



**COMMUNITY BROADCASTING IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA:
A THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE CAMPUS RADIO STATION,
UNIVERSITY OF PESHAWAR**

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Abstract

This research study is designed to analyze the contents of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar while using the thematic approach, in order to know that how does this broadcaster serve its community and follow the code of conduct, designed for community broadcasting in Pakistan. The researcher has used the qualitative method while going through the audio programmes, aired by the radio during six months, to find answers to the research question. To know the audience perspective, the researcher has interviewed twenty listeners, who regularly listen to the radio, and had also in-depth interviews with media experts to ascertain reasons behind the gap between what is being aired, and expected by the respective community. The respondents who represented the community have been selected by purposive sampling technique. Thematic analysis as a method was used to analyze the data of the radio station. The data has been examined through the lens of the agenda-setting and uses and gratification theories. The findings show that the Campus Radio Station at the University of Peshawar is not serving its community in a true sense, and still much is needed to be done to be a community broadcaster in the real sense. The findings also identified a gap between perspectives of the community and the broadcaster, that lead to certain recommendations for improvement in the broadcasting culture in Pakistan.

Keywords: *Community Broadcasting, Campus Radio Station, Thematic, Community Development*



Introduction

Community Radio Stations commonly known as FM radios in Pakistan assert that they are endeavoring to renovate themselves into such a convincing forum that offer their respective local communities with an opportunity and prospect to get engaged in a conversation on numerous issues related to development, that affect their lives one way or the other, resultantly molding the discourse towards their fundamental information needs. Initial research in this regard shows that the contents being aired by these radio stations are not according to the needs of the community they have been made for.

There has been a rapid growth in the quantity of FM radio stations during the past 15 years in Pakistan. The constant demand by the people of Pakistan for having a platform where they can share their view point and have an insight of the policy makers on it, has further accelerated the process of establishing FM radio station even at various districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, like Swat, Swabi and Mardan. The number of FM radio stations in Pakistan has increased rapidly during the past few years to 235, with 157 commercial, and 60 non-commercial radio stations. During this period the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) has not only issued licenses for the new radio stations, but it has cancelled licenses of 21 radio stations in the four provinces and Islamabad for not complying with rules & regulations. The number of FM radio stations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is 33, with 23 commercial and 10 non-commercial radio stations, which are also known as Community Radio Stations (PEMRA, 2021).



By and large, every radio station and exclusively those who broadcast to serve a particular community, are presently playing a vital role on the media scene with numerous colours in term of significance. But it has always been an issue to devise a sound strategy for these broadcasters in a country like Pakistan, that can evaluate its significance and impact. These broadcasters can be utilized as a successful apparatus for the advancement of society, if operated appropriately and managed professionally (Khan, 2017).

The FM radio stations particularly Community Radio Stations (CRS) in Pakistan and specifically in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, have diverted their focus merely to contents related to entertainment, dominated by music and ignored addressing core issues of the respective communities. Consequently, some illegal and illegitimate radio stations stepped in and started attracting people in some parts of the province to militancy and radicalization thus challenging even writ of the government. (Saeed & Ullah, 2021).

Campus Radio Station, established in 2003 at the University of Peshawar in one of these broadcasters in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which has been licensed for the development of its community on non-commercial basis. The community of this radio station includes students, teachers of various departments, colleges and universities on campus, and the residents who serve various universities but share the campus for residential purposes. Besides, the surrounding areas of the university campus also use to listen to this radio for various purposes, mainly entertainment. This study is based on the thematic analysis of Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar along with investigating



the perspective of the respective community regarding their level of gratification and satisfaction with the content.

Community Radio Station

Community Radio is a channel that offers a rationally different model of broadcasting, contrary to public or commercial broadcasting. A community radio station can also be defined as a broadcaster that serves a community geographically, as well as a section of society with common interests whose issues are raised with the intentions to get noticed by authorities, which are responsible to address it. A Community Radio Station (CRS) airs content that usually do not find any space in the mainstream commercial media, but is accepted and admired by the audience as it has a significance for them. Community Radio Stations are own, operated and regarded by its community. CRS operate on non-commercial grounds with the aim to empower individuals, encouraging opinion leaders to tell their stories and appealing the quarters concerned for the compensation (Nirmala, 2015).

Statement of the Problem

The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) has issued licenses to different institutions to establish Community Radio Stations in Pakistan, purely on non-commercial basis and for the development of the community. The University of Peshawar is one of these institutions, which has established a Campus Radio Station in 2003, that was formally inaugurated on January 17, 2004. Like many other broadcasters, it has also designed a Fixed Point Chart (FPC) and submitted the same to the PEMRA as one of the prerequisites. A number of Programmes, based on



education and general awareness of its community were enlisted, along with few other chunks to be filled by the representatives of the respective community. With the passage of time, the radio has switched to either entertainment or airing some old programmes, with no fresh ideas and representation of the community.

Research Question

RQ: Does the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar serve the community it is established for?

Objectives of the study

1. To Analyze the contents of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar by using thematic analysis approach.
2. To investigate the needs and problems of the community vis-à-vis their expectations.

Literature Review

Frederich, Noronha (1998) argues that few groups of citizenries thought to have a radio stations on non-profit basis that can work as a platform for those whose voice has never been raised and heard in India. Being instrumental in the development of the society, the same model of community broadcasting has also been copied in Pakistan. Campus Radio Station at the University of Peshawar is one such example, which was established with the purpose to give voice to voiceless people of the university campus, which currently housing five public sector universities, constituent colleges and schools. The thematic analysis of the Campus Radio Station at University of Peshawar aimed to investigate that whether these communities have been represented in the contents or otherwise.



Nian Sevanti (2001) in his article rationalizes the concept of Community Radio in Nepal and terms it as the best examples of community broadcasting. The article debates about four such radio stations which works independently and operating for the community development in Khatmandu, Palpa District of Western Nepal, Nanigram-Butwa, and in the town of Ghorai. The number of community radio stations is constantly on increase in Pakistan too, but the important thing is that what themes are being broadcasted from these radio stations? This is why the preliminary research for this study revealed that the agenda set for the audience does not represent them in the true sense, rather other factors influences the agenda after going through number of bureaucratic filters.

Community Radio Stations works as a channel for communities to advance their aims and plans for development. France, Argentina, South Africa, Australia, Ireland, Nepal, Sweden, Syria and USA can be quoted as countries with best examples of community broadcasting that truly incorporate voices of their communities, and bridging the gap between listeners and governments. Similarly, the community radio also has its significance in this part of the world, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where people still prefer to listen to the radio for information and entertainment (Saeed & Ullah, 2021). One of the main reasons is that due to live streaming of many radio stations on the internet, mostly the youth do switch to these broadcasters, but the problem arises when it comes to the content. The content under different themes of these community radio stations are usually not in accordance with needs of the audience or in other words it is not that much useful in their social growth. This research also aimed to find out, if the respective community is not served with the



contents, then what types of themes are being broadcasted by the campus radio station, at University of Peshawar.

According to Paul (2012) that in the developing countries more than 75% of people listen to radio on daily basis, certifying the argument that if the audience is given with the productive and quality content in term of gratifications to the needs, they can make a real difference in their respective roles as a responsible member of the community. This is the reason that in societies like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, FM radio or Community Radio for that matter is still considered as an important and effective source of communication especially for educating the people in both formal and informal way, as people have to rely on it due to low literacy rate and communication barriers. (Paul, 2012).

FM radio has an important role to provide news and information regarding local, national and International Issues (Marcus, 2020; Rodero, 2020; Times, 2020). This is the reason that the current study has been carried out to investigate that is the campus radio station at University of Peshawar plays the same role especially in providing information about issues of its community. Likewise, the study also aimed to find if the issues of respective community which are not reflected in its themes, then what are the themes which the radio rely on? Similarly, one of the objectives of the study was to investigate from the community that what do they expect from the Campus Radio Station at University of Peshawar, that can possibly gratify their information needs.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the agenda-setting theory of media, which according to McCombs & Shaw (1972) argues that if applied properly, it



helps the media to influence the public agenda and topics being discussed can be made part of public discourse. The audience will surely regard it as an important issue of their lives, if a media channel frequently and significantly covers it and presents it as an important news item. Keeping in view the theory, the researcher has investigated the agenda of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar in order to find that what types of themes are presented in its broadcast. The contents of themes have also been analyzed in connection with the Fixed Point Chart, that has been submitted to the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority at time of application for license. Similarly, in order to know the perspective of the community regarding themes of the Campus Radio Station, the researcher has applied the uses and gratification approach, presented by Katz (1959). The approach accepts that when applied, it actually shifts the concentration of the audience towards the channel, which claims that its contents are in accordance with needs of the audience. The researcher has investigated that whether the Campus Radio Station at University of Peshawar was successful in gratifying needs of its community or not, and to find how consumers are considered as an important stakeholder when it comes to selling a content as product (Severin & Tankard, 1997).

Methodology

The researcher has used the qualitative methodology for analyzing the contents of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar. The researcher has also used the qualitative instruments of measurement to collect data in order to explore a theoretical relationship that is usually not easy to study with the scientific or empirical method alone, and is likely to enable the researcher to assess the relationship of the given data vis-à-vis the needs of people (Smith, 1999).



It is a thematic analysis of the content being aired by the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar during six months (Sept 2017–Feb 2018), as because of the academic session in progress, these regular transmissions were managed mostly by students and heard by the respective community. The selection of Community Radio Station at University of Peshawar was made on the basis of definitions, made by the Pakistan Electron Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) as they consider all non-commercial FM Radio stations as Community Broadcasters with the prime aim to serve the community and work for its overall uplift (Iqbal, 2019).

Themes of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar were identified after listening the contents of various programmes under the Fixed Point Chart. Since these themes were repeatedly discussed and described in the discourses of presenters as well as participants, so it led the researcher to go for them, and analyze the themes in light of the expectations of the community. After a thorough analysis of the themes of contents, it has been reassessed through the technique of interactive discourse with the audience as well as experts on media, in order to conclude that whether the themes are in accordance with audience's preferences or otherwise. This interaction with the community members helped the researcher to know about observations and demands of the audience along with their expectations from the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar. Such studies surely help the policymakers to evolve strategies and design policies for media organizations like community radio stations, for effective implementation of the standards with the objectives to serve community in a professional way (Khan, 2004). The researcher has also interviewed experts on media and representatives of the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) in order to find reasons behind the gap



between themes of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar and expectations of the community. Through purposive sampling, the researcher has selected 20 listeners from the log book, that contains information about the regular callers who constantly interact with the radio. The selection of respondents were made on the basis of their frequent interaction with the radio station, in order to get their demands fulfilled and issues addressed by the experts of concerned field or discipline for that matter.

The researcher used a code sheet method, in order to draw a conclusion from the data that is rational and justified. A code sheet is an analytical process that categorizes the data quantitatively as well as qualitatively, thus helping the researcher to enlist broader themes of the data and then supplementary topic, being presented in content (Donmez, 2015).

Universe of the study

The study has been conducted in university campus and suburbs where people used to listen to the transmission of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar during the period, selected for this study. The areas included University Town, Tehkal, Danish Abad, Gharib Abad, Jamrud, Hayat Abad and Palosi.

Thematic Analysis

Braun and Clarke (2006) say that thematic analysis is a qualitative method of identifying, analyzing and reporting of patterns within the amount of data available to the researcher. During the analysis of the themes, the researchers ask certain questions from themselves that help them come up with themes of any media content. In the case of the radio broadcast the frequently used words, topics and phrases are the indicators of a theme, regardless of the whether that theme attracts the attention of the



audience and gratify their needs. Sometimes media houses have their own agenda regarding dissemination of information, educating audience on a specific issue or entertaining them in a way that its agenda is also incorporated in it. Therefore, the researchers while analyzing themes, study the data and find answers for the research questions in a meaningful way.

The process of thematic analysis is based on certain key steps that help the researcher to come up with the unbiased and objective scrutiny of data. The researchers make themselves familiar with the data and generate various categories. After generating varied categories, themes are discovered, reviewed and defined in accordance with the research questions.

During this study, the researcher has come up with six main themes out of the contents, along with some sub-themes after going through the primary data. The primary data was audio programmes of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar aired during the specified period. An interaction with the listeners has further helped the researcher to critically analyze contents of the campus radio station, besides discussion the gap found in both, while using thematic approach. The in-depth interviews with media experts and representative of the PEMRA have also helped the researcher to know reasons behind the gap between what is being aired, and being expected or demanded by the community.

Profile of the Campus Radio Station (FM 107.4), University of Peshawar

Campus Radio Station (FM 107.4) established at the department of Journalism & Mass Communication, University of Peshawar and started its test transmission in October 2003, followed by the launching of its regular broadcast on 17th January 2004. Before that, Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) Peshawar used to record its programme 'University



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Magazine' at a place allocated to this radio and later on PBC would air those programmes. First-ever of its kind in the South Asia, Campus Radio Station was established with the financial and technical assistance of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and Deutsche Welle (DW). Coverage area of the Campus Radio Station is 20 kilometre radius that encompasses University Campus, Shaheen Town, Tehkal and Hayat Abad, but it can be listened even in areas like Peshawar Cantonment, Haji Camp, landi Kotal, Mohamand, Shangla and some parts of Nowshera.

Objective: The main objective of the Campus Radio Station is to be an effective source of communication for its community, which mainly consists of students, teachers and residents of the university campus, Peshawar.

Table 1. Fixed Point Chart (Fixed Programmes) of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar



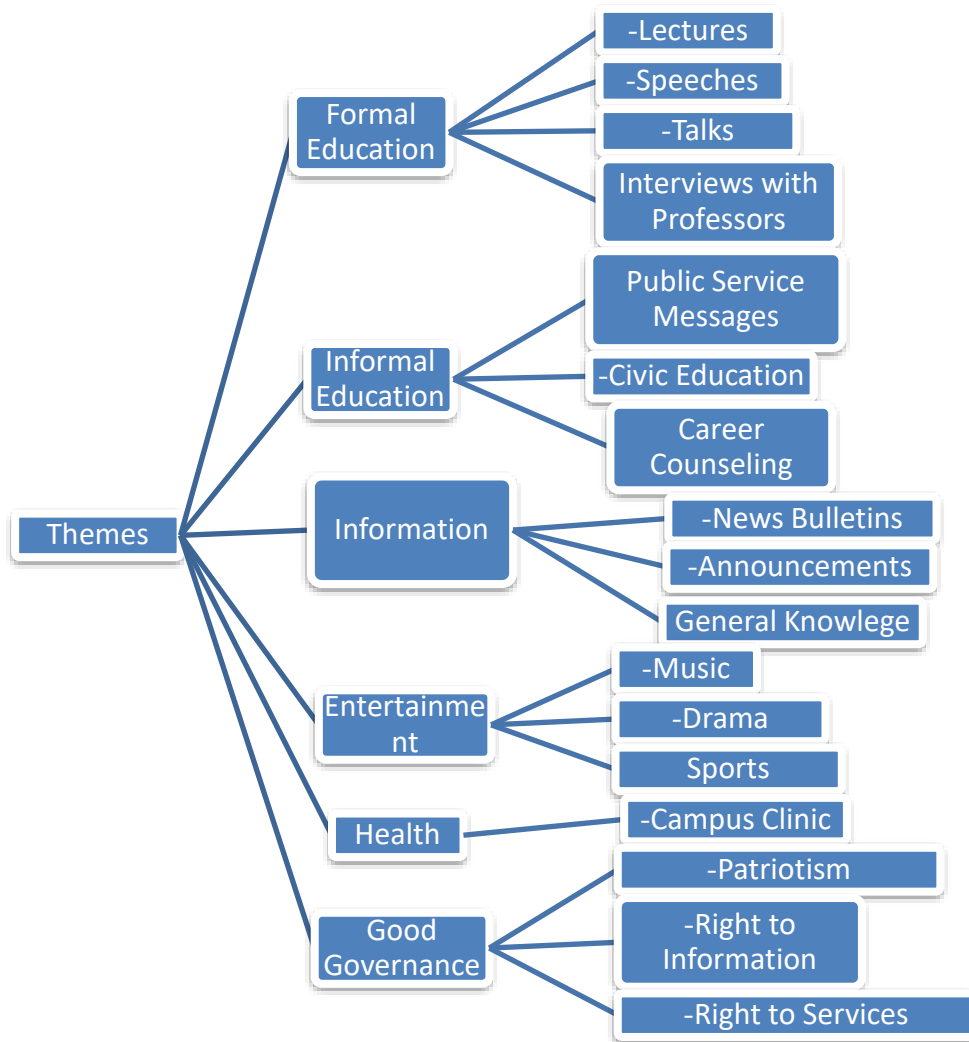
Research Corner	1. Campus Clinic	Lawyer in Studio	Psychologist in Studio	4. Career Counselling	Talent Hunt
Deen o Danish	7. Adabi Ghorzang	8. Qalam Qabeela	9. Drama	10. Darakhshan Sitaray	11. Life on Campus
2. Music	3. University Magazine	4. Islam and Science	15. Sports Magazine	16. Science Magazine	7. Dareechay
8. Inquiry Box	19. Deen o Dunya	10. Da Nan Khabara	21. News Bulletins	2. Meri Awaz Suno	13. Hawa or Dunya

24.

Out of the available data regarding the themes of Campus Radio Station, the researcher could identify six broader themes with some main themes, which have been broadcasted during the selected period. The six main themes and sub-themes are given below;



Figure 1. The Fixed Point Chart of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar



25. The Fixed Point Chart of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar have many other programmes mentioned in it which were not found in the audio record of the radio, which means that these chunks have either been filled by other contents or ignored all together.



According to data, in the section of Formal Education, the radio broadcasts lectures of various professors on topics related to their respective disciplines, with the aim to educate the audience. The topics include English Language and Applied Linguists, Islam, the significance of literature in a society, Physics and its application in our daily lives, Journalism as an eye, nose and tongue of the society, Significance of Co-Curricular activities in personality grooming, Communication Skills and Human Psychology. The section also includes speeches of the Vice-Chancellor shedding light on the performance of University, Kashmir Day, Patriotism and some other scholars also spoke on patriotism and nationalism. Similarly, the radio broadcasted interviews with researchers on their M.Phil and Ph.D. researches, explaining the validity and impact of their findings for the education of students as well as teachers. It has also broadcasted some brief talks by experts on issues like Social Cohesion, Interfaith Harmony and Plantation drives for making the country clean and green.

26. In the Informal Education category, the radio could broadcast few Public Service Messages related to cleanliness, responsible citizenry, charity begins at home and traffic rules. The radio also broadcasted some programmes based on civic education like respect of elders and women, rights of senior citizens and career counselling. In the category of Information, the researcher could find News Bulletins, announcements of examinations and results, and some information about general knowledge as one of the features of broadcast contents. One of the themes was Entertainment, which was filled with sub-themes of dramas on various social issues of the society, an excessive of music mainly Pashto and some Urdu as well as Punjabi, and few shows on sports. Health was



also one of the themes identified in the archival data of the Campus Radio Station, and the chunk was filled with some interviews with the health practitioners in programme “Campus Clinic”, taking about seasonal diseases, care and precautions. The theme of Good Governance was found in some presentations and programmes based on the Right to Information (RTI), Right to Services (RTS) and highlighting performance of the government mainly in the education sector, besides talking about Pakistan with the intention to make people good of their homeland.

Audience Perspective

Being considered as an important stakeholder of community broadcasting, the researcher also investigated the audience’s perspective. Interviews have been conducted with those who frequently listen to these broadcasters and interact accordingly. The researcher has interviewed 20 regular listeners of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar on campus and surrounding areas of the university.

The community of Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar appreciated what is being aired by the radio, especially the entertainment content. Mostly they like the Pashto dramas, with serious observation on excessive music as to them why the management of radio has put music all the time, for entertaining them. Audience can be entertained even with good conversation, talking about their issues, airing radio features, documentaries and reviews on television dramas and movies. They also wanted to listen to interviews of their favourite celebrities in the field of art, music, sports and fashion industry. One of the observation recorded during interview was the timings of the radio broadcast, which according to listeners are improper. Instead of remaining on-air in day time, the radio should go on air in the evening as people are free from their daily routine and can listen to the radio



with concentration as well as give good feedback. Since the radio mainly address the community on campus and suburbs, so listeners want programmes on tourism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, online education facility provided by the University of Peshawar, disadvantages of notes culture and the market (Coffee Shop) that is famous for promoting the trend of reading notes just before the examination and get pass marks, documentaries on various historical places of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, especially Peshawar, interviews with noted personalities of various fields/disciplines, like Vice-Chancellors, Deans, Chairpersons of the various academic department, Directors of Institutes and eminent professors, who can inspire and motivate the community. They also want critical discussions on the quality of food, security on campus, the code of conduct for shop keepers on campus, issues faced by the housewives along with engaging them in discussions and discussions on political current affairs.

Discussion

Several scholars Frederich, Noronha (1998); Nian, Sevanti (2001); (Paul, 2012); (Saeed & Ullah, 2021); (Marcus, (2020); Rodero (2020) ; and Times (2020) have discussed the role of community radio station in their local perspective, mainly countries other than Pakistan. This study is mainly analyzes contents of the radio station, that is based in an academic institutions with the objectives whether the needs of its community gratified or otherwise?

Community Radio Stations, usually known as FM radio stations in Pakistan, claim that they are trying to come up as a forum where communities have an opportunity to speak on issues they are confronted with. The forum also gives chance to the respective communities to get themselves engaged in a discourse with people at the helm of affairs, and



the deliberations ultimately leads to overall uplift and development of them. The community broadcasters also claim that they are the ones who truly doing the development journalism, in a way that issues of public interests are highlighted with the intent to make the quarters concerned realize its significance and they take measures accordingly. The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA), which is supposed to regulate every aspect of community broadcasting especially in terms of the contents being produced, has not been able to define 'Community Broadcasting'. They simply call every non-commercial FM radio stations as community radio stations. The discussion aims to analyze the themes of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar, and also assess that whether the expectations of the audience are fulfilled and code of conduct have been followed in letter and spirit, designed by PEMRA for the community broadcasting. The discussion also aims to find gap between themes and expectations of the audience as well as reasons behind the gap.

Khan, Wakeel (Personal Communication, 2020) argues that the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority issues licenses of FM radios in two categories, commercial and non-commercial radio licenses. Commercial Radio Licenses are allotted to the companies and organizations, registered with the Security Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), through an open bidding process under section 19 of the PEMRA Ordinance 2002 (Amended Act, 2007). Non-Commercial FM Radio licenses are allotted to educational institutions recognized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and other organization, which does not use these sound waves for commercial gains. University of Peshawar is one such institution, that has got the license for FM radio station, with the coverage area of 25 kilometers radius. He admits that there is no precise



definition for the community radio stations, but all non commercial FM radio stations are treated as community broadcasters with certain standing rules and directions. These rules include monitoring of the themes, feedback of the community, check on content from other countries especially India with reference to music and guiding the broadcasters accordingly. While analyzing themes of the Campus Radio Station, the researcher could not find any such initiative by the PEMRA to have check on content and regulate them accordingly. This is the reason we usually find gap between themes being aired and expected by the communities (Khilji, Ansar Personal Communication, 2021)

According to Shah, Jehan Syed (Personal Communication, 2021), one of the reasons behind this gap is policies of the educational institutions like the University of Peshawar which can not fulfil all demands of the community, like talk shows on politics, sectarian issues, and Indian music can not be made part of themes, as it makes problems for the management as well as environment of the campus. But on the other hands, some of the demands of community are genuine, as they deserve to be made part of themes that seems missing in the contents. Jabbar, Javed (Personal Communication, 2021) argues that broadcasters like Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar have a lot of space for educating their community both formally and informally, but lack of training on part of presenters is a hurdle in this way. Similarly, the themes sometimes do not reflect that if the listener is listening to a university radio, but to any commercial radio with back to back music and no healthy discussion that can benefit the community.



Conclusion

The study has been carried out to analyze themes of the Campus Radio Station, University of Peshawar. As per the definition of the PEMRA and the operational definition by the researcher, the FM radio stations working on the non-commercial basis are known also as Community Radio Stations. Although the researcher could not find any precise definition of the community broadcaster, but researchers across the globe have categorically defined it, with clear objectives its existence. Campus Radio Station at University of Peshawar can be termed as a Community Broadcaster, as it claims to serve a specific geographical as well as the thematic community. The research concludes that the themes of Campus Radio Station University of Peshawar have still a lot of space for improvement in light of expectations of the community. Main reason behind the missing links between the source and receiver is lack of coordination, absence of feedback mechanism and disinterest of presenters in airing quality content with a properly researched script. The immergence of social media and especially facebook live has diverted the attention of presenters as well as management from quality content to the visual appearance, which has damaged the standard of broadcasting. Relying on back to back music, ignoring the audience and monotony in the contents are other main problems surfaced during the research.

Recommendations

- PEMRA should give licenses to community radio stations free of cost as the broadcaster run on non-commercial basis. Instead of helping them out for the community development, they are being charged for licenses and for the renewal every year.



- PEMRA should organize trainings for the management (Producers and Engineers) and presenters of the Campus Radio Stations across the country, in order to have a uniform arrangement of contents/themes and improve the quality of broadcasting.
- PEMRA should initiate competitions for students asking them to produce different programmes in order to create a healthy environment for radio production. The participants can be encouraged by awarding them with certificates and other prizes.
- The management of the Campus Radio Stations should have a proper mechanism of the editorial meeting, assigning tasks, examining the script and assessment of feedback from community.
- The script should be made compulsory for any presentation and all scripts must be based on a thorough research.
- Excessive broadcast of music should be discouraged that presenters should learn how to keep the audience engaged in conversation, rather than making them listen to music only.



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Personal Communication

- Personal Communication 1, with Mr. Wakeel Khan (through email), Director General Licensing PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority), March 11, 2020.

- Personal Communication 2, with Professor Dr. Shah Jehan Sayed, Former Dean, Faculty of Management and Information Sciences, University of Peshawar. Chairman, department of Journalism & Mass Communication, University of Peshawar. Former, Chairman (COC) Council of Complaints PEMRA, Islamabad Chapter.

- Personal Communication 3, Javed Jabbar, An author, film maker, radio and tv broadcaster, Founding Chairman of the South Asian Media Association. Served as Federal Minister, Senator of Pakistan.

- Personal Communication 4, Muhammad Ansarullah, Station Director Pakhtunkhwa Radio Peshawar.