



Community Radio Station Radio Siddhartha – A Sociological Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Community Radio is characterized by its limited local reach using low power transmission and programming content that caters to the needs of the specific community it serves.

Our study has focused in understanding the role of Community Radio station 'Radio Siddhartha 90.8 MHz' on the community of Tumkur taluk in Karnataka state.

The study was conducted because the Community Radio station services were effectively reaching the people through direct broadcasting, narrowcasting and web streaming in this taluk. The data were collected by the reviewing literature and interviewing some beneficiaries through direct contact with the help of Community Radio station Radio Siddhartha itself.

The role of Community Radio indicated that more changes have occurred in the community. This kind of research would help the researchers to understand how the community radio plays an important role in community development.

KEYWORDS

Community Radio, programmes, development.

Introduction:

Community Radio is becoming very powerful communicational tool and playing very important role in integrated development in India. In other words, Community Radio is a part of Development Journalism.

Community Radio station is not a profit making institution. It is purely a service oriented system. Community Radio station can convey message or knowledge to the targeted listeners community over radio regarding health, hygiene etc. As Community Radio stations broadcast / narrowcast / podcast (Web) their programmes over FM frequencies it is easy to listen through mobile phone having FM facility, in moving vehicle or places like garden, park and such places or computer users also. Its minimum coverage area is 15 to 20 kilometers.

Review of literature:

There are very few studies on the role of community radio in India. However, some studies which are available for reference have pointed out the need of more studies far and wide in India.

Tabing says that Community Radio station is one that is operated in the community, for the community about the community and by the community. According to him the community can be territorial or geographical – a township, village, district or island and can be also a group of people with common interests, who are not necessarily living in one defined territory. (Pavarala, Vinod and Malik, 2007: 17)



Figure no.1: Community radio interview with foreign lady

According to D.S Mehta (1979:4) "The communication Media should also promote understanding and involvement of people in the socio-economic changes and developmental activities taking place in the country. The media can quicken the process of development". The point which the media need to emphasize is that development is perfectly possible within the democratic framework by reaching the information to grass root level.

Pavarala, Vinod and Malik (2007:178) opined that "Community Radio in India is not about playing alternative rock music, but it is a source of strength for poor people for addressing their basic needs". Here the authors analyse how Community Radio has mobilized, mainly the civil society organizations, for participatory development. The authors believe that the Community Radio has a long way to go before it can produce any "tangible results in terms of sustainable goals of social change".

There are 16 Community Radio stations in Karnataka state. They are the following. *Namma Dhvani-Kolar, Krushi CR-Dharwad, Radio Active-Bangalore, Radio Siddhartha-Tumkur, Radio Sarang-Mangalore, Radio Manipal-Manipal, Antharwani-Gulberga, Jana Dhvani-Mysore, Neladani-Bangalore, Ramana Dhvani-Bangalore. Radio Universal-Bangalore, Sarathi Zalak, Bangalore, KLEdani-Hubli, Venudhwani- Belgaum, Radio Ninada-Dharmastala and Nammura Banuli-Belgaum.*

Methodology :

The data were collected by the reviewing literature and interviewing some beneficiaries through direct contact with the help of Community Radio station Radio Siddhartha itself. The study will help in understanding the power of Community Radio in strengthening the community.

Radio Siddhartha - Community Radio of Tumkur Taluk :

Radio Siddhartha FM 90.8 MHz is also known as voice of Tumkur. It is the first Community Radio station in Tumkur district situated in Karnataka state. The main goal of the Radio Siddhartha is to provide education to the rural, urban masses through inspiring and awareness programmes related to agriculture, health, education, culture, entertainment and so on.

Tumkur district consists of 10 taluks and Tumkur taluk is one

among them. Tumkur taluk consists of 374 villages. Radio Siddhartha covers 150 villages.

Radio Siddhartha is the Community Radio station of Sri Siddhartha Education Society. Shikshana Bhisma Dr. H.M.Gangadharaiiah, Founder Secretary of Sri Siddhartha Education Society (R) in 1959, whose vision was to provide education to the rural and to reach the unreached. He was a true Gandhian and follower of Buddha and strong disciple of Dr.Baba Saheb Ambedkar and impressed by Saint Vinobha Bave a social reformer. His son Dr. G. Parameshwara, had a strong belief that education is an instrument of social change and has a vision to cover all branches in Sri Siddhartha Education Society. In view of this great vision, he has started PG courses in Media Studies and in 2009 established a Community Radio station Radio Siddhartha 90.8 MHz in the Campus. It empanelment with Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity, a nodal agency of the government of India for advertising on 01.10.2013.

This Community Radio has given a platform to the marginalized sections of the society, and to the rural and urban masses to voice their feelings and emotions. It benefits students as well as general public. (Radio Siddhartha Souvenir, 2014:20)

Radio Siddhartha, Community Radio is broadcasting total 9 hours programme scheduled according to the needs of the community mainly 6A.M. to 9 A.M., 12 noon to 3 P.M. and 6 P.M. to 9 P.M. daily. According to the Community Radio guidelines the programme committee members and radio staff discuss the concept, identify local talents and concerned resource persons, provide them platform to debate and voice their feelings and views. Programme Committee comprises different sections of the society. They are rural folk, slum dwellers, the labour class, social workers, HIV affected persons, artists, educationists, science activists and members of NGOs in and around the district.

Radio Siddhartha has its own innovative programme formats. One of the programmes 'Parivarthane'(transformation) is well listened by the listeners according to Community Radio staff. This programme is to transform the addicts and make them to give up their bad habits which ruin their family and social life. Community Radio staff interview the de-addicts and their family members. It has brought awareness among the drug/alcohol/tobacco consumers.

The Radio has been getting overwhelming appreciative responses from its honourable listeners through letters and phone calls and mobile messages. According to the staff of Radio Siddhartha, listeners are so much inspired by the programmes that they have been coming out with requests for more programmes related to issues like environmental degradation, deforestation, gender discrimination, developmental programmes, especially financial assistance for the upliftment of the poor and the downtrodden.

Programme series like Shikshanavani (Educational Speech), Navu mattu namma hakku (We and our rights), English time (Spoken English), Namma Desha Namma Samvidhana(Our Nation and our Constitution), Namma Arogya (Our Health), Akka Kelakka (Listen Sister Listen), Krushi Kanaja (Agricultural Storage), Prathibha kirana (Rays of Talent), Amrutha Bindu (Values in brief),Vishesha Sandarshana (Special Interview), Janapada Jagattu (World of Folklore), Radio talks, dramas and many awareness programmes have broadcast by the Community Radio Siddhartha. Radio Siddhartha broadcast/ narrowcast/ podcast (Web) its variety of programmes. (www.radiosiddhartha.com)

Success Stories :

Hosakere Rizwan Basha, a government high school teacher added in India book of Records for giving more than 825 episodes of Shikshanavani (Educational Speech) in Community Radio station proudly says that Community Radio Siddhartha mould him into good resource person.

This is how a Community Radio could bring marvellous changes in

and build a beautiful community. Yes, Radio Siddhartha has achieved it in many such success stories. One of the examples is the 'Pappad makers' of Gulur village in Tumkur, which comes in the radius of Radio Siddhartha. Anjamma, Kamalamma, Bhagirathamma, Laxamma, Geetha and others are aged women and suffering from poverty. They were in a position where they could not lead their life without work and they were left out from their family also. They were not getting coolie work also as their age matters most. Though these aged women have brought up their children to some extent, the latter were not taking care of their mothers indeed. Suryanarayana, a listener of Radio Siddhartha got to know about the pathetic condition of these women and informed this to the Radio Siddhartha. The Community Radio got into action contacted Mr Cheluvharaju, a Pappad making trainer in Tumkur. Cheluvharaju joined his hands with Radio Siddhartha's community work and trained the women. After proper training, the aged women are running their own small business of making pappad and selling it and earning their livelihood. Now things are changed. Community Radio achieved the goal of community service by bringing smile in the faces of the aged women and confidence of leading life. The women are now happy and have become role models for other women in their village.



Figure No.2: Community radio interview with pappad makers

Radio Siddhartha has been continuously producing programmes to create awareness about HIV- AIDS among people. "Jeevana Nauke, Mulugeethu Joke" (Life is a voyage; without care it may Sink!) a radio play written by a community member Aruna Kumar Kuthpady, which briefs how negligency and bad habits infects a person. Radio staff was successful in persuading the artists who are highly educated to voice the play, who hesitated in the beginning, assuming that people will mistake them to be AIDS infected! The play got a wonderful response from the audience. The artists came back with tears assuring that they will definitely participate in such programmes in the future too.

LIVE PHONE IN programmes are well received by the people and they actively interact on selected subjects and thus clarify their doubts and solve their problems. Community Radio Siddhartha helped the district to improve S.S.L.C. results from tenth to ninth place during 2014. Deputy director of Public Instruction says that Community Radio was one of the reasons for improvement in results. (The New Indian Express, 2014:13th May)

Conclusion: The review of literature has shown that there has been no research work done so far regarding this subject. So this kind of research may help research students as well as general public to know about the Community Radio stations. This kind of research would help the researchers to understand how the community radio plays an important role in community development.

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