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Journalistic Gatekeeping of Viral News in Indonesian Radio: A Case Study of Global FM Surabaya

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Abstract

This research examines the gatekeeping process of news in Afternoon Vibes program that will air on Global FM Surabaya with using Shoemaker and Reese's hierarchy of influence model. The study ultimately aims to explore why viral news items are chosen and presented. Daily editorial practices were observed, using a qualitative approach with ethnographic method. Data were collected by direct observation of pre-production, production and postproduction work along with interviews including the program director, producers and announcers. The results demonstrate that gatekeeping in Global FM happens on five levels, individual, routine practices, media organizations, social institutions, and social systems. Playing up the station slate's female and family-friendly identity has been an overriding factor in how viral issues end up being filtered and recast. These findings expand the discourse of gatekeeping within journalism media and provide applicable reflection for broadcasters contemplating the lines between credibility, audience, and market.

Penelitian ini mengkaji proses penyaringan berita (*gatekeeping*) dalam program Afternoon Vibes yang disiarkan oleh Global FM Surabaya dengan menggunakan model *hierarchy of influence* dari Shoemaker dan Reese. Tujuan utama penelitian ini adalah untuk mengeksplorasi alasan di balik pemilihan dan penyajian berita yang sedang viral. Praktik redaksional sehari-hari diamati menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode etnografis. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi langsung terhadap tahapan pra-produksi, produksi, dan pasca-produksi, serta wawancara dengan direktur program, produser, dan penyiar. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa proses *gatekeeping* di Global FM berlangsung pada lima tingkatan: individu, rutinitas kerja, organisasi, institusi media, dan sistem sosial. Penonjolan identitas stasiun yang ramah bagi perempuan dan keluarga menjadi faktor penentu utama dalam cara isu-isu viral disaring dan dikemas ulang. Temuan ini memperluas wacana mengenai *gatekeeping* di media jurnalistik serta memberikan bahan refleksi yang relevan bagi para pelaku penyiaran yang sedang mempertimbangkan keseimbangan antara kredibilitas, audiens, dan pasar.

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Introduction

The idea of gatekeeping in journalism has long attracted attention in communication field. In *Stay Tuned: A History of American Broadcasting*, Sterling and Kittross describe how editorial control evolved alongside the growth of broadcasting institutions in the United States. Editors and producers, they argue have long served as practical gatekeepers filtering, scheduling, and framing information based on institutional priorities and audience expectations.[1] This concept is essential to this study and furthermore becomes the key to analysing how Indonesian radio, in this context Global FM Surabaya, covers viral news from Indonesia. To get a better understanding of the theoretical background and the Indonesian media context, this section presents the hierarchy of influences and radio journalism in Indonesia.

Hierarchy of Influence in Gatekeeping Theory

Shoemaker and Reese emphasized that editorial decisions in journalism rarely come from a single point of control. Instead, they emerge from interactions across five different levels of influence[2], which are *individuals*, *routine practices*, media organizations, *social institutions*, and *social systems*. At the most personal level, individual factors matter the background, experience, and personal values of editors, reporters, or broadcasters often shape how stories are chosen and framed. Beyond that, everyday work routines also play a role, production schedule, deadlines, and the rhythm of newsroom practices subtly guide what gets covered and what does not.

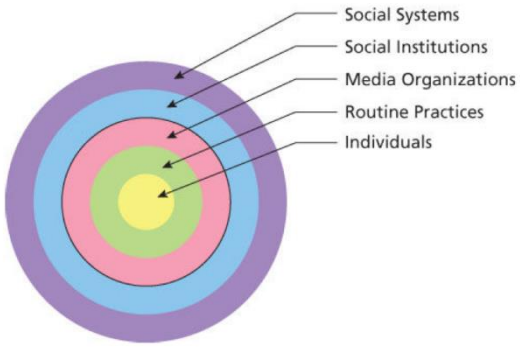


Figure 1. Hierarchy of Influences Model Uses Five Levels of Analysis
(Source: Shoemaker & Reese, 2013)

This framework underscores that *gatekeeping* is not merely the outcome of individual decisions but rather the result of complex interactions among these multiple levels. In the context of radio, this means that decisions about broadcasting news are influenced not only by announcers or producers but also by programming routines, organizational policies, sponsor interests, and the social expectations of the audience.

News is a constructed message shaped by editorial decisions, institutional routines, and audience expectations. This understanding reinforces the idea that every stage of news production selection, framing, and presentation involves a process of filtering information to fit organizational and cultural norms. In this sense, editors and producers act as gatekeepers who balance informational accuracy with narrative appeal, ensuring that the content aligns with both

[1] C. Sterling and J. M. Kittross, *Stay Tuned A History of American Broadcasting (3rd Edition)*, 3rd ed. (Routledge, 2001).

[2] Pamela J. Shoemaker et al., *Mediating the Message in the 21st Century A Media Sociology Perspective (Routledge, Ed.; 1st Edition)*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2013).

professional ethics and audience sensibilities.[3]

The task of the *gatekeeper* has become increasingly complex, as it must balance the news value with a style of delivery that remains light yet meaningful.[4] Moreover, interactivity serves as a key strength of such programs. Listeners are given space to respond through text messages and social media, and the high level of audience feedback demonstrates that the program is able to foster strong audience engagement.

Furthermore, research on its application in radio, particularly interactive entertainment radio, remains relatively limited. This situation creates a research gap. Entertainment radio has distinctive characteristics: news in presented in a light and conversational style, the audience is actively involved through interaction, and the broadcasting process is strongly shaped by commercial considerations. These factors make the study of gatekeeping in entertainment radio essential for filling the gaps in academic literature.

Global FM Surabaya as Radio in Indonesia

Mass media is significant in creating the opinions of the people, conveying information, and entertaining the society.[5] Radio as one of mass media can provide information in a timely fashion and at the same time, it has the ability to establish the emotional appeal to the listeners through its real time nature. The presentation of news itself is not rigid but rather resembles the style of everyday conversation.[6]

According to data from the Indonesian Press Council, in 2024 there were 549 radio stations across the country.[7] However, that figure does not indicate that all such radio stations are registered with journalists' associations or listed on the Press Council's website. Global FM Surabaya is an example of a long-established station, operating for over 25 years, that has not yet been included in the list of radio stations verified by the Press Council. There are 11 radio stations that are officially registered on the Press Council's website (https://dewanpers.or.id/data) and verified both administratively and factually.

Figure 2. Logo of Global FM Surabaya
(Source: Global FM Surabaya Radio Website: https://globalfm.id/)

Nevertheless, examining Global FM is significant because it is part of the Indonesian mass media, the freedom of which is protected by Press Law No. 40 of 1999. It functions as a disseminator of information; however, it does not merely distribute information but must also verify its accuracy through its news broadcasts. Beyond disseminating information, radio

[3] Sterling and Kittross, *Stay Tuned A History of American Broadcasting (3rd Edition)*.
[4] Nuruddin, *Pengantar Komunikasi Massa (1st Ed.)* (Rajawali Pers, 2011).
[5] H. A. Imran, "Media Massa, Khalayak Media, The Audience Theory, Efek Isi Media Dan Fenomena Diskursif.," *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi Dan Media* 16, no. 1 (2013): 47, https://doi.org/10.31445/jskm.2012.160103.
[6] H. David, *Radio in the Global Age* (Polity Press, 2000).
[7] Dewan Pers, "Survei Lanskap Media Pers Indonesia," June 12, 2024, https://dewanpers.or.id/read/news/04-01-2025-survei-lanskap-media-pers-indonesia.

in Indonesia serves as a medium for education, entertainment, and social control.

Global FM Surabaya positions itself through branding as a *female and family radio*. One of its flagship programs is Afternoon Vibes that is aired during prime time between 3:00 p.m and 6:00 p.m which falls in between work and recreational activities at home. This show offers afternoon entertainment and a viral news section. Even though Global FM is an entertainment radio, it still fulfills its function to deliver information and news to its listeners.

The news delivered has an informal, light and entertaining style without ignoring the informative part. The format fits the specifics of the audience of Global FM, and the news is selected to fit the target audience and the institutional values of the station. The news that has been deemed too heavy, sensitive or does not align with the interests of the sponsors has the possibility of being modified or omitted into broadcast. How Global FM Surabaya chooses news sources and carries out gatekeeping will be discussed in the results and discussion.

Methodology

This study is a qualitative case study using ethnography. Ethnography is a methodological tool that strives to give an elaborate and integrated explanations on social practices and cultural dynamics in a specific group or a given institution.[8] The selection of this design is based on the objective of the study, which is to gain an in-depth understanding of *gatekeeping* practices within the Afternoon Vibes program at Global FM Surabaya.

One of the researchers in this study is an active media practitioner at Global FM Surabaya. This positionality provided unique access to the field and made it possible to conduct participant observation as part of daily newsroom and studio activities. The researcher was a participant observer as he was involved in production dynamics among the program director, production staff, and announcers.

The pre-production process, production process and post-production processes were observed showing how the news was chosen and editorial decisions were made in real-time. The interviews provided insights into how gatekeeping was experienced and perceived and how viral news may be filtered. Data validity was strengthened through triangulation using documentation. The results were arranged according to thematic codes based on the five levels of Shoemaker and Reese's hierarchy of influences to form a holistic, contextually grounded picture of the functioning of gatekeeping in entertainment radio.

Results and Discussion

The results show that gatekeeping practices in the Afternoon Vibes program at Global FM Surabaya are shaped by multiple levels of influence, as conceptualized in Shoemaker and Reese's hierarchy of influences model. This concept emphasizes that selection of news is influenced by five levels, ranging from the individuals level to the social system level. Gatekeeping process can be observed in the program's coverage of three viral news stories in 2025, specifically the Makan Bergizi Gratis (MBG) program,

[8] Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson, *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, 4th ed. (London: Routledge, 2019).

budget efficiency, and the case involving the intimidation of a Tempo journalist.

1. **Gatekeeping Across Multiple Levels of Influence**

At the personal level, the research indicates that announcers, production staff, and the Program Director have major roles to play as far as the selection of the news stories that can be deemed fit to air is concerned. These decisions are dependent on personal traits, values, and work experience. As an example, the Director of the program has the last say when it comes to deciding on whether to air these scripts. The role of individual decisions can also be seen when the announcers are directly involved in screening urgent or viral news, which shows how the subjectivity and personal background can influence the process of gatekeeping.

In the context of the individual level, the gatekeeping process at Global FM Surabaya is influenced by the individual differences, work experiences and cognitive orientations of individuals as the main decision makers. The first filters in the process of information flow are the Program Director (Iqbal Marino) and the Production Staff (Laela). Their decisions to air viral or trending news stories are guided not only by journalistic ethics, but also by their subjective tastes, gender sensibilities, and emotional intelligence.

The interviews indicate that Laela, as one of the members of the production staff, gathers and rewrites news stories that she obtains from various sources, including online portals, government releases and social media and passes them on to Iqbal, who checks the relevance of the topic covered and the tone of the language. Empathy and relatability inform the way Laela understands newsworthiness such that despite the fact that the stories must appeal to the family-oriented audience, they must resonate emotionally.

Shoemaker and Reese consider individual-level factors to be the values of journalists, personal ideologies and conceptions of professional roles. These personal filters are closely connected with affective labor, or the emotional management of the station that supports the friendly and family-oriented identity of Afternoon Vibes. In this way, gatekeeping also involves an affective dimension, in which editorial control takes emotional tone into account. The female announcers in the Global FM tended to adopt a caring communication approach which emphasized inclusiveness and friendliness. As a result, not only individual gatekeepers decide what is being broadcasted, but also the way it is told as a transformation of factual information into an affective experience to the listeners.

At the routine level, Afternoon Vibes is consistent with the working patterns, including checking the news portals and social media online during the day, checking the news stories on two or

three portals, writing scripts based on the WTYT (Write The Way You Talk) style, and review by the Program Director.

When the Nutrition Free Meal Program (MBG) became a trending policy topic, the production team at Global FM Surabaya didn't rush to broadcast it. They began with quiet observation and a short editorial discussion during the pre-production stage. Laela, one of the production staff, describes the routine clearly:

> *"The process starts with monitoring various news sources every morning by the production team, especially from online news portals and social media. We select topics that are relevant to the Afternoon Vibes audience. After that, news considered suitable of noted and rewritten into a short script. The script is then submitted to the Program Director for review, revision if needed, and approval. If approved, the script is delivered by the announcer for broadcast according to the program rundown." (Interview with Iqbal Marino, May 26, 2025)*

Such procedures are the framework that dictates the passage of news between pre-production, production, and post-production. In addition to operational efficiency, such routines have an active role in the selection, framing and presentation of news. The process of converting content into easily digestible conversational scripts ensures that news meets audience demands for immediacy, clarity, and emotional engagement. Cross-checking portals and transforming the scripts into the WTYT form reflect the adaptation of news values to the immediacy and proximity of radio, and demonstrate how routine work processes incorporate media logics into everyday gatekeeping.[9] This shows that routines in radio are not neutral; rather, they are interpretive practices shaped by the medium's own standards of accuracy, accessibility, and audience engagement.

Laela as production staff starts every day by scanning the different web-based sites with possible viral posts. This routine reflects how journalistic norms, including objectivity, are embedded in everyday news production practices.[10] These daily editorial briefings, chaired by Program Director Iqbal Marino, are ritualized decision-making meeting in which all possible subjects are evaluated against the Global FM

[9] T. Harcup dan D. O'Neill. What Is News? Galtung and Ruge revisited. *Journalism Studies*, *2*, no. 2 (2001)., 261–280. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616700118449

[10] V. Rupar, *Investigating the Journalistic Field: The Influence of Objectivity as a Journalistic Norm on the Public Debate on Genetic Engineering in New Investigating the Journalistic Field: The Influence of Objectivity as a Journalistic Norm on the Public Debate*, 2007.

content guidelines. These rules serve as a written and loose filter that makes sure that the tone, language, and framing stay within reasonable boundaries light, optimistic, and conversational. In this way, the selection process is predictable but dynamic so as to be adaptive without compromising brand coherence.

At the organizational level, the internal policy of Global FM as a female and family radio plays the role of ideological frame, which shapes the manner of news presentation. The organizational values compel the production team to focus on family friendly framing, warmth and entertainment. Stories that are too heavy or too sensitive are revisited or even discarded. The Tempo intimidation case illustrates this process. The case was definitely newsworthy and socially important, yet it posed certain risks. During the pre-production phase, the team members engaged in a thorough and lengthy deliberation process. They not only assessed the informational value of the matter, but also its possible social implications. The internal tension lay between the need to inform the populace and the need not to create avoidable fear, misinformation, and sensationalism. In the editorial discussion, the team members identified some of the factors to consider that included the risk of misinforming the listeners, legal sensitivity, and the ethical limits of covering matters that touch on intimidation, freedom, and justice. All the members presented views influenced by career experience and ethical consciousness.

This contemplation resulted in an ethically conscious and socially responsible gatekeeping process. Having conducted a serious review inside the company, the team decided to proceed with the story, but with a different focus. Instead of showing the confrontation or naming the people involved, the report would focus on the overall civic and democratic significance of the event. This ethical framework guided all the creative and technical decisions in the production stage. The writing team reorganized the original text, eliminating any potentially inflammatory information and changing the focal point of the narrative towards democratic values, freedom of speech and the overall contribution of citizens to protect press freedom. The language used was a key issue and each sentence was paraphrased to ensure accuracy, neutrality, and empathy.

They employed analogies and real-life examples that were easier to relate to abstract civic ideals. The presenters related the concept of press freedom to the significance of open communication in a family and that, as much as there should be trust and honesty between the parents and the children in a family as a way of ensuring harmony, there should be a free press in the society as a way of ensuring transparency and accountability.

This is also an organizational factor, which is

associated with the working structure where the Program Director is the ultimate decision-maker according to the vision and mission of the station. This shows that organizational identity is not only a functional guide but also an ideological screen that influences all the editorial decisions.[11] The focus on female and family perspectives limits individual agency and shapes routine organizational practices, ensuring that all content remains consistent with the station's branding.

The Program Director (Iqbal Marino) is the major institutional gatekeeper who converts the managerial instructions into editorial practice. His position is between the business logic of management and journalistic logic of storytelling. This illustrates how editorial freedom is negotiated within economic and branding concerns. This sort of editorial adjustment reflects market driven journalism, in which the desire to retain an audience and advertising income affects the gatekeeping activities alongside journalistic considerations.[12] This logic is further supported by the reliance on advertisers, including beauty brands, family products and local business sponsors. When advertisers tend to favor positive or lifestyle-based content, the newsroom may be more likely to filter out hard or negative news.

At the social institutions level, influencing factors are the sponsors, owners of the media, and the audiences. Sponsors are important participants because they implicitly set the limits on what can be aired.[13]

Stories that could be detrimental to the interest of sponsors are often excluded or repackaged to be less perilous. The implicit influence of sponsors can be related to the political economy viewpoint, in which commercial interest will draw demarcation lines of what the editorial will cover.[14] Another external influence on editorial is the audience, specifically, Instagram interactions and the GLO Ladies Community.

> *"Audience feedback is very important, but it cannot be measured directly on air. Instead, we rely on social media interaction. We often share the news via social media, especially Instagram, and from there we can observe feedback directly from listeners. By looking at likes, comments, and shares, we can determine what kind of news content can be shared again." (Interview with*

[11] S. D. Reese dan P.J. Shoemaker. *A Media Sociology for the Networked Public Sphere: The Hierarchy of Influences Model.* (2016).
[12] S. Hjarvard, "John H. McManus: Market-Driven Journalism. Let the Citizens Beware?," *MedieKultur: Journal of Media and Communication Research* 12, no. 24 (1996), https://doi.org/10.7146/mediekultur.v12i24.1065.
[13] H. B. Ben, *The New Media Monopoly* (Beacon Press, 2004).
[14] N. Chomsky and E. S. Herman, "The Political Economy of the Mass Media EDWARD," *Global Media and Communication* 6, no. 2 (2010).

Iqbal Marino, May 16, 2025).

The team was proactive in using various feedback channels after the broadcast such as WhatsApp messages, phone calls, and social media comment sections. Audience feedback is used for internal evaluation. The production team records which news stories received positive responses, which sparked debates, and which were less appealing. From these evaluations, the team refines its strategy for future broadcasts to better suit audience preferences. The team conducts post-production evaluation focusing on audience responses and engagement metrics.

Very negative reactions from the audience can result in a withdrawn or revised story. In addition, the newsroom editorial latitude is indirectly influenced by governmental and regulatory factors. The renewal of broadcasting licenses in Indonesia is done periodically by the regulatory authorities including the Indonesian Broadcasting Commission (KPI).

This kind of structural dependency may lead stations to avoid politically sensitive issues that might expose them to sanctions. "We are very careful with politics issues … it is just a matter of surviving the system," the Program Director acknowledged. The third social institutions dimension is manifested in the audience interactivity. The digital age has changed the consumer, the listeners are not simply consumers, but also active participants who help shape content through social media.

The culture of Indonesia at the level of the social system, too, influences the packaging of news in Afternoon Vibes since Indonesian cultural values, including family orientation and politeness, influence the ways in which news is packaged. This is clearly seen in the manner in which framing tends to focus on family issues, daily living, and positive values, even when addressing such a serious topic like media intimidation. In Indonesian society, politeness and family orientation can function as strong social filters.[15] This shows that the social system is not only a passive background but an active force that strengthens the organizational ideology, shapes the routines, mediates individual agency, and ensures that radio content remains aligned with cultural values and audience preferences.

Media content is not a direct copy of reality; it reflects boarder social and boarder cultural values. The ideology of harmony and family-oriented values is replicated through the global FM's way of delivering news through emotional warmth, moral lessons, and community values. Afternoon Vibes reflects a boarder discourse of positivity in Indonesian media

[15] Denis McQuail, *Mcquail's Mass Communication Theory*, 6th ed (Sage Publications, 2010).

because it focuses on so-called soft news and tends to avoid conflict-driven narratives. It does not necessarily emerge by accident, but may reflect historically and culturally shaped media practices as well as the station's established branding. Cultural norms of *santun* (courteousness) and *harmoni sosial* (social harmony) are internalized by radio broadcasters, and they influence editorial decisions at an implicit level. Hence, at this level, gatekeeping operates as a culturally embedded process, which is not driven by policy but maintained through shared social norms or consencus.

Therefore, these results confirm the applicability of the theory proposed by Shoemaker and Reese's hierarchy of influences model and show the influence of the five levels within the entertainment radio setting. Lastly, the social system is also a contributing factor to gatekeeping. The cultural context has a significant influence on news selection because of audience expectations.[16] The female and family audiences prefer light, uplifting and news that is pertinent to their everyday life. Audience responses on Instagram and within community group supports this pattern, as topics framed in this way tend to receive higher engagement. This means that the social system in which Global FM is working in is not just a passive setting but an active constituent that is constantly influencing editorial choices.

2. Distinctive Features of Radio Gatekeeping: Immediacy, Emotion, and Personal Delivery

The research also indicates that radio journalism has unique features in practice, unlike other media. Immediacy, emotion, and personal delivery stand out as three aspects. The current state of the production team is immediacy because of how fast the team responds to viral news. Screening is done every morning and in case of emergencies the announcers can be directly engaged in the selection of the stories that are being widely discussed. This real-time reaction is important because radio is real-time and the timeliness of information delivery is essential. This immediacy drives editorial agendas, however, the speed may limit thorough analysis, and privilege of timeliness over comprehensiveness in broadcast gatekeeping.[17] This depicts a theoretical contradiction in the liveness of radio, a medium where accuracy and speed have to be balanced and this supports the fact that radio gatekeeping is structurally different from print or TV. However, the team still carries out cross-checking by comparing various online portals during the process of verification.

Emotion is primary force of the delivery of news in Afternoon Vibes. Difficult or serious news are

[16] McQuail, *Mcquail's Mass Communication Theory*.

[17] J. Pavlik, "Journalism and New Media.," *Journalism and New Media.*, ahead of print, 2011, https://doi.org/10.7312/pavl11482.

repackaged as lighter, inspirational, and friendly to the women and family listeners. As an illustration, when the government announced its budget efficiency policy, the newsroom of Global FM Surabaya faced a familiar challenge: how to make an economic issue sound close, warm, and relevant to family listeners. During the pre-production stage, editors and producers gathered for their daily editorial meeting, questioning whether this topic would resonate with their female and family-oriented audience. The Program Director, Iqbal Marino, emphasized his editorial role:

> *"In the news search phase, the production staff will look for the most updated and viral news via verified online portals or websites. Then, they proceed to write the script with a specific angle tailored to the target audience. I then review whether it aligns with the audience's needs, and only after my approval can it be presented on air." (Interview with Iqbal Marino, May 16, 2025).*

One of the segments started with an example of how families tend to schedule grocery shopping by planning the necessary needs first followed by the non-essential ones. Based on that, the hosts associated the analogy with how the government prioritizes spending on education and healthcare. These literary devices functioned as mechanisms, which transformed abstract financial reasoning into something practical, recognizable and emotionally engaging. The appeal to relatable examples such as saving to send the children to school and changing the meal plans according to market prices make the audience understand the idea underlying the concept of efficiency without necessarily understanding economics.

This affective framing shows that affective strategies are embedded in radio gatekeeping as a means of maintaining the attention of listeners. This is consistent with Wahl-Jorgensen's concept of the "strategic ritual of emotionality," which highlights the institutionalized role of emotion in journalistic storytelling.[18] In Afternoon Vibes, this is evident in the way factual information is transformed into relatable and emotionally engaging narratives for the target audience. This course of action allows listeners to feel more intimate and emotionally involved with the problems that are aired.

Personal delivery is associated with how news is portrayed by the announcers. The announcers speak in the form of everyday conversation with the listeners. The tone of voice, style of language, and narrative plotting become important elements in

[18] K. W. Jorgensen, "The Strategic Ritual of Emotionality: A Case Study of Pulitzer Prize-Winning Articles," *Sage Journal* 14, no. 1 (2012), https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884912448918.

creating emotional intimacy.[19] The announcers are considered companions that the audience trusts and therefore, the news becomes more acceptable. This type of parasocial interaction explains how individual agency is exercised within structural frameworks, as announcers perform relational work that may influence audience perceptions and receptions while presenting content produced by editorial team.[20]

The three aspects reveal that this radio possesses distinctive pattern of the gatekeeping. The selection of news reflects how news values are adapted to the characteristics of the target audience. All in all, these characteristics show that radio gatekeeping is driven by a different logic. The editorial judgment does not only concern the choice of news but also the framing of content to suit the urgency of airing, appeal to the heart, and audience identification. This highlights the fact that radio gatekeeping involves negotiating between structural constraints such as time, organizational policy, and audience engagement strategies.

Conclusion

This paper finds that the process of gatekeeping of the viral news in Afternoon Vibes of Global FM Surabaya is multi-layered and shaped by personal/individual judgment, newsroom routines, organizational values, external institutional influences, and broader cultural norms. Throughout the pre-production, production, and post-production processes, journalists turn viral digital information into ethically accountable and emotionally stimulating stories. Radio gatekeeping is characterized by the interplay of immediacy, emotion, and personal delivery, through which information can be filtered through empathy and human connection.

The results indicate that the issue of gatekeeping in Indonesian radio is not only about the selection; it is about cultural translation that adapts viral content to values of harmony, optimism, family orientation, and audience expectation. Afternoon Vibes shows that radio journalism remains relevant in the digital age because it can make information more relatable through emotional and personal delivery.

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