

## Reaching the Unreached through Community Radio (CR)

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### **Abstract:**

Community radio has become popular in recent years as the media of root-level individuals in deprived communities, and it has opened a new arena for the involvement of both politicians and grassroots individuals in the growth process of their community. Nevertheless, after liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation in the 1990s, through its programme material and advertising, the country has witnessed the rise of giant media companies projecting an elitist lifestyle. For most parts of India, radio remains the prime source of news and entertainment. Community radio plays a critical role in a country's communication. It represents a specific community's culture, philosophy and feelings, norms and values. Community radio has become a common and new opportunity for both media professionals and grassroots people as the media of residents of a specific community. This article critically examines various issues of community radio like historical ideology, features and functions, Govt policy for Community Radio Station, Feminist Radio movement, role of UNESCO and AMARC, mechanisms to guarantee participatory aspect, impacts on Social Change. The main objective of the essay is to motivate academics, writers, and educators in a new way of exploration through the Community radio – an important tool of expressing and sharing the world about the viewpoint, feelings, ideas, problems and aspirations of rural, marginalised communities, to impart critical thinking of the paradigm shift in the theoretical, ideological spheres in the light of postmodern, globalised perspectives.

**Keywords:** Community radio, Community Development, disadvantaged and vulnerable group, Remote and rural areas, alternative media, democratic participation

### **Introduction:**

Community radio is the type of radio owned and operated by a community and which often broadcasts programming relevant to that community. There are three facets of community radio: non-profit making, ownership and management of the community, and involvement in the community. Community Radio can be seen as a medium where, as provided for in Article 19 1 A of the Constitution, communities can exercise their right to free speech and expression. As community radio derives its strength from its strong association with communities, it has proven to be a powerful and inspiring platform for addressing community concerns, advocating for the rights of women, minorities and Dalit communities, building community disaster resilience, establishing secular constitutional values and building deeper understanding within communities. The views and demands of the local rural population are not based on commercial radio. In addition, commercial radio shows and content are not

community-oriented individuals, but rather promote western culture. Community radio falls under the category of community broadcasting.

Community radio contributes to the provision of resources and facilities for various aspects of our society's development, such as education, health, water and sanitation, security against natural disasters, addressing social problems at the level of the community and connecting rural people to the government. Community radio helps ensure the right of people to knowledge and community engagement by expressing in the creation process the voice and ideas of grassroots people. By facilitating local communities to express their own understandings and to critically discuss social problems, activities and policies impacting their lives and livelihoods, community radio can play a crucial role in growth and democratisation. Through the implementation of programmes and strategies to improve the lives of listeners in agriculture, education, health and gender problems, disasters and environmental destruction, local government issues, peace keeping, etc.

### **Historical ideology of Community radio:**

About 50 years ago in Latin America, where the stimulus for these first encounters was poverty & social inequality, the flourishing phase of today's national community radios began. One of these two started in Bolivia in 1947, known as the Miner's Radios, and another in Colombia in the same year, known as Radio Sutatenza / Accion Cultural Popular. Such interactions set a trend, even though the idea of community radio today has changed significantly. For instance, in the decades of inner struggle between Marxism and capitalism, the Minors Radio in Bolivia operated. Their key goal, therefore, was to bring the mining community together to fight for an improved and better working climate. Radio Sutatenza/ACPO in Colombia was regarded as not owned or directly managed by Radio, although enthusiastic about the effort to help the group of farmers or peasants. A lot of input from farmers was considered and these definitely ensured the integration of the requirements and expectations of the farmer into the contents and programming of the radio. But it was not equivalent to the goal of community radio today, which is 'radio for the people by the people'. It was in Europe that community radio first became a fundamental public phenomenon, although it began in Latin America. These stations in the West have been able to inspire governments and national broadcasting networks to launch community radio at the local level. The establishment of community radio became a social movement in Africa after the demise of the apartheid regime in South Africa.

The pressure groups are persuaded by community radio in many parts of the world (e.g. miners, missionaries and democratic movements). In addition, foreign organisations such as UNESCO and other national broadcasters have implemented programmes to help get community radio off the ground.

Community radio's historical ideology is to use this approach as the voice of the marginalised group, the representative of oppressed persons, and as a platform for change and development in general.

### **Community, community radio and ‘Rural Radio’:**

Community implies a group of people living together within a broader society with similar characteristics or interests. The word "community" refers to a group of people or a collective collection of citizens who share the common interest in ensuring that members of the community are well informed about events and concerns that concern them as individuals and community members. However, it should be noted that a diverse range of views and opinions from within the group are reflected by the most efficient community radio stations, thereby fostering diversity and peaceful exchange of views.

Public radio, as opposed to commercial and public service programming, serves to bring small communities together at the local level, reflects on the everyday needs of the general public and helps to realise local demands and expectations. The services offered by rural radio stations have always been the government's most productive way of providing people with knowledge. When rural radio programming contains community voices, it may provide a forum for contact between the government and communities.

### **Features and Functions of Community Radio:**

The public as protagonists: Community radio's basic emphasis is to make its audience the key standard-bearer, through their association in all parts of its management, content and programme creation, and through providing them with programming that will assist them in the specific community's comprehensive growth.

#### *Ownership and control:*

Community radio ownership and control must remain in the hands of the community or community group by establishing democratic processes that encourage the community to engage in the various aspects of decision-making and management. These systems must avoid the co-opting of one or more individuals' personal interests. This also implies that the group is engaged in programming growth, contributing to the financial sustainability of the station.

#### *Non-profit making aspect:*

Community radio is a non-profit radio station and its primary goal is the well-being of people in the community at the local level. It provides a programme for individuals in any specific geographical region and also represents their culture and beliefs, thoughts and ideas, etc. The aim of community radio is to grow this community, to share its own culture, to communicate its problems and constraints all over the world.

#### *Community Participation:*

Community radio benefits from the ownership of the community and is closely related to its non-profit existence. Members of the Group should be invited to take part in the audit and to assess management and programmes. They may also be interested in the directing and development of programmes or the search for funding. Other distinguishing features include the participation of programme planning and broadcasting of diverse voices.

*Funding:*

Community radio, as the name implies, is the community's asset; it can work by its own commitment, endowment and financial support. A variety of sources include support for community radio programmes, such as public aid, members' membership fees, fundraising activities, tariff and levy, funding, advertisement revenue, etc.

*Promote Social Change and Development:*

It is possible to promote sustainable development and meaningful social change for minority communities through community radio. It is community radio which can communicate to the policy making authority the sufferings and sorrows, difficulties and shortcomings of a community. It can concentrate on the individual issues; coordinate debate on the solutions and joint mobile action.

Community radio has many benefits over other media as a medium for social change:

- Facilitates genuine participatory collaboration that is vital for sustainable development;
- It represents a particular (marginalised or vulnerable) population or group;
- Its contents and services are important to the community;
- It is an ideal communication instrument for the illiterate population;
- It is an ideal communication medium for the illiterate population;
- In terms of investment, it is cost-efficient, which will promote its sustainability.

**Development of Community Radio in India:**

The following two declarations played a significant role in the growth of the movement of Community Radio in India.

The Supreme Court's decision of 1995, in which the honourable court ruled that "airwaves are public property and must be used for the public good" The foundation stone of community radio in India was this 1995 ruling.

The Bangalore Declaration was formulated and adopted by the Civil Society Organisations, which expressed the need for a third level of broadcasting, i.e. community radio. This was followed in 2000 by the Pastapur Declaration, reiterating the need for community radio and claimed that it should be non-profit-making, localised and operated by the community.

**The Government Policy towards Community Radio in India:**

The NDA Government adopted a policy in December 2002 to issue licences for the establishment of Community Radio Stations ONLY to well-established educational institutions, including IITs/IIMs. Therefore, the capacity to own and operate community radio was limited to educational institutions only.

In 2003, the nation's community radio movement received an official nod with the announcement of a policy that limited the licence to operate stations only to educational institutions. Even so, it marked the beginning of giving the group a voice. In February 2004, the first campus radio was launched. However, on 16 November 2006, when the larger goal

of providing the group with an agent did not materialise, the Government of India adopted a new policy that allowed CRS to be run by NGOs & non-profits.

Anna FM was launched as India's first community campus radio station by the students of Anna University on 1 February 2004. The oppressed and voiceless groups remained outside the group radios, however, by that time.

The Government issued a new Community Radio Policy in 2006 that allowed agricultural universities, educational institutions and civil society institutions such as NGOs to apply for a community radio broadcasting licence in the 88-108 MHz FM band. It should be specifically founded as a 'non-profit' organisation and should have a demonstrated record of supporting the local community for at least three years. It should only broadcast services that respond to the community's educational, developmental, social and cultural needs. (Entertainment is not expressly forbidden. News programmes on Community Radio and FM Radio in India are prohibited). The corporation must be a legal entity, i.e. it must be licenced (under the registration of Societies Act or any other such act relevant to the purpose).

### **Role of Community Radio for Social change:**

Community radio acts as an instrument for growth, discussing concerns of local concern. Community Radio may also lead to programmes such as the dissemination of education, the discussion of local problems and the acceptance of corrupt authorities. Because the transmission is in the local language, individuals can immediately connect to it. CR stations could now be a repository of local folk songs and culture, as the local population of the affected CR station could now link to it. Community Radio is also referred to as "People's radio, for people, by people" Community Radio is a geographically bound community radio service where infrastructure is weak and does not enter mainstream national and regional media. The service is generally owned and operated by local people and discusses problems in the local language relating to the community. It can be used to raise awareness among communities of various social problems such as dowry, heavy marriage of young girls, nutrition and eco-balance.

Community radio can be used effectively to provide information on the weather conditions, the timing of trains and buses in the locality where the community radio station is located, potential outlets from which rural villagers can apply for funds, educational and training facilities, and work opportunities. It could spread peace, harmony, inclusion, and give a voice to the community's marginalised and disadvantaged sectors by providing spaces for dialogue, addressing issues of alienation, or spreading hate and violence.

Community radio has proven to be an outstanding way of serving the most disadvantaged groups. It has played an important role in linking people to knowledge about their rights and rights, as well as in bringing people's protagonists to the fore. It has tremendous potential to become a powerful way to make the voice of disadvantaged groups heard and to create collective energies around concerns that have the greatest impact on people. Community Radio is a strong tool for reaching residents with knowledge and for the city administration and local leaders to be a forum for their voices. In rural India, it has excellent potential to serve as a development tool to build awareness, disseminate information, and encourage communication.

**Community radio Innovation:**

<b>Community radio Innovation</b>	<b>District / State</b>	<b>Community radio Platform</b>	<b>Innovation</b>
Response to Disaster & Conflict Situation	East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh	Radio Ala:	Guiding and protecting fishermen in the sea
	Bhadrak District, Odisha	Radio Bulbul:	Empowering communities for peace and justice
Justice to marginalized community	Puri District, Odisha.	Radio Namaskar :	Making administration accountable To different issues and difficulties of the citizens/community and to appeal for their redressal.
	Kollam District, Kerala	Radio Benziger:	social inclusion of the differently able in the locality. Making health services reach the community.
	Goving Nagar, Mumbai Naka, Nashik	Radio Vishwas:	Giving an identity to the people who collect garbage. Their daily living, difficulties and challenges they face in day-to-day life.
	Lucknow District	CMS Radio:	Bringing light to the community
	Nuh District, Haryana	Alfaz-e-Mewat:	Providing voices to the voiceless
Livelihood & Agriculture	Palace Road, Bangalore	Radio active:	Prioritising women's health. "YariVaru" or "who are you?" Is the programme about identity of one of the stigmatized group of population. Hosted by RJ Priyanka, who incidentally became the first

			transgender radio Jockey in India, the programme voices concerns related to the diverse issues faced by the community members like identity, education, unemployment, lack of housing facilities, social security, stigma and discrimination, sexual harassment, issues of homophobia, and criminalization of the community.
	VIT University, Vellore, Tamil Nadu.	VIT Community Radio:	Protecting women in bidi industry from threat of TB.
	GROVES HILL ROAD, KOTAGIRI.	Radio Kotagiri:	Popularising organic farming in indigenous communities.
	Sangli-Miraj Road, Sangli	Green Community Radio:	Creating a comfortable society for women in period
	Parts of Solan, Sirmour, Bilaspur, and Shimla districts. Himachal Pradesh	Hamara MSPICM:	Empowering farmers with up-to-date knowledge
	Namakkal District, Tamilnadu	Radio SSM:	Helping farmers insuring their crops. To aid the farmers who lost their harvest due to Natural calamities under "Pradhan Mantri FasalBima Yojana".
	Orchha in Tikamgarh district Madhya Pradesh and Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh	Radio Bundelkhand:	Building a resilient community and ecosystem. Trained community radio reporters in climate change journalism serve as an effective two way communication link at the grassroots between farmers, line department of the Government and scientists from agriculture extension agencies such as Krishi Vigyan Kendras.
	Chanderi,	ChanderikiAwaaz:	Bringing back youth into

	Madhya Pradesh		traditional craft and enhancing income
	Madhya Pradesh	Kisan Vani:	Building skill and livelihood of farmers. Discusses various improved method cultivation, use of bio pesticides, sustainable use of fertiliser etc in agriculture.
	Dist- Satara, Maharashtra	Radio Mann Deshi Tarang Vahini:	The programme takes up many farmers related topic periodically which includes water literacy, organic and natural farming, farming best practices & non-conventional farming. It also discusses market rates of agri products, weather forecast, agri-businesses as per need of the listeners.
	Dist-Koraput, Odisha	Radio DhimSA:	Empowering women for good governance. women of Self Help Groups, mothers, young girls & women of age group between 25 – 40 years old from tribal villages in Koraput . awareness on government acts, rules, schemes of programmes.
	Sanand District ,Ahmedabad	Rudi No Radio:	Augmenting livelihood for better women's health. information on healthy and good lifestyle. organic farming and kitchen garden.
Empowerment & Engagement of Women	Kanpur Dehat, Uttar Pradesh	Waqt Ki Awaaz:	Empowering women against open defecation. It highlights the issues of safety and dignity of women as well as health risks associated with open defecation. Keeping in view that women are usually forced to wait till nightfall to defecate, it



			<p>increases their chances of infections and exposing them to violence as they go out in remote places.</p> <p>The programmes also talks about bathroom facility for women within the household, issues of privacy, how bathing in the open makes women prone to infections. The series also raises the issues of girls who are also forced to drop out of school once they reach adolescence because of lack of privacy and toilet facility in schools.</p>
	Alwar District and Alwar Rural, Rajasthan	Alwar Ki Awaz:	Empowering community to grow with vikaspedia
	Shiwajee Nagar, Siwan	Radio Snehi:	This program is based on women's and adolescent girl's health & hygiene. Converting women into health educators
	Dist: Pune,	Radio Vasundhara:	G Ganitacha an initiative of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, aims at countering the fear of maths in the society. Women learnt applied mathematics through radio
	Sangli, Maharashtra.	Yeralavani:	Building scientific temper among women through radio stories
	Vijayanagar, Tollgate Circle, Bangalore	Radio Universal:	Promoting young women for participation. create awareness amongst people for empowering women in India.
Innovation through Community Radio	KLE ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND REASERCH, JNMC CAMPUS	VenudhwaniKleKanasu:	Helping high school students to score better in board exams

	NEHRU NAGAR, BELAGAVI		
	KRISHI CR, UAS DHARWAD, Karnataka	Krishi Community Radio:	Imparting livestock management training to the farmers
	Film & Television Institute of India, Law College Road, Pune	Radio FTII:	Teaching math through fun
	Mananthavady, Wayanad, Kerala.	Radio Mattoli:	Building a thriving farming community
	Eachanari, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu	Rathinavani Community Radio:	Creating a mobile convergent community
	NUH, MEWAT	Radio Mewat:	Making radio the classroom
	Kottayam(Dist), Kerala	Radio Media Village:	Making rural community self reliant
	Dist-Nayagarh, Odisha	Radio Surabhi:	Advancing gender equality. to sensitize the community/general public on survival, protection & development of girl child
	District: Nuapada, Odisha.	Radio Swayamshakti:	Facilitating access of people to government entitlement. showcasing the talent of school & college going students.

[SOURCE: Community radio for change, ActionAid, Odisha Regional Office, Bhubaneswar, Booklet Published in 2017. Pp 1-45]

### **Feminist Radio:**

Feminist Radio is radio programming focused on women that facilitates non-sexist interactions, non-stereotyping and focuses on topics impacting women and girls. Many feminist radio organisations are community-based, gradually broadcasting to reach a broader audience over the internet. Feminist radio organisations provide examples of: Women's International News Gathering Service (WINGS) (Canada), Feminist International Radio Endeavor (FIRE) (Costa Rica, in English and Spanish), the Women's Radio Fund (USA), Mama FM (Uganda), Radio Al-Mahabba (Iraq), Nisaa (Palestine), and the AMARC Women's International Network (hosted by AMARC, global).

### **Role of UNESCO:**

In addition to government programmes, foreign organisations such as UNESCO also contribute funds to make the experience of community radio a success storey in India. The International Program for the Creation of Communications of UNESCO (UNESCO-IPDC) has accepted USD 60,000 in funding to help set up the first 10 Community Radio Stations in India. The purpose of the funds is to support tribal CR stations in partnership with organisations such as Alternative India Growth (AID).

### **Role of AMARC:**

The World Organization of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC 1998) viewed that a voiceless voice instrument is Community Radio. At the grass-root stage, it is the empowerment of people to communicate their interests in their language and means.

The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) offers detailed information on the use of audio, video and print media; how tests can be carried out; provides connections to media networks in all regions; and a place for members to work together. The website can be accessed in Spanish, French, and English. On a different page, the AMARC site hosts the AMARC Women's Network, providing links to major international initiatives and women's rights events.

### **Conclusion:**

Public radio is more than content production, broadcasting, or even listening; it is essentially a virtuous cycle with the ability to promote fundamental social change from the bottom up. We sincerely hope that community radio officials, civil society actors, community leaders, colleges and educational institutions, and local administration will cooperate in the immediate future. In all fields, this will encourage people and us to become change-makers. Recently, in Odisha, we have seen how children can use community radio to express their minds and hearts about a child marriage problem that has influenced them. It is also an incredible and unseen tool to give voice to the voiceless as it offers the world an opportunity to talk about their life problems. Community Radio has the potential to bring substantial positive change to the local community's social fabric. The basic role of Community Radio stations as an instrument of progressive social change makes it a perfect tool for inspiring the community. There is an opportunity in India to encourage Community Radio.

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