



COMMUNITY RADIO: STRENGTHEN WOMEN'S ROLE AND CHANGING RURAL SOCIETY THROUGH ITS PROGRAMME CONTENT CREATION

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Abstract

'TV gives everyone an image, but radio gives birth to a million images in a million brains (Peggy Nooma, 2014). Radio is one of the easiest accessible mass media which provides major information through its programmes. Radio broadcast is available to the people as three -tire service such as All India Radio (AIR), Private Commercial FM (Pvt.Com. FM) and Community Radio (CR).

Community radio is a process, it guarantees nearest to the communities folks. The concept of community radio (CR) is gaining momentum in recent period. According to **Snehasis Sur, 2008**, Community radio is associated with local people and empowering them as alternative agencies or teams. CR is *by the community* and *for the community*. It is not simply about producing radio programme, to put on air. CR is providing opportunity for the people including women representation from different ethnic, social and religious backgrounds. For social development, empowering the Women at grassroots and their capacity building is the major concerns. Community radio (CR) can emerge as a future tool for rural women development (**K.C. Siva Balan & Selvin Jebaraj Norman, 2012**). Community radio 'encourage widespread community participation in broadcasting, offer a chance for horizontal communication between people and teams within the community, stimulate additional free and open dialogue of community problems and replicate the cultural and social diversity of the community' (**White, 1990**).

This study attempts to analyse community radio stations creates a unique programmes for self help groups (SHG) and also makes them in creating programmes for their groups. Four radio stations have been taken for the study. Two NGO owned stations namely PARD, Kalangiam and two campus based stations namely PSG Radio, TNAU Radio has been taken for the study. Qualitative observational method, Focus group discussions and in-depth interview were employed to collect data.

Key words: Community radio, NGO, communities folks, content creation

Introduction

Imagine a country which has 18 officially-recognized languages and a total of 1652 mother tongues in a country nearly a billion strong and spread over an area of 3.2 million square kilometers -- that's India. In India community radios propaganda started in the year 1990. According to the judgment of Supreme Court in February 1995 announced that the air waves are the public property. In India Anna FM is the first campus community radio station which is under the control and run by Education and Multimedia Research Centre (EMRC). On 16 November 2006, the government of India advised that NGO's and other civil society organisations can own and operate community radio stations (Saad Ullah Khan, 2010).

Citizens groups and non-profit organizations in India are pushing for a wider representation on the centralized and hierarchical Indian radio network -- with some success. Court rulings have recently favoured the establishment of new, local stations and campaigners from across India are underlining the importance of radio in shaping the destiny of Indian society For decades, India's radio stations have been centralized, unable to cater to the regional diversity of India, and lacking editorial independence.(Noronha Frederick, 1998). Community radio is broadcasting which is for, by and about the community, whose ownership and management is representative of the community, which pursues a social development agenda, and which is non-profit (AMARC: Africa & Panos Southern



Africa (1998). The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) has introduced a new scheme, the Community Radio Support Scheme, under the 12th Five Year Plan to provide financial support to new and existing community radio stations. The Community Radio Support Scheme will be primarily for equipment acquisition, with maximum support of 50 per cent of the total estimated expenditure, subject to a ceiling of Rs 7.50 lakhs. (Ek Duniya Anek Awaaz, 26 December 2013).

NGO (Non Governmental Organisation) and SHG (Self Help Groups)

A non-governmental organization (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' cluster that is organized on a neighbourhood, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by individuals with a typical interest, NGOs perform a spread of service and humanitarian functions, bring subject issues to Governments, advocate and monitor policies and encourage political participation through provision of knowledge. Some area unit organized around specific problems, like human rights, setting or health. they supply analysis and experience, function early warning mechanisms and facilitate monitor and implement international agreements. Their relationship with offices and agencies of the international organisation system differs betting on their goals, their venue and therefore the mandate of a selected establishment.(www.ngo.org). Self-help groups, also known as mutual help, mutual aid, or support groups, are groups of people who provide mutual support for each other. In a self-help group, the members share a common problem, often a common disease or addiction. Their mutual goal is to help each other to deal with, if possible to heal or to recover from, this problem. (www.psychcentral.com).

COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS TAKEN FOR STUDY

According to the researcher four community radio stations at two districts has been taken for the study namely PSG, TNAU community radio stations from Coimbatore district and PARD, KALANGIAM from Madurai district.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- ❖ **To study the role of community radio in campus based and NGO owned.**
- ❖ **To evaluate programme content focusing towards women's development.**
- ❖ **To investigate the participation of women participation in station.**
- ❖ **To analyse community radio programs for the upliftment of women's.**

Review of Literature

Daniela Bandelli (2011) suggested that women's communication needs in Community Radio coverage areas should be carefully investigated and compared with information rising from content analysis of radio programmes. Moreover, women's communication desires ought to be deeply explored, not solely by researchers, but also by NGO initiators prior to the establishment of Community Radio. Also, analysis of past NGOs' activities should be carried out and longer participation of researcher in team meetings and listeners groups activities would enable to detect possible unaddressed communication needs.

S. Revi Sterling & John O'Brien & John K. Bennett (2009) point out that AIR project seeks to advance women's in developing regions by providing them a mechanism to amplify and publicize their distinctive considerations, knowledge, and needs. Critical of community radio's claim to be the "voice of the voiceless,"

K.C. Siva Balan & Selvin Jebaraj Norman(2012) comments that Women ought to be assisted in conflict things and their participation in peace processes supported. so radio media features a range of attributes that makes it an efficient tool in promoting women's participation in decision-making processes and governance structures. It is not controlled company and government interests that permits it to speak to problems severally.



VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION FOR PEOPLE SERVICE (VAPS) (2002) concluded that the women of Tamilnadu is authorized through the help of knowledge and communication technology. it's modified their position from the past. Tamilnadu as a technologically advanced state in India is additionally doing lots of comes for village and illiterate women in particular. it's additionally taken many steps and enforced varied plans and policies together with government of India to eradicate impoverishment and convey the ladies into the IT connected trade. NGOs operating within the field, international agencies and other non-public agencies have additionally extended their facilitate to market IT among the women. the event of its enabled the ladies section to participate in the daily affairs of the state, that vary from the family work to native governance.

Binod C Agrawal (2013) emphasizes that Community radio may be a method and may not exit in socio-political isolation. Community radio is not merely concerning manufacturing programmes to broadcast, it needs making ready and making awareness and data of a community radio from the terribly starting. Community radio is about developing a community-a neighbourhood cluster of villages or faculty field. Despite the huge gap that exists between policy and ground level realities, the community radio can grow within the future. it's a matter of your time. owing to 'slow and steady' growth of community radio

several of them can die out and an oversized variety can born. it's applicable to present civil society the time to reply to the current chance, so they will utilize the medium in an exceedingly additional purposeful way, because it is supposed to be.

Usha Rani. N (2013) discusses that the three radio stations Jana Dhvani, KVK Pravara Community Radio Station, Krishi Community Radio Station of University of Agricultural Sciences suffer from reaching the stakeholders with fifty watt transmitter covering a radius of 10-15 kms only and also the signals square measure terribly weak and can't compared with the commercial FM stations . Stations square measure still new to the conception of broadcasting and turn out programs that they are snug with by exploitation constant recent unimaginative prescriptive AIR program formats instead of telling the stories of the those who are their key audience. They're smart at making awareness regarding government's development programs however lack clear cut policy on making the community radio movement a force to reckon with.

ABHILAKSH LIKHI (2013) believes that it would be extraordinarily worthy to analyse the extent and impact of coverage by operational community radio stations of vulnerable sections of society like regular castes, regular tribes, minorities, ladies and particularly youngsters. Thus, the fourth governance challenge would be to spot regions and themes wherever additional energies have to be compelled to be dedicated to inspire non profit civil society candidates to determine community radio stations.

Methodology

The main objectives of this article are to analyse the community radio programme content, which helps in enhancing the strength of women's role in participation and the involvement of a programme production for women's both by community radio stations and women participants. In this, qualitative methodology has been adopted for this study. Observation can provide rich qualitative data, sometimes described as 'thick description' . where the relevant phenomena have been carefully observed and detailed field notes have been recorded (Geertz, 1973). Researcher visited all these four radio stations, collected programme content and observed whole day for analysing the programme production. Following this, the Observation method is most appropriate one and it was employed here with the in-depth interview on the focus group. Research questions are framed to analyse the above said objectives.



Research Questions

RQ1: Does community radio stations are concerned about women's development?

RQ2: Does women participants eagerly comes to the station with a programme production?

RQ3: Does community radio stations allocates separate timings for women programmes?

PSG Community Radio

PSG Community Radio Station started with four hours of broadcast daily. the published timings were doubled to eight hours daily from January 2009 and currently the station broadcasts its programmes between 6.00 am to 10.00 am and repeats the broadcasts between 6.00 pm to 10.00 pm. PSG Community Radio conjointly has plans to increase the transmission length from eight to twelve hours daily. To act as a catalyst for ascension the community by disseminating information on a range of subjects like governance, ladies authorization, child development, atmosphere and bio diversity, career counselling, sports, legal problems, youth empowerment, entrepreneurship, agriculture, preserving culture and heritage, etc. MAGALIR NERAM(9.45 – 10.15 AM)--- The Program highlights the empowerment of women in every sense, especially benefiting widows and destitute. The program provides women in general with lots of tips on earning from home like making handicrafts and recipes, saving for the rainy days and problems of working women giving them solutions from the experienced women-folk.

TNAU Agri University

TNAU is more than a century old premier Institution. The broadcast takes place in two time slots. The morning slot commences at 10 AM to 1 PM and 2 PM to 5 PM. (6 hours). It's been interacting with farmers from the time of its beginning. Over the years, TNAU has engaged in farm faculties broadcast over AIR, imparted for effective transfer of latest farm technologies to the farming community. A need-based approach was adopted to assist the farmers to transfer the newest farm technologies and resolution for field homeward issues among the farming community. The TNAU Vivasayee CR 107.4, has been established for this. Focus is on agriculture and its allied sectors. Programmes on health, setting, folk songs, education, career steerage, temperament, skill development and Self Help Groups. They have exciting features such as on line phone-in programmes for women participants.

KALANGIAM SAMUGA VANOLI

The broadcast takes place in single time slots. The slot commences at 8 AM to 12.30 PM. Kalanjiam Samuga Vanoli was established as a partnership between UNDP and DHAN Foundation to serve communities in the tsunami-ravaged Nagapattinam district which is prone to multiple hazards including floods, cyclone, drought and tsunamis. It was promoted with a belief that a community-run radio would give people a voice. Kalanjiam Community Radio Station is run by trained women volunteers who facilitate community volunteers in the field and also engage in building their capacities in production skills in the areas of voice recording for producing field programmes from villages. Involving women in the core business of media management, within the male dominated local communities is the other challenge. Women's speaking through the media is always seen as threat within the families as well as in the villages by men. Gramiya Kuilgal, programme is to create a platform for local women's and NGO's to develop their skills in communication.

PARD VANOLI

The broadcast timings takes place at evening time slots (1:30 PM - 05:00 PM). The People's Association for Rural Development (PARD) is a well-established NGO working among farmers in Madurai district of Tamil Nadu. The region is drought-prone and PARD's Community Radio, PARD VAANOLI, functions from the model farm of the parent NGO since it was inaugurated in 2009. The



programmes are produced with the participation of the local villagers and thus the local people feel that this is their own radio station to express their feelings in their community. community-based and stress on the importance of education, health, legal aid and legal awareness, sustainable agricultural techniques and good governance.

Discussion & Interpretation

RQ1: Does community radio stations are concerned about women's development?

Four community radio stations in which two community radio stations are operated from campus and other owned by NGO's. While discussing about women's development these stations takes an initial on women's development by allocating separate timings for women programmes and also involving women volunteers to express their views and talents. In campus based radio stations only limited number of women volunteers participate to make programmes. TNAU community radio have exciting features such as on line phone-in programmes for women participants. Limited number of field works are done by these stations. Palanisamy (Station head, TNAU) explains that kongu region is mostly depending on agriculture and Industries, the stations should follow the farmers' mindset and every station should give separate timings for agricultural programmes , women developments and also for self help groups. Special awards are given by the TNAU stations for self help groups for their achievements. 82 women self help groups comes kalangiam community radio station were only few women volunteers eagerly participate for programme production. Naguveer Prakash (Station Head) kalangiam community radio station points out that lack of fund and power problem is the main drawback for this radio station. But PARD vanoli programmes are mixed with the songs of the rural singers in the listeners' area to make the programme more interesting and audible.

RQ2: Does women participants eagerly comes to the station with a programme production?

When discussed with Chandrasekhar (Station head, PSG CR) he admits students can come to stations with a programme content because the station is situated in the campus itself, at the same time the volunteers or community members also comes to the stations with their programmes. But when compared to the student community the community members are less in detail. PARD vanoli station head insisted that women volunteer comes with a particular programme content and they also show interest in technical aspects like voice recording, editing and mixing. Once the women is participated in this programme and if their voice is spreader in their surrounding then there will be a own eagerness will be developed with them. Programmer can perform in their own style. Where, there will be no restriction to perform in a particular style. Comparably rural side people are so eager to perform than urban side people.

RQ3: Does community radio stations allocates separate timings for women programmes?

The community radio stations as PARD vanoli, TNAU, PSG, Kalangiam where they have a standard broadcasting time. But in that they have allocated a very shortage time for women program. There should be a correct available of production assistants otherwise it leads to lack age of programme broadcasting.

CONCLUSION.

Community Radio puts the tools of communications into the hands of communities for cultural expression, news and knowledge, views and dialogue and facilitates the empowerment of native communities. Rather than obtaining vulnerable by the communication technology revolutions, community radio remains a tool within the hands of the poor and marginalised for fulfilling their communication and self expression needs. they'll reinforce traditional types of communication such as storytelling, word and theatre and that they will alter grassroots participation in political and democracy.(Dr. Pitabas Pradhan, 2011). These community radio stations has a very short timing allocations for broadcasting women program. If the timing is extended for women programme it will



be a very useful and there are many chances where will let to come to know about the creative ideas of women's and the programs can also be conducted in interview style by and also we can share our conversations with different intelligent women's also. Community radio stations must encourage women volunteers in programme production and participation. Where in this competitive surrounding there are many people hidden with their precious talents. It can be brought out and make their life full fill with colour's and happiness through community radio stations.

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