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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION

**ANALYSIS ON THE PERCEIVED EVALUATION OF CONTENTS OF
UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY RADIO: THE CASE OF DEBRE MARKOS
UNIVERSITY AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITY RADIO FM 97.7**

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OCTOBER, 2024

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Barkelign Zewdu, entitled " Analysis on perceived evaluation of university community radio: the case of Debre Markos Univercity and Surrounding Community Radio FM.97.7 and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication.

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Declaration

I, as the designated advisee of the university, confirm my endorsement for the submission of this thesis for evaluation. The content of this thesis is entirely my own creation, and I have duly credited all sources of data utilized in the research. Furthermore, the entire document has undergone plagiarism checks successfully meeting all required examinations.

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Abstract

Community radio play significant role in addressing issues which aren't addressed by mainstream media. Related to this comprehensive research on the role of community radio in Ethiopia isn't available. Therefore, this research aimed to critically to assess the role of Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 by covering informational, educational, and entertainment needs that are unaddressed by commercial and government broadcast services. The research employed both quantitative and qualitative methods for data gathering. The research covered programs September to December 2021. The researchers used questionnaires in order to gather quantitative data. Based on those, 151 questionnaires were utilized for the research. The researcher also used in-depth interviews with the station manager, board member, journalists and members of the audience of the programs. The findings of the study showed that the coverage of educational programs such as health, agriculture, culture and others in DMU and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 is high. The research also showed that the radio is also working to broadcast relevant informational programs and news, to inform citizens. The community radio also gave due paid attention to entertainment programs. However, the attention given by the community radio on social issues is not as much. Issues like volunteer activities get coverage, while issues like indigenous knowledge, and skills of the community are not. Some programs, such as those focusing on agriculture, have a significant social impact. Audience participation via phone calls to DMU and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 is high. The research showed that farmers and other part of the community mainly give feedback, via phone calls. The performance of journalists to improve program is high, even if there are financial problems. Another finding of the research is the continued challenges of political intervention. The higher political officials in Debre Markos city intervene so as to stop the program. The research also reveals that the significance of DMU and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 in delivering new information is not very high. The radio tried to create independent platform. However, politicians intervene when issues touch their interests. The research findings indicate that the community radio focuses on health-related issues. The coverage of the radio on culture promotion is good. It covers traditional music, food, activity, life style of the community. The community radio provides better coverage of economic issues. It also educates society about the society on health, culture, foods, drinks, life skill, and other related issues. However, most airtime is dedicated to music. The coverage of environmental issues and disasters is low. The coverage of indigenous knowledge on Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 is too limited. Limitation of finance and budget made obstacles to cover the issues of the area. Therefore, the community radio should give more air time to cover the issues of that community. The entertainment and educational programs should identify the interests of these different groups. The radio should give attention to the rural part of the community. The program should bring social impact. The community radio should do their work without any intervention.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

KHOI Inc., a community-based radio station in Central Iowa, United States indicated that, the origins of community radio can be traced back to the late 1940s when it emerged as a medium to provide media access, notably during a labor strike in Bolivia to serve union members and their families. The inaugural community radio station, Pacific, was established in 1949 in the United States. Since its inception, this dynamic media movement has proliferated worldwide, transcending geographical boundaries from Western nations to underserved communities in the developing world. At its core, the impetus behind community radio stems from the fundamental human need for communication and self-expression, positioning it at the forefront of contemporary democracy movements.

The emergence of community radio stations in the United States catalyzed a global evolution in communications development. Subsequently, community volunteers were trained and entrusted with pivotal roles in radio production, operation, and program development. This inclusive approach extended to youth involvement, offering them opportunities to actively engage in radio initiatives. These stations remain committed to serving the needs of their communities, consistently seeking input from listeners to ensure relevance and responsiveness.

Community radio typically operates as a local, non-commercial radio station or channel with limited broadcasting range, serving the informational needs of a specific geographic area. These stations prioritize content tailored to the local context, including languages and formats that resonate with the community they serve. Beyond mere broadcasting, community radio serves as a platform for fostering engagement and can be instrumental in mobilizing campaigns.

¹ <http://khoifm.org/about-us/community-radio>

¹ <https://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/1270-community-radio.html?next=1248>

Community broadcasting services play crucial roles in addressing informational, educational, and entertainment needs that might be overlooked by commercial and government-run broadcast services. The expansion of such services is vital in meeting the diverse informational, educational, and entertainment requirements of various ethnicities and communities within a country.

The radio station's programming, spanning educational, informational, and entertainment content, is tailored to the specific needs and interests of the local community. This approach ensures that the content produced resonates with the audience, leading to the creation of high-quality programming across various genres.

Among the three main branches of media—public service, commercial, and community radio—the latter emerges as a particularly suitable medium for fostering social change. Community radio stations, due to their proximity to the communities they serve, possess the agility to address issues promptly, potentially offering timely solutions and driving societal transformations. By focusing on raising awareness about diverse informational, educational, and entertainment topics, community radio stations effectively serve the populace and contribute to positive changes within society.

Community radio stations are legally recognized and supported as a form of community media in Ethiopia. Recognizing the significant impact of media on national development, UNESCO emphasizes the crucial role of community radio in fostering positive change across various aspects of community development through participatory communication approaches.

UNESCO's comprehensive approach to communication acknowledges its multidimensional nature, encompassing technological, social, political, and cultural dimensions. This holistic perspective underscores the importance of community radio in promoting capacity development, sustainable development, productivity enhancement, integration, and people's participation, thereby contributing to integrated community development efforts.

At its core, community radio serves as a platform where local residents actively engage in producing and broadcasting their own programs, as well as participating in the operation of

the station. It serves as a communal space for collaboration and interaction, fostering a sense of community cohesion and empowerment. Engaging with community radio is not only enjoyable but often transformative, nurturing individual creativity and self-empowerment. Participants derive immense satisfaction from contributing to the unique radio experience and witnessing the positive impact it has on community life.

According to the Ethiopian Media Authority (EMA) in 2022, there are 52 operational community radio stations in Ethiopia, each addressing specific purposive issues tailored to their respective communities. Despite their presence, these community radio stations face challenges in effectively supporting integrated and sustainable development within their communities.

Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 was established in 2015, aligned with its editorial policy to serve both the university and its surrounding areas. The station holds a broadcasting license under Broadcasting Proclamation No. 533/07 Article 28, registered as No. 33/2007, and operates as a community radio on the frequency of 97.7. It acquired its broadcasting license from the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority in June 2015 and began broadcasting in June 2016.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Community radio stations are unique in that they are established, owned, and operated by the communities they serve. These stations broadcast programs in local languages, focusing on issues that are of utmost importance to the community, often addressing topics such as health, agriculture, fisheries, environmental concerns, access to credit, and local market information (Fraser, 2002).

These radio stations serve as vital platforms for facilitating dialogue among community members, local authorities, and civil society organizations. They provide spaces for open discussions on various community-related matters, allowing for the assessment of local environments, identification of underlying problems, and exploration of potential solutions.

By assuming a "watch-dog" role, community radio stations also play a crucial role in holding local authorities accountable for their actions. They serve as advocates for

transparency and accountability, ensuring that the concerns and needs of the community are addressed and that local authorities are responsive to their constituents. Through these mechanisms, community radio stations contribute significantly to fostering informed citizenship and empowering local communities to take action to improve their circumstances.

Community radio actively promotes the engagement of community members across various programs, providing a platform for traditionally marginalized groups such as women, children, youth, and minority groups to have their voices heard (Wanyeki, 1999). By facilitating their participation, community radio empowers these groups to share their perspectives, concerns, and aspirations with the broader community.

Moreover, community radio plays a pivotal role in peacekeeping, reconciliation, and conflict resolution efforts by disseminating reliable information and facilitating dialogue among conflicting parties. By providing a neutral space for dialogue, community radio fosters understanding and cooperation, allowing different sides of a conflict to come together to resolve issues peacefully.

Furthermore, community radio serves as a crucial communication technology in developing countries, bridging literacy gaps, geographical distances, and language barriers. Its affordability and accessibility make it the most relevant medium for reaching and engaging with diverse communities. Through its inclusive and participatory approach, community radio contributes significantly to promoting social cohesion, fostering dialogue, and advancing development goals.

Community radios primarily focus on addressing local issues and programming that reflects the unique identity and character of their communities. While they may incorporate news and events from outside their immediate vicinity if they have special relevance or interest to their audience, their main emphasis is on local culture and community-specific content. Community radios aim to capture the dreams, hopes, and narratives of individual community members regarding their past and future aspirations.

By fostering inclusivity and encouraging participation from all sectors of the community, community radio platforms strive to amplify diverse voices and opinions, promoting unity amidst diversity.

As per the Ethiopian Media Authority (EMA) in 2022, Ethiopia boasts 52 functioning community radio stations, each tailored to meet the unique needs of its respective community. Nevertheless, these stations encounter obstacles in their efforts to foster sustainable development.

The radio station aims to inform, engage, entertain, and empower the citizens of the community. Its programming is specifically designed to address needs that are not met by corporate media. The station's overarching goal is to provide accessible and timely information to promote holistic socio-economic development in Debre Markos and its surrounding areas. It focuses on enhancing access to information and raising awareness on critical issues such as agriculture, education, health, business, environment, climate change, human resource development, and good governance.

Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio provides a platform for marginalized voices often sidelined by mainstream media, particularly those owned by major corporations. It actively engages youth in programming and serves as a medium for community members to express their sentiments, opinions, and perspectives. The station's beneficiaries primarily include local farmers, residents, primary and secondary school students and teachers, university students and staff, and governmental and non-governmental organizations. It acts as a communication outlet for disseminating information related to community development, agriculture, health, micro-enterprises, marketing, environment, climate change, and early warning systems.

During its establishment, a project proposal highlighted the lack of proper radio access for the people of Debre Markos City and East Gojjam Zone, which resulted in limited information about local issues and events. Social challenges such as harmful traditional practices, gender inequality, poor hygiene, and environmental degradation were prevalent. The establishment of accessible and participatory media channels was deemed necessary to increase community awareness and address these issues.

The primary objective of Debre Markos University Community Radio is to provide an alternative media platform for those lacking access to mainstream media in the region. By collaborating closely with the grassroots public, the station offers educational, informational, and entertaining programs covering topics such as natural resource management, agriculture, health, environment, technology, and culture.

The purpose of this research is to examine the practices of DMU Community Radio FM 97.7 and assess its performance in fulfilling its outlined responsibilities. The findings will help identify any gaps in the station's operations.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are divided into two broad categories. These are general and specific objectives of the study.

1.3.1. General Objective

The main objective of this research is to analyze the practices of the university community radio, Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of study are: -

- To examine the extent to which the local issues and university activities are covered.
- To examine the significance of the program by informing, educating and entertaining the local audiences.
- To examine the existence of independent platform for interactive discussions to the community.
- To examine the challenges of Debre Markos and Surrounding Community radio.

1.4. Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do the programs cover local issues?
2. Do the programs help the local community to inform, educate and entertain?
3. Does the radio create the independent platform for the interactive discussions to the community?
4. What are the challenges of the DMU and Surrounding Community radio service?

1.5. Scope of the Study

The study exclusively focused on the programs of Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7. Research covered programs aired from September to December 2022. This timeframe was chosen to ensure that respondents could easily recall content. Additionally, it allowed for convenient meetings with reporters, editors, producers, and program directors.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study helps community radio media managers and program producers to let them give more attention to the issues which were not addressed by commercial and government broadcast services. In addition to that, the study has an important role for media and communication professionals and others in providing additional knowledge on the area. Further, it gives a hint for the researcher to do more researches on community radio program. In addition, it will use as a data source for other researchers who are eager to conduct their researches in related issues. Besides, the research is expected to provide valuable information to other broadcasting media. This study also helps the governmental to give due attention for the problems regarding the content of community radio program.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

The conflict between the Ethiopian National Defense Force and the military group Fano, which occurred during my data gathering period, cast a shadow over my research work. Many respondents were unwilling to complete the survey questions. Any group meetings or movement from one place to another was prohibited, making it very challenging and time-consuming to convince respondents. Furthermore, it was difficult for me to access transportation to reach the research areas, as even the stations were closed during war.

In particular, due to the fear of damage to the station, broadcasting was suspended for months, which had a serious impact on gathering data from the station.

Additionally, the state of emergency limited me not to use focus group discussion properly (FGD) in addition to the questionnaire. Furthermore, shortage of research works on the area

and getting enough documents about Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio was the other difficulties for the researcher.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Community: is a group of people who form relationships over time by interacting regularly around shared experiences, which are of interest to all of them for varying individual reasons are community.

Community Radio: is a kind of radio station operated, owned, and driven by the Community they serve.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The research thesis has five chapters. The first chapter is the introductory part. The second part is review of related literature. And the third is the methodology of the study. The fourth chapter presents data presentation and analysis. The last part, chapter five is the conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter examines literature concerning the definition, characteristics, role of community radio, the evolution of Community radio in Ethiopia, distribution of community radio by broadcast languages, highlight of the Ethiopian Community Radio Proclamation, benefits of community radio, and the policy to prepare magazine programs.

2.1 What is Community Radio?

Vincent (1999) offers insights into the historical evolution of media development paradigms, tracing the shift from top-down solutions, as seen in modernization theories, towards more community-centric approaches aimed at addressing cultural and social issues through community participation and empowerment. This transformation has given rise to the prominence of community radio as a vehicle for promoting grassroots development.

The terminology for community radio varies across regions and scholarly discourse. In America, it is often referred to as popular or educational radio, while in Africa, it may be recognized as rural or local radio. Australia employs the term public radio, and in Europe, it is known as free or associative radio (Okechukwu, 2002).

Lloyd (1991) characterizes community radio as a small, low-powered station specifically tailored to cater to the unique needs of grassroots communities. UNESCO (1999) expands on this definition, underscoring community-driven creation and participation as fundamental elements. AMARC (1998), representing the World Association of Community Broadcasters, offers multiple definitions emphasizing citizen participation, ownership, and the amplification of marginalized voices as central themes.

Girard (1992) conceptualizes community radio as a medium designed to serve people by fostering expression, participation, and the preservation of local culture. It serves as a platform to empower those historically marginalized or unheard, providing a voice to those overlooked by mainstream media.

According to Al-hassan, Andani, and Malik (2011), community radio embodies a distinct broadcasting model transcending commercial and public service paradigms. It caters to

specific geographic communities and their interests, with content tailored to local audience needs and preferences. Operated, owned, and driven by the communities they serve, community radio stations function on a not-for-profit basis, offering platforms for individuals, groups, and communities to share stories and experiences, thereby encouraging active participation and media contribution.

However, Teer-Tomasselli (2001) highlights challenges in applying these definitions uniformly across all community radio stations. The relationship between community radio stations and the communities they serve can be complex and sometimes contradictory, leading to ambiguity in representing community interests on air. Additionally, community radio stations may face instability in operational style, including aspects such as civic responsibility, financial management, staffing, and technical capacity. These factors vary widely among different stations, making strict adherence to idealistic definitions of community radio difficult.

2.2 Characteristics of Community Radio

Community radio has emerged as a distinct alternative to government-controlled, commercial, and public stations in contemporary media landscapes. Servaes (2002) outlines key characteristics that define community radio:

Minimal reliance on commercial advertising: Community radio stations aim to reduce dependence on commercial advertising revenue, seeking support primarily from user contributions supplemented by grants from community organizations and foundations. This approach allows them to maintain independence from commercial interests and prioritize community needs.

Platform for marginalized voices: Community radio provides a platform for less powerful segments of society to voice their alternative views and lifestyles. By amplifying the perspectives of marginalized groups, community radio fosters diversity and inclusivity in media representation.

Involvement of volunteers: Volunteers play a significant role in the production of programs on community radio stations. There is a deliberate effort to blur the distinction between professional broadcasters and ordinary community members, allowing volunteers

to contribute to programming and reflect the diverse interests and concerns of the community.

These characteristics underscore the distinctive nature of community radio compared to mainstream media outlets, emphasizing its dedication to fostering community engagement, empowerment, and grassroots representation. Community radio encourages widespread participation in broadcasting and facilitates horizontal communication within communities. Owned and operated by local citizens, these radio stations typically serve a limited geographical area, allowing them to cater to the specific needs and interests of their community members (Servaes, 2002).

Building on this, Servaes (2002) highlights additional characteristics of community radio as identified by AMARC. These include a commitment to addressing community needs and contributing to progressive social change, as well as promoting active community participation in radio programming and decision-making processes.

Furthermore, Wood (1993) outlines detailed characteristics of community radio based on the work of the British Community Communication Group. These characteristics include serving the local community and its interests, providing non-profit information, education, and entertainment services, predominantly broadcasting locally originated content, and fostering participatory democracy to combat discrimination and promote social inclusion.

Indeed, the multifaceted role of community radio in promoting community development, social change, and participatory democracy is underscored by the comprehensive characteristics outlined by various organizations and scholars. UNESCO, for instance, highlights three key aspects: the participation of the community, access to the radio station, and self-management (HOACBP, 2002). These characteristics emphasize the active involvement of community members in all aspects of community radio operations, from programming to management.

Ultimately, as Wabyeki (UNESCO, 1999) aptly states, community participation should be regarded as both a means to an end and an end in itself. In other words, the active engagement of the community is not only essential for achieving the goals of community radio, such as community development and social change, but it is also intrinsically valuable as it empowers individuals and fosters a sense of ownership and belonging within the

community. As such, community radio serves as a vital platform for local expression, engagement, and empowerment, facilitating meaningful dialogue, and contributing to the overall well-being of the community it serves.

2.3. The Role of Community Radio

Community radio plays a vital role in empowering and engaging local populations. As highlighted by Cammaerts (2009) in *International Journal of Media & Cultural Politics*, this medium fosters citizen participation and encourages inclusive communication, allowing marginalized voices to be heard and influence local governance. Additionally, Hemer and Tufté (2005) discuss in *Media, Culture & Society* how community radio broadcasts in local languages and shares cultural content, which is essential for preserving cultural heritage and identity within diverse communities.

The impact of community radio extends to social development and advocacy as well. Vargas (2011) emphasizes in the *Journal of Radio & Audio Media* the importance of community radio in advocating for social justice and human rights, particularly for marginalized groups. Similarly, Okigbo (2004) in *African Communication Research* points out the effectiveness of community radio in delivering educational programs tailored to the needs of local populations, covering crucial topics such as health and agriculture.

Economically, community radio supports local development initiatives. Dutta (2008), in the *International Journal of Communication*, explores how community radio promotes local businesses and creates job opportunities, facilitating economic growth in the area. Furthermore, Wilkins (2008) in the *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship* discusses how community radio strengthens social ties and encourages dialogue among diverse groups, contributing to a sense of community and understanding.

Lastly, Rowland (2005) in the *Journal of Community Development Society* highlights the role of community radio in disseminating essential information, such as weather forecasts and emergency alerts, especially to remote and underserved areas. Overall, community radio serves as a crucial tool for empowering communities, preserving culture, and supporting both social and economic development

2.4. The Evolution of Community Radio in the World

According to Servaes (2002), the establishment of community radio was prompted by the desire for class power and cultural representation. This led to the creation of miners' and peasants' radios in Bolivia and Colombia in 1974. These stations aimed to instigate social change and engage in direct political struggle, countering dominant political cultures and giving a voice to marginalized community. Similarly, Rennie (2006) notes that dissatisfaction with mainstream public media in Europe, resulted in the emergence of pirate radios in 1985. These stations operated outside established regulatory frameworks, challenging monopolistic control and offering alternative perspectives to the public.

Latin America (Bolivia and Colombia): Community radio stations established in countries like Bolivia and Colombia in 1974, such as miners' and peasants' radios, were driven by a desire for class power and cultural representation. They served as platforms for social change and direct political engagement, challenging dominant political cultures and amplifying the voices of marginalized communities. These stations empowered communities to express grievances, advocate for rights, and mobilize for collective action.

Europe: In Europe, dissatisfaction with mainstream public media led to the emergence of pirate radios in 1985. These stations operated outside regulatory frameworks, challenging monopolistic control and offering alternative perspectives to the public. Pirate radios aimed to address biases and limitations in mainstream media by providing platforms for diverse voices and grassroots activism. Their establishment reflected a desire for greater media pluralism, democratization, and cultural diversity.

In both Latin America and Europe, the pioneers of community radio sought to reclaim control over media narratives, challenge power structures, and promote cultural expression and social justice. These early initiatives laid the groundwork for the subsequent growth and development of community radio as a powerful tool for grassroots empowerment, civic engagement, and social change globally..

The establishment and development of FM radios during these times were not solely driven by the interests and needs of the community for program satisfaction. In Italy, France, and the United Kingdom, local stations were operated by trade unions and social movement

groups as a challenge to the status quo of public broadcasting (Rennie, 2006). However, it was UNESCO that initiated the establishment of community radio in the Asian continent. According to Fraser and Estrade (2001), the first community radio was established in Sri Lanka in 1983, with rapid expansion seen in the 1990s.

In Africa, community radio is a relatively recent phenomenon. UNESCO established the first community radio in Kenya in 1982, named the Homa Bay community radio, which operated for only two and a half years (Fraser and Estrada, 2001). While there have been initiatives in southern and central parts of Africa, the rest of the continent has not progressed as expected due to legislative gaps (Wanyeki in Abdi et al., 2009). Countries like Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda have been conducting programs without a regulatory framework, which sets them apart from private commercial broadcasters (Wanyeki in Abdi et al., 2000).

These findings suggest that although there has been some advancement in the development of community radio in central and southern Africa, the growth of community FM radio stations across the continent hasn't matched the pace seen in other parts of the world. This underscores a delay in the establishment of media infrastructure and broadcasting services in Africa, indicating a necessity for increased emphasis on community-driven initiatives and accomplishments within the region.

2.5 The Evolution of Community Radio in Ethiopia

The development of community FM radio in Ethiopia has indeed been a relatively recent phenomenon compared to other African countries. Before the adoption of the Community Radio Proclamation in March 2006, there were attempts to establish community radio stations in the country, but with limited success.

One significant initiative preceding the proclamation was led by the Horn of Africa Capacity Building Program (HOACBO). This organization was responsible for financing and establishing community radio stations in the Horn of Africa region. Among the stations set up through this program, three stood out: Radio Galgadud in Puntland, Somalia, and two in Ethiopia - Radio Sidama and Radio Harar (HOACBO, 2002).

Radio Sidama and Radio Harar marked early endeavors in community radio in Ethiopia. Although established before the formal adoption of the Community Radio Proclamation, they did not achieve widespread success or long-term sustainability. Nevertheless, they played crucial roles in introducing community radio concepts and practices to the country, laying the groundwork for future developments in the field.

The early community radio initiatives in Ethiopia, although modest in their impact, set the stage for the eventual adoption of the Community Radio Proclamation in 2006. This legislation established a legal framework for the establishment and operation of community radio stations in Ethiopia, laying the foundation for the sector's growth and development in subsequent years.

Today, community radio plays an increasingly vital role in Ethiopia's media landscape, offering platforms for local expression, cultural preservation, and community engagement. While the introduction of community radio in Ethiopia may have been relatively recent compared to other African countries, the sector has demonstrated significant growth and potential, contributing to media pluralism, democratic participation, and social development in the country.

According to scholars such as Helene Mekuria et al. (2003) and Mathios Tadesse (2006), the Sidama community radio holds the distinction of being the first community radio station in Ethiopian history, established before others that followed. As reported by Warnock (2005), during the early stages of community radio development, stations designated as community radio included Harrari community radio, Sidama community radio, and Gullele community radio (which operated as a pilot project in Addis Ababa but was later closed down).

Getahun Nigatu (2006), in his MA thesis, conducted interviews and discussions with Ato Desta Asfaw, the deputy manager of the Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority (EBA) at the time, regarding the licensing and development of community radio after the enactment of the Community Radio Proclamation. Ato Desta's insights, as relayed by Getahun (2006), provide valuable context into the early phases of community radio development in Ethiopia following the proclamation's adoption.

The licensing of Kore Community FM Radio represents a historic milestone in Ethiopia's media landscape, as it was the first community radio station to receive authorization under the Community Radio Proclamation. This formal recognition validated community radio as a legitimate broadcasting platform in the country.

The establishment of Kore Community FM Radio paved the way for the proliferation of other community radio stations across Ethiopia. Stations such as Harari Community Radio (at the pilot level), Sekota Community Radio, Kombolcha Community Radio, and Keffa Community Radio followed suit, expanding the reach of community broadcasting nationwide.

Among these initiatives, Jimma Community Radio stands out as a notable example, though specifics regarding its establishment are not provided here. Nevertheless, its inclusion alongside other operational community radio stations underscores the increasing diversity and impact of community broadcasting in Ethiopia.

In essence, the licensing of Kore Community FM Radio marked the dawn of a new era for community radio in Ethiopia, catalyzing the establishment of numerous stations that have since become indispensable platforms for local expression, cultural preservation, and community engagement throughout the country. According to the 2019 IMS report on Ethiopia Community Radio assessment, now a days, these were 13 radio stations in SNNP, 11 radio stations in Oromia, 9 radio stations in Amhara, 5 radio stations in Tigray, 4 radio stations in Somali, 3 radio stations in Benishangul Gumuz, 2 radio stations in Addis Ababa City Administration, 2 radio stations in Afar and 1 radio station in Gambella region. As the data indicated that, SNNP, Oromiya and Amhara Regions have the highest number of community radio stations than others with 13, 11 and 9 respectively.

Addis Ababa City Administration and Afar have two community radio stations each, while Gamella has only one. Harari Regional State and Dire Dawa City Administration do not have any community radio stations registered within their administrative boundaries at that time. While the broadcast coverage of other nearby stations could not be confirmed by Haromaya University Radio, the populations in these locations confirmed that they listen to the broadcasts by stations registered within the administrative boundaries of Oromiya and

Somali. These include Haromaya University Community Radio station and Jigjiga University Community Radio station, located in Somali. As it is understood that the regions didn't have radio stations at the moment of this time, they were trying to be in advantage of getting information from their nearby regions those which had previously.

2.6. Distribution of Community Radio by broadcast languages

According to the registration documents of the radio stations, there are 29 broadcast languages used to disseminate programs. These were: Afar, Konso, Afaan Oromo, Afarigna, Agawigna, Agnuwak, Amharic, Argobigna, Arigna, Awigna, Baskettogna, English, Gezogna, Gofigna, Gumuzgna, Hemtigna, Hosagna, Kefagna, Kembata, Korete, Kunamigna, Nuerigna, Shekkicho, Shinashigna, Silteгна, Somali, Tigregna, Tigre and Wolaytigna.

Out of the total surveyed radio stations, 36 (72%) utilize Amharic, Ethiopia's national language, either as their primary or secondary language for broadcasting. Afaan Oromo is used by 32 (32%) of the stations, while Tigrigna is used by 5 (10%), and Somali and English by 4 (8%) each. English tends to be favored in community radio stations on university campuses. Despite Oromiya having 11 radio stations within its jurisdiction, 16 stations elsewhere opt for Afaan Oromo/Oromiffa as their broadcast language, reflecting its widespread usage beyond Oromiya. Afaan Oromo is estimated to be spoken by over half of Ethiopia's population, indicating its significant linguistic presence across the nation.

Kore FM, among the earliest community radio stations, is registered in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNP), contributing to the total of 13 radio stations in the area. These stations are scattered across the central, northern, and southern parts of the region.

Language-wise, radio stations affiliated with higher education institutions and industrial parks like Hawassa Industrial Park, Hawassa University, and Dilla University primarily use Amharic and English. Conversely, the remainder of the stations broadcast in local languages such as Korete, Kembata, Kefa, Afa Konso, Gofa, Gezo, Ari, Silte, Basketto, Shekkicho, and Wolayita. Although it's unclear to what extent regional governments can monitor, control, or regulate these stations, historical practices suggest they've wielded some level of authority and autonomy in the past.

2.7. Benefits of Community Radio

Community radio has been widely recognized for its significant contribution to enhancing the quality of life within communities. This assertion finds support in research conducted by Dr. Richard Florida from Carnegie Mellon University. In his book "Competing in the Age of Talent: Quality of Place and the New Economy," Dr. Florida elaborates on the concept of "quality of place" and its influence on individuals' decisions to relocate to specific communities. According to Dr. Florida's findings, community members can access essential information through daily radio broadcasts, enabling them to lead fulfilling lives and achieve positive outcomes.

Based on data collected across 35 metropolitan areas concerning labor pools, environmental factors, recreational opportunities, cultural amenities, and economic indicators, Florida drew several conclusions. He found that communities perceived as inclusive, supportive of diversity, and characterized by a rich cultural landscape were more successful in attracting skilled and innovative workers. Additionally, communities that fostered diversity, participatory civic culture, and boasted well-developed cultural and environmental offerings tended to excel in retaining talent over the long term. Florida's research suggests that sociological and environmental considerations are increasingly significant, sometimes even surpassing economic factors, in driving and sustaining regional prosperity. The data

underscores the importance of community radios in facilitating the sharing of diverse cultures and information, thereby equipping community members with essential life skills on a daily basis.

2.8. The Establishment of Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio

Established in 2015, Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 serves both the university and the surrounding community. Operating under a broadcasting license granted by Broadcasting Proclamation No. 533/07 Article 28, the station began broadcasting in June 2016. Its mission is to inform, engage, entertain, and empower the local community, filling a gap left by corporate media.

The project proposal presented during the establishment of the station indicated that Debre Markos University and the surrounding community radio aim to promote holistic socio-economic development in Debre Markos and its environs. This will be achieved by providing timely information and raising awareness on critical issues such as agriculture, education, health, business, the environment, climate change, human resource development, and good governance.

Objectives include delivering educational materials and supporting academic activities, fostering the training of students and staff, and promoting local culture, language, and values.

The primary beneficiaries include local farmers, residents, students, teachers, university staff, and both governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The establishment of the radio station was driven by the lack of proper radio access in Debre Markos City and East Gojjam Zone, which limited information about local issues and events. Social challenges such as harmful traditional practices, gender inequality, poor hygiene, and environmental degradation were prevalent. The station addresses these issues by providing accessible and participatory media channels to increase community awareness.

Debre Markos University Community Radio produces and broadcasts its own programs with active participation from both university staff and the surrounding community. It

serves as a community space for collaboration, transforming community life and providing a unique platform for participants. The station has a daily six-hour transmission, ensuring a wide range of programs are available.

According to the station's editorial policy (2015), no one can profit from the community radio, ensuring it remains a platform for community benefit. The radio station offers a forum for sharing experiences, discovering fresh perspectives, and supporting community activities, giving a voice to those often overlooked by mainstream media.

2.9. The Policy to prepare magazine programs

Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 is committed to serving the community interest by providing local content of the highest quality that develops the community. The station adopts this policy to serve as a guide to programme design and broadcast to ensure that the station adheres to the principles of local community broadcasting of individual interest. The policy has the following purposes. The first one is to provide guidelines for the station's content development team and programme producers to maintain utmost professionalism. The policy shall also ensure that all staff members deliver on their daily duties and maintain the schedules assigned to them.

The editorial policy also give guidelines for producers and presenters, and other content development team members, to ensure that most of Debre Markos University Community Radio programmes must be magazine formats. It helps to ensure that programming format fulfills the mission and vision of the station, to catch up the audiences until the end of the program and to satisfy the community with in different formats of the program. The editorial policy also helps to ensure community participation across the station's programmes, to produce programmes that empower, develop, educate and entertain, to ensure that messages of the program content are unforgettable and to develop journalists' performance in preparing programs.

The editorial policy has the following principles in programming and production. The first principle focuses on planning and producing radio magazine programs. According to this principle, the Comunity Radio programme producers will do magazine format programs. This is a magazine programme with a mixture of items, topics, contributors and formats or

techniques. However, while it implies a mixture, this mixture is always necessarily a variety of topics.

While planning a radio magazine, target-related content selection, selection of appropriate formats and proper sequencing of the items was also stressed. An analysis of the different issues revealed the wide canvas of magazine which can be used creatively and imaginatively for optimum results. While planning a radio magazine, target-related content selection, selection of appropriate formats and proper sequencing of the items was also stressed.

The other principle is planning radio magazine. In the case of other radio programmes, planning constitutes a vital part of production of a magazine. This includes target-related content planning, selection of the production team, planning of the content, selection of items and appropriate formats etc.

The target audience should be defined before planning programs. The production team should be selected. Planning and production of a magazine in a large broadcasting station generally includes a producer, a scriptwriter, anchor person or a narrator. Each has a specific role to perform though sometimes it may not be possible to have separate persons for each job.

The policy also stated about the role of the script writer. The scriptwriter of a magazine has to have the skill of relating any event, be it national or international, with the lives of the common people. In addition, s/he must have a thorough understanding of the subject to be able to present any item in a simple, straight and interesting manner. S/he should enjoy the full confidence of the producer. As it is given earlier, preparing different kinds of productions for broadcasting and print media, there is a need to have skilled human power and which is so needed to bring developmental media infrastructure as well as media literacy will be an outcome of the community as a whole

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The study is conducted to assess, analyze, and critically evaluate the role of Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 in meeting the informational, educational, and entertainment needs that are unaddressed by commercial and government broadcast services.

To accomplish these objectives, the researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods. To provide a humanistic perspective, in-depth individual interviews were conducted to explore the anticipated outcomes of the research. Subsequently, 151 questionnaires were prepared, distributed, and properly completed by the respondents. The researcher utilized these data for the quantitative analysis portion of the research.

3.2. Research Design

Mixed research approach was employed as a research design. The researcher used both quantitative and qualitative research design so as to generate depth of information about the research topic. The first method used in the study is quantitative method. According to Miller and Brewer (2003), quantitative research method is numerical measurement of specific aspects of phenomena.

According to Campbell and Stanley (cited in Creswell, 2009), quantitative research method includes the true experiments and the less rigorous experiments called quasi-experiments, correlation studies, and specific single-subject experiments. Creswell (2009) adds that more recently, quantitative strategies involved complex experiments with many variables and treatments.

Surveys, interviews, observations as well as questionnaires are the common tools to gather the information (Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009). In the study survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews were tools employed to gather information.

On the other hand, a qualitative methodology is a composite of philosophy, concepts, data-gathering procedures, and statistical methods that provides perhaps the most thoroughly elaborated basis for the systematic examination of human subjectivity. According to Given (2008) it focuses on the meanings of experiences by exploring how people define, describe, and metaphorically make sense of these experiences. Qualitative research is interpretative research with the inquirer typically involved in a sustained and intensive experience with the participants (Creswell, 2009).

The study aims to analyze the practices of the university community radio, focusing on the case of Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7. The researcher used both methods in order to get representative data.

3.3 Data Sources

The researcher gathered data from the residents of Debre Markos, members of the station's board, staff of the community radio station, including the station manager and editors who are working in that radio station currently.

3.3.1 Key Informants

The key informants were board member, general manager and editors of the community radio station. The selection of the key informants was by using purposive sampling technique.

Amharic language was used for the version of the questionnaires to enable the respondents to explain the questions briefly, easily, simply, and clearly. Consequently, the researcher conducted interviews with seven key informants, including board members, managers, journalists, freelance journalists, and audience members

3.4 Population

In research doing times; Population can be defined as a comprehensive group of individuals, institutions, and objects with common characteristics and traits that are the interest of a researcher to be seen and evaluated critically. It is for the benefits of the population that researches are done by the researchers to bring societal changes in all aspects of the

situations. Based on that, the community that listened to the radio program is considered the population.

3.5 Sampling

The researcher has used sampling representation techniques and selected a sample through purposive sampling, which is considered the most appropriate method and commonly used. Additionally, Stratified random sampling was utilized to select participants from the broader population of Debre Markos and its surrounding areas, who fall within the purposive and sampled framework of the research. The research aimed to select participants based on criteria such as age, occupation, educational background, gender, and other relevant factors. In total, 151 individuals participated and effectively provided their responses.

3.6. Instruments/tools

3.6.1. Individual Interview

Individual interviews are interview between one interviewer and one candidate. It usually stays from 30 minutes to an hour (vidcruiter.com) Interviewing was conducted intensively, involving individual interviews with several respondents to explore their perspectives, ideas, and insights on the particular idea, program, and situations. It provided good opportunities to collect detailed information about the research questions.

The interviews were conducted in-depth with media professionals, including editors and program producers. These interviews helped to provide a humanistic view for the research and enabled it to yield sound results. Different views, opinions, and experiences of the media professionals were also gathered during this time. This process also facilitated the collection and organization of data through the use of questionnaires. The individual in-depth interviews helped the researcher gain a better understanding of the relevant ideas and issues in the research area. Additionally, the researcher employed a semi-structured interviewing format to ask additional questions outside the box and sought clarifications and further explanations essential for the research to yield the best outcome or findings.

Essentially, one of the board members of the community radio, the General Manager, and the deputy editors-in-chief from the station were crucial individuals and key participants in

the interviewing process. Board members hold the highest duties and responsibilities in controlling the station. The General Manager is the primary source of information and is responsible for controlling, managing, and making decisions regarding the station's activities. Following the General Manager, the editors-in-chief or deputy editors-in-chief are part of the editorial committee and possess significant experience in the program production process.

3.7. Procedures

3.7.1. Data Collections

The researcher relied on gathering data from questionnaires, and interviews. SPSS software was used to encode the quantitative data, and the outputs were presented in frequencies and percentages. Additionally, interview questions were prepared in English to ensure the successful completion of the study and because all respondents were sufficiently educated to effectively use the language. The questionnaires were also translated into Amharic to ensure that respondents could easily understand the questions, as they were expected to be educated individuals. Voice recording was also utilized as an additional method of obtaining necessary information, and note-taking was employed with the permission of the respondents.

3.7.2. Data Analysis

The triangulation method is crucial for aiding researchers in gaining a better and deeper understanding of the issues. This approach of examining ideas from different perspectives is essential for researchers to produce strong and effective study results, as it broadens the scope of analysis.

Deacon et al. (1999, p.29-30) stated that triangulation enables researchers to "check the full range of available sources to build up the most accurate and comprehensive account possible." The results obtained from the two data collection tools were analyzed in combination to gain a better understanding of the role of the programs. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to analyze the collected data in terms of percentage and frequency.

These methods have proven to be useful for accurately and correctly representing data. It is evident that employing proper research methods consistently allows researchers to obtain expected findings, resulting in thorough, articulate, and effectively illustrated analyses.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter deals with the presentation, analysis and discussion of the results. As it has been stated earlier, the scope of the study was targeted at Debre Markos and Surrounding University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7.

The main objectives of the research were to analyze the practices of the university community radio, focusing on the case of Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7.

The Community Radio how it was covering informational, educational, and entertainment needs that are unaddressed by commercial and government broadcast services media types.

To gather the required data, a questionnaire served as the primary tool.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part aimed to gather demographic information from respondents, while the second part was designed to assess the role of community radio in addressing informational, educational, and entertainment needs that may be unmet by commercial and government broadcast services. The questionnaires were distributed in Debre Markos city and its surrounding areas.

The discussion began with the presentation of demographic distribution results obtained from the data, followed by questions related to the role of community radio. Demographic results were discussed using percentages, while the remainder of the discussion utilized mean scores and percentages. Tables and graphs were employed in both cases to present the data clearly and comprehensibly.

Data was primarily collected through questionnaires and interviews. The results from both data collection methods were analyzed in combination to gain a better understanding of issues directly related to the results.

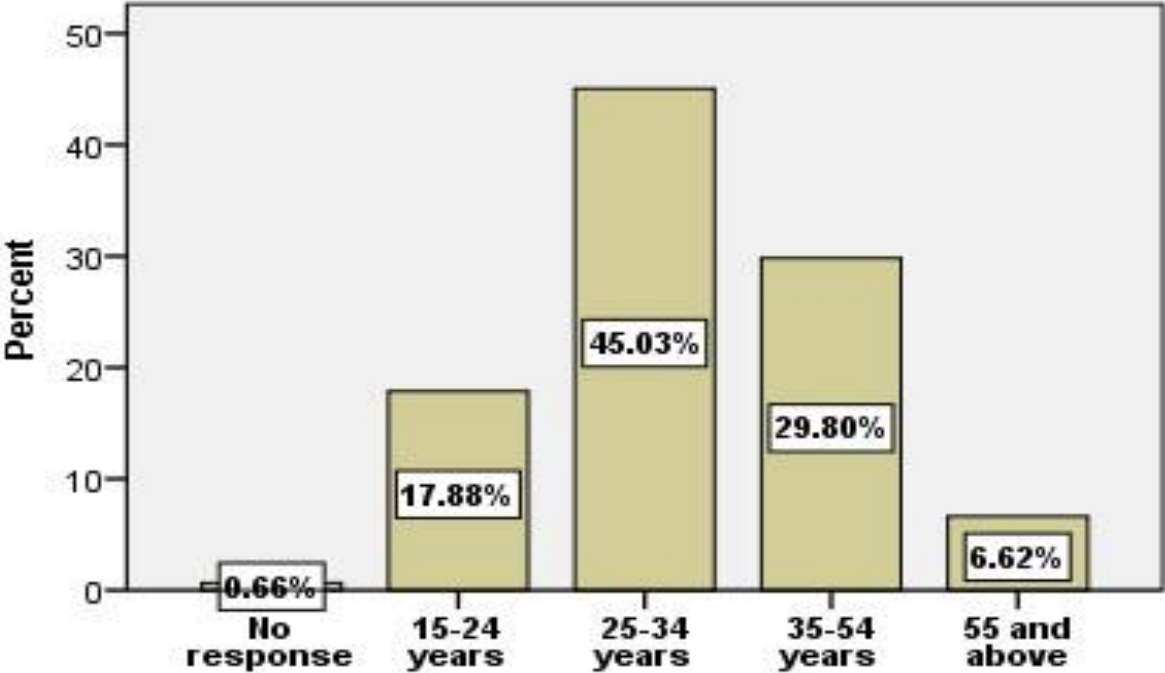
4.1. Demographic Representation of Respondents

4.1.1. Age of Respondents

Age is the most important demographic element of the community which is used to categorize the population in the status of being infants and adults. When we look at the age distributions of respondents, most of them are young listeners who were between 25 and 34 years (45.03%). 29.80 % of the respondents were between 35 and 54. These two numbers showed that the young people moved to the new media genres. This is due to the access of the new technology by using their smart phones. In addition to the technology, the youngsters were being lived in the town areas and this geographical existence gives more advantage of chance to them to be more than the other age groups.

The following graph- 1 shows these issues in details.

Graph 1: Age of the respondents

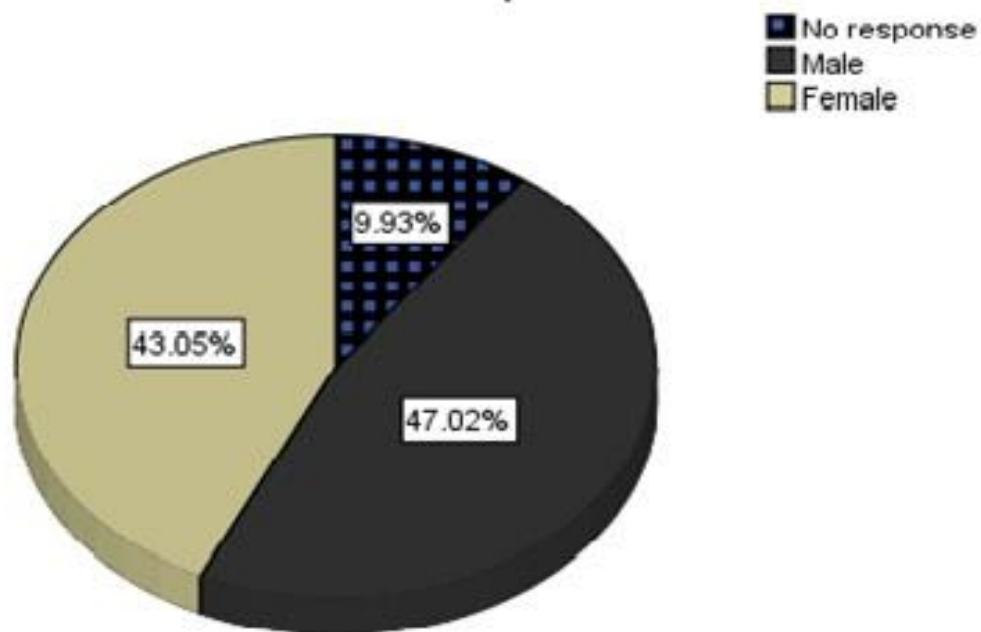


4.1.2. Gender of Respondents

Gender is another demographic determinant of community members, used to categorize the numbers of females and males in the community for researchers' needs.

The data revealed that the number of females who responded was almost equivalent to that of males. This indicates that females also have equal opportunities to listen to the radio programs of Debre Markos University Community FM 97.7. The following table provides further details.

Graph 2: Gender of Respondents with Percent

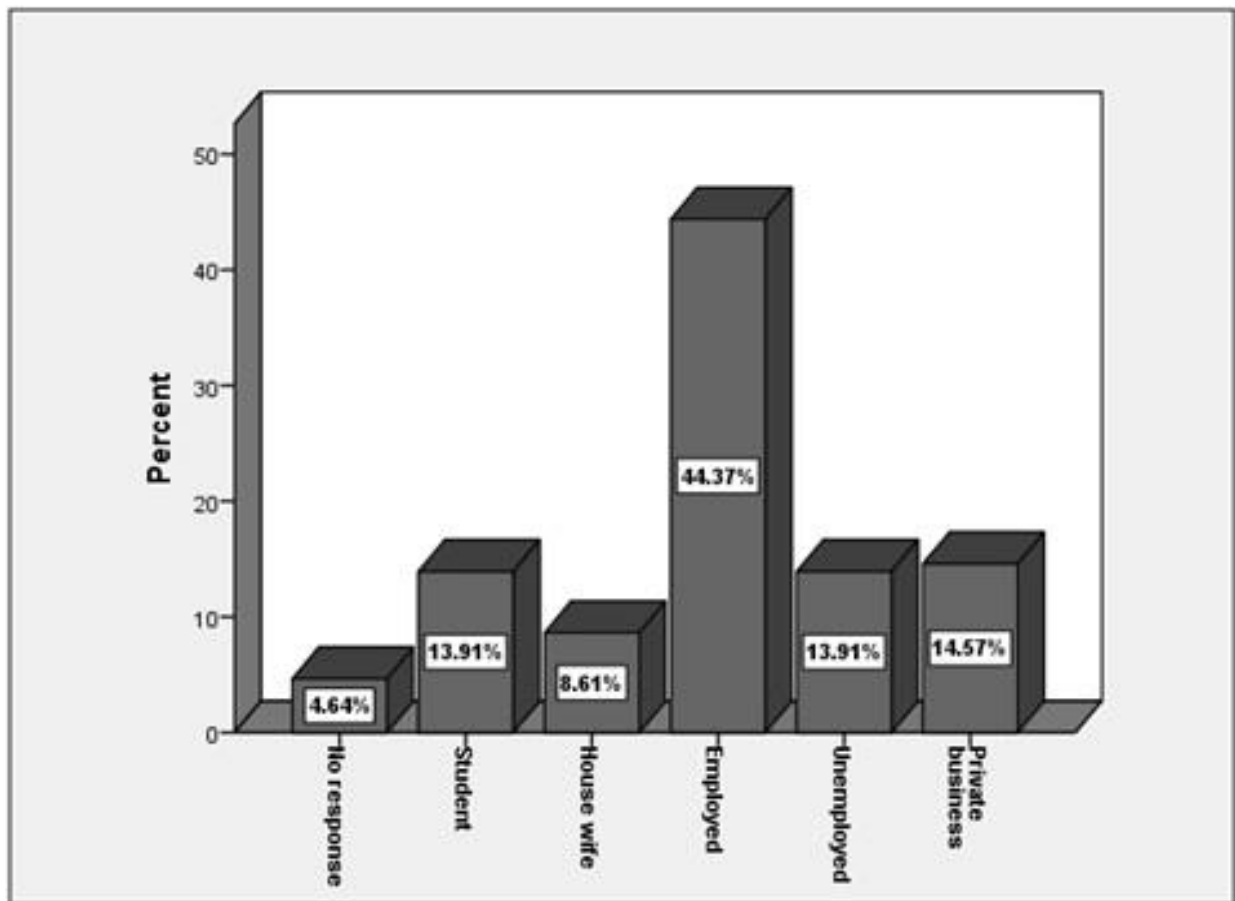


The above graph is showing the distributions of genders in the community towards the how many females and males are being engaged in the stated community radio about whether they are discussing. The graph showed that 47.02 % of the respondents are males, where as 43.05 % are females. The remaining 9.93 were those didn't mention their sexes with different situations. As it denoted that the respondents were dominated by the males.

4.1.3. Occupation of Respondents

The quantitative data depicts that the occupational distributions of the respondents. Hence, most of the respondents (44.37%) are employed and 14.57% are running their private business, where as 13.91 % was unemployed and students respectively. This shows that majority of the respondents were employed. The following graph shows this issue in detail.

Graph 3: Occupation of Respondents with Percent

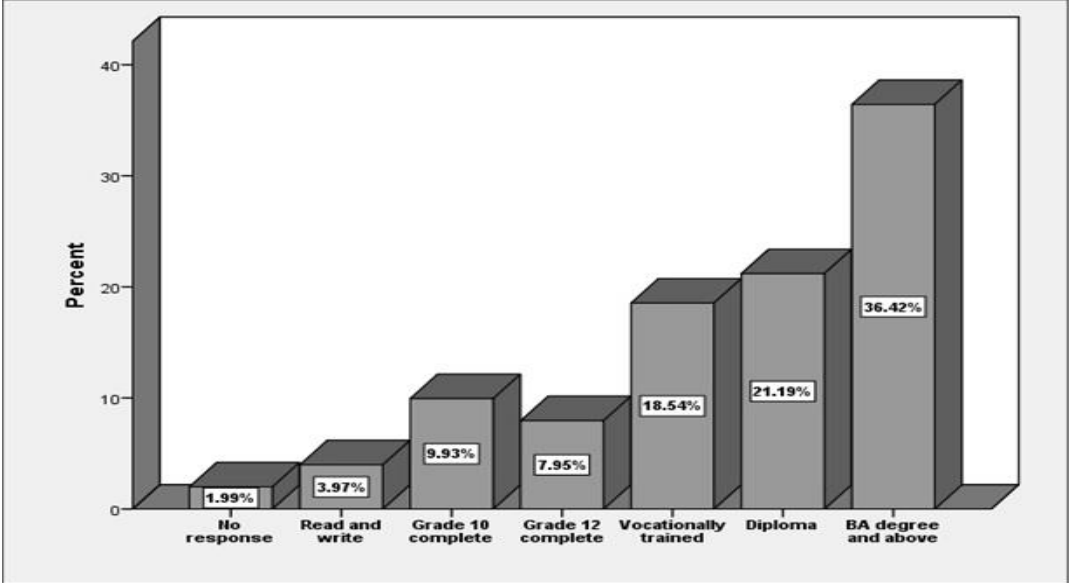


4.1.4 Educational Background of Respondents

The data shows that 57.61 % of the respondents (by adding 36.42 BA Degree & above and 21.19 diploma) educational background is diploma and above. The degree holders were many in number which covers the percentage 36.42 from the total taken population size of

the sampling. The data shows that most of the respondents were educated. The following graph shows this issue more:

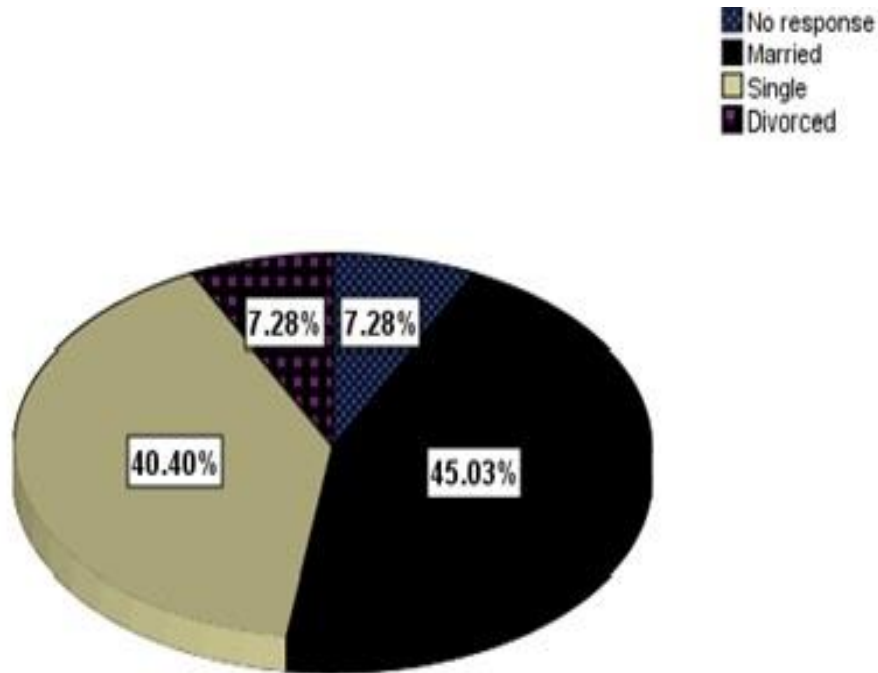
Graph 4: Educational Background of Respondents with Percent



4.1.5. Marital Status of Respondents

Marital status of the respondents has taken as demographic elements to be seen as important and a category to put them in different qualifications. The quantitative data shows that most of the respondents were (45.03 %) married where as 40.40 % was single but 7.28 % divorced. The rest 7.28 % didn't respond because of different situations. The following graph shows this issue in details:

Graph 5: Marital Status of Respondents with Percent



4.2. Main Questions

4.2.1. Educational programs

The primary purpose of community radio is to educate, entertain, and inform the rural segments of society by addressing issues overlooked by mainstream media outlets. It predominantly broadcasts locally originated program content, fostering participatory democracy aimed at combating racism, sexism, and other discriminatory attitudes within communities (Wood, 1993, p.4). The scholar emphasizes that programs originating from content owners must be aired at appropriate times and presented by suitable individuals to the concerned community.

In line with this, respondents in the research were asked, "How do you rate the coverage of educational programs on Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7?" The responses revealed that 74.8% of respondents (comprising 29.1% and 45.7%) believed that the coverage of educational programs was very high and commendable. Conversely, 19.9% of respondents (comprising 16.6% and 3.3%) believed that the coverage of educational programs was very low. This indicates that educational programs, crucial for

combating illiteracy within the community, did not meet the expectations of the community in terms of engagement and entertainment. The following table provides detailed insights.

Table- 1: The Coverage of Educational Programs

Coverage of educational programs					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No response	1	.7	.7	.7
	Very high	44	29.1	29.1	29.8
	High	69	45.7	45.7	75.5
	Unable to decide	7	4.6	4.6	80.1
	Low	25	16.6	16.6	96.7
	Very low	5	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	151	100.0	100.0	100.0

The response of the editor and journalists also showed that the radio programs of Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 were educational. One of the editor replied as the most common programs of the community radio from Monday to Friday in a week was more of educational. The other programs like health, agriculture, and culture are good examples of additional programs that they take place to be entertained in a given week as the part of the other program.

Related to this issue, among the respondents has replied that educational programs are included. He also said the following about the attentions given by the community radio in order to educate the society in different issues too.

People in our area walk on bare foot, as a result of that they become victim for diseases like vodokonasis and elephantiasis. The university did research on the problem with other stakeholders, and we produce programs so as to aware the society, let them use shoes. We also teach them about raising a better species of hens, sheep, and cows. Better agriculture techniques can also get coverage.

As the quote above indicated that the community members are mostly farmers and were not well educated how to protect themselves from pandemic diseases and told due to lack of educational awareness creations by having media oriented programs before.

4.2.2. Informational Programs

Community radio serves various community-based purposes by providing relevant information to its audience. It plays a significant role in promoting good governance practices within a country. For instance, it contributes to economic development, facilitates social interaction, encourages political participation, and preserves culture and language, thereby becoming an integral part of daily life. Additionally, community radio plays a crucial role in producing informed citizens, fostering social development, advancing technology, transforming methods of information dissemination, education, entertainment, and mobilizing the community, as stated by Getahun (2006, p. 35).

The primary aim of community broadcasting services is to provide information, education, and entertainment programs for inaccessible communities, thereby contributing to their political, social, and economic development. In line with this goal, Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 radio are expected to disseminate relevant information to the community consistently. It should inform, engage, and empower citizens residing in the radio station's coverage area, despite any challenges in reaching certain parts of the community.

In light of these objectives, respondents were asked the question, "How do you rate the coverage of informational programs on Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio?" The responses indicated that 72.9% of the respondents (by adding 14.6% and 58.3%) believed that the coverage of informational programs was very high and met the expected level of information dissemination. In contrast, 15.9% of respondents (by adding 14.6% and 1.3%) indicated that the coverage was very low. The following table provides detailed information on this.

Table 2: Coverage of Informational Programs

Coverage of informational programs					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No response	1	.7	.7	.7
	Very high	22	14.6	14.6	15.2
	High	88	58.3	58.3	73.5
	Unable to decide	16	10.6	10.6	84.1
	Low	22	14.6	14.6	98.7
	Very low	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	151	100.0	100.0	

The data which was gathered by interviewing also consolidated the data that gathered by quantitative ways. According to the editor of Debre Markos University Community Radio; news are presented three times per a day. Most of the news are targeted the community of Debre Markos University and the community of the city too. Therefore, the community radio news was informational and affirmative in their manner of expressions.

4.2.3. Entertainment Program

One of the uses of community radio is to entertain the rural part of the society by focusing on issues which aren't addressed by mainstream media. Most weekend programs of the community radio are more of entertainment focused as a result of this. Related to this the following table shows the response of respondents on the coverage of educational programs.

Table 3: Coverage of Entertaining Programs

Coverage of Entertaining Programs					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No response	3	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Very high	38	25.2	25.5	27.5
	High	59	39.1	39.6	67.1
	Unable to decide	16	10.6	10.7	77.9
	Low	30	19.9	20.1	98.0
	Very low	3	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	149	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	2	1.3		
Total		151	100.0		

The response showed that 64.3% of the respondents believed the programs of Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio are entertaining but 21.9% of the respondents believed that the programs aren't entertaining. The following table shows this in details.

The response from the editors and reporters also showed that the attention was given to the entertainment program and it was high. The reporter said that programs named, 'zikre Tarik', 'Yenibab gebeta', 'Ye Tibeb Mead', 'Tireka', 'Sport meznagna', 'Fiker Be Muzika', 'Monkorer zema' (old songs), 'Ye Muzika Gibja' are among the entertaining programs which are being recently given to be broadcasting by this radio station mostly.

4.2.4. Coverage of Social Issues

One of the primary roles of community radio is to positively impact the community's life without aiming for financial gain. Instead, these radio stations are expected to advocate for marginalized voices and address social issues relevant to the residents of Debre Markos town and its environs. According to survey data, 55.6% of respondents felt that the community radio effectively addressed social concerns. Conversely, 19.8% of respondents disagreed, while 23.8% were undecided. The breakdown is illustrated in the table below:

Table 4: Coverage of Social Issues

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No response	1	.7	.7	.7
Very high	32	21.2	21.2	21.9
High	52	34.4	34.4	56.3
Unable to decide	36	23.8	23.8	80.1
Low	23	15.2	15.2	95.4
Very low	7	4.6	4.6	100.0
Total	151	100.0	100.0	

Qualitative data indicates that the Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio program effectively covered social issues. A participant in in-depth interview states the following.

In volunteer activities such as renovating the homes of the less fortunate, we requested media coverage, and they created programs for that purpose. We also contributed by providing commentary. I believe they do well in addressing social issues, but more is expected from the objectives of their establishment.

The other in depth-interviewee participant (IIP-3) replied that the community radio doesn't play its role as we expected. He states the following too:

Various issues of the people, complain of the community aren't included in the radio program. In each and every woreda there are many good governance problems. The radio isn't covering those problems of the community. They should give much attention to social, economic issues of the community. There are people with indigenous knowledge, values, and skills. Still, they don't cover them. They waste much more time by inviting music and advertisement. They are working to generate income. The radio isn't acting like a community radio. It is working like a mainstream media. If the journalist covers the diversified types of social issues of the community, they can grab large number of audiences. They aren't working their level best.

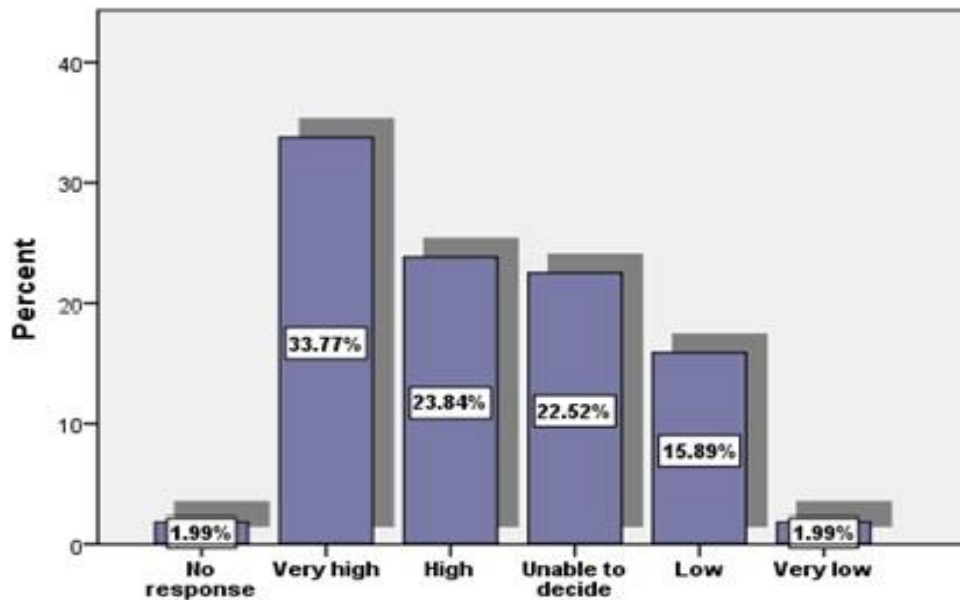
4.2.5. Rate of Social Impact

Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 has outlined its anticipated results and impacts. Its aim is to address the socio-economic challenges of the region by heightening community awareness through the daily dissemination of crucial information.

The programs are designed to educate the audience about various social issues, including the importance of using bed nets, HIV/AIDS prevention, the dangers of Female Genital Mutilation, early marriage, hygiene practices, handwashing, and other pertinent topics. This objective is supported by data obtained from diverse respondents who were questioned and provided responses.

The quantitative data shows that 57.61% (by adding 33.77% and 23.84%) of the respondents believed that the radio programs bring impact on the society by being imperative the most vital roles of information to the community by the community. On the other hand, 17.88% (by adding 15.89% and 1.99%) of the respondents replied that the impact was low and very low. The following graph showed this in detail:

Graph 6: Impact of the Radio on the Society



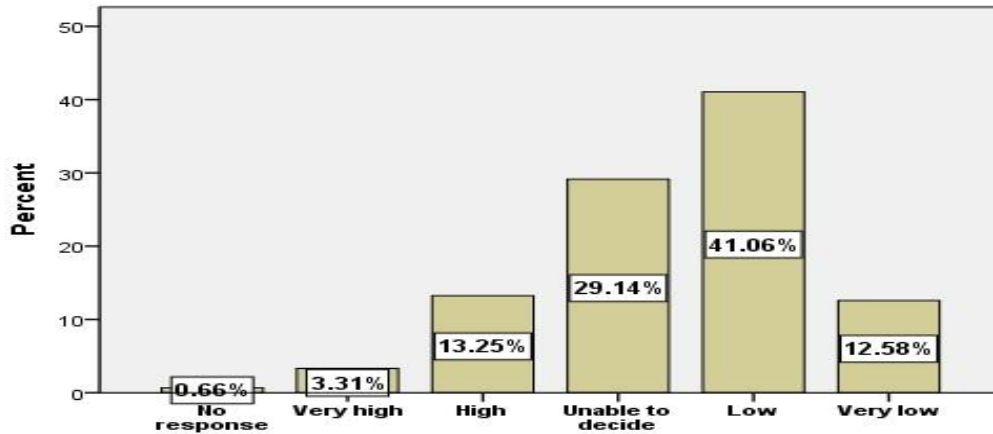
The data obtained from the in-depth interviewing also showed that the community radio programs brought the positive social impact on the concerned community. The response of one of the reporter showed that programs like agriculture brought the wonderful impacts on the farmers too. The reporter said the following too:

There are other programs which target the farmers like agriculture. Which are produced for the benefit of the farmers who are around Debre Markos. Personally, I produce different programs depending on the farming season. It focus about techniques how to use urea, crop rotation, inter cropping, feasibility, planning, harvesting, and how a farmer can work in collaboration with agriculture agent. The radio program gets the attention of many audiences. The reason why is that it is all about farmers in our community. The content, language, is about our community. Other mainstream media produce program by taking the interest of all farmers through out Ethiopia, but our program in our community radio target the farmers around Debre Markos. Therefore I can say that some progrms can bring social impact in the farmers around Debre Markos city.

4.2.6. Political Impact

The community radio could solve the political problems of the society. Problems like lack of good governance could get solutions since the community radio established the platform to have solution sets for the created problems. The people can raise the problems in details. Following that the higher politically assigned politician can reflect their understandings about the level of the problems. Atleast they can take assignment from the discussion so as to solve the mentioned problems by short, medium and long term plan. Related to this, the respondents were being asked about the level of political impact of Debre Markos Community radio. Their responses were shown in the following table:

Graph 7: Political Impact of the radio on the community



The respondents said that the political impact of Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio is low. Respondents who said the political impact of the radio program is very high and high and are only 3.97% (by adding 0.66% and 3.31%). On the contrary 53.64% of the respondents said low and very low. 29.14% of the respondents can't decide. This showed that the radio station has limitations in bringing political impacts as it was expected to be taken as impactful results.

The data which was maintained from the in-depth interviewing also showed that similar response. One of the in depth-interviewee participant (IIP_1) replied as follows:

We are under influence, when we make programs on political issues like problems on good governance. She said the interventions always come from different higher officials. When we teach the issue of good governance, our journalist get harassment with phone call. They higher officials call to our office to give warning. Therefore, I personally can't say our radio program can bring political impact.

The in depth-interviewee participant (IIP_7) replied that the community radio has limitations in bringing social impacts. He also added the following issues:

They don't make either news or programs on political events they were on the spot. For example, there were different protests in Debre Markos. They attended and watched every feeling and opinion of the people, but they don't directly report. They wait the news from either ETV or AMC. After they release or post, Debre Markos University and surrounding community radio releases the news. They aren't working freely in some political issues. Under this circumstance, it is very difficult to say that this community radio brings political impact. It is totally under influence.

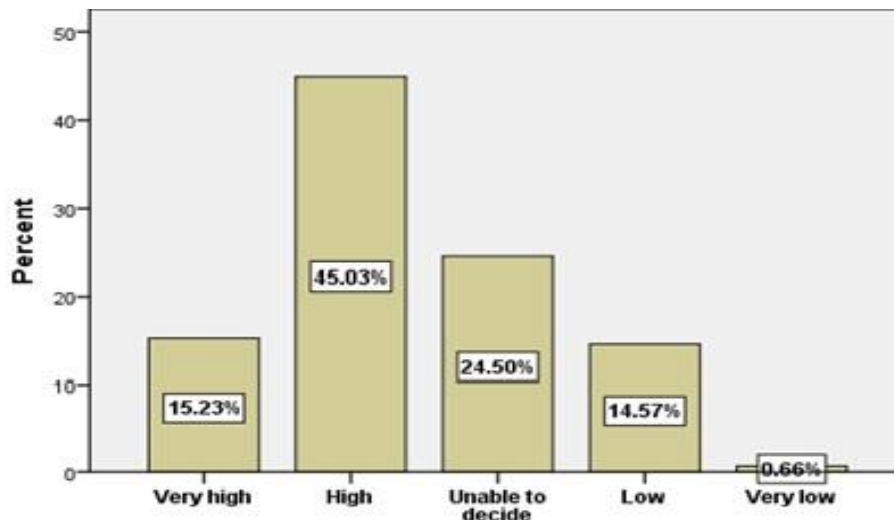
4.2.7. Audience Participation

The community radio is very important to a group of people who share and live together. It also acts as a community, forming several families, neighborhoods, and even multiple villages or communities. But the important thing is that they are interacted each other due to having media platform. One of the features of Community Radio is that it has to be participatory and pave the way to create community engagement with in the community to come up with common understanding. As reported by the UNESCO, a community radio station is one that is operated in the community for the community, about the community and by the community. It is now recognized that participatory approaches to communication are powerful tools to bring in change and empower people at the grassroots to decide their own future.

In the context of the information society and its transformation into a knowledge society, Participatory communication plays a vital role in increasing access to information for marginalized people for transforming the entire society to a knowledge-based society and this can effectively be done through a proper and planned participatory communication method. Efforts should be taken to make some Community Radio programs to be interactive and two ways. The representative of the community can be called to the studio to share and debate their views. They can also participate with telephone and other alternatives according to the access of technology.

Related to this the respondents were asked questions about audience participation, 60.26% of the respondents (by adding 15.23% and 45.03%) said that the participation of the audience is very high and high. On the other hand, 15.23% of the respondents (by adding 14.57% and 0.66%) said the participation is low and very low. This graph shows this in detail.

Graph 8: Audience Participation in Percent



The data which is maintained from the in depth interview also showed that there is a high participation of the audience by using phone calls. Farmers got the coverage of the community radio program engagements and try to call and forward their feedback, like such as questions, suggestions, opinions, and comments after they had listened different programs. As a community radio, the community can participate in setting the agenda, discuss, but the community's participation is limited to providing comments via phone calls only.

One of the employed reporter in-depth interviews (IIP_2) responded as; almost all journalists are graduates of Journalism and communications from the schools of journalism with B.A Degree and they are permanently employed by Debre Markos University to work as journalists in the community radio. He added the following too:

But when we come to our media almost all are employed journalist. We are out of the directive of the community radio. In community radio manger and technicians should be employed, but the rest should be volunteer journalist. This isn't happening here. The community is participating with phone call only. They don't get the chance to present their ideas being at studio.

The other interviewee (IIP-1) elaborated the reason why all journalists of Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio are permanently employed. And then she has presented the following reasons:

The time, when we celebrate our second-year anniversary, the community said that AMC wasn't covering their issues. AMC most issues are more of national and regional. So, they asked us to cover local community issues of Debre Markos and its surrounding, and they asked us to add more air time. Our radio reaches to nine woredas clearly. Yejubie, Sinan, Amber, Amen, Gozamen, Debre Markos, Amanuel, Elias and Denbecha, out of this in Dera and in Oromia Fincha Sugar factory, it can be reach clearly. As a result of that volunteer from students, teachers, began to participate. We had one volunteer from merchant, who read poem. There is one youth who narrate tale to children program. Other youths narrate novels like Emegua, Tikur Dem. Therefor the participation was relatively good, but more is expected. This isn't happening here. The community is participating with phone call only. They don't get the chance to present their ideas being at studio.

One of the members of management board emphasized the above idea.

As a community radio volunteer participants have very important role as their interest and capacity. There is a good platform and chance to them. Here in Debre Markos and the parts of Eastern Gojjam there is full of talented artists. Even as a journalist, it is where many experts have come. Therefore, they want to go to the station and present their artwork and other gifts. There are many who want to present their programs. But, they want to be paid. And the site can't pay. The professionals also have questions better salary and benefits. The station experts are paid from the budget allocated by the Ministry of Education to the university. As a result, the previous volunteers are now greatly reduced. It is one of the questions that will be asked in the board meeting

4.2.8. Tools which were used to have participation

Community radio stations aim to provide informational, educational and entertainment services for inaccessible communities. The platform provides an opportunity for community members to participate. The community can give feedback to the program producers using telephone, letter, email, and other alternatives. In relation to this, the respondents were asked how they provide feedback to the program producers of the community radio, 61.6% of the respondents used telephone. On the other hand, 17.6% of the respondents didn't respond. The following table showed the details.

Table 5: Medium used by Audiences to Participate

Medium to participate	Frequency	Percent
Telephone	93	61.6
Writing letter	14	9.3
Email	3	2.0
By giving interview	15	9.9
No response	25	17.2
Total	151	100

The quantitative data showed that a significant portion of the feedback is provided via phone calls. When we cross-tabulate the audience's phone call participation with age, Out of the total telephone participants, 45.9% were aged 25-34 years old. The following table represented this in details:

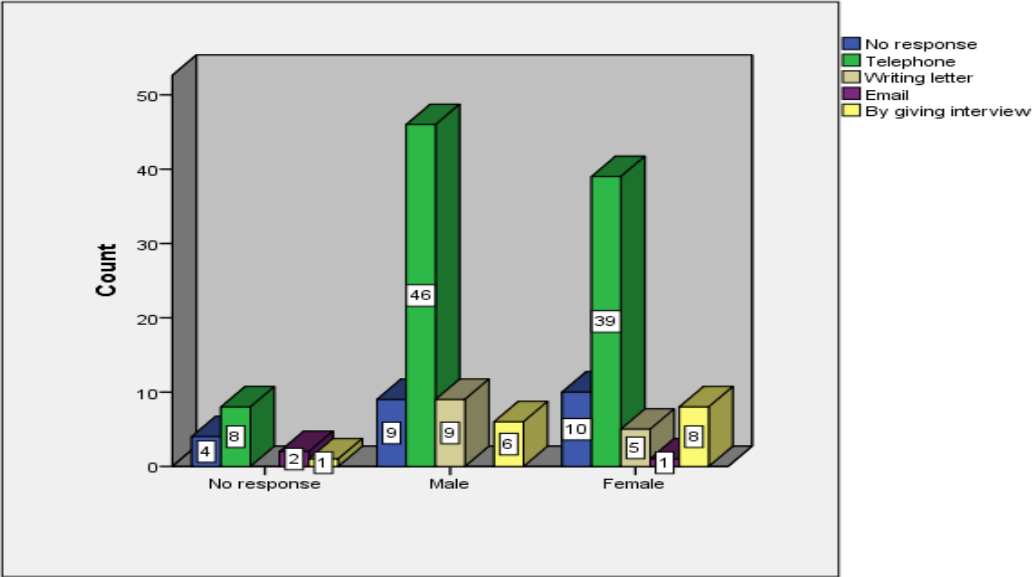
Table 6: Cross tabulation of medium used by audience to participate and age

Age of respondents * Q_8 Cross tabulation								
			Q_8					Total
			No response	Telephone	Writing letter	Email	By giving interview	
Age of responder	No response	Count	1	0	0	0	0	1
		% within Age of respondents	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within Q_8	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%
		% of Total	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%
	15-24 years	Count	4	16	2	0	5	27
		% within Age of respondents	14.8%	59.3%	7.4%	0.0%	18.5%	100.0%
		% within Q_8	17.4%	17.2%	14.3%	0.0%	33.3%	18.2%
		% of Total	2.7%	10.8%	1.4%	0.0%	3.4%	18.2%
	25-34 years	Count	11	44	7	1	5	68
		% within Age of respondents	16.2%	64.7%	10.3%	1.5%	7.4%	100.0%
		% within Q_8	47.8%	47.3%	50.0%	33.3%	33.3%	45.9%
		% of Total	7.4%	29.7%	4.7%	0.7%	3.4%	45.9%
	35-54 years	Count	6	27	4	2	3	42
		% within Age of respondents	14.3%	64.3%	9.5%	4.8%	7.1%	100.0%
		% within Q_8	26.1%	29.0%	28.6%	66.7%	20.0%	28.4%
		% of Total	4.1%	18.2%	2.7%	1.4%	2.0%	28.4%
	55 and above	Count	1	6	1	0	2	10
		% within Age of respondents	10.0%	60.0%	10.0%	0.0%	20.0%	100.0%
		% within Q_8	4.3%	6.5%	7.1%	0.0%	13.3%	6.8%
		% of Total	0.7%	4.1%	0.7%	0.0%	1.4%	6.8%
Total	Count	23	93	14	3	15	148	
	% within Age of respondents	15.5%	62.8%	9.5%	2.0%	10.1%	100.0%	
	% within Q_8	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	15.5%	62.8%	9.5%	2.0%	10.1%	100.0%	

As the data indicated over that most of the age groups of youngsters were highly engaged in the participation of phone calling than the other age groups. It is evident that other age groups were less engaged in participation due to a lack of technology and awareness in the community.

When we examine the cross-tabulation of audience participation methods by gender out of the total respondents who engaged in telephone calls, 49.5% were male, while 41.9% were females. This data indicates that participation between the two gender groups was nearly equal.. The following graph shows this age categories in details:

Graph 9: Cross tabulation of means of communication and sex number

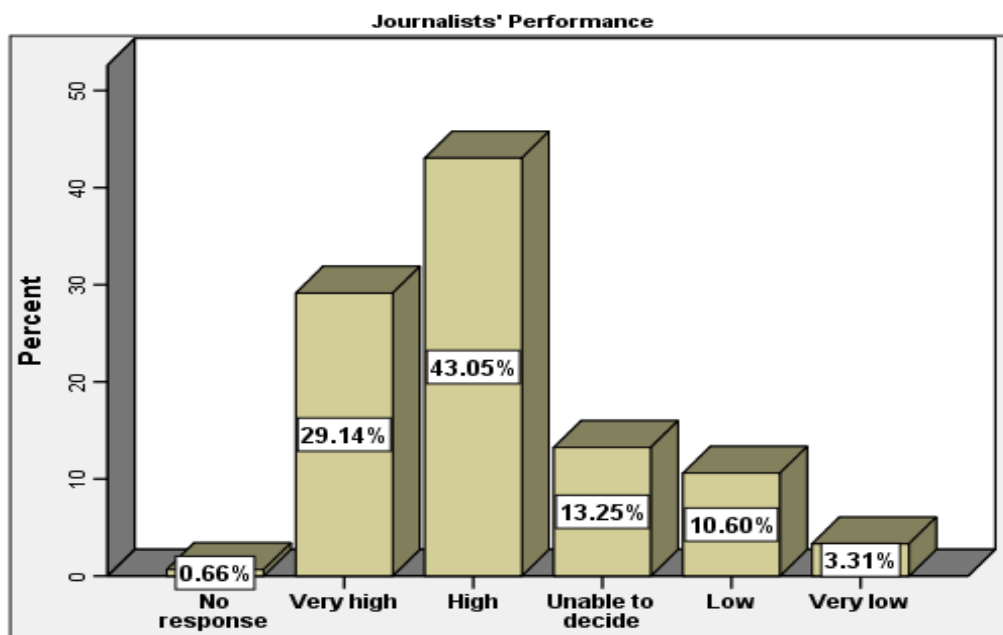


In in-depth interview, one of the in depth-interviewee participant (IIP_3) stated that the number of phones to receive the feedback of audiences in Debre Markos University was just one. This hinders the participation in one or the other way. If the line is occupied by one audience for long minutes, the rest can't give feedback, comment and suggestions. This can be actually solved through having alternative phone lines and try to find other means of media engagements to reach these people in the time of need of their participations

4.2.9 Performance of Journalists

Community radio is owned and controlled by the community, as owning and controlling the means of communication is a fundamental concept of community media. It can play a significant role at the grassroots level for rural development. As a result, information has become a critical factor for social development. In this case, informed citizens can play valuable roles in reducing poverty and illiteracy. Community radios are important tools in bridging the information gap and in mobilizing the society. In this regard, journalists working at the community radio can play significant roles. They should work harder to educate, inform, and entertain their target audience. Related to this the respondents were asked about the performance of the journalists who are working at Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio. Based on their responses, 72.19% of the respondents rated their performance as very high or high, with 29.14% rating it very high and 43.05% rating it high.. The detail will be show in the following graph.

Graph 10: Journalists Performance in the eyes of respondents in %



One of the in-depth interviewees (IIP_3) stated that all activities of journalists are limited due to finance problems. The respondent also added that they didn't cover the issues of the

community in various woredas, which are reached by Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio. As well as elaborated the problem as follows:

The work of radio is directly related with budget. As you know there is a budget deficit in the country. As a journalist you have to move to different woredas. There is a transport problem, and maladministration also existed. The board members of Debre Markos University Community radio are working without any payment. So, they aren't working for the benefit of journalists and the radio. They don't know the existing problems of the journalists and radio. If we continue like this it would be difficult to achieve the strategic objectives of the radio.

The data from the in-depth interview also showed that the journalists are working their best. The in-depth interview participants expect more from the journalists. One of the in-depth interview participants (IIP_4) stated the following too:

The journalists who work at Debre Markos University Community radio should focus on youths without a job. They can show the job opportunities, and best experiences of successful entrepreneurs. Women tried to cryout at court due to injustice. This radio program should cover the voice of those women. They can cover the free law advisory service at Debre Markos University. If their work based on day-to-day life of the society, they can produce good radio programs, which can catch the attention of many audiences.

The other in depth-interviewee participant (IIP_8) stated that the journalists who are working their full time and volunteers are working well, but according to the objectives of the community radio and the expectation of the community expected more about the situations. In addition to these issues, she explained the expected tasks as follows:

In Debre Markos University, there is a modern animal raring project namely 'Menkorer Animal Rearing'. The community radio can promote that. The radio can work on the life of female university students, who drink alcohol, practice unsafe sex, and using drug. They are member of the community of Debre Markos University. The community radio should work on that by targeting these female students. In front of the university compound, there are people who sell 'chat', the radio should work on that. Those 'chat' selling shops should be moved away from those areas of the university. The area is full of news. So, even if the journalists are working, more is expected from the radio.

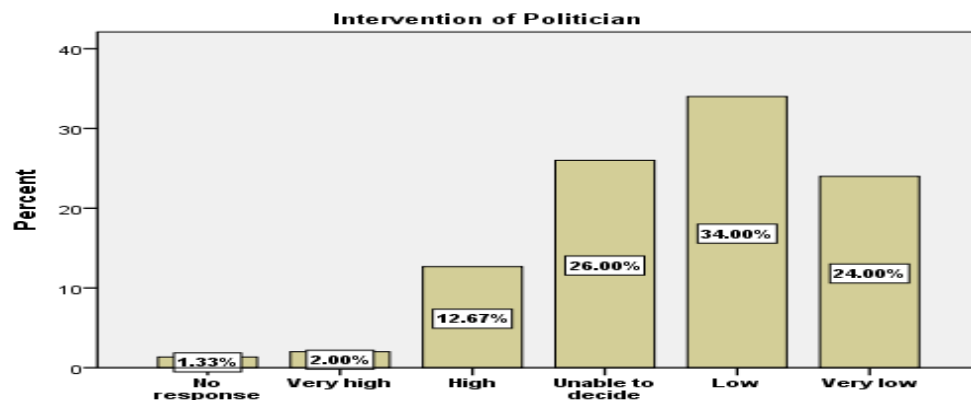
4.2.10. Political Intervention

The community radio provides an avenue for community members to participate in the preparation of its programs. According to Community Radio Broadcasting Service Directive No. 02/2008, it welcomes opinions and suggestions, conducts investigations, and interviews relevant stakeholders before disseminating information to the community. The primary goal of the community radio is to serve the common interests of the community. This means that political intervention is prohibited, even though the radio is designed to engage all members of society.

However, it is crucial to prioritize media freedom to guarantee that community members have unrestricted access to and can freely share information on a wide range of topics. In connection with this, 58% of respondents (by adding 24% and 34%) indicated that political interventions in the Debre Markos University and Surrounding community radio were perceived as very low or low.

. The following graph showed the details of this scenario.

Graph 11: Interventions of the Politics in Percent



On the contrary, during an in-depth interview with one of the journalists (IIP_4) at Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7, it was revealed that political interventions were particularly noticeable. The journalist stated that issues related to good governance were not easily covered in a clear manner during presentations. According to this respondent, higher-ranking political officials attempted to halt their programs as their interests were not being promoted at the time. The female respondent

recounted an instance where a higher official from Debre Markos city responded with: "Who are you to prioritize this issue? You should focus on other social matters instead.

4.2.11. Reasons why people listen the radio

There are over 20,000 radio stations worldwide and more than 2 billion radio receivers. Despite the belief held by the Center for Journalism and Mass Communication that television and other advanced communication technologies will supplant radio, it continues to expand steadily.

According to scholars (Dev Sanskriti, 2014), radio has consistently dominated the realm of mass communication, with its waves reaching nearly every corner of the planet. It serves as the primary electronic medium for the economically disadvantaged, as its portability and relatively low cost make it accessible to all for obtaining information. By transcending barriers of isolation and illiteracy, radio stands as the most affordable electronic medium for broadcasting and reception.

In our country, radio boasts a wide-reaching audience with minimal geographical constraints. While some listeners possess traditional radio receivers, others tune in via their mobile phones, eliminating the need for a smartphone. This accessibility allows audiences to easily engage with community radio programs at their convenience.

The respondents of this research were being asked why they listen community radio. According to their responses; 16.6% of the respondents listen so as to get information, 9.9% to be entertained 3.3 to get education. Most of the respondents (66.2%) listens the radio to get information, to be entertained, and to get education. The following table shows about these issues in details.

Table 7: Reasons why the respondent listen the radio

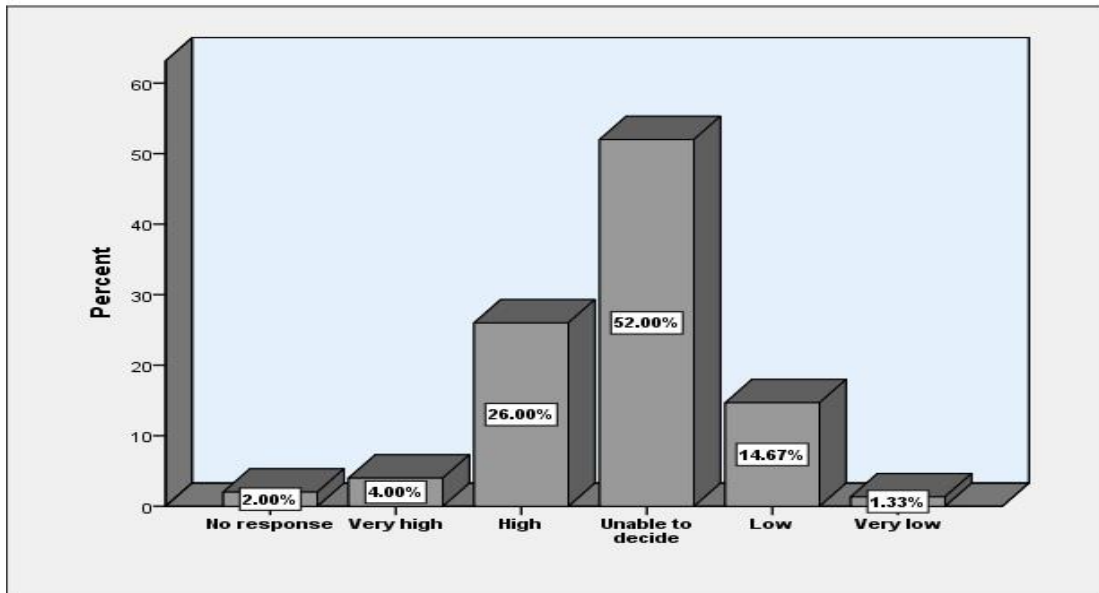
Why People Listen Radio	Frequency	Percent
To get new information	25	16.6
To be entertained	15	9.9
To be educated	5	3.3
All of them	100	66.2
No response	5	3.3
Total	151	100

4.2.12. Significances of the Programs to get new Information

Community radio should offer programs focused on human and democratic rights to foster and elevate community awareness. In accordance with Community Radio Broadcasting Service Directive No. 02/2008, community radio transmission programs are mandated to incorporate both local and national news coverage.

Related to this; the respondents were asked the level in which the program help the audience to get new information. The 40% of the respondents (by adding 26% and 4%) said very high and high. On the contrary 16% of the respondents (by adding 14.67% and 1.33%) replied as low and very low. This shows that the programs have some kinds of limitations in providing new information to the concerned audience of the surroundings.

Graph 12: The significances of programs to get new information in percent



The replying in the in-depth interview (IIP_1) also indicates that even though informative news from Monday to Friday has been broadcasting, limitations are still existed there. The female respondent described the recent performance and limitation of the radio programs as follows:

There are programs which inform to the rural community named “Ye Arso Aderu Hiwot” meaning ‘Life of Farmers’ which inform the community about better species of hens, sheep, cows, which are distributed to the farmers. The health program informs the rural community about the problem of walking on bare foot, which can be a cause for disease known as elephantiasis. A program named ‘Nikate Hig’ informs to the poor member of the community about the free law advisory services given at Debre Markos University. These are the informative programs, but more is expected from Debre Markos Community radio. They aren’t working their best so as to deliver new information to the audience.

As it is known that, news is the main source of information. One of the in depth-interviewee participant (IIP_5) explained the problem of journalists in producing news as follows:

The journalists have problems related with content. They aren't professionals. They should identify the need of the audience. But they don't do that. Most news and programs are redundant. They broadcast news and programs again and again. They repeat the news and issues of mainstream media. They don't know what news means even. They make five minutes of news. They use the up sound of one person four times in the same news. And also the community radio wasn't led by professional.

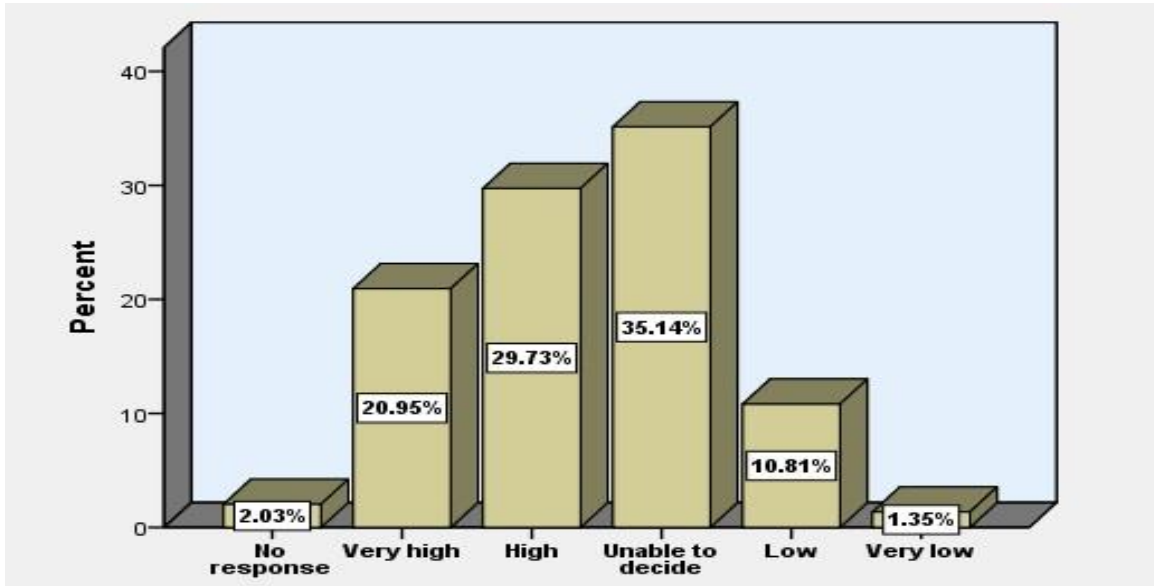
The data from both quantitative and qualitative information showed that the limitations are there in broadcasting informative news types and programs.

4.2.13. The existence of independent Platform

The Community Radio station, operated by and for the community, offers a range of services including educational and entertainment programs for students, staff, and local residents. Additionally, it provides opportunities for individuals to develop skills across various domains, thereby broadening their experiences. The station serves as a valuable resource for ordinary people, granting them access to pertinent information on socio-economic issues such as HIV/AIDS, personal hygiene, environmental degradation, harmful traditional practices, gender equality, human rights, soil erosion, general education, economic and marketing education, agricultural insights, and early warning information. Furthermore, it offers educational and entertaining content beneficial to the community. An independent platform is also established to foster interactive discussions.

In this regard the respondents of the research were asked the question “How do you rate the provision of independent platform for interactive discussion?” They said 50.68% of the respondents (by adding 20.95% and 29.73%) said very high and high. On the other hand, 12.16% of the respondents (by adding 10.81% and 1.35%) said low and very low. 35.14% of the respondents don't have idea about the plate form. The following table shows this in detail.

Graph 13: The provision of independent platform in percent



The above graph shows that the 47.3 % of the respondents replied as (by adding 35.14%, 10.81% and 1.35%) either have no idea about the existence of independent platform or they responded as that the provision of independent platform is low and very low. These data showed that there are still limitations in the designing of the independent platform for the interactive discussions on the social problems of the community as a whole. The data from in depth-interviewee shows these limitations.

One of the in depth-interviewee participant (IIP_1) stated that it is very difficult to say that the Debre Markos University Community radio designed independent platform. He stated the following about the existence of independent platform:

There is one program with the live discussion, which invites audiences to participate on phone call. The name of this program is Hello Markos. The program raises different problems of the community like water problem, problem on giving service by government organizations, and other social problems of the community. The program raises different problems, but when the issue touches the authorities, they oppose us. They usually say ‘who are you to raise this issue?’ We are trying to facilitate independent platform, but sometimes they try to intervene. As a result of that the sustainability of such live discussions will become in danger.

4.2.14. Health related issues

The Community Radio operates for the collective benefit of the entire community, prioritizing non-commercial objectives. It serves geographic communities with shared interests. While commercial and mainstream media cover general health issues, community radio targets specific health concerns relevant to its audience. Owned, operated, and propelled by the community itself, these stations address the particular health challenges faced by their community members. They share health-related stories and experiences, broadcasting incidents that endanger rural lives, such as epidemics threatening public health. Consequently, they educate their audience about various diseases that pose risks to people's lives. In line with this, research respondents were queried about the health coverage provided by Debre Markos University Community Radio .Their response is indicated in the following table:

Table 8: Coverage of Health in Debre Markos University Community radio

S.N	Issues of Debre Markos	Alternatives				
		Very High Coverage	High Coverage	Unable to decide	Low coverage	Very low coverage
14	Health related issues	39.7	19.9	20.4	19.2	0.7

As indicated in the above table 59.6% of the respondents (by adding 39.7% and 19.9%) said the coverage of health is very high and high. On the other side 19.9% of the respondents said low and very low.

The data from the in depth interview shows that the community radio is trying to educate the community. One of the interviewees said that health program on HIV/AIDS is very nice program. But it has a sustainability problem. He also added the following:

The program on HIV/AIDS is very important for me. I listen the live discussion about the transmission, way of protection seriously. Those programs teach me to keep myself from unsafe sex. The experience of those victims teaches me a lot. I can say that it helped me to shift my paradigm of my life. It teaches me to have safe sex. Even after listening

those live discussions, I decided o check my blood. And now I am teaching my friend who are still on unsafe sex. Such kinds of programs are vibrant to put youths in the right truck of life. But they aren't sustainable. Different political, economic and other issues dominate them, and they disappear. Creating awareness should be a continuous work.

The data from the in-depth interview also show that the coverage of health-related issues on Debre Markos University Community radio is good, but one of the in depth-interviewee participant (IIP_3) stated that the coverage of the community program wasn't as expected by. He added the following too:

The coverage of health-related issue in Debre Markos University Community Radio is not as expected. There are different problems which came through time. For example, in East Gojjam, harmful traditional practices, female genital mutilation, early marriage still exist. If the radio program work on these improvements would happen. In addition to that the rural community has a problem of hygiene and garbage disposal problems. The health programs should teach more by showing the reality by going on the spot. The duration of the health program is low. So, much attention should be given to this field.

4.2.15. The culture issues

The establishment of Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 primarily serves the community residing in specific geographical areas, sharing common languages, cultures, and values. Unlike other mainstream media, which often neglect the culture of this community, this radio station has a responsibility to cover it comprehensively. It is expected to promote the community's cuisine, dances, attire, music, artistic expressions, and other cultural facets. In connection with this, research respondents were also queried about the coverage provided by Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio regarding the cultural issues of the community. The following table shows this issue in details.

Table 9: Coverage of Culture in Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio in percent

S.N	Issues of Debre Markos	Alternatives				
		Very High Coverage	High Coverage	Unable to decide	Low coverage	Very low coverage
15	Coverage of culture	41.7	27.2	18.5	10.6	2.0

As it is seen from the above table, 68.9% of the respondents (by adding 41.7% and 27.2%) replied that the coverage is very high and high. On the other side 12.6% (by adding 10.6% and 2.0%) said low and very low coverage. The figure shows that the community radio widely covered the culture of the community as it was expected by.

The data from the in-depth interview also shows that attention given by the community radio to the culture of the community. The in-depth interviewee (IIP_4) stated the following:

After 3 years of Debre Markos University Community radio transmission, we did survey, and the finding of the research shows that air time should be added. We increase the air time from five hours to eleven hours. And also, we increase the number of programs from ten to 26. This gave the chance to focus on culture of the community. We focused on the traditional music, food, activity, life style of the community. Following that most farmers, shopkeepers and other part of the community continue listening the radio programs frequently

4.2.16. The current affairs

As per the Ethiopian Mass Media Authority's Community Radio Broadcasting Service Directive, any community radio station in Ethiopia is required to allocate a minimum of 14 hours per week for its transmission program. The transmission program must include local and national news. The community around the Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio has the right to get any political, economic, cultural and social information which takes place in the country. Incidents which are all about that community

will also be entertained. Related to this, the respondents were being also asked about the coverage of current affairs. The table shows this issue in detail as follows.

Table 10: Coverage of Current Affairs in Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio in percent

S.N	Issues of Debre Markos	Alternatives				
		Very High Coverage	High Coverage	Unable to decide	Low coverage	Very low coverage
16	Coverage of current affairs	10.6	52.3	18.5	17.2	1.3

As indicated in the above table 62.9% of the respondents (by adding 10.6% and 52.3%) said the attention given to current affairs by Debre Markos University and Surrounding community radio is very high and high. On the other hand, 18.5% (by adding 17.2% and 1.3%) said the coverage of current affair is low and very low.

4.2.17. The social issues

Community radio programs and news play a vital role in addressing the social issues within a community. They are tasked with promoting the values of voluntary activity and encouraging community participation in local development, governance, and various aspects of social life.

Listeners often utilize these radio stations as a platform to voice their grievances to authorities when encountering problems in their daily lives, such as issues related to access to roads and electricity, poor governance, and sluggish decision-making processes concerning societal matters. The authorities then respond to listener complaints through live discussions. In line with this, respondents were also queried about the coverage of such social issues.. And the following table shows these issues in details:

Table 11: Coverage of Social Issues in Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio in percent

S.N	Issues of Debre Markos	Alternatives					
		Very High Coverage	High Coverage	Unable to decide	Low coverage	Very low coverage	No response
17	Coverage of social issues	24.5	49.7	6.0	11.9	5.3	2.6

As it is indicated from the above table, 74.2% of the respondents (by adding 24.5% and 49.7%) said that the attention was given so as to cover social issues by Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio which is very high and high. On the other side 17.26% (by adding 11.9% and 5.3%) said the coverage of social issues is low and very low.

4.2.18. The economic issues

Community radio should prioritize the economic aspects of the community. This includes discussing the prices of various goods and services and highlighting market opportunities for locally produced cereals, fruits, and vegetables, among other vital economic topics. Program producers can facilitate discussions with various stakeholders to delve into these issues and find appropriate solutions to societal problems. In connection with this focus, respondents were queried about the coverage of economic issues. These issues are depicted in the following table in detail.

Table 12: Coverage of Economic issues in Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio in percent

S.N	Issues of Debre Markos	Alternatives					
		Very High Coverage	High Coverage	Unable to decide	Low coverage	Very low coverage	No response
18	Coverage of economic issues	18.5	43.7	14.5	17.2	3.3	2.7

Based on their response 62.2% of the respondents (by adding 18.5% and 43.7%) said that the coverage of economic issues is very high and high. On the other part, 50.5% (by adding 17.2% and 3.3%) replied that the coverage is low and very low.

4.2.19. The educational issues

As emphasized by various scholars, education serves as a cornerstone for development. In this context, community radio holds significant potential in educating society about a multitude of issues. Nowadays, the media's role in combating social challenges like illiteracy and poverty, even if they are not prevalent as "evils," cannot be overlooked. Community radios are instrumental in disseminating knowledge to rural community members who may lack access to formal education. This media platform can educate on a wide range of topics including health, culture, nutrition, household management, life skills, critical thinking, moral values, and more, all of which contribute to community development. In line with this, respondents were queried about the coverage of educational programs. These issues are depicted in the following.

Table 13: Coverage of Educational issues in Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio in percent

S.N	Issues of Debre Markos	Alternatives					
		Very High Coverage	High Coverage	Unable to decide	Low coverage	Very low coverage	No response
19	Coverage of educational programs	45.7	19.2	8.0	20.5	2.6	4.0

According to the response of the respondents, 64.9% (by adding 45.7% and 19.2%) said that the coverage of educational program is very high and high. On the other hand, 43.1% (by adding 20.5% and 2.6%) said the coverage is low and very low.

4.2.20. The environmental issues

When we refer to the environment, we encompass the habitat where living and non-living entities coexist harmoniously. Community radio serves as a platform to advocate for villages that are environmentally friendly, green, clean, and devoid of pollution. It can

educate communities on the prudent use of resources, soil erosion prevention techniques, and the importance of tree planting to mitigate the effects of global warming. Through tailored programming, community radio can effectively educate the public on a variety of environmental issues. In connection with this focus, research respondents were queried about the coverage of environmental topics. The following table more detail.

Table 14: Coverage of Environmental issues in Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio in percent

S.N	Issues of Debre Markos	Alternatives					
		Very High Coverage	High Coverage	Unable to decide	Low coverage	Very low coverage	No response
20	Coverage of environmental issues	5.3	35.1	24.5	27.2	6.0	1.9

According to the response, 40.4% of the research respondents (by adding 5.3% and 35.1%) said that the coverage of educational program is very high and high. On the other side, 33.2% (by adding 27.2% and 6.0%) said the coverage is low and very low. In addition to that 24.5% of the respondents can't decide on the issue.

4.2.21. The sanitation

Community radios serve as educational platforms for communities on sanitation issues. They provide information on methods for removing dirt and waste particles from homes and the environment. Furthermore, they emphasize the importance of maintaining clean toilets and practicing handwashing before and after meals, as well as after using the toilet. Additionally, community radio educates on the necessity of consuming distilled or boiled water to prevent waterborne diseases such as cholera. Overall, they raise awareness within the community about the detrimental impact of poor or inadequate sanitation practices. Related to this, the respondents were asked about the coverage of sanitation and gave the following data as follows in detail.

Table 15: Coverage of sanitation in percent

S.N	Issues of Debre Markos	Alternatives				
		Very High Coverage	High Coverage	Unable to decide	Low coverage	Very low coverage
21	Coverage of sanitation	1.3	25.8	25.8	33.1	13.9

According to the response given by, 27.1% (by adding 1.3% and 25.8%) the coverage of sanitation program is very high and high. To the contrary, 47.0% percent of the respondents (by adding 33.1% and 13.9%) said the coverage is low and very low. In addition to that, 25.8% of the respondents didn't have idea on the issues.

The data from the in-depth interviewee (IIP_4) showed that the coverage of educational program still existed. As he said that "There are educational programs that I like most. For example, programs on gender equality, how to look after the children, how to prevent women violence, harmful traditional practices, and irrigation are my favorite programs. I would like to say that more is expected so as to bring all rounded development in the community."

4.2.22. The disaster issues

Covering environmental issues is crucial for community radio services, providing communities with ongoing benefits. Community radio stations broadcast national disasters that pose threats to community health. A disaster is an event causing significant harm, damage, loss of life, or serious difficulty.

According to the Community Radio Broadcasting Service Directive, community radio services must transmit emergency statements issued by federal or regional state governments and police commissioners free of charge. This includes incidents endangering constitutional order, national disasters, and epidemics threatening public health. Respondents were queried about the coverage of disasters on Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio. The following table shows the detail of their responses.

Table 16: Coverage of disaster in percent

S.N	Issues of Debre Markos	Alternatives					
		Very High Coverage	High Coverage	Unable to decide	Low coverage	Very low coverage	No Response
22	Disaster issues	3.3	17.9	31.1	32.5	12.6	2.6

Based on the responses given above, 21.2% (by adding 3.3% and 17.9%) of the respondents said the coverage of disaster is very high and high. And 45.1% (by adding 32.5% and 12.6%) of the respondents said the coverage of disaster is low and very low.

4.2.23. Indigenous knowledge of the Community

Indigenous knowledge refers to the accumulated understanding, skills, practices, and beliefs that are developed by indigenous peoples over generations within a specific cultural context. It encompasses various aspects of traditional knowledge, including environmental stewardship, medicine and healing practices, agricultural techniques, traditional arts and crafts, social organization and governance.

It is valuable not only for the well-being of indigenous peoples themselves but also for broader society. It offers insights into sustainable living practices, biodiversity conservation, and alternative approaches to various challenges, from healthcare to environmental management. However, it's important to respect the intellectual property rights and cultural sensitivities associated with indigenous knowledge and involve indigenous communities as partners and stakeholders in any efforts to document, preserve, or utilize their knowledge

To the indigenous knowledge of the community must be given programs to be entertained via having community radios in the community. The government, national media and private commercial media have limitations in the covering of the indigenous knowledge of the community of a country with large number of nations and nationalities. Therefore, the community radio can play a vital role in promoting the indigenous knowledge of the community.

Related to this the respondents of the research were also asked about the coverage of indigenous knowledge of the community. The following table shows these responses in details.

Table 17: Indigenous knowledge of the community in percent

S.	Issues of Debre Markos	Alternatives					
		Very High Coverage	High Coverage	Unable to decide	Low coverage	Very low coverage	No response
23	Coverage of indigenous knowledge of the community	7.3	46.4	20.5	20.5	3.3	2.0

As the whole representations and demographic figures are showing above all, it is possible to say the following. As indicated in the above table 53.7% of the respondents (by adding 7.3% and 46.4%) replied that the coverage is very high and high. On the other side 23.8% (by adding 20.5% and 3.3%) said the coverage is low and very low.

The services from Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 were not adequately meeting the diverse interests and preferences of the local community. This discrepancy highlighted a gap between community expectations and the actual programming provided, indicating a need for improvement and alignment with community desires.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter deals about the conclusions and recommendations. The first section is about conclusions of the research while the second part is about the concerned recommendations.

5.1. Conclusions

The coverage of educational programs on Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio FM 97.7 is extensive. The radio broadcasts educational programs on health, agriculture, culture, and other topics. Research has shown that the low awareness levels among the rural population regarding health issues necessitate the production of more educational programs and news by the radio station.

Furthermore, the research indicates that the radio station also strives to broadcast relevant informational programs and news to foster informed citizenship. News segments are presented three times a day, with particular emphasis on national and regional news. However, the coverage of community-focused news is relatively low.

The community radio also pays due attention to entertainment programs. Research indicates that among the radios in Ethiopia, Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio stands out for its clear program dissemination. Residents of Debre Markos city, the university community, and rural areas express a desire for more diverse entertainment programs. Current entertainment offerings do not fully satisfy the audience's interests in terms of content variety.

However, the community radio's focus on social issues is lacking. While it covers volunteer activities, it neglects topics such as indigenous knowledge and community skills. A significant portion of airtime is allocated to music and advertisements. In general, it can be said that the community radio falls short of addressing the social issues pertinent to the community at its optimal level.

There are programs which bring social impacts like programs on agriculture. The farmers around Debre Markos learn farming technologies related to their work. The program on health can also bring social impacts. It educates the youths of the city and the students of the

university to keep themselves from HIV/AIDS. And the health programs also educate about the personal hygiene keeping of the farmers.

The radio has huge limitations on bringing political impacts. The journalists were trying to produce programs on the problems of good governance. However, there are interventions from the higher officials of Debre Markos city administration. The journalists aren't freely working on political issues; as a result, their impact is very low.

The participation of the audience in Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio by using phone calls is high. As the research showed, the farmers and other members of the community mainly gave feedback by using phone calls. The community members also gave feedback for the improvement of the radio programs during panel discussion times.

The performance of journalists in producing better quality programs is high even if there is a financial problem. They are working their best to fill the information gap between and to mobilize the society too. The research showed that financial limitation is becoming a problem for the journalists to cover different issues of different woredas of that community. Finance is becoming the main problem for the radio in order to become the voice for the voiceless of the community.

The other finding of the research was that political intervention still exists. The higher political officials in the Debre Markos city intervene to stop the program. When the community radio tries to bring different political issues to the platform for discussion, they harass the journalists with a single call.

The significance of Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio to get new information isn't that high. The radio gives high coverage to national and regional news taken from news agencies and other national and regional mainstream media. The coverage of news that focuses on that community is relatively very less. In addition to that, the news being broadcast is redundant, repeatedly broadcasting the same news every time.

The radio media house tried to create an independent platform. But when the issue touches the interest of politicians or higher officials, they intervene. This situation threatens the existence of an independent platform. When the issue doesn't touch the interest of

politicians and audiences forward their opinions without any problem. Therefore, it is possible to say that the existence of an independent platform is on and off.

The finding of the research shows that the community radio works on health-related issues, but more work is expected. In East Gojam, harmful traditional practices, female genital mutilation, and early marriage still exist. The rural community has problems with hygiene and garbage disposal. The radio program isn't working sustainably on these issues.

The coverage of the radio on culture is good. It covers traditional music, food, activities, lifestyle of the community. The program on agriculture covers the lifestyle of the farmers. The radio also covers food, dance, cloth, song, and artistic values of the community.

The attention given to current affairs by Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community radio is high. The research shows that most of the current affairs target national and regional issues focused by national and regional mainstream media. Current affairs of the community aren't entertained that much.

The coverage of this community radio on economic issues is better. Programs named as 'mekenet,' a program which focuses on economic activities of the community, create awareness in society to save money and start other business types. The program also educates the society not to waste resources with the name of different parties.

The community radio educates the society about health, culture, foods, drinks, life skills, critical thinking, moral values, and other related issues. But most of the airtime is covered with music and advertisements. Therefore, much more effectiveness is expected from the radio in order to bring social development.

The coverage of environmental issues is low. Even if the radio promotes a village which is conducive, green, clean, and free from pollution, the coverage isn't that much. They are event-based coverage. It gets coverage during the time of Green Legacy, a time in which seedlings are planted.

The coverage of disaster issues is low. The radio didn't work sustainably on such kind of issues. The coverage of indigenous knowledge in the Debre Markos University Community radio is not that much. The radio didn't give due attention to teach the community to keep

their language, medicine, cottage, culture, literature, stories, and other pieces of knowledge that have been practiced traditionally as expected.

Due to a shortage of transportation and financial resources, reaching the community from Debre Markos has been significantly hindered.

5.2. Recommendations

Currently, Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio FM 97.7 are increasing the number of programs from time to time. It also increases the airtime. Following that, the university employed full-time journalists. Recently, the community radio isn't acting like a community media. It is mostly run by professional journalists. Its formats are like the F.M radios of mainstream media. It doesn't give place to the issues of that community. Therefore, including the community so as to make them discuss their social, economic, and other problems would be more effective. The university should work on that.

The community radio should give more airtime so as to cover issues like HIV/AIDS, personal hygiene, environmental degradation, harmful traditional practices, gender equality, human rights issues, soil erosion, general education, economic and marketing education, agricultural and early warning information, education, or entertainment which can be useful for the community. Recently, much of the airtime is covered with music and advertisements. The board members should give due attention to covering these issues by targeting the community.

The focus of the community radio on news of that area isn't that much. Most news is either national or regional. News of that community isn't well entertained. The social, economic, political, cultural, and other issues of the community should be covered by the community radio. The community wants to listen to news about the success and failures of their kebeles and woredas on this radio. Therefore, the university should pay more attention to the issues of that community.

The research shows that the community radio gave high attention to entertainment and educational programs, but the interest of the university community is different from that of the farmers in rural areas of Debre Markos. Therefore, the entertainment and educational

programs should identify the interest of these different groups. Therefore, the university should do audience research at least once a year.

Recently, more time of the community radio is covered by advertisement and music. The community radio should give more emphasis on social issues of the community. The radio should give attention to the rural part of the community. Since this community doesn't have any alternative to media, this radio should target them. The program should bring social impact. The community radio should do their work without any intervention. For that, the university should be aware of the role of community radio to the higher political officials of Debre Markos city and rural areas around the city. The research shows that financial limitations are becoming a hindrance for journalists to cover various issues in different rural areas of that community. Finance is becoming a problem for the radio to serve as a voice for the voiceless part of the community.

In Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio, political intervention still exists. The higher political officials get involved so as to stop the program. When the community radio tries to bring different political issues, the politician harasses the journalists and the radio manager by a single call. Therefore, the board members of the community radio should be aware of the higher political officials about the role of community radio.

The finding of the research shows that the community radio work on health-related issues, but more work is expected. So, the university should focus on problems like harmful traditional practices, female genital mutilation, and early marriage which still exist in Gojam. The board members and manager of the community radio should work in collaboration so as to solve these social problems. The community radio gave attention to current issues, but the current issues are mainly national and regional. The radio program producers should give attention to the current affairs of the community. The community radio should work more on environmental, sanitation, and indigenous knowledge. The program producers should do a survey to examine the interest of the audience so as to make a better program

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Appendix One: Questionnaire

Addis Ababa University Graduate School of Journalism and Communication

Dear Respondents,

The main objective of this research is to critically assess the role of Debre Markos University and Surrounding Community Radio by covering informational, educational, and entertainment needs that are unaddressed by commercial and government broadcast services. Your genuine and accurate answers have great contribution to the outcomes of the research. Therefore, you are kindly requested to give genuine responses to the questions below. The researcher would like to remind you that the answers you give to these questions are going to be used for research purposes only. Thank you in advance.

Part One: Demographic Information

Instruction: Answer the following questions by putting an 'X' sign in the boxes given below.

1. **Age:** 1. 15-24 years 2. 25-34 years 3. 35-54 years 4. 55 and above

2. **Gender:** 1. Male 2. Female

3. **Occupation:** 1. Student 2. House wife 3. Employed 4. Unemployed 5. Private Business

4. Educational Background

1. Illiterate 5. Vocationally trained

2. Read and write 6. Diploma

3. Grade 10 complete 7. BA degree and above

4. Grade 12 complete

5. **Marital status** 1. Married 2. Single 3. Divorced

Part Two:

1. How do you rate the coverage of educational programs?

1. Very high 2. High 3. Unable to decide 4. Low 5. Very low

2. How do you rate the coverage of informational programs?

1. Very high 2. High 3. Unable to decide 4. Low 5. Very low

3. How do you rate the coverage of entertaining programs?

1. Very high 2. High 3. Unable to decide 4. Low 5. Very low

4. Does the program cover social issues of the society?
 1. Very high 2. High 3. Medium 4. Low 5. Very low
5. How do you rate the social impact of the radio on the society?
 1. Very high 2. High 3. Medium 4. Low 5. Very low
6. How do you rate the political impact of the radio on the society?
 1. Very high 2. High 3. Medium 4. Low 5. Very low
7. Do the programs give chance for the audience to participate?
 1. Very high 2. High 3. Medium 4. Low 5. Very low
8. If your answer to question no. 7 is very high or high, what is the tool that you used to participate?
 1. Telephone 2. Writing letter 3. Email 4. By giving interview
9. How do you rate the performance of the journalists?
 1. Very good 2. Good 3. Medium 4. Low 5. Very low
10. How do you rate the intervention of politician on the contents of the program?
 1. Very high 2. High 3. Medium 4. Low 5. Very low
11. Why do you listen radio programs of Debre Markos and Surrounding Community Radio? (You can choose more than one)
 1. To be entertained 2. To get new information 3. To be educated 4. All
12. At what level does the program help to get new information?
 1. Very high 2. High 3. Medium 4. Low 5. Very low
13. How do you rate the provision of independent platform for interactive discussion?"
 1. Very high 2. High 3. Medium 4. Low 5. Very low

Part Three:

Instruction: Put 'X' sign in one from the given alternatives.

S.N	Issues of Debre Markos	Alternatives				
		Very High Coverage	High Coverage	Unable to decide	Low coverage	Very low coverage
14	Health related issues					
15	Culture related, , like local music, food, clothing and dance					
16	Current affairs					
17	Social issues					
18	Economic issues					
19	Educational issues					
20	Environmental issues					
21	Sanitation					
22	Disaster issues					
23	Indigenous knowledge of the community					
24	Thoughts and ideas of the local people					

Appendix Two: Interview Guide for the Debre Markos University Community Radio Board Members, Manager, Editors, Reporters and Audiences

1. Would you kindly tell me your name and position?
2. How and why did you establish this community radio station?
3. What is your editorial policy?
4. How do you perceive the role of community radio in educating, informing and entertaining the community?
5. What kind of educational, informational and entertainment programs do your station is covering?
6. What is your coverage area in Km?
7. How many hours do you broadcast per day?
8. The level of emphasis given to local, national or international issues?
9. Where do you get information and who are your sources?
10. Do the audiences/listeners contribute in the production of your program? If yes, in what ways?
If no, why?
11. Does the radio station did survey so as to identify the audiences taste?
12. Is there any intervention from the local politicians on the contents? If yes explain by example
13. Who is paying salary for you and how much do you earn?
14. How do you express the journalist satisfaction by the amount of salary, management in specific and work in general?
15. What mechanisms do you use to engage the community actively in all the programs?
16. Who owns the station? Is it governed by the community?
17. Could you mention the name of five programs which focus on issues which are unaddressed by commercial and government broadcast services.