

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Nepal has achieved a lot in broadcasting sector in the last one and half a decade. After the establishment of Democratic Republic Nepal, with 2006 April movement, there is tremendous change in broadcasting media, Radio and Television, both. Before 2006, only 56 FM radio licenses were issued. Now, 610 FM radio licenses have been distributed among the 26.5 million populations. Only one district Manang among 75 has no radio station all over the country, though a company has got the license from the Ministry of Information and communication. And other 74 districts have community radio stations and the number of proclaimed community radio is almost fifty percent among in operation.

FM radio is very common in Nepal and among Nepali people. May be there is no household that does not have radio set. Even in 2006 about 60 percent population have radio set according to Nepal Demographic Health Survey. BBC World Service Trust Report of 2008 had shown that 93 percent rural people having radio set and listening radio programs. It is the result of radio station operating in their local areas and FM band radio sets are easily available and affordable price in the market. On the other hand, development of telecommunication service as mobile phone has provided the chance having radio facility at least FM band accessible for almost all of the mobile phone holders.

At the time of issuance of FM radio license, government has given the directives to compulsory broadcasting of health, education, agriculture, forest and environment

issues in FM radio transmissions. According to the National Broadcasting Act 1993, Clause 11(a) such directives are mandatory to the FM stations. The objective of such provisions in the act is obviously that government wants to disseminate the development issues through FM radio. There is the question of big BUT in practice. Radios are covering few issues regarding development activities. Neither government has strong monitoring mechanism to check compliance of such directives and regulations, nor are the FM operators covering those issues so that people have easy access of information of their needs and interest. The content related to the local development issues according to the needs and wants of the community citizen are not satisfactory.

Yes, there are some right based programs on community development such as women rights, dalit and social discrimination, human rights and good governance. It is mostly because of the NGOs or the donor agencies are providing some budget to develop the program as well as the cost to broadcast from the particular stations of their link or interest. In many cases, it is found that when the budget stops, the station itself has not continued such programs.

In audience survey, they considered the development basically in the infrastructural issues such as construction of road, irrigation, advancement in agriculture and electrification. Education, health, information and employment are other emphasized issues of development in their understanding. Infrastructural issues of development are not directly addressed by FM radio stations. There are programs in most of the stations on health, education and agriculture. But those programs are sponsored by either donors or local organizations. The sponsors are not direct part of the local community. More than 60 percent population of Nepal still depends on agriculture

and majority of the community radio audiences are from this community but very few stations are providing agricultural programs on regular basis.

Most of the radio stations has increased their transmission time immediately or after sometimes of operation to compete with other local stations. Their competition is mostly on the similar programs rather than to create a new signpost of the station in the society. Generally, the radio tunes from 5 o'clock in the morning and goes on air up to 11 o'clock in the night, but there has not been fixed time allocated for skill development and/or employment generation related programs that could directly benefit the local audiences. These radio stations have given less time and very few programs focusing marginalized people.

Participation and involvement of the community people in the radio station either by ownership or by producing program is in questionable position. Involvement of community group or people in program production could not be found in this study. Major role of audience participation seems to provide information to that specific radio station and programs. Audiences provide more and more suggestions to the station to make the program for the community. But programs are not being changed according to the audiences' preference. Most of the program producers answered that change would take place 'according to the needs' of the station. Even feeling of ownership among the community members in any specific radio under this study is almost absent.

Majority of rural parts of the country are yet to have electrification. So FM stations are mostly located either in the urban center and the district headquarters. The transmissions could be reached somehow far from the station areas where the real audiences are located and do live. They don't have the electricity to access TV service

neither have television sets or cable service to receive satellite TV broadcasting. They are the real audience of FM radio as they can receive radio waves easily on a cheap FM band radio sets. But the programs on FM broadcastings are not intended to bring changes in their lives according to their needs, wants or interests.

Reduction of poverty is the major agenda of MDGs, which is a real problem of Nepali citizen. Unfortunately very few stations have program on poverty reduction.

Sometimes the stations broadcast situation of poverty as a part of news or radio report about poor lives rather than the program provide information and opportunity and skill for them to get rid of poverty.

It might be the reason that the owner of FM frequency is not considering the radio station as a public property. In National Broadcasting Act 1993, it is clearly mentioned in its preamble that "... to protect and promote the right to information of the citizen and by using broadcasting system to disseminate the economic, social and cultural activities to create ethnic, lingual, regional and religious equality, harmony and tranquility and aware them through national language..." the broadcasting media is need of time. But the FM station owners are failed to recognize the spirit of the act as well as the need of the society. Political segment of information is so strong that each station is covering it in their almost every news bulletin but the needy issues of day to day life are forgotten.

Most of the community radios have neither short nor the long term plan and policy to operate the station. In the management part of the station, they do not very clearly known why they are operating the station in the poor condition. In editorial part, they have no landmark programs to create the signpost of the station and mostly copying

similar nature programs' of other stations and saying that they are being more competitive with others. Creativity on program production is almost zero.

We can generalize the situation of FM stations regarding programs as follows:

- Most of the radio stations are community by name but not in practice. Community concept is not clear to the owner as well as producer.
- Community participation in producing radio program is very low.
- Community radio has very few programs of community interest relating rural development.
- Community radios are more dependent on networking programs.
- Community programs are driven by donor and most of such programs are received from network approach.

5.2 PARTICIPATION OF COMMUNITY

Nepal's situation regarding the participatory approach of community radio is very similar to the African state Rwanda. The research made by Search for Common Ground report states (http://www.radiopeaceafrica.org/index.cfm?lang=en&context_id=3&context=manuals)¹:

When reviewing community ownership, control, participation, and service, it is found low levels of community participation and, therefore, buys-in, which it maintains are the cornerstones of sustainability. None of the stations studied had employed democratic process to ensure community-led governance, and board members were neither community-elected nor representative. Similarly, there were low levels of community involvement in production. As well, few stations truly catered to local languages and all stations were reliant on outside programming for diversity. However, all stations did attempt to

¹ Retrieved from this site on 12 December 2012

interact with their audiences via methods including SMS/text messaging, call-in shows, and announcements. (para. 3)

For this study, selection of the stations attempted to be independent. Geographically it has tried to cover from mountain, hill and terai from each development region.

Operationally, operated by Women, and Man, Dalit and Indigenous people, Madheshi and Pahadiya, Hindu and Christian are chosen as far as possible. Politically, self proclaimed as democrat, communist and ultra communist stations were chosen. By ownership, community, NGO and cooperative were covered. All of them claimed that, they have covered more and more development issues whatever their political or religious lining or faith.

ACORAB Nepal has developed a long list of radio ethics and editorial guidelines to facilitate unbiased reporting even in the selection and presentation of the issues.

According to ACORAB (2008), followings are the topics of ethics that a community radio has to perform:

1. Promotion of press freedom
2. Protection of the right to information and freedom of expression
3. Accuracy and Objectivity
4. Impartiality and Diversity of Opinion
5. Fairness
6. Privacy
7. Violence, Crime and Anti-social Behavior
8. Harm and Offence
9. Protection of Children
10. Protection of Neglected and Underprivileged
11. Political Impartiality
12. Conflict, Riot and Insurgency
13. Election
14. Religion

15. Editorial Integrity and Independence
16. Language, Style and Style Book
17. Professional and Technological Competition and Responsibility
18. Partnership and Cooperation
19. Management. (p. 15)

But in practice, there is the lapse in internal ethical standard. Even the staffs or the volunteers who work for radio do not know what the ethics is. It has been hanged up in most of the radio stations, but no one has even read it seriously.

UNESCO (2002) has set an international standard to conduct the community radio. It has clearly given the operational values to operate, control and manage the station in five specific areas calling it the principles of community radio operation:

a) Access to the facility is the primary step towards the full democratization of the communication system. People have access not only to the media products but also to the media facilities. The feedback channel is always open and full interaction between the producers and receivers of messages is maintained.

b) Participation in the production and management of media is the logical step after access. Citizen's participation in radio is allowed at all levels – from planning to implementation and evaluation of the project. It involves the citizens in the decision-making process, including making decisions about the contents, duration and program schedule. The citizens, or their representatives, also have a voice in the management and financing of radio program projects.

c) Self-management of the communication facility follows participation. Once the community members gain necessary experience and assimilate the required skills there is no reason for preventing them from managing and owning the radio station.

d) Community mandate is the inevitable result of the process of democratizing the communication system. Community mandate encompasses not only management but also ownership of the radio.

e) Accountability is exercised. There is no sense in having the opportunity accountability is not in the hands of the managers and broadcasters. (pp. 11-12)

Toby Mendal (2014) supporting above mentioned idea has added freedom of expression to operate community radio freely and professionally. “The most important international norms which support and enable community media are the guarantees of the right to freedom of expression found in both international and regional human rights systems.” (p. 13)

Based on those above mentioned guidelines, the findings of this study suggest that community radio has given the access\ to the people to express their opinions and ideas. Regarding the feedback from the audiences, to some extent it has been addressed and interaction between the producers and receivers of messages is maintained.

In community participation it has serious problem in understanding of community radio concept. It is hard to found as expected by the UNESCO standard as involving the citizens in the decision-making process, including making decisions about the contents, duration and program schedule. Involving a diverse cross-section of community members in the production of programs and in the decisions taken by a station as much as possible is probably the only way of achieving community interest. Though there are lapses in self management and ownership, peoples' accountability towards community radio still in existence.

Community radio could be sustainable if the community citizens directly involve in its policy and program making. There is severe lacks in the involvement of community members and volunteers to make the station a community station. In some stations people are working as the volunteer but they neither represent any community

organization nor their self motivation. They are volunteers simply because they are not paid by the station due to its poor management. The station itself has not been approached the local or community people to participate in the program production. Feeling of community ownership in local level is very poor.

5.3 COMMUNITY RADIO IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Community radio by definition must be operated by the community for the community with community participation in programs, and its policies. Community might be rural or urban but community radio must address the issues and problems of that specific community. Gumucio-Dagron (2008) not only confines it on community participation and ownership but also emphasizes the content that should be related to development and local:

A majority of programming is locally produced and is relevant to the needs of the poorest in the community. This includes the promotion of dialogue and debate on issues of education, health, legislation, human rights and social organization, among others. (p. 45)

Developing Radio Partners President William Siemering offered a working (although non-exhaustive) definition of community radio as follows:

Community radio that serves a geographic group or community of interest is licensed to a nonprofit organization to serve the public interest by:

- electing a governing board that reflects the diversity of the community, defines the mission, sets policy, is financially responsible, and appoints the manager;

- creating structures and processes to identify community needs and interests that inform programming decisions and evaluate the effectiveness of the programming;
- ensuring broad participation in programming, giving value to communication among the people to facilitate positive change, not simply relaying information to the citizen;
- ensuring that the service is trustworthy, accurate, and independent of outside influences, be they government, [commercial,] special interests, or religions. (CIMA and NED, 2007, p. 6)

The slogan of a community radio station in Mongolia—“Your radio is listening”—speaks volumes about the nature of this medium. Community radio is about the horizontal exchange of information—a participatory interaction between the community and the radio station rather than a vertical, one-way communication method, delivering information from a medium to the public.

The most important aspects of community radio, the participants emphasized, include broad participation by community members—often on a volunteer basis—and the ownership and control of the station by the community through a board of directors that is representative of the community and responsive to the diversity of its needs. Community radio involves community organization, joint thinking and decision-making, all of which lead to great potential for empowering communities and building a democratic society.

Though the station is at core city center or the districts headquarter, its major audiences are the rural people. According to the then station Manager of *Radio Sagarmatha*, first community radio of Nepal stationed in Kathmandu valley has targeted its programs to the rural people of outskirts areas of the capital city. If we

observe the programs of *Radio Sagarmatha*, rural audiences are focused in its programs.

Other stations that studied for this research purpose are mainly located at the headquarters- urban or semi urban parts of the districts having rural issues. Their major audiences are from the rural areas than the very locals. Though the programs could not be popular among the audiences, programs are carried out of the nature of rural development. "Samajik Serophero", "Krishi Karyakram", "Gharelu" of *Radio Nepalbani* or "Kehtipati" of *Radio Janakpur* or "Sushan", "Kura Kisanka", "Janasarokar" of *Shuklaphanta FM* are the programs on rural development.

Unfortunately, they are not popular simply because either they are not providing the content of audience interest or not looking for the audience participation in program production. Therefore, what the audience considered as development has hardly been covered by those stations.

Regarding the ownership, Nepal's community radios are operated by three types of institutions: cooperatives, NGOs and local government. By cooperative law it seems more participatory than NGO. According to Cooperative Act 2048, article 3.1.a the cooperative needs at least 25 members as shareholders to be a legal entity. NGO needs three members only to be legalized. Local government is an elected body by the people through periodic election. Local election has not been taken place since 1998 and real representation is lacking in local body. Another danger of local body is it might not be equally representative of diverse community by ideology, gender, ethnicity etc. Even real problem is in existence in cooperative as well. Whatever is the legal provision, cooperatives have not included diverse community people as a stakeholder. At least, there is no substantial representation in the radio cooperatives.

NGOs are less participatory by its nature so community people are not involved in the board.

5.4 THEORIZATION OF CONTENT

There are many different theories of how people learn. Who follows what among varieties of them depends individually, and it is useful to consider their application on how they learn and also how it is delivered. It is interesting to think about particular way of learning and to recognize that everyone does not learn the way the other do.

Reinforcement theory is one of the learning theories which help to change the behavior of the people. The developer of this theory B.F. Skinner believed that behavior is a function of its consequences. The learner will repeat the desired behavior if positive reinforcement (a pleasant consequence) follows the behavior.

Reinforcement could be negative or positive. This theory is also implied in the advertisement. Advertisements are repeated time and again through media to make the product or service known. It is done for the two purposes, one is to retain the consumers of the product or the service and other is to reinforce to the new prospects. Sometimes, repetition of an advertisement irritates the audience who later decides not to use that specific product or service. Or, some sorts of information, like discouraging matters on smoking might create enthusiasm that negatively motivate the audience, which is negative reinforcement. Similarly, the content in the form of information or any other format through the FM stations are intended to reinforce the audience to make an opinion or behave in a particular way as stated in that media content.

Though radio is not considered as the social media but is the part of society as it is covering from the society for the society. Audience of the rural areas mostly depends on radio for new ideas and information. What is broadcasted on a radio is a new knowledge to them. In 1977 Albert Bandura (http://psychology.about.com/od/profilesofmajorthinkers/p/bio_bandura.htm) proposed social learning theory has become perhaps the most influential theory of learning and development in the rural society or community. Bandura believed that direct reinforcement could not account for all types of learning.

Bandura's learning theory added a social element, arguing that people can learn new information and behaviors by watching or listening other people. Known as observational learning (or modeling), this type of learning can be used to explain a wide variety of behaviors.

There are three core concepts at the heart of Bandura's social learning theory. First that people can learn through observation. Next is that internal mental states are an essential part of this process. Finally, this theory recognizes that just because something has been learned, it does not mean that it will result into a change in behavior.

Radio is following 'development media theory' to some extent, because it has been advocating the issues of development. McQuail (1983) described development media theory endeavors to bring about national economic development. Most of the community radios in this study have covered the rural or community issues in their different programs like news; talk show or current affairs. They have followed the 'democratic participation theory' by involving the audiences in the program on rural or

community development issues. Democratic participant theory also developed by McQuail, advocates media supports for cultural pluralism at a grass root level.

Role of social transformation also cannot ignore that has played by FM stations. In social scientific literature the term 'social transformation' is increasingly used to describe societal changes and generally indicates a critical stance towards older notions of the idea of development. The approach of social transformation does not consider the western model as the one that should be imitated by all other nations. Some scholars consider social transformation studies as a field of research that can lead to positive steps for social and political action to protect local and national communities against negative consequences of global change.

In a lecture given at a Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies workshop Castles (2000) has tried to link development as a social transformation:

The response to social transformation may not entail adaptation to globalization but rather resistance. This may involve mobilization of traditional cultural and social resources, but can also take new forms of 'globalization from below' through trans-national civil society organizations. (p. 3)

Though we can find linkages of different media theories followed by the community radio under this study in their contents and presentation that mostly followed the 'media dependency theory'. Media dependency theory was originally proposed by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur (1976). This theory integrates several perspectives as:

First, it combines perspectives from psychology with ingredients from social categories theory. Second, it integrates systems perspectives with elements from more causal approaches. Third, it combines

elements of uses and gratifications research with those of media effects traditions, although its primary focus is less on effects per se than on rationales for why media effects typically are limited. Finally, a contextualist philosophy is incorporated into the theory, which also features traditional concerns with the content of media messages and their effects on audiences. (P. 4)

Among those different perspectives of media dependence theory, basically Nepali community radio has been found emphasized on uses and gratification approach. This approach differs from other theoretical perspectives, in that way it regards audiences as active media users as opposed to passive receivers of information. In contrast to traditional media effects theories centralized around on “what media do to people” and assume audiences are homogeneous, uses and gratifications approach is more concerned with “what people do with media” as mentioned by Katz (1959). It allows audiences personal needs to use media and responds to the media as determined by their social and psychological background.

In the mass communication process, uses and gratifications approach puts the function of linking need gratifications and media choice clearly on the side of audience members. It suggests that peoples' needs influence what media they would choose, how they use certain media and what gratifications the media provide to them.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS

Community radio could consider the real property of the community when it produces programs of community interest, needs and wants as theorize as users and gratification approaches. To make them real community stations, some corrective measures have to be followed among others:

- Should classify the radio stations when licensing and the state should behave them accordingly;
- Has to enhance community participation in management. Board member should be selected from the community people trying to balance the gender as well as be inclusive;
- Address the perception of community radio in content so that community broadcasting is for the citizens of the community;
- Encourage greater community participation in program production by participating them directly;
- Selection of radio contents should be from the community, for the community and by the community;
- Identify the diversified sources of income for the community radio at local level; and
- Promote and enhance the role of community radios on rural developmental through some sort of compensation by the state or its agencies to sustain them.

Community radio is essential for empowering oppressed sectors of a population and bringing about democratic and social change. In Nepali context there is no hindrance of legal provisions to get license for radio, but the frequencies are haphazardly distributed so that new comers in community radio sectors could be discouraged due to saturation of frequency. The provision to be a community radio is not specified by the government laws and regulations. Due to this reason, self declared stations are failed to maintain the norms and values of community station.

Nepali promoters of community radio are not strong enough. Donor funding is crucial for community radio development. A great misconception about community radio is that if anyone gets license of community radio, donor comes to support them in one fine morning and provides every essentials to them. In the beginning it was somehow true. They got most of the equipments they needed to make a station ready to broadcast. Obviously community radios are the quick means of getting information across to a community but they have not institutionalized so far. So, donors should invest in the community radio to develop it as an institution. UNESCO has been showing concern to enhance the quality and capacity of community radio and could continue to coordinate for the long-term support from the donors.

Donors are supporting to strengthen the technical capacity of the radio stations. To support of rural peoples' development through community radio stations, programs of their needs have to be enhanced so that it helps them to make the life easier. That obviously means radio station still needs donor support to produce the program on rural development.

5.5.1 MEASURING IMPACT

Community radio has great impact in the society. People used to listen them and do believe on them. It has helped them to make the life easy and prosperous. Substantial resources should allocate for rigorous quantitative and qualitative research on community radio to measure their effects. Most of the funding on community radio from the donors community till the date is either on technological support or on specific content production. The composition of board of the community radio and the content of the community interest has not been thoroughly researched. So, the

rigorous research is the need for its sustainability and to enhancing peoples' participation to make the community radio a real community.

The radio stations study looked at content has no much differences between commercial and community media. The fundamental differences are commercial media's information sources were limited to the traditional ones – press releases, press conferences, promotional events, large public events, official spokespersons, and so on. On the other hand, community radio makes active use of field reports, interviews with ordinary people, testimonies, and other techniques that privilege “people as content”. But some of the commercial radio has also followed the format of community radio. Basically, networking radio has tried to do so, so that it can hook the community radio to expand its network.

Rural development is not a general term. It varies community to community as the needs and wants of the community differ from one to another. Some may have need of agricultural support whereas other may have primary treatment. Only MDGs priorities might not address the need of under developed countries like Nepal. Infrastructural development is the potent need of rural population.

5.5.2 COMMUNITY RADIO PROGRAMMING

Community radio has to do a lot to make it a real radio of community by covering local issues on development. The major lacks on community radio is about the participation of community in programming. After five years ahead, programs in community radios' are almost the same as described by World Bank Institute (WBIST, 2007). Communities participate in programming could be many ways as follows:

- **The community is present in the programs:** Community radio programming is primarily locally produced and about local people and issues. This is in harsh contrast to television or the print where the resource-intensive nature of production on television and reading impair of illiterate people or poor purchasing capacity impose limits on the amount of local programming.
- **The programs are present in the community:** Community members do not only listen to the radio, the station goes out to the community. In Ghana, for example, programs are often recorded in open village meetings and the effect of hearing one's own and one's neighbors' voices on the airwaves has been profoundly empowering. Radio Bheri of Surkhet had copied the same format in one program.
- **Participatory program formats:** Including talk shows, round tables, reading listener letters on the air, *vox populi*, broadcasts from public locations, etc. are very simple ways of facilitating community participation. People comment on the issues of the day, on the station's programming, or they just send greetings to friends and family members. This kind of service is very valuable, especially in rural areas where people are isolated from each other and the radio is the only medium that brings them together and contributes a sense of community. Participatory formats are a potent vehicle for communities to develop public opinion.
- **Community volunteers involve in the programs:** Local people know their need and could assess the real problems of the society. NGOs and other types of civil society associations produce and broadcast their own programs using the community radio's production and broadcast facilities. Rural development issues also could be covered by those volunteer organizations. Or, local volunteers like listener clubs or consumer communities can provide rural issues by producing program themselves.
- **Feedback and participatory evaluation mechanisms:** Such mechanisms are widely used. These include on-air mechanisms including the participatory program formats mentioned above but they also include "open house" days when community members are invited to

visit the station and meet with staff and volunteers and public meetings at which listeners and station representatives evaluate the programming.
(p. 26)

5.6 CONCLUSION

Community radio is a new and common phenomenon in Nepal. Community radio stations are credited for the public participation and for giving voices to the marginalized people of the society. Nepali community radio stations are somehow helping to fulfill these objectives. Participatory communication might not provide the same meaning to all community, region or the level of understanding. In Nepali community radio context, participatory communication means that a local radio station initiated, managed, programmed and financed by local communities, NGOs or local authorities. The main objective of the station is to provide information about their day to day life. It is a greater access to the locals on relevant information on time.

Community radio stations were flourished in Nepal after the successive movement to restore democracy in 1990. Newly elected government of Nepali Congress Party adopted liberal media policy through National Communication Policy 2049 B. S. which was convened by Narahari Acharya that opened the door to issue the radio license to the private sector as well as community radio stations, though the first license was issued by United Marxist Leninist government. After the political change in 1990, the newly elected government created the environment to initiate private radio station and that enable community radio stations in Nepal. Nowadays, community radios are helping people to participate in the rural development through the democratic process by making them aware of their rights and responsibilities. Community radio is being a channel to express the opinion of the voiceless people.

Community radio is also owned by the local government. NGOs for specific objectives have also operated the radio in the name of community. Cooperatives have founded community radio as a common practice in Nepal. Every type of stations have got recognition at national level and got support at international levels. In other parts of the world, there exist radio stations owned and controlled by religious groups and the trade unions. We do not have such practice directly as the license are not issued on that basis. But some of the stations are getting support in favor of religious program though do not have such types of direct involvement. As there is no clear legal provision, it is difficult to say which model is better for Nepali community radio.

There are some major lessons that have been learned in operating community radio station in the rural part of the country. Managerial skill is highly lacking in most of the radio stations. They've no strategic understanding of the requirement of human and other resources for sustainability. There is a severe lack of technical human resource, as most of the community radio stations have local staff's from management to editorial sections.

The term 'global village' was very common in communication sector before to enter the 21st century. It is said to refer the advancement of information technology that make it possible to get information from one corner to the next of the world. Many forms have been developed in the world as the medium to express the opinion of the people. But many people in rural areas of Nepal still have no means to communicate their voices. Socially and economically marginalized groups are still deprived from the expression of ideas and opinions. A big challenge in bridging the gap between 'haves' and 'have nots' in terms of their access to information. Community radio has

tried to fill up such gap to some extent though how good the programs are with relevant information.

Radio is a sound. No one needs to be literate to get the information or to be entertained from radio. It is a great advantage over print media. Equally, no one needs to go market to buy the media every day or needs of any subscription. Radio is the air wave and till the date is easily accessible to all without discrimination. Again the question rises, how useful information the disadvantage people are receiving from the community radio stations.

To be a real community radio, community participation is essential in the decision-making process. Radio stations can facilitate community participation not only in planning, operation and evaluation but in the program production as well. It helps to identifying what types of information or entertainment the people want from the station. It is about ownership and sharing the benefits of the station. It does not only give the feeling of ownership at radio station but also encourage them to participate in the whole process of rural development.

People can participate in many ways to run the community station. People can participate directly as individuals to produce the program or a member of a group or organization provides volunteer service for the same or some kind of remuneration. Such kinds of participation not only help a station, but also give the feeling of ownership to the station. Such type of awareness among the community people itself is a part of rural development.

The efforts of community radio stations should be appreciated as there are no or less alternatives to get information about the community and even of the government. Still there are some areas where government operated Radio Nepal has no access. On the

other hand, there are more radio stations than the newspapers in some of the district head quarters. Though the more stations mean more option to the audience, but it raises the question of sustainability of station itself.

Radio not only helps to change the society, but also preserve the historic values, culture and tradition in good faith. Each community of Nepal is unique and every community has its own culture. There might be different ways and processes to make the people participate to promote and preserve such heritages through community radio. It should be developed its own ways of doing things for the real preservation. How the other people know what certain community is doing? Obviously it is community radio that can inform and share to other. How bigger or the smaller is the community; everyone has right to preserve its language and ethnic and cultural identity. And only a real community radio can help to preserve local culture and identity.

Community radio has contributed in the rural development of the country. It has brought the issues of development that are the immediate needs of the rural people. Very simple example of development is sanitation or immunization that the community radio helping people. It has also helped for the enrollment of children in the school as well as promoted for the girls education. It has also made aware the authorities about the issues that they have to immediately address.

In the view of community radio developer- a conversation with Raghu Mainali, Director of Community Radio Support Center, NEFEJ, Kathmandu- community radio stations often “serve as the most trusted agent in rural or urban areas that brings change.” Community radio plays a vital role in building vibrant communities, in mobilizing groups to action by informing and empowering citizens, in giving voice to

the marginalized groups of society, and in bringing community needs to the attention of local and even national governments. The scope of the actual and potential impact of community radio is wide-ranging, many agree, as are the challenges associated with community radio development.

Like a vaccine capable of reducing preventable diseases, community radio is a simple, effective solution to achieve development goals, to prevent fragile states from becoming failed states, and also to help people enjoy their own culture. The impact of community radio is most evident in areas having practically no other access to information. So, community radio is generally the best tool for getting information to illiterate and poor communities, as it requires neither reading skills nor money needed to buy newspapers. Alike Nepal, in many countries most media are concentrated in capital cities and heavily populated areas, and even national media fail to reach remote areas, community radio provides the opportunity of reaching powerless communities and giving them a voice. Even in areas where national media broadcast is accessible, the impact of a community radio broadcasting in a local language or languages is incomparable. So, the national broadcasting Radio Nepal has started FM stations all over the country to make the audience habitual to tune it.

Community radio is an extremely important part of the whole media sector.

Community radios are serving people by providing different types of information service even for the development of rural areas which the government has failed to serve them. But community radio stations are in very uncomfortable situation as they are not getting financial support, neither from government nor from community as well. Government's lack of understanding of the importance of reaching out to and

communicating the issues of rural development with marginalized or rural sectors of the population can obstruct community radio development.

Finally, it can, thus, be said that community radio is an extremely important part of the whole media sector for the rural development of the country like Nepal.