

## Impact of Radio Siddhartha Community Radio Station on the Integrated Development of Tumkur Taluk - A Sociological Study

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### Abstract

*In the Indian context community radio has great possibilities of creating impact on society. India being a country of villages, rural population being predominantly engaged in different categories of employment, find it convenient to listen to the radio for both information and entertainment. Such a need can be effectively satisfied by the community radio stations. Our study focuses on understanding how the programmes are designed and their impact on the community of Tumkur taluk. The study was conducted in Tumkur taluk of Tumkur district in Karnataka state. Tumkur was selected because the community radio station services are reaching the people through direct broadcasting, narrowcasting and web streaming in this taluk. 80 respondents were selected purposively for the study through non-probability sampling technique. Questionnaire and interview schedules were used for data collection. The overall impact of community radio indicated that more changes have occurred in lifestyle and local culture of the respondents. This kind of research would help the researchers to understand how community radio plays an important role in integrated development.*

**Keywords:** Community Radio, impact, programmes, development.

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### INTRODUCTION

Community Radio is characterised by its limited local reach using low power transmission and programming content that caters to the educational,

developmental and socio-cultural needs of the specific community it serves. Community Radio is becoming very powerful communication tool playing a very important role in integrated development in India. In other words, Community Radio is 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 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 variety of communication devices. Its minimum coverage area is 15 to 20 kilometers.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

There are very few studies on the impact of community radio in India. However, some studies which are available for reference have pointed out the need for more studies far and wide in India. Tabing says that community radio stations are 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 also be a group with common interests, who are not necessarily living in one defined territory. (Pavarala, Vinod and Malik, 2007: 17)

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 emphasise is that development is perfectly possible within the democratic framework by reaching the information to grassroots 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 mobilised, mainly the civil society organisations, for participatory development. However the question whether Community Radio could transform the dominant public sphere and lay the

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ground for a more complete societal transformation is another matter. 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 as following; *Namma Dhvani-Kolar, Krushi CR-Dharwad, Radio Active-Bangalore, Radio Siddhartha-Tumkur, Radio Sarang-Mangalore, Radio Manipal-Manipal, Antharwani-Gulbarga, 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.*

### **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. The main goal of Radio *Siddhartha* is to provide education to the rural and urban masses through inspiring awareness programmes related to agriculture, health, education, culture, entertainment etc,. 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 established in 2009 by *Sri Siddhartha* Education Society. It is empaneled with the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity, a nodal agency of the government of India for advertising since 2013. Community Radio has given a platform to the marginalised 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)

### **OBJECTIVES**

- To study the impact of Community Radio on local communities of Tumkur Taluk.
- To study the role of Community Radio in holistic development of rural areas.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This paper is based on secondary and primary data. Primary data was collected from a sample of 80 respondents who are the listeners as well as the participants of local Community Radio of Tumkur taluk using survey method with scheduled questionnaire and interview.

### **Profile of Radio Siddhartha**

Radio Siddhartha, Community Radio broadcasts a total 9 hours programme scheduled according to the needs of the community between 6 a.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 express their feelings and views. Programme Committee comprises of different sections of the society. They are rural folks, 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 to by the listeners according to Community Radio staff. This programme is aimed at transforming those who have got hooked to evil habits which ultimately 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.

Radio has been getting overwhelming appreciative responses from its listeners as revealed by their feedback through letters, phone calls and mobile messages. According to the staff of Radio *Siddhartha*, listeners are so 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),

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*Namma Arogya* (Our Health ), *Akka Kelakka* (Listen Sister Listen), *Krushu 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 are broadcast by the Community Radio *Siddhartha*. Radio *Siddhartha* broadcast/ narrowcast/ podcast (Web) its variety of programmes. (www.radiosiddhartha.com)

### **Success Stories**

Aradhya S. S. basically a Professor of English and one of the resource persons of Radio *Siddhartha* says that it is not just a source of information but also a source of knowledge and wisdom. He has delivered over 200 episodes of programmes on communication skills in English. He says that these talks have made him popular because of English language teaching in Tumkur district. (Radio Siddhartha Souvenir, 2014:20)

Hosakere Rizwan Basha, a government high school teacher who is featured 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* moulded him into a good resource person.

This is how a Community Radio could bring marvellous changes and build a beautiful community. There are many success stories achieved by Radio *Siddhartha*. One of the examples is the ‘Pappad makers’ of Gulur village in Tumkur, which comes in the radius of Radio *Siddhartha*. Anjamma, Kamamma, Bhagirathamma, Laxamma, Geetha and others are aged women suffering from poverty. They were in a position where they could not lead their life without work and they were deserted by their family. They were also not getting any work due to their old age. Though these aged women have brought up their children to some extent, the latter were not taking care of their mothers. Suryanarayana, a listener of Radio *Siddhartha* got to know about the pathetic condition of these women and informed Radio *Siddhartha*. The Community Radio got into action and contacted Mr

Cheluvvaraju, a Pappad making trainer in Tumkur. Cheluvvaraju joined 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. Community Radio achieved the goal of community service by bringing a smile on the faces of the aged women and confidence of leading a good life. The women are now happy and have become role models for other women in their village.

Here is a success story of 84-year old retired teacher who hails from a tiny village Urukere. He is an arthritis patient. He rides his two-wheeler all the way from his native place to Tumkur to present programmes at Radio *Siddhartha*. He is none other than Huchchappadasa. He is a writer himself. He has written stories, composes poems and *Harikatha* (Story telling). He not only gives programmes but also inspires others to exhibit talent in Radio *Siddhartha*. He trains them, prepares them and motivates the rural talent to showcase their skills at Community Radio station. Station provides an opportunity and platform to tap his hidden talents, obviously local organisations began to recognise his talents and helped him to publish his articles. He was awarded 'Taluk Rajyotsava Award'. Because of Community Radio station's effort, now Huchchappadasa is a popular figure in and around Tumkur.

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, which briefs how negligence and bad habits destroys 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.

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. Funding and infrastructure is provided by Sri *Siddhartha* Education Society. Society's aim is to spread education to the poor sections of the society.

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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, 2014:13<sup>th</sup> May)

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A purposive sample of 80 respondents were selected from Tumkur Taluk. They are the regular listeners and participants in the programmes of Community Radio Station.

Table 1: Demography of Respondents

Male		Female		Urban		Rural		Literate		Illiterate	
f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
48	60	32	40	50	62.5	30	37.5	65	81.25	15	18.75

Table 1 illustrates demographic details of the respondents. Sample consisted of 60% males and 40% females. Majority 62.5% are from towns and 37.5% from villages. Majority of them are literates (81.25%). Tumkur district has a literacy rate of 75.14% with male literacy at 82.81% and female 67.38% showing rapid increase in literacy among females.

Table 2 Programme Preferences

Programme	Education		Health		Agriculture		Environment		Women		Culture	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>Male</b>	25	31.25	30	37.5	20	25.00	33	41.25	25	31.25	41	51.25
<b>Female</b>	20	25.00	25	31.25	15	18.75	21	26.25	28	35.00	31	38.75
<b>%</b>	45	56.25	55	68.75	35	43.75	54	67.5	53	66.25	72	90.00

Table 3 Purpose of Listening

Purpose	Informative		Awareness	
	f	%	f	%
<b>Male</b>	35	43.75	40	50.00
<b>Female</b>	30	37.50	29	36.25
<b>%</b>	65	81.25	69	86.25

As shown in Table 2 relating to programmes most liked by men and women shows 90% listeners like cultural programmes, 68.75% health programmes, 67.5% environmental programmes, 66.25% women's programmes, 56.25% educational programmes and 43.75% agricultural programmes. As far as purpose of listening is concerned, 81.25% said that programmes are informative whereas 86.25% felt that programmes create awareness.

**Table 3 Programme Effectiveness**

Gender	Effective in inclusion of marginalized		Reducing caste and Religious inequalities	
	f	%	f	%
Men	42	52.5	30	37.5
Women	27	33.75	29	36.25

Table 3 illustrates 52.5% of men and 33.75% of women agreed that Community Radio is effective in inclusion of marginalised. This shows that Community Radio is engaged with marginalised sections in its programmes. 37.5% of men and 36.25% of women are of the opinion that Community Radio is powerful in reducing the caste and religious inequalities also.

**Table 4 Derived Uses from Radio Programmes**

Programme	Beneficiaries	
	f	%
Education	63	78.75
Health	71	88.75
Agriculture	60	75.00
Environmental	30	37.50
Women	45	56.25

As shown in the table 4, majority of respondents 78.75% benefited from educational programmes, 88.75% from health based programmes, 75% got positive results by listening and participating in agricultural



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programmes, 37.5% benefited from environmental programmes and 56.25% benefited from programmes for women.

Table 5 : Need of Community Radio for the community development

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Need of Community Radio</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	45	60.00
Female	30	40.00
Total	75	100.00

As shown in the table 5, almost all listeners, 56.25% of men and 37.5% of women are of the opinion that Community Radio is essential for community development. Thus a total 93.75% of the respondents say that Community Radio as a developmental tool very essential for the development of community.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Community Radio is playing a very important role in development of Tumkur taluk. Radio *Siddhartha* is well received by the local community of Tumkur taluk. They respond positively for all the programmes broadcast by Radio *Siddhartha*. Majority of the respondents of Tumkur taluk liked variety of Community Radio programmes and benefited by them. 93.75% of the respondents say that Community Radio is a developmental tool essential for the development of community. Further, this kind of research reveals the challenges of Community Radio stations in its survival and in reaching the masses. In fact, this study may show an opening to many educational institutes, NGOs, Agricultural Universities and *Krusha Vigyan Kendras* to start their own Community Radio stations. This kind of research explains radio listening culture is still alive and how the Community Radio is needed for the integrated development of society by considering an individual as a role player in socio-cultural development. Central and State governments have to advertise more and include sponsored programmes and thereby garner financial support in order to strengthen the Community Radio stations.

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