pp. 317).

Since the discussion is attended by participants with various backgrounds, so differences of opinion are acceptable in this forum. Habermas believes that discussion with diverse interests or opinions can achieve negotiated meanings about common problems and their solutions. In this vein, the public sphere is important for fostering collective action by participants as they pursue their common goal.

Within this framework, it seems obvious that the public sphere be associated with political action (see Rennie, 2006, p.34). Indeed, the public sphere is also seen to be important in the development of democracy. Jacobson (2004 p.10), elaborating on Habermas's theory, argues that democratic legitimacy is grounded in discursive power. Therefore, it is often argued that political democracy is not possible without providing a public sphere that gives people opportunities to participate in decision making processes (Meyer and Hinchman 2000, p.1).

There are two essential conditions which are necessary to build an effective and healthy public sphere: the quality of discursive practices and the quantity of participation within discourses (Howley 2005, p.19). The first condition calls for rational and critical debate based not on the identity of participants, but upon the reasoned and logical merits of an argument. The second condition demands public access to participate in open debate and encourage the inclusion of various opinions and perspectives. Therefore, the concept of public sphere implies that democratic society is only possible if everyone has access to information. This access is only possible if there is acknowledgment of both the right to communicate and its implications, such as freedom of information, democratisation of the media, and diversity of opinions.

Through their participation in the use of non-mainstream media, people at grassroots level struggle to create opportunities to exercise their ability to express their ideas and interests. Regarding the relation between participation and the ability to communicate, it is relevant to refer to Pusey's argument (1987), which states that it is important for all community members to participate in the dialogue about public affairs in an open arena or forum. People first learn and then practice how to express and listen to different ideas, a process which contributes to decision making. To participate in this process, people should have the skill to articulate their interests using various forms of media. This is what Habermas sees as communicative competence. In this way, people can be involved in the political process, especially in decision making, to ensure their needs will be accommodated. The idea of empowering people at grassroots level can be also found in Paulo Freire's concept of 'pedagogy of the oppressed' (1972), which will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Within the framework of studies of communication, Rennie (2006, p.19) cites Downing to contend that alternative media can be seen as an extension of the active audience. The concept of active audience is derived from the need to shift the position of ordinary people from media consumers to media producers. It is also seen as a way to 'destabilize the one-to-many communication structure of the mass media through their participatory, two way structure' (Rennie 2006, p.18). In two-way communication, there is more possibility for participants to exchange ideas and experiences in order to improve their understanding of their environment. The opportunity to exchange experiences is essential in the concept of the public sphere, since the public is seen as a social organisation formed by societal experiences. In this

vein, Rennie argues that community media can ensure ordinary people have increased opportunities to participate in the dialogue of public interest and they can elaborate their potential as citizens Rennie 2006, p. 182).

Citizenship is a status that implies that the individual is granted rights and duties in the community. To enable one to implement his/her rights and duties, one should have the ability to act as an agent of a political community (Cammaerts 2007, p.1). While citizenship is related to egalitarian considerations, equality is not a given. Rather, people should create it through political activity; citizenship is in this sense a political identity (Mouffe 1992, p. 231; Alfaro 2006, p. 745). This argument refers to situations where people should firstly have power in order for them to pursue their interests. In this context, community media becomes a tool for people at grassroots level to negotiate their citizenship ‘through expressions of identity and cultural strategies’ (Rennie 2006, p.21).

In view of the relationship between citizens and community media, Rodriguez (2001) argues that there is a need to frame alternative media and community media into the concept of citizen media. Through the concept of citizen media, she suggests that community media should be related to empowerment and enables people at grassroots level to be active citizens. In other words, community media can produce power (Rodriguez 2001, p. 19). Furthermore, Rodriguez argues that referring to citizen media implies:

that first a collectivity is enacting its citizenship by actively intervening and transforming the established mediascape; second, that these media are contesting social codes, legitimized identities, and institutionalized social relations; and third, that these media are empowering the community involved, to the point where transformations and changes are possible (Rodriguez 2001, p.20).

By allowing people's participation, citizen media function to transform people at grassroots level into active citizens, who are aware of their rights and obligations. In summary, by using the term citizen media, Rodriguez locates the function of community media in the context of articulation of citizenship (Rennie 2006, p.21). From this point of view, the active audience in turn will transform into active citizens.

Therefore, through the use of community media the process of negotiation of citizenship is brought into the public sphere. As Habermas points out, the public sphere is a foundation for building citizenry that provides a forum for all to discuss public matters openly. As a result, any attempt to provide a public sphere is important for a community (see Howley 2005, p.19). The discussion around civil society and the public sphere brings to the forefront the importance of a communication platform for empowering people. Furthermore, by talking about the necessity for people at grassroots level to build citizenry, the debate then becomes associated with the need for community media, including community radio (see Rennie 2006, pp.32-37).

In light of these arguments, community radio can thus be seen as providing a public sphere for people at grassroots level, as it accommodates the expression of diverse interests and opinions within society. Through the civil society's engagement in this public sphere, it can be said that community radio represents citizen participation. Within this framework, community media is seen as a form of media specifically designed for public participation (Rennie 2006, p.22 & p.34).

1.4 Participatory Communication

Communication studies scholars have discussed the participatory communication approach in processes of social development since the 1970s. It has been argued that participatory communication, or communication from the bottom up, opens spaces for the participants to communicate views in order to build and voice common interests. In terms of social development, the participation of the community is perceived as a crucial ingredient (Fraser & Estrada 2002; Tabing 2002; Dagron 2008; Lewis 2002 & 2006; Lucas 1995; Forde, Foxwell & Meadows 2001). The opportunity to participate is thus useful for people's self-empowerment by developing self-confidence, awareness, and organization at the local level (Stuart & Bery 1996).

There is a close relation between participatory approach and the power of people at grassroots level. To facilitate those people to develop their potential, the approach acknowledges about the importance of cultural identities of local communities and of democratization and participation at all levels. Moreover, participation is thought to be important, because:

Development efforts should be anchored on faith in the people's capacity to discern what is best to be done as they seek their liberation, and how to participate actively in the task of transforming society. The people are intelligent and have centuries of experience. Draw out their strength. Listen to them (The Xavier Institute, cited in Servaes 1996, p. 15).

This view of communication calls for a shift from a communicator-oriented approach to an audience-oriented approach, while recognising that people are the agents of development (Servaes 1996, pp.15-17; Thomas 2006, p.475). This approach cannot be applied in a non-democratic society that puts the government at the centre of the communication flow, a phenomenon often found in developing countries. For this reason, some scholars, especially in Latin America, have defined the mass media in

their countries as an extension of the social elite's domination (Rogers 2006, p.118). In fact, in most developing countries, social communication is controlled by the socio-economic elites, who own the media technologies, hold the political power and are located in large cities. As a result, an imbalance is produced in the flow of communication, whereby the content of the mass media tends to reflect the perspective of the urban elite, regarding issues such as politics, the economy, and entertainment. Since in Indonesia most commercial radio and television networks are centralised in Jakarta, news, entertainment and advertising represent only the perspective of the big city.

Because in developing countries most of the information originates in big cities, rather than rural areas, the mass media are seen to be responsible for creating widening gaps between advantaged and disadvantaged audiences (Shingi and Mody 2006, p.126). Responses to this imbalance of information flow can be seen, for example, in NWICO (New World Information and Communication Order). Dependency theory proponents, by the same token, have questioned the domination of the information flow by developed countries, especially in relation to the content of the mainstream media, which in turn influences alternative media movements.

It has been argued that linear or top-down communication, while designed to accelerate development, does not allow for active involvement of the participants of the process of social communication. Considering the failures of the top-down approach, Romano notes that communication scholars have 'advocated greater emphasis on interpersonal networks and interactions of media audiences in order to mobilize the people' (Romano 2003, p.39). Based on his study of radio education,

Ansu-Kyeremeh (1992) suggests that linear communication, especially the top-down model, not only contradicts many aspects of village communication but also leaves no place for the voice of the people to be articulated. Moreover, he argues that the one-way communication approach is incompatible with the interpersonal, face-to-face communication patterns which characterise village interaction. Rather, two-way communication and horizontal communication are forms of a more appropriate model for the village, where people can exchange ideas based on their way of life and culture.

According to Stuart Hall (1997, pp.1-5) meaning is the central point of culture: the people of a community produce, exchange, and share meanings that are about their daily experience and practice. In the same way, they construct their own identity and give value to it. It should be considered that communication is not only a process of transmission of messages but also a process of creation of meanings by participants within their daily life.

Because people always communicate and exchange ideas with each other, there is a constant process of identification with the community. Identification itself influences the way people articulate their life (see Hall 1996, pp.2-3). Through the use of tradition to maintain meanings, people in turn make new meanings that 'regulate and organize our conduct and practices [and] help to set the rules, norms and conventions by which social life is ordered and governed' (Hall 1997, p.4). For this reason, in recent years 'culture' has been defined as a community's particular way of life, with its own specific diversity of meanings, interpretations, and representations.

Considering that every community has its own culture, centralised communication, which assumes that there is only one way to interpret and represent any topic, is likely

to fail to represent local interests and points of view, thus marginalising local cultures from developmental processes.

Latin American scholars Jesus Martin Barbero, Luis Ramiro Beltran, and Juan Diaz Bordenave have rejected the model of centralised communication in the development process, and proposed an alternative model emphasising participatory communication (known as the participatory communication model). They promoted a new model which should develop from a local situation. For example, Bordenave (2006) suggests a need for new models in agricultural development. Beltran (2006) argues about the need of a new model to answer problems of rural development and social communication in Latin America. Another scholar, Barbero (2006) argues the importance of culture in the construction of communication theories to understand the real situation in the field.

Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (published in 1970 and translated into English in 1983) was the major source of inspiration for the theory of participatory communication (Servaes 1996, p.17; White 2006, p.482), as he combined Liberation Theology and Marxism (Lewis 2006, p.20) to re-examine issues of power, participation and educational content in adult literacy (Downing 2001, pp. 45-46; Manyozo 2004).

Consequently, Servaes (1996, p.17) explains that Freire's works are articulated by a dual theoretical strategy. The first strategy, based on theology, 'demands respect for otherness.' Liberation Theology, developed within the Latin American Catholic Church in the 1960s and 1970s, had an important role in Freire's thoughts. Herndl and

Bauer (2003) describe Liberation Theology as a religious ideology that represents the Catholic Church's commitment to and solidarity with the poor of Latin America, who demand radical economic and political reforms (p.565). Foroohar (1986, p.40), in turn, defines it as: '[t]he theological response of Latin American Catholics to poverty and repression' In other words, this theology is a combination of political practice, religious practice, people's daily experience and local context (Herndl and Bauer 2003, p. 564). Because of its revolutionary ideas about empowering people and its calls for 'class struggle' against capitalists and dictators supported by the USA, according to Herndl and Bauer (2003), Liberation Theology has often been seen by North Americans as a Marxist version of Catholicism (see also Roelofs 1988, p.549). Other scholars, however, reject this allegation arguing that in some Latin American countries Liberation Theology emerged as a counter to communism (Foroohar 1986, p.37). Overall its grassroots orientation has made it an inspiration for activist scholars to fight against authoritarian regimes.

In summary, theology inspired Freire to see each individual as an autonomous human being who has the capacity to decide what they need based on their reflection on daily experience. For Freire action and reflection are not separate activities. Rather, the dialectic interplay of action and reflection create conscientisation, which will be the main trigger for individual independence. In this way, conscientisation leads to 'actual liberation' (Thomas 2006, p.476).

The second strategy of Freire's thought, according to Servaes (1996, p.17), is inspired by Marxist theory in which human life is more than life as a fulfilment of material needs.' Marxism influenced Freire's ideas about poverty and cultural suppression. For

Freire poverty and cultural suppression should be approached by collective solutions where the community's interests are higher than any individual interest. Freire's tendency to put community as the highest value has made him a leading theorist of communitarianism (Tehrani 1996, p.43).

Freire's notions of dialogical education, conscientisation, and the 'culture of silence' became widely accepted by development communication scholars. According to Freire (1983) the opposite of the directive 'top-down' approach is the process of 'conscientisation', which refers to the process in which men and women, not as recipients but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness both of the sociocultural reality that shapes their lives and their capacity to transform that reality. Thus, people's consciousness about their environment is the foundation for participating in the process of decision making where they can voice their interests and propose the solution which is relevant to their lives. Freire highlights the importance of knowledge that is owned by people and rejects knowledge that is dropped from the 'scholar's authoritative shelf' (Downing 2001, p. 45). On this point, Freire's notion of liberation encourages critical thinking that helps people at grassroots level to understand 'the causes of social injustices and to organize effective action to influence the socio-cultural reality that shapes their lives' (Romano 2003, p.40).

The influence of Freire's reflections on the study of projects involving people at grassroots level is remarkable. Thomas (2006, pp.476-477) notes that Freire has greatly influenced scholars and social activists involved in participatory development projects. Lewis (2006, p.20) states that Freire's notion of conscientisation has

contributed to the movement of independent community media, which ‘went hand in hand with the critique of oppressive mainstream media and the culture of silence they induced.’ Based on the acknowledgment of the people’s capacity to nurture their own development, participation is therefore an important aspect of all decision making processes because people need to have information, knowledge, and experience related to the development process in their environment. In this vein, those working in development studies have conceptualised development as a natural process occurring in a community (Servaes 1996, p. 15 and p.19).

It can then be concluded that Freire’s theory of pedagogy, which emphasises people-centred development, is a core philosophy of the participatory communication model (Downing 2001, p. 46). This model in turn has influenced the development of community radio throughout the world, especially through UNESCO programs that facilitate the use of community radio in developing countries. In its 1977 meeting in Belgrade, UNESCO proposed self-management, access and participation as key principles when dealing with community media (Servaes, 1996, p.18). By making space for people’s participation, community radio provides horizontal communication within the community. Horizontal communication is based on the principle of community access to media production and decision-making. For people at grassroots level, these principles are important in that they encourage them to contribute ideas about the development of their community; for example, fostering transparency, accountability, education, health and care for the environment.

The participatory perspective establishes a greater focus on the process of understanding in people’s daily life. In this way, community radio is meant to help

people to create new ideas for the solution of local problems (see Berrigan 1979, p.8). In so far as it promotes democracy and participation, community radio has been theorised as an effective medium for the implementation of participatory communication. It is, as Kivikuru pointed out at the IAMCR Conference in Porto Alegre in 2004, 'considered as providing a closer route to the grassroots.' In this way, community radio aims not only to participate in the life of the community, but also to allow the community to participate in the life of the station (Bruce Girard cited in Jankowski 2002, p.7).

According to Hendy (2000, p. 16), the potential of community radio in supporting people at grassroots level to gain their right of expression is based on three premises: firstly, the small scale of community radio; secondly, its participatory nature; and thirdly, its non-profit orientation. These premises enable people in rural areas to have their own media and administer them in terms of principles of self management (Lucas 1995, p.9; Fraser & Estrada 2001, p. 4). In consequence, it can be said that community radio focuses on expression rather than professionalisation, and that, as a result of the community's access to the means of production, there is no sharp distinction between sources and audiences (Crisell 1994, p.229).

As a type of community media, community radio has been presented by communication scholars and media activists as the tool to achieve social change. According to Dunaway (2002, p.80), for example, community radio sees itself as a social movement. In summary, community radio is an effective device for participatory communication since it 'rejects the necessity of uniform, centralized, expensive,' professional and institutionalized media, and argues for

multidimensionality, horizontality, deprofessionalisation, and diachronic communication exchange' (Servaes cited in Wildemeersch 1999, p.217).

1.5 Community Radio and the Free Flow of Information

Extolling the value of community radio is not to say that the mainstream media do not contribute anything in promoting democracy (Downing 2001, p.42). However, while acknowledging the role of the mainstream media in the democratisation of politics, some scholars have noted that the mainstream media perform disappointingly in producing participatory social change and public involvement because of their focus on entertainment, sensation, and money (McQuail 2000, p. 159; Mody 2000, p.189). Dagron & Tufte (2006) note Latin America's experience in the use of the mainstream media as a medium of propaganda by authoritarian regimes left the majority disillusioned with the performance of the mainstream media. In addition, there is a tendency for the owners of commercial media to use its power to make profit from the audience, especially by placing the audience as an object of the market, rather than providing social benefits, such as building political participation, encouraging solidarity, and strengthening cultural identity.

Latin America and other Third World countries are not different from the situation of the mass media in the world. This is especially so in relation to the debate about the flow of information, which has been dominated by Latin American scholars who argue that Third World countries experience an unequal flow of information. The free flow of information promoted by Western countries often creates an information hegemony by global media corporations and, as a result, community radio is seen as a challenge to the domination of corporate media (Rennie 2006, p. 17). McChesney

(2004, pp. 17-20) suggests that the free press mythology should be criticised, since global media corporations often use this myth to protect their interests and to dominate the international information industry and market. McChesney claims that US media corporations, followed by other media capitalists around the world, including those in developing countries, propagated the free press myth to influence decision makers in developing countries to open their markets to first world capitals. With the US media system implemented internationally, content produced by US media corporations dominates the mass media in developing countries. Consequently, global corporations, which are US-based firms, can shape media content, especially in countries with a high corruption index and tight censorship over media such as states in Latin America and Asia.

Third World scholars and policy makers have also expressed concern that the dominance of Western content in their countries' mass media will eventually erode local cultures: 'Third World countries were becoming alienated entities without a clear idea of who they were and where they wanted to go' (Rodriguez 2006, p.766). Rennie notes that for people living in Western democracies this argument can be debatable if they do not see mainstream media as oppressive. Many media scholars argue that the mainstream media can highlight political and social issues that are important for people's lives. Commercial television, for example, can educate audiences about citizenship through interesting programs: 'a type of "democratainment"' (Rennie 2006, pp. 18-19). Additionally, the domination of the US media increasingly faces challenges from such countries as India, Taiwan, Hongkong, Japan and China, whose film and television programs can counter the domination of the media content of the US. For example, Hongkong's movies,

especially martial arts films, can compete with US movies and, in this way, represent the existence of an Asian influence in a multicultural world (McPhail 2006, pp. 10-12 & 113-116; Prashad 2003).

The issue of the international media imbalance was discussed in NWICO (the New World Information and Communication Order) supported by UNESCO in the 1970s. This commission had a task to examine the inequality of information flows between the First and Third Worlds (Rodriguez 2001; Rennie 2006, p. 17). Another effort against US media corporations' cultural hegemony was UNESCO's conference in 1998 in Stockholm that recommended that culture be granted special exemptions in global trade deals (McChesney 2004, p.11). Rodriguez (2001 & 2006) states that NWICO hoped to balance the flow of information and communication. NWICO has inspired emerging alternative media to alter the mainstream media power in the developing world, including community radio. In this context, Bolivian miners' radio, established in the late 1940s, represents an example of a movement of democratic community radio (Rennie 2006, p. 17).

Furthermore, UNESCO took this issue to Indonesia as a response to the reform era after the fall of Soeharto, supporting the use of radio as a tool for freedom of expression by providing training for radio journalists and encouraging the establishment of community radio. In order to support the community radio movement, UNESCO sponsored discussions and publications, and translated books concerning community radio, for example, *Community Radio Handbook* written by Fraser & Estrada (2001).

1.6 Social Capital

The core idea of social capital theory is that social networks have value that can help people in coordinating their activities (see Buckland & Rahman 1999, p.175). In *Bowling Alone: The collapse and revival of American community*, Putnam (2000, pp.18-19) notes that a social network is important in community building because community sustainability is built by interrelations among its members. In other words, community members are willing to communicate with each other in daily life.

Drawing from Putnam's notion of social capital, Mathbor points out:

the more people connect with each other, the more they will trust each other and the better off they will be individually and collectively, because social capital has a strong collective aspect (2007, p. 360).

The importance of social connections in the individual's life was described by Durkheim in his study of suicide (Halpern 2005, p.5). Societies which have high social cohesion and solidarity seem able to protect their individual members from suicide through 'mutual moral support.' Hence, communication plays an important role in maintaining a sense of civic engagement, which in turn can be seen as a basis for volunteering and philanthropy and spontaneous 'helping'.

In addition, Beaudoin (2007, p. 419) points out the importance of communication and social capital in dealing with disasters. A disaster creates a new situation which leads to uncertainty among the members of a community. People need information to adapt to the situation, resolve uncertainty, and make decisions about how to survive.

Information is also useful in helping people to face physical and psychological hardship. For example, the role of communication can be seen in the case of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. Prior to the hurricane, it was important to prepare people to cope with the disaster by providing information about safety strategies and

evacuation routes. Although the responses of the US authorities to Katrina were particularly inadequate following the hurricane, information helped people in affected areas to understand the new situation, to find accommodation and to plan their return to the affected area.

Mathbor asserts that social capital can be utilised in capacity building of a community in disaster management projects (2007, p. 358). In the context of community based disaster risk management, there are three stages in creating and developing social capital (Mathbor 2007, pp. 361-363): firstly, bonding within communities; secondly, bridging between and among communities; and thirdly, linking communities through ties with financial and public institutions. In the first stage, development of social capital can begin with social connections through two-way communication to enhance cohesion and solidarity among community members. Willingness to help other community members can assist this step. In this context, people's participation in social activities or an organisation such as a community radio station is a vehicle for community bonding.

The second stage in using social capital is constituted by the people's activities to communicate and cooperate with other communities in order to develop coalitions that support their interests. The implementation of this stage can be seen in the efforts of people at grassroots level to create associations between community organisations. In Mathbor's words: 'Groups and interested citizens can form a coalition to identify the needs' (2007, p.361). Finally, the third stage is identified with the involvement of public institutions, such as NGOs, governments, universities and research institutions,

in mitigating the impact of natural disaster. Community cooperation with those institutions is thus a result of longstanding relations (Mathbor 2007, pp. 361-362).

1.7 Community Radio and Democracy in Indonesia

Sen and Hill (2000, pp.11-12) note that the Soeharto government used the media as ‘vehicles for the creation of a national culture’ whose impact enabled Soeharto’s administration to control, maintain, and execute its policies. TVRI (State Television), for example, had to promote unity among Indonesians, which was interpreted as the principle that no Indonesian citizen should disagree with government policies. To support the task of TVRI to spread government policies over the Indonesian archipelago, since 1976 the government used the domestic broadcast satellite Palapa. The use of the satellite allowed TVRI to broadcast uniform news and information throughout Indonesia, creating an Indonesian television system centralised in Jakarta. This situation resulted in the flow of communication being Jakarta-centric in which expressions of the aspirations from the regions were far fewer than of the instructions from Jakarta. This policy was a clear effort on the part of the government to ensure that the media would support Soeharto. Thus, it is no wonder that Palapa is seen by many observers as a symbol of ‘the conquest of the periphery by the centre’ (Sen and Hill 2000, p.111).

A similar critique of mass media performance was made by media activists when referring to the media system in the post-Soeharto era. Similarly, the myth of a free press has been used by a few media tycoons to control national media ownership. Sudibyo’s study (2004) on the political economy of the Indonesian broadcasting system has shown a tendency by virtue of which if companies can own television and

radio stations, most of them will prefer to make profits from the weak media system. The broadcasting media in Indonesia have been conquered by conglomerates that make media an economic tool. Most of these conglomerates are members of *Keluarga Cendana* (Soeharto's family) or Soeharto's cronies. Corporate domination of radio broadcasting in Indonesia has affected democratisation in the broadcasting system, especially in terms of diversity of ownerships and content. Diversity is important to ensure the accommodation of people's interests (Suranto and Haryanto 2007).

Reformasi (Reforms) in 1998 resulted in people demanding decentralisation as a means to having more opportunities to participate in political processes of local scale. In 1999 the House of Representatives enacted Regional Governance Law number 22/1999. This law is seen by the World Bank (2003, p.i) as a milestone which could transform Indonesia from one of the most centralised countries in the world to a more decentralised country. Furthermore, in describing this radical transformation, the World Bank calls it a 'big bang', which has brought about many changes in Indonesia (World Bank 2003, Chapter One). After the enactment of this law, another law was passed: the Broadcasting Law number 32/2002, which regulates the existence of local media including community radio. Local media are more likely to focus on good governance, which is seen as very important for the success of local autonomy (World Bank 2003, p.vii).

The issue of decentralisation became a hot topic of discussion during the reform era since the centralised government of Soeharto was blamed as a factor of the economic crisis in Indonesia in the late 1990s. According to the World Bank (2003, p.2), Soeharto's New Order used the benefits of the oil boom to legitimise his centralised

power (see also Sen and Hill 2000, p. 5). Power abuse by Soeharto's regime caused widespread discontent. There was no opposition party to demand accountability from his government. Therefore the fall of Soeharto brought a great momentum for people to call for reform so as to replace the old political system with a more democratic one. Antlov (2003) notes that political reforms in Indonesia in 1998 have created opportunities to change the relationship between state and citizens, especially by introducing decentralisation, which enhances democratisation at the local level.

Soeharto's New Order applied a top-down approach, which emphasised uniformity and standardisation, and allowed no ideology other than that sponsored by the state. Soeharto believed that economic development was only achieved if there was national stability (Antlov 2003, pp.193-197). To ensure that the government policy could be implemented in villages, Soeharto depoliticised villagers by using the policy of floating mass. In this policy, no political activities outside the pro-government party were allowed. As a result, the communication process tended to be one-way, where the local elites, what Antlov (2003, p.197) calls the loyal clients of the New Order, monopolised the process.

The fall of Soeharto and the beginning of reforms in 1998 brought hope for the media to realise its democratising role (Jurriens 2003; Sen and Hill 2000; Hill and Sen 2005). The media are expected to facilitate popular participation as well as provide public scrutiny of the government. However, there is a gap between the ideal and the reality, and this is particularly so in the case of broadcast media. Supriyanto (n.d), a former coordinator of the International Federation of Journalists in South East Asia, notes that in the reform era there was enthusiasm to speak about freedom of expression.

This enthusiasm could be seen in the increased number of broadcast stations in Indonesia. For example, in 2002 members of the Association of Commercial Radio Broadcasting of Indonesia (PRSSNI) noted 805 stations. Four years later, there were 846 radio stations registered in this organisation (Suranto and Haryanto 2007, p. 19).

Unfortunately, this blossoming of mass media in the country has not brought about media pluralism because most mainstream media are Jakarta-centred and they tend to focus more on national or macro issues rather than local issues. In contrast, community radio is a part of the people's demand to communicate their opinions concerning local, daily life issues, including local governance issues, such as accountability and transparency (Supriyanto n.d.).

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the definition of community radio cannot be a single, homogenous one, because the characteristics of each community radio station depend largely on the characteristics of its community. The practice of community radio has attracted scholars to study the efforts of grassroots people around the world to exercise their right to express their interests and opinions about issues such as local politics and local cultural identity. These issues have little opportunity to be represented by the mainstream media due to their focus on commercial benefits. Therefore, many media studies scholars have examined the role of community radio in the context of processes of democratisation within the community. They have studied the people's struggle to participate in the public sphere through community radio, which is important in order to ensure that their voice is accommodated in decision-making processes. Within this framework, in order to understand community

radio the chapter has discussed key concepts, such as community, the notion of public sphere, and participatory communication.

Habermas's concept of public sphere, an open forum for all to discuss public matters, has been useful in this chapter's examination of community radio as a form of accessible media. In this context, a participatory communication model can be used to examine the process of communication within communities responsible for the operation of radio stations. Through people's participation, community radio can represent people's interests, while balancing the communication flow. A participatory communication model emphasises the importance of horizontal communication as it enables people at grassroots level to reach their potential and develop their life conditions. Nevertheless, in order to understand more fully the current condition of community radio in Indonesia, it is necessary to trace in detail the history of radio broadcasting in this country. This is precisely what the next chapter sets out to do.

Chapter 2

The Emergence of Community Radio in Indonesia

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the history of community radio in Indonesia in order to provide a context for understanding the explosive growth of community radio in this country during the reform era. It demonstrates that the efforts of people to use community radio can be traced back to the earliest uses of radio in Indonesia. Therefore, the central question that this chapter addresses is: ‘how and why has community radio developed in Indonesia’s recent history?’ Considering this history, it is expected, can help the understanding of the place of community radio in the Indonesian media system today. In addressing the above question, the chapter thus argues that it was the people’s long held desire for freedom of expression, following the downfall of Soeharto, which enabled the emergence and expansion of the community radio movement in Indonesia. Based on the theoretical discussion of Chapter 1, community radio is understood in this and the next chapters as a form of media that is non-profit oriented, managed by the community, and in the service of the needs and interests of the community.

The chapter explores the history of community radio in Indonesia in terms of three distinct periods. Firstly, it considers the Dutch colonial period, describing the early history of broadcasting radio in the Netherlands Indies (which was the name of Indonesia at that time). It then looks at the second period, running from Indonesia’s proclamation of Independence in 1945 to the late 1990s. In this section the chapter offers an analysis of the changing position of radio in the transition from Soekarno’s

to Soeharto's regimes, including the phenomenon of student-run radio at the end of Soekarno's administration and in the early days of Soeharto's, during the mid 1960s. Finally, the chapter discusses the reform era, covering the emergence of the community radio movement at the end of the Soeharto regime until the present.

2.2 The Pre-Independence Period

The term 'community radio' was probably firstly heard in Indonesia in the post-Soeharto period. Most scholars agree that the use of this term began after the fall of Soeharto, especially in the early 2000s when the civil society started to campaign for the acknowledgment of community broadcasting in Indonesian law; for example, the amendment of the Broadcasting Law number 24/1997 (see Masduki 2005, p.148). However, if one applies the criteria that community radio is not for profit and is managed by the community to serve its own needs and interests, then the practice of community radio can be traced back to the period prior to Indonesia's independence.

The development of radio as a new form of media in the 1920s in Europe and the US stimulated European people in their colonies in Asia, including the Netherlands Indies, to establish radio stations. An orientation towards community participation was clearly visible from the very beginnings of radio as a medium of communication in Indonesia. The earliest radio in Indonesia was described as listener-sponsored and not-for-profit. Dutch radio enthusiasts in Jakarta (which was called Batavia at that time) founded the community radio association *Bataviasche Radio Vereeniging (BRV)* on 16 June 1925, which aimed to establish a radio station that accommodated the Dutch colony's needs for news of their homeland and cultural interests, western music

in particular (see Kementrian Penerangan & Djawatan Radio Republik Indonesia [hereafter KPDRRI] 1953, pp. 10-18; Lindsay 1997, pp. 105-106).²²

BRV is an example of a radio station that was established by community initiative. The radio enthusiasts collected money to buy a radio transmitter and pay program costs (KPDRRI 1953, p. 10-11; Wild 1987, p.18; Mrazek 1997, p.5; Effendy 1990, p.55; Lindsay 1997, p.106; Sen & Hill 2000, p.81). The first radio program in the Netherlands Indies was broadcasted by *BRV* from a room of *Hotel Des Indes*, Jakarta in 1925. That was only six years after the first musical radio program was aired in the Netherlands (Lindsay 1997, p.106; Sen & Hill 2000, p.81). The ability of people in the Netherlands Indies to follow the development of electronic media was a result of the fact that radio enthusiasts were wealthy and so could afford the latest technology. Radio equipment was too expensive for the people of the Netherlands Indies, and only the elite had the capacity to acquire it. It was a symbol of prestige that was sold in music stores, together with expensive musical instruments, such as pianos. A modern house, at that time, was incomplete if it lacked a radio receiver (KPDRRI 1953, p. 11; Mrazek 2002, p. 116).

Soon after the establishment of *BRV*, the enthusiasm of people to establish radio stations in the Netherlands Indies increased greatly. Some stations were founded by merchants to promote their business interests, others by groups of individuals to accommodate their cultural interests in, for example, local music, traditional arts and local dialects (KPDRRI 1953, p. 11). Mrazek (2002) provides a detailed description of the people's enthusiasm for the development of technology in the Netherlands

²² Articles 22 and 23 of the Broadcasting Law number 32/2002 state that the establishment of community broadcasting is based on its community and non-profit orientation.

Indies, especially the European colony's hunger for the new telecommunication technology, including radio which helped to break the isolation of the Europeans in the Netherlands Indies. Mrazek, for example, illustrates the situation of the Europeans living in Bali in the following terms: 'Kloengkoeng, a little place in the interior of Bali with three European families. No gas, no electricity, no theatre, no movies. But, indeed radio' (Mrazek 2002, p. 168). For the same reason, radio became an important social and cultural tool in the Netherlands Indies, where the Dutch built the highest radio tower of Southeast Asia to help them communicate both within the Netherlands Indies and with their European motherland. Radio, indeed, made the Netherlands Indies become a part of the modern world (Mrazek 2002, p. 168).

BRV was the forerunner of local radio stations in several cities in the Netherlands Indies, for example: *Radio Vereeniging Midden Java* in Semarang, Magelang and Yogyakarta; *Radio-Club* in Semarang; *Hellant Muller Radio* in Surabaya; *Radio van Mingen* in Jember and Surabaya; *Radio JH Goldberg* in Surabaya; *Radio Jarico* in Surabaya; and *Radio Electric*, *Lamslijn Radio* and *Soerabajaasch Kantoer voor Radiozaken* in Surabaya (Mrazek 1997, p.5). This list shows that from the beginning radio in Indonesia was oriented to serve people in specific geographical areas. This localised trend continues to be the orientation of radio in Indonesia until now.

The status of *BRV*, as a radio based on community contributions, changed when, in 1934, it became *NIROM/Netherlands Indische Radio Omroep Maatschappij* (Netherlands Indies Radio Broadcasting Company). With its new name, this radio was transformed into commercial radio and the voluntary financial contributions from community members were replaced by advertising and license fees (Effendy 1990,

p.55; Lindsay 1997, p.106; Sen & Hill 2000, p.81). Although established as a private radio station, in 1934 the *Radiowet* (Radio regulation) of the Netherlands Indies gave *NIROM* a license for five years to broadcast in the Netherlands Indies as the official colonial government channel and the right to impose *luisterbijdrage* or radio tax. Money collected from this tax helped *NIROM* develop its networks. By January 1941, *NIROM* had twenty radio stations in Java and Sumatra (KPDRRI 1953, pp. 11-12; Mrazek 1987, p.5).

The mushrooming of radio in the Netherlands Indies influenced native people to establish their own radio. In the early 1930s, in Solo, 600 km from Batavia/Jakarta, a group of Javanese belonging to the *Javaansche Kunstkring Mardi Raras Mangkunegaran* (Javanese Music Association of the Mangkunegara Palace) established the first radio station run by Indonesians. This group was part of a Mangkunegara Palace group concerned with the preservation of Javanese arts (KPDRRI 1953, p.12; Dwiyanita 1987; Lindsay 1997, pp. 106-107). The name of the radio station was *PK2MN/Pakempoelan Kawoelo Mangkoenegaran*.²³ It used an old transmitter brought by Prince Mangkunegara VII from Yogyakarta (Wild 1987, p.19).

Mangkunegara VII also allowed the radio station to use some of his property, for example land, house and equipment located one kilometre from his palace. He encouraged *PK2MN* to broadcast cultural programmes, such as *klenengan* (Javanese music) from the palace and *kethoprak* (Javanese theatre) and *wayang orang* (traditional drama based on epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata) from Balekambang Garden (SRV Gedenkboek 1939, p.1). Indeed, Mangkunegara VII used radio for the

²³ Although *kawoela* literally means ‘retainers’, in the context of *PK2MN*, it also means ‘aristocrats’ (Mangkunegaran families), who were the retainers of the Sultan.

promotion of cultural identity through broadcastings of Javanese music. He also demonstrated his open-mindedness by allowing palace music to be accessed from outside the palace via radio broadcasts. Although at the time a radio receiver was an expensive item that only twenty aristocrats could afford, Mangkunegara VII's support stimulated Indonesians' enthusiasm to use radio as a medium of communication (Lindsay 1997, p. 108; see also Effendy 1990, p.55 and Wild 1991, pp. 18 and 36; Dwiyananta 1987; KPDRRI 1953, p.13).

The process of development of indigenous radio began when Mangkunegara VII asked members of *Javaansche Kunstkring Mardi Raras Mangkunegaran* to replace the old *PK2MN* transmitter. The transmitter was too old and was not sufficiently powerful to accommodate their plans to cover a larger area. For these reasons they decided to establish a new radio station in order to continue *PK2MN*'s objective to maintain Javanese culture (SRV Gedenkboek 1939, p.2). But since in order to buy a new transmitter they needed a large sum of money, On 1 April 1933 they found the *Solosche Radio Vereeniging* (Solo Radio Association: *SRV*) to support this project. The use of a Dutch name for the radio was related to the fact that members of *SRV* consisted of the elite, that is, Javanese aristocrats and wealthy people.²⁴ To finance the radio, members of *SRV* contributed 1 guilder as a starting fund and then donations were received from wealthy people in Solo. Mangkunegara VII still played an important role in this radio project by providing a location in Kestalan, close to the

²⁴ Radio, at that time, was a new technology brought by the Dutch into Indonesia (Darmanto, personal communication, 9 November 2008). Most references were in Dutch language and most members of *SRV* were Javanese aristocrats and wealthy people who had a Western educational background. For example, Sarsito Mangunkusumo, an engineer, the chair of *SRV*, was a member of Mangkunegaran Sultanate. Later on, he became chair of the board of the Java Bank, embryo precursor of the Bank of Indonesia (Linblad no date, p. 4). Tjiong Joe Hok, a technician, had been trained in the US (Mrazek 2002, p. 127), Wongsohartono and Prijosumarto were entrepreneurs (KPDRRI 1953, p. 13).

Balapan Train Station.²⁵ Finally, thanks to the contributions of its members and the support of Mangkunegara VII, *SRV* was established. The radio gained instant popularity with its Eastern music program.

One remarkable example of the role of *SRV* in promoting Javanese culture occurred in 1934. On this occasion the radio transmitted a gamelan performance from Solo, Netherlands Indies, to The Hague to accompany the daughter of Mangkunegara VII and other Javanese dancers who performed in front of Queen Wilhelmina (Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis 1993, p.66; Mrazek 1997, p.9). The important position of *SRV* in the history of radio in Indonesia can also be noted through the role of Maladi, an announcer of *SRV*, who helped found *Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI)*, the state owned radio, in 1945, and who in 1946 became the director of *RRI* in Jakarta (Perusahaan Jawatan Radio Republik Indonesia [hereafter PJRRI] 2000, pp. 228 and 240).

Indonesian radio enthusiasts in several cities soon followed Solo's initiative, with other radio stations emerging, such as *VORO (Vereeniging voor Oosterse Radio Oemroep)* in Batavia, *VORL (Vereeniging voor Oosterse Radio Luisteraars)* in Bandung, *CIRVO (Chinese en Inheemse Radio Luisteraars Vereeniging Oost Java)* in Surabaya, *EMRO (Eerste Madiunse Radio Omroep)* in Madiun, and *SRV kring Semarang* in Semarang (KPDRRI 1953, p.13). All these radio stations were non-profit oriented and focused on cultural expression. Because these radio stations emphasised Eastern or Indonesian indigenous culture, they were collectively known as *Radio Ketimuran* (Eastern Radio) to differentiate them from Western radios owned by Dutch

²⁵ This place has been used as the studio of *Radio Republik Indonesia* of Solo ever since.

or Europeans in the Netherlands Indies. In terms of radio programming, *Radio Ketimuran* emerged as an alternative to *NIROM* with its Western programs. *Radio Ketimuran* had members who played important roles in the maintenance of the radio station, with their financial support being the primary income for the daily operation of the radio (KPDRRI 1953, p. 14).

For Indonesians radio became an instrument of nation building in the 1930s, especially in terms of the process of forming a national identity. From a nationalist perspective radio was charged with this political task. Regarding this function, Wild (1991, p. 36) argues:

Though the Dutch had not allowed the stations operated by natives to broadcast political matters many Indonesians were already accustomed to hearing the voices and music of their own culture on the air.

These efforts helped Indonesians to understand their own identity and create solidarity among them as a nation. Later on, this sense of national identity became a useful aspect in the struggle to achieve Indonesia's independence. For example, as Effendy (1990, p.55) and Wild (1987, p.18) state, *Radio Ketimuran*, which was run by Indonesians, emerged in response to the awakening of nationalist spirit during the period 1908-1928.

The use of radio in the creation of a national identity can be traced through the activities of the organisation *Budi Utomo*. This was a prominent organisation that played an important role in the emergence of the nationalist movement, through an emphasis on national culture. In their first meeting on 20 May 1908 the members of *Budi Utomo* focused on how to preserve their culture, how to perceive Western culture, and how to adapt to changing times. They saw that education was the way to

help their people halt their cultural decline (Brown 2003, p. 117; Kartodirjo 2005, pp. 11-16). Within this vision, Mangkunegara VII, as an activist of *Budi Utomo*, used radio to promote national culture (Susumu 2007; KPDRRI 1953, pp 12-13). He was the key person behind the establishment of *Comite voor het Javaansche Nationalism* (Committee for Javanese Nationalism), which had the objective of rediscovering and elevating Javanese identity (see Ricklefs 2001, p.222).

Although radio had not been used primarily for addressing political matters, in 1934 radio audiences listened to the news that Soekarno had been exiled by the Dutch government to Bengkulu, Sumatra. From radio people also understood the situation in Amsterdam when the communists declared the Red Communist Front (Dwiyanta 1987). Thus, despite restrictions placed on the broadcast of political matters, Indonesians were still able to experience the function of radio as a political tool.

Radio Ketimuran experienced rapid development: by 1939 up to 42,000 members were listed as listeners (Haslach in Wild 1987, p.19). To compete with the popularity of *Radio Ketimuran*, *NIROM*, which in the beginning produced only Western programs, decided in 1936 to produce Eastern programs and air local music. *Radio Ketimuran* protested because this new policy would endanger its own position (Lindsay 1997, p.110; Susumu 2007). Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo,²⁶ who was a member of the *Volksraad* (People's Council), raised this issue in 1936. Soetardjo urged the Dutch colonial government to give *Radio Ketimuran* the opportunity to produce and air its programs. He also argued that since the radio tax was too high for Indonesians to have access to radio, it should be reduced (Mrazek 1997, p. 24). In

²⁶ Soetardjo was the spokesman of the Association of Indigenous Civil Servants (Brown 2003, p. 134). He was a Javanese aristocrat who had close links to the members of *Radio Ketimuran*, who were mostly Javanese aristocrats.

this way, the efforts to provide access to radio to all Indonesians turned this demand into a political issue in the colonial *Volksraad*. As a result of this lobbying, the colonial government eventually allowed the establishment of *Perikatan Perhimpunan Radio Ketimuran/PPRK* (Federation of Eastern Radio Societies). With the support of Soetardjo, several radio associations from Solo (*SRV*), Jakarta (*VORO*), Bandung (*VORL*), and Yogya (*MAVRO*) attended a meeting on 18 March 1937 to establish a federation (KPDRRI 1953, pp. 15-16; Mrazek 1997, p.24).

The *Radio Ketimuran* stations succeeded in creating solidarity among the audience in support of the existence of the radio, with several groups of people working together to support it. For example, *MAVRO*, an Eastern radio station in Yogyakarta, was supported by local organisations who contributed with programs: *Taman Siswa* (education organisation), *Sana Budaya* (cultural organisation) and *Soos Tionghoa* (social organisation of Chinese). However, since radio was a new, expensive technology only the elite had the opportunity to access it. Radio was becoming a public arena but only for the elite; people at grassroots level, on the contrary, had no access.

During the years of Japanese occupation (1942-1945) all radio stations were under control of the *Sendenbu*, the Japanese propaganda service. Very tight Japanese control meant that community and private stations were not allowed to operate. Radio *Hosokyoku* was given sole authority to broadcast in Indonesia. This radio was under the control of the *Sendenbu* and was used as a propaganda medium for the benefit of the Japanese, especially through regular broadcasts about the victories of the Japanese army in the Asia-Pacific war. In addition, no private radio stations were permitted to

operate and people were not allowed to listen to foreign radio stations in order to ensure that they would not get information about the progress of the war (KPDRRI 1953, pp. 21-22).

Significantly, the use of radio by the Japanese inspired Indonesians working within *Hosokyoku* to use radio as a political tool, as they witnessed how the Japanese broadcast radio programs for the benefit of their army. From their experiences during the war years, Indonesians working in radio developed an intimate relationship with political activism (Kitley 2000, p.28). Although under tight Japanese control, Indonesian radio operators still had the opportunity to monitor information coming from outside Indonesia, especially in relation to the war situation. Importantly, they were able to inform nationalist leaders about the surrender of Japan, which was crucial for the latter to make the decision to proclaim the Independence of Indonesia on 17 August 1945 (KPDRRI 1953, pp. 22 & 33).

The experience gained working with the Japanese was also useful for Indonesian radio operators to support the political struggle of the Indonesian Republic during the independence movement of the period 1945-1949 (Lindsay 1997, p. 110; Sudibyo 2004, p. 325). In early August 1945 groups of young people congregated in Jl Menteng 31,²⁷ Jakarta, and established a 'wild' (unlicensed) radio station called *Radio Indonesia Merdeka* (Independent Indonesia Radio).²⁸ Pioneered by Abdulrachman

²⁷ Jl Menteng 31 was formerly Hotel Schomper I. During Japanese occupation, this building became headquarters of the youth movement for Independent Indonesia. On 15 August 1945 this place was used by young people as well as Soekarno and Hatta (who were to become the first Indonesian President and Vice President) to discuss the proclamation of independence of Indonesia. After these young people heard the BBC news about the downfall of Japan in World War II, they pressured Soekarno and Hatta to proclaim the independence of Indonesia immediately, worried that the Japanese would hand Indonesia back to the Dutch (Tempo 2007).

²⁸ Independent Indonesian broadcasts were done through *Radio Indonesia Merdeka* since *Hosokyoku* could not be used as it was still controlled by the Japanese.

Saleh, a founder of *VORO* and later of *Radio Republik Indonesia*, the purpose of this radio was to support the Indonesian Independence Movement and to oppose the Japanese by broadcasting heroic music and talks. With its signature call ‘This is the voice of free Indonesia’, the radio also broadcast news to the international community outside Indonesia (KPDRRI 1953, p. 30; Fakultas Sastra Universitas Padjajaran & Departemen Penerangan Republik Indonesia 1978, p.95; PJRRI 2000, p.228).

When Japan surrendered to the Allies, the Dutch sought to reoccupy Indonesia through the Netherlands Indies Civil Administration (NICA), thus resulting in armed conflict with Indonesia. Since NICA’s military weapons were more powerful than Indonesia’s, Indonesians used guerrilla tactics in the conflict. In the second so-called ‘police action’ of 19 December 1948 NICA forces attacked Yogyakarta, which was at the time the capital city of the Indonesian Republic. As a result of this action, Yogyakarta fell under the control of NICA, and the Indonesian army had to move outside the city. To save the radio transmitter, Indonesian operators had to move it continuously from location to location; for example, from Yogyakarta to Wonosari and then to Playen, in Pegunungan Sewu. From all these places, they continued to broadcast news about the guerrilla war against the Dutch occupation. This mobile radio station was useful as a political tool to announce the existence of Indonesia to the world. NICA understood the power of the radio so often looked for and attacked it (KPDRRI 1953, pp. 33, 83-84).

2.3 From Soekarno to Soeharto

During Soekarno’s administration (1945-1966), only the government-owned *Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI)* could operate, that is, the ‘state had monopoly control over

radio' (Sen 2003, p.578). Soekarno was able to take full advantage of this monopoly since he was a good orator. Soekarno made full use of radio to promote nationalism in such Indonesian regions as Ambon, Aceh, Madiun, Sumatera, West Java and Makasar, especially during crises caused by conflict with the Dutch concerning sovereignty (1945-1949), as well as with Papua and Malaysia in the 1960s. Particularly during the Guided Democracy period (1959-1965), the radio *RRI* was used by Soekarno as a medium for political propaganda (KPDRRI 1953, pp 72-73).

By the late 1950s Soekarno was also using radio as a medium to broadcast propaganda against western culture. *RRI*, for example, was forbidden to broadcast western music, which was called *musik ngak-ngik-ngok* and referred in particular to music produced by Western pop groups, such as *The Beatles* and *The Rolling Stones*. Soekarno saw such music 'as decadent imperialist influence' (Wild 1987, p.36) and his ban showed the desire of the government to control the media. The Guided Democracy system, and particularly the dismissal of the Parliament on 5 July 1959, greatly increased Soekarno's power, thus leaving as the only other major political forces the army and *PKI* (Indonesian Communist Party) (Brown 2003, p. 197).

Although formally only *RRI* was acknowledged by the government during the Guided Democracy, on the ground campus-based community radio stations did exist. For example, students of *ITB* (Bandung Institute of Technology) established a radio station in 1963, called *8EH Radio ITB*, which they used in particular to broadcast the type of music they could not hear on *RRI*. In addition, the student radio often criticised the government and, as a result, during the confrontation between Indonesia

and the Dutch in West Papua it was closed down. This radio was also used to support the student movement in 1970 (Rakasiwi 2008; Samuel 2008).

At the end of Soekarno's administration, and especially after the incidents of 30 September 1965,²⁹ the government's domination of the press and the broadcast media was resisted by students and intellectuals³⁰ and, as a result, many student radio stations emerged in support of the anti-Soekarno movement.³¹ Typically, these radio stations were of low capacity and not for profit, and served a small area. They were mostly oriented towards political activities, providing a forum for anti-Soekarno discussions. To ensure their safety, some student-run radio stations were protected by troops loyal to General Soeharto (Sen 2003, p.578), who disagreed with Soekarno's policy towards *PKI*. As part of the anti-Soekarno agenda, the radio stations challenged the anti-Western policy by broadcasting songs by *The Beatles* and *The Rolling Stones* (Sen & Hill 2000, p.83). Clearly, *RRI* could not compete with these student-run radio stations in attracting a young audience.

Student radio stations also broadcast news and information; that is, although they operated on low power transmissions and reached only a limited audience, they broke the monopoly on information previously held by *RRI*. Two well known anti-Soekarno

²⁹ In the night of 30 September 1965, six army generals were murdered. These murders were seen by the army as part of a coup attempt by *PKI*. This incident was the peak of the conflict between *PKI*, a political party with three million members, and the army. The army, under Soeharto's control, acted quickly and succeeded in defeating *PKI* (Brown 2003, pp.197-199).

³⁰ Brown (2003, p. 200) notes that 'students and intellectuals were a major group supporting Soeharto' in his dismantling of Soekarno.

³¹ In his book *Wars Within: The Story of Tempo, an Independent Magazine in Soeharto's Indonesia* (2005), Steele provides an interesting description of the involvement of student activists in the press during the end of Soekarno's administration.

radio stations were *Radio Ampera*,³² supported by the army, and *Radio KAMI*³³ (Lindsay 1997, p.112; Sen 2003, p. 578).

In the mid 1960s Jakarta and Bandung were the cities where the majority of radio stations blossomed; there were 20 radio stations in Jakarta and 50 radio stations in Bandung (Bachtar cited in Wild 1987, p.36). All stations were initially based on volunteerism and collective participation, and had a non-profit orientation. Later, with the introduction of advertising, some of their leaders realised that their radio stations could earn money and so they became professionalised as managers. Thus, these were embryonic private, commercial radio stations.

After the overthrow of Soekarno, the new freedom allowed people to build hundreds of radio stations, and a 'honeymoon' period followed involving the New Order government and the mass media. Radio stations, mostly run by students, proliferated, even though the new government attempted to regulate their existence. Aware of the role that radio had played in deposing Soekarno, and after solidifying its power, the New Order tried to control the radio sector through regulation. For example, in 1967 the government differentiated hobby stations from the more established ones and one year later it restricted student-run radio. In 1970 the government enacted Government Regulation number 55/1970, which allowed the operation of commercial radio stations; they were forbidden, however, to produce their own news programs, having to relay news from *RRI* (Sen & Hill 2000, p. 83-84). This regulation was seen as an

³² *Radio Ampera* was operated by students from the home of Mashuri, an army officer who would become the Minister of Information under Soeharto in the 1970s (Sen 2000, p. 83).

³³ *KAMI/Kesatuan Aksi Mahasiswa Indonesia* (the Indonesian Student Action Front) organised anti-Soekarno demonstrations around three issues called *Tri Tuntutan Rakyat* (Tritura) or Three Demands of the People, these being 'a reduction in the price of basic commodities, the dissolution of the PKI/Indonesian Communist Party, and a purging of the Cabinet' (Brown 2003, p. 200; Steele 2005, p.41).

attempt to prevent radio stations becoming politically oriented, which was similar to the situation during Dutch colonialism when radios were banned from addressing political matters (Lindsay 1997, p.107). Dhakidae (cited in Siriyuvasak 2005, p.248) contends that in order to enforce his rule, Soeharto sought to turn mass media into commercially oriented media that had to concentrate merely on entertainment. By adopting a commercial orientation, the mass media would have been 'neutralised' or 'depoliticised'. All non-government radio stations were required to follow this policy if they wanted to continue their operations, and, in fact, some of the student-run radio stations converted to commercial broadcasting radio, such as *Radio Arif Rahman Hakim* (Jakarta), *Ramako* (Jakarta), *Radio Oz* (Bandung), and *Radio Arma Sebelas* (Yogyakarta).

Therefore, since 1970 Soeharto's government recognised only two types of broadcasting radio: government broadcasting radio (*RRI*) and non-government broadcasting radio (private radio).³⁴ *PRSSNI/Persatuan Radio Siaran Swasta Nasional Indonesia* (the Indonesian National Private Broadcast Radio Association) was established in 1974 to accommodate the non-government radios. All non-government radio stations were required by the government to join *PRSSNI*. Any broadcaster outside this organisation was labelled as *radio gelap* or *radio liar* (illegal or 'wild' radio). The political affiliation of *PRSSNI* was clear: to support the government. The political importance that *PRSSNI* had for the government can be

³⁴ On the ground there were instead three kinds of radio station: *Radio Republik Indonesia*, *RSPD/Radio Siaran Pemerintah Daerah* (Regional Government Radio) and commercial radio. *RSPD* emerged as a consequence of regional governments' need to inform their policies to people. The existence of *RSPD* was supported by regional governments, especially district governments (Siregar 2001, pp.177-178). The existence of *RSPD* is an example of an inconsistency of Soeharto government in the implementation of Broadcasting Law. This phenomenon also illustrated the domination of the government in the field of radio broadcasting.

seen in the role of Soeharto's daughter, Siti Hardiyanti Rukmana, in this organisation. Her involvement will be discussed below.

The New Order regime had long used a mechanistic approach in its program of development of mainstream social communication, emphasising the diffusion of innovation as a tool for social change, especially in rural areas. In the regime's view the role of communications media was to spread official messages about development programs throughout the country.³⁵ Therefore, it was not surprising that to ensure the government's programs Soeharto attempted to control the media through *Departemen Penerangan* (Department of Information). Besides this Department, Steele (2005, Chapters 3 and 4) notes, there were at least two military institutions that were also involved in controlling the media: *Pusat Penerangan ABRI* (Armed Forces Information Centre) and *Kopkamtib/Komando Operasi Keamanan dan Ketertiban* (Operations Command to Restore Security and Order). These institutions used a range of control and repressive methods, the first of these being censorship.

Sen and Hill (2000, p. 12) state that for most of the New Order, the media were under government control through formal and informal censorship processes. This was imposed on all media, which had to conform to the state ideology of *Pancasila*. For media practitioners the main problem was that the government monopolised the interpretation of these principles to restrict news reporting perceived to be in opposition to government policies. Thus, it was difficult for any media outlet that was seen as being in opposition to the government to obtain permission to operate. It was common for mass media editors to get calls from the government asking them not to

³⁵ Tight control over mass media is usually applied by governments with centralised, planned economies. They use the mass media to realise their political aims and to consolidate their power (Fraser and Estrada 2001, p. 7).

publish or broadcast news about a particular event. This informal government control was known as *budaya telepon* or telephone culture (Kingsbury 2005, p. 123).

Another method of control of the flow of information was the near-monopoly over the media exercised by Soeharto's family and cronies. This near-monopoly emerged at the end of the 1980s and early 1990s with the boom in the media industry,³⁶ which saw the establishment of new television stations, tabloids, magazines, newspapers, and radio stations. In this context, most mass media outlets were sponsored by Soeharto's family members and close friends (Vatikiotis 1993, pp. 108, 152; Sudibyو 2004, pp. 15-16; Kingsbury 2005, pp. 123-124).

In the field of radio, for example, all stations had to obtain a recommendation from *PRSSNI* as the only private broadcasting association accredited by the government (Sen and Hill 2000, p. 87).³⁷ Although it was not easy to get recommendation from *PRSSNI* exceptions were regularly made for members of Soeharto's family. In addition, Siti Hardiyanti Rukmana (Tutut), Soeharto's daughter, had a significant position as General Chairperson of *PRSSNI* from 1989 to 1998. Soeharto's son, Bambang Trihatmojo became the owner of *Radio Trijaya FM* networks, *Radio Arif Rahman Hakim* in Jakarta; *SC FM* in Surabaya; and *Radio Prapanca* in Medan. Finally, Sudwikatmono, Soeharto's cousin, became the the owner of *Indika FM* (Sen and Hill, 2000, pp. 89-90; Sudibyو 2004, p. 170 & 177).

³⁶ Heryanto (2003, p. 44) points out that since the 1980s there has been a serious transformation of the press in Indonesia from *pers perjuangan* (journalistic political activism) to *pers industri* (industrial press). This phenomenon occurred since the financial conglomerates invested their capital in various industries, including the mass media. In the Indonesian context the term *pers* (press) is sometimes used for both the print and electronic media (Sen and Hill 2000, p. 71).

³⁷ *PRSSNI* was the only commercial radio organisation until 1999, after the fall of Soeharto, when another commercial radio association emerged, namely *ARSSI/Asosiasi Radio Siaran Swasta Indonesia* (the Association of Private Broadcasting Radio Indonesia). Most members of *ARSSI* were radio stations which failed to get the endorsement of *PRSSNI* for a broadcasting license during the Soeharto era.

A third method of media control involved preventing news reports criticising the regime, and for this purpose the government applied a system of one-way information by which private broadcasting stations were not allowed to produce news, especially political news. Every hour, they had to relay news produced by the state-owned *RRI* (Kitley 2000, p. 250; Sen and Hill 2000, p.125-126). In this way, the New Order tried to prevent dissenting opinions being publicised through radio and other media. However, despite the regime's efforts it was impossible for it to prevent all radio stations from producing their own news programs.

To avoid government restrictions and censorship, some radio stations used different names for their news programs. For example, *Radio Unisi*, owned by the *UII* (Indonesian Islamic University) in Yogyakarta, became well known for two controversial cases in the mid 1990s concerning interviews with two dissidents: Permadi, now a member of *DPR/Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* (People's Representative Council) and Sri Bintang Pamungkas, the head of *PUDI/Partai Uni Demokratik Indonesia* (Indonesian Democratic Union Party). One of these interviews focused on polemic political themes, including the forecasting of government succession, which was a taboo subject during the Soeharto administration. As a result of this program, *Radio Unisi* was instructed by the authorities to stop radio programs which, according to the government, broadcast misleading information.

Sen & Hill (2000, pp. 96-100) note that *Radio Unisi* was not the only radio which produced their own news. *Radio Trijaya* in Jakarta had a weekly program, 'Jakarta First Channel,' consisting of discussions of politically controversial issues. Similarly,

since 1980 *Radio Mara* in Bandung used talkback to deliver news to its audience. This talk program made *Radio Mara* an important source of information about the dynamics of the population of Bandung for the regional authorities. One remarkable report was done by *Ramako*, who covered live the attack on the headquarters of *PDI/Partai Demokrasi Indonesia* (Indonesian Democratic Party) in Jakarta on 27 July 2006.

In this generalised climate of censorship and media regulation, illegal radio stations, that is, all radio stations outside of *PRSSNI*, were often the target of government ‘sweepings’ or in many cases simply closed down by the Monitoring Bureau of the Department of Telecommunication (Sen & Hill 2000, p. 86; 2003, p.580). For example, *Radio Papas* in Bantul was closed down by the government for not having a license. To avoid ‘sweeping’ other radio stations used guerrilla tactics. For example, when the operators of *Radio Pamor* found out that government representatives would come to their village, they hid the radio equipment in a kitchen and placed pots with plants in the studio. *Radio Pamor*’s operators were able to anticipate the government’s plans to ‘sweep’ their village in search for the illegal radio by monitoring information through *Radio Antar Penduduk Indonesia/RAPI* (Association of Communication Radio of Indonesia), which was often involved in ‘sweepings’ and had members who were also volunteers of *Radio Pamor*. Considering the political situation during the Soeharto era, *Radio Pamor* eventually self-censored its radio programs by avoiding provocative contents. To avoid being a target of government ‘sweeping’, this radio station focused on Javanese cultural content (interview with Soenandar, 11 December 2006). On this occasion, the government succeeded in its promotion of self-censorship among media broadcasters. Broadly speaking, the New

Order regime saw community radio, with its vocation for freedom of expression and information, as a threat to social development and national stability.

2.4 The Reform Period

As mentioned earlier, the fall of Soeharto in 1998 heralded the emergence of community radio. After 30 years of tight control, Indonesians were allowed to exercise the right to free expression, which included not only freedom to receive information but, more importantly, to play an active role in the media, something that traditionally had not been available to people at grassroots level. In summary, this was the right to own social communication media that reflected people's daily lives and experiences.

Aspinall and Fealy (2003, p.2) identify the range of changes applicable to the media system that was the basic demand of the *reformasi* (reform) movement. Obviously the democratisation of politics encouraged the civil society to find a public forum that was separate from the market and the state (Sen 2003, p. 577). According to Sen through the rise of community radio after the end of the New Order radio became a two-way communication medium with a limited audience. In Sen's words, community radio became 'a medium where the audiences could and did speak back in a variety of ways - thus eroding the conventional distinction between the producer and the consumer in mass communication' (Sen 2003, p. 584). I discuss this process of participatory opening affected by the rise of community radio in Indonesia in the next chapters.

Attempts to gain legal acknowledgement for community radio in Indonesia have always been controversial. According to Ali Pangestu (interview 6 April 2007), who was Head of Presidium of *JRKI/Jaringan Radio Komunitas Indonesia* (the Community Radio Network of Indonesia) between 2002 and 2004, prior to the enactment of the Broadcasting Law number 32/2002, community radio was seen as 'wild radio, illegal radio'. As a result, there were some community radio stations that were established without a broadcasting permit from the government. In the north of Yogyakarta, students and local inhabitants established *Suket Teki* Radio in Minomartani village in 1998. In Lembang, West Java, Ida Yurinda Hidayat, a former journalist, supported by *MKPMI/Majelis Keluarga Petani Mandiri Indonesia* (Council of Independent Indonesian Farming Families), established *JRSP/Jaringan Radio Suara Petani* (the Network of Farmer Community Radios) in 1999. In 2000, the citizen's forum of Cibangkong village and the citizens's forum of the Majalaya village (both in West Java) established their own community radio stations. To the south of Yogyakarta, young people in Timbulharjo village established *Radio Angkringan* in 2000 in order to monitor the actions of the village's government.

The effort to seek support for community radio in the post-Soeharto era can be seen in the following activities. On 22-24 March 2002 community radio activists of West Java participated in a workshop in Bandung (Kompas 27 May 2002). The workshop's participants, who came from various types of *radio gelap*, such as citizens forum radio, campus radio and hobby radio, agreed to transform their radio stations into community radio. Since the community radio movement had just begun not all

participants were familiar with the term,³⁸ and so during the workshop they discussed definitions and characteristics of community radio. The workshop's main agenda was to create a common understanding of their movement and delineate a unified strategy for the promotion of community radio in Indonesia, especially in terms of gaining legal acknowledgment in the new broadcasting law. They saw the new law as a starting point for them to obtain a broadcasting license (JRKI n.d.). In this workshop, community radio activists also started to break 'the silence situation' of Indonesian community radio stations by building networks.³⁹ Yet this workshop is mainly remembered due to its historical declaration of establishment of *JRK Jabar/Jaringan Radio Komunitas Jawa Barat* (the Community Radio Network of West Java). This organisation can be considered the first community radio association in post-colonial Indonesia. Therefore, the function of this workshop was highly political rather than merely technical, and the declaration of establishment of *JRK Jabar* was heard by community radio activists in Yogyakarta, 500 km east of Bandung.

The formation of *JRK Jabar* was followed on 6 May 2002, by the establishment of *JRKY/Jaringan Radio Komunitas Yogyakarta* (the Community Radio Network of Yogyakarta) in Gedung *DPRD/Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah* (the Yogyakarta Regional People's Representative Council Building) by 30 community radio stations, supported by 23 NGOs. The chosen location was the building *Rumah Rakyat* (the House of the People); thus the action had the symbolic function of representing their

³⁸ Community radio activists built their understanding about community radio through their participation in community radio meetings and workshops. It can be said that they learned by doing (interview with Adam 9 February 2006).

³⁹ Regarding network building, Akhmad Nasir, a founder of *Angkringan* Community Radio, admitted that to promote community radio in Indonesia, community radio had to 'show off' in order to gain attention from policy makers involved in the process of drafting the broadcasting law. Therefore, in 2002 community radio needed to consolidate their power by building associations and networks (interview 25 July 2006).

action as a political movement from below. The movement also indicated that the struggle of community radio could not be separated from the democratic movement where people at grassroots level can exercise their citizenship. They wanted members of the Council in Yogyakarta to accommodate people's interest and communicate it to their colleagues in *DPR/Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* (National People's Representative Council), Jakarta (interview with Adam 9 February 2006).

These moves culminated in the establishment of *JRKI* outside the People's Representative Council building in Jakarta on 15 May 2002. This location was also strategically chosen to attract the attention of a wide public, especially members of parliament and the mass media, and to proclaim that community radio, as representative of the voice of people at grassroots level, has a right to be acknowledged in the media system in Indonesia. At this event, *JRKI* also declared that they supported the draft of the Broadcasting Law discussed by the People's Representative Council (Masduki 2007, p.174).

Soon after the establishment of community radio organisations in 2002, community radio activists, NGOs and universities established a team called *Advokasi Rencana Undang Undang Penyiaran* (Advocates for a Draft Broadcasting Law). Their objective was to endorse the inclusion of a clause on community broadcasting in the Law. Community radio activists understood that obtaining community acknowledgment is a long process. In order to establish their legitimacy, they made a coalition with NGOs and academics, lobbied members of the Council and networked

with international organisations such as AMARC, Internews, and UNESCO.⁴⁰ It was a civil society movement that emerged to pursue the kind of freedom of information that was not found under Soeharto (Kitley 2003, pp. 97-114). Community radio in Indonesia has thus been used by the civil society as part of a social change movement to democratise the political system, that Antlov (2003, p.73) sees as a mechanism of democracy that allows people at grassroots level to be heard.

The drafting of the Broadcasting Law was dominated by ideas about the democratisation of the broadcasting system in Indonesia. According to Zainal Suryokusumo (interview via email 18 December 2006), the draft of the Broadcasting Law adopted by the People's Representatives Council was a proposal of civil society organisations, especially an initiative of *MPPI/Masyarakat Pers dan Penyiaran Indonesia* (the Indonesian Press and Broadcasting Society) and *PRSSNI* (see also Masduki 2007, p.130). To support the proposal, they used references from the Broadcasting or Telecommunication Law of the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, Sweden, Germany, the Philippines, and South Africa, including a reference to an independent regulatory body. To demonstrate the importance of *KPI/Komisi Penyiaran Indonesia* (Indonesian Broadcasting Commission) for the regulation of broadcasting media, Suryokusumo (2003, pp. 159-173) uses as examples independent regulatory bodies in several countries, including Sweden, the Philippines, the United States, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and France.

⁴⁰ This process of building social coalitions occurred along with the community radio movement everywhere. Experiences of community radio groups in various countries, such as in Latin America, showed that their political achievement (acknowledgment in the legal system) was a result of a long process of struggle. Their struggle can be identified as an attempt to realise democratisation of communication, using media in their own way. They were often opposed by the government and corporate media (see Rodriguez 2001, p.10; Dagron 2007, p.205).

Two central issues included in the Broadcasting Law were endorsed by the civil society and the People's Representative Council. The first one is the establishment of *KPI* as an independent regulatory body to manage the broadcasting system in Indonesia. The second issue is the provision of alternative media for people at grassroots level, that is, community media as part of the broadcasting system in Indonesia. Later on, however, *PRSSNI* withdrew from the Broadcasting Law proposal because it did not agree with the authority of an independent broadcasting commission, which it thought would restrict the freedom of the media. They believed that the *KPI* would become the equivalent of the former Department of Information, active under Soeharto, which had absolute power in determining the fate of broadcast media in Indonesia. To avoid a similar experience in the future, *PRSSNI* argued that *KPI* should remain as an administrative institution only (see Masduki 2007, p.180).

After long debates, the new Broadcasting Law was enacted on 28 December 2002. Naturally, *JRKI* saw this event as the successful outcome of their campaign (*JRKI* n.d.). The new Indonesian broadcasting system introduced by Law number 32/2002 had a new regulatory body, *KPI*, and acknowledged four types of broadcasting institutions: 1) public broadcasting, 2) private broadcasting, 3) subscriber broadcasting, and 4) community broadcasting. This Law proclaimed that Indonesia's media system was entering a new era. But the enactment of the Law did not stop controversies about its content. In fact, six broadcasting organisations⁴¹ were not happy with the enactment of the Law, and especially about the position of *KPI* (Masduki 2007, p.184). They suspected that the *KPI* would be a reincarnation of the

⁴¹ The six organisations were: *ATSI/Asosiasi Televisi Siaran Indonesia* (Indonesian Television Broadcasting Association), *PSS/Persatuan Sulih Suara* (Dubbing Association), *IJTI/Ikatan Jurnalis Televisi Indonesia* (Indonesian Television Journalists Association), *PRSSNI, Komteve/Komunitas Televisi* (Television Community), and *PPPI/Persatuan Perusahaan Periklanan Indonesia* (Indonesian Association of Advertising Agencies) (Pandjaitan & Siregar 2003, p.76).

New Order's Department of Information, which had been invested with considerable authority to control the flows of social communication. Article 8 of the Broadcasting Law number 32/2002 sets out the position of the *KPI* as follows:

1. *KPI* as the manifestation of public participation functions to accommodate aspirations and represent public interests on broadcasting;
2. In carrying out its functions as mentioned in clause (1), *KPI* has authorities to:
 - a. Set up broadcast program standards;
 - b. Compose regulations and set up code of conducts on broadcasting;
 - c. Monitor the implementation of regulations and code of conducts of broadcasting as well as the broadcast program standards;
 - d. Impose sanctions towards violations of broadcasting regulations and code of conducts as well as broadcast program standards; and
 - e. Perform coordination and/or cooperation with the Government, broadcasting institutions, and the public.
3. *KPI* has tasks and duties to:
 - a. Ensure the public to get decent and correct information in accordance with human rights;
 - b. Help managing the infrastructure in broadcasting sector;
 - c. Help creating fair competition atmosphere among broadcasting institutions and related industries;
 - d. Maintain fair, just and balanced system of information;
 - e. Accommodate, investigate, and follow-up complaints, counter-statements, as well as criticisms and public appreciation toward broadcasting operation; and
 - f. Plan the development of human resources that guarantees professionalism in broadcasting sector.⁴²

For the government, especially the Department of Communication and Information, the main concern was that *KPI* would take over the government's authority to issue broadcasting licenses.

Based on article 10 of the Broadcasting Law number 32/2002, *KPI* was not created by government. This institution was created by the House of Representative in order to reduce government's domination in broadcasting sector. In this context, government

⁴² This English version was translated by Indonesia Media Law and Policy Center (IMPLC). Retrieved February 5, 2008 from www.imlpc.or.id.

objected this institution since KPI is a competitor of government. Government wanted to keep its control in broadcasting sector.

Siregar (2002b) criticises the objections of the government concerning *KPI* and community radio. Firstly, Siregar points out, the reform era government wanted to keep the control over the broadcasting system, especially the authority to grant broadcasting licenses.⁴³ The broadcasting permit, according to the government, should fall under the authority of *KPI*. Secondly, Siregar adds, the government feared that community radio would waste radio frequency band-width and threaten the stability of Indonesian society. In fact, a senior officer of the Department of Communication and Information Technology, speaking at a Community Radio meeting in Bandung in March 2002 (cited by Henschke 2002), claimed that community radio could ignite conflict between religious and racial groups in Indonesia. This claim was also put forward by the government's representatives during the process of drafting the Law. But, according to Siregar, this claim was based on assumption rather than evidence. Since many conflicts had emerged in such regions as Ambon, Poso, Aceh, Central Kalimantan and Papua during the 1990s and 2000s, that is, before the emergence of community radio in Indonesia, the claim that community radio could be a possible cause of conflict was clearly not appropriate.

⁴³ The Department of Information during the New Order was very powerful in controlling the mass media, as it determined who could get broadcasting licenses (See Sen & Hill 2000, p.54 and Steele 2005, Chapter 4). Thus, to avoid the loss of control over the mass media, the Department of Information rejected the role of *KPI* to authorise broadcasting permits. It seemed that the government wanted to retain New Order-style control over the issuing of licenses.

Furthermore, the government asserted that since community radio had come from foreign countries it did not represent Indonesia's original needs.⁴⁴ Ali Pangestu claims that this was not true, arguing that in the post-Soeharto era, the community radio movement started as a people's initiative, when activists, intellectuals and university students started their discussions (interview 6 April 2007). Perhaps the government's fear was manifested in article 23 of Broadcasting Law number 32/2002, which stated that community broadcasting is not allowed to use foreign aid for its establishment and operation. This article can be interpreted as the result of a compromise between those in favour and those against the acknowledgement of community radio.

As stated above, the enactment of the Broadcasting Law did not stop the controversies over it. Only two months after the enactment, objections by opponents of the Law were put to *MK/Mahkamah Konstitusi* (the Constitutional Court). Some community radio activists, NGO members and academics opposed this objection, publishing a book entitled *Membangun Sistem Penyiaran yang Demokratis di Indonesia* (Developing a Democratic Broadcasting System in Indonesia) and drawing together discussions about the important role of *KPI* in Indonesia. This book was submitted to the Court as *ad informandum* or additional information (see Pandjaitan & Siregar 2003, p.73).

Community radio activists prefer to support *KPI* since this institution is seen as a defender of democratisation of media in Indonesia. It also means that the existence of community radio as part of democratisation in media can be protected by the institution. For this reason, community radio activists supported the 'original' version

⁴⁴ Soon after the fall of Soeharto, several international NGOs sponsored programs for media democratisation, for example USAID, Frederick Neuman Stiftung, UNESCO, Ford Foundation and Open Society.

of the Broadcasting Law number 32/2002 (before the judicial review) which sets out the position of KPI as an independent regulatory body for broadcasting sector.

Finally, on 28 July 2004, the Court approved a judicial review of the Law that reduced the authority of the *KPI* to issue broadcasting licenses, while giving back that authority to the government, as it used to be in the New Order period. Civil society activists asserted that, with the Court's approval, the government had regained its power to control broadcasting media. Community radio activists were dissatisfied with this result since they expected that *KPI* would reduce the government's capacity for intervention of the broadcasting media. They saw *KPI* as a representation of people's sovereignty in relation to the broadcasting system.

In response to the result of the judicial review, community radio activists held a National Congress of Community Radio in Bandung on 12-16 December 2004. This congress was attended by seventeen delegations of community radio associations. Showing their disappointment with the Court's decision, participants were aware that the decision would threaten the existence of community radio since they had expected that *KPI* could become its defender. For this reason, they resolved to support the implementation of the Broadcasting Law number 32/2002, which acknowledged the existence of community radio. They argued that the Law was beneficial in protecting the voice of people at grassroots level.

Further controversy arose when the government released regulations concerning broadcasting institutions, including public broadcasting, community broadcasting and foreign news. The regulation about community broadcasting, Government Regulation

(*Peraturan Pemerintah*) number 51/2005, was seen by community radio broadcasters as not accommodating their aspirations. For example, the regulation limited the coverage area of community radio to only 2.5 square kilometres or to effective radiated power of a maximum of 50 watts. Community radio activists rejected this limitation, asking the government to revise the regulation (VHRmedia 17 March 2006). They believed that the regulation would reduce the effectiveness of community radio, as it reduced the access to communication media of people at grassroots level.

The case of Government Regulation concerning community radio further testifies to the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of finding a universal definition of community. The Government Regulation, in fact, defines community in terms of geography. This definition places certain limits on the capacity of community radio, such that community radio stations have by definition low power and a limited area of coverage. The government asserts, in this way, that the implementation of a geographical approach can prevent conflict within society, which may be provoked by the misuse of community media by specific groups of people (interviews with Senior Officers at the Department of Communication and Information Technology, Republik of Indonesia, July 14, 2006).

The limitation of the area of coverage has been strongly criticised by community radio advocates. Firstly, they have argued, this limitation is based on the demographics of Java, which has a high population density, and therefore is unsuitable for areas with low population density, such as Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Papua. Secondly, they have claimed, the coverage area is too narrow to accommodate the information needs of people, because their social interactions can reach beyond

2.5 square kilometres. In addition, they have seen that this limitation does not accommodate people who may have common interests and features, such as ethnicity, profession, and religion, but may be spread over a larger geographical area.⁴⁵

A geographically based definition of community is particularly problematic for Indonesian community radio since many stations are not structured in relation to geographical location. For example, campus radio is categorised as community radio in the Broadcasting Law, although most of these radios are interest based. A campus radio, in fact, is not managed by the community surrounding the station since it belongs to a higher education institution and is mostly run by students. In many cases the radio functions for educational purposes, especially as a tool for students to practise specific skills, as, for example, campus radio stations in communication studies departments. *JRSP/Jaringan Radio Suara Petani & Nelayan* (Community Radio Network of Farmers and Fishermen) is another example of community radio based on a community of interest. Thus, community radio on the ground has developed not only over a geographical area, but also because of community interests. As a result of this, community radio activists have expressed a desire to combine geographical and interest-based criteria in the formulation of a definition of community in the context of community radio.

Thus, the definitions contained in both the Broadcasting Law and Government Regulation seem clearly focused on how to limit the scope of community radio. In addition, the government located community radio's frequencies in the risky area of

⁴⁵ This issue was discussed several times by community radio and civil society activists, for example: Focus Group Discussion facilitated by Lembaga Studi dan Pengembangan Pers [LSPP] in Jakarta 12-13 September 2008; the National Congress of Community Radio in University of Indonesia, Jakarta 14-15 January 2004.

107.7-107.8 FM, which is close to the frequency of air traffic. This implies that community radio's transmissions must be of very good quality to prevent interference from air traffic frequencies. It also means that the community would need to purchase more expensive equipment, although money is not a simple matter for people at grassroots level. Thus, with its regulations the government seems intent on preventing community radio's becoming powerful or influential.

2.5 Licensing and Networking

By 2009 community radio stations have been trying to obtain broadcasting licenses from *KPI*. So far this process has taken three years, and it has not yet been finalised. The conflict between the Indonesian Government (Ministry of Information and Communication) and *KPI* has meant that the granting of broadcasting permits for community radio, crucial for the radio station's existence, is still uncertain (Masduki 2005, p.155). Despite these difficulties in getting licenses, community radio stations are blossoming everywhere in Indonesia. *JRKI* claims more than 700 member radio stations (interview with Bowo Usodo January 2, 2006), while *JRSP*, as stated in its website, claims more than 350 member radio stations. Recently, more associations of community radio stations have been established, such as *Jaringan Radio Komunitas Demokrasi* (Community Radio Networks for Democracy), *JRSP*, *JRKI*, *Forum Radio Kampus Indonesia* (Campus Radio Forum), *Jaringan Radio Komunitas Himpunan Kerukunan Tani Indonesia* (Community Radio Network of the Association of Indonesian Farmers), and *Jaringan Radio Komunitas Pesantren* (Community Radio Network of Islamic Schools).

To strengthen their existence, community radio associations have also developed international networks. The community radio movement of Indonesia is a member of AMARC, an international community radio organisation based in Canada. Facing an uncertain legal situation, on 24-27 November 2005 Indonesia hosted the 1st AMARC Asia-Pacific Conference. AMARC gave concrete support to community radio in Indonesia by choosing Jakarta as a location for the establishment of AMARC Asia-Pacific. This conference seemed demonstratively to provide international support for Indonesian community radio. With sponsorship from AMARC, Indonesia also sent delegates to the 9th World Conference of AMARC in Amman, Jordan, on 11-17 November 2006.

The Indonesian community radio movement also facilitated AMARC's workshop concerning poverty alleviation and disaster management on 17-20 October 2008 in Yogyakarta. Importantly, in this workshop Indonesian community radio organisations endorsed women's empowerment in community radio since women's participation in community radio is rare. Although participants in this workshop agreed about the importance of women's participation in community radio, to realise this idea in the field was perceived as hard work and as something that needs time. Nevertheless, this workshop was useful to alert community radio activists of the need to encourage women's participation in community radio. To promote women's participation, the Women's International Network of AMARC (AMARC-WIN) frequently invited Indonesian women to participate in conferences related to community communication. For example, several women were sponsored by AMARC to participate in AMARC's conference in Jordan in 2006.

The development of new information and communication technologies has also influenced the way community radio is practiced in Indonesia. Several community radio stations, for example, actively utilise the internet to network with other radio stations, such as *JRKI*, *SIAR* (Channel of Grassroots Information), *Jaringan Lintas Merapi* (Cross-border Network of Merapi Volcano), and *APIK* (Centre of Community Information Arena), *Suara Komunitas* (Voice of Community), and ARRNet (Aceh Nias Reconstruction Radio Network). These websites function to link community radio stations in order to exchange information and programs. Radio stations have also combined radio and internet in order to improve people's access to information. For example, *Angkringan* in Timbulharjo, Yogyakarta, has been promoting the use of the internet in the village. They have introduced *wajanbolic*,⁴⁶ literally a parabolic antenna made from *wajan* (wok), as a wireless internet receiver. The technology is a combination of high technology (wifi USB adapter) and ordinary technology (a wok). This idea was developed by the open source community of Indonesia. *Wajanbolic* is based on a concept that people must have an opportunity to access information, which is only possible if there is cheap technology available. In Timbulharjo village people would be expected to spend 350,000 rupiah (A\$50) to have a *wajanbolic*, and every month a household would have to pay a A\$10 subscription. *Wajanbolic* is then to be used by the village people to access information on the internet. Based on a trial by eight households, this technology has the capacity to work. To serve more people, this program was officially launched on 15 November 2008.

The above developments are part of the Indonesian community radio movement's efforts to enlarge its functions within the community. For some community radio

⁴⁶ Further discussion about *wajanbolic* can be found in Chapter 3.

stations, there is a need to act as embryonic community communication centres. Such activity can be found, for example, in the work of *Radio Komunitas Balai Budaya Minomartani* (BBM community radio) in Sleman, where volunteers collected money and built a village library within the radio station's location. Like the radio station, the library can be accessed by all the inhabitants of Minomartani village.

2.6 Conclusion

Looking at the history of community radio in Indonesia this chapter has argued that it was the people's long held desire for freedom of expression, after the end of Soeharto's regime, which enabled the emergence and expansion of the community radio movement. In order to demonstrate this claim the chapter has discussed the history of community radio in Indonesia in terms of three main periods. In terms of the first period, the chapter has shown that the efforts of people to use community radio can be traced back to the earliest uses of radio in Indonesia. The notion and practice of community radio has indeed existed in Indonesia since radio enthusiasts in the Netherlands Indies first established radio stations to accommodate their needs for news and cultural expression. In relation to the second period, the chapter has claimed that in the post-independence era, especially during the transition from the Soekarno to the Soeharto regimes in the 1960s, students were the main actors in the creation of 'rebel' radio, which was used as a form of resistance to Soekarno's repression. Finally, in terms of the third period, the chapter has shown that the community radio movement gained momentum when Soeharto fell from power in 1998. Thus, in the post-Soeharto period, people at grassroots level emerged as the main actors in the movement. In this period, the challenge to community radio's existence and expansion came from both the government and the commercial radio

sector. Whereas the government saw community radio in terms of security, commercial radio asserted that community radio was ‘competition’ regarding audiences and space in radio frequency. As a result, these challenges marginalised community radio in the Indonesian broadcasting system.

In Chapters 3, 4 and 5, I will discuss how community radio has been used by communities to empower themselves in the context of the public sphere, strengthening local identity, and developing civic action, especially in emergency situations created by natural disasters.

Chapter 3

Community Radio and Citizenship

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 showed that political democracy is not possible without a public sphere that gives people opportunities to express their interests. Participation in the public sphere is a necessary condition for active citizenship, since it is there that people exercise their rights as citizens, as they negotiate their interests with others.

This chapter addresses the thesis' main research question: 'how do Indonesians use community radio at grassroots level to promote participation in the public matters of the village?' In addressing this question the chapter discusses the potential of community radio as a social communication medium that functions to develop active citizenship, especially through the expansion of participation and the minimisation of the marginality of people at grassroots level. Thus, this chapter argues that with community radio Indonesia's village people have increased their opportunities to participate in public debates and to realise their potential as citizens who are aware of both their rights and their obligations in society. In this chapter, as in the whole thesis, community radio is seen as a medium that is actively used to counter the assumptions of the 'top down' approach to social communication, which underestimates the capacity of people at grassroots level. This problematic approach tends to ignore the significant knowledge that people have about their local environment and daily circumstances. Indeed, people know

not only their needs but also the best way to fulfil these needs in accordance with the characteristics of their environment and situation.

The chapter's discussion starts by examining how people use community radio at grassroots level to fill the participation vacuum that traditionally affects the public sphere at the lowest political administrative level: the village. The discussion shows how village people use community radio to increase their engagement with political processes, giving especial attention to the issue of good governance in the village. The chapter goes on to show that in the villages of Wiladeg, Timbulharjo and Minomartani community radio has become a central form of the public sphere, in which the expression of people's interests is realised. This idea is illustrated through the cases of three community radio stations in the abovementioned villages: *Wiladeg Community Radio*, *Angkringan Community Radio*, and *BBM Community Radio*.

3.2 The Need for the Democratisation of Information

The enactment of Press Law No. 40/1999 and Broadcasting Law No. 32/2002 recognised the people's demands not only for a change of regime, but also for a change into a political system that would enable communities to participate in decision-making processes; in other words, a political system that would ensure that people have the opportunity to express their wishes (Bakti 2005, p. 199). It is not enough to open up political spaces if people (especially the poor and the vulnerable) do not have a mechanism that allows them to make their voices heard and to have an active role in the public life of the village. Indeed, any attempt to allow the people's voices to be heard is

vital, especially when considering that historically political transitions are often hijacked by the social elites, who benefit from their greater access to the media (Antlov 2003, p.73; Nugroho 2005, p.41). For this reason, after the fall of Soeharto it was necessary to establish in Indonesia a public media system that empowered civil society, including people at grassroots level. Reforms had only just begun and the process of democratic transition was still fragile, so there was an urgent need to prevent a reversal (Susastro 2001).

The implementation of Local Governance Law 22/1999, concerning decentralisation and local autonomy, affected the role of the civil society and the media not only at the macro level but also at the level of the village. Decentralisation is expected to bring the government closer to the community by giving greater authority to local decision-makers, and, in this way, expanding people's capacity to participate in the political process (Susastro 2001). Scholars in participatory communication studies argue that in the context of village life, decentralisation gives people more opportunities to participate in self-governance by deciding on policies related to their daily lives (Servaes 1996, p.102; Howley 2005, p.19).

As Habermas points out, the public sphere is a foundation for building citizenry, which provides a forum for all to discuss public matters openly. As a result, any attempt to articulate a public sphere is important for a community because it is in the public sphere that people have the opportunity to voice their opinions (see Howley 2005, p.19). As discussed in Chapter 1, the concept of public sphere highlights the importance of a

communication platform for the empowerment of the people. By accessing a public space which is open for all, people have an opportunity for self-management through their participation in the planning and production of media content. Through community radio, people practice an activity that is democratic in nature, especially in the process of making decisions about the production of social messages (Servaes 1996, p.105).

3.3 The Role of the Students

The discussion of the development and function of community radio as an aspect of the public sphere in Indonesia must consider the role played by students. During the post-Soeharto period, students played an important role in initiating community radio. They were active in encouraging people to establish community radio stations and organisations of community radio broadcasters. They also campaigned for recognition of community broadcasting in the Indonesian legal system. Students established their own type of radio, which is known as *radio komunitas kampus* (university or campus-based community radio). Although it is difficult to obtain definitive data about campus-based community radio in Indonesia, it has been suggested that of 55 community radios operating in the Yogyakarta Province in 2009, 11 were campus-based (Subiyantoro 2009).

When Bowo Usodo, the chairperson of Community Radio Network of Indonesia (JRKI), first became involved in the community radio movement, he was a communications student in Bandung, West Java. He has been involved with radio since 1996 when he

operated *radio kampus* in that city. This campus-based radio had no name and had no permanent location. Bowo Usodo explains that:

At that time, indeed, campus-based radio was broadcast from one campus or another in Bandung; for example, it had been at Unisba (Bandung Islamic University); it then was relocated to Sastra Unpad (Faculty of Literature, Padjadjaran University) and Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Komunikasi (Communication Science College). Its goal was to broadcast something that was different from mainstream media. (interview with Bowo Usodo, 19 July 2006)

Bowo Usodo also acknowledges that campus-based radio was utilised by students to strengthen the changing attitude toward the Soeharto regime. As he states:

At that time our interest was political change ... we were so excited in generating a spirit of change ... for that reason we launched massive protests against the New Order (of Soeharto) before the year 1998. (interview 19 July 2006)

Following Soeharto's fall, Bowo Usodo and his colleagues expanded the use of this kind of radio. His experience in non-profit radio was enriched when, in Bandung in 2000, he joined a young artists' radio, *Radio Kopi Pahit* (Black Coffee Radio), which provided a discussion forum concerning cultural studies, philosophy and the arts..His work in these two 'alternative' radio stations had started his involvement in community radio; later, in 2002, he became involved in the establishment of JRKI (Community Radio Network of Indonesia). He was also a journalist and an activist in an association of artists in Bandung. One year later, together with Haris Irnawan, a village inhabitant, he initiated a community-based radio, *Radio Komunitas Kita-Kita* (Our Community Radio), in the Sadang-Serang Village, North Bandung (interview with Bowo Usodo, 19 July 2006).

Another prominent community radio activist, Ali Pangestu, the former coordinator of Community Radio Network of Indonesia, also came from campus-based radio. He was an

activist of student-run radio at Juanda University, Bogor, West Java. He explains that from the beginning campus radio activists were aware that the function of campus radio was not only to voice students' interests but also the interests of grassroots people outside the campus. It is, therefore, not surprising that students were also actively involved in promoting community radio among village people (interview with Ali Pangestu, 6 April 2007).

In Yogyakarta Special Region many community radio activists were also students. This phenomenon occurred not only in the cities but also in rural areas, as is the case of *Angkringan* Community Radio, *Balai Budaya Minomartani* (BBM) Community Radio and Wiladeg Community Radio (*RKW*). In the Timbulharjo village, Akhmad Nasir had an important role in the *Angkringan* Community Radio. His involvement was influenced by his previous experience as a *pers kampus* (student press) activist in Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, at the end of the 1990s when he worked as a journalist of *Bulaksumur*, a bulletin published by the student press and generally regarded as well-managed. Working with the 'alternative press' at the end of the Soeharto era gave Nasir a valuable perspective on the importance of community media for the expression of the interests of the public. According to Muhammad Toriq, a student press activist in Yogyakarta, the student press was the main source of information about the student movement during the Soeharto regime. As expected, many student press activists became members of the anti-Soeharto movement (Radio Nederland Wereldroep 2008).

After his work in the student press, Nasir focused on developing community media in his village, Timbulharjo:

I decided to take part in community media since I saw many of the roles of the student press had been replaced or taken over by mass media. The role of student press as a locomotive of press freedom had finished along with political reform in Indonesia in 1998. For me, that momentum occurred when I was not active in student press anymore, so [I wondered] how to relocate the arena to my village which needed more media advocacy. From that point, the idea of *Angkringan* emerged (interview, 1 March 2007).

Nasir decided to take a leading role in initiating community media in his village and so he asked his friends and other young people of Timbulharjo to participate. Nasir is well known in Indonesia as a pioneer of community radio as he was instrumental in the establishment of *Angkringan* Bulletin and Community Radio. He learned much from the process of organising these two community media, and, therefore, many organisations have invited him to share his experience and ideas about community communication with a wider public. Because of his deep involvement in community radio, he chose to work at CRI (Combine Resources Institution),⁴⁴ an NGO concerned with community-based information network development and well known for supporting community radio in various regions, such as Lombok, Aceh and Java. By working at CRI, Nasir was able to be involved with many community radio stations in Indonesia.

Many more cases of former campus-based radio activist progressing to the field of community radio can be mentioned, For example, students played an important role in the establishment of *Radio Suket Teki* in the Minomartani village, from which *Radio Komunitas BBM* (Balai Budaya Minomartani Community Radio) evolved. Adi Nugraha,

⁴⁴ Since 1 November 2008, Nasir has been the chair of CRI.

a student of Gadjah Mada University, and his friends established this radio, which used the frequency 93.5 FM. Since the radio had no broadcasting permit, they operated in practice as an ‘illegal radio.’ In 2000, however, and after operating for only one year, they were forced to close down the radio after receiving a warning from the Monitoring Bureau of the Department of Transportation (Jonathans 2003b; Tanesia 2007b, p.103). Similarly, the late Wijanarko recruited students to initiate and operate the Wiladeg Community Radio (*RKW*) with support from the Head of the Wiladeg village. Sulis, an announcer of *RKW*, was studying at a higher education institution in Yogyakarta when he was asked by Wijanarko in 2002 to support the establishment *RKW*.

Based on his research into the student movement’s pursuit of democratisation of the media in Indonesia, Hidayat argues that Indonesian students could develop this kind of public profile because they were relatively untouched by the pressures of the state and the market (2002, p.157). In fact, student volunteers wanted to work with people at grassroots level in villages to promote and encourage community radio. By establishing community radio, students challenged the government’s harsh policies on freedom of expression. In this sense, they constituted a moral force, which was free to express their idealistic challenge of the status-quo.

3.4 The Process of Establishment

The development of *BBM* Radio in Minomartani was based on knowledge about the potential for community communication. This was derived from SAV Puskat (Audio Visual Studio Catechetical Centre), which was the facilitator of the radio. SAV Puskat is

an educational institution founded by Jesuit Priests, which focuses on community communication. Providing training and workshops on grassroots communication, such as people's theatre, group communication, and audio and video production since 1971, SAV Puskat has a rich experience in promoting social communication among the under-privileged.⁴⁵ The involvement of SAV Puskat in community activities in Minomartani started when this organisation built housing for its staff members in the early 1990s. In the compound, SAV Puskat also built a hall as a centre of social activities. The hall, known as the Balai Budaya Martani/*BBM* (Minomartani Cultural Hall), was not only for the use of SAV Puskat staff members but also of other inhabitants of Minomartani. Eventually, it became the centre of social communication of Minomartani. People often used *BBM* for traditional culture performances, such as *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet), *ketoprak* (traditional drama), traditional dance, and *karawitan* (traditional music). These cultural activities became the foundation of *BBM* Community Radio. For activists of *BBM*, these cultural activities are also a medium to express their creativity.⁴⁶

SAV Puskat understood the important social role that the media had for the community and promoted the idea that public media should be used to empower village people through the power of social communication. Ruedi Hofmann, a Jesuit Priest⁴⁷ and the Head of SAV Puskat from 1994 to 1996, thought that all villages should have their own community media outlets so as to help villagers improve their lives through social

⁴⁵ In Indonesia Catholics make up around 3 % of the population (Steenbrink 2003). Catholic organisations have been active in local development projects focusing on intermediate technology and self-reliance.

⁴⁶ Further discussion about community radio and cultural activities can be found in Chapter 4.

⁴⁷ Jesuit priests also played a crucial role in participatory communication projects in other countries. Dagron states that in Western Tanzania Jesuit priests facilitated the establishment of Radio Kwizera, while in The Philippines they supported several community radio projects (Dagron 2001, p.18).

communication. This idea was based on the notion that the role of the media should be to facilitate the efforts of the people to develop themselves (see Servaes 1996, p.100). In this context, SAV Puskat promoted community radio as it provided horizontal communication among community members. SAV Puskat believed that community radio could assist people in becoming active community participants as it provided access to media production and decision making. They thought that people could develop a grassroots democracy in which a diversity of opinions could be allowed, because on the ground there were consistent differences among participants' experiences, which meant that there was always a range of different interpretations of the same problem (interview with Giovani, 14 March 2006).

In order to promote community radio and share ideas about its potency, in 1993 SAV Puskat facilitated a discussion about the potential of community radio in Balai Budaya, Minomartani. Among the participants there were community members and three representatives of commercial radio broadcasters of Yogyakarta. As a starting point, they discussed a video about *Latacunga* community radio in Latin America. The video was provided by Hofmann, the Director of Puskat, after his visit to that region (Jonathans 2003b; interview with Kusuma 13 May 2006). In the discussion about the potential of community radio for Minomartani, the term *gubug rekaman* (studio hut) emerged.⁴⁸ *Gubug rekaman* was a symbol of an independent media production unit owned by people at grassroots level, whereby village inhabitants could produce radio programs and share

⁴⁸ The term *gubug* refers to a small hut or shack made of bamboo and wood. Usually, it can be found in villages and slums.

their interests.⁴⁹ The concept of *gubug rekaman* was also an acknowledgment that people have the potential to develop themselves with their own resources. This perspective is echoed in Julius Nyerere's argument. Nyerere, first President of Tanzania and a well-known proponent of the participatory approach, stated that '[p]eople cannot be developed, they can only develop themselves' (cited in White 1999, p.31). The problem is that people often have little opportunity to do this. In line with this perspective, community development should, therefore, focus on how people can stand on their own feet.

Liberation Theology and Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* probably inspired Hofmann in developing SAV Puskat. Such inspiration also influenced ideas about the use radio as a tool for people's empowerment.⁵⁰ This Latin American perspective has actively influenced debates about communication approaches in the development process in Indonesia, particularly in terms of the imbalance in flows of information between centre and peripheries or cities and regions. Such critiques of the imbalance in the flow of information can be seen in the perspective of SAV Puskat toward the role of communication media. Iswara Hadi, the chairperson of SAV Puskat, acknowledged that Latin America's experiences inspired community media programs such as folk theatre, group media, community radio, and video programs in his institution (personal

⁴⁹ On the wall of the studio of BBM, there is an illustration of people's cultural activities sketched by a SAV Puskat artist, in which a community member dressed in a Javanese traditional costume is speaking in a radio program. Close to him, a woman is listening to her radio while watching a *wayang kulit* performance. The illustration described the idea of community radio as conceived by SAV Puskat: focused on the local context and the resources of village people.

⁵⁰ Wahono Nitiprawira (1987, p.9), a Jesuit priest, notes that Indonesian scholars started to discuss Liberation Theology in 1975. This theology became a hot topic during the 1980s, when key scholars, for example, Mangunwijaya (1982), Sumartana (1982), Hardawiryana (1983), Magnis-Suseno (1984), Tanja (1985) and Banawiratma (1985), published their works.

communication, 23 April 2007). Interestingly, a key characteristic of social movements in Latin America, namely, conflict with the government, was not applied in SAV Puskat's projects. SAV Puskat preferred to invite local government to work together in developing projects in the communities of Minomartani.

In another village, Wiladeg, activists lead by Wijanarko invited people to the local hall to discuss the possibility of establishing a community radio station in the village. Wijanarko who knew much about community radio from his links with community radio activists of Yogyakarta Community Radio Network (JRKI) became a source of information for the locals. However, the villagers did not reach agreement in the first meeting; they wanted a trial of a radio broadcast before making a decision. Thus, the trial took place in 2002. The village people were asked to listen to the broadcast from the hall: the radio aired *wungon*, which consisted in information about the village and *sarasehan* (dialogue). The people were asked for their opinion about the program: they were amazed. In the beginning they did not believe that their village could do it, but after the trial they were confident that their village could operate a radio station. After long discussions among Wijanarko, the village's Head and the community of Wiladeg, it was decided to establish a community radio station in the village.

Following the fall of Soeharto the community radio movement had already begun in Indonesia in the early 2000s. Radio was chosen in many villages because this medium was relatively affordable and easily operated and understood by everyone. These reasons were important for Wiladeg because most villagers are farmers, with the older generation

in general having low levels of formal education (the younger generation, on the contrary, are better educated and many work as civil servants, employees of local firms, teachers, labourers, merchants, entrepreneurs, and NGO activists). Wijanarko and Sukoco, the village's Head, had promoted community radio for the first time in the village. For this, they had been inspired by a video produced by a group from Yogyakarta, Kusuma and colleagues. The video was about a traditional event held annually in the Wiladeg village: *Rasulan* or Village Cleansing.⁵¹ People in most villages in Gunung Kidul District celebrate *Rasulan* as an expression of gratitude to God for a successful harvest. Although, it is not known when this tradition began (interview with Subadi, 22 January 2007), in Wiladeg it is celebrated every *Jumat Kliwon* of July.⁵² During *Rasulan* people prepare special food and bring it to the village or sub-village hall, where they share it with their neighbours and families, while being entertained by local attractions. The day ends with a *wayang* show.

After a long, difficult process, Wiladeg's villagers established Wiladeg Community Radio (*RKW*). Limited human resources and financial support were part of the problem. For example, there were no locals who had experience in broadcast radio. As partial solutions, volunteers were sent to take part in discussions and workshops at other community radio associations, and in-house training was provided in the village's hall in cooperation with Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University. *RKW* mostly used hand-made

⁵¹ More information about *Rasulan* can be found in Chapter 4.

⁵² *Jumat Kliwon* is a sacred Friday for Javanese. *Kliwon* is the fifth day of the five-day week in the Javanese calendar. *Jumat Kliwon* is the intersection between the Javanese calendar (five-day week) and the international calendar (seven-day week) so it occurs every 35 days.

equipment and the people themselves assembled the electronic gear, built the studio, and installed the antenna for free: step by step they built a community radio station.

The experience of Wiladeg's *RKW* demonstrates how village people can take the initiative to fulfil their social communication needs by building their own community radio station. However, it also highlights the drawbacks, for example, the fact that, when the quality of the equipment is low, technical problems occur.⁵³ Nevertheless, an advantage of the use of handmade equipment is the production of a sense of ownership among villagers toward the radio. For example, when the transmitter interfered with television reception, there were immediately volunteers to fix it and thus ensure the continued operation of the radio station. Since there were limited funds to buy components, contributions were necessary. *RKW* received donations from a group of Wiladeg people living in Jakarta, which enabled the station to buy second-hand materials from a junk yard and build a new transmitter tower with help from young volunteers from Wiladeg.

While the transmitter tower was being set up, *RKW* was off the air for a month, and, as a result, the audience declined. Consequently, after setting the tower up, *RKW* had to regain its audience, which, according to a *RKW* volunteer of name Sulis, was not an easy task because villagers thought that the radio had closed down. In addition, the radio station received donations of equipment from some individuals. For example, the late Wijanarko donated computers. To make the studio soundproof, they utilised second-hand materials

⁵³ Amri, an NGO activist working with community radio notes that because of the limited budget, many community radio stations in Indonesia used handmade equipment. Since the equipment is made with low cost components, many stations often experience technical problems (2007, p. 172).

from a Wiladeg house recently renovated. Other inhabitants also contributed their skills: young people worked as technicians, while older people participated in management and provided funding. Yet, participation of women in the radio station was still limited.

Women, in general, were only members of the audience. Since most announcers were men in the drive to recruit volunteers for *RKW* women became a priority. As a result, girls became announcers in youth programs, especially of popular music.

3.5 The Experience of Print Media

The emergence of community radio in the three villages referred to in this chapter's introduction was related to the efforts of the villagers to gain access to community media more generally. In fact, before the community of Minomartani owned a community radio, they had gained experience in publishing a local newspaper called *Kobar*, an acronym of *Koran Selembar* (one page newspaper). *Kobar* is also a Javanese word meaning 'flaming' or 'in flames', thus, implying a media which was burning with the spirit of solidarity of the village (personal communication with Iswara Hadi, 19 November 2008). This newspaper was handwritten, used a very simple format, and focused on local issues. The simple format was designed to enable everyone to participate in the media. *Kobar* was produced through a form of citizen journalism that did not require complex skills or much money to operate.

Printed media was also used in Wiladeg along with the emergence of community radio. Their publication, an information leaflet, was also managed by Wijanarko. The leaflet provided information regarding *Proyek Pembangunan Kecamatan* (Sud-district

Development Project) sponsored by the World Bank, but was not sustained beyond the lifetime of the development program (interview with Margio, 7 July 2006, and personal communication with Sukoco, 20 July 2009).

In the Timbulharjo village, community media activities also started with community print media. Here print media was used to counter-balance the village's government. A group of young people in the village used community media to stimulate their neighbours to develop critical awareness about the local situation. Interestingly, when the young people of Timbulharjo decided to publish *Angkringan Bulletin* they had no particular concept of community media. At that time they were also unaware of the complexity of media management, including its sustainability. They just wanted to express their concerns about local politics, especially about village governance. As Nasir explains:

Angkringan did not start with a big idea. We started with the real situation happening in our village. Just printed it out, made copies, and distributed it (interview with Nasir, 25 July 2006).

The context for the work of these young people was the economic crisis in the late 1990s, during which their village received government aid, called *Jaring Pengaman Sosial* (Social Safety Net). This program was intended to help poor people affected by the economic crisis. These young people saw that access to aid had a potential for abuse since there was a lack of central government control and no counter-balance within local government due to lack of unity among the villagers (Nasir 2001, p.1; interview with Nasir, 25 July 2006).

Originally, *Angkringan Bulletin* was to be named *saksi mata* (witness) but this name seemed unfamiliar to the village people. The term *saksi mata* also has a connotation of being *galak* (fierce). As a result, the young people chose the alternative name of *Angkringan*, which refers to a typical sidewalk food stall carriage with two wheels. Traditionally people gather at *angkringan* not only to eat and drink but also to socialise, because it is a place where they are able to speak freely and spontaneously. Hence, the young of Timbulharjo wanted *Angkringan* to become a medium in which the people of the Timbulharjo village would be able to discuss issues related to their interests (interview with Nasir, 25 July 2006). Thus, this bulletin constituted a form of the public sphere but in the specific context of a rural village. Whereas the participants of Habermas's public sphere came from the bourgeois society, Timbulharjo's public sphere was inhabited by villagers.

3.6 The Role of Leadership

The Timbulharjo experience illustrates the argument of Robinson and Fitzpatrick that states that people's initiative is important to prevent the excesses of authoritarian rule and to allow greater community participation to foster a more sustainable development process (See Robinson and Fitzpatrick, p.255). However, in order to take collective action, a community needs leadership. For example, the role of Nasir as an activist of *pers kampus* was crucial to encourage his friends to take action in their village. In the early stages of *Angkringan*, Nasir was a student of the prestigious Gadjah Mada University; this and his high status among volunteers due to his previous experience in the

student press, namely *Balairung*, helped him to inspire and organise his friends to operate *Angkringan*.

In the case of Minomartani, Surowo was the person who actively encouraged people to utilise *BBM* Radio as a tool for communication within the community in order to improve the quality of the community's life. As a community media trainer in SAV Puskat, he was also active in promoting community radio in other villages or regions of Indonesia. His experience was useful in helping him to organise people to use *BBM* Radio.

In Wiladeg Wijanarko motivated the villagers to establish *RKW*, actively contributing his talent to the radio. His numerous contacts with academics and activists outside the Wiladeg village gave him useful information and knowledge concerning community development. With this knowledge, he was able to convince the people of Wiladeg to build *RKW*, because they saw him as a role model who supported the existence of community radio in the village. While he was the key person in the life of *RKW*, it can be said that he created a situation of dependency among the volunteers, because after he passed away in 2006, *RKW*'s activities drastically declined, with the other volunteers needing time to fill the vacuum. Regarding this phenomenon, Amri (2007, p. 170) acknowledges that community radio often experiences difficulties when a senior volunteer resigns and there is no one ready to replace her or him.

Tilakaratna (cited in Thapalia 1996, p.152) suggests that the role of individuals such as Nasir, Surowo and Wijanarko is to encourage their communities to embark on a two-step

process. The first step, of reflection, is to develop a critical awareness of the social forces that have produced the community's poverty; the second step, of action, is to build confidence in the group's collective abilities to bring about positive changes. The process of reflection and action outlined by Tilakaratna was indeed taken to effect in the daily experiences of the people of the three villages that I'm discussing in this chapter, as they effectively used community radio as a public arena for social interaction among villagers. Since the initiators of this process of social change were insiders who had knowledge of the local situation, they were not distanced from the daily experience of the participants but were a part of it.

Significantly, the three key persons mentioned above were media literate; all three of them had worked with communications media before becoming involved in the community radio movement. As a staff member of SAV Puskat, Surowo also had experience in video and television productions and in community media training. Similarly, Nasir had experience working as a journalist on a student newspaper in Yogya, while Wijanarko had been a staff member of a local advertising agency in Semarang, the capital city of Central Java Province. The media literacy of the community radio leaders was helpful in their task of organizing their neighbours into the community media movement, for example, actively supporting the community radio movement's legal recognition.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Lourenco notes that the media literacy of community media activists was also useful in enhancing change in the legal situation of community media in Brazil (Lourenco 2007, pp. 89-99).

3.7 Community Control

Often a community radio starts from the initiative of a small group of people, but once it has demonstrated the benefits it brings to its community, other people become interested in participating. This is precisely what occurred in the Wiladeg, Minomartani and Timbulharjo villages. As a result of this process of collective participation in establishing the radio, villagers develop a sense of ownership over the radio station. Bowo Usodo (interview, 13 July 2006) asserts that ownership is an important aspect in the sustainability of community radio. If people have a sense of belonging to the radio station, the latter will then be maintained. Yet in order for this sense of belonging to grow, people need time. A sense of belonging, as Dagon (2004, pp. 55-56) points out, can be seen in people's willingness to contribute to the community radio station's progress. Community support indicates that the radio station:

originates, circulates and resonates from the sphere of civil society ... This is the field of media communication that exists outside of the state and the market (often non-government and non-profit), yet which may interact with both (Rennie 2006, p.4).

Rennie's statement implies that community radio is a kind of media that is rooted in society; and, in this sense, it is very different from media owned by the state or by corporations. Therefore, community media's activities should always be non-profit oriented in order to prioritise the interests of the community.

Regarding community radio's ownership, Lilik Subiyanto, the Head of the Community Radio Network of Yogyakarta (JRKY) from 2005 to 2009, contends that the existence of community radio reflects the democratisation of the media as it enables a diversity of

ownership, which in turn makes diversity of contents more likely (Interview, 17 May 2006). Whereas public and commercial radio may serve the people, the decision-making power over their content is not in the hands of the people. Community radio, on the other hand, allows the community to participate in designing programs and producing messages.

In terms of the experiences of village community radio I'm discussing here, there were various patterns of ownership of radio stations at play. For example, ownership of *BBM* Radio was shared by the community in Minomartani and SAV Puskat. While the content of programs and the operation of the station were independently controlled by the community, the facilities, especially the studio and some equipment, were owned by SAV Puskat. However, SAV Puskat did not intervene in the radio station's daily activities. Instead, it acted as a resource facilitator, distancing itself from the operation of *BBM* Radio. As a result, the community had the full responsibility of maintaining the activities of the radio, deciding what was appropriate for their needs articulating their interests and encouraging social relations among community members.

Decisions were often made by *BBM* activists in informal meetings held in the broadcasting studio in the evenings. For example, when they planned the program for the anniversary of *BBM* in 2006, they discussed it in the open outside the radio studio, where there was a meeting place where community members could talk at night. Informal meetings of this kind helped sustain the village's community radio station. This is probably the greatest strength of community radio: the avoidance of bureaucratic

structures in decision-making processes. Indeed, community radio should support people in the expression of their ideas rather than entrap them (interview with Giovani, 14 March 2006).

In the Timbulharjo village, *Angkringan* was fully owned by the community since they obtained the equipment through their own fund raising (sales of bulletins and T-shirts, and donations). The radio station's independence enabled volunteers to self-manage, which in turn allowed the participation of the village people in the planning and production of media content. This independence can be seen in the organisational structure of *Angkringan*, which was not linked to the structure of the village's government. According to Nasir (interview, 25 July 2007), *Angkringan* did not include the village's Head in the structure of its organisation in order to maintain its independence. *Angkringan* was able to maintain its independent, collective model of management of the operations of the radio station mainly because the station was not owned by any individual.⁵⁵

In the case of *RKW*, the station's equipment was owned by the people of Wiladeg but the studio was located in a public facility in the village hall. This ownership was acknowledged by the village government as an effort of the community to provide information and entertainment by and for themselves. The daily operations of the radio station were not conducted in terms of a complex or hierarchical type of management but were, on the contrary, managed directly by volunteers. The radio station's Community

⁵⁵ Article 2 of Government Regulation Number 51/2005 on community radio states that the legal entity of community radio should be that of an association or cooperative organisation.

Broadcasting Board (DPK) was not an active one; it did not have official meetings timetabled throughout the year, nor did the Board members meet with volunteers.⁵⁶ The Board only had a meeting once a year when the radio was preparing to support *Rasulan*. Hariyanto & Ramdojo (2009, pp. 105-109) note that DPKs were ineffective in many community radio stations in Indonesia. In those radio stations, DPK was only a name without activities. On the contrary, in terms of *RKW*'s operations important decisions were usually made in *musyawarah desa* (village meetings), in which people could contribute their ideas about the community radio station along with other development issues in the village. Sigid, a villager, notices that an important decision from one such meeting was that the radio station was to be supported by a grant from the annual village budget (interview with Sigid, 27 July 2006). In addition, people also participated in decision-making at *RKW* through discussions between volunteers and *Paguyuban Monitor* (listeners' group). The role of this group was an important one in supporting the radio station since its members were also active in *RKW*'s programs, especially in interactive programs. The group informally represented the participation of ordinary village people in the radio; they often supported the daily operations of the radio station, especially when money was needed to upgrade equipment.

3.8 Local Orientation

Since community radio is born out of the community, it is necessary for this medium to have an orientation towards local issues in order for the radio station to remain relevant to its community. Also, in order for community radio to exist within its community, media

⁵⁶ A DPK consists of persons chosen from the community. The Broadcasting Act 32/2002 states that the DPK's main function is to supervise volunteers in the daily operation of the community radio station in order to maintain both the vision of the radio and the focus on community interests.

radio station requires a flexible policy. This type of policy can be seen in the way *Angkringan* Radio was developed. Although in its early operation *Angkringan* focused on the good governance of the village, it did not ignore other social issues in Timbulharjo, for example, the fact that many village children could not pursue an education because their parents could not afford it. In order to deal with this social problem, volunteers of *Angkringan* Radio mobilised the people of Timbulharjo to collect money to provide scholarships for poor village children. With talk shows and public service advertising, they succeeded.

In this case, *Angkringan* used a ‘problem posing’ approach towards the situation in their village. ‘Problem posing’ is a characteristic approach of participatory communication media, which emphasises community participation rather than problem solving. This approach not only focuses on the goal, but also the process people go through in finding the solution to a common problem (Servaes 1996, p.100). It also allows people to use their existing experience and collectively to create new meaning and knowledge concerning their own environment. On this basis, community radio has a significant role in maximising people’s competence to cope with their environment (Freire 1983; Kivikuru 2004, p. 408).

In the Timbulharjo village, Nasir (interview, 25 July 2006) explained that deciding on the kind of communications media to be used within the community was not a priority of the *Angkringan* volunteers. For them the content or issues to be covered in radio broadcasts was the most important aspect: these should be relevant for the people of Timbulharjo.

Hence, community media was seen as a tool rather than as the goal of communication and, as a result, they were not dependent on any specific type of media technology, which could be replaced or combined with other types. In this context, the issue of media is more important than the type of media technology. The spirit of community media, however, to enable people to voice their interests should always remain alive.

For this reason *Angkringan* started to develop internet-based communication in 2008, when volunteers saw that the need to access the internet had reached Timbulharjo. Since the *Angkringan* studio was connected to the internet, many people went there to use it. For example, students used it to search for information for their homework, while others used it to read news or send email. Since the studio only had three computers, *Angkringan* could only accommodate a few people at a time. Also, until 2008 internet access was limited since it was still expensive for people in the village. Volunteers wanted to provide affordable internet access so that villagers could access information about Timbulharjo from the village government web (www.timbulharjo.web.id). As a result, they decided to develop an internet network in Timbulharjo to enable villagers to use the internet and maximize the benefits of this medium.

Since the cost of an internet connection can be reduced if people share the connection, *Angkringan* decided to share the studio internet connection with houses in the village by using a transmitter. Volunteers called this technology *wajanbolic* and claimed that the technology could also help to develop some of the small home industries in Timbulharjo village. One user of *wajanbolic*, Joko Utomo, states that the internet was useful as it

allowed him to promote his products and communicate with his customers. He acknowledges that the technology helped him reduce internet costs (Haryanto & Ramdojo 2009, p.61). Thus, with this community-based approach, *Kusir Angkringan*⁵⁷ could support and extend the concept of village information sharing that had been started by the village government.

The ‘problem posing’ approach can also be found in Minomartani, where *BBM* Radio has been used to encourage people to be concerned about their environment. As a village with a vast housing development, Minomartani has been transformed into a high-density population area. The housing development involved some environmental problems, especially the issue of domestic garbage dumping, which was being done at a site near a primary school. Although, it was difficult to find an alternative location, radio helped people to discuss this problem and find that one possible solution was garbage reduction. As a response to the problem of domestic waste and the preservation of their environment, the people of Minomartani utilised community radio to promote a program called *Jogja Green and Clean* that ran from 19 March to 25 April 2008. On 13 April 2008 the people of Minomartani worked together voluntarily to clean up their environment, picking up rubbish and sorting it out into three categories: plastic, metal and paper. Organic rubbish, such as leaves, was utilised to make ‘bokasi’ fertilizer. As a follow-up and a support to this activity, they created ‘yel-yel’ (slogan) for the radio program in order to continue their campaign. Volunteers of *BBM* Radio enthusiastically recorded this ‘yel-yel’ in the studio of *BBM* Radio (e-mail from Surowo, 15 April 2008).

⁵⁷ *Kusir Angkringan* was an abbreviation of computer for people information system.

In Wiladeg, meanwhile, one crucial problem was the limited development budget of the village government. One source of funds for the local government was *Pajak Bumi & Bangunan/PBB* (land and building tax). For a long time, villagers' tax payments had been overdue. Since 2003, the village government worked together with *RKW* to make villagers aware of the need to pay their tax. The government understood that villagers needed a role model. They launched a *warga teladan* (model citizen) program to encourage people to pay their taxes. The radio broadcast the names of those who paid their taxes and these villagers then became *warga teladan* for others. Sponsored by individuals and the village government, the radio provided prizes, such as radio receivers, vouchers, soap and toothpaste. As those who went to the village hall to pay their taxes got a prize, this program succeeded in getting more people to pay their taxes (interview with Sukoco, 27 July 2006).

3.9 The Role of Local Government

Jankowski points out that there is a possibility for local government to take a role in community radio (Jankowski 2002, p.7). Rennie also argues that although conceptually community radio is seen as a part of civil society, this does not mean that there is necessarily a separation between community radio and local government. Rennie (2006, p. 37) suggests that community media should build cooperation with the state in order to maintain its existence. In some situations, this cooperation may be beneficial for a democratic society. This position has been taken by *RKW* in Wiladeg. *RKW* was an example of cooperation between local government and the community. The radio station was managed by the community with support from the village government. The

government always allowed the radio to cover local political activities in Wiladeg, such as village meetings and visits from sub-district or district officials. This policy helped people to be well informed about their local situation. A volunteer said that every village meeting was recorded both on a computer and on audio tape as documentation. The village Head used this documentation to find out about the opinions expressed in the meetings. In the particular case of Wiladeg, it is clear that through community radio, the people and the government have been able to maintain a dialogue about public issues. *RKW* was not established to confront local government but to provide a local forum, which is something that has been achieved in this village. Dunckelmann's argument is relevant here, she argues that community media need not necessarily be confrontational with the establishment, but can be used to provide a public sphere (cited in Hollander, Stappers & Jankowski 2002, p.24).

By using community radio, people had more opportunities to access information concerning public matters openly. In addition, the use of community radio to inform Wiladeg inhabitants about the activities of the village government encouraged accountability of government officials. Sukoco, the village Head, states that to obtain legitimisation from the people, the village government must have a commitment to implement transparency and accountability. Such a policy attracted participation and involvement in the development process of the village, which was important because the government did not have enough resources to carry out all the necessary activities. This involvement of the community is only possible if people have adequate information (interview with Sukoco, 7 January 2007). In fact, *RKW* demonstrated that community

radio can function as a public arena for the promotion of good governance. Colongon (2003, p.97) notes that people's participation in governance encompasses various factors, such as the openness of government, citizens' access to information, and transparency to encourage government accountability and responsiveness.

In Wiladeg, community radio volunteers used a partnership approach. They saw that community radio would give them more opportunities to participate in the process of development in their village. They understood that to enable participation people needed information, but they also knew that the flow of information was restricted by the lack of communications media in their village. They also saw that mainstream media, published or broadcast from outside the village, did not serve the needs of the village's inhabitants to communicate local issues, such as village meetings, social events and traditional culture preservation. For this reason, community radio volunteers wanted to provide a form of media that would represent the village's situation.

Seemingly, in Wiladeg there was greater willingness to share power and so the relation between *RKW* and the village government was relatively smooth. The village government applied an open information policy in order to encourage participation in the development process of the village. Soekoco, the Head of Wiladeg, was aware that in order to invite participation, people should be involved and adequately informed. Therefore, since the use of community radio helped develop well informed citizens, he supported the initiative of the people of Wiladeg to establish a local community radio station.

The process of democratising information in Wiladeg showed that the political environment has strong positive influences on the potential for meaningful local-level participation (see Cohen 1996, p. 227). Wiladeg inhabitants had a strong tradition in democracy since the time before Indonesian Independence. This tradition has been maintained by inhabitants and village leaders from generation to generation. The practice of democracy can be seen in the annual cultural event called *Rasulan*, which the people of Wiladeg have adapted into a political forum. For years *Rasulan* has been used by village governments and inhabitants to gather together to discuss the progress of their village. In the past, the village Head had to deliver an annual report about works conducted to raise the village's prosperity, including agricultural experiments to find superior seeds, especially rice, suitable for Wiladeg soil. People also used *Rasulan* to discuss development plans for the village.

Sukoco has in fact been showcasing a new experiment, that is to say, a “democratic experiment” implied in the use of community radio. A day before the celebration, on *Kamis Wage* (Thursday *Wage*) night, a *rembug desa* (village dialogue) was held and was attended by hundreds of dwellers in each *dusun* (sub-village). Traditionally, on this Thursday *Wage* the village Head delivers his annual report about the development of Wiladeg. However, due to the geographical location of Wiladeg, namely, in a very hilly area, meant that the village Head often found it difficult to visit all sub-villages to deliver his annual report. Thus, since 2003 community radio has been broadcasting this annual report, enabling people in all Wiladeg regions to hear it at the same time. Indeed,

villagers go to sub-village halls to hear the report through a radio receiver and loudspeakers.

In this example, one can see how a village government and its people have used community radio to strengthen democracy in their village by providing information about the decision-making process. Sigit, an dweller of Wiladeg, says about this *RKW*'s function:

I know about issues before the village council take decisions about them. This shows the benefit of having a community radio. The community radio helps us to expand our horizons. The people need to know I've got to know what is being planned by the village council. Even though I might be late in finding out about national affairs, I know about village affairs immediately as they occur. (Interview with Sigit 27 July 2006).

Community radio thus functions as a bridge between local government and people. The role of Sukoco was significant in the operation of *RKW*. A founder of *RKW*, he consistently supported the maintenance of the radio. Moreover, his position as village Head has helped ensure the existence of the radio, for example, influencing the village council to include the operation of *RKW* in the village budget. Although the sum of money from the village government was not sufficient for all operational costs of *RKW*, it established a policy by virtue of which the radio was recognised by the village government: the community radio station was a legal institution in Wiladeg. This status did not mean that *RKW* was under the authority of the village government but a formal recognition by the government of the people's need for community media. Wiladeg's policy was ahead of the Indonesian government's own project to create a regulatory policy for community radio in the country.

Similarly, in the Minomartani village *BBM* Radio's relationship with the local government was based on a partnership, despite the fact that the radio station had been established by the people independently and without intervention from the village government. As *BBM* Radio became more popular in Minomartani and its neighbouring villages, the local government began to take note. The village government used *BBM* Radio to get input from inhabitants and to distribute information about its policies. *BBM* Radio broadcast the latest information not only through news programs, but also through talkback. The village chief, for example, informed the village about government activities through this program, and then inhabitants gave their responses via telephone.

Angkringan differed from both *BBM* Radio and *RKW* in the nature of its relations with the village government. In Timbulharjo, *Angkringan* would pressure the village government to keep people informed about the situation of the village. One of the most significant changes has been the way in which ordinary citizens have begun to engage in an open dialogue in meetings and discussions on issues affecting the community. Public pressure on the government directed through *Angkringan* demanding good governance changed the attitude of the village government toward the democratisation of information. For example, for a long time the annual report had been presented by the village Head in front of a limited number of people in the village hall. *Angkringan* thought that the annual report was a very important document with information that influenced people's lives and should be known by all in the village. In 2003, in order to ensure transparency and accountability in village governance in Timbulharjo, *Angkringan*

proposed to broadcast the annual report, so that more people could hear it. But the village Head rejected the proposal arguing that this was not how things were traditionally done in Timbulharjo. In response to this rejection, *Angkringan* volunteers protested brought this issue into the public arena. They managed to attract the attention and support of the village people through announcements on the radio and with flyers highlighting the village Head's rejection of their proposal. People showed their support by pressuring the village head to accommodate everybody's need to hear the annual report. This struggle for good governance took time until finally the government procedures became transparent and accountable. With the people's support in the next year the village Head accepted *Angkringan*'s proposal to broadcast the annual report (interview with Nasir, 25 July 2006). In the campaign for good governance in the village, *Angkringan* worked together with *Forum Komunikasi Warga Timbulharjo/Fokowati* (Communication Forum of Citizens of Timbulharjo), a community organisation consisting of opinion leaders of the village. In the forum, the opinion leaders discussed the idea of good governance. This case shows how *Angkringan* has encouraged the people of the Timbulharjo village to participate in local politics. This participation in a society requires the willingness to share political power, but this sharing is not easily implemented since it decreases the privilege of those who hold power (Servaes 1996; Sudibyo 2004, p. 220).

In the case of *Angkringan* Radio, the idea of providing public space through community media was initially not popular with the village government. There was conflict between *Angkringan* and government officials who considered that the demands of *Angkringan*

Community Radio was inappropriate, probably because there was no precedent for such a requirement for transparency of the village government.

Angkringan's volunteers saw that people's control would prevent the abuse of power by the village government. The target of *Angkringan* was the officials' accountability regarding their duties as public officers. *Angkringan* was not interested in personal or private issues involving the officials (interview with Nasir, 25 July 2006). In this way, *Angkringan* sought to keep watch on the village government through its bulletin and radio news, in order to prevent cases of power abuse in the Timbulharjo village, including the case of KUT (Credit for Farm Enterprise Program) and of distribution of subsidies for poor people to compensate for the increasing price of fuel. In the first case, *Angkringan* reported the corruption of money of KUT by a hamlet head. The money was collected by the hamlet head from farmers as repayment of their credit. This report caused farmers to push the hamlet head to give the money back to them. In the latter case, *Angkringan* reported the government's list of people who would get the subsidy. Local people thus saw that the list did not accurately reflect the economic status of the villagers. As a result of people's pressure, the village government revised the list and gave it to *Angkringan* to be published. Nasir argues that *Angkringan* chose this conflict approach because of the social-political situation of Timbulharjo village, where the government was dominant and the people feared to voice their interests (Nasir 2007, p.60). This adversarial approach meant that *Angkringan* often had problems; for example, in 2002 the radio had its telephone line cut (Haryanto & Ramdojo 2009, p. 61).

It can be concluded that since its early operations, *Angkringan* Radio wanted to be independent in order to maintain its mission as a watchdog of the village government. To support its mission, *Angkringan* collaborated with *Fokowati*. This organisation consisted of representatives of the 16 sub-villages of Timbulharjo, so it had significant influence in local politics. In this forum, *Angkringan* played its role as a communications media organisation. Because of its role in *Fokowati*, *Angkringan* Radio got a room in a village office for its studio. Nasir (interview, 25 July 2006) explains that this ‘room’ was not an actual room. It was a space between two buildings in the village office complex. *Angkringan*’s volunteers used it as studio and office. Village government allowed the radio to utilise electricity, but telephone and other equipment had to be provided by the radio itself.

The decision to accept this location was based on the fact that it was in a public facility and in the centre of the Timbulharjo village, so it enabled people to access the radio readily. Furthermore, this location was a symbol that the radio belonged to the public. Based on his experiences in facilitating community radio training in various regions in Indonesia, Nasir concludes that the location of a community radio has a significant impact on the people’s participation in local politics, because a strategic location encourages people to visit the studio. The radio station, therefore, can become a centre for communication.

This function was shown in Timbulharjo when there was a village Head election in 2003. According to Jaswadi (interview, 12 June 2006) *Angkringan*’s role in broadcasting local

news and its strategic location made it a *pusat informasi* (information centre) during the election process. In the past the election of the village Head had been at risk due to money politics and conflict among supporters of candidates. People also often got inaccurate information about candidates. To ensure a fair election, *Angkringan* Bulletin and Community Radio produced special reports of the event, providing information related to profiles, vision and mission of the candidates. Before the election, all the candidates had an opportunity to deliver their programs through the radio. Volunteers of the radio station recorded the 'promises' of the candidates, printed them out and distributed them as a reminder if the candidate were elected. Volunteers reminded people of the Timbulharjo village to keep the printed material in order to monitor the work of the elected village head.

To maintain fairness, on polling day the radio ran a live program from 23 polling locations in the village. By using handy talkies, which were linked with *Angkringan* Community Radio, volunteers reported on the voting to the whole village. When the ballots were counted, the radio reported the results directly from the locations. In their own words, the radio applied a 'quick count' (interview with Nasir, 1 March 2007). Whereas in the previous election, people of Timbulharjo had to come to the *balai desa* (village office) to follow the results of the elections, in 2003 they could follow the progress from their homes. This helped to prevent conflict among the followers of each candidate by avoiding the gathering of supporters of different candidates in the same location. The same phenomenon also happened in the Wiladeg village where community radio was used to report the process of a village election.

Nowadays, the village government has a good relation with *Angkringan* in spreading information to the people. Village governments have started a more open dialogue with the community as a result of pressure from community radio. As a response to the village government's attitude, *Angkringan* also changed its perspective from a conflict approach to a cooperative approach. However, it is safe to expect that *Angkringan* would reverse to a conflict approach if the village government were not prepared to cooperate.

Moreover, the role of community radio cannot be separated from off air programs⁵⁸ in its community. This type of program is indicative of community radio's nature as a part of the people's social life. Off air programs are useful to maintain relationships between the radio and its community, because through these programs community radio demonstrate its position as a community organisation that helps people to mobilise. In the cases of the three villages discussed in this chapter, issues addressed on community radio always became public issues and public issues also generate radio content, and this process encouraged people to work together to respond to challenges.

3.10 Audience Participation

People's participation in community radio may range from being mere listeners to their involvement in the processes of producing, planning and managing communications.

Peruzzo (2006, pp. 801-802) illustrates people's participation as follows: 'When you call a radio broadcaster to request a song or chat with the announcer, you are participating'.

⁵⁸ An off air program is a non-broadcasting activity organised by a radio station. In some cases, this program is a follow up of an on air program.

Furthermore, she points out, the more advanced levels of participation can be seen in representativeness and co-responsibility. The degree of people's participation is measured by their active role in the operation of their radio. Their involvement in the radio is not only as audience but also as program contributor. For example, people can give information for news programs and share experiences in talk back programs. Such participation gives people the opportunity to operate in a democratic way, where they learn how to express their ideas and listen to other people's ideas. This phenomenon shows that participation can take almost any form. Dagron argues that requesting a song or sending a short message about a social happening can be categorised as a kind of participation. This action will help to sustain a community radio (see Dagron 2004, p.55).

Such a strong sense of belonging was demonstrated by the inhabitants of Minomartani. *BBM* Radio covered not only Minomartani but also villages in the 5 square kilometre area surrounding Minomartani. In the context of Java, because of the high density of population, a community radio can cover more than one village. In consequence, many volunteers and members of the Community Broadcasting Board came from outside Minomartani. An example of this is the case of Musiyono, a manager of *BBM* Radio, who was an inhabitant of Kelurahan Condong Catur, the next village from Minomartani. The origins of volunteers from various villages were described by Musiyono (interview, 6 March 2006):

Coincidentally those who manage daily operations, who are active here, in fact, come from outside of this area. Although a different village but still in the radio's coverage area. The secretary comes from the area of the bus station, Gejayan. Pak (Mr) Bambang and Bu (Mrs) Agustin are from this village, the treasurer is from Klaseman business section located in Klaseman and Sinduadi. Then mbak (Ms) Lia who does the daily finances is from this village.

Thus, this radio station was open for all including people from outside Minomartani. They were interested in the radio programs and this allowed ordinary people to be volunteers. The involvement of people outside the village indicated that the radio programs were accepted by a broad public but the need to open access to the wider public was problematic since this would not be consistent with the concept of participation.

In designing the radio programs, audience participation was gauged through a survey. In Wiladeg four hundred questionnaires were distributed to inhabitants by volunteers of *RKW* to establish their needs. The result of the survey was used as a basis for planning community radio programs. The survey indicated that the first choice of the audience was *campur sari* (variety), followed by *uyon-uyon* (information and entertainment), youth programs, and news programs. Other sources of information to make decisions on the content of radio programs were audience requests and the initiative of volunteers. *Tembang Kenangan* (Nostalgia Song), for example, was a program created by *RKW* to accommodate the audience's requests.

The survey method was also used by *Angkringan* Radio to know the needs of its community. Interestingly, the community put news about their village as the first choice, followed by entertainment and agricultural programs (interview with Nasir, 25 July 2006). *Angkringan* did not have an audience organisation like *BBM* and *RKW*. While Nasir acknowledges this he argues that it does not mean that there is no participation from its audience. Instead, the participation of villagers in this radio station can be seen in

the production of messages. When *Angkingan* reported a corruption case, knowledge about other cases also emerged as people came forward with information. According to Nasir:

People became the source of information for other cases. It is like a snowball. The report of one case becomes an inspiration for people to disclose another case, and people become journalists (interview with Nasir 25 July 2006).

People's participation and the creativity of volunteers became the backbone of community radio. In the three villages, community radio stations were developed by people with limited facilities and money. People and volunteers had to be creative and work together to overcome their situation. Regarding their participation, Jaswadi (interview, 12 June 2006) asserts: 'a community radio cannot be sustained for a long time without people's participation.' In *Angkringan* people participated as program announcers and supported the radio program through their responses via telephone calls or SMS. Since the radio did not have a telephone line, volunteers used their mobile phones, effectively paying the radio program's telephone expenses.

In Wiladeg, people's creativity was shown in *RKW*'s early years, when the radio used home-made equipment. For example, they assembled an audio mixer, a radio transmitter, and an antennae tower. "It is a kind of people's participation and creativity," Sukoco says (interview with Sukoco, 27 July 2006). The use of home-made equipment was necessary at a time when people wanted to establish a radio but they had a limited budget. Because of financial limitations, community radio in the three villages has been built step by step.

3.11 Financing Community Radio

The contribution of a group of young activists in the Dadapan sub-village of Timbulharjo enabled the birth of *Angkringan Bulletin*. Although the first edition of the bulletin was distributed free, after suggestions from villagers, the weekly bulletin was sold for Rp 400 each (A\$ 0.05) or Rp 1500 per month (A\$ 0.18). From the sales of *Angkringan Bulletin* the young activists bought a second-hand radio transmitter. Some equipment of the radio station came from personal contributions; for example, a desktop computer and CD player were borrowed from volunteers, and a radio tower was donated by the Cultural House of Tembi, an NGO focusing on Javanese culture, located in the Timbulharjo village. In addition, *Angkringan Bulletin* was awarded Rp 2.5 million (A\$ 312.5) by ISAI (Institute for the Study of Information Flow), Jakarta, in August 2000, which was used to improve the radio equipment. The radio activists also sold *Angkringan* T-shirts to help fund a soundproof studio.

The volunteers of *Angkringan* never stop seeking ways to earn money for their radio station. For example, at the time of the 2004 Presidential election they approached the General Election Commission (KPU) and proposed to be involved in political education about the election in their village and its surrounding area. The 2004 election was different from the 1999 election, in that people could now vote directly for their candidate for President. Since this system was being implemented for the first time, people needed information about how to vote. Thus, the Presidential election was seen by volunteers of *Angkringan* as an opportunity to be involved in political education about

the election in their village and region. Once KPU had accepted their proposal, they were asked to show a video about the election to village people. From this activity, they also earned money to support their radio station. This service was one of the many off-air activities through which the radio volunteers served their community's needs.

The Tourism Office of Sleman District Government in Minomartani sometimes contributed money to support cultural events on *BBM*. The radio frequently received orders to create 'jingles' from outside organisations. *BBM* Radio also rented out a sound system to earn money. In Wiladeg they got income from broadcasting special events or performances such as *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet) shows, talk show programs from Gunung Kidul District Government concerning public health and education, and public service advertisements. For example, from covering a *wayang kulit* show in Wiladeg, *RKW* could earn between 200,000 and 400,000 rupiah (A\$ 30-50).

Other financial resources of *RKW* derived from the Village Budget (*Anggaran Pendapatan & Belanja Desa/APBDes*), donations, and sponsorships. Since 2004 the village government has given financial support to *RKW* by providing as much as 2 million rupiah (A\$ 285) per year from the village budget. This budget was for maintenance of *RKW*'s equipment. In reality, all this financial support proved to be not enough for financing all the radio station's needs but it worked as a stimulant for the volunteers. From the villagers there was no fixed contribution, since *iur* or people's contribution is voluntary (interview with Sukoco, 7 January 2007). In addition, to sustain the community radio station, electricity and a telephone were provided by the village.

Sigit (interview, 27 July 2006), an opinion leader, argues that the budget of *RKW* should be discussed with the community. He believes that Wiladeg's villagers will not mind contributing money for financing their own radio station because they have developed a sense of ownership toward *RKW*. His views emphasise the importance of people's participation in the work of maintaining their community radio.

Another financial source for community radio was the audience. As a consequence of government regulation on radio frequency, *RKW* had to move to the channels allocated to community radio between 107.7-107.9 FM. It thus needed money to relocate and readjust its equipment in order to suit the new channel. The audience was informed of the situation. Soon after, *Paguyuban Monitor* responded with financial support to enable the radio station to move to the new channel. In Minomartani, members of an audience group voluntarily contribute money for the daily operation of *BBM* Radio. Margo, a member of the audience group, explains: 'As a community radio ... it gets money from the audience... This is a kind of joint responsibility and mutual cooperation' (interview with Margo, 8 March 2006). In this vein, Girard (cited in Jankowski 2002, p.7) points out that the aim of community radio is 'not only to participate in the life of community, but also to allow the community to participate in the life of the station.' This idea illustrates the sense of belonging that results from the contribution of community radio to the community.

3.12 Volunteers

Volunteering can be a big issue for the development of community radio stations. Jaswadi, the Head of *Angkringan*, acknowledges that the problem of shortage of volunteers frequently emerged for *Angkringan* and that at one point the radio went off air for some time because of this. For this reason, *Angkringan* tried to attract more volunteers. However the process of getting volunteers was not easy and took time. Most volunteers were students who could not stay very long with the radio since they had to work or continue their schooling outside the village (interview with Jaswadi, 12 June 2006). To secure the process of recruitment, *Angkringan* is collaborating with *Karang Taruna* (village youth organisation), inviting young people to participate as volunteers. For example, on 4 October 2008 volunteers of *Angkringan* invited seventy members of *Karang Taruna* to come to the studio to discuss the use of *wajanbolic* for the spreading of information in the Timbulharjo village. Since young people are potential users of this technology, at this event *Angkringan*'s activists also raised the possibility that members of *Karang Taruna* become community radio volunteers. *Angkringan* followed up this discussion with an invitation to volunteers to develop the bulletin and the radio. In addition, on the anniversary of *Angkringan* in January 2009 several members of *Karang Taruna* started an internship in *Angkringan*.

Volunteers also come and go at *RKW*. Sulis explains that although the existence of *RKW* is appreciated by people in Gunung Kidul District, only a few individuals work for the radio station. Urbanisation seems to be a factor in the difficulties of attracting volunteers. Many young people tend to leave Wiladeg to find jobs or to study in cities. Another

factor was that some volunteers had to leave the radio station to focus on their main jobs (interview with Sulis, 8 August 2006). Sulis, on the contrary, can be seen as the representation of a loyal volunteer, to the extent that *RKW* cannot be separated from this young man. Sulis, a father of one, was a low profile student who graduated from high school, and then could not finish his higher education because he lacked the money. He worked in an advertising agency and as an event organiser in Bandung. In mid 2004, he was invited by Wijanarko to support *RKW*. In *RKW* he had many jobs, as an announcer and unofficial custodian. Sulis does not want to leave the radio station because he feels that it has grown to be a part of the community's life. He worries that if he left *RKW*, the radio would cease to operate for lack of volunteers.

Sulis participation in this community radio has encouraged in him a sense of responsibility to manage the problem. He decided to reside in the Wiladeg village to be an announcer of the radio. Yet, he knew that the radio should recruit new volunteers. In the light of Stuart and Bery's claim (2006, pp.208-209), Sulis' attitude is an illustration of sensibility and responsibility toward a public facility established by the community through hard work.

Lack of human resources meant that *RKW* had to be flexible in recruiting volunteers and, in fact, there was no formal qualification for being recruited. One may say that the main qualification was willingness to contribute to the radio. For this reason, volunteering was open to dwellers of Wiladeg and people from outside Wiladeg, who were interested in radio broadcasting (sometimes a temporary volunteer from outside the village would

want to work in the radio as an announcer). Thus, volunteers have a privileged position in the daily operations of the station, often multi-tasking and virtually becoming anything from announcer to manager.

In *BBM* volunteers came from the radio station's audience and, as a result, their solidarity meant *BBM* did not have a problem of shortage of volunteers. Margo explains that the solidarity of the audience reflected the slogan 'Mbah Tro Mulur' (To add friends and to meet relations). The members worked together to help sustain *BBM* Radio (interview with Margo, 8 March 2006).

3.13 Benefits

Along with the growth of community radio in villages, program announcers became rather popular. For example, Upik, an announcer of RKW, benefitted from his involvement in community radio (interview, 11 May 2006). He acknowledges that his role as a community radio announcer has developed his skills in mastering *kromo inggil*, the polite or high form of the Javanese language. Most of his audience were adults who had a special interest in the preservation of the Javanese language. He delivered a *Campur Sari* program, a combination of Javanese pop music and traditional music. This music is well known in Gunung Kidul since some artists came from this region. The ability to speak Javanese helped Upik to improve his income. He describes himself as coming from a poor social background. Born in 1963 as the youngest of four children, he later graduated from high school. Previously his main jobs were church caretaker and wedding party decorator. Later, Upik was capable of earning an income from his skills as

Master of Ceremonies (MC), with a specialty in Javanese language. He would receive invitations to be MC at traditional events in the Wiladeg village and its surroundings.

In Minomartani the experience of Unai, a mother of four children, can illustrate the function of community radio to empower ordinary people. She says that the radio helped her to learn to speak to the public, becoming more self-confident after being an announcer on the radio. Her involvement in this radio was based on her interest in socialising with others. Based on her experience as an announcer, she understood the radio could be a device for people to improve their social interactions. She improved her skills progressively. In Unai's words:

I was taught to use a computer. Actually, I don't have a computer in my home. I was taught to use the computer, turn it on, looked for songs and other things, and learned to be an announcer (interview with Unai 19 June 2006).

This example shows that community radio helps people to be self-reliant. Indeed, White argues that self-reliance at the local level is important for human resource development needs. According to White:

Immediate concerns can focus on basic needs of the people, catalyzing individual and group participation. This becomes a challenging arena for making participatory communication a part of dynamics as an important activity to develop self-reliant individuals who are confident enough to speak up with their own points of view, unite together to define community needs, and have strong voice in setting priorities and action agendas. This includes taking control of the media, its message and ideally its ownership (White 2006, p. 484).

Therefore, community radio is useful to develop self-confidence among the local people. On the subject of confidence building, Stuart and Bery (1996, pp. 200-201) found that participation in community media helps people at grassroots level to be more confident in

communicating their ideas. People first learn about how to operate the equipment and then continue with participation in decision making.

In the Timbulharjo village, in addition, experiences in managing a community radio station have helped volunteers to build networks with NGOs and other community radio organisations. Considered as pioneers of community radio in Indonesia, volunteers of *Angkringan* have been invited to be speakers in many seminars concerning community media. They were also involved in the development of community radio in various regions in Indonesia. In fact, several volunteers now have jobs as staff of NGOs working with community media. It can, therefore, be said that community radio is useful for villagers in the context of self-development and self-empowerment and in that it helps people to enlarge their social networking.

3.14 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that, as a public communication medium, community radio has the potential to encourage the development of active citizenship, especially in terms of expanding people's participation in the public sphere, where they can realise their potential as citizens who are aware of both their rights and obligations in society. The chapter has shown how in three Indonesian villages community radio has contributed to the articulation of the public sphere, encouraging the expression of the village people's interests. This has been seen in this chapter in relation to three specific community radio stations: *Wiladeg Community Radio*, *Angkringan Community Radio*, and *BBM Community Radio*.

Participation in the public sphere at grassroots level enables people to develop themselves as citizens, insofar as community radio stations supply them with relevant information about their social circumstances. Indeed, in these villages participation allows people to become informed so as to be able to decide what is best for their situation. In addition, community radio provides people with access to the public sphere in a simple format, and with flexible rules, no hierarchies and a participative environment. Thus, through their participation in the process of social communication, which in this case is mediated by community radio, village people are able to create a common identity as citizens who are aware of their rights and duties. In the next chapter, therefore, I will discuss how people use community radio specifically in the context of cultural issues.

Chapter 4

Community Radio and Local Culture

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 discussed the use of community radio in the development of citizenship at the level of local political culture. It showed that participatory communication emphasises local and cultural contexts, while drawing attention to the fact that each community is unique and has the capability to fulfil its needs in order to develop its own life through self-determination. Thus, the previous chapter concluded that local culture is a central issue for the development of community radio. Indeed, community radio stations in the three villages studied in Chapter 3 illustrate the dynamics of people's use of local culture in the community's public communication. Local social communication helps people at grassroots level achieve a deepening awareness of the socio-cultural reality in their villages, a reality that shapes not only their everyday lives but also their capacity for change. This type of communication entails democratisation of the social processes in which people become actors and producers of meaning, so that they can develop their full potential as individuals and groups.

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the relation between community radio and local culture. Thus, this chapter addresses the question of how village people use community radio, arguing that people at grassroots level use community radio as a medium for cultural and political self-expression, so that their interests are represented in ways that cannot be replicated by the

mainstream media. The chapter discusses the issue of the hegemony of the mainstream media, which community media activists generally see as a threat to the existence and maintenance of local culture. The chapter goes on to show how the mainstream media's hegemony causes an imbalance in the information flow, whereby people at grassroots level have little opportunity to be represented. The chapter's discussion continues by addressing the issue of the politics of representation. Community radio, in this context, is seen as a political tool for people to interpret their situation or environment from the perspective of their local context.

4.2 The Media Monopoly

In most developing countries the domination of communication technologies by those in power has created an imbalance in the flow of information. Since vertical communication in the transferral of information is emphasised, those at the centre of message production benefit most from the process. Media Directory *Pers* Indonesia (Serikat Penerbit Surat kabar 2006) shows that in this country the mainstream media are concentrated in big cities. Since the messages of mainstream media are aimed at the wider public, the media often involves high cost, highly professionalised skills and high control. However, these aspects constitute barriers for ordinary people to participate in the process of message production. According to Lucas (1995, p. 5) the majority of the people at grassroots level have difficulty in accessing the process of production of content of the mainstream media, such as commercial media (owned by private institutions) and state media (owned by the government). The consequence of this situation is that the information only flows one way: from big cities (centre) to rural areas (peripheries).

Syamsul Muarif, Minister of Information and Communication, has stated that 41,000 villages still cannot enjoy broadcast radio.⁵⁸ Most radio stations are concentrated in big cities, making radio the medium of urban people. This disproportionate distribution has caused an uneven level of access to information. Even the only state radio network, *Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI)*, which is supposed to distribute information to all Indonesians, broadcasts only from cities, and generally from the capitals of provinces. Sudibyo concluded that this situation creates a ‘blank spot area’ in geographical and sociological terms. While some people cannot receive radio broadcasts because they live in unreachable places, even grassroots people living in big cities are not served by commercial radio since the contents of the programs, such as information and advertising, are not designed for them. In other words, due to their lower social status, they are not a target market for commercial radio (Sudibyo 2004, p.225).

Another problem contributing to the uneven information distribution in Indonesia is that many commercial radio stations are Jakarta-biased. This is commonly observed on commercial radio programs, especially those with teenagers as their target audience, which have a tendency to use a Jakartan dialect spoken by teens in the capital.⁵⁹ This dialect is preferred by radio announcers throughout Indonesia, thus facilitating the rapid spread of Jakartan slang to other cities of Indonesia (Jakarta Post 4 September 2007). Zainal Suryokusumo, a broadcaster since the 1960s, points out that the broadcasting system in Indonesia is clearly dominated by this market

⁵⁸ This statement was made in the workshop ‘Strategi Advokasi Lembaga Penyiaran Komunitas’ 14 May 2002, Jakarta. See *Laporan Lokakarya Nasional Strategi Advokasi Lembaga Penyiaran Komunitas*, Jakarta 12-15 May 2002, p. 32.

⁵⁹ A combination of Indonesian and English, that Indonesians call bahasa *gado-gado*, can be heard on many commercial radio stations; for example in program titles such as the following: After Lunch and *Jogja Pagi/Good Morning Jogja* (Swaragama FM Radio), Top 40 and *Dasa Tembang Nusantara/Nusantara Top Ten* (Geronimo FM Radio), and Jogya Reporting News and *Persada Gemilang/Resound Eden* (Unisi FM Radio)

orientation, which will endanger local culture. Furthermore, he suggests that policy makers need to take account of the situation since the local culture is important as a foundation of nationhood (interview via email, 18 December 2006).

Information and news programs are also Jakarta-oriented. In fact, it is common that regional commercial radio stations would broadcast Jakarta news. Trijaya FM Yogyakarta, for example, broadcasts news and talk shows every day, most of which are about Jakarta. This radio station simply relays the programs broadcast from Jakarta. The Jakarta-based news agency Kantor Berita Radio 68 H (68 H Radio News Agency) provides news programs that can be relayed by many commercial radio stations throughout the country.⁶⁰ News programs from Elshinta (Jakarta) are relayed by other radio stations (Katoppo 2005, p. 37; Sudibyo 2004, p. 171). This is in spite of the fact that most people who live outside Jakarta, or any other big city, need specific information about their local environment.

Being market-oriented pushes commercial radio stations to build networks⁶¹ which are aimed at attracting advertising. This orientation causes radio stations to broadcast programs that are popular with wide audiences. Pop music, for example, is a popular program content that

⁶⁰ KBR 68 H claims that 400 radio stations relay its programs (www.kbr68H.com).

⁶¹ To expand their market, commercial radio stations joined in networks (Suranto and Haryanto 2007, pp. 19-26). For example, the MRA Group owns Hard Rock FM (Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya, Bali), Trax FM (Jakarta, Semarang), Cosmopolitan FM (Jakarta), I-Radio (Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta); the Masima Group is the owner of Radio Prambors (Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Makasar, Surabaya, Semarang, Solo, Medan, Bandung), Radio Female (Bandung, Jakarta, Semarang, Yogyakarta); Elshinta has a network in Bandung, Tegal, Semarang, Surabaya, Medan, Lampung and Palembang. In addition, hundreds of radio stations throughout Indonesia are in Elshinta's news syndicate. Other radio conglomerates are Sonora, Ramako, and CPP Radionet, which has networks in 40 cities. In fact, the biggest radio network is Radio Republik Indonesia/RRI. As a radio whose function is to maintain national unity, RRI has 60 radio stations spread out all over Indonesia (www.rri-online.com 2009). As a public radio, RRI focuses on news and information.

specifically targets teens (Kedaulatan Rakyat 30 December 2008). As a result, radio stations broadcast similar content that reaches across the country and this content becomes a commodity, instead of providing a service for the people (Sudibyo 2004, pp. 162-173).

Suranto and Haryanto (2007, p. 26) contend that such networks illustrate a ‘diverse monopoly’, and by this they mean that although there are many radio stations, these are owned by only a few corporations. In consequence, the number of radio stations does not reflect a multiplicity of voices. The centralisation of media ownership is a serious matter since the media has a strategic position within a country; they can block the differences in opinions in the public sphere and can be used as a public relations device for a certain group, especially the ruling elites.

4.3 The Politics of Representation

Representation is defined as a construction of meaning which is produced and exchanged among members of a culture, who actively participate in making meaning by using their own language to represent their environment. The members of a culture communicate with a language they understand, which consists of ‘the same conceptual maps’ so they have a unique way of interpreting their environment (Hall 1997, pp. 15-20). One can say that the media play an essential part in the process of creating meaning because they help people to communicate with each other.

As a political issue, representation is related to the access that community members have in community radio practices. In the context of participatory communication, access can be interpreted as an opportunity for people to participate in the process of message production and decision making. This not only means the possibility to receive but also to produce messages. Therefore, access is an important factor in ensuring that people's interests, such as opinion, cultural expression, and local news, be represented by the media. By actively having access to the media, both as receivers and producers of media content, people empower themselves; as Freire put it, they break the culture of silence and regain their voice, (Rodriguez 2000, p. 150; Peruzzo 2006, p. 804).

However, direct, active access cannot be applied to mainstream media. As Rodriguez (2000, p. 767) points out, mainstream media applies a hierarchical organisation that locates audiences in the passive role of receiving media messages. In this position, people at grassroots level have little chance to participate in the process of message production. A distance between the audience and the media means that people's interests are mis- or under-represented by the mainstream media. The hierarchical organisational structure of the mainstream media means that the process of message production is in the hands of the few people who have the power to control the media.

The growing awareness of the possibility of changing the meagre situation of media access is what has led to the establishment of community radio in Indonesia. According to Nasir (interview with Nasir, 25 July 2006), the founder of *Angkringan* Community Radio, an early

motivation to establish community radio was to provide space for local (village) issues, since it was difficult to expect mainstream media to regularly cover them. It has never been easy for ordinary people to have their interests represented in mainstream media, especially those who have limited budget and experience. For example, to perform on a commercial radio or a state-owned radio people must have certain qualifications and funds (Rp 150,000 [A\$21]) (interview with Giovani 14 March 2006). In the case of people from Wiladeg, the village is too far for them to go to the studio of a mainstream radio. Thus, the development of community radio in various areas of Indonesia can be read as a response to the problem of access to mainstream broadcasting, insofar as community radio's content and approach are aimed to support people's voice in villages.

4.4 Local Culture

A basic characteristic of community radio is the intensive relationship it has with its community (Sudibyo 2004, p. 235). This relationship manifests, for example, in programs based on local culture. Before the establishment of *RKW* in Wiladeg, people felt that their village had little chance of appearing on mainstream media, even though they had strong cultural traditions,. Thus, they wanted to present their cultural traditions through community media in order to attract more people to becoming involved and to express the richness of their culture.

From the start *RKW* was developed as a radio that would focus on local culture. Indeed, it was developed during a period when both the village's inhabitants and government emphasised cultural activities. For example, in 2008 the Wiladeg village facilitated an arts festival for the

district level, presenting performances such as *karawitan*, *reog*, and *sholawatan*. And so as a result of Wiladeg's concern with cultural preservation the village was named by the Indonesian Government as *Desa Budaya* or cultural village in 2008. This award was the result of a long process of cultural activities in Wiladeg in which *RKW* played an important role by broadcasting cultural activities in the village (personal communication with Sulis, 7 August 2008).

The capability to represent people's interests in local culture has made this community radio station very popular within its community; its unique way of using local symbols is a way for this radio to get attention from community members. For example, *RKW's Uyon-uyon Manasuka* has been known as a program that represents people's daily life and local culture. *Uyon-uyon* literally means 'joking', while *Manasuka* means 'free'. This radio program invited people to freely discuss current issues in the village in an informal situation. The program combined talkback and entertainment, usually in the form of Javanese music.

In Minomartani village *Mbah Tro Mulur* is the primary program of BBM Radio. *Mbah Tro Mulur*, an abbreviation of *Nambah Mitro Ketemu Sedulur* ('to add friends and to meet relations'), is a Javanese expression that describes a function of communication to strengthen cohesion among community members. While *Mbah* literally means 'grandfather' or 'grandmother', for the Javanese it also is an expression of respect given to elders. Similarly, *Tro Mulur* refers to a Javanese nick name. In this case, the use of *Mbah Tro Mulur* as the name of a radio program can be seen as an effort to show the close relation between the radio station and its community, because the sound of the program's name would be very familiar for Javanese

people. This program is a combination between a song-request program and an art performance, because audience members can perform their creations, especially Javanese music. At the same time, they can send greetings to other audience members.

In Timbulharjo village, Radio *Komunitas Angkringan* was well known for breaking the culture of silence among the village inhabitants. Since the previous village government was very dominant in the public arena,⁶² one key problem in Timbulharjo at that time was the communication gap between village government and people. Generally in a Javanese village the structure of communication between village government and the people was based on vertical communication, whereby the position of the government was at the top while the people were at the bottom. Since there was no one to counter the government, the government employees tended to misuse their power, especially in the management of public matters.

It was not easy for community media to counter the village government, especially since the radio was located in a Javanese village where people hold a philosophy of *ngono ya ngono nanging mbok ojo ngono*, which literally means: ‘it is like that, yes, like that, but don’t let it be like that’ (Shackford-Bradley 2007) . This expression is related to a ‘rule’ that guides the Javanese in special activities. For example, in giving a judgment to somebody, the rule has it that one should not be arrogant since the subject also has merit, and therefore should be appreciated (Herusatoto 1984, pp.170-171). In the context of the relation between Radio *Komunitas*

⁶² During the New Order, the village Head was the centre of power and so he had the final word on all matters. In this way Soeharto tried to control every aspects of people’s lives down to village level (Bebbington et al. 2004, p. 192; World Bank 2004, p.10).

Angkringan and the village government, this rule can be interpreted as follows: ‘in criticising somebody, someone should not be overly severe. The critique should be in proportion.’ This philosophy refers to a concept of appropriateness that implies doing something at the right time and place. Cultural values should be considered by volunteers of Radio *Komunitas Angkringan* since most of them are young while the village government officials are elders. A Javanese was taught to hold a cultural value of *mendem jero mikul duwur*, which means that the Javanese should honour the dignity of their elders and leaders. This value is related to *kesopanan* or politeness. In consequence, volunteers of Radio *Komunitas Angkringan* should understand how to criticise people without being seen as impolite.

Community radio can be accused as a provocateur which is not appropriate with Eastern tradition. But, community radio must criticise people who are in power. Usually elites do not agree, while ‘grassroots’ must be pro (Interview with Nasir, 23 December 2005).

This situation expresses a tension between older and younger people when dealing with public matters. Younger people need a change in local governance that enhances transparency and accountability, while village officials want to maintain the supremacy of the village government. This radical position by the young to demand change meant that the village government perceived community radio as subversive (see Dagrón 2007, p. 203).

Young people wanted openness, while village officials were not familiar with such openness. As Rachmiatie (2007, p. 135) notes, in a traditional community, elders tend to avoid open expression that can produce social conflict. The way of expressing an opinion is important in the context of the village; it is about how to package a message that is suitable for the community. In this sense, the public sphere does not mean that people can speak freely without considering the cultural context; instead, there has to be recognition of this context (Karppinen 2007, p.15). In

fact, the context will determine the success, or lack of, of the process of social communication. In the context of *Angkringan* Radio, one advantage of the radio is that since its beginning it has been developed by the community, so its volunteers know well the local cultural values. It took a long time to convince people in the village that the local government should be made accountable by the people but since then increasing awareness concerning good governance has made the village government change their policies. For example, they have participated in an open dialogue and have provided open access to information about governance. Today the relation between *Angkringan* Community Radio and village government is closer than before (see Chapter 3).

4.5 Cultural Identity

White argues that empowerment should not be separated from culture and identity since all are essential ‘for sustaining the physics energy required for human development and change’ (White 2006, p. 483). The need for recognition of cultural identity in the process of social development is based on the notion that cultural identity is a way of ensuring people’s position as active and primary participants in the development (Malan 2006, p. 679). Several scholars (Hall 1996, pp. 2-3; Servaes 1996, p.32; Hamilton 2000; Malan 2006, p. 679) have argued that cultural identity is a process of formulating and learning new ways of organising experience and of finding the form and content to present it in such a way that others can understand and participate in that experience. This process occurs in people’s daily activities, as they share experiences in community and negotiate them in the public arena (Winterstein 2003, p. 3).

However, the cultural identity agenda cannot be separated from political struggle. Any effort to preserve cultural identity, thus, can be interpreted as a political action (Rodriguez 2001, p. 150; Dagon 2001, p.34). The preservation of cultural identity can only happen in a democratic society because it relates to the recognition of the rights of the people to speak about their life. But in Indonesia it was not easy for community radio activists to realise this objective. This is because, although community radio has been recognised in the country since 2002, as discussed earlier in this thesis, it has encountered great difficulty in obtaining broadcasting permits. This difficulty was seen by civil society activists as a barrier for people to use community radio to air their aspirations. In this way, people's right to express their opinions, which was acknowledged by the Indonesian Constitution, was effectively being blocked.⁶³

In fact, the people of the three villages studied in this thesis used community radio as a public arena to negotiate identity. Their negotiation was manifested in radio programs. *BBM* Radio, for example, produced programs tracing the history of Minomartani village. The initial impetus to achieve this goal was the project of historical drama *Rona Cakrawala Tanah Perdikan* (RCTP). This drama encompassed three series: the first of which consisted of seven episodes of *Mendung di Kartasura*; the second series *Bumi Sesigar Semangka* consisted of 14 episodes; and the third series *Tahta Semusim* consisted of 10 episodes. RCTP presented the history of Minomartani village in the context of the legend of Mataram Kingdom, an early name of the Yogyakarta Sultanate. Within the framework of Javanese culture, *Mataram* was a kingdom that had *budaya adi-luhung* or high cultural traditions (see Herusatoto 1984, p. 137).

⁶³ The requirements for obtaining a permit can be seen in the Government Regulation no. 51/2005 stating 14 points which should be fulfilled by community radio (Darmanto 2009, p. 25).

In the drama *Minomartani* village was described as a free land in the Yogyakarta region. Through the story, people wrote their local stories in order to recognise their roots, knowing that their ancestors and village had an honourable position. This kind of information is important as it raises self-confidence and pride among the inhabitants. Community radio, in this way, plays an important cultural role by promoting local stories and opinions, all of which reinforce community memory and history (Rennie 2006, p. 4). Through the story of RCTP, villagers learned the special position held by their ancestors and village in the Mataram Kingdom; as Javanese, it was their pride. Furthermore, RCTP not only entertained but transferred values (integrity, toleration, emancipation) to their audience. Interestingly, the story of RCTP was written and played by *BBM* Radio's volunteers, who conducted research in the form of interviews with elders and literature study. From the oral histories of the elders and written data found in documents, they were able to understand the historical identity of *Minomartani* village. At the same time, they adapted the historical context to the current situation of Yogyakarta, especially of *Minomartani*. By doing so, they transferred the meanings of the past of *Minomartani* to the inhabitants' life in the present. It was a way for *Minomartani* people to understand their collective identity (interview with Surowo, 9 September 2008). In this way, 'community radio deals with local issues in the local languages and cultural context, relating to local problems and concerns, and aiming to help the community develop socially, culturally and economically' (Fraser & Estrada 2002, p. 70).

The content of community radio programs is not separated from people's daily experiences, which involve 'the way they work, the economic relationships they establish, their relationship with society, their religious beliefs, their feelings about love, their attitude toward death, their ideas about time and space' (Schmucler 2006, p. 342). Local culture is not a zero-sum game where contact with the outside culture is inevitable but the result of adaptation through interaction with outside cultures. At *BBM*, for example, cultural activities encouraged reflection and sharing of daily experiences that resulted from a combination of local and outside culture. In a celebration of *BBM*'s anniversary in 2008, the radio volunteers organised a people's theatre festival with members of *Paguyuban Monitor*.⁶⁴ Seven groups performed in the festival with each presenting its own topic, which was rooted in daily issues, such as corruption, fidelity, and schooling. These performances were inspired by the traditional drama form known as *ketoprak*, which was combined with contemporary drama. They also used a mixture of traditional and modern musical instruments in their performances. According to Surowo (interview, 9 September 2009), this approach aimed to involve young people in the cultural activities of *BBM*. In addition, all the plays had to use Javanese language in order to preserve its existence. This choice of language was considered by activists as their contribution to cultural preservation, as they were aware that the Javanese are losing their language (see Kompas.com 31 January 2009).⁶⁵

According to members of *Paguyuban Monitor* of *BBM* Radio (interview, 9 September 2008), twenty-minute drama performances were coincidentally designed by the *paguyuban* to enable

⁶⁴ The name of *Paguyuban Monitor* was often used to refer to the association of listeners of the radio.

⁶⁵ However not all radio programs used Javanese. Several programs of *BBM* Radio were delivered in Indonesian language or a mixture of Javanese and Indonesian, especially programs which were aimed at the youth.

participants to reflect their experiences. For example, a drama performance about school children emphasised the problem of parents faced with the expense of educating their children. Another one focused on family conflict caused by unfaithfulness. In a culture with strong family values, this story can be seen as a critique of unfairness in family life (interview, with Surowo 9 September 2008). Through their performances people wanted to discuss their problems in the public arena in an informal atmosphere. For community members, the quality of the performances did not matter; more important was the process by which they could reflect their life and represent it in the story. To produce drama plays, they had to discuss the story and rehearse their performances, which were recorded and broadcast through *BBM* Radio during the following days. The process of production involved many community members and enabled them to discuss their interpretation of daily community life. It meant that the process of creative production was open to all community members who wished to participate.

By engaging in community radio activities, participants also discussed ideas for the development of their village. For example, because Minomartani's main pathway became dusty in the dry season and muddy in the rainy season, the village people wanted to pave the path but the village had no budget for such a project. As a result, *BBM* Radio broadcast information about this situation in order to attract the attention of the inhabitants. In response, inhabitants conducted *rembugan* (discussion) to find a solution for this problem and asked the village government to provide a budget for the project. Finally, the village government agreed to contribute a sum of money as a stimulant budget. Since the budget was not enough, the inhabitants participated in *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) by contributing money and doing work together. People in villages are familiar with *rembugan* and *gotong royong*; whereas the first one refers to the

process of discussion and development of ideas among community members, the second one refers to collective action as the follow up of *rembugan*. Accordingly, participatory communication considers the uniqueness of each society's culture. In this context, it is necessary to support the use of a cultural approach in order to enable people at grassroots level to participate in the broader social development process. The effect of incorporating the uniqueness of each society's culture means that there is no single model of development that can be applied to all communities. Each society can develop by themselves a strategy appropriate to their culture and local context. In this way, community radio can focus on local context programs (see Servaes 1995, p.30; Howley 2005, p.2).

Since culture consists of local wisdom and indigenous knowledge, people use this knowledge to adapt to new situations within the process of social change. *BBM*, for example, has been developed by people as a medium for cultural expression in order to strengthen people's solidarity with their village as this faces changes. Since Minomartani is not far from Yogyakarta, being 9 km to the North-East, and is close to the locations of various universities, the village has become an attractive place to live. But this has also meant that rapid housing development has significantly changed Minomartani, which has been transforming from a rural to an urban location. Therefore, in order to avoid a sense of alienation in this transformation, there is a need for people to understand the roots and heritage of their village. Today the village consists primarily of housing, with most inhabitants no longer working as farmers, but as civil servants, lecturers, entrepreneurs, and employees of private companies. Kisno, a volunteer of *BBM*, as well as a local artist, explains that the population of Minomartani is a complex one, as residents are not only from Java, but also from Sumatera, Sulawesi, Jakarta, and other regions. Thus, *BBM*

Radio encourages inhabitants to communicate with each other by using arts and cultural activities, which are developed in the Minomartani Cultural Hall. In this way, inhabitants can integrate as a plural society (interview with Kisno, 13 September 2006). In addition, *BBM* itself welcomes other cultures, not only Javanese, and this cultural openness was shown by its community when they created *gamelan gaul*, a mix of Javanese music and music from other cultures in Indonesia, for example, from Papua and *Sunda* (West Java). In this way, *BBM*'s aim was to attract young people and non-Javanese to join in their cultural activities (interview with Surowo, 22 February 2009). *BBM* also provided a weekly ethnic music radio program that aired traditional music from other regions of Indonesia. This program was aimed at encouraging understanding of other cultures. *BBM* has been invited by the Tabanan village, Bali, to exchange cultural programs by broadcasting Javanese and Balinese versions of *mocopatan* (a type of traditional music) (Tanesia 2007b, p. 105).

In addition, intercultural communication can be seen in *BBM*'s off air programs. On many occasions *BBM* became the host of groups from other regions, even from other countries. In October 2008, a group from Malaysia performed at the Minomartani Cultural Hall. *BBM* Radio supported this performance in order to fulfil its mission to encourage encounters of people with different backgrounds, that is, of being a medium for community dialogue. Because of the different daily activities of the villagers, one problem in Minomartani is the lack of time and space for people to gather. Consequently, cultural activities are seen as a catalyst of social gathering and, in this context, community radio has a community-building function that enables the dialogue among community members in order to build a common identity (see Forde et al. 2002, pp. 56-57).

In Wiladeg the background of the inhabitants, most of whom are farmers, is more homogenous than that of the people of Minomartani. Wiladeg is a village located in a hilly area in Gunung Kidul District, about 60 km to the South of Yogyakarta. The influence of the agricultural tradition is still deep in people's life. It is not surprising that the most important annual celebration for Wiladeg's inhabitants is *Rasulan* (village cleansing), which was agricultural in origin.⁶⁶ Wiladeg people, including *perantauan* (people who work and live outside Wiladeg), identify with this special position of *Rasulan*, in spite of the fact that some of them come from Jakarta, 600 km from Wiladeg, and some from other islands. Since this celebration is also attended by inhabitants of other villages, it can be said that *Rasulan* has become the cultural pride of Wiladeg's people.

Even though *Rasulan* is a tradition in many villages of Java, a form of cultural heritage that contains a local wisdom (Herusatoto 1984, p. 68), in Wiladeg this tradition shows a relationship between people and their environment, which manifests in agricultural activities. For people with an agricultural background, *Rasulan* used to be in the past the expression of gratitude to God for a successful harvest. Today people continue to celebrate by sharing their happiness and the best food of their land, while at the same time they create solidarity as a community. This tradition is celebrated every *Jumat Kliwon* of July.

Today, *Rasulan* is an event that celebrates the village's achievements during one year. During the celebration each hamlet displays their harvest or their best symbol of development, such as, environmentally friendly farming, paddy, or a model of a healthy *kampong* (hamlet). 'During the

⁶⁶ A discussion about *Rasulan* as a political forum can be found in the Chapter 3.

New Order, this was called development expo (*pameran pembangunan*),’ Sukoco, Wiladeg’s Head, says (interview, 27 July 2006). Indeed, most hamlets use agricultural products as symbols of development. During *Rasulan*, the village people often prepare special food and bring it to the village or sub-village hall in order to share it with their neighbours and families. On the day of *Rasulan* the Wiladeg village receives thousands of people, not only Wiladeg inhabitants but also visitors from other villages. Even Wiladeg inhabitants who live and work in various regions of Indonesia come back to the village to celebrate this event. The climax of *Rasulan* is held in the *balai desa* (village hall). There, the village Head delivers a speech describing the current situation of Wiladeg village. Since there is a stage for local artists to perform, throughout the day hundreds of people are entertained by various local cultural attractions, such as traditional dances, which end with a *wayang* show at night.

During *Rasulan* *RKW* has provided a live commentary from morning to afternoon, continuing with the *wayang* (shadow puppet) program at night. The radio station broadcasts information about the event to those audience members who cannot go to the village hall. With traditional music in the background, audiences of *RKW* hear an announcer’s voice reporting the celebration. As a cultural icon of Wiladeg, *Rasulan* is celebrated by villagers with cultural performances lasting a week. *RKW* has covered the whole cultural week and since the radio station’s studio is located in the village office compound, which is the central location of the event, the reportage of *Rasulan* has been done directly from the studio.

In Timbulharjo village, the majority of the inhabitants also work in agriculture and are familiar with collective decision-making processes. *Angkringan* Community Radio functions to support

this collectivity, especially in relation with local governance and its volunteers know very well the strength of *rembugan* (decision-making discussion). For example, *Angkringan* was an endorser of a people's communication forum in Timbulharjo (*Forum Komunikasi Warga Timbulharjo/Fokowati*), which consisted of a gathering of representatives from all hamlets in Timbulharjo. Because *Angkringan* Radio took a role in communicating information from *Fokowati* (interview with Jaswadi, 12 June 2006), a successful collaborative project between *Fokowati* and *Angkringan* was the establishment of a scholarship program for children from poor families.

As mentioned earlier, the organisational structure of community radio is not based on hierarchy, and so it can provide horizontal communication for participants. Community radio programs are, in this sense, a representation of the people's communication. They are developed by the community, and sometimes even based on spontaneous contributions because people use flexible methods for creating programs and managing their community media. Consequently, in community radio the programs are often and easily changed. For example, in Wiladeg village people still maintain a tradition in which they express gratitude for recovery from illness or giving birth to a baby. For this event, people often invite a *dalang* (a puppet master) to perform *wayang* (shadow puppet) with a special theme, such as revelation. Since it is expensive to employ a *dalang* and his/her group of artists, people often use their community radio to share their happiness, requesting *RKW* to broadcast the *wayang*. The radio station, therefore, broadcasts an announcement that makes the event public as a symbol of the happiness of the family. This event is broadcast from 9 pm until 5 am.

Such a request often replaces the previous program schedule. For example, on 8 September 2008, *RKW* received a request from a community member to play *wayang* of ‘Wahyu Makuto Romo’ with the *dalang* Ki Timbul Hadiprayitno for the celebration of someone’s recovery from illness. Although usually *wayang* was programmed on a Wednesday night, this sudden request replaced Monday night’s nostalgia music program (interview with Sulis, 8 September 2008). Such flexibility enables community radio to tackle relevant issues or needs of the community. For example, after *Angkringan* Radio succeeded in opening the discussion about good governance within the community, the radio started to pay attention to entertainment based on local culture. For this reason, *Angkringan* invited local artists to perform in the studio and cultural programs started to be seen as an advantage of community radio, which attracted local participation. Moreover, time schedules of programs and announcers can also be flexible. Reinforcing this idea that flexibility is an inherent characteristic of community radio, Giovani states that if there was an important event in the village, such as a wedding ceremony, the usual programs can be suspended or postponed to a later time. He adds that in order to be sustainable, community radio must adjust itself to local needs (interview with Giovani, 14 March 2006). This characteristic lack of rigidity with programming can also be found in most other community radio stations in Indonesia (see Masduki 2006, p.15).

The struggle to preserve local culture is seen by volunteers as a characteristic of community radio. This positioning does not attract profit, but it does make an important contribution to the dynamic of social life in the village. Volunteers saw that cultural programs in *BBM* and *RKW*

succeeded as a tool of social interaction among community members. Serving a limited number of people, especially within a village, brings community radio close to its audience. This closeness to people at grassroots level was seen by mainstream media as potential competition for audiences.

Considering the advantage that community radio has in its familiarity with the local community's construction of cultural identity (Peruzzo 2006, p. 801), AMARC stresses the important role of community radio in preserving the traditional culture in order to maintain identity while developing a diverse community. Community radio plays a role in encouraging people to pay 'respect to cultural and language diversities rather than promoting one culture' (AMARC 2007, p.27). While community radio activists in Yogyakarta have not necessarily read this AMARC document, in the field they understand the potential of community radio in cultural preservation. By preserving their culture, they contribute to cultural diversity in the context of the larger scope in Indonesia.⁶⁷

Off-air activities of community radio are also important in the general effort to preserve local culture. A good example of this is provided by *BBM* Radio. Every 12 August, the community of Minomartani celebrate *BBM* Radio's anniversary and hundreds of people go to the *BBM* station (Minomartani Cultural Hall). Originally this event was simply the anniversary of the hall. Now,

⁶⁷ In Aceh, for example, community radio provided programs focusing on local culture preservation. *Nazam* (traditional poems of Aceh) was often aired in community radio stations. These poems usually presented a religious message. More information about radio in Aceh can be found in Chapter 5.

with the existence of *BBM* Radio, it has become the celebration of both the cultural hall and the radio.

This annual event is popular among people concerned about traditional culture. For example, in 2006, people celebrated sixteen years of the cultural hall, and six years of the radio. The celebration was full with social activities, such as a bazaar and sporting activities, climaxing with art performances by community members, with children, youth, and adults performing traditional dances, *wayang kancil*, *wayang kulit*, *mocopatan*, *kethoprak*, and *karawitan*. However, not all the performances were played by the community of Minomartani but also by people from other villages. For example, a group of earthquake victims came to the celebration, although the distance from their villages to Minomartani is close to 20 km. Since the event took place in front of the studio of *BBM*, it was not difficult for radio crews to air all activities in a live show format.

The need to participate in cultural preservation can also be seen in Wiladeg where the village hall (*balai desa*) also became a place for traditional art performances. This hall provided a set of *karawitan* instruments that was often used by local inhabitants, including primary school students, who sometimes staged *campursari* performances. Since one function of community radio is to support the regular cultural activities of villagers, these performances were often supported by *RKW*. Since the radio studio was also located in the village hall compound it was easy for *RKW*'s volunteers to cover cultural activities taking place there. Some young *dalang* (puppet master) used *RKW* to improve their skills in *wayang* performance and so the radio

became a means of advancing their careers. Additionally, they could ask RKW to record or produce their 'album' as part of their portfolio.

As Rodriguez (2001, pp. 54-55) points out, by focusing on the agenda of cultural identity community media can avoid being co-opted by political interests. Community radio activists have realised that political parties will try to use the community radio as a medium for advancing their interests. Adam Agus found that one community radio in the South of Yogyakarta was operated by a political party (interview, 9 February 2006). Dadang Hidayat, a commissioner of the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission of West Java, noted that several community radio stations were representing a major political party (Haryanto & Ramdojo 2009, pp. 50-51). To avoid political cooptation, community radio should be independent in its operation. For this reason, *BBM* Radio has refused to be used as a tool of political propaganda, for example, by remaining independent from the village's government structure. This neutral position has helped maintain community radio as a form of public media for the free exchange of ideas among all sections of the community. Cultural activities were seen by activists of *BBM* as neutral bridges to be used to encourage dialogue among community members; they thought that through culture people could communicate with each other and so they focused on the preservation and development of traditional culture. Through this cultural approach, *BBM* could be accepted by both the people and the village government. Therefore, frequently the government was invited by *BBM* to communicate with the inhabitants of Minomartani.

This approach was different from that of *Angkringan* Community Radio, which took a position of absolute distance from the village government to maintain its independence, which is unusual for the organisational culture of Indonesian villages. However, *Angkringan*'s position was functional within its main orientation, which was to be a political tool of the villagers to counter the power of the village government. In consequence, *Angkringan* tended to have oppositional political interests to those of the village government.

4.6 Audience Building

Community radio stations in Minomartani and Wiladeg have become popular stations with loyal audiences. Lindsay (1997, p.116) points out that radio stations will have a loyal audience if the radio can provide local programs. Building a loyal audience takes time; this process begins when audiences feel that the radio could represent their interests. For instance, initially people in villages just wanted to communicate better within their community about local issues and entertainment (see Dagon 2007, p.202). In the beginning they used community radio to broadcast popular music, sometimes imitating programs of commercial radio, such as 'The Top 40'. But step by step they recognised the need for including local music and Javanese culture in their programs, while those with similar concerns toward local culture agreed to support the radio station's commitment by forming audience groups.

The same concern for the sustainability of Javanese culture encouraged audiences of *BBM* Radio to create an audience group called *Paguyuban Monitor*. The members of this group were not uniquely audience members since they sometimes participated in the radio programs as

announcers. The radio station's 'open door policy', which meant that the door of the studio was always open, allowed no gap between announcer and audience. This phenomenon can be read as an attempt to deinstitutionalise the media organisation in order to break the blockade between sender and receiver of public messages. According to Servaes (1996), sender and receiver are interchangeable positions. In this way, this friendly approach shown by community radio enables people's horizontal communication. Audience members can come close to the announcer and see the process of production, and if they want they can join in the making of the program. In *BBM*, that situation usually occurred in the music programs, which enabled the audience to participate 'karaoke' style. Almost every night, usually from 9 pm to midnight, people from the community came to the studio and became the core of *BBM* Radio's activities, whether on-air or off-air (as explained earlier off-air activities, such as patient visits, collecting donations for natural disaster victims, sporting activities, arts performances, and the celebration of *Balai Budaya Minomartani*'s anniversary, are supportive extensions of the on-air or broadcasting programs). People's involvement in *BBM* Radio's activities has thus encouraged solidarity, interaction and concern for each other. If a member has a problem, the others would help him/her to solve it. In addition, they celebrated community members' birthdays (see also Laksmi & Haryanto 2007, p. 77). In this way, community radio is useful for improving the quality of life by strengthening social solidarity (interview with Surowo, 9 September 2008).

The creation of an audience group also occurred in Wiladeg. Since *RKW* has a special Javanese culture program, the popularity of the radio station has been increasing in the village and its surroundings. A popular program of *RKW* was *Campur Sari*, a combination of Javanese pop

music and traditional music.⁶⁸ Audience members respond to this program through short SMS messages or telephone calls. In the beginning, audience members used cards to request songs and send greetings. Since mobile phone technology has become available in the region, the audience has switched to telephone. It is not uncommon for the announcer of a *Campur Sari* program to receive forty telephone calls from the audience over the two hours of the program. Regarding this situation, Upik, an announcer of *RKW* happily describes the audience's participation in radio programmes: 'Well ... I who handled them directly got overwhelmed. The telephone calls never stopped; moreover, if [messages were sent] via SMS, I would get even more overwhelmed' (interview 11 May 2006).

By sending greetings to each other, some audience members began to become familiar, especially with the sound of their voices and their on-air nick names. Later, they expressed the need to see each other, and from there they became a loyal audience who were concerned about the sustainability of *RKW*. To accommodate their interest in encouraging solidarity and supporting *RKW*, they established *Paguyuban Monitor*. This organisation was open to all of *RKW*'s audience. 'Social relations on the air can be more valuable if continued in the real life,' acknowledged Muji, a former high-school teacher, who allowed his house to be used as a meeting place of *RKW*'s *Paguyuban Monitor*. Muji sees that the group is beneficial to strengthen horizontal communication and maintain Javanese culture.

⁶⁸ See Chapter 3.

As part of the regular meetings among members of *Paguyuban*, they created *Arisan*.⁶⁹ *Arisan monitor* was based on the audience's initiative to gather and strengthen solidarity among them. In this case, winning the *arisan* was not their priority but the stimulus for their regular meetings. This activity was started by *Paguyuban Monitor* of *RKW* on 17 May 2006. *Paguyuban Monitor*'s members created a T-shirt with the slogan 'Radio Wiladeg: rural radio but not rustic radio' (*Radio Wiladeg: Radio ndeso sing ora ndesit*) in order to express their appreciation for the radio. This T-shirt was made especially for the *crew*⁷⁰ of *RKW* as an appreciation of their dedication to the sustainability of their community radio. This expression means that these people are proud of their status as villagers. In the context of modernisation, to be villagers usually connotes backwardness or a less developed status. But in Wiladeg the village people want to show that *ndeso* cannot be seen as an inferior status. With resources such as culture, solidarity and creativity, the village can then compete with the city, just as *RKW* (the symbol of the village) could compete with mainstream radio (the symbol of the modern city) in the village.

The importance of *Paguyuban Monitor* for *RKW* was shown in this group's response to the Indonesian government's new regulation on radio frequency. The regulation required community radio to move to the channels allocated to community radio, between 107.7-107.9 FM. To relocate its frequency, *RKW* had to adjust its equipment. To do so, the radio needed money but as a community radio in a rural area, *RKW* did not have any budget for that purpose. When this problem was made known to the radio station's audience, *Paguyuban Monitor* responded to this

⁶⁹ *Arisan* is a kind of lottery but it mainly functions as a regular social gathering whose members contribute to and take turns at winning an aggregate sum of money.

⁷⁰ Community radio volunteers are called *crew* (crew) to indicate that a community radio station is managed by a group of people who work together on a task. They have a special position among the community of *RKW*. Incidentally, they often get gifts from their monitors.

need. After discussions among members, *Paguyuban Monitor* decided to provide the financial support that would enable the radio station to move to the new frequency. One cultural value in the village is collectiveness, which allows people to build solidarity. This value was strengthened by the horizontal communication encouraged by the radio station on this issue, both on-air and face to face.

Interestingly, most members of *Paguyuban Monitor*, both in Wiladeg and Minomartani, are adults between 40 and 60 years of age. Based on his observations, Surowo categorises members of the *paguyuban* into three groups: *new comers*, *sustainers* and *belongers*.⁷¹ Firstly, *new comers* are participants who have just joined the group; they are in the process of introduction to community radio activities and they infrequently go to the studio. Secondly, *sustainers* are people who are concerned about ensuring the sustainability of the radio; they usually take a role in the organisational structure of the radio, for example as announcers. Thirdly, *belongers* are people concerned not only with the sustainability of the radio but also its function within the community; they have a sense of belonging to the development of community radio and they willingly contribute ideas and money to develop facilities related to the existence of the radio. For example, they built a library for the community's benefit. Regarding this phenomenon, Nasir observes that members of *Paguyuban Monitor* usually have a special interest in radio broadcasting. Often, they had an experience with radio when they were younger (interview, 25 July 2006). Furthermore, elders have a concern with the preservation of Javanese culture in the term of *nguri-uri*, literally meaning: to make the Javanese culture still alive. These people are usually at least 50 years old (see Herusatoto 1984, p. 69).

⁷¹ These terms are stated by Surowo himself in an interview on 9 September 2008.

Unlike *BBM* and *RKW*, *Angkringan* does not have a formal audience group, possibly because *Angkringan* focuses on political issues. When a specific issue has been solved, then *Angkringan* goes back to its ordinary program, broadcasting music, local news and greetings. In addition, most volunteers of *Angkringan* are young people. This means that outside radio activities, they do not necessarily have similar interests that could tie them in off-air activities like *BBM* and *RKW* volunteers do. Aware of the importance of an audience group, *Angkringan* has been enlarging its audience by providing cultural programs, such as *mocopatan* (traditional Javanese music) and *solawatan*. This effort aims to attract elders to work in the radio as volunteers. Without the support of an audience group *Angkringan* Radio has sometimes experienced difficulties in its operation.

4.7 Challenges to Traditional Culture and Language

Promotion of Javanese culture is one of the main goals of community radio in Yogyakarta. This is so because this region is well known as the capital of Javanese culture. People who are concerned about local cultural preservation have realised that local culture has to compete with the massive invasion of popular culture through the mainstream media. For example, in *BBM* some activists were afraid that Javanese culture would become extinct. This concern was shown by participants of *BBM*'s Focus Group Discussion (FGD) (20 August 2006), who understood that Yogyakarta has been transforming from a traditional culture towards a cosmopolitan one. As *kota pelajar* (student city), various cultures meet and mix in Yogyakarta. Participants of the FGD believed that the influence of foreign culture has endangered the existence of Javanese culture.

One participant told how, in the past, traditional dancers were often invited by people and hotels to perform. Nowadays, not many hotels invite them. Another participant described how nowadays young girls used clothes which exposed their navels, which was considered not appropriate for the cultural values of Yogyakarta. As Rodriguez notes, cultural invasion from foreign countries has worried developing countries since foreign values and cultural forms will endanger local cultures and identities, which in turn will affect the national vision (2006, p. 766). In this regard, Malan also sees that the development of local communities is challenged by the invasion of foreign culture (2006, p. 679).

Therefore, all efforts to maintain cultural identity often face challenges. Since the use of Javanese language has declined, community radio is confronted with the difficulty of finding people who can speak Javanese fluently. In discussions on *BBM* on 20 August 2006, some participants expressed their concern for the preservation of Javanese language, since young people could not speak it correctly. In particular, the participant referred to the poor ability of the young to use *kromo inggil*, a form of Javanese language that expresses politeness, generally used with elders and upper class people. In summary, because there are many reasons to be concerned about the preservation of Javanese culture, community radio in Minomartani and Wiladeg explicitly stated that their mission is its preservation. Thus, most of *BBM*'s and *RKW*'s programs use Javanese language, even though it is not easy to promote its use. For example, in Wiladeg, most announcers who use *kromo inggil* are adults. Muji, a listener, asserts that while young announcers are not fluent in speaking *kromo inggil*, he appreciates their effort to use it (interview with Muji, 17 May 2006). Young announcers are often encouraged to use Javanese in the delivery of a radio program. For example, Sulis, a young announcer who uses Javanese in his

program, has seen his speaking ability improve since he became an announcer in *RKW*. In other community radio, young announcers prefer to use the Indonesian language or a combination of Indonesian and *ngoko*, a form of Javanese language used among friends or when speaking to lower status people. *Ngoko* is perceived as a lower-level language than *kromo*. This kind of language is broadly known as *bahasa gaul* ([Indonesian] street language). According to Laksana (2008), the Javanese language has been marginalised by the use of *bahasa gaul* among the young.

Today, Javanese language is more like a ‘foreign language’ for them. Javanese is more complicated than *bahasa gaul* since Javanese recognises strata and rules. This language contains symbolic meaning, which is related to literature, and it should be thought about deeply (see Herusatoto 1984, p. 137 & p. 161). Young people do not use Javanese language, especially *kromo*, in daily conversation. They prefer to use the *bahasa gaul*. Sarjiman, the head of *Angkringan*, acknowledges that young people are not brave enough to use Javanese language (*kromo*) since they cannot speak *kromo* very well (interview with Sarjiman 24 Juli 2008). They prefer to use daily conversation language (*ngoko*) on *Angkringan*. *Ngoko* is acceptable for speaking to other young people, but not appropriate for speaking with adults and elders. Linguists blame broadcasting media for promoting the use of *bahasa gaul*. This insensitivity to local culture in the mainstream media’s content make the preservation of traditional culture seems irrelevant. In this case, the impact of this insensitivity is clear in the degradation of Javanese language in Yogyakarta, where Javanese magazines and other print media are also declining (Siyamta 2009). Regarding the problem of the existence of native language, Henriksson (2007,

p.64) suggests the need for the media to reach towards the young and encourage them to use their native language.

As a part of the social dynamic in the development of community radio, people should negotiate their interests. Sometimes this process of negotiation creates a conflict among volunteers. For example, *BBM*'s efforts to preserve local culture have occasionally produced friction among activists regarding the issue of accessibility.⁷² In *BBM* there was a need to turn cultural activities into a tool for communication among community members. In the beginning, SAV Puskat pursued this aim by encouraging participation in the preservation of traditional culture. To promote cultural activities in the Minomartani Cultural Hall, SAV Puskat invited artists of Javanese dance and music. Although some of them lived in the Minomartani village and others came from outside the village, they all worked together to train children, youth and adults in traditional music and dance. Over the years, these efforts succeeded in establishing *BBM* as a centre of Javanese culture. But not all people were happy with this process. Some people felt that they were being marginalised by the concentration of *BBM*'s efforts on cultural activities. Focusing on cultural matters has created a problem among volunteers because the radio seems to be dominated by certain local artists or people with specific interests. An inhabitant of Minomartani asserts:

Because I feel this radio is mine. I may say that because I am living in Minomartani, and the founder of that radio wanted that all inhabitants own that radio too. I feel that recently this radio has changed, because *BBM* Community Radio is being different. People there are like very exclusive, only people who are involved in traditional arts.

The radio station's focus on arts meant that ordinary people felt inferior and unable to join in the activities of *BBM* Radio. Other inhabitants said that a gap between the radio and its community

⁷² Accessibility to media is an important issue of community radio since access is 'the heart of democratic progress' (Fuller 2007, p. 13). Access enables ordinary people to express their ideas with a language they understand (Hamelink 2007, p. 216).

has been emerging since the radio provided more programs for culture, which made some people feel uncomfortable about visiting the studio since they had different interests. This issue has also dominated the conversation of members of the audience group. As a response to the critiques, Surowo, a founder of *BBM* Radio, states that inhabitants of Minomartani are still welcome to participate in the activities of *BBM* Radio. He shows as a fact that many people do come to the Minomartani Cultural Hall when performances are staged and on every anniversary celebration. Other inhabitants are more positive about the development of *BBM* Radio. One says that the recent situation of the radio is a result of its progress. The problem then appears when some people's capacities have been improved by their involvement in the radio. When their capacities have achieved a high standard and their standard is too high for other participants, they tend to dominate. This domination hinders the participation of those less experienced. In this case, he suggests, management of *BBM* Radio should be sensitive to this situation in order to maximise participation.

That comment refers to the capacity of some volunteers who are recognised to have a high reputation in the field of Javanese arts. These volunteers are seen by other community members as too dominant in the operation of the radio, to the extent that some volunteers decided to withdraw from the activities of *BBM* Radio. However, since *BBM* has many volunteers the decision could not stop the operation of *BBM*. Other volunteers could take over. It can be said that the situation was a part of the dynamic of interaction which can occur in an organisation. It also occurred in other community radio stations (personal communication with Sulis, 14 July 2009). However, the radio station did not ignore the problem: *BBM's* management showed that the radio is open to critique. To solve the problem, the radio made an effort to invite more people

to participate in *BBM's* activities. One effort can be seen in the celebration of *BBM's* anniversary, when all people were welcome to get involved.

In Wiladeg critiques came from some community members. Despite the success of *RKW* in promoting Javanese culture, some community members disagreed with the program's format. The radio was seen as too focused on traditional Javanese programs. This focus, they claimed, would limit the participation of other inhabitants. Another critique was about the role of *Paguyuban Monitor* in *RKW*, in the sense that the members of the group seemed to be dominant. Apparently, they focused on their own interests and were too exclusive, so other audience members felt that they were ignored. A further critique addressed the fact that certain announcers were dominant. As a result, not all inhabitants were interested in joining the radio support group. Regarding this situation, Sulis points out that everyone can be a volunteer in *RKW*: the problem is that not many people actually want to spend their time voluntarily operating the radio (interview, 8 August 2006).

There is a disagreement about who can perform in *RKW*. Another audience member suggests the need for *RKW* to be more selective about the people or groups of artists who can perform on the radio to avoid low-quality performances being broadcast. Another opinion states that all people should be allowed the opportunity to be aired on *RKW* and that through their participation in the radio station, they can improve their skills. However, all these disagreements indicate that people have a sense of belonging toward their community radio and so they always need to negotiate their ideas. By doing so, they construct a democratic community. This situation shows that community radio can become an arena for the negotiation of community members' ideas about

their culture. It also implies that community radio should welcome all ideas in order to enable people to participate in the construction of their culture.

4.8 Risky Temptation

A problematic temptation for community radio is to want to enlarge its coverage area in the way of commercial radio. Dagron asserts that the enlargement will result in decreasing participation if the radio cannot maintain its responsiveness to community needs. The temptation also will reduce the effectiveness of community radio in enabling people at grassroots level to participate in the process of message production (Dagron 2004, p. 56; Dagron 2007, pp. 199-100). For community radio activists, wanting a large audience is a very real risk. Activists generally believe that being a radio with a large coverage area and big audience numbers can be the starting point of a transformation from community radio to commercial radio.

The idea to enlarge the coverage area of community radio was expressed in *BBM* and *RKW*. Several members of the community wanted their radio to become more popular by enlarging the coverage area. The popularity of those community radio stations can be seen in the number of invitations to broadcast social events in the village and other villages. Also, the number of requests from local artists to perform on the radio, for example *dalang* (puppet master) and local music groups, has increased. A larger coverage area and a more powerful transmitter are perceived by some volunteers of community radio as a source of prestige. Debates about this topic occurred among volunteers, including those of *BBM*, Minomartani village. One volunteer of *BBM* stated that he had a dream that *BBM* would have a large coverage area in order to compete with commercial radio. Another volunteer expressed his pride when he knew that his

radio transmission could reach other sub-districts. Other volunteers did not agree with this, since they thought that a community radio should focus on its community not on efforts to be big. The desire to be like commercial media was also discussed in the mailing list of JRKI. One member from West Sumatra articulated his idea to make community radio profit-oriented. Other members of the mailing list criticised the idea and commented that profit was not relevant for community radio. They commented that people's participation, not a large audience, was the main reason for the existence of community radio (jrki_ngobrol@ yahoo.com, 8 October 2007).

Nasir (2001) disagrees with the argument of enlargement of coverage area of community radio. He states that the limitation of community radio's power and coverage area avoids conflict with other community radio stations in other villages that use similar frequencies. Many communities want to establish their own radio to accommodate their aspirations. Also, with limitation of coverage area, community radio can maintain communication among its community members. For this reason, *Angkringan*, a radio that was established by Nasir, is still committed to its original idea to serve the community of Timbulharjo village. If there were no limitation of the coverage area, community radio would be similar to state and commercial radio. There would also be a gap between the community and the radio, since the radio would not be able to concentrate on serving its original community, and, in consequence, people's participation would be sacrificed. Such was the phenomenon of Radio *Sutatenza* in Colombia. In the beginning the radio was an alternative media outlet for farmers in the Tenza valley. Since it enlarged its coverage area and became a national scope radio, Radio *Sutatenza* lost the participatory communication of its audiences (Dagron 2004, p.49).

The discussion of this dangerous temptation challenges community radio volunteers to rethink the principles of community radio. As an alternative media form, community radio is expected to enable ordinary people to voice their interests, exemplifying the concept of ‘many to many’ in the communication process. *BBM*, *Angkringan* and *RKW*, all made efforts to provide opportunity for people to participate in the operation of the community radio station. Training, internships and recruitment evidenced their commitment to creating more social communicators. These efforts exemplify Dagron’s argument (2007, pp. 199-200) that the most important aim for community radio is to multiply the number of communicators, ‘not only the number of consumers of information.’ This does not mean that community radio’s goal is to gain a larger audience base far beyond the radio station’s capacity to fulfil the principle of participation of its audience. The idea would endanger the existence of community radio if the radio station were tempted to use a commercial approach in view of increasing audience numbers. Community radio stations should then focus more on community interests and less on being big.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the existence of community radio responds to the need of grassroots people to express their local cultural and social life, something that finds little opportunity to be represented in the mainstream media. The chapter has shown that the mainstream media’s hegemony causes an imbalance in the information flow and this is what makes community radio a necessity for village people. However, the chapter has also shown that the implementation of community radio in the villages studied in this thesis was not easy, since there are consistent

barriers put on the development of community radio, such as the process of legalisation and the often limited human and financial resources.

The chapter has also shown that there is a supportive relationship between community radio stations and the community's social and cultural activities, especially those that seek to preserve cultural identity. As a medium specifically designed for the nurturing of cultural identity, community radio becomes a public arena where people with similar interests in local culture can gather. In this sense, community is constructed by people who participate in the process of social communication, sharing ideas on community radio's on-air and off-air activities and using a combination of radio programs and cultural activities to strengthen solidarity in the village.

The experiences of the three community radio stations discussed suggest the notion, discussed by Hochheimer (1999) that the establishment of a community radio station should not be seen as the starting point for community organising, but rather should be viewed as an extension of an existing desire to communicate. In this sense, community radio plays an important cultural role by facilitating an open dialogue between the diverse components of a community. Chapter 5 will discuss the role of community radio in facilitating strong relationships among community members, focusing in particular on community radio's capacity for civic action in the management of natural disasters.

Chapter 5

Community Radio and Civic Action in Natural Disaster Management

5.1 Introduction

A natural disaster seriously disrupts the economic and social progress of any society. UNESCO defines 'natural disaster' as a serious effect to a community or region caused by the impact of a naturally occurring, rapid onset event, such as earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, tsunami, flood or drought.⁶⁶ In disaster areas there is always an urgent need for information to evaluate the situation, find out how to get aid, and how best to use the aid. In this context, the role of the media, and particularly of community radio, in providing information to those affected is crucial for the coordination among local people (victims), government and aid agencies (Tanesia 2007a, p. 72).

Whereas the previous chapters have discussed how people at grassroots level use community radio in the context of citizenship and local culture, this final chapter of the thesis discusses the role of community radio in situations of emergency caused by natural disasters, which frequently occur in Indonesia. The use of community radio in disaster areas raises the following two questions: firstly, how do people use community radio in emergency situations caused by a natural disaster? Secondly, how do they manage to achieve the many functions of community radio in such situations? These questions are my focus in this chapter's examination of the role of community radio as grassroots communication media in natural disaster circumstances, and in order to answer them, I present several case studies of community radio stations from

⁶⁶ UNESCO n.d., *Natural Disaster Reduction*. Retrieved August 10, 2007 from http://www.UNESCO.org/science/disaster/about_disaster.shtml.

various regions of Indonesia. Thus, the chapter argues that Indonesians use their community media to satisfy their communication needs and find solutions for their problems, and that this is especially so during the occurrence of a natural disaster. This chapter was inspired by my experience, while conducting field research for this dissertation, of the earthquake that struck Bantul, Yogyakarta Province, on 26 May 2006.

5.2 Living with Natural Disasters

On 26 December 2004 an Indian Ocean earthquake, measuring 9.3 on the Richter scale, caused a giant wave that devastated coastal regions of several countries. Aceh, the Westernmost province of Indonesia, became the region worst affected by the tsunami. Along hundreds of kilometres of coastline, 180,000 people were killed, while houses and buildings were flattened, making more than 500,000 people homeless. Additionally, the devastated areas became isolated because of the damage caused by the tsunami to communication infrastructure. While Indonesia was recovering from the devastation of the tsunami in Aceh and the Nias earthquake, which also occurred in 2004, further natural disasters shocked the country in 2006: two earthquakes in Java (in the Bantul and Klaten Regencies on 27 May) and a tsunami in Java (Pangandaran Beach, 17 July), in which more than 5,000 people were killed (World Bank 2007, p.9; Asian Disaster Reduction Center 2007, p. 22). The natural disasters affecting Indonesia in 2006 have been described as ‘one of the world’s 25 worst disasters’ (Asian Disaster Reduction Center 2007, p. 86).

The Center for Hazards and Risk Research at Columbia University (2005) has recorded historical data on disasters in Indonesia from 1907 to 2004 (excluding the

Aceh Tsunami of 2004). This information illustrates that over almost 100 years Indonesia has experienced 10 cyclones, 11 droughts, 78 earthquakes, 93 floods, and 43 volcanic eruptions. Indeed, Indonesia is a country that experiences many natural disasters since it is located in a tropical region along the Pacific 'Ring of Fire', sandwiched between three continental plates. This is a location with the potential for various types of natural hazard, such as earthquakes (volcanic and tectonic), volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, floods, landslides, and droughts (Asian Disaster Reduction Center 2007, p. 86; Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia/WALHI 2006). Given these circumstances, Indonesians seem to be familiar with natural disasters and should prepare themselves to anticipate them.

5.3 Vulnerable People

Studies concerning the position of community in the context of natural disasters show that low-income or marginalised communities are the groups that suffer the worst impact. Poverty in the affected areas exacerbates the severity of disasters. The loss of infrastructure has a significant impact on the poor, especially in terms of access to sanitation, electricity and clean water (Buckland and Rahman 1999, p.177; Pyles 2007, pp.321-322; ADRC 2007; Freeman n.d). As Mathbor (2007, p. 358) emphasises, the most vulnerable people suffer the worst effects of disaster since they are faced with limited resources. Limited resources may also delay emergency action.

Where government expenditure and preparedness to take action in disaster management is limited, it is important to consider the potential for the community to take a role, since it is the community who suffers the effects of disaster (Allen 2006, p. 84). In the context of Indonesia, Tanesia (2007a, pp. 70-71) shows that in the early

days after natural disasters, victims often have to manage the impact with very limited resources, since governments need time to coordinate activities and provide funding. In Bantul, Yogyakarta Special Region, for instance, victims of earthquakes had to stay for more than two weeks in the emergency accommodation they built themselves with the debris from their homes. Additionally, they had limited access to sanitation, which affected their health.

Given these circumstances, it is necessary to enhance community participation and capability in disaster risk management because community action is the key element in reducing risk. Through communication people develop an understanding of risk and make it their collective problem. This process of understanding ultimately encourages community action to address the risk (Flint and Luloff 2007, p. 432). In this vein, community radio plays a role in helping people to manage the risk of natural disaster, especially by providing a public sphere for people in the affected areas. As mentioned in Chapter 3, community radio functions to help community members discuss their situation and consequently strengthen their relationships and solidarity towards each other.

5.4 Social Capital

Van Vuuren notes that social capital is related to the motivation of volunteers to work in community radio. Volunteers see their activities as worthy for community life and they are inspired to participate when they see the benefits of radio to pursue the community's common interests; for example, providing information (van Vuuren 2001). In disaster areas there is always a need for information; information is required in order to evaluate the situation, and find out both how to find aid and how best to

use this aid. In this context, the role of the media, particularly community radio, in providing information to affected people is very important for the coordinated action of the local people (victims), government and aid agencies (Tanesia 2007a, p. 72). In emergency situation, community radio has shown its advantage in its flexibility in terms of mobility and adaptability of formats and content compared to mainstream media.

Awareness about the importance of community media in disseminating information related to natural disasters has encouraged people to use community radio.

Community radio emphasises the importance of networks within communities, among activists of community radio, and between activists of community radio and NGOs and other organisations (see Allen 2006). The following cases illustrate the use that Indonesian villagers and volunteers have made of community radio in disaster risk management.

5.5 Aceh Post-Tsunami: Early Media Reports

The post-tsunami experience in Aceh illustrates the role of NGOs, national and international, in helping to use community radio. Thanks to their social networks, several community radio volunteers from other regions in Indonesia worked in community radio projects in this area. The role of community radio in Aceh in the beginning was to help people in the emergency-response situation and this provided a first experience for the volunteers in dealing with natural disaster response. More recently, however, community radio has been developed as media for recovery and reconstruction.

The 2004 tsunami killed many journalists, destroyed mass media infrastructure and telephones, and washed away parts of roads. UNESCO noted that up to several days after the tsunami, there were no means of communicating with Aceh. Half of the thirty radio stations were damaged, including RRI, the state-owned radio. RRI lost its twenty-six staff members. As a result of this loss, even though RRI started to broadcast again on 28 December 2006, the radio had great difficulties in obtaining reports from the field (Afrizal, Rokhmani & Prakoso 2009, pp. 22-23; UNESCO 2005b; Indonesia Tsunami Relief Portal). This situation completely isolated the Acehnese people, who were unable to communicate with one another and with people in other regions.

As a result of this isolation, the first news about this natural disaster was reported at 8.30am; that is, many hours after the tsunami, by Detik.com, an online media outlet based in Jakarta. Television broadcasters had problems reaching the region, and as a result could only report the event by midday (Gunawan 2005). Seeing that the mass media could not reach Aceh, *RAPI/Radio Antar Penduduk Indonesia* (Association of Communication Radio of Indonesia) sent information from the devastated area. As a result, this organisation became a source of information for the mass media, both national and international. Many information and interview requests were received by *RAPI*'s headquarters in Jakarta (Kamaruzzaman 2007).

5.6 Radio Projects in Aceh: Outside Initiatives

Due to the difficulties experienced by communications media, independent parties and NGOs moved quickly to establish radio stations.⁶⁷ Suddenly, radio stations were mushrooming everywhere in Aceh. There were two groups of radio stations developed by benefactors in Aceh in the post-tsunami period. The first group of radio stations functioned as substitute for commercial radios destroyed by the tsunami. These radio stations had a similar coverage area to the commercial radio that had previously served a particular district. Later, several of these replacement stations became commercial radio themselves. With the support of Free Voice International and the cooperation of former student activists and radio professionals, KBR 68H established new radio stations in several cities in Aceh, including Smong FM (Simeleu), Pro FM (Sabang), Nara FM (Nagan Raya), Cipta Pesona (Aceh Singkil), SIT FM (Tapak Tuan), and Rapeja (Lamno). These radio stations provided immediate information for victims. Since there was no electricity, these stations were powered by generators. For the same reason, people needed battery-operated radio receivers so they could access the information broadcast by the radio stations. As a result, UNESCO, BBC and KBR 68H among others, provided hundreds of receivers to tsunami refugees via tsunamihelp.info.

The second group of radio stations had limited coverage, serving one sub-district only. These radio stations became the foundation of community radio in Aceh. In general, community radio in Aceh was not established from grass-root initiatives.

⁶⁷ The involvement of NGOs can be seen in the following list: Masyarakat Pers dan Penyiaran Indonesia/MPPI (the Indonesia Press and Broadcasting Society), Persatuan Radio Siaran Swasta Nasional Indonesia/PRSSNI (the Indonesian Private Broadcast Radio Association), HIVOS, James L Knight Foundation, the Japanese government and Bulog (Indonesian Logistic Bureau) the UK Department for International Development and Internews established Radio Suara Aceh (The Voice of Aceh Radio) as an emergency radio in Banda Aceh and Meulaboh (Suranto & Haryanto 2007, pp.50, 53). Muhammadiyah, The Asia Foundation, and Kantor Berita Radio/KBR 68H (68H Radio News Agency) established Radio Komunitas Suara Muhammadiyah (Voice of Muhammadiyah Community Radio).

Initiators of community radio were mainly people from outside Aceh. This process seemed to be a consequence of the extraordinary situation in Aceh. In the first days after the disaster, local people were still struggling to survive so it was impossible for Acehnese to establish community radio themselves. Therefore, several community radio stations were established with support from the World Bank and Combine Resources Institute/CRI under ARRNet (Aceh Nias Reconstruction Radio Network) (infoaceh.net). ARRNet focused on the development of community radio networks to provide information about the process of reconstruction and rehabilitation, which are relevant for the Acehnese. As part of the project, ARRNet also provided a website as a medium of communication among community radio established by ARRNet.

There are several reasons behind the support for the establishment of community radio. Firstly, people affected by the disaster had little opportunity to be heard by benefactors and policy makers. After the tsunami, aid from local and international support organisations showered on Aceh. In some cases, supply and demand did not meet because, as pointed out by CRI (World Bank 2006), the limited dialogue mechanism to mediate between affected people, government and donors worsened the conditions for many victims of the tsunami. For example, limited dialogue meant some areas did not receive any aid while other areas received too much (Acehkita.Com 2005).

Thus, community radio functioned as a communication link between demand and supply, ensuring that the aid was appropriate for local conditions in the affected areas. For example, Pijar Harapan Community Radio in Lhoong often aired information about projects of rehabilitation and reconstruction. In one instance, the radio

broadcast information from people concerning the development of housing and public facilities that did not meet people's needs. As a result of this report, beneficiary agencies came to the field to ask a local NGO, the operator of the project, to improve their works (Afrizal, Rokhmani & Prakoso 2009, p. 45). Such problems of poor coordination in the phase of reconstruction and rehabilitation sometimes resulted in the overlapping of programs among NGOs, which, for example, occurred in Meuraxa sub-district. Therefore, to improve the coordination in Meuraxa, the government and NGOs agreed to fund Korrexa/Komite Rehabilitasi dan Rekonstruksi Meuraxa (Committee of Rehabilitation and Reconstruction in Meuraxa Sub-district) as a communication centre to enable all parties, including ordinary people, to access information about the development in the sub-district. To support the dissemination of information, this committee used community radio as a medium of communication (Afrizal 2006b).

The second reason behind the support for the establishment of community radio is that this form of public media functioned to fill in a media vacuum. As I mentioned earlier, airways in several regions in Aceh were empty since commercial radio stations had been destroyed by the tsunami. Thus, community radio stations established by benefactors filled the vacuum. For instance, in Aceh Besar Regency, SeHa FM⁶⁸ community radio was the only source of information for people in Jantho since commercial radio stations broadcasting from Banda Aceh are often not clearly audible (infoaceh.net). In this situation, SeHa FM gave local people the opportunity to voice their interests; villagers utilised community radio as a medium for

⁶⁸ SeHa is an abbreviation of *senang hatee*, meaning 'happy feeling'. As the name suggests, SeHa Community Radio volunteers aimed to heal the trauma of its community.

communication within and between communities in order to meet their needs and aspirations during the recovery phase.

The third reason is that community radio was intended by benefactors to provide a medium of communication and information to affected people. Since community radio focuses on local issues, people could use the radio stations to communicate among themselves, helping to heal their trauma, and entertaining and educating community members in recovery and reconstruction phases. A good example for this purpose was the use of *nazam* (traditional poems of Aceh). These poems convey a religious message aimed to strengthen affected people to help them recover from their sorrow. *Nazam* aired on community radio stations often expressed people's feelings, such as their hopes for peace in Aceh. For instance, *Samudera* FM Radio, a community radio station operated by refugees from the tsunami-affected areas in North Aceh, broadcast *nazam* every Friday evening. Voluntarily community members came to the studio to participate in this program. Some of them contributed scripts to be broadcast. Community members also collected money to buy dispensers to provide drinking water in the studio (Afrizal 2005; Afrizal 2007, p. 100).

Another example was SeHa FM Radio, which was managed by young victims living in refugee camps. This community radio aired field reports from the camps giving information on situations, problems and opinions of affected people living there.

Suara Meulaboh Radio conducted *vox populi* interviews with local inhabitants.

Samudera FM in the Samudera sub-district, Aceh Utara, reported and discussed the conditions and problems faced by people living in camps and barracks (infoaceh.net).

This reportage helped build close relations between community and their radio since

the radio helped them to voice their aspirations. Community radio also functioned as entertainment media through airing song requests. They helped heal their community and themselves in this way.

5.7 The Role of JRKY in Aceh

Besides benefactors and NGOs, volunteers from Jaringan Radio Komunitas Indonesia/JRKY (Community Radio Network of Yogyakarta) played an important role in initiating community radio in Aceh. As well as participating in ARNet, some of them also participated in community radio post-tsunami emergency-response programs sponsored by Internews (interview with Kadir, a volunteer of Malioboro Community Radio of Yogyakarta, 17 September 2007). Experiences in managing community radio and their close relation with CRI, a Yogyakarta based NGO, and Internews, an international NGO, gave community radio volunteers of Yogyakarta an opportunity to participate in the initiation of community radio in Aceh. Their experiences in managing community radio in their villages were shared with the Acehnese who had no previous experience with community radio.

Volunteers of JRKY also trained community members to use the radio to announce emergencies to the community when they received information from the government about a potential natural hazard. In this way, Kadir explained, local inhabitants were trained to speak calmly when broadcasting announcements about an earthquake or tsunami in order to avert panic among the audience (interview, 17 September 2007). ARNet helped to link community radio with *Badan Meteorologi Klimatologi dan Geofisika* (Meteorology Climatology and Geophysics Agency), which provides data about earthquakes or tsunamis.

5.8 Problems

The tasks of volunteers in the emergency phase were to facilitate the establishment of community radio and to socialise the use of community radio as public media for linking family, trauma healing, and entertainment. However, these tasks were not easily implemented by volunteers. There were three main problems in the operation of community radio. Firstly, there were security problems. According to Sarwono (interview, 17 September 2007), a volunteer from *Panagati* Community Radio of Yogyakarta in Aceh in 2005, there was still conflict between the Indonesian Government and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM). As a result, he had to be circumspect in his activities to avoid incidents. He felt that he was always watched by both parties. For instance, in the name of security protection, military police officers often monitored the process of setting up radio stations. They did not want community radio to become a medium of political propaganda for GAM. If they suspected that a radio station would present a security risk in Aceh, it would be closed down. A community radio station in Bireun Aceh, *Al Jumhur* FM, experienced such measures. The radio was closed down by Indonesian police and the radio equipment was taken to the police office. Although after negotiation between volunteers and the police, the equipment was given back, the radio could not be operated until they got a broadcasting permit from the military (Afrizal 2005).

The second problem found in the operation of community radio was that people were still deeply traumatised by both the political conflict and the tsunami and so were reluctant to participate. In this context, initiators from JRKI needed to approach local people sympathetically to make them feel wanted and to welcome the community

radio. Kadir (interview, 17 September 2007) says that the process to approach Acehnese took time, having to build relationships with the Acehnese before initiating community radio activities. The Acehnese were also very careful when establishing relationships with foreigners, an attitude that was the result of the political conflict, which left them as victims.

Thirdly, further problems in Aceh were represented by the lack of communication and information in the devastated areas due to physical isolation and poor communication infrastructure. It was very difficult to bring equipment since the roads were destroyed by the tsunami. Therefore, the volunteers had to build radio stations with very limited equipment.

5.9 The Tsunami and the Media's Openness

For their recovery, people not only needed food and shelter but also communication media. Facing the huge effects of the tsunami, the Indonesian Government welcomed both national and international organisations in helping recovery. To support this humanitarian activity, the Government also allowed national and international organisations to facilitate Acehnese to fulfil their right to and their need for communication. Up to 2007, ARNet, for example, had succeeded in establishing thirty-six community radio stations in the Aceh province, especially in areas most affected by the tsunami or in refugee camps (ARNet 2007). As a result, community radio stations are now mushrooming in the region.

The enthusiasm of national and international institutions in rebuilding and establishing radio in Aceh meant that this province has been transformed from an

isolated to an open region. Bimo Nugroho, a commissioner of the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission, notices that the presence of post-tsunami broadcasting media in Aceh has succeeded in fulfilling two agendas related to recovery: opening up the isolation of Aceh and rebuilding local broadcasting (Suranto & Haryanto 2007, pp.50-51). To support the existence of community radio in Aceh, activists of community radio met in the First Congress on 25-26 August 2008. In the congress they founded Community Radio Networks of Aceh Nanggroe Darussalam and discussed the role of community radio post-tsunami as part of the social movement in the province (ARRNet 2008).

The tsunami has had a great impact on the situation of the media in Aceh. Before the tsunami, Aceh had been a field of conflict between the Indonesian Government and Gerakan Aceh Merdeka/GAM (Free Aceh Movement) since 1976. As a result, media activities were not free since the press was controlled by either one side or the other. This situation meant that journalists were always under pressure from both sides. As a result of the tsunami, they were forced to think about political negotiation in order to focus on humanitarian action to help the Acehnese. Finally, both sides agreed to stop the conflict. They signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 15 August 2005 in Helsinki, Finland. This agreement can be seen as contributing to the reconstruction of Aceh. Since the agreement, Aceh has been transformed into a peaceful region. This new situation has also affected people's participation in community radio programs. People are no longer afraid to go to the radio studio in the evenings. For instance, in the Samudera sub-district, members of the *nazam* group went to *Samudera FM* Community Radio to broadcast *nazam* for two hours every Friday evening. Members

of the group were primarily women, especially housewives. This activity could not have occurred during the time of conflict in Aceh (Afrizal 2007, p. 99).

5.10 The Importance of Social Networks: Community Radio in Bantul

A severe earthquake, 5.7 on the Richter scale with the epicentre in Bantul, destroyed parts of Bantul (Yogyakarta Province), Klaten (Central Java Province) and the surrounding areas on 27 May 2006. This natural disaster occurred in the morning, at 5.50am, when people were just starting their day; children were preparing to go to school and many were still sleeping. Suddenly, the disaster changed their plans for the day and their life. The disaster also changed their sense of security about their homeland, which for a long time had not been devastated by such a disaster. In Bantul alone, more than 5,000 people were reported dead and 60,000 houses, buildings and public facilities were damaged or destroyed by the earthquake (UNICEF 2006).

Damage to electricity, telephone, and transportation facilities isolated the affected people from other regions until three days after the disaster. Most victims lost their homes; they slept anywhere, for example, in soccer and paddy fields, even in their cattle or chicken pens. Some of them chose to sleep outdoors in anticipation of further quakes. During the first week everybody found it difficult to find shelter and food and lack of health facilities made the situation even worse. I was a witness: the first week after the disaster was utterly devastating.

Since there was no power in the location, and mobile phone networks hung because their lines were overloaded, a chaotic situation arose. Inhabitants were faced with uncertainty, since they did not know what would happen with their life and their environment; they did not know what they had to do. Rumours that there would be

another bigger earthquake or tsunami spread throughout the region. Just an hour after the earthquake, roads were full of people running or driving to find a higher place in the north of Yogyakarta to avoid a tsunami. They panicked at that time because they remembered the tsunami in Aceh, on 26 December 2004. However, not all people ran to the north; many just sat around confused by this sudden situation. It can be said that this chaotic state of affairs in the first days after the earthquake arose because there was no information to explain the real situation for the victims.

With little assistance from the local government and NGOs in the first days after the earthquake, people in Bantul had to fend for themselves. During my fieldwork in Bantul, I witnessed families and organisations from outside Yogyakarta voluntarily travelling to the affected areas with their trucks and cars full of food, medicines, tents and clothes for victims. From the registration number of their vehicles, I suspected that they came from Jakarta, about 600 km away. Unfortunately, in the days after the earthquake, the lack of coordination and communication caused a chaotic situation in the distribution of aid. As a result, several areas received too much aid while other areas lacked food and other essential goods such as clothes and tents. In these circumstances, social networks, such as relationships and co-operative groups, played an important role in facing the emergency caused by the natural disaster (see Victoria 2003, p. 269). One example of this was Timbulharjo village, which was severely affected by the earthquake as it was located about eight kilometres from the epicentre. In the village 160 people were killed, hundreds of people were injured, and sixty percent of 5,500 houses were flattened. The studio of *Angkringan* Community Radio was also destroyed. One of its volunteers became paralysed after being struck by debris (Jaswadi 2008).

The experience of *Angkringan*'s volunteers in social activities in their village and other regions had made them sensitive to local social problems. After the earthquake they had a strong motivation to help their neighbours although they were also victims. For instance, a volunteer of *Angkringan* who lost his father and sister said that he did not want to succumb to a sad situation without doing anything. It was better for him to be able to help people because he knew from his experience that many inhabitants of his village needed aid. He thought that volunteers of *Angkringan* could play a role in helping affected people by using their networks with various organisations outside of *Timbulharjo* village (interview with Jaswadi, 12 June 2006). People used everything they had to cope with the bad situation after the disaster. This seems to fit in with Putnam's notion of social capital (2000); people who lack money will nevertheless contribute their time and energy to help people who need help.

For this reason, soon after the earthquake some volunteers of *Angkringan* Community Radio got together to discuss what they could do to help their neighbours. To respond to the effects of the earthquake, volunteers decided on two actions: firstly, to contact benefactors to find aid for their neighbours. They realised that they could not use their community radio station as the equipment had been damaged by the earthquake. But they agreed that they had to do something for their community. They remembered that they had networks with people outside their village. They decided to use them.

Thanks to their networks, they were able to mobilise themselves to find help from local and national organisations. Via mobile phone they called community radio associations, NGOs, and other institutions to communicate the needs of victims in affected areas, especially in their village. Besides contacting people outside the

village, they provided information on the actual situation in their community to their neighbours. One advantage of having volunteers as the source of information from the victimised areas was they were community members and so victims themselves.

The second disaster response action decided upon by volunteers was to rebuild the *Angkringan* community radio station. As mentioned earlier, the studio had been destroyed by the earthquake, like most houses and buildings in the village. Two weeks after the earthquake, volunteers set up an emergency studio under a plastic tarpaulin, beside the flattened houses. They moved all equipment from the damaged studio into the emergency studio. To operate the radio, they borrowed a power generator from CRI, a local NGO. Limited facilities were not a reason for *Angkringan* Radio not to serve its community. After many trials, finally *Angkringan* was able to broadcast on 7 June 2006 in the frequency of 107.9 FM. The radio served its community with information about refugee camps, aid distribution and entertainment. The studio became a post where volunteers and their links gathered together to organise the aid for the affected people.

Similar activities were also carried out by other community radio stations in Yogyakarta. Although Minomartani in the Sleman Regency, 20 km to the North of Bantul, was not affected by the earthquake, the monitors (group of listeners) of Radio *Balai Budaya Minomartani* FM spontaneously collected food and medicines for earthquake victims. Besides being announced through the radio, this collective activity was publicised on a poster glued on the guard-house in the Minomartani housing complex. The radio studio was used as a post for collecting food and other

goods for distribution to people in the affected areas. For one month after the earthquake, there were mountains of aid goods in the studio.

5.11 Building Emergency Radio Stations

In collaboration with MPPI (Masyarakat Pers dan Penyiaran Indonesia/Indonesian Press and Broadcasting Society) and Internews, *Jaringan Radio Komunitas Yogyakarta/JRKY* (Community Radio Network of Yogyakarta) established an emergency-response radio to help the victims with information. Based on the experience of facilitating emergency radio in Aceh in 2004, they established a radio station that covered the disaster area in the Bantul and Klaten regencies, plus the slopes of Merapi volcano.

They named this emergency-response radio *Punakawan* Radio, a name taken from the name of characters in *wayang*, which is adapted from the Indian epic stories, *Mahabarata* and *Ramayana*.⁶⁹ According to Surowo, an initiator of the radio and a founder of JRKY, *Punakawan* is a symbol of ordinary people who are underestimated, but who in fact often play important roles in changing a crisis situation. He explains that the philosophy of *Punakawan* Radio is ‘[s]imple but powerful in bringing a change’ (saksigempa 2006).

⁶⁹ *Punakawan* in the Javanese tradition consists of four ordinary persons, namely Semar, Bagong, Petruk and Gareng, who serve *Pandawa*, five warriors of the *Mahabarata* Epics. They are symbols of humble persons. Usually they perform as jesters but in a crisis situation, they can give down to earth advice to their king (<http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Indonesian/Wayang/contents/punakawan.htm>).

Zainal⁷⁰ (interview, 21 October 2006), an initiator from MPPI (Indonesian Society of Press and Broadcasting), explains that the background of *Punakawan* Radio is not separated from the experience of MPPI in helping victims of the tsunami in Aceh. In Aceh, Zainal saw that the problem at that time was that no commercial radio was ready to serve as news radio. Although much training sponsored by international agencies had encouraged commercial radio to produce news, in reality, those radio stations stuck to their original entertainment-focused format. He asserts that a similar situation occurred in Yogyakarta and adds that expectations cannot be put on the shoulders of commercial radio since they have been used for so long only for entertainment purposes. In this context, he states that emergency radio was needed to fulfil the need for information that was relevant to the victims of natural disasters. A similar comment was made by Paulus Widiyanto, a member of DPR (People's Representative Council) in the Communication Study Forum of Yogyakarta, 22 September 2006, who described the situation in affected areas as that of an information drought (Ispandriarno, personal communication, 29 September 2006).

During its operation over three months, *Punakawan* Radio used AM frequency. There were several reasons why they chose this frequency (interview with Zainal, 21 October 2006): firstly, because there were many space allocations in AM frequency due to the fact that not many radio stations use this frequency; secondly, the broadcasting license in this frequency was easier to obtain than in FM; thirdly, the technology of AM radio was easier than the technology of FM radio; and fourthly, the operational costs of AM radio are lower.

⁷⁰ Zainal Suryokusumo was a pioneer of commercial radio station in Indonesia. He participated in founding *Arif Rahman Hakim* (ARH) Radio in Jakarta in the 1960s.

Volunteers of *Punakawan* Radio came from Community Radio Network of Yogyakarta. Before the operation, all volunteers participated in training facilitated by MPPI and JRKI. At least five community radio stations of Yogyakarta were involved in this project, Angkringan, BBM, Suara Malioboro, Lima Cemara, Kopi Lurah, and K FM from the slopes of Mount Merapi. Since many organisations participated in the establishment of *Punakawan* Radio, community radio activists called this project *proyek gotong-royong* (collaborative work project). In this context, Zainal sees that the purpose of *Punakawan* Radio was not only to give voice to victims of earthquakes (listeners) but also to be a real laboratory for community radio volunteers to strengthen their social capital (interview, 21 October 2006). It seems that a further purpose of *Punakawan* Radio was to empower community radio in Yogyakarta. Volunteers could learn how to organise several community radio stations in one movement. Also they could learn how to manage emergency radio. *Punakawan* Radio operated from 31 July 2006 until 30 September 2006, with the goals of providing both a source of information about the victims' process of trauma healing, and an outlet for the voices of victims. The radio broadcast from 08.00 am until 11.00 pm every day. Most programs were information heavy, collected by reporters from the field or information from institutions involved in the earthquake recovery. Twelve volunteers worked in this radio as announcers, reporters, and producers.

To house the activities of *Punakawan* Radio, they rented a house located in Banguntapan, Bantul Regency, five km East of Yogyakarta. The studio was not like an ordinary radio studio. With limited facilities, there was a need for creativity. Volunteers used a nine square meter room equipped with a mixer, a mobile telephone, and a desk top computer. Three foam mattresses were put on the wall of the studio to

make it a little bit soundproof. This radio rented equipment cheaply from *Suara Surabaya* Radio, a commercial radio known for its community journalism.

To cover a wider area, news programs of *Punakawan* Radio were relayed by other community radio stations surrounding Yogyakarta. With this network, *Punakawan* Radio could reach people on the slopes of Mount Merapi and in the Klaten Regency to the North and East of Yogyakarta. *Punakawan* Radio's programs also could be heard by streaming online through website www.saksigempa.org provided by CRI/Combine Resource Institution. To enable affected people to receive information, 550 radio receivers were distributed by sponsors.

The quick response of JRKY's volunteers was a result of their previous experience. Several volunteers of community radio of Yogyakarta had experience in dealing with natural disaster when they helped Acehnese in 2005 in establishing emergency community radio in order to provide information within communities in areas affected by the tsunami. One year later, this experience was also useful in helping their neighbours in Yogyakarta in earthquake response. Volunteers understood how to use information and networks in an emergency situation. Spending many hours as volunteers in community radio helped them to move quickly in organising themselves to take action. For instance, in Minomartani, Timbulharjo and Wiladeg, volunteers conducted off-air programs. Volunteers were active in helping their neighbours. They became social workers, and the location of the radio became a *posko* (command post) of aid. These collective actions can be seen as a result of the solidarity created by the activities of community radio volunteers.

Yet the emergence of community action in solving problems caused by disasters is not automatic. Activities and interactions among community radio volunteers in Community Radio Networks of Yogyakarta (JRKY) had encouraged solidarity that enabled them to take collective action. As Flint and Luloff (2007, p. 433) point out, participation in social organisations and activities reshape collective identities, which in turn encourage individuals to perceive a problem as their common problem and lead them to take collective action in solving the problem. Since such action is based on people's initiatives unconnected to the actions of the government, it can be interpreted as a manifestation of civil society action. People will take action in relation to their own situations without intervention from the government. Volunteers of community radio showed how they used their community radio to strengthen social solidarity to help their community and other people. In this way, through community radio they learned about the value of group action, social solidarity and dependence on others, which Kumar sees as actions of the civil society that educate people for citizenship and prepare them to participate in the political arena (Kumar in Guan 2004, p.3).

5.12 *Lintas Merapi*: Radio for People Living in a High Risk Area

Local people have also used community radio as a medium for emergency communications on the slopes of Mount Merapi, a volcano located between the provinces of Yogyakarta and Central Java. Since Merapi is still a very active volcano, people living in its vicinity always face this hazard. The risk of potential hazard of the volcano cannot force people to relocate. A similar situation is also apparent in Hawaii, where people living in the Puna District on Kīlauea do not want to move to another area since their present location supports a good livelihood, which is more important

than the volcanic risk. For those people, benefits from natural resources are more attractive than the risk (Murton and Shimabukuro cited in Gregg et al 2004, p. 533). Aware of the dangers of the volcano, people on the slopes of Merapi use their own resources, such as indigenous knowledge, community organisation, and communication system, to reduce the risk to life and property presented by the active volcano. Although since 1995 people have organised training for risk-reduction, Merapi's volcanic activity during April and May 2006 raised more awareness of the need to improve local methods to protect life.

Uncertainty is a problem for people in the risk area. When Merapi's volcanic activity increased in the year 2006, thousands of people living on its slopes were evacuated to refugee camps placed about ten kilometres from the villages. As a result of the relocation, local people were in the refugee camps for months, which had a serious impact on their lives. Since most of them were farmers, being away from their fields and their houses meant they could not make a livelihood. They did not have any information about how long they should stay in the camps. This situation supports the claim by Flint and Luloff (2007, p. 432) that: "natural resources based communities are often at the front line in terms of impact, experience, and mitigation."

Living in uncertainty in the refugee camps increased people's frustration. On the ground, they saw that Merapi did not erupt as forecast. They thought that the decision of the government to evacuate them had been taken too early. In fact, before the evacuation they had expressed their preference to stay in their villages but the government decided to evacuate them as soon as the activity of Merapi increased. In this case, people's voices were not considered in the process of decision making and

they resisted it. This situation is reflected in Pearce's argument (2003, p. 217) that people will challenge policies and actions that do not involve them in the disaster management process.

Based on the 2006 experience, Sukiman, an opinion leader on the slopes of Merapi (interview, 19 September 2007), suggests that in the future the government should let people participate in all decision making about their situation. The government should also allow inhabitants to use their indigenous knowledge. 'The importance of participation in the program related to Merapi has been proved during the crisis of Merapi in April and May 2006,' Sukiman says. Without people's participation, decisions would not touch the real situation of affected people and they will resist the government's decisions. What occurred in the case of Merapi supports Rubin's claim about the importance of people's participation in the decision making process in disaster management since it is related with their life (Rubin cited in Pearce 2003, p. 212). People become frustrated when they are excluded from the decision-making process. For that reason, their knowledge about their environment should be considered by policy makers.

Using their knowledge about their environment, locals have prepared themselves to deal with the increasing activity of Merapi. Since 1995 they have developed *Pasag Merapi*, an organisation which was established by villagers in order to improve the people's capacity to manage their environment and develop strategies of risk reduction of natural hazards (BBC Indonesia.com 27 February 2007). According to Sukiman, a founder of *Pasag Merapi* (interview, 17 September 2007), although the group was founded by only a few villagers, recently it became a centre of activity for

the village people living on the slopes of Merapi, and had 60 cadres. In its activities to reduce the impact of natural hazards caused by Merapi, the organisation has built co-operation links with academics, Search and Rescue Institutions (SAR), *Badan Meteorologi dan Geofisika* (Meteorological and Geophysical Agency), the Indonesian Red Cross, and NGOs. Through this local organisation people developed a capacity for community action that represents their care for others and their place of dwelling. According to Flint & Luloff, community members who are active in social organisations have a capability to mobilise their resources in response to threats (see Flint & Luloff 2007, p. 447).

Living in the risk area, people on the slopes of Merapi understand that information is important in reducing the risk of disaster. For this reason, they established a communication system that was supported by the use of community radio, which was given the name of *Radio Komunitas Lintas Merapi* (Lintas Merapi Community Radio). This radio was expected to be able to distribute information quickly about Merapi Volcano. This radio was established in 2001 as a result of the people's need for an effective but cheap communication device. The very simple radio studio was located in Sukiman's house in Deles, Klaten Regency. The studio was on a strategic location besides a village road; therefore, it can be easily accessed by villagers. In the early days, their radio only worked on 20 watt power but the emergency situation in 2006 encouraged people to improve their radio. In 2008, a studio was built outside the house and the radio station was equipped with a mixer, an audio compressor, handy talkies/HT (two way radio), a desk top computer, a phase-locked loop/PLL (a closed loop frequency control system), and a tower.

Furthermore, based on their daily experience, they set up a standard operational procedure for monitoring the environment of Merapi. Local people had distributed HT to 14 *pos ronda* (patrol posts). HT was used in this area because there was no telephone line. *Pos ronda* were observation points to visually monitor the activities and environment of Merapi. To support observations, a tower was built by people close to the radio studio. All people who were in charge in posts should report emergency situations to the studio of *Lintas Merapi*, and the announcer would then broadcast the information to all inhabitants. To complement their monitoring, they cooperated with *Balai Penyelidikan dan Pengembangan Teknologi Kegunungapian/BPPTK* (a government institution which is responsible for monitoring volcanoes in Indonesia).

Information from *Lintas Merapi* Radio was not only used by local people, but also by people living along the ‘rivers’ that flow from Mount Merapi. These ‘rivers’ are lines of hot and cold material (sand) that usually flow from Mount Merapi after heavy rain on the slopes of Merapi. Many people utilise materials from Merapi, such as stones and sand, for building. They dig sand and stones from those ‘rivers’ and sell them in the surrounding areas. Since their life and livelihood depends on the condition of the ‘rivers’, they listen to *Lintas Merapi* Radio’s reports on the situation in the upper parts of Mount Merapi and thus avoid the impact of flood material brought by the rain. The radio announces emergency information to its listeners if there is potential risk caused by Merapi. This phenomenon is relevant to the function of the media in risk disaster management. As Nigg (1982, p. 27) points out, in a situation of disaster, the media can play a key role in disseminating warnings and information about relief efforts, thereby reducing the risks associated with natural disasters.

Among the volunteers there was a commitment that whenever there was an emergency, their radio station would be activated. For example, once there was a particularly heavy rain at 1 am and, as a result, volunteers came immediately to the *Lintas Merapi* studio and broadcast live reports about the situation. This radio was also prepared to broadcast information about evacuation paths and refugee camps if there was an emergency situation. However, *Lintas Merapi* Radio was not only for early-warning purposes. According to Sukiman (interview, 19 September 2007), in normal situations this radio was used for entertainment (by broadcasting local and popular songs) and education (by providing information about agriculture and simulations of emergency-response). Its daily program started in the afternoon, after local people finished collecting grass to feed their goats or cattle. Hence, they called their radio *Radionya Wong Ngarit*, meaning ‘radio of people who work looking for grass’. This label indicated the positioning of *Lintas Merapi* Radio as a radio station for people at grassroots level. Thus, in its daily programs, *Lintas Merapi* took into account local custom.

Lintas Merapi Radio welcomes everyone who wants to volunteer. Its running is financed by donations from individuals and from local organisations, such as Forum *Klaster Lereng Merapi* (Clusters of the slope of Merapi). To maintain transparency, all budgets are stuck on the wall of the studio so everyone can read them. To maintain community orientation, this radio does not accept any commercial advertising. However, it does broadcast public service advertising which promotes people’s productivity. To do so, it is also used to support programs of agriculture and home-industry, such as handicrafts, and production of local delicacies and traditional snacks.

Volunteers of *Lintas Merapi* have also invited outside institutions to work together in the development of the radio. For instance, starting on 23 August 2007, the services of the radio were offered to the local government and the wider public, including NGOs and people's organisations, to be used as a part of the early warning system in the vicinity of Mount Merapi (Jalin Merapi 2007). In line with the development of the radio station, *Pasag Merapi*, a parental organisation, used *Lintas Merapi* to support its mission of preserving cultural tradition and the natural environment on the slopes of the mountain. To further its mission, this organisation had several activities; for example, training in disaster management, enhancing people's readiness toward Mount Merapi's activities, preparation of emergency-response, and people's empowerment through agricultural activities.

Thanks to internet technology, information about this organisation can be found on their website: <http://merapi.combine.or.id/>. Through this website locals can also communicate with people outside their villages. As a result of this communication, they can invite the wider public to join in their environmental conservation program, which is called *tanam air* (investing water). Through this program, they have planted trees on the slopes of Merapi in order to preserve spring water. The activities of the people living on the slopes of Mount Merapi were noted by the BBC in 2007 as a good example of people's initiative in cultural and natural preservation (BBCIndonesia.com 27 February 2007). Indeed, the case of Merapi shows how important it is to consider the capacity of local people. Community organisation, like community radio, helped people to improve their capacity. They have proved their self-reliance in dealing with their permanently risky situation. White points out that in

such communities people are capable of diagnosing their own problems, while developing diversity that is relevant, culturally sensitive and ecologically sound and sustainable (White 2006, p.484). In this sense, community radio has been productively used to develop people's resources in order for them to cope with their risky environment on the slopes of Merapi Volcano.

5.13 Pangandaran Radio: Disaster Management Based Radio

In the beginning *Pangandaran* Radio was established as an emergency response radio to be used in case of a tsunami. Now, this radio has been developed as part of the early warning system in the coastal area of Ciamis Regency, West Java. The history of *Pangandaran* Community Radio starts on 17 July 2006, two months after the Yogyakarta earthquake, when a tsunami destroyed Pangandaran beach, a popular tourist destination in West Java. According to the Meteorological and Geophysical Agency of Indonesia (BMG), the earthquake had a magnitude of 6.8 on the Richter scale with the epicentre in the Indian Ocean (BMG 18 July 2006). *Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia/Walhi* (2006, p.9) and the United Nations' International Strategy for Disaster Reduction/UNISDR (2006) reported that about 600 people were killed with another 300 missing and 50,000 displaced. UNISDR stated that local people did not get any official warning about the approaching tsunami. If early warning information had been available more people could have been saved. Prih Harjadi, the Chief of the BMG, explained to UNISDR that his institution had sent a warning about the potential tsunami to local authorities in the coastal areas soon after the earthquake in the Indian Ocean (UNISDR 2006). Unfortunately, this warning failed to reach the public. Regarding this failure, Walhi noted that state institutions lack the capacity to manage emergency situations caused by tsunamis (2006, p.10).

Local authorities seem to be unprepared to anticipate the impact of natural disasters. Poor management was evident in the approach to helping affected people. For example, the decision to isolate Pangandaran beach from outsiders, including volunteers who wanted to help victims, made the situation worse. For security reasons, isolation was intended to prevent looters, as had happened in Bantul's surroundings after the earthquake on 27 May 2006. However, the isolation prevented volunteers taking necessary actions to help victims (Interview with Dadang Sudardja 30 August 2007). As a result, there was a chaotic situation and resources were scarce in the affected area. Local people, who were traumatised, ran to the hills or other safe areas. For almost one week they lived in uncertainty, caused by the many rumours circulating in the area. This situation showed that there was no framework in place to manage disasters. The government failed to give sufficient information for people regarding the impact of a natural disaster. To reduce a chaotic situation, borrowing from Davidson et al (2007, p. 114), procurement should be established by participating organisations to anticipate disasters. In other words, as Davidson et al argue, community, government and social organisations should set up the framework that can help them work together.

Chaos always occurs following a disaster; therefore a framework to prepare the community, social organisations and government to manage disaster is necessary. Information is important in this matter. Walhi, an NGO that has been facilitating *Pusat Pendidikan Lingkungan Pesisir/PPLP* (Education Centre of Coastal Environment) since 2004, has collaborated with Community Radio Network of West Java (JRK JaBar) and Indonesian Broadcasting Commission of West Java (KPID JaBar) to help local people to establish *Suara Pangandaran: Radio Komunitas*

Darurat Recovery Ciamis Selatan (Voice of Pangandaran: Emergency-Recovery Community Radio of South Ciamis). This community radio first went to air on 10 August 2006, with its main task as *radio bencana* (disaster radio) being to provide information to help victims of the Pangandaran tsunami (interview with Gagan, a board member of JRK JaBar, 5 September 2007).

As a pilot project for emergency-response radio, *Pangandaran* Radio was allowed by KPID JaBar to exceed power limits by 100 watts (*Republika*, 23 August 2007).

Information related to natural disasters was packaged in the program 'Recovery Forum for All.' People could participate in this program by giving their responses about the tsunami. To encourage people's awareness about their post-tsunami situation, this program often invited public figures, volunteers from aid organisations, activist from NGOs and local social organisations, government officers, community members, and members of the House of Representatives to discuss important aspects of social recovery after a tsunami. According to Adhi Yuwono (interview, 20 October 2007), the program 'Recovery Forum for All' was formatted as a talk show in order to bring together the people and the government. People sent SMS or called via mobile phone to the studio during the talk show. Debates about potential corruption in the distribution of aid were dominant.

During the emergency-response in July-September 2006, the activities of *Pangandaran* Radio were supported by *Konus* (an NGO concerned with environment conservation), Radio *Mara* (a commercial radio from Bandung), Association of Journalists Bandung, and the Government of West Java Province. They provided radio receivers to tsunami victims in refugee camps in order to give them recent

information about the weather, aid distribution and entertainment. Volunteers made contact with sub-district and local police offices to assist with the coordination. At that time, the state-owned telephone company, *Telkom*, facilitated a free telephone line for the radio station.

This phenomenon shows that in an emergency situation there is a need for cooperation among stakeholders. Initiatives from below should be supported by other institutions. Community action will be effective if the relationship among elements of the society with the government is based on 'equal partnership, mutual respect and open, two-way communication' (see Buckland and Rahman 1999, p. 189). The capacity to work together is an important point in the community action taken in response to a natural disaster. People contribute their own resources to solve the problems. Flint and Luloff (2007) categorise this capacity as 'interactional capacity'.

Such interaction promotes the continual reshaping and molding of collective identities and perceptions of problems while providing the means for motivating specific community actions in response to specific threats or risks (2007, p 433).

Support provided by other organisations indicates trust for community radio activists and their projects.

As a disaster radio, *Pangandaran* Radio needs to be ready whenever an emergency situation is approaching. Adhi (interview, 20 October 2007) explains the procedures of emergency-response at *Pangandaran* Radio by taking the example of recent earthquakes. Within five minutes after an earthquake, volunteers of the radio announced the situation to the community. People were asked to remain calm and to stay tuned to the radio to know the development of the situation. For emergency

situations, accurate information is necessary, so to support their information, at the same time, volunteers collected data concerning the earthquake from BMG. The use of BMG's data was the strength of *Pangandaran* Radio, because its information was deemed as reliable. It was also useful to reduce the uncertainty caused by rumours. After receiving the data, the announcer broadcast the details of the earthquake, including the potential for a tsunami. Since during these announcements, *Pangandaran* Radio often received calls and visits from members of the community asking questions to clarify the earthquake situation, all volunteers were required to give consistent information to ensure that there was no confusion or panic among the people.

In situations where isolated victims felt lonely, the existence of a community media outlet that broadcast talks about their situation of disaster could be a source of comfort for them. The following testimony illustrates another benefit of *Pangandaran* Radio as media used for trauma healing. Engkis, an inhabitant of Pangandaran, acknowledged to *Republika* (23 August 2007) that since the tsunami swept Pangandaran, the area had suddenly become a dead region.

All people disappeared. I have lost some family members. But I don't want to sink in sadness. Almost everyday I listen to community radio. I feel a very different nuance (after listening to the radio) because this radio provides information concerning natural disaster and earthquake. Since the tsunami there were some earthquakes, and this radio provided comprehensive information. I greatly appreciate it.

Therefore, community radio contributed to maintaining calm among the affected people after the earthquake because it gave them clear information about the overall situation. Affected people had guidance to make an appropriate response to natural phenomena in their region.

To operate the radio, there were fifteen volunteers who came from various backgrounds, such as housewives, students, and entrepreneurs. Ninety percent of volunteers were inhabitants of Pangandaran. Although in the beginning this radio was financed by Walhi, it did not mean that the radio belonged to Walhi, said Adhi Yuwono, an activist of Radio *Pangandaran* (*Republika* 23 August 2007). As a result, the financial needs of Radio *Pangandaran* could be met by its community. Since there was no fixed contribution from community members, the board of the radio needed to make efforts to sustain operations. The main income was from donations and public service advertising. Adhi acknowledges that he and his friends earned money to support the radio by collecting and selling fish (interview, 20 October 2007). There was a plan to provide paid information services via short messages (SMS) about the weather to certain members of the public, for instance fishermen (interview with Dadang, 30 August 2007).

Obviously, the radio faced financial problems to sustain its operation as it was hard to ask community members to give donations. Perhaps people perceived that the radio belonged to Walhi. It is, in fact, a risk for a radio to be initiated outside the community, although Walhi itself has worked in Pangandaran since 2004. This situation becomes a task for the radio to prove to community members that they are the owner of the radio. Step by step, Walhi should step back from the management of the radio and give full responsibility to the community to manage the radio. This financial situation also challenges the independence of the radio station. According to a volunteer, the first challenge was the temptation of commercialisation. Although they needed money, volunteers have decided to avoid commercial advertising. Adhi

says that ‘we want to prevent commercial advertising in our radio because our radio is to help the community’ (*Republika* 23 August 2007). The second challenge came from local government. Interestingly, although they were worried about the impact of accepting commercial advertising, they were not worried about the impact of receiving money from local government. There was a promise from the government of Ciamis Regency to donate new equipment in 2008. ‘The cost of equipment will be included in the Ciamis Regency’s Budget 2008,’ says Adhi (interview 20 October 2007). The government money could influence the independence of the radio in serving community interests.

Pangandaran Radio illustrates the transformation of emergency radio into community radio. Walhi, an NGO working in the area for years before the natural disaster, was the initiator of the emergency radio. In the early months of its establishment, Walhi organised people to use the radio. After the emergency response, Walhi intended the radio should be managed by volunteers from Pangandaran. Therefore, community members were responsible to maintain the radio.

5.14 Community Radio in West Sumatra: Spontaneous Action

Based on experiences of natural disasters in other regions in Indonesia, community radio volunteers in West Sumatra were better prepared to respond to the emergency caused by a 5.8 earthquake in West Sumatra on March 6, 2007. The earthquake killed 66, injured hundreds, destroyed about 10,000 homes and buildings, and displaced more than 6,500.

Although there had been no emergency-response training, community radio volunteers in West Sumatra had learned that local knowledge was crucial during the emergency-response period. They noted that two hours after the earthquake, the communications infrastructure was collapsing. The only information came from *Radio Republik Indonesia* (RRI), a state-owned station. Since it was located in Padang, the provincial capital, most information was dominated by Padang's crisis. As a result, there was a lack of information for victims and medical teams in remote areas.

The earthquake disrupted wide areas, most of them rural, cutting off roads and isolating some areas. The condition of victims worsened, since most affected areas were in mountainous regions not easily reached by land transportation. Some areas, due to their topography, could not be covered by radio from Padang or other cities. Those areas were known as blank-spot areas. As a result, inhabitants were isolated from aid distribution. They urgently needed a form of communication to describe their plight. Thus, community radio volunteers in West Sumatra realised that radio could help the victims. They decided to go to these areas to establish emergency radio. Four community radio stations in Solok (Radila FM Community Radio and Semarak Community Radio) and Padang Pariaman (Suandri FM Community Radio and Bahana FM Community Radio) operated as emergency stations immediately after the earthquake.

To support their activities, the Community Radio Network of West Sumatra applied two strategies. First, they dropped volunteers in the affected areas to set up emergency radio. Because their station had no available funds, volunteers had to use their own

money. They came from various community stations surrounding the affected areas. They alternated in working for three to four days at a time. Second, they used their networks to obtain support from people outside the disaster locations. They received support from the Community Radio Network of Indonesia, the Combine Resource Institution and the Indonesian Press and Broadcasting Society. The capacity to work together played an important role in community action, drawing upon their own resources to solve problems. Interestingly, community radio also cooperated with a commercial media, Fanesa FM, in covering affected areas. Their cooperation was to provide accurate information about the areas. For example, Fanesa FM broadcast interviews with regional government institutions, while community radio broadcast interviews with field officers and volunteers in order to cross-check data.⁷¹ Thus, community radio stations allowed local people and government as well as aid agencies to be informed about the situation, and to coordinate help and distribution logistics. Community radio volunteers collected data about the need for milk, bandages, mineral water, baby food, instant noodles, and tents. Then they broadcast these needs widely to connect supply and demand.

Another function of community radio was to provide the most recent information about the situation in affected areas. For example, soon after the earthquake many rumours began to circulate about an impending tsunami and another earthquake. In order to reduce the impact of these rumours, community radio informed survivors of the real situation from the Indonesian Meteorological and Geophysical Agency and provided timely information about after-shocks. Similarly, community radio helped victims to release their stress. Locals joined in the radio programs to entertain each

⁷¹ Prakoso, JRKY mailing list 10 March 2007.

other. They sent greetings to their friends and families by radio, which covered areas surrounding Singkarak Lake. They could update people on their situation and encourage each other to recover from their grief due to the destruction. This activity can be seen as a community effort in healing victims' trauma, which is useful for disaster recovery. As Pyles states, trauma healing should not be neglected in the community development phase (see Pyles 2007, p. 321). This example shows how a community radio network intervened to respond to a natural disaster in an affected area of their province. The initiative taken by a community radio organisation (JRK Sumatera Barat/Community Radio Network of West Sumatra) was prominent in this context as they used their own resources (money, equipment and volunteers) to help affected people in their region. Knowledge of the experiences of other community radio networks in Indonesia has also helped JRK *Sumatera Barat* to organise themselves in order to respond adequately to the devastation caused by the earthquake.

5.15 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that people at the grassroots in Indonesia use their community media to satisfy their communication needs and find solutions for their problems, especially during the occurrences of natural disasters. The chapter has also shown that the collective response to a natural disaster has often involved the establishment of community radio stations especially to fulfil the communication needs in affected areas. With the continuation of a state of exposure to natural disasters, Indonesian people have become aware of the potential hazards constantly presented by their environment. Thus, a general awareness among the population of the importance of

community media for the dissemination of crucial public information relating to natural disasters has encouraged people to use community radio in such situations.

Furthermore, the chapter has demonstrated that in the chaotic and uncertain circumstances caused by natural disasters, the public dissemination of information was crucial for people to understand their recently changed situation. Limited equipment was not a barrier for community radio volunteers to fulfil the people's need for information and the strength of community action to provide information through radio in the affected areas originated from their solidarity towards the community. In other words, social capital was essential for the development of community action as a response to sudden disaster and community radio stations had already played a vital role in strengthening relationships among community members. Community radio was also an important link with people outside the disaster areas.

Finally, the chapter has shown that the uniqueness of community radio's response to natural disasters was that it represented the events from the perspective of victims' experiences, since the source of information—interviewees and reporters—were mostly insiders. In this context, the initial role of community radio stations in disaster areas was that of responding to the state of emergency. Later these radio stations developed into media outlets focused on recovery and construction. In addition, in some areas community radio stations have also supported community-based strategies of disaster preparation by broadcasting timely warning information.

General Conclusion

This thesis has discussed Indonesian rural communities' participation in grassroots democracy through the use of community radio. In response to the question 'how do people at grassroots level have use community radio in the process of democratic transition in Indonesia?' the thesis has argued that the need of people to participate in the process of communication in local contexts has encouraged them to use community radio as a tool for pursuing democracy from below. In order to demonstrate this proposition, the thesis has applied theories of participatory communication to a discussion of the dynamics developed by Indonesian people in several villages when using community radio as a tool for pursuing democracy from below. The greatest achievement of community radio in this context has been the promotion of the democratic function of public communications media: by providing media access, community radio has given Indonesian village people the opportunity to express their specific needs and interests, an opportunity so far denied by the mainstream media.

The emergence of community radio in Indonesia in the Post-Suharto era has indeed brought a new dimension to people's participation in the public sphere. Thus, the thesis has extended Habermas' concept of public sphere (1989), originally focused on bourgeois society, to a discussion of community radio in Indonesia, which as a result has been conceptualised here as a public space where people at grassroots level exchange ideas and experiences about their everyday life situation. Thus, in the public sphere articulated by community radio, Indonesian village people make their voices heard and,

in doing so, exercise their rights and obligations as citizens in the context of local politics. Similarly, the thesis has shown that community radio activists have used the public sphere for their campaign for recognition of community radio in Indonesia's mass media system. For them, the public sphere implies the possibility of people at grassroots level to participate in public matters, in particular in the local context. Another aim of community radio activists in the democratic movement has been to promote local participatory communication, which is useful for raising awareness about local social and cultural potential. Furthermore, because of its cheap and easy mode of operation, community radio has been 'owned' by grassroots people as their community's medium of communication and distribution of information.

One of the key characteristics of community radio is its diversity. This thesis has demonstrated that there is not just one type of community radio but many since each community influences its community radio station in its own unique way and, therefore, each community radio develops its own distinctive forms in response to the specificity of its local context. Thus, the local conditions and the nature of the community always influence how people operate their community radio. The thesis has shown, for example, how BBM Community Radio in Minomartani village focused its role as community media on the strengthening of social relations among community members. Minomartani is a semi-urban village where people with different backgrounds (profession, ethnicity, religion and education) live together. With a relatively highly educated and ethnically mixed population, social relationships are always an important matter for villagers. Thus, cultural issues were used by BBM Community Radio volunteers as a bridge for social

communication within the village. Furthermore, the thesis claimed that in Timbulharjo people used *Angkringan* Community Radio for a different purpose. Timbulharjo is an agricultural village where locals have a relatively homogeneous background (ethnicity, profession and education). Therefore, the role of student activists living in the village influenced the orientation of the radio towards local political debates, especially on the problem of good governance. In this way, *Angkringan* Community Radio became a *radio perlawanan* (resistance radio), developing a conflict approach towards the village's government. Moreover, the thesis argued that *Wiladeg* Community Radio (RKW) was instead used by villagers to strengthen democratic traditions and cultural values in their village. Compared to Minomartani and Timbulharjo, Wiladeg village is the most isolated since it is the farthest from the capital of Yogyakarta Province. Here villagers' backgrounds are even more homogeneous than in Minomartani and Timbulharjo, especially in terms of education and work. In fact, most Wiladeg villagers are farmers of dry land who possess a low level of education and economic status. Significantly, they have a democratic tradition consisting of an annual cultural event that is used as a political forum. This event was crucial in the shaping of RKW, which was adopted by both the villagers and the village's government as the village's own community media outlet to be used for both cultural and political purposes. Finally, as it was discussed in the thesis' last chapter, community radio stations in disaster and disaster-risk areas, such as Central Java, West Java and West Sumatra, have focused on how to use community radio in disaster management and reducing disaster risk. Thus, the thesis has demonstrated that the diverse purposes of the community radio stations operating in various Indonesian rural locations reflected the different experiences of each community.

This research finding is in line with a multiplicity paradigm that emphasises the importance of local context in dealing with community problems. In light of this approach, the problem solving process adopted depends on the characteristics of a given community. In accordance with Paulo Freire's theories, the thesis has shown that Indonesian village people use community radio within a 'problem-posing' framework, that is, people put community radio to work as a tool for them to solve their common problems.

Additionally, the thesis has discussed the importance of the relationship between community radio and local culture. The thesis has considered, in this sense, the strength with which Javanese culture influences community radio in the Yogyakarta region, where radio programs that emphasise Javanese culture have become increasingly popular. In fact, RKW and Radio BBM defined themselves as community radio stations motivated by a specific focus on *nguri-nguri budaya Jawa* (Javanese culture preservation). In this context, the thesis has shown that community radio that focuses on local culture gains more support from its community and that in order to maintain a close relationship between the radio station and the community, radio volunteers and members of the community often work together in the creation of cultural programs. Off-air programs, in this sense, become a common way for village people to participate in the operation of community radio. Therefore, cultural programs have emphasised the position of community radio as a form of public media that is by definition close to its local context. This is important because the communication among community members on the basis of

local knowledge, interests and concerns enables them to strengthen a sense of local cultural identity.

A sense of belonging is a key factor in the sustainability of community radio. In this sense, the thesis has demonstrated that in the absence of certainty about funding, creativity and volunteerism, known locally as *gotong-royong* (mutual help), become a key mechanism for communities to maintain their radio stations. The problem of limited financial resources often means that communities struggle to sustain the operation of their radio stations. However, community radio volunteers creatively use several fund-raising approaches, such as requesting individual contributions, renting out their sound systems, selling air time, and running off-air programs.

The thesis has also discussed the relationship between community radio and natural disaster management. Community radio in Indonesia has been challenged to play a central role in emergency situations, such as natural disasters. A positive consequence of the close relationship between community radio and its community is that the persons involved in the radio stations understand the problems of their community. Thus, community radio has been used by people at grassroots level as a crucial tool of natural disaster management, whereby radio volunteers often become frontline reporters during and after emergencies. This research finding is in line with Buckley's observation regarding the important role played by community radio volunteers as mediators between the community and their environment (2009). Indeed, in several disaster-affected areas of Indonesia, community radio volunteers have had an advantage over mainstream media

professionals, in so far as they live in the affected area, are close to the victims, and know their people and environment well. In addition, as disaster victims themselves, volunteers understand the reality of the victims' experience and therefore are able to voice their needs and interests accurately.

Finally, the thesis has also addressed the issue of how the efforts to endorse community radio as a prime form of public media for village people in Indonesia were challenged by both the mainstream media and the central government. Different perceptions about the nature of community radio coloured the debate in the process of drafting Indonesia's new Broadcasting Law. However, as the thesis has claimed, in Indonesia the debate about community radio in the post-Soeharto period was closely related to the broader debate on the democratisation of the national communications system. This debate addressed the nation's need to diversify the ownership of the media in order to provide the wider public with access to the processes of message production.

While the regulated practice of community radio in Indonesia is a relatively new phenomenon, its development in recent years has been considerable, with a rapidly increasing number of community radio stations being established in many regions of Indonesia, in rural areas in particular. Therefore, further research into community radio in rural Indonesia is required. As village people continue to struggle with the aftermath of natural disasters and political conflict, as well as endemic poverty, new research may provide a better understanding of the role of community radio in promoting public health

in the life of communities. This is a crucial issue for people in developing countries, such as Indonesia.

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Interview guideline

1) The history and position of community radio in the mass media system in Indonesia.

i) Sources:

1. Bureaucrats
2. Academics
3. Community Radio activists
4. NGOs activists

ii) Questions:

1. When did the first community radio in Indonesia exist?
2. What is the background of community radio in Indonesia?
3. Would you like to explain regulations published by government related to community radio?
4. How many are community radio stations in Indonesia?
5. What has the government done to develop the community radio?
6. How is the process of development of community radio networks?
7. What is the problems in the process of legal drafting of Broadcasting Law 32/2002?

2) The perception of villagers towards community radio.

i) Sources:

1. Inhabitants
2. Village leaders
3. Community radio operators

ii) Questions:

1. Would you like to describe the aims/intentions of community radio?

2. What are the benefits of community radio for people?
3. Do you think the community can bring people's voices?
4. How does community radio support people's interests?
5. Who should manage community radio?
6. Who should finance the community radio?

3) The implementation of community radio in the three villages, Indonesia.

i) Sources:

1. Participants (listeners, operators, and board members) of community radio in the three villages
2. Heads of the three villages
3. Authorized persons of Yogyakarta Community Radio Networks/*Jaringan Radio Komunitas Yogyakarta*
4. Authorized persons of NGOs

ii) Questions:

1. Who initiated community radio in your village?
2. How was it financed?
3. Are you involved in community radio activities?
4. How people are involved in community radio activities?
5. Who do support the community radio?
6. Is there any government representation in the community radio?

4) The impact of using community radio on the democratisation of village governance in the three villages.

i) Sources:

1. Participants (listeners, operators, and board members) of community radio in the three villages
2. Village leaders

ii) Questions:

1. Can you describe general political conditions in the village?
2. How community radio is involved in decision making process in the village?
3. What radio programs are concerning village governance?
4. Whose people's interests are articulated/amplified?
5. How people's voices are articulated? By whom?
6. Did this mechanism involve marginalized people? (e.g. the poor, women, the disabled)?
7. What mechanisms helped articulate and amplify their concerns in ways which reached policy-makers' ears?
8. What was the impact of the community radio on village governance?
9. What has the village government done to develop the community radio?
10. How does the government respond to inputs by the community radio?

5) The role community radio in disaster risk management.

i) Sources:

1. Participants
2. Activists of NGOs

ii) Questions:

1. Can you describe the situation of people in devastated areas?
2. What community radio programs are concerning disaster management?

3. Are the programs oriented to victims' problems?
4. How do community radio contribute in solving victims' problems?
5. Can you explain the reasons behind the involvement of community radio in disaster areas?
6. Who are initiators of emergency radio?
7. Who can control programs of the emergency radio?
8. How community radio volunteers are involved in decision making process?
9. How is the role of outsiders?

A List of Participants

Group	Name	Organisation	Dates of Interview
Government/ KPI/DPR	Distyawan	Balai Monitor Frekuensi dan Satelit, Yogyakarta	10 January 2006
	Rosarita Niken W	Programme and Production Director of RRI	12 July 2006
	M Kabul Budiono	Control Board of RRI	12 July 2006
	Bimo Nugroho	KPI	13 July 2006
	Agnes Widiyanti	Broadcasting Director, Department of Communication and Information Technology	14 July 2006
	I Gusti Ngurah Wirajana	Vice of Broadcasting Director for License, Department of Communication and Information Technology	14 July 2006
	Udi Rusadi	Social Communication and Institution Director, Department of Communication and Information Technology	14 July 2006
	Distyawan	Radio Frequency and Satellite Monitoring Institution Yogyakarta	29 August 2006
	Effendy Choirie	DPR	16 March 2007
	Paulus Widiyanto	DPR	5 September 2008
Academics	Masduki	Communication Sciences Department UII	14 March 2006

	Eny	Communication Sciences Faculty, Universitas Padjajaran, Bandung	24 March 2006
	Darmanto	Research and Development of Information Institution (Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Informasi), Yogyakarta	20 February 2006
Activists/Professionals	Akhmad Nasir	CRI	25 July 2006
	Tri Giovani	SAV Puskat	15 March 2007
	Eroll Jonathan	Suara Surabaya	2 October 2006
	Slamet Mulyadi	PRSSNI	29 September 2006
	Zainal Suryokusumo	MPPI, Jakarta/Radio Arif Rahman Hakim	12 July 2006 21 October 2006
	Kusumo	Satu Nama/Swadesi, Yogyakarta	13 May 2006
	Adam	Cindelaras, Yogyakarta	9 February 2006
	Hendratmoko	AJI	8 September 2008
Community Radio Networks/Organisations	Lilik	Chair of JRKY	17 May 2006, 26 December 2006
	Sunandar	Pamor Community Radio	4 October 2006
	Ali Pangestu	Chair of Formation of JRKI	6 April 2007
	Mart Widarto	Secretary of JRKY	11 May 2006

	Bowo Usodo	Chair of JRKI	19 July 2006, 14 February 2007, 8 May 2008
	Gagan Gani	JRK Jabar	15 February 2007 5 September 2007
	Faridah	Jaringan Radio Komunitas untuk Demokrasi, Jombang	20 July 2006
Community Radio Participants	Sukoco	Wiladeg Community Radio	27 July 2006, 30 January 2007
	Upik	Wiladeg Community Radio	11 May 2006
	Sulis	Wiladeg Community Radio	8 May 2006, 8 August 2006, 24 January 2007 8 September 2008 14 Juli 2009
	Sumarno	Wiladeg Community Radio	8 August 2006
	Margio	Wiladeg Community Radio	23 May 2006
	Sigit	Wiladeg Community Radio	27 July 2006
	Mujiyanto	Wiladeg Community Radio	17 May 2006, 8 November 2006
	Siswoharsono	Wiladeg Community Radio	9 November 2006
	Sri Sayekti	Wiladeg Community Radio	9 November 2006
	Mubari	Wiladeg Community Radio	21 January

			2007
	Subadi	Wiladeg Community Radio	22 January 2007
	Surowo	Balai Budaya Minomartani Community Radio/Radio Komunitas Punakawan	2 November 2005 30 September 2006 9 September 2008
	Unai	Balai Budaya Minomartani Community Radio	19 June 2006
	Purwanti	Balai Budaya Minomartani Community Radio	19 June 2006
	Tati	Balai Budaya Minomartani Community Radio	19 June 2006
	Margo	Balai Budaya Minomartani Community Radio	8 March 2006
	Musiyono	Balai Budaya Minomartani Community Radio	6 March 2006
	Walijan	Balai Budaya Minomartani Community Radio	19 June 2006
	Aswahani	Balai Budaya Minomartani Community Radio	21 September 2006
	Sukisno	Balai Budaya Minomartani Community Radio	8 September 2006
	Sarjiman	Angkringan Community Radio	8 April 2006
	Jaswadi	Angkringan Community Radio	9 June 2006 12 June 2006
	Gopek	Angkringan Community Radio	9 June 2006

			12 June 2006
	Nasir	Angkringan Community Radio	25 July 2006
	Ambar	Angkringan Community Radio	Januari 2009
	Nyonya Sukiman	Lintas Merapi Community Radio	20 April 2006
	Sukiman	Lintas Merapi Community Radio	17 September 2007 19 September 2007 28 March 2009
	Dadang Sudarja	Pangandaran Community Radio	30 August 2007
	Hendri Iksan	JRK Sumbar	8 October 2008
	Mardi	Swara Kota Community Radio	8 October 2008
	Adhi Yuwono	Pangandaran Community Radio	20 October 2007

Other Data Materials

Pictures of people's activities related to community radio

Articles of community radio in newspapers

Articles of community radio in internet

Voice Recording of radio programme

Discussion/Seminar Forum on Community Radio

Coding Schedule

The Emergence of Community Radio in Indonesia	
Community radio in pre-independence period.	The community radio is not for profit and is managed by the community to serve its own needs and interests.
Community radio: from Soekarno to Soeharto.	Community radio is low capacity and not for profit. Community radio was dominated by student run radio.
The reform period (After the fall of Soeharto)	Community radio is part of civil society movement to gain the right to free expression.
Pioneers of community radio movement	People who involved in promoting community radio as a medium where people at grassroots level can speak their interests. Students were dominant.
The formation of community radio organisation	Jaringan Radio Komunitas Jawa Barat Jaringan Radio Komunitas Yogyakarta Jaringan Radio Komunitas Indonesia Jaringan Radio Suara Petani
The process of legal drafting	The process in supporting community radio in the broadcasting system in Indonesia through the acknowledgement in Broadcasting Law 32/2002.
Controversies of Broadcasting Law 32/2002	Pro-contra about the authority of Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPI). Judicial review of the Broadcasting Law 32/2002 Community Radio's support on the position of KPI.
Licensing	The process of community radio in getting broadcasting license.
Technology development	Equipments which were used by people at grassroots level from the beginning of their radio until the recent development, for example by using handmade, brand product and computer and internet.

Community Radio and citizenship
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The need for democratisation for information	People's movement in gaining the free of expression
Organisation	Community radio as a tool for organising people at grassroots level
Activism	The development of activism among community radio broadcasters.
Embryo	The embryo of community radio in Soeharto period.
Community based radio	Community radio which was developed by people in villages. It focused on geographical area.
Participation in radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiators of the establishment of community radio The role of inhabitants. The role of local government. The process of decision making. The process of recruitment of volunteers. People finance the radio. The arrangement of radio's programs. The role of leadership. Community control. Audience participation
Media activism in the community	People's experiences with another community media.
Orientation of community radio	Community radio have an orientation towards local issues.
Benefits	Benefits for people from the existence of community radio. Benefit for community dan individual.

Community Radio and Local Culture
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Motivation	Motives of people in establishing community radio to maintain the existence of local culture.
Media hegemony	Mainstream media provided a little space for local culture.
Radio programs related to local culture	Using local symbols in the name and

	content of radio's program. Javanese culture is a focus of community radio.
Representation of daily life	Issues were based on people's activities and problems.
Identity	Strengthen local identity Tracing local history Performances of local artists in community radio
Pluralism	Radio's support on cultural diversity Radio's support on dialogue among community members
Off-air activities	Community radio's facilitation for off-air activities to preserve local culture. Off-air activities is the strength of community radio
Neutral position	Cultural activities as a strategy to avoid being co-opted by political interests of political parties. Community radio is public arena for all sections of community.
Cultural preservation	People's concern. Audience building as a consequence of local cultural preservation.
Challenges	Problems of cultural preservation. Competition with pop cultures. The difficulty in finding volunteers who can speak Javanese language.
Temptation	Temptation as a consequence of the growth of popularity. Enlargement of the coverage area. Commercialisation

Civic Action in Natural Disaster Management	
Situation	Massive destruction in devastated area Many people were killed Media vacuum
Initiators	Outsiders: local NGOs and international NGOs. The role of volunteers of community radio networks Insiders: The role of local people The role of community volunteers in devastated areas
Problems	Security

	<p>Psychological barriers of people in devastated areas</p> <p>Traumatic</p> <p>Lack of communication and information facilities.</p>
Opportunity	<p>Policy for media in the post tsunami</p> <p>Enthusiasm of national and international institution in helping victims</p>
Radio programs	<p>Local culture</p> <p>Entertainment for recovery</p> <p>News of the latest situation</p> <p>Information concerning aid distribution</p> <p>Information concerning early warning</p> <p>People's problems oriented</p> <p>Disaster risk reduction management</p> <p>Alternative to mainstream radio programs</p> <p>Off-air programs: radio as a command post for disaster management.</p>
Organisations	<p>The role of community radio networks</p> <p>Solidarity among community radio stations</p> <p>Developing awareness on disaster management issues</p>
Strength	<p>People's experiences in local organisation</p> <p>Social networking</p> <p>Solidarity of inhabitants in helping each other.</p>
Emergency radio	<p>Skill of local people in operating radio station</p> <p>The use of radio equipment in the establishment of emergency radio.</p> <p>Intervention of community radio networks to establish emergency radio stations.</p>
Participation	<p>People's role in news productions</p> <p>People's role in the radio management</p> <p>People's involvement in determining programs</p>