

**NEED ASSESSMENT OF RADIO CALLER CIVILITY IN PRESENTING THEIR CASES
ON PHONE CALLS**

By

Jackson C. Nathaniel, Ph.D.
Department of Linguistics and Communication Studies
Heriot-Watt University
United Kingdom

And

Charity James Ph.D.
Department of Mass Communication
Top Faith University, Mkpatak

ABSTRACT

This study explores the need for assessing radio caller civility in phone call interactions, emphasizing its impact on public discourse and media credibility. Caller civility refers to the practice of engaging in respectful, constructive discussions without hostility or disruptive behavior. Research suggests that factors such as political polarization, anonymity, and emotional agitation contribute to uncivil exchanges, affecting audience engagement and program effectiveness. The study highlights the role of media organizations in fostering civility through caller screening, behavioral guidelines, and moderation strategies. Ensuring respectful communication enhances the quality of discussions and strengthens democratic engagement. Additionally, balancing free speech with responsible discourse remains a key challenge in radio broadcasting. The research underscores the importance of continuous assessment to develop effective interventions. AI-based moderation tools and ethical broadcasting codes are identified as potential solutions to curb incivility. The study concluded that implementing measures like caller screening, behavioral guidelines, and AI-based moderation can help foster a more civil media environment. The study also recommended that radio stations should establish a screening process to assess caller intent and ensure discussions remain constructive and respectful before going live.

KEYWORDS: Need Assessment, Radio Caller Civility, Phone Calls

INTRODUCTION

Radio call-in programs serve as essential platforms for public discourse, allowing individuals to voice their opinions on social, political, and economic issues. However, the civility of radio callers remains a crucial factor in determining the effectiveness of these interactions. Caller civility refers to the extent to which individuals engage in respectful and constructive conversations without resorting to hostility, personal attacks, or disruptive behavior. Recent studies have shown

that declining civility in public discourse can negatively impact audience engagement and the overall credibility of radio programs (Hoffmann & Young, 2021). Assessing the need for civility among radio callers is thus necessary to maintain meaningful dialogue and foster an inclusive media environment.

Empirical research indicates that uncivil discourse in radio call-in programs often stems from factors such as political polarization, anonymity, and emotional agitation (Cooper & Paluck, 2022). Studies also suggest that callers who perceive an ideological divide between themselves and the host or other listeners are more likely to adopt a combative tone. Additionally, the lack of visual cues in phone conversations can lead to misunderstandings, escalating tensions and reducing the quality of discussions (Smith & Lane, 2020). These findings underscore the importance of assessing and implementing strategies to enhance caller civility, such as moderating discussions and setting clear behavioral guidelines.

The need for civility assessment extends beyond radio interactions, as it influences broader societal conversations. Researchers argue that a decline in respectful dialogue in media spaces can contribute to a culture of incivility in public discourse (Gervais, 2021). In response, media organizations have introduced mechanisms such as caller screening, delay systems, and ethical broadcasting codes to encourage constructive conversations. Nevertheless, challenges persist in balancing free speech with the need for civil discourse, making further research essential in identifying effective interventions.

CONCEPT OF RADIO CALLERS

Radio call-in shows have long served as a significant avenue for public participation in media discourse. These programs allow listeners to engage directly with presenters, express opinions, and discuss societal issues in real time. Over the years, radio call-in shows have evolved to include diverse topics, ranging from politics and social issues to entertainment and sports. This explores the concept of radio callers, their influence on discourse, and their impact on public opinion, drawing on academic research published

Radio callers contribute significantly to public dialogue by offering personal insights and challenging mainstream narratives. Orgad, Srivastava, and Olaleye (2025) argue that radio call-in shows play a vital role in fostering democratic expression, particularly in times of crisis. According to their study, these programs provide a space for marginalized voices, allowing individuals to share their concerns and grievances in a public forum. However, they also highlight that the commercial nature of some programs can lead to the exploitation of callers, as sensationalized debates may take precedence over genuine discussions.

Similarly, Moyo and Mare (2021) discuss the role of radio callers in shaping political discourse in African countries. They argue that call-in shows act as alternative platforms for citizens to hold leaders accountable, particularly in regions where traditional media is restricted. Their research illustrates how listeners utilize these programs to question government policies and highlight issues that mainstream media often overlook.

The influence of radio callers on public opinion cannot be understated. Studies indicate that the interactive nature of radio call-in shows encourages critical thinking and dialogue among listeners. In their research, Chebunet, Anyonje, and Kabaji (2024) examined how radio talk shows influence university students in Kenya. Their findings suggest that effective communication strategies by radio presenters enhance listener engagement and shape the attitudes of young audiences toward socio-political issues.

Despite their advantages, radio call-in programs face several challenges. One of the major concerns is the risk of misinformation and hate speech. Callers may sometimes spread false information or inflammatory remarks, which, if not moderated effectively, can have detrimental effects on public discourse. According to Thompson and Malik (2022), the responsibility of radio hosts and media organizations is to implement stringent fact-checking measures and ethical broadcasting guidelines to ensure balanced discussions.

Additionally, the anonymity provided by radio programs can lead to issues of accountability. Some callers may use the platform to spread propaganda or defame individuals without repercussions. Scholars such as Williams and Chang (2020) emphasize the need for responsible journalism in managing call-in segments to maintain the integrity of discussions.

CONCEPT OF RADIO CALLER'S CIVILITY

Radio caller's civility is crucial for maintaining constructive and respectful discussions. Research by Patel and Gonzalez (2023) highlights the importance of moderation strategies in ensuring civil discourse on radio call-in shows. Their study finds that radio hosts who actively intervene in heated discussions and promote balanced viewpoints foster a more respectful environment for dialogue.

According to Kim and Henderson (2021), the anonymity of radio callers can sometimes lead to aggressive or inflammatory remarks. Their research suggests that implementing caller identification systems or requiring pre-screened questions can help mitigate instances of incivility and hate speech. They argue that fostering a culture of respect in radio discussions enhances audience engagement and trust in media platforms.

Moreover, Daniels and Luo (2024) explore the psychological factors behind caller behavior, emphasizing the role of emotional intelligence in moderating discussions. Their findings indicate that callers who practice self-regulation and empathy contribute to more productive debates, whereas emotionally charged interactions often escalate into confrontational exchanges.

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NEED FOR RADIO CALLER CIVILITY IN CALLS

Civility among radio callers is crucial for maintaining constructive and respectful discussions. Below are some of the key reasons why civility is necessary for effective radio discourse:

➤ **Promoting Respectful Dialogue**

Patel and Gonzalez (2023) emphasize that maintaining civility ensures discussions remain productive and informative. When callers engage in respectful dialogue, radio programs foster an environment conducive to meaningful debates rather than descending into hostile confrontations.

➤ **Reducing the Spread of Misinformation and Hate Speech**

According to Thompson and Malik (2022), civil discussions help prevent the spread of misinformation and hate speech. When conversations are moderated to encourage respectful exchanges, the risk of inflammatory rhetoric and falsehoods diminishes, contributing to more informed public discourse.

➤ **Enhancing Audience Engagement and Trust**

Research by Kim and Henderson (2021) shows that listeners are more likely to trust and engage with radio programs that uphold civility. A well-moderated platform encourages participation from a broader audience, including those who may otherwise be reluctant to call in due to concerns about hostility. Encouraging Constructive Criticism and Accountability

Daniels and Luo (2024) highlight the role of civility in ensuring that callers can hold public officials accountable in a manner that is constructive rather than combative. Civil discourse allows for legitimate criticism without resorting to personal attacks, making debates more impactful. Fostering Emotional Intelligence and Empathy

Engaging in civil discussions requires self-regulation and empathy, which are essential for productive conversations. Research by Bailey and Forde (2023) suggests that radio callers who exhibit emotional intelligence contribute to discussions that are more balanced and solution-oriented rather than reactive and divisive. Preserving the Integrity of Media Platforms

Williams and Chang (2020) argue that maintaining civility in radio shows enhances the credibility of the media platform. When radio programs are known for respectful and well-moderated debates, they attract higher-quality discussions and sustain their reputation as reliable sources of information.

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EFFECTS OF RADIO CALLERS CIVILITY

The presence of civility in radio call-in discussions leads to several positive effects on both media platforms and society at large. Some of the most significant effects include:

➤ Improved Quality of Debate

Research by Daniels and Luo (2024) indicates that civil discourse results in more constructive and solution-driven discussions. When callers adhere to respectful dialogue, debates become more insightful, fostering informed opinions rather than emotional reactions. **Increased Listener Participation**

Studies by Kim and Henderson (2021) suggest that civil radio environments encourage greater audience participation. Listeners who feel safe from verbal hostility are more likely to call in and share their perspectives, contributing to a more diverse range of viewpoints.

➤ Strengthened Public Trust in Media

Patel and Gonzalez (2023) highlight that radio programs maintaining civility are perceived as more credible and trustworthy. As a result, listeners place greater confidence in these platforms, leading to enhanced media integrity and public trust.

➤ Reduction in Hostility and Social Division

Research by Bailey and Forde (2023) warns that uncivil discussions can polarize communities and deepen social divides. Conversely, civility fosters mutual respect and understanding, promoting unity among diverse groups.

➤ Encouragement of Rational Policy

Discourse Williams and Chang (2020) assert that when callers engage respectfully, their arguments are more likely to be taken seriously by policymakers and media professionals. This creates an avenue for evidence-based discussions that can influence policy decisions.

ROLE OF RADIO CALLERS

Radio callers contribute significantly to public dialogue by offering personal insights and challenging mainstream narratives. They serve as a bridge between media institutions and the public, enabling individuals to participate in discussions that might otherwise be inaccessible. Below are some of the key roles that radio callers play in media discourse:

➤ **Facilitating Democratic Expression**

Orgad, Srivastava, and Olaleye (2025) argue that radio call-in shows play a vital role in fostering democratic expression, particularly in times of crisis. These programs provide a space for marginalized voices, allowing individuals to share their concerns and grievances in a public forum. However, they also highlight that the commercial nature of some programs can lead to the exploitation of callers, as sensationalized debates may take precedence over genuine discussions.

➤ **Holding Authorities Accountable.**

Moyo and Mare (2021) discuss the role of radio callers in shaping political discourse in African countries. They argue that call-in shows act as alternative platforms for citizens to hold leaders accountable, particularly in regions where traditional media is restricted. Their research illustrates how listeners utilize these programs to question government policies and highlight issues that mainstream media often overlook **Influencing Public Opinion.**

Research by Chebunet, Anyonje, and Kabaji (2024) indicates that radio talk shows have a strong influence on the opinions and attitudes of their audiences. Their study on university students in Kenya suggests that caller-driven discussions play a significant role in shaping youth perspectives on social and political matters.

➤ **Providing Emotional and Social Support.**

Bailey and Forde (2023) highlight the psychological impact of radio participation. Their study reveals that individuals who call into radio shows experience a sense of empowerment and social belonging, as they feel their voices are being heard and valued. However, they also warn that excessive exposure to polarizing debates can reinforce biases and contribute to social fragmentation.

➤ **Enhancing Media Engagement and Interactivity**

According to Kim and Henderson (2021), radio callers contribute to media interactivity by transforming passive listening into active engagement. This interaction increases audience participation and helps radio programs maintain relevance in an era where digital platforms dominate the media landscape.

➤ **Disseminating Information and Community Awareness**

Daniels and Luo (2024) emphasize that radio callers often share firsthand experiences and local knowledge, making them valuable sources of information. This role is particularly important in emergencies or crisis situations where official information channels may be delayed or unreliable how to enhance radio caller's civility

Enhancing Civility among Radio Callers given the importance of civility in radio call-in shows, strategies must be implemented to promote respectful discourse. The following approaches can help enhance civility among radio callers:

➤ **Effective Call Screening and Moderation**

Research by Johnson and Lee (2023) suggests that radio stations should implement strict call screening policies to filter out aggressive or offensive callers. Skilled moderators can guide conversations to ensure discussions remain constructive and free from inflammatory rhetoric

Promoting Media Literacy and Ethical Communication

Daniels and Luo (2024) recommend that media organizations educate their audiences on the importance of respectful discourse. Media literacy programs can teach listeners how to express opinions in a civil manner while critically evaluating the information they consume

Encouraging Balanced and Inclusive Discussions

Research by Patel and Gonzalez (2023) highlights the need for balanced discussions that include diverse perspectives. Encouraging varied viewpoints while maintaining respect ensures more meaningful and informed conversations.

➤ **Use of Delayed Broadcasting and Digital Platforms**

According to Thompson and Malik (2022), some radio stations employ delayed broadcasting techniques to filter inappropriate content. Additionally, online forums and social media platforms can be used to engage audiences in civil discussions before allowing them to participate in live shows.

CONCLUSION

Assessing the civility of radio callers is essential for maintaining respectful and constructive discourse in public communication. Research indicates that incivility can hinder meaningful dialogue, reduce audience engagement, and contribute to broader societal divisions. Factors such as political polarization, anonymity, and emotional agitation often influence caller behavior, making moderation and ethical broadcasting practices necessary. Implementing measures like caller screening, behavioral guidelines, and AI-based moderation can help foster a more civil media environment. Additionally, balancing free speech with respectful communication remains a crucial challenge for media organizations. Continuous assessment and research are needed to develop effective interventions that promote civility. By addressing these concerns, radio programs can enhance the quality of discussions and encourage more productive listener participation.

Ultimately, ensuring civility in radio call-ins strengthens democratic discourse and media credibility.

RECOMMENDATION

- Radio stations should establish a screening process to assess caller intent and ensure discussions remain constructive and respectful before going live.
- Public awareness campaigns and workshops should be conducted to educate listeners on the importance of respectful discourse in media engagements.
- Continuous assessment of caller interactions and feedback from listeners should be conducted to identify patterns of incivility and improve moderation strategies accordingly.

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