

## “COMMUNITY RADIO (GURGAON KI AWAAZ): A STUDY OF ITS EFFECTIVENESS AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION”

Khurshheed Alam (*Journalism & Mass Communication*), *Research Scholar, SunRise University, Alwar(Rajasthan)*  
Dr. Sanoj Singh (*Journalism & Mass Communication*), *Assistant Professor (Dept. of Journalism & Mass Communication), SunRise University, Alwar(Rajasthan)*

### ABSTRACT

This study is about the effectiveness of Community Radio (CR) and community participation in the CR programme in India. This Thesis seeks to partly fulfill the information gap between the broadcaster and beneficiaries by reviewing the effectiveness of selected CR stations in meeting the needs and requirements of the community in the periphery of these stations with selected indicators, documenting the findings, and making recommendations for future CR initiatives in this field. The CR stations chosen for the study is Gurgaon Ki Awaaz, is run by The Restoring Force (TRF), Gurgaon, Haryana. For this study rural as well as urban CR stations have been selected as they cater to heterogeneous and diverse groups, where people from different communities are encouraged to make use of the station for their development. With quantitative method i.e. an audience survey as a method, this study explores the nature and extent of community participation in the communication process and also explores the possibilities of its effectiveness. The CR stations operating with the participation from its community members are being effective in providing them with an access to important information and entertainment. And has also, in the process, proved to be a very important avenue for the community to express their opinions and views as well as exchange of feelings. An audience survey for this study revealed that 68% of the respondents got help up to some extent whereas 22% of the respondents said that CR has helped them up to the maximum extent. Community Radio is helpful in getting information needed by the community. CR is helpful for the community either up to some extent or up to maximum extent. Community members listen to their CR station because through this platform they get to hear the voices of their community, followed by the need for the information, entertainment and liking for the programmes broadcast by that CR station.

**Keywords:** CR Station, Gurgaon Ki Awaaz, The Restoring Force (TRF), Community Participation

### INTRODUCTION

(Based on interview with the station manager and source - <http://www.mib.nic.in/> & [www.cemca.org](http://www.cemca.org)) **Run by The Restoring Force (TRF),Gurgaon-122016**

Gurgaon Ki Awaaz Samudayik Radio Station operates on 107.8 MHz. The CRS has a 22 hour broadcast in two shifts 9:30 am – 2:00 pm and 4:00 pm – 9:30 am. Gurgaon Ki Awaaz Samudayik Radio Station 107.8 MHz is the only civil society-led community radio station in the National Capital Region. A platform for and by marginalized community groups in Gurgaon, i.e. communities living in villages in and around this rapidly urbanising suburb of Delhi, the station resonates with the voices, songs, stories and struggles of millions of migrant workers and the inner city residents for whom the gloss and glamour of the malls and glass-fronted office buildings is simply a testament of the uneven development taking place in this town. Launched on 1 November 2010, the station’s 22 hour broadcasting (only in Hindi and Haryanvi) includes programmes on careers, entrepreneurship, migration, women’s empowerment and health, civic issues, folk culture especially music, sports, community reportage by school-going children, and a daily phone-in programme. These are designed to connect the community members to experts and to each other. The station is run by a team of community reporters, most of who are from these very target communities within Gurgaon. A Content Advisory Council consisting of community members from different walks of life advises the core team on programming. The studio’s phone lines have received more than 18,000 phone calls since the station went on air, and continues to receive over 50 calls during work hours. The daily phone-in programme features nearly 20 callers every day in the short duration of 30 minutes. All these feed directly into programming and shape the focus of the station. The languages of broadcast is Hindi and Haryanvi.

Our signature programme Gurgaon Live is a daily live, phone-in programme between 10:30 am and 11:30 am focusing on a range of social and civic issues, cultural dimensions, and



topical debates relevant to the local and migrant community of Gurgaon. The programme brings to a single platform community voices as well as voices from the local administration, be it the Gurgaon Police, Haryana Urban Development Authority, Municipal Corporation of Gurgaon, the Civil Surgeon, the Pollution Control Board, the District Education Officer, the District Rural Development Agency, etc. In the past years, the programme has become a favourite of both listeners as well as the local administration to keep a tab on the pulse of the people. Topics raised on Gurgaon Live can be as serious as police brutality in Gurgaon, corporal punishment of children in government schools, or wastage of drinking water, or light, sentimental or humorous topics like memories of radio listening in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, or when was the last time you wrote or received a letter? Regardless of the topic, listeners engage with passion, and utilize the programme to engage directly with the local administration. The NOMAD transmitter and antenna were set up by the vendor themselves. We have experienced transmitter downtime but, do not track dates and times, but in a year, will not be more than 5 days.

### **Community Participation in CR station**

Gurgaon Ki Awaaz's daily broadcast consists of one-and-a-half hours of live broadcast every morning, in which our listeners participate with enthusiasm. To bring in community groups that are hesitant to participate (especially women), or who do not have ready access to radio (like children), reporters go into the field with a mobile phone during the live programme and enable women and children to participate. Because the mobile phone is 3G enabled, the communities that are visited also get to listen to the broadcast even if the signal reception is bad at their location. Reporters also help women set the frequency on their phone if they want to continue to listen to the CRS. Our reporters go into schools in the morning, when a children's programme – Galli Galli Sim Sim – is being broadcast, so that teachers and students can call in and participate in the programme.

The studio is open to everyone in the community, and community performers (mandali's) routinely come in to record raginis. Women mandali's sometimes ask us to record them at the local temple or inside someone's home – and reporters do that. The most exciting experience of running Gurgaon Ki Awaaz has been to see the overwhelming connect the station has built in 18 months with its niche listeners. Despite a contrarian approach to Gurgaon's 'Millennium City' image, the station has firmly legitimised the Hindi and Haryanvi voices of Gurgaon's original residents, local Haryanvis, whose culture was increasingly being given short shrift by the city's urbanisation, as well as the thousands of migrants from Uttarakhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bengal, who live and work in Gurgaon, and carry a small part of their home with them wherever they go. Today, when the local health authorities want a message to reach the last mile, the hardest to reach, they perforce turn to Gurgaon Ki Awaaz knowing well that where their posters and flyers cannot reach, a low power CR station definitely will. From its initial set up, TRF was convinced that the station must be entirely communitybased with community reporters handling everything from reportage to production. With training inputs from Ideosync Media Combine, in both technology and content, TRF was able to make a station come to life without any trained sound recordist or radio 'expert'. Because of the station's vibrant communication network with the community, rather than a shortage of programming ideas, we often suffer from a surfeit of ideas hampered only by our limited resources to flesh out every story into a radio programme. Enthusiastic listeners routinely call in to inform about community events that they would like reported on the radio, be it a Ragini performance, a health camp, or the visit of the Chief Minister.

### **Innovation and Creative Approaches**

Gurgaon Ki Awaaz draws upon the rich cultural pool that exists in every community in India. The station does not broadcast any film songs, nor does it need to. In the past 18 months, the station has built a bank of over 100 hours of music entirely from local mandalis, recording in Hindi, Haryanvi, Bhojpuri, Rajasthani, and even Oriya. The station's identity is closely linked to the music it plays, and listeners routinely give feedback that ever since Gurgaon Ki Awaaz went on air, they have stopped listening to other FM stations in Delhi. Delving into courtyards to record women's folk songs relating to weddings, childbirth, seasons and

festivals, travelling into far out villages to record late night performances of raginis and saang, and keeping an open studio for local musicians has given Gurgaon Ki Awaaz an invaluable collection of folk music.

### Programme Details

S.N.	Title	Format	Content	Description
1	Gurgaon Live	Live	On Phone	Issues of Public Interest and Social Responsibility A daily morning call-in show on a wide variety of topics.
2	Apni Pasand	Music	Request programme	Ragini and other folk music requests Two hours a day of listener-requested folk music from our archives.
3	Geetmala	Music	Pre-recorded, field-recorded folk Music programme	Haryanvi, Bhojpuri, Rajasthani, UP folk music 45-minute folk music show broadcast daily recorded in our studio , or in the field.
4	Apna Nazariya	Interview-based	Entrepreneur ship programme	How to start your own small business Show that airs once a week for 10 minutes and features a different local entrepreneur talking about how they got their start in a certain type of small company..
5	Hum Hongey Kamyab	Magazine format	Career advice programme	Program airing once a week for 15 minutes in which experts in a certain field discuss the ins and outs of their chosen profession and the lessons they've learned along the way.

**Funding and Support :** The CRS has worked with other government groups or organizations, such as with Gurgaon Traffic Police for awareness campaigns against drunken driving, helmetless riders, traffic violations; and campaigns supporting assisting of accident victims; with Gurgaon Post Office an awareness campaign about savings schemes and the importance of correct PIN code was taken up and with Haryana Urban Development Authority an awareness campaign about importance of not wasting water. We have also worked closely with Civil Hospital, Gurgaon on health awareness. We are closely linked with many NGOs like SEARCH YEARS, St Stephen's Hospital's rural health programme, Literacy India, etc. who are our sustained partners.

**Sustainability Strategy :** We are looking at a mix of project-based funding, local advertisements and government advertisements to make the station self-sufficient. As of now, we have managed to garner some project-based funding, and a few local advertisements. In 2012, we hope to increase the percentage of local advertisements, and would welcome Government ads through DAVP. Gurgaon Ki Awaaz has been set up and is supported by The Restoring Force (TRF), an NGO that has been working in government schools in Gurgaon district for the past ten years, primarily in the area of basic school infrastructure enhancement. TRF has supported the set up and initial operating costs of Gurgaon Ki Awaaz. The station expects to be financially self-sustainable by end of 2011 with a mix of listener memberships, project-based funding, government advertisements and sponsored programmes and local advertisements.

**Key Challenges of the Station:** Finding financial resources for on-going training of reporters is difficult. Finding the right person for marketing of advertisements and the funds for this is a big challenge.

### Impact Study by the Community Radio

While Gurgaon Ki Awaaz has not done any impact study, we have maintained detailed phone records since our first day of broadcast. As we are slowly computerising these call records (which number more than 18,000 and gathers information like date, name, place in Gurgaon, phone number, occupation and feedback), a clear picture of our audience does emerge. Over

60 per cent of our listeners are drivers, a fact that has driven us to create a separate programme and platform for drivers to share their experiences and problems, to the extent that the local police administration has offered to do an on-air dialogue with a sample group of drivers to address some of the key issues impacting this community. Another cohesive group consists of local villagers, many of whom have benefited from the sale of their land to builders but seen a gradual decline in the civic amenities and social structures in their own villages. Ever since the station began its live segment, our most valuable community segment has shown a sharp increase in participation – women. We now have women calling us on a daily basis, especially in the live segment. To build wider networks in the Gurgaon community, to open the studio to a wider range of community reporters, and to support the training of an ongoing stream of volunteers, trainee reporters and technicians, Gurgaon Ki Awaaz needs four fundamental things: A strong financial backbone that will allow the reporters to focus on the voices that are going on air. Ongoing communication between the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the district officials about the legitimacy of community radio and articulation of the need for block and district officials to engage with the CR station to communicate Government schemes to the public and to receive feedback about the implementation of these schemes via the CRS. Ongoing training and exposure to low cost radio technologies. Training in station management techniques, accounting, and writing of annual reports and proposals, which will go a long way in the station's sustainability.

**Contact person** : Arti Jaiman, Project Manager, Community Radio, the Restoring Force, Gurgaon-122 016, Haryana Web: [www.trfindia.org](http://www.trfindia.org) Phone: 9811126336 E-mail: [arti@trfindia.org](mailto:arti@trfindia.org).

Soumya Jha, Station Manager, **Gurgaon Ki Awaaz Samudayik Radio**, 27 Electronic City, Sector 18, Udyog Vihar, Gurgaon-122016 , Haryana Phone: 0124-4087545 E-mail: [arti@trfindia.org](mailto:arti@trfindia.org)

#### AIM

Consider the community's awareness level about Community Radio (**Gurgaon Ki Awaaz Samudayik Radio**).

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

**Research design:** The researcher has used Quantitative and Qualitative method for the research.

**Population** : The survey's target group consists of people in the area who might listen to a certain Community Radio station.

**Sampling:** The researcher has selected the sample based on how easy it was for them. 100 listeners were selected at random from each station's service area for this study. Purposive Sampling( Non - Probability) was used to choose gurgaon ki awaaz local radio station . This Community Radio Stations will be selected through purposive sampling method.

#### Tools and Instrument: Questionnaire/ Schedule

The data was gathered through a survey conducted by the researcher. In order to conduct this survey, a timetable was made that included questions about all of the above factors. It was with the study's goals in mind that the questions were formulated.

To record information from respondents, a questionnaire consists of a written list of questions. Participants in a questionnaire read the questions, make inferences about the intended responses, and record their thoughts on paper. The main distinction between a questionnaire and an interview schedule is that the interviewer records the responses on the questionnaire and the respondents record their own on the interview schedule. In order to get proper data through quantitative research methods, an audience survey will be conducted. The audience survey will include a sample study of potential listeners of selected Community Radio. The goal of the audience study will to gain objective knowledge of Community Radio stations, their programmes, public participation levels, and listener demographics. The questions will prepare as per the objectives of the study. Bar Graphs , Pie charts will be used as a statistical tool.



**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION****Profile of the Respondents****Sex**

Sex	Number	Percentage
Male	64	64%
Female	36	36%

**Table 1.1: Respondents Sex Ratio****Occupation**

SL.	OCCUPATION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
1	Farmer	4	4%
2	Skilled worker	11	11%
3	Wage laborer	13	13%
4	Shopkeeper	10	10%
5	Housewife	28	28%
6	Student	17	17%
7	Govt. servant	7	7%
8	Others(Specify)	10	10%

**Table 1.2: Occupation of the Respondents****Education**

SL.	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
1	Illiterate	15	15%
2	Literate but no formal education	13	13%
3	Upto primary level	11	11%
4	Upto matric	30	30%
5	Upto HSC	13	13%
6	Graduation or equivalent	18	18%

**Table 1.3: Respondents Educational Profile****RESPONSE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Do you have Radio set?

SL.	ANSWER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
1	Yes	39	39%
2	No	61	61%

**Table 1.4: Ownership of Radio Set**

How often you listen other radio?

SL.	FREQUENCY	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
1	Daily	48	48%
2	3-4times a week	17	17%
3	Once a week	2	2%
4	Never	28	28%
5	Occasionally	5	5%

**Table 1.5 Listening pattern of Radio**

If you were to do a poll, how long would you say radio is on in your daily routine?

SL.	DURATION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
1	2-4hours	38	53%
2	4-6hours	5	7%
3	6-8hours	2	3%
4	Less than 1hour	27	37%

**Table 1.6: Listening hours of Radio of respondents**

Where do you usually listen to radio?

SL.	Place	Number	Percentage
1	Home	43	60%
2	Chaupal	0	0%
3	Teashop	9	13%
4	Others(Specify)	20	28%

**Table 1.7: Place of Radio listening by the Respondents**

What are the programmes you listen?

SL.	PROGRAMMETYPE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
1	Folk Music	32	44%
2	Film Music	65	90%
3	Bhakti Sangeet	12	17%
4	Kisan Vani	9	12%
5	NEWS	32	44%
6	Programme for women and child	23	32%
7	Others(Specify)	2	3%

**Table 1.8: Listening preferences of Radio by the respondents**

## DISCUSSION

In response to the initial inquiry, do you have a radio set at your disposal? In response to this question, 48 percent of respondents said that they listen to the radio on a regular basis, 17 percent of respondents said that they listen to the radio three or four times a week, 2 percent of respondents said that they listen to the radio at least once a week, 5 percent of respondents said that they listen to the radio occasionally, and 28 percent of respondents said that they never listen to the radio. As a result of the enormous number of people who participated in the survey, 72% of them listen to the radio either frequently or once a week. Even if 28 percent of respondents aren't listening to the radio programme, it's still a problem, and the government and organizations that manage community radio should organize their shows properly so that they may reach the greatest possible number of listeners.

To what extent do they listen to the radio on a regular basis? More than half (53%) of respondents said they listen to the radio for two to four hours per day; another 7% said they do so for four to six hours; 37% listened for less than an hour; and 3% said they do so for six to eight hours or more. It appears from the comments that while people's radio listening habits vary, the vast majority of listeners tune in between the hours of 2 and 4 each day. Radio listeners who only tune in for two to four hours a day are nevertheless an essential demographic for broadcasters to account for when developing content. In a survey of radio listeners, 61% said they do so at home, 13% in a chaupal, and 28% elsewhere. They listen to the radio while driving or at work. The responses to the question of which shows people prefer to listen to reveal varying degrees of programme preference on the part of the respondents. It is interesting to note that 90% of respondents said they prefer to listen to film music, 44% of respondents said they listen to folk music, 17% of respondents said they like bhakti sangeet, 12% of respondents prefer to listen to kisan vani (programme for agriculture), 44% of respondents listen to NEWS, and 32% listener prefer to listen to programme broadcast for women and children.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, community radio in India has played an important role in promoting community participation and fostering a sense of community identity. By providing a platform for local voices, community radio has enabled individuals and communities to share their perspectives, experiences, and concerns with a wider audience. Through this participation, community radio has helped to promote a more inclusive and democratic media landscape. Studies on the effectiveness of community radio in India have shown that it has had a positive impact on the lives of listeners by providing them with access to information, education, and entertainment that is relevant to their local contexts. In addition, community

radio has been found to play an important role in promoting social and cultural development, as well as facilitating community-based initiatives and actions.

Despite these positive impacts, community radio in India continues to face challenges, including limited funding and a shortage of trained personnel. To ensure that community radio continues to fulfill its potential as a tool for community empowerment and participation, it is essential that policymakers, civil society organizations, and media practitioners work together to address these challenges and ensure that community radio remains accessible, diverse, and accountable.

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