CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter includes an overview of community media at the global level and in India and narrows its focus to the campus community radio sector. With the purpose of locating Anna FM’s pedigree within the global campus community radio scenario, this chapter identifies gaps in literature with respect to campus community radio and the relationship between participatory approaches, improved knowledge and behaviour change. Defining the phenomenon of campus community radio in India, as compared to other countries, the chapter identifies similarities and differences that justify the need for the study.

One of the most apt and comprehensive definitions of community radio reflecting its true mission and purpose is found on the AMARC website in the words of Vigil (1997).

“When radio fosters the participation of citizens and defends their interests; when it reflects the tastes of the majority and makes good humor and hope its main purpose; when it truly informs; when it helps resolve the thousand and one problems of daily life; when all ideas are debated in its programs and all opinions are respected; when cultural diversity is stimulated over commercial homogeneity; when women are main players in communication and not simply a pretty voice or a publicity gimmick; when no type of dictatorship is tolerated, not even the musical dictatorship of the
big recording studios; when everyone’s words fly without discrimination or censorship, that is community radio” (Bold italics by the researcher).

### 2.2 THEORIES OF MASS COMMUNICATION

CR functions according to specific community needs and interests. Because circumstances differ between communities, strategies for pursuing the CR vision vary along economic, geographic, and demographic lines. While it is of some interest to focus solely on differences, one should also consider the processes by which CR projects confront their unique tasks. CR broadcasting is influenced by earlier theories of the role of communication in society and development.

The magic bullet or hypodermic needle theory equates media influence with the effect of an intravenous injection with values, ideas and attitude ‘injected’ into the media user resulting in a particular behaviour. The two step flow theory says that information from media moves in two distinct stages. Opinion leaders who pay close attention to mass media pass information to others through informal, personal communication. Next the diffusion theory focuses on the conditions which increase or decrease the likelihood that a new idea, product or practice will be adopted by members of a given culture.

The agenda setting theory postulates that media tell their audience what is important and what is not in such a way that the mass media through coverage of ideas and events, may influence on what the public regard as important. The functional theory which sees communication as serving many functions in society is related to the Uses and Gratification theory which speaks of what the individual uses communication for rather than what the communication effects on the individual.
CR can have an effect on society, as illustrated by ‘media effects’ and ‘normative’ theories. To understand theories of mass communication it is necessary to understand mass media functions of information, education, motivation, persuasion, entertainment, cultural promotion and integration.

On relationship between mass media and society, McQuail (1983) proposed an interactive perspective, that mass media are primarily moulders of society as well as reflectors of it. The psychological approach held the individual’s psychological mechanism responsible for his reaction to media while the sociological approach puts greater emphasis on audiences and sees them as manipulating the media more than the media on them.

The normative theories of mass media highlight the constraints in which they operate under prevailing economic conditions. This led to a new approach, the Development Communication Theory that uses media as a support to the national development program. A recent addition is the Democratic-Participant Media Theory which is concerned with the right to information, the right to answer back, the right to use media for interaction in the small-scale settings of the community and favours multiplicity of media and horizontality of communication at all levels. The ‘demassification of the media’ according to this theory is as vital as ‘democratisation’. The ultimate goal is to entrust media to communities for their own ‘liberation’ through a process of ‘conscientization’ and in Reyess Matta’s words, a ‘critical national audience’.

Normative media theories as outlined by McQuail (1987) range from the ‘authoritarian media theory’, the ‘Free press or liberation theory’, the ‘Social Responsibility theory’, the ‘Soviet media theory’, the ‘Development media theory’, to the ‘Democratic participant media theory’. Along with the ‘diffusion’ theory, McQuail’s interpretation of the ‘development media’ and ‘development participant media’ theories serve as a starting point for
providing a rationale behind the discourse of CR broadcasting. In general, communication policy must not assume a universal applicability that was inherent in the dominant paradigm, but must be based on the fact that priorities are more contextual to the needs of individual countries or communities. Dagron (2001) adds that participatory approaches contribute to putting decision making at the hands of the people and instill cultural pride and self esteem.

2.3 MODELS OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is central to our lives as it regulates and shapes all human behavior. The functional definition of communication is “the transfer or conveying of meaning” (Oxford Dictionary), “one mind affecting another” (Claude Shannon), “transmission of stimuli” (Colin Cherry) or ‘sharing of experience on the basis of commonness’ (Wilbur Shramm). The earlier models of communication were simple but inadequate. Aristotle’s communication model was to ‘persuade the other party’, while the Bullet model constructed during World War II (1935-45) saw communication as a magic bullet to transfer ideas.

By 1950 models became elaborate and adequate contributing significantly to the understanding of the communication process. The Osgood model emphasizes the dynamic relationship between source and receiver while Shramm visualizes communication as a process of sharing experiences and stresses on feedback and noise in the process. The experience of the past fifty years has demonstrated the crucial importance of communication in the field of development. Within the perspective of development communication, two trends developed successively: an approach that favoured large-scale actions and relied on the mass media, and an approach that promoted grassroots communication, also called community communication, promoting small-scale projects and relying especially on small media.
These trends, which still co-exist today to various degrees within the field of development communication, are linked to the evolution of the development and communication models that have marked development efforts up to now. As a matter of fact, the first development models were defined exclusively by their economic variables. As the MacBride Commission report noted:

“…The imitation of a development model, based on the hypothesis that wealth, once acquired, will automatically filter down to all levels of society, included the propagation of communication practices from top to bottom. The effects were a long way from the effects that were expected” (MacBride 1980)

The trend toward mass communication initially marked the first two decades during which the media were utilized in the field of development. These initial experiences, centered mainly around the mass media, relied both on a communication model based on persuasion and information transmission, and on a development model based on increasing economic activity and changes in values and attitudes.

One of the models that had a major influence on communication practices in the area of educational development is the innovation dissemination model. This model resulted from an extension of agricultural practices exported to developing countries involving transmission of information to farmers by a resource person and rested on three main elements: the target population of the innovation, the innovation to be transmitted, and the sources and communication channels. Communication channels and sources were generally used within the framework of vertical, top-down communication and since then, the development and communication models have evolved considerably.
The conceptions everyone had of the role of communication in development have changed radically. The communication paradigm earlier consisted of transmitting the technology necessary for the growth of productivity and later focused on stimulating the potential for change within a community followed by the concept of grassroots participation in the development process. A new model emphasizing the endogenous character of development has made it possible to define development as a global process, for which societies are responsible. In this new perspective, development is not something that can come from the outside. It is a participatory process of social change within a given society (Rogers 1976).

This model has also made it possible to extend the concept of development to non-material notions by bringing into the equation notions of social equality, liberty, revenue distribution and participation in development. One of the models which exercised in the past, and today still exercises a determining influence on the development communication practices, is the consciousness model developed by Freire and several other communicators after him, identified communication as a process that is inseparable from the social and political processes necessary for development.

Pointing out Paulo Freire’s influence on communication projects for social change, Dagron (2001) has summarized the structural model that make radio participatory with integral participation as the goal for CR operators.

Community ownership, instead of access mitigated by social, political, or religious contingencies;

Horizontal organization, rather than vertical organizing that positions community members as passive receivers;
Dialogic, long-term processes—not top-down campaigns more concerned with yielding results for external evaluation than with building sustainable community power;

Collective agency, or power asserted in the interest of the many rather than the few;

Community specificity in content, language, culture, and resources;

Need-based initiatives—determined by community dialogue rather than donor influence.

Freire insisted on the fact that the mere transfer of knowledge by an authority source to a passive receiver did nothing to help promote growth in the latter as a human being with an independent and critical conscience capable of influencing and changing society. According to him, for development communication to be effective, it had to be linked not only to the process of acquiring technical knowledge and skills, but also to the awareness-raising, politicization and organization processes. In his model, which he explains in The Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Freire 1973), development communication can be considered as a tool that the grassroots can use to take control.

The participatory theoretical model lies within the paradigm of ‘another development’ (Melkote 1991) that sets forth the importance of cultural identity of local communities and of democratization and participation at all levels, largely emanating from traditional receivers. The Freirian notions of dialogical communication are central to the model which focuses on participation, cultural identity and empowerment. ‘Another’
communication thus endorses what McQuail referred to as ‘multiplicity, smallness of scale, locality, deinstitutionalization, interchange of sender-receiver roles and horizontality of communication links at all levels of society (McQuail 1987).

One of the models attached to this paradigm is the methodology of community media which consists in helping people to formulate their problems or to acquire an awareness of new options. The concept of interactivity, with the small media as its operational instrument, makes possible the endogenous acquisition of knowledge and skills within the framework of a search for solutions and the communication process. The methodology results from educational technology and is characterized by the integration of needs analysis and evaluation mechanisms in the communication process.

Other practices are based on the community approach and the grassroots awareness-raising model. The same is true of the alternative for democratic development communication, which emphasizes grassroots access to the communication process for the purpose of promoting social justice and democracy. In certain cases, this is translated by an emphasis on participation by the most disadvantaged in the communication process (access to small media at the local level), and in other cases, by actions promoting cultural expression and the search for ways of taking control of the mass media.

In short, the field of development communication is vast and its divisions are numerous. In spite of the diversity of approaches and orientations, there is a consensus today on the need for grassroots participation in development and on the essential role that communication plays in promoting development. This is very well said in a popular FAO slogan: “There is no development without communication” (Balit 1988).
2.4 MAPPING GLOBAL COMMUNITY RADIO

Of the various means of mass communication, CR makes for neither the easiest nor most sustainable, though all it takes is ‘a low-power transmitter harnessed with an antenna, a tape recorder and a microphone’ (Tabing 2002). Take the money out of radio, and one has stations struggling for a tiny foothold of non-profit, do-good enterprise in an ocean of commercial endeavors. Still, CR exists all over world ‘in multiple forms’, (Price-Davies and Tacchi 2001) suited to the local task. What makes community-based radio a viable medium is a direct function of a community’s need for a relevant, accessible tool of communication. Community stations arise and survive only where the people need it and possess the means to support it. From Latin America to Southern Africa to South East Asia, CR succeeded where commercial outfits could not reap profits and state-run services failed to make an impact.

Among other things, CR can help conflict resolution and reconciliation, encourage community participation and interaction, provide new skills and opportunities, and promote fair democracy through improving local access to information in order to stimulate the local economic development and be ‘a catalyst for building community’ (Siemering 2000). In its ideals, community radio functions as a communicative instrument integrated into the social ecology of a community. Whereas public or public service radio offers programming for a listening community, community radio is forged by the listeners. The participatory aspect of community radio runs both outward and inward, as Bruce Girard, founder of World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC), writes:

“Community radio aims not only to participate in the life of the community, but also to allow the community to participate in the life of the station... at the level of ownership, programming, management, direction and
financing” (Girard 1992).

Several important processes in the late 1970’s, including UNESCO's "MacBride Commission," concluded that increased participation of development 'beneficiaries' in media projects was needed for successful development projects. For the MacBride Commission, participation should not be limited to simple audience feedback, but include active local involvement in the planning and production of media programming. Additionally, the Commission expressed its concerns about the concentration of media ownership and the control of information by the developed world.

In diverse social contexts, the notions of community ‘access’, ‘management’ and ‘participation’ are common to most discourses on community radio. In community media the community participates as planners, producers and performers. They are means of expression of the community rather than for the community. It is also found that community radio broadcasting is an important site for social activism. The emergence of community radio broadcasting across the world has, in recent years, led to the growing recognition of its importance and its distinctive character in the international human rights system as well as in the discourse of international development agencies.

According to the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC - acronymn for Association Mondiale des Radiodiffuseurs Communautaires), the strategic plan and budget for 2007-2010 focuses on five main development areas for CR namely i) Advocacy and policy research; ii) Knowledge sharing and capacity building, iii) Content exchange and social action campaigns, iv) Gender equality and women’s rights and v) Network development and communication (AMARC 2006).
The first real signs of community radio were in Latin America in the 1940s, in Bolivia’s tin mining communities. The miners’ radios began in 1948 and by the 1960s, 23 radio stations were operating in practically all the mining centres of Bolivia, enabling workers, families, and communities to communicate news and discuss their livelihoods. The miners themselves sustained the radio stations by giving a percentage of their salary to the running costs. These stations became a trustworthy source of information and a major stimulus for local debate (Huesca 1994).

Experiences from Latin America, dating as far back as mid-1940s, have demonstrated the potential of community radio for social change. More recent legislative history of countries like Australia, the United States, Canada and Ireland offers us durable examples where community media are operating on a self-managed, democratic basis (Pavarala and Kumar 2001).

In the USA, community broadcasting had its roots in a 1945 decision of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to reserve 20 per cent of the FM radio spectrum for non-profit services. The first non-profit radio services in the USA were limited to educational and religious institutions but the launch in 1949 of KPFA in Berkeley, California marked the beginning of a wider opening for community broadcasting. Over the last twenty years, across the Americas there has been a massive increase in the number of community-based radios. There are educational radio stations but outside the structures of formal education. There are indigenous peoples’ radio stations that take account of local languages and traditions; those run by peasant’s organisations and by women's groups and those run by the Catholic Church, by universities, and by trade unions as in Bolivia (O’Connor 1990).

Europe has been characterized by a more uneven development. In 1976, Italy opened its airwaves after the Supreme Court declared the state monopoly illegal. France followed in 1983 and today, most western European
countries have policy and regulatory systems that recognise community broadcasting. Even the UK, after years of resisting reform, finally legislated for community radio in 2004. Eastern Europe, with a few exceptions including Slovenia and Hungary, has been slower to move forward. Despite, or perhaps more accurately because of the stampede to the market after the collapse of authoritarian communism, there are still few countries in Eastern Europe in which civil society groups are able to legally take to the airwaves.

In Africa, radio outside the state-owned systems has been a recent but also a rapid development. In 1985, there were less than 10 independent radio stations in the entire continent. In post-apartheid South Africa, the establishment of community radio was seen as a tool to empower the majority, previously excluded from the airwaves. South African community radio has a distinct status as a third tier alongside state and commercial radio and over 150 community radio stations have been licensed. The South African model has been adopted elsewhere including Malawi, Uganda and Namibia.

In Asia and the Pacific, community broadcasting is less widespread. It has been established in Australia since 1973 coinciding with the introduction of radio broadcasting on the FM spectrum pioneered largely by Community Radio. In the 1980s, it emerged in the Philippines and spread to several South East Asian countries including, more recently, Indonesia and Thailand. It has also taken root in Nepal and is a focus of current media reform in India. Today there are hundreds of small community radio stations across the Indonesian islands, serving peasants, fishing communities and the neighbourhoods of the urban poor.

The Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) in 1981 with the support of UNESCO and the Danish Development International Development Agency (DANIDA) set up the Mahaweli Community Radio station which remained the second most important source of agricultural and health related
information till the end of the decade after which it started showing off cracks. Two decades hence, Sri Lankan Community Radio is struggling to sustain while battling with the profit-oriented FM channels of the corporate sector. The subsequent local Community Radio stations that followed are the Kothmale and Uva Community Radio but there are no civil society movements or educational institutions attempting to set up or even lobby for ownership of air waves.

Despite the worldwide growth of community broadcasting, many States remain reluctant to open their airwaves to civil society organisations. Ironically, despite their enthusiasm for the free market, private commercial broadcasters have also frequently sought to exclude not-for-profit community broadcasters from competing in the media landscape. Country level legislative and regulatory frameworks and associated spectrum planning remain the most persistent obstacles to the establishment and growth of community broadcasting. The entry of large media conglomerates with their tendency of rampant vertical and horizontal integrations has taken policy further away from the disempowered section of society. It is being increasingly felt that the hegemonic dominance of ‘media elites’ on policymaking and governance, coupled with operational challenges often faced by community groups, results in legislation that restricts the enormous potentiality of community media access, participation and representation.

In essence, CR is present in most countries and all regions of the world. It builds on more than half a century of grassroots experience that has earned it the support of tens of thousands of communities worldwide. Diverse studies on CR across the globe provide a rare insight into its functioning and helps explore the limitless potential waiting to be tapped.

A thematic review of such worldwide studies pertaining to CR’s educational and development purpose, participatory approaches to doing CR,
its potential in advancing women empowerment as also different approaches to CR research as also impact and evaluation studies will guide us through a more profound understanding of community radio practices and their role in development communications and help locate Anna FM as a participatory campus community radio initiative in the global development community radio sphere with its rare ability to facilitate improved knowledge and encourage behavior change along the lines of claims of non-profit radio’s educational purpose.

In the words of a Rockefeller Foundation report (Dagron 2001) what better way to realize this educational purpose than CR which is “one of the best ways to reach excluded or marginalized communities in targeted, useful ways,” and in giving them a ‘voice’ that matters most in development communication (Dagron 2001).

An example of non-profit radio’s educational purpose is reflected in Tamminga’s (1989) case study of radio programming by two Honduran NGOs. In his study, “Is community radio an effective tool for grassroots development? - A case study of two Honduran NGOs”, Tamminga argues that scores of projects in Latin America attempted to use radio for educational purposes, but for the most part, these experiments did not fully meet their development objectives. This study assesses the potential of radio from a different perspective by examining the effectiveness of CR as a component of ‘grassroots' development processes in detail through radio programming by two non-governmental organisations in Honduras, according to three main criteria - use of local language, culture and indigenous knowledge; participation of community members in programming; and impact of programming on audiences.

The research concludes that both organisations have been strikingly successful at utilising indigenous knowledge and culture to produce radio
programming that is sensitive to the development needs of their audiences. As against the practical observation that contradictions of power and participation limited effectiveness of the Honduras project in contributing to social change, the experience at Anna FM demonstrates that when two communities participated at Kannigapuram and Kotturpuram, an healthy competitive environment evolved, with an eagerness to outsmart the other in terms of showcasing indigenous knowledge.

In fact, this led to an innovation of sorts, when the weekly phone-in interactive live show became a bridge between the two communities to know, understand and collaborate better on sharing knowledge and resources. Strangers until then, this additional effort with two student media volunteer teams coordinating with the two communities at their locale with WLL phones, seemed to forge mutually beneficial partnerships between local communities and pave the way for long term solutions to common issues.

And the importance of this key role played by community volunteers at Anna FM is endorsed by White (1990) while situating his analysis within the United States, Italy, France, Sweden, Latin America and Britain. He argues that community volunteers play an important role in production of programming with opportunity for horizontal communication between individuals and groups in the community.

According to Salter (1980) community radio stations often succeed particularly well when they act as what she called a fulcrum, balanced, perhaps precariously, between the multiple interests, issues, participants, listeners and publics they exist to animate. As part of her study on Co-op Radio, Vancouver, Salter (cited in Lewis and Booth 1990) developed what she refers to as the ‘range of perspectives-in-conflict’; those concerned with class, participation or process in community radio broadcasting.
As she warns, the problems of perspectives in conflict are important to a critical examination of community and campus-community radio. Salter (1981) adds that an attempt to forward the goals of participation and access must include an examination of the terms in a real situation as an assessment of their validity. At Anna FM too, meticulous care is taken to ensure that every effort is made to accommodate multiple interests of the community, ranging from addressing civic issues and self-help group formation to health camps and local crime. This is made possible with regular feed forward and feed back studies, focus group discussions, live phone-in interactions and frequent interpersonal communication.

Each station enables and encourages community participation in the levels of ownership, programming, management, direction and financing of the stations according to Girard (1992) in his comparative studies of community media development across different countries. In the context of Anna FM, a first experiment of its kind in the country as a campus community radio station, the emphasis is at fostering participation mainly in the area of programming, related decision-making and uninhibited utilization of available resources with the underlying purpose of inculcating a sense of belonging and pride at being an intrinsic part of the community media environment.

Participatory development being the core priority of Anna FM, this researcher along with a team of media student volunteers played the role of ‘animators’ (Josiah, 1994) to break the ice and create a sense of community. This periodic mediation as live phone-in interactions, production of community skits and off-air outreach activities facilitated the establishment of a strong rapport with the community and build interpersonal communication and social capital. In a study by Josiah on social mobilization through animation for participatory development in Sierra Leone she found how
‘animators’ stimulated and created awareness among communities about ‘the reality in which they live’.

Echoing Tamminga’s fears of community radio’s limited effectiveness of social change attributed to contradictions of power and participation, Huesca’s (1994) ethnographic case study of Bolivian tin miner’s radio while seeking to identify the dynamic processes and procedures by which participation is implemented in Community Radio, concludes that participatory media involved both elements of ‘empowering’ and ‘marginalising’, and if participation is left to chance, it will inevitably reflect relations of power in societies, neighbours or households.

Again, the Anna FM experience at empowering communities through participatory radio clearly points to a completely positive influence beyond socio-economic and educational divides as against the power struggle stated by Huesca. For instance, at the community radio training workshop for women organized at Anna FM as part of the Science for Women project, which included programme planning, scripting, interviewing and recording, Mala, a flower seller from Kotturpuram and a few other illiterate participants were pleasantly surprised when they received writing notepads for drafting scripts.

Apprehensive of feeling alienated at the workshop for not knowing to write, they felt disillusioned. But this was a short-lived moment, when the other literate members reorganized themselves and entrusted them with roles suited to their abilities, to play the role of interviewers and participate as stock characters in skits and programme promos. A typical example of recognizing individual strengths and making best use of indigenous resources beyond differences as against marginalizing and struggling in power relations.
Putting aside such fears of contradiction of participation and power, Bekken (1998) describes that media involvement with the community can provide an additional understanding to CR. Lewis and Booth (1990) also emphasise community media in terms of listener participation. Both by having listeners participate in funding station operations and being a part of station management and programming, a participatory approach to broadcasting allows community media to be responsive to their listeners.

Throwing light on the extent of participation ideal for CR, Hendy (2000) offers an interpretation, one which is smaller in scale than mainstream ‘local’ radio, so that it is ‘closer’ to its listening community than other forms of radio, and the other that is more ‘participatory’ than mainstream radio, staffed more by volunteers drawn from the listening community rather than full-time professionals. As Dunaway (2001) writes, “Our community identity is partly determined by our identification with its local broadcasters”, with stress on community access than conforming to standards of professionalism.

While further emphasizing the importance of participation, Fraser and Estrada (2002) highlight the need to reflect and promote local identity, character and culture by focusing principally on local content and create a diversity of voices and opinions on the air through its openness to participation from all sectors. It is participation that can socially and individually empower hundreds of local volunteers with the chance to become broadcasters and produce real social gains for their communities as well as some lively radio, argues Everitt (2002) in his evaluation of 15 Access Radio Projects.

Linking together the concepts of public sphere and social capital van Vuuren (2003) while investigating community participation in Australian Community Broadcasting explored the relationship between media and democracy. She states that the value and purpose of community broadcasting
are located in its community development function and related to ‘community spirit’ and demographic structure. A paradigm shift is necessary from behaviour change communication to a greater focus on community involvement, creation of support systems, the improvement of material conditions, and a spotlight on human rights says Mostert and Zyl (2004). Quoting Marshall McLuhan’s ‘The Medium is the Message’, he says that Media Determinism relates to the belief that a medium like radio, because of communication qualities unique to that medium, will be able to change the behaviour of or impart knowledge to, its audience, irrespective of context.

Documenting the motivation for participation in WAIF 88.3 FM, an all-volunteer CR station in Cincinnati, Ohio, Terry (2004) in his study on CR’s place in a globalizing media landscape argues that CR has proven itself to be an alternative medium that allows citizens to construct their own local media space that allows access to everyday, non professional citizens where in addition to media exposure and interpersonal communication ‘audience members need to be viewed more as collaborators than as passive receptors of expert information and advice’ (Sood et al 2004) to achieve sustainable behaviour change.

While motivation for participation as volunteer broadcasters in CR stations is not based on wage benefits, people take on these roles for a variety of reasons, according to Coates (2004), ranging from altruistic notions of community service to the development of personal skills and profiles.

Investigating ‘Radio Networks and the Redefinition of Local Private Rádio’ Taylor (1998) calls for increasing regulatory vigilance of existing policy governing local content. With regards to the Indian community radio broadcast policy, Anna FM respects the mandate of the Government to ensure participatory programming in the stipulated areas of health, education, environment and community development. A stinker from
the authorities after an inspection directing Anna FM towards more community participation was received in the right spirit and programming revamped accordingly - an illustration of what good ‘regulatory vigilance’ can do to make community radio more meaningful and increase ‘broadcaster’s commitment’ to the community.

In general, the tendency in community broadcasting research is to focus more on operational aspects than on conceptual or methodological aspects. As reflected in the forthcoming examples with campus and community media efforts at Kenya, Canada, Ghana, Zambia, Namibia, Pakistan, Tanzania and South Africa, efforts were directed at Anna FM towards exploring the educational purpose of innovative non-profit radio projects through enhancing everyday awareness in the broad areas of health, environment and nutrition.

In Kenya, the Media Trust has recently been supporting the use of radio drama/soap opera, transmitted by a local radio station, as part of a health education campaign in the Meru region. In the Oshakati area of northern Namibia, local radio is part of a non-formal education project entitled "Cattle is our livelihood," to improve cattle keeping practices among local farmers. In the Apac community of northern Uganda, a portable solar or battery powered "suitcase radio station" broadcasts programs of local and timely interest.

Radio and audiocassettes, supported by print materials and study groups with trained tutors or facilitators, have been used traditionally in agriculture, health education and language instruction. Radio Farm Forums were started in Canada in the 1940s. The idea was taken up in Ghana and India in the 1950s and continued into the ’60s. In the mid-1980s, the Co-operative College in Lusaka - in collaboration with the Zambia Broadcasting Corporation - produced two series of dramatised
programs, with accompanying booklets and a network of study groups, to promote and support the operation of co-operatives.

In Pakistan, the FEPRA project (Functional Education Project for Rural Areas) used the study group approach - with accompanying audiocassettes, flip-charts and illustrated handouts - to teach vegetable growing, animal husbandry and basic electrical wiring, among other things. In western Tanzania, the HESAWA project (Health through Sanitation and Water) used audio drama, flip-charts and illustrated booklets to encourage 200 village-based groups to improve the quality of their water supply by digging rock wells, and to improve local sanitation by adopting a new type of pit latrine.

Similar methods were used by ABEP (the Adult Basic Education Project) at Fort Hare University in the Eastern Cape of South Africa, to teach poultry keeping and first aid. There are some areas of non-formal education that are more difficult for the radio format than others. Radio has only a limited role to play in the teaching of basic literacy, although it was used in the Ghana Functional Literacy Project in the 1990s to motivate and to raise literacy awareness in adult learners.

While directing this review of studies to better understand the specific efforts at exploring the educational purpose of participatory nonprofit radio among marginalized women across the world, several interesting insights emerged on issues ranging from programming and participation to training and collective community action.

A compilation of community media research (Jankowski, 2001) contains a section of four chapters devoted to issues and illustrations of the public sphere as related to community radio and television. There, Mitchell (2001) explores how women’s community radio may serve as a tool for
women’s empowerment. With empirical data from women’s radio stations and projects across Europe, Mitchell examines how radio can be used to develop a feminist public sphere.

According to Mitchell (2001a), women’s radio production is facilitated by women oriented training and community development strategies. This is based on the premise that women are able to participate in programme production and are given access to broadcasting time and space on the airwaves. This participation is achieved through training and confidence building taking place inside and outside radio stations. Community based training means courses and workshops are located where women meet as part of their daily lives. Participation is further facilitated by programme led training where broadcast technology is demystified through women-only training and confidence building. Targeted training has led to a wide range of women producers in terms of ethnic and class backgrounds.

Women see basic radio training, including training on broadcasting legislation and radio management skills as the most urgent requirement in Asia and Africa, according to Miglioretto (1998). And truly, women community volunteers were the first to display their deep interest and passion in connecting to Anna FM and being an intrinsic part of its training and programming initiatives. From shy onlookers behind doors to eager and enthusiastic volunteers catalyzing collective action; it has indeed been a paradigm shift, much to the surprise of the entire team of project coordinators and facilitators. To link women working in participatory radio, AMARC established the Women’s International Network (WIN) to encourage the exchange of expertise and information among women working in community radio around the world.
In her presentation on ‘Women and community radio: opportunities, challenges, and responses’, Carbera-Balleza (2003) elaborates on Women’s Pirate Radio in the mid-1970s. The women’s movement, particularly in Western Europe, used pirate radio (low-power unlicensed broadcasting) to strengthen the visibility of women’s issues. Feminist groups in several European countries became forerunners in the development of “free radio”. Radio programmes were made on a variety of issues seldom considered in conventional radio programming. Programmes produced on these themes would not otherwise be broadcast by government or commercial stations. Or if they were, the coverage was distorted in ways that put the blame on the women themselves.

On the need to expand opportunities for women beyond the stereotypical roles, Cabrera-Balleza points to how gender dynamics and power relations that exist in public and corporate media are also present in CR. She argues that it is necessary to examine how women are defined, depreciated, and excluded in the media production process and in decision making in CR initiatives.

According to her, gender stereotyping in terms of assignments and tasks is not uncommon - many times it is the women broadcasters who deal with programmes on family, health, and nutrition while the “heavier” discussions on politics, economy or general community affairs are conducted by men. This, in effect, is a reiteration of the premises of unequal gender relations. Women technicians are also still a minority and are not prioritised in training on technical production nor given opportunities to experiment with the technologies and self-train.

On the other hand while investigating the ways in which technologies have simplified the art of radio program production, Dunaway (2000) reports that gender divisions present in analogue editing scenarios
were disappearing in the new digital environment. Demystifying radio broadcast technology he refers to multitasking where ‘Interviewer becomes recordist and recordists become their own editors and sound designer’ while doing community radio. Bridging digital divide, Buckley (2000) demonstrates how community radio can act as a gateway to provide access to information technologies as tools for creative communication in which traditional barriers of literacy and of perception are, if not removed, at least significantly reduced.

Carter (2004) pointed out that the pressure from changes in civil rights laws and the second-wave of the women’s liberation movement yielded three models of women’s access to the airwaves that emerged in the ensuing decade where women gained access to the air in varying degrees of success. According to her, the first model was liberal feminist tending toward the sameness of women and men. The organization was hierarchical and the content was broad in audience appeal. The second access was through nontraditional organizations that advocated inclusion of women’s programs in the mainstream media. Radio stations that featured alternative programs maintained basic organization and format but dedicated a small portion of broadcast time to women who produced their own programs for and about women. The regularly scheduled programs were often generated by women’s collectives with station equipment, but independent of direct station supervision of the content. In the third model of access, the entire radio station was dedicated to women’s programming. It combined the traditional organization of a mainstream station with women-centered programming. The programs were gendered in content with a mixture of both radical and cultural feminism.

On the other hand, Carter (2004) argues that, increased numbers of women employed did not translate into meaningful positions within the stations. Thus, even though women were able to get good jobs in the media,
they were not positioned in crucial decision-making roles. On the second model, many short lasting radio programs were created by women’s radio collectives during the 1970s and 1980s but the radio programs became stagnant as they failed to expand beyond the middle class. In the last model, the entire radio station was dedicated just for women. Radio stations failed to gain listeners and advertising revenue fell. Critics argued that the narrow focus of the program was detrimental to the stations’ success and they had turned out to be too feminist. Despite high expectation and push by feminist movements, the three models did not survive critics and challenges that threatened their existence.

The findings of Carter are pessimistic but a women-centric radio project with promise can be found in SFW. Millions of women around the world remain voiceless, despite vast growth and availability of multitude of media and information outlets. This scenario makes SFW unique and crucial as it has the potential to be an effective medium in giving powerless women access to participatory media. It has the strength to survive when research suggests it should not, and is even more significant in the backdrop of a developing country like India. The case of SFW offers a novel and robust model that needs to be studied in order to understand how it can surpass all the three models of women’s access to airwaves.

The way traditional media and video are used (Matewa 2002) determines to what extent participatory radio production contributes to the empowerment and advancement of women and the marginalised communities and as to how community interests, needs and concerns are served by community media. The researcher’s case study of the Development Through Radio Project (DTRP) is based on information collected during unstructured in-depth interviews with the project personnel, the founder member, board members, participants of the project, observations of four
radio listeners clubs, articles, documents, annual and general reports. A process that enables the target groups to participate in both the production of content and dissemination should be encouraged that would give communities an opportunity to set their own agenda as well as enable them to set priorities of what issues are dealt with.

As argued by Young (2000), there are five faces of oppression that include exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence. Even though all the above forms of oppression are detrimental to those targeted, Young pointed out that “marginalization is perhaps the most dangerous form of oppression”. This point reinforces the dedication seen with SFW that enables marginalized women to become visible and gain some power of expression. To the question of why radio is a practical media for women, radio is perhaps the most widely available and popular mass media in the world especially in the developing countries. It is relatively cheap and easy to operate and does not need print or computer literacy to learn. In addition, radio broadcasting was a legacy that was abandoned by corporate interests during the 1980s, but was embraced by women and social groups throughout Latin America, Canada and Europe as an affordable mass medium that would reach marginalized populations (Kidd 2002).

In developing countries, radio is “women’s media” because it can be women’s companion in daily life. Women can tune into it while doing the thousands of tasks women are often expected to do. Radio studies show that although women are not represented proportionally in the production of radio, it is heavily used by women, because of it low cost, and also that women can be doing other work while listening (Thompson et al 2005).

With at least a dozen women-run and managed stations, according to Sterling and Bennett (2007), African stations have struggled with issues of women’s participation. Exploring how stations that purport to be the voice of
the community involve women at all levels of CR involvement, there are lessons for India in Africa’s efforts. Providing an overview of the strategies, successful and otherwise, that CR stations have employed to increase female representation, he suggests a prototype device intended to help women “talk back” to their CR stations, thus letting their voices be heard.

As per existing data, in Africa, 90% of women listen to the radio, 20% have made a positive change due to programming and less than 5% have ever contacted a station. Sterling suggests, women’s only stations, women’s specific focus groups, involvement of women in all aspects of CR, “Narrowcasting” as a readiness technique, Listening clubs, Edutainment, local “reality shows” and women-focused “interactive” programs.

What has been central to Sharma’s (1998) study is the role of radio technology in the production of an imagined South Asian identity and community in a diasporic space and a woman centered focus on the performative use of radio, music and lived experience as pedagogical tools. Both researcher and respondents have been second generation South Asian women who not only engage in the same intellectual discourse but also dance together and listen to the same kind of music. In essence, this study has sought to expand notions of pedagogy as a performative practice and radio as a site for pedagogical interventions.

Encouraging discussion about lessons from across the world pertaining to participatory community radio initiatives among marginalized women inspire applicability of such gender initiatives in CR to the Indian context. To strengthen visibility of women’s issues beyond gender dynamics and power relations, to expand opportunities for women beyond stereotypical roles, to let them set their own agenda and priorities, to demystify community broadcast technology, to facilitate women-focused interactive programming to provide access and participation in community media are some of the
objectives of exploring the many benefits of community radio towards the empowerment and advancement of women.

What is most gratifying about Anna FM’s ‘Science for Women’ project is its attempt at recognizing and valuing the enormous quest amongst its women community volunteers to utilize their time and resources to learn, understand and implement everyday science awareness and thereby help empower themselves and their community. This led to working on a framework for the project, primarily taking into account the specific needs and interests of the women folk through regular focus group discussions and interpersonal communication followed by consultation with media experts and project advisory team members.

And thus was born a year-long everyday science awareness project, supported and catalysed for the first time exclusively for women, by the National Council for Science and Technology, under the Indian Government’s Science and Development Ministry. An illustration to show that Government machinery can be mobilized to prioritise women-centric media initiatives, when sensitised with the right approach through scientific, innovative and cost-effective projects with community development as the underlying focus.

A review of literature exploring approaches to community radio studies and evaluations across the world reveals a wide range of methods suited to diverse environments.

In her study, ‘Radio, Community and Identity in South Africa: A Rhizomatic Study of Bush Radio in Cape Town’ Bosch (2003) adopts a case study approach and draws on ethnographic methodology, arguing for rethinking of old theoretical conceptualizations of CR and for more theoretically creative, rhizomatic approaches to CR. Framed within theories of entertainment-education and behaviour change, the researcher explores
specific programs on air and outreach programs offered by the station.

Rooted in cultural studies, her work draws on the theory of rhizomatics espoused by Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, arguing for new, creative theorizations of alternative media. According to her, Bush Radio sports state of the art digital equipment and sophisticated organizational structure, yet it is deeply connected to the communities it serves.

An historical analysis establishes the fact that the shape that CR broadcasting has assumed in Zambia is largely reflective on state-centric policy making regime of British colonialism, according to Banda (2003) in his study on, ‘Community radio broadcasting in Zambia: A Policy Perspective’. All the CR initiatives researched face similar problems to do with lack of funding, volunteers lacking motivation, poor training of staff and dearth of state-of-the-art equipment or even basic production equipment.

Based on a focused synthesis of a range of historical, political, policy, regulatory and other factors, within the context of participatory development communication, his study proposes a normative policy model of CR broadcasting in Zambia, seeking to promote it in terms of its vision, regulatory structures, funding, training, facilities, technology, production of local content and research.

In an interesting study on the development of a Community Radio Station for a National Game Park’, Zeeman (2006) argues that there needs to be a conceptually synthesised audience, consisting of a local ethnic community and a tourist community and that these communities have interwoven functions around the provision and exploitation of tourism. The thesis then interrogates the concept of communication by radio and draws on McLuhan’s concepts of ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ receivers and Walter Ong’s work around primary and secondary orality amongst others.
Here the thesis argues for the way that radio may be used to exploit and develop a synergy of the ethnic and tourist community. Through the recognized research process of ‘triangulation’, the shared content of tourism in National Parks and the communal form of radio are creatively interwoven into a potential or hypothetical program layout. Arguing for the advantages of the development of such a CR station for National Parks, the study notes budgets, training and bureaucratic intervention by licensing authorities as primary obstacles. A somewhat similar parallel can be drawn to the Anna FM scenario where a rare synergy between student media volunteers and community volunteers display interwoven functions to mutual benefit while doing participatory community radio.

While exploring, “The trouble with community radio research, or, how methodological setbacks can inform theoretical development”, van Vuuren (2006) describes the troubles that arose during fieldwork conducted at a CR station, how these unexpected events forced a reformulation of the research question, and how this eventually led to an improved theoretical insight. Similar experiences arose at Anna FM when a subtle questionnaire fatigue among volunteers was palpable during the pilot study leading to simplifying of the survey schedules.

As van Vuuren suggests participatory research design appears as an attractive option in the study of community media organisations. It puts the generation of the research question, the design of data collection methods, and the analysis of the results in the hands of the researched. This approach can demystify the research process and can be an empowering experience.

But, as she found out with her doctoral research, the researcher needs to carefully assess an organisation’s capacity to undertake do-it-yourself research, because, when things go wrong, this approach can also reveal conflicts within an organisation, as well as give rise to tension resulting
from the divergent needs of the researcher and those of the researched.

Her approach to research included investigations of: the host community with respect to its geography, history and demography, and the presence of other media; the listeners, and what it is about CR that appeals to them, how they use the station, and what motivates some to support their station financially; sponsors, businesses, government and community organisations, and what it is that motivates their use of the station; the CR organisation, including its stated objectives, organisational structure, management processes, and fundraising strategies; program formats and content; and the individual volunteers, the nature of their motivations and their active participation.

To explore a number of approaches to CR evaluation and impact through personal experiences and ideas, the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, U.K. in the year 2006 coordinated a four-week long email discussion with hundreds of subscribers and different themes each week. The discussion was meant to be an opportunity for community media practitioners and activists from around the world to share their experiences and views on the role of CR in development processes. Discussants including this researcher who contributed on the issue of ‘Assessing Social Impact’ felt that CR activists need to consider the following issues: Learning, Participation, Networking, Evaluation and Language.

When asked to identify the kinds of benefit that CR can confer on a community, respondents’ preferences were widely spread and tended to reflect a respondent’s particular area of interest, implying that the medium appears well-placed to address a wide range of concerns according to Everitt (2002). There is a trend towards the accreditation of radio training and a growing recognition among the pilot projects of the need for reliable listener surveys and more effective marketing. The staging of, or participation in, live
events has become a significant component of a CR station’s work and a trend is emerging of broadcasting home-produced drama, the study further added.

An evaluation of Access Radio Projects reveals a growing demand for issue-based programs at the expense of music among audiences. The responses to Community Questionnaires, sent out to organisations that have worked with the pilot projects, reveal an enthusiastic welcome for CR and evidence of widespread collaboration.

The combination of radio programs with listening groups appears to be associated with higher levels of knowledge, current usage and discussion about contraceptive methods, and are significant even after age, gender, education, caste and gender composition of surviving offspring are taken into account, according to Sood et al (2004) in their study, ‘Come Gather Around Together - An Examination of Radio Listening Groups in Fulbari, Nepal. He further argues that exposure to the radio programs and to listening groups was positively related to knowledge about modern methods of family planning.

Through an experimental research design with control study, Sood et al measure the efficacy of community radio in enhancing awareness on reproductive health issues among listening and non-listening groups. The authors sought to answer the research question: "Do members of listening groups have higher levels of correct knowledge, approval, intention to practice, current use and personal advocacy related to family planning compared to those who are not members of the listening groups?" and in general, evidence from their research in Nepal revealed that they do.

In a impact assessment study of eight of Mozambique’s CR stations, Jallov (2005) explored whether the radio stations created desired development and social change within the community as compared to those determined by the original baseline research. Reinforcing the power of
community media in inculcating and enhancing health awareness she found that knowledge on the importance of clean drinking water decreased cholera deaths in Dondo and radio programs on HIV testing reduced social stigma and encouraged them to discuss it openly.

Community radio has been the focus of studies across western societies (Halloran 1977) and while there is a growing theoretical and empirical tradition which attempts to define their identity, according to Carpentier et al (2003), the complexity and elusiveness of this identity has made this a difficult task.

Regarding the professionalism/community development dichotomy questions raised by Hochheimer, Barlow (1999) argues that while the professional model tends to put a greater emphasis on the quality of the content broadcast on CR, the community development orientation is more concerned with providing access to ordinary people and under-represented social groups.

In an overall assessment of a national experiment with community electronic media in the Netherlands, the researchers suggest that the contribution of community media to community-building process worked best in those situations where a sense of community is already well established (Hollander 1982; Stappers et al 1992). In residential areas short on social capital, it seems as if community media can do little to ‘make things better’ (Jankowski et al 2001).

With a mapping of the global community radio scenario and related studies on the subject pertaining to CR’s educational and development purpose, participatory approaches to doing CR, its potential in advancing women empowerment as also different approaches to CR research, impact studies and evaluation, it would now be appropriate to understand the
2.5 COMMUNITY RADIO IN INDIA

In the face of competing media, Radio has often been relegated to the background. Good times do come back and radio is no exception. It is in fact fast becoming the most preferred medium today for all its inherent advantages and constantly striving to reinvent itself through the application of new technologies. CR is not just about broadcast content; it is mostly about the process of community engagement, about social skills, business skills, creativity, IT skills, local democracy, hard to reach groups, involvement of women and young people and involvement of hundreds of volunteers (Jayweera 2007).

Next to public service, commercial and educational radio, this is a new genre of radio broadcasting in India. What distinguishes it from the other media is its participatory nature where listeners are treated as subjects and encouraged to voice their concerns. Programs are designed to incorporate the specific needs of the community it caters to and are further restructured based on feedback. There is no talk down approach but just sharing of information relevant to the community in a manner that is easily assimilated.

An emerging broadcast sector with vast untapped potential to facilitate progressive societal change, Community Radio is the need of our times, particularly in a developing country like India. With an endless string of such rich attributes it is a wonder that community radio is yet to take off in a big way in our country, though it has been popular for over fifty years in countries across the world.

Earlier, to promote radio for education and development, based on the Verghese Committee’s recommendations in 1978, AIR’s first experiment
in local FM radio was conducted in Nagercoil in 1984 and later in the rural areas of Bangalore and Hyderabad. Simultaneously, there are other initiatives in the field, where some organizations are helping certain communities produce and share audio program through diverse means.

Namma Dhwani at Budhikote, Karnataka, cablecasts audio programs produced by the community. The Deccan Development Society (DDS) at Pastapur produces audio tapes and narrowcasts in adjoining villages. While the Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS) broadcasts from AIR, Bhuj station as a thirty minute weekly serial, Alternative for India Development (AID) in Jharkhand buys airtime on AIR, Daltonganj on a weekly basis. According to Sarma (2004), “the expansion of community radio would supplement the public broadcasters” efforts to reach to the masses and meet their aspirations. The public broadcaster can help prospective community radio operators with technical and infrastructural know-how.

In 1995 when the Supreme Court of India made a landmark judgement declaring airwaves public property, a new chapter unfolded in the history of radio broadcasting in India. The judgement noted that Indian Broadcasting was governed by archaic laws while our constitution forbids monopoly either in print or electronic media.

In 1996, VOICES, an NGO called for a debate to formulate a strategy to set up a legislative framework to introduce CR. The resultant Bangalore Declaration advocated that AIR should allot regular airtime to CR and requested the government to grant NGOs and non-profit organizations permission to set up CR. A UNESCO sponsored workshop at Hyderabad brought out the Pastapur Initiative on Community Radio in 2000, urging the Government to create a three tier structure of broadcasting in India - State-owned public radio, private commercial radio and non-profit community radio.
In 2000, the Government of India opened up the radio sector for participation by private FM broadcasters and offered 108 frequencies in 40 cities in Phase I. At the same time, the Government also permitted educational radio broadcasting and allowed the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) to set up FM radio in 40 cities for education broadcasts of which 21 stations are operational.

Close on the heels of private FM radio which began making waves, CR enthusiasts across the country began lobbying for permission to set up CR stations for development activities. The government responded positively in December 2002 and opened up the airwaves for CR but restricted licenses to well established educational institutions specifying the following major guidelines,

“Community Radio is expected to focus on issues relating to education, health, environment, agriculture, rural and community development. The contents are to be confined to social, cultural and local issues and the format, subject, presentation and language must reflect and exude the local flavour and fragrance” (Community Radio Policy Guidelines).

Anna University, Chennai was the first in India to receive a CR license in February 2004 for Anna FM @ 90.4 MHz and according to recent figures, there are 38 Campus Community Radio stations operating across India today. Ever since the Government opened up CR to educational institutions, there has been a demand for expanding the scope of radio to meet local communities’ needs. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) sought inputs for a consultation paper on licensing issues posted on its website (www.trai.gov.in) to which over forty CR stakeholders including Anna University responded. This was followed by open house discussions in October 2004 at New Delhi and Mumbai, based on which TRAI tabled its
recommendations to the Government.

TRAI’s major recommendations on CR included relaxation of licensing procedures and fixing a time frame for clearances apart from provision for advertisements and increasing transmitter power. Other suggestions included a reduction in the bank guarantee to Rs.25000 apart from waiving the spectrum fee for the first two years of the license period. Following TRAI’s recommendations, cabinet discussion on CR and decision of Group of Ministers (GoM), the Government announced the new CR policy in November 2006, opening up the airwaves for NGOs, non-profit organisations and registered societies. The policy has further liberalised the licensing process to government run educational institutions by offering single-window clearances.

The second phase of CR licensing for civil society organizations is expected to further widen the Community Radio mediascape in India. As per recent reports, the growth of CR in the country is on the upswing and number of functional Community Radio Stations (CRS) has grown from 27 in 2008 to 41 currently, with 38 of them located in educational institutions. According to Kar (2009),

“The Ministry has issued letters of intent to about 129 institutions for setting up CRS. This includes 70 educational institutions, 31 NGOs and nine state agricultural universities among others”.

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has recently introduced a six-month program on CR, claimed to be the first of its kind in Asia, in association with the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) bringing together CR practitioners, communication experts and students of media arts and sciences. With the CR presence poised to grow further and contribute to grassroots development, efforts are on to
deregulate the sector by easing the licensing process and working towards ensuring sustainability through networking of community radio stations and exploring the possibilities of online sharing of relevant programs.

Capacity building for CR is another important aspect needing immediate attention as there is a road block to programming due to a dearth of radio professionals. With lakhs of rupees invested on infrastructure there are a few players today who have not yet started off due to lack of content support and proper direction. Identifying and training the local community in the nuances of CR broadcasting including programming and technical aspects are imperative to build on available talent and resources.

With CR on the fast track mode in India, the airwaves may soon become public property in the real sense as envisaged more than a decade ago by the historic Supreme Court Judgement of 1995. And before the momentum fizzes out, all CR stakeholders need to strengthen their persuasive powers to keep the excitement on and allay the unfounded fears of the government of a possible takeover by civil society. The dream journey of this democratic development communication medium for of and by the people called CR may be a late start for India but the dormant strength of this people driven media power in the world’s largest democracy is potential enough to overshadow the achievements brought about in this sector in the rest of the world in a much shorter span.

An understanding of the Indian CR scenario and its development through the recent years would be more complete with an insight in to research studies through projects, experiments, surveys and campaigns that include both on-air and off-air evaluations.

All India Radio began its Audience Research Wing in 1946 which functioned until 1952 and set up again in the mid-sixties. With paucity of
trained staff, feedback was gathered through letters from listeners, daily program meetings with staff of stations and newspaper media columns. The research methods by AIR’s Audience Research Unit (ARU) in recent times include listenership and viewership surveys, summative and evaluation studies and market surveys.

A careful observation of mass media in India over the last three decades reveals that the felt need for direct feedback from audience is increasing. More airtime is given on radio for programs where audiences share their reactions and suggestions. Unsolicited letters, phone calls and casual conversation by producers with audience also provide valuable feedback.

The Rural Radio Forums or ‘Charcha Mondale’ started in 1959 in collaboration with UNESCO reached only advanced sections of the rural population as indicated by the Report of the Study Team on Five Year Plan Publicity (Menon 1965). Studies by the Vidyalankar Committee found that of the 70,000 community radio sets installed across the country, in the early seventies, 50% were not in working order at any point of time. Research studies on radio campaigns on family planning carried out by the National Institute of Community Development, Hyderabad, point to a wide gap between awareness and acceptance.

In the last half century, radio has been tried for education in many parts of the world, especially for adult literacy (Burke 1976, McBride 1980, Mehta 1989, Basu 1992, and Ghosh 2006). The first attempt to use radio in India for education was a pilot project known as ‘Rural Radio Forum’ initiated after independence, modelled around Canadian Rural Radio Forum’s first broadcast in 1941. In 1984, AIR established its first local radio station at Nagercoil, Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu (Anjaneyulu 1989). Nagercoil radio station gave a meaningful direction in the use of radio for education and
development. While Ghosh (2006) found positive gains in adult learning from radio, Dighe and Reddi (2007) indicated the liberating power of ICT for women’s education. Use of radio for education especially of women’s education has been recommended, though hard research findings are scanty, that too limited to small “experiments” and “projects”.

Two experiments in rural television were launched in 1975 towards social change and development. The Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) beamed four hours of programs on education planned and produced by AIR. Though the gains through SITE were meagre, the experiment was a valuable learning experience for both the technical and program personnel of the media. The Kheda Communications Project launched at the same time made remarkable progress due to constant interaction with the people and consistent pre testing of program.

In 1986, the ‘Project in Radio Education for Adult Literacy, (PREAL), initiated by the Indian Government’s National Literacy Mission used the field experimental design with control technique to improve the pace and quality of the teaching learning process for women through radio broadcasts. The PREAL assessment revealed that women learners gained from the adult literacy programs on radio. While usefulness of radio was indicated, the contribution of radio could not be fully realized. More than pedagogy, the shortcomings arose out of inappropriate management techniques in project implementation and this needs to be further explored to define the role of radio in literacy programmes (Agrawal 1993).

The National Foundation of India’s (NFI) gender program section visited Bhuj in Gujarat in March 2000 to study the CR project of Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS), the first ever regular radio program produced in local dialect with participation of the local community. The KMVS visit not only reinforced NFI’s faith in radio as an effective medium,
particularly among the non-literate communities, but also highlighted the need for building the capacities of community members to handle an entire range of activities related to CR (National Foundation for India 2001).

Bhanumathi (2006) in her study on ‘Integrated approach for effective communication’, while endorsing the words of Katz and Lazarsfe, “How individuals understand the ideas and the degree to which ideas are accepted and modified depend in large measure on the interaction along the network” states that it is certain that sustained efforts using all the medium of communication in an integrated way would yield enormous effects. The participatory approach and information at the right time would certainly create audience glued to the media without getting distracted with mere entertainment program, which has only commercial motive.

Kumar (2007) in her studies on ‘Community Radio in India: Opportunities and Challenges’ captures the essence of CR initiatives across India, setting the context for its successful deployment. The research investigated how access to radio could transform the dominant public sphere, by establishing decentralized public spaces for dialogue and collaborative action controlled by the marginalized sections in India. It also sought to explore conditions for the creation of an enabling environment for democratic media by taking into consideration the history of broadcasting and the issues that currently challenge the media policy formation in India. According to her, CR initiatives deserve to be encouraged for facilitating participatory communication and development. Addressing the critical issues related to the functional and efficacy aspects of community radio through case studies of ongoing experiments with four CR projects in India, initiated by NGOs, she concludes that, in a sense, all the four initiatives studied have achieved some success in putting the community first.
It is this priority to ensure community participation at all levels and the progress and enthusiasm displayed by India’s first CCR station, Anna FM, in carrying forward the mandate of community development to its best potential that inspired and instilled confidence in the minds of policy makers to expand the scope of CR to the NGO sector. And at the Community Radio Review Meeting organised by the Indian Government’s Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in August 2005 at Anna University, Chennai, where Campus Radio Station Managers from Tamil Nadu state participated, it was decided that each CCR station would update the Ministry regularly on its progress and share their experiences. The meeting also discussed the potential of the sector in India and ongoing plans for expansion.

Responding to an email from this researcher on ‘Policy Guidelines and getting CR Licence’, CR Workshop, Anna University, Chennai, February 3, 2007, Shri R. Parasuram, Former Joint Secretary, MIB, GOI and the then Minister (Agriculture), Embassy of India, Rome had this to write on February 7, 2007.

“…success in the venture at Anna University was to a very large extent responsible in convincing me of the need to expand the initiative in India...” (Parasuram 2007).

Kongu FM’s CCR broadcast from Kongu Engineering College, Erode has been successful in providing a much needed platform for the local community focusing on the needs, aspirations, ambitions and abilities of the local people, according to Thangaraj (2007). In a study conducted by Kalanjiam CR, Krishnamurthy (2007) reports that 73% of the respondents have highlighted health as a serious development issue and other concerns they raised were disaster management and infrastructure such as road, electricity and drinking water.
Singh (2007) examines IT for Change’s Kelu Sakhi (Listen, Friend) CR initiative, which seeks to provide a radio platform for empowerment processes of ‘collectives’ of disadvantaged, mostly non-literate, women in the villages of Mysore. With reference to the unique needs and situation of disadvantaged women she explores what constitutes the essential meaning of a CR, and what are the contextual factors that enable women to appropriate the radio platform and use it purposefully.

While discussing the community radio (CR) discourse in relation to the dominant ICT for development (ICTD) discourse; the recent developments in India regarding CR policy, and its follow up; and some specific issues that arise from ‘Kelu Sakhi’, she draws a connection between the three and also reveals the points of congruity and divergence between CR and ICTD. She also comments on how these changes are perceived by different actors situated in different contexts, and how the interplay between them is shaping the CR landscape in India, touching upon issues of state interference, market proclivities, as well as NGO self-aggrandizement and the nature of ‘social capital’ available in most communities today for setting up CRs.

Solution Exchange’s, (UN initiative for development practitioners in India) e-discussion on “How to Set up a Community Radio Station” with a question on successful examples of CR worthy of replication received wide responses. Citing various CCR stations operating in India, members specifically mentioned Anna FM of Anna University, CMS Lucknow and Banasthali Vidyapeeth (Tikoo and Sen 2007).

In the context of very limited studies related to Community Radio in India and much less related to how women could appropriate the platform purposefully, it would be interesting to now explore the Campus Community Radio Scenario and related studies on the subject, first on the global level
followed by an insight into the relatively new Indian scene.

2.6 CAMPUS COMMUNITY RADIO

2.6.1 Global Scenario

Research shows that the establishment of university or campus based community radio stations first started in the U.S.A in the 1960s and soon spread to Canada, Europe and then to Africa.

Community Radio Stations (CRS) based in educational institutions have existed for over eight decades in various parts of the world in diverse forms and are more commonly known as “College Radio” in USA, as “Campus radio” in Canada, as “University Radio” in Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere, and as “Campus Community Radio” (CCR) in India. Whatever the nomenclature, CR stations based in educational institutions are open to both students and the wider community where they are based. As examples from across the world show, campus stations are sometimes operated for the purpose of training professional radio personnel, with the aim of broadcasting educational programming, while other stations exist to provide an alternative to commercial or government broadcasters.

Campus radio stations despite a vast range of programming are almost always focused on local concerns, issues, news, information, music, arts, culture, politics and other elements of local importance. Irrespective of financial support received from government, audiences, donations, advertising or other means - campus stations are almost always dependent on volunteers and expertise of local residents who are committed to their local or campus station. This commitment is demonstrated in the hundreds of voluntary hours that represent the global core of community media development and sustainability.
Largely as a result of its local, volunteer-driven nature, campus radio usually plays an important role within the national broadcasting systems that both encourage and enable citizen access to the airwaves and have often come with considerable struggle. The magnitude of this role will vary from country to country, but the fact that a number of countries have developed a structural approach to the funding of campus radio identifies the stature that community-based broadcasting has achieved.

The first non-profit radio services in the USA were limited to educational and religious institutions. One of the first college radio stations in the country is WRUC (Wireless Radio of Union College) from Union College, Schenectady, New York with experimental broadcasts in 1920 under the call sign 2ADD. Though college radio stations in the US began in early 20th century as physics experiments, it was in the 1960s that Federal Communications Commission (FCC) began issuing Class D licences for 10 watt licences to promote the then new FM band. Most of the FM stations received higher-class licenses, typically a few hundred watts. A few got several kilowatts, and a small handful got licenses in the range of tens of thousands sometimes reaching up to full-power 100 kilowatt outlets.

In terms of signal strength, the biggest college radio station in the world is WRAS (Radio at Georgia State) of Georgia State University in Atlanta, Georgia. In terms of population within protected contour the biggest college radio station in the world is WSOU (South Orange) of Seton Hall University. WEXP (WEXplorers) of La Salle University in Philadelphia has what is widely considered as the most extensive sports coverage of any college radio station in the United States airing nearly 100 live sports broadcasts every year for six Explorer teams, in four sports.
To evaluate the levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction among student and staff employees for eighteen job related factors as originally identified by Frederick Herzberg, Legg (2004) studied ‘Job Satisfaction at selected university licensed CPB qualified public radio stations’. Students in this investigation rated the hygiene issues of interpersonal relationships as significant elements of job satisfaction.

Legg further adds that public radio stations are important arms of university outreach and community enhancement where in almost every instance the mission statement of these stations is to serve the community. According to him public radio is a significant part of the university setting that has been historically undervalued by these same institutions and virtually ignored by researchers. More importantly his studies reveal that the potential of public radio continues to be great as part of the core mission of the university system.

Campus Radio was born in Canada in 1922 at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario. Begun as an electrical engineering experiment, the station remained Canada's only licensed campus station until the campus radio at the University of Saskatchewan was licensed in 1963. During the 50s and 60s, campus radio clubs began on many campuses across the country. They were primarily volunteer operations with very limited budgets, funded by their student councils and broadcasts were restricted to closed-circuit operations on their campuses.

As interest and membership in these radio clubs in Canada grew, problems of limited listening range created problems in getting increased support and more volunteers for these stations. As campus radio organizations evolved through the 1970's, the nature of campus radio stations changed and by the beginning of the 1980's, FM stations could be found on campuses in
Winnipeg, Guelph, Hamilton, Waterloo, Ottawa, London, Quebec City, and Fredericton.

In a study on, ‘Beyond Polarity: Campus-Community Radio and New Relations of Power in Radio Broadcasting Policy in Canada’ Monk (1997) provides a critique of CCR itself: and of the complex term, community. In CR, these volunteers are members of the local area in which the station broadcasts. In CCR, both students and community members comprise the volunteer roster. Both these types of radio are required to provide access to volunteers and to reflect the ’special interests’ of the local market in which they broadcast.

She further notes that not all stations which are campus-based offer access to the members of the larger community. Campus-based stations which primarily operate as a training site for students are classified by CRTC as instructional campus stations. They are usually affiliated with a broadcast journalism school. With the intervention by campus and campus-community stations into the broadcasting system, there develops a new means of understanding the use and function of radio.

Through her study, she suggests that radio can be used not only as a linear means of transmitting information, but as a vehicle of self-expression by users (senders) who are also part of the community of listeners (receivers). In this sense, campus and community radio are tools for expression and information for individuals and groups in society. Thus radio functions as a democratic means of communication - the sharing back and forth of ideas, information, and artistic output rather than merely its production and dissemination by those not necessarily informed as to the relevancy of issues and tastes of the listeners they purport to serve.
As pointed out by Monk, Anna FM is a campus community radio station, similar to the nomenclature used in Canada by CRTC. Serving twin purposes, Anna FM operates both as a training site for media students at the Anna University and also offers access to members of the community in areas where it broadcasts as a democratic means of participatory communication.

However, a unique feature of Anna FM is that media student volunteers and community volunteers synergise their efforts towards mutual benefit. While students put to real practice what community media theory has taught them, and learn what works and what doesn’t and why, and also facilitate the judicious use of campus resources for the community volunteers both in terms of infrastructure and programming inputs, interacting with community volunteers provide students with a rare insight into their living conditions, the everyday challenges they face in making ends meet, and to understand their quest to uplift themselves by helping themselves through initiatives such as access and participation in community media.

In the UK, University Radio York was not only the first student radio station in the country, but also the first independent radio station in the UK, being founded in 1967, followed by Swansea University's station. Some student radio stations operate on the FM waveband for short periods at a time under the Restricted Service Licence (RSL) scheme, while others chose to broadcast full-time on the AM waveband using an LPAM (Low Power Amplitude Modulation) licence.

There are only three UK student radio stations permitted to broadcast all year on LPFM (Low Power Frequency Modulation). As none of these licences provide for a reception area greater than four kilometres from the point of transmission, to counteract these licence restrictions and, in the case of AM broadcasts, poor quality audio, many stations simulcast on the
Internet. The Student Radio Association works on behalf of more than fifty UK-based member stations to further their development, encourage and facilitate communication between member stations and links to the commercial radio industry, and lobby for the membership's interests on both a regional and national level.

In Europe, the first independent, non-commercial radio was born in 1969, when students at the University of Ljubljana set up Radio Student. By the late 1980s, it was highly popular for its non-conformist and independent stand, in line with civic opposition to the one-party regime.

In Australia, it was in the mid 1970s that a third tier of community radio broadcasting was created and a majority of the early community stations were generalist in nature and based in universities, the first coming up in the University of North England in 1970. There are five licensed campus radio stations in Australia, all which broadcast via analog signal and online. However, this seeming void is filled by the Student Youth Network (SYN), a multimedia, multiplatform youth-oriented service that developed from a merger of two campus radio services in an effort to secure a community radio licence in 2002.

There are also a number of youth-oriented community radio stations that deliver spoken word and music content specifically tailored for audiences in the 12 to 25 demographic. This focus on youth programming, education and training may also be reflected by the fact that 90 percent of community radio stations report having volunteers under the age of 26.

Similar to the situation in other jurisdictions, campus radio in Australia is largely funded through university student union grants (which are in turn created from student tuition fees), and from additional grants from their respective postsecondary institutions.
New Zealand has seven student radio stations that are non-profit undertakings and broadcast their services through analog signal and online. Funded primarily by individual student unions at, student radio stations are operated exclusively by volunteers and permitted by regulation to sell advertising.

There is no distinct category of campus or student radio in The Netherlands; however, there are approximately 60 to 70 ‘student-run’ stations in the country. During the mid 1970s, several European governments in the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Great Britain funded research on experiments with community radio and television (Jankowski et al 1991). Much of this work with a few exceptions was conducted by academic institutions that illustrate the strong connection between community radio and educational institutions and most of the studies conducted were in Denmark.

The development of a small campus radio sector in Belgium is in part reflective of a country that has four distinct political territories and emerged only in the 1990s when the public broadcasting monopoly was lifted. Campus radio stations must abide by largely the same rules of content, spoken word/music balance and language of broadcast as private commercial stations and must restrict their Effective Radiated Power (ERP) to 15 watts.

Funding for student radio in France is largely government-based, while in Germany campus radio stations are run by volunteers and funded through contributions from state-based regulators via the collection of licence fees, donations and personal contributions of station staff and limited advertising revenues. Student radio in Switzerland is quite limited with two campus stations, one in Zurich and one in Lausanne. Funding for student
radio stations in the U.K. comes from Student Unions, but student fees provide by far the bulk of stations revenues.

In South Africa, it was in the late 1980’s that CR began at the University of Western Cape, when local activists tried to set up an alternative to the state propaganda machine, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). Using ‘suitcase’ radios, the activists played taped programs in taxis and public places. The unlicensed station, Bush Radio, named after the “Bush” University of the Western Cape, was set up in a secret location off campus. Though subjected to police harassment, this radio station set a trend for being the first to be created outside the SABC.

Examples of campus based radio stations in South Africa are UNIVEN Radio at the University of Venda, Rhodes Music Radio at Rhodes University, Tuks FM at the University of Pretoria and Radio Turf at the University of Limpopo with the aim of serving the University and the neighbouring communities. Initially, one year trial licenses were issued to some of these institutions and later renewed for a four year period as subsequent applications for renewal were made (Fourie 2001).

According to Osunkunle (2005), though the general belief worldwide is that any campus based community radio station is a mere juke box, recent research studies have shown that some of these stations such as Radio Turf, Rhodes Music Radio and Tuks FM have been giving such opportunities to their listeners to contribute to developmental processes in their communities and are therefore actually contributing to community development.

In her study on Radio Turf as a case study she evaluates the impact of campus based radio stations as agents of social change in post-apartheid
South Africa using the focus group discussion technique. Radio Turf for example broadcasts materials mainly of local origin and in local language and also promotes the participation of communities in the station’s operations to ensure support of democracy, development and the empowerment of communities. The findings of the focus groups conducted with various groups of listeners clearly showed that the station’s social development programmes do have impact on the listeners.

Campus radio also exists in Israel, where several colleges, universities and high schools have successful programs. Another college radio station is the Hebrew University's in Jerusalem, broadcasting mostly indie and alternative music. Operating since May 2004, the CRS based in Kabul

University’s Faculty of Journalism serves both as a training tool for journalism students and an educational outreach voice for the University in its efforts to further engage the local community, with equipment funded by the UNESCO.

Most of the programming in such CR stations includes news, sports, music and educational shows both for public service and distance learning. Flexible program formats encourage radio jockeys to display a great amount of creativity and individualism in their presentation styles. Their grounding in craft-skills and freedom of expression principles within the Faculty of Journalism is aimed at ensuring high standards of reporting in the developing democratic environment of Afghanistan with tools to learn how to do their work while ensuring that citizens receive impartial, balanced and independent access to news and information.

Bangladesh’s first online campus radio station broadcasts study related talk show, seminar, cultural function, campus activity and news where a student can get online to join the workshop or talk show. Brunei
Darussalam, is the first and only University-based radio station in Brunei Darussalam. Established in 2008, the student-run station operates under the Educational and Technology Center of the Universiti Brunei Darussalam and has been proactive in promoting local artists and bands and providing exposure to untapped talents, which are predominantly students of the University itself.

DZUP 1602 in Metro Manila is a low-power AM campus radio station owned and operated by the University of the Philippines, Diliman. It broadcasts from the Media Centre of the College of Mass Communication, UP Campus, in Quezon City and is used as a laboratory for the Broadcast Communication students of the university. The station operates from 12:00nn-8:00pm, Mondays to Fridays and is Broadcast-free during semester breaks. Its programming includes music programs and request shows to informative segments and talk shows. A means of freedom of expression within the university, it serves as the community radio station of the U.P. Diliman campus.

In Malaysia IIUM FM operates under the purview of the Department of Communication which has a dedicated audio lab is meant for teaching radio production under the Electronic Media specialization. The station broadcasts live from 9am to 9pm weekdays and the rest of the hours on automated system. Fifteen practical students are involved in the IIUM FM project under the guidance of an academic fellow who work according to a daily duty roster to prepare daily news, weather, traffic, capsules, public services announcements, station playlist, talk shows and calls for daily prayers.

Open University Malaysia's (OUM) first Internet radio station (iRadio) broadcasts since its inception in April 2007 and hosts a variety of shows mainly aimed to add value to OUM learners' open and distance
education. iRadio is the creativity link, bridging education and information with entertainment. Its programmes range from module-based segments to programmes designed specifically to enhance the overall quality, not just for OUM citizens, but the general listening population as well.

As the above review illustrates, University radios, also called student, college and campus radios, depending on the local cultural and social contexts where they have developed, have been a tier of broadcasting or narrowcasting stations that have become a regular feature in campuses across the Americas, Northern Europe and Australia. In some cases they are also local community radio stations that serve the communities that live in the surrounding areas and play a role in training future broadcasters, widening the access to the media and a space for activism and social movements and also contributing to community development as a participatory tool.

In the last decade, these media have been developing at a fast pace also in Southern Europe, Asia and Africa and adapted dynamically, often with scarce resources, in the convergent media landscape where they have experimented with the integration with web-based forms of radio broadcasting and podcasting. Student radio and radio stations based in universities have been already around for almost 50 years, with some early experiences tracing this even back to the early days of radio and the experimental broadcast of the 1920s. Most of these campus stations are devoted to music, some of them serve as a training tool for journalism students and an educational outreach voice for the university and only a very few are dedicated to community development. Even though those stations are, and have always been, placed in the same premises where media studies are taught and researched, this is an under-developed area of research and there are limited research resources available in this area.
2.6.2 Indian Scenario

CR is the new fourth tier of broadcasting in the country next to Public Service, Commercial and Educational Radio. A new chapter in Indian broadcasting history has unfolded with the setting up of licensed CR Stations in educational institutions. Still in its infancy, a number of lessons need to be learnt along the way to ensure a sustained future for the growth of this unique participatory development communication tool. Each CR station is woven of a unique special fabric; each weft and weave representing the thoughts and voices of the community aired every day; these collective voices leading to a collective thought process; towards catalyzing collective action for the progress of its people. And its in the appreciation of this distinct character of each station, understanding the factors that contribute to its successes and failures; lies the true philosophy of CR, where rules and regulations are not carved in stone; but evolved out of a sense of purpose to spread a feeling of social goodness, better living standards and a way to community living in peace and harmony. Understanding the nuances of CR from successful examples across the world, do help provide an overall insight, but the very nature of community radio is in its local feel, and hence each CR is inherently special and different.

Soon after the announcement of the CR policy 2002, aspirants wanting to set up Campus Community Radio Stations had a tough time struggling with laborious paper work, as the CR licensing procedure is a long drawn affair involving clearances from several ministries including information and broadcasting, telecommunication, human resources, home and defence apart from consuming plenty of time. And finally from among sixty applicants, Anna University was the first to be awarded a CR license in the country and began its broadcasts on February 1, 2004, with a mission to promote participatory programming for, of and by the community, thanks to
the unstinted support and encouragement of the Anna University that truly believes in the sharing of academic resources for community development.

Anna University’s campus radio follows the mandate stipulated by the Government of India’s community radio guidelines. This includes programmes on Health, Education, Environment and Community Development. While campus radio began in the 1920s in the USA and Canada as Physics and Electrical Engineering experiments respectively, in India, the attempt is to democratize the airwaves and utilise campus resources for the larger benefit of the community. While some campus stations broadcast mostly music, others serve as a training tool for journalism students and an educational outreach voice for the university. In contrast to the above, Anna FM is an effort at building a campus community radio that gradually increases the engagement of the local community with support and guidance from student volunteers and faculty expertise, towards catalyzing collective action for the progress of the community in the broad areas of health, environment, education and community development.

After a span of over four years since the first Campus Community Radio Station was set up, a total of 38 CCR stations functioning in educational institutions have received licences in the states of Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, New Delhi, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Punjab. 70 more educational institutions who have received their LOIs are going through preparatory work for setting up their CCR stations. The earliest Tamil language Community Radio stations to come up in the country apart from Nila FM at Pondicherry, are MOP FM and Loyola FM in Chennai, Kongu FM and Mughil FM in Erode, Holy Cross FM in Tiruchirapalli and PSG FM in Coimbatore. With the highest number of eight CR stations, ‘the southern state of Tamil Nadu is the CCR Capital of India’ (Sreedher 2007) declared
Sreedher, one of the architects of CR in India who set up Anna FM.

Addressing sustainability concerns, CR, “needs to be seen as an opportunity for social investment” (Stalin 2007) and for its part, the government is now allowing five minutes of commercials on CR as an incentive to reach self-sustenance. As an answer to commercialism and enthused by the success of CCR, Sreedher (2007a) suggests that the “…young student community from educational institutions could very well build new models”,

On the other hand, an earlier prediction by Pavarala (2003) that “…it is unrealistic to expect campus radio stations managed by young students to eschew fun and entertainment” needs to be reviewed in the light of the current progress being demonstrated by media student volunteers jointly with the community in the coverage zones of CCR stations. With the CR sector in India gathering momentum and as debate on diverse initiatives intensify, there are lessons waiting to be learnt.

‘Funding is clearly a crucial aspect’ (Tacchi 2003) as a new tier of broadcasting emerges in India. She draws attention to the scenario in Australia where university funding for campus based stations diminished with the growth of the sector leading them to become independent partially or completely. As a similar situation is envisaged here in India, the consistent support of the state is needed to sustain ‘the ongoing development of the sector and the range and diversity of the initiatives’ (Tacchi 2003).

A review of the campus community radio sector in India reveals that it is still an emerging sector and the new stations that were set up after Anna FM have just begun their operations and are yet to settle down to regular programming. Quite a few educational institutions that have received their final clearances have invested huge amounts in setting up infrastructure, but are yet to begin their operations in full swing. Critics point to the fact that
this is due to a dearth of radio talent to plan and produce content, magnified by an indifference towards including radio broadcast training as part of curriculum even in reputed media training institutions, as compared to courses in television and multimedia.

CR activists argue that expecting CR stations based in educational institutions to serve the community beyond the campus wall sounds very much like the public service broadcaster on which they seem to be closely modelled and to live up to this confused mandate is far from CR. More than four years after the setting up of licensed CR stations in India, there are criticisms denying the existence of the same, and making claims that these stations based in educational institutions are campus stations with limited mandates.

As preliminary studies at Anna FM point out, to a large extent, a CRS and its people learn practically all by themselves, what works, what doesn’t and why, with respect to their existing environments. Truly enough, most of the learning to effectively develop, manage and program Anna FM has been by doing, learning, unlearning and testing the lessons learnt. Today’s Anna FM is the collective dream of the community, created and nurtured with a sense of togetherness and belonging, beyond socio-economic, educational and digital divides, that characterize the community of which it is a part and serves; connecting community volunteers, media student volunteers, faculty and partner organisations.

2.7 JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY

A literature search for empirical accounts of journalistic practice by broadcasters across the world and India reveals a paucity of research in the Campus Community Radio sector in general and in participatory communication for women empowerment through CCR in particular.
Moreover, CR in India is still at a very nascent stage with the Government opening up the airwaves for this sector in 2002 for educational institutions and in 2006 for the Non Government sector. Most of the earlier radio studies in India are restricted to audience research as in the case of public sector broadcasting with respect to rural development and adult literacy programs whereas in the rest of the world studies are diverse in areas such as participation and access, policy issues, horizontal communication, participatory development, programming formats, research methodology and innovations in Community Radio broadcast technology.

To quote Legg (2004), Community Radio is a ‘significant part of the university setting that has been historically undervalued and virtually ignored by researchers despite its potential as part of the core mission of the university system’.

CCR is brand new to the Indian Media landscape and Anna FM as its first experiment offers the perfect setting to understand the role of participatory campus community radio in development communication. It would hence be a worthwhile effort to study the impact of India’s first CCR, Anna FM in fulfilling the mandate of democratizing airwaves for, of and by the community. Sharing the lessons learnt in shaping Anna FM, with other CR practitioners would help further the true spirit of community radio, and that is to, ‘Listen to the People Broadcasting!’ (Zyl 2005). In a fast developing country like India, bringing community media into the university set up is a novel and unique strategy to sensitise its students volunteers to face real world challenges, build bridges with the community and engage them in participatory media initiatives. This is potential enough to facilitate translation of academic knowledge to practical advantage for larger social benefit and more importantly contribute to mutual empowerment of both student and community volunteers in diverse ways, hitherto unexplored.
While resources for community media work have always been scant in developing economies, universities having the resources to do it are looking for creative ways to reach out to the communities that surround them. As a public service broadcaster working with the Indian Government’s All India Radio for over twenty one years since June 1989 (on a two year study leave research grant), this researcher and Dr. R. Sreedher, (responsible for setting up Anna FM; now Director, CEMCA) felt strongly that that a participatory development-oriented media project can evolve, that can best utilize campus and community resources for larger societal benefit. A participatory campus community radio initiative that can bring together scholars, students, government, social action groups and corporates to strategically collaborate and strengthen communities, generate public scholarship, and inform local decision making, sure merits a study of this nature. An innovative endeavour with its own upsides and downsides, this study is potential enough to offer a model worth sharing for setting up sustainable community media programs.

Constantly trying to leverage available resources, share knowledge, and produce stronger work by forging partnerships with willing partners, the essence lies in identifying an intersection of common goals and realise how such shared endeavours can extend mutual benefits to all involved and this study can help explore these frontiers of development communication research. Today universities want to be seen as more active and responsive to local communities, scholars want their research to be more relevant to the public, students want opportunities for field-based learning, and Government is ambitious to ensure that its funding of projects serves its designated purpose down to the last rupee. Communities, on the other hand, want resources to help themselves raise their quality of lives, seek opportunities to document their cultures, histories, struggles, and strategies for change.
Further the literature survey reveals that women in community radio are under-represented and in many cases where they are involved, their contributions are undervalued calling for a consistent improvement in opportunities for women interested in radio. This being the CR scenario, it is evident that when it comes to campus community radio, there is a gap in studies relating to using CCR as a participatory community radio medium, more so in the context of empowering marginalized women. And it is here that a study of Anna FM’s SFW project and its role in contributing to knowledge and understanding the ways in which participatory campus community radio can encourage understanding issues of importance among women from disadvantaged communities assumes significance. A particular focus on women is the need as women’s education is a significant indicator of development and can help bridge economic and education divides through informal education.

Addressing women and radio is crucial to the field of communication for several reasons: First, there has been rapid growth of community radio around the world. Given such growth, it is important to focus on women in community radio to examine its effectiveness and understand how it can be used to increase the presence of women and women’s perspective in the media, especially those living in developing countries. Secondly, there is the need for a greater presence of women and women’s perspective in the media. Thus, promoting communication media such as women centric community radio will facilitate access to information and give a voice to traditionally voiceless women. In addition, it will enable women to voice issues that affect their lives and bring them from the domestic and marginalized life into the outside world. If women get access to information and communication, their awareness of what is going on around the world may be greater and will ultimately facilitate a more reasonable social-economic development.
Moreover, the design of a field experiment with control is a novel approach to establishing the effects of participatory radio on participants’ awareness and knowledge of the issues and topics. The research design with a repeated application of the method to separate themes comprising the SFW program provides an opportunity for identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the method and to develop a robust survey instrument. Off-air activities in the form of health and environment camps, weekly live interactive quiz programmes and participatory production of community skits also help explore the power of interpersonal communication in inculcating knowledge and awareness coupled with on-air programming.

As the above review illustrates, university radios, also called student, college and campus radios, depending on the local cultural and social contexts where they have developed, have been a tier of broadcasting or narrowcasting stations that have become a regular feature in campuses across the Americas, Northern Europe and Australia. In some cases they are also local community radio stations that serve the communities that live in the surrounding areas and play a role in training future broadcasters, widening the access to the media and a space for activism and social movements and also contributing to community development as a participatory tool.

To sum up, even though student radio and radio stations based in universities are, and have always been, placed in the same premises where media studies are taught and researched, this is an under-developed area of research and there are limited research resources available in this area calling for an important need that calls for this study.
2.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter included an overview of community media at the global level and in India and narrowed its focus to the campus community radio sector. With the purpose of locating Anna FM’s pedigree within the global campus community radio scenario, this chapter identified gaps in literature with respect to campus community radio and the relationship between participatory approaches, improved knowledge and behaviour change, in general, and in the context of empowering marginalized women in particular. Defining the phenomenon of campus community radio in India, as compared to other countries, the chapter also identified similarities and differences that justify the need for the study. Drawing on lessons learnt and perspectives understood from the literature review studies, the next chapter will discuss the research methodology and design adopted with perspectives on experimental design, including identification of the universe, sample selection, construction of research instruments, field investigation process, reliability, validity and inferences from secondary data.