COMMUNITY RADIO IN NEPAL:
A CASE STUDY OF COMMUNITY RADIO MADANPOKHARA

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Arjun Banjade
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by

ARJUN BANJADE

has been approved for
the School of Telecommunications
and the Scripps College of Communication by

Drew O. McDaniel
Professor of Telecommunications

Gregory J. Shepherd
Dean, Scripps College of Communication
Abstract

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COMMUNITY RADIO IN NEPAL: A CASE STUDY OF COMMUNITY RADIO MADANPOKHARA (353 pp.)

Director of Dissertation: Drew O. McDaniel

This study is about Community Radio Madanpokhara (CRM) in Palpa district in Western Nepal. Initiated and managed by the local residents, CRM has been on the air on frequency modulation (FM) band serving 800,000 potential listeners in the region since 2000. Triangulating in-depth interviews, observations and an audience survey as methods, this research explores the nature and extent of the local residents’ participation in the communication process.

The station, operating with a wide participation from its community members, has not only been successful in providing them with an access to much needed information and entertainment but has also, in fact, proved to be an important avenue for the local population to express their opinions and views as well as exchange feelings. An audience survey, conducted in January 2004, revealed that 80.8 percentage of the local respondents listen to their community radio station for information and entertainment.

Community radio in the region not only took away listeners from the state owned radio station, it also added new listeners. Thus, operation of a community radio station is not about sharing power, but it is also about creating new power. CRM has increased access to information for a larger section of rural population previously not served or underserved by the state media or the capital based-elite media. If knowledge is power
and democracy is more about decentralization of power, then community radio stations in Nepal are truly championing this cause by creating many centers of power in the nation by empowering those left behind in the process and by securing their active involvement. They are encouraging the dispossessed and the marginalized in breaking the ages-old culture of silence, and CRM is leading the way in this endeavor.

Approved: _____________________________________________________________

Drew O. McDaniel
Professor of Telecommunications
Dedication

To

my parents Yog Prasad & Rukmini Banjade,

my wife Anju & my daughter Anusuya Banjade,

my parents-in-law Jibnath & Kamala Kharel,

and those who contributed in the establishment and

the development of community media in Nepal
Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Professor Dr. Drew O. McDaniel for his continued support and guidance throughout the research process. Professor McDaniel not only served as my academic and dissertation advisor, but also helped me whenever I needed him at Ohio University. I would like to express my gratitude to the dissertation committee members Professor Dr. Don Flournoy, Professor Dr. Arvind Singhal and Professor Dr. Sung-Ho Kim for their feedback and insight during the research. I would also like to thank all my professors and colleagues who contributed to my academic skills and knowledge.

I am grateful to the staff and volunteers of Community Radio Madanpokhara (CRM) for their active participation in the research process. Special thanks go to Gunakar Aryal, Station Manager; Somnath Aryal, Station Coordinator; Rajesh Aryal, Program Coordinator; Ramesh Aryal, Office Assistant; and Yam Prasad Pandey, President of the Executive Committee of CRM. I would like to thank Radio Representatives of CRM who worked very hard with a minimum reimbursement for the audience survey as well as those residents who participated in the survey. I would also like to thank the Local Initiative Support Program of Helvetas for financial assistance to CRM for the audience survey.

Finally, yet importantly, I am grateful to my wife Anju Banjade for her support and my daughter Anusuya Banjade for not giving a hard time during those difficult days.
Preface

My idea of writing about community radio in Nepal has its root in my first meeting with my academic advisor Professor Drew McDaniel. I met Drew in the Front Room at the Baker Center in fall 2000 and discussed possible research areas at this coffee meeting. I still remember the questions he asked me; it was something like this: “What do you want to do after your studies? Do you want to go back to Nepal or stay in the U.S.?” Honestly, I was not sure at that moment what I wanted to do. Drew advised me to choose a research topic that interested me. His questions and suggestions always remained in my mind whenever I thought about my research project. Community radio in Nepal was not the only topic but one of the topics at that moment.

My interaction with Professor Arvind Singhal reinforced the idea of choosing community radio in Nepal. Returning from Miami after participating at the 19th Intercultural Communication Conference held at the University of Miami on April 2002, we were in the same flight and I received a ride from Arvind Singhal from Columbus to Athens, Ohio. On the way, Arvind made three points when choosing a research topic for my dissertation: remember your origin, topic that interests you, and area that you can contribute in your field.

Community radio is a new concept in Nepal as well as in the whole of South Asia. In 1997, Nepal became the first country in South Asia that granted a license to the non-government sector to operate a community radio station. Community Radio Madanpokhara (CRM) in Palpa district in Western Nepal became the first such station to be operated in a rural setting. Coming from a remote village in Western Nepal, I found
community radio stations that aim to empower the marginalized sector of the society an interesting area to explore.

I come from Arghakhanchi, a neighboring district in the west of Palpa district. On the way to Kathmandu or back home, I had seen the beautiful village of Madanpokhara from a distance. In my first visit to the station in 2002, I found CRM staff very cooperative. I returned to CRM in December 2003 and spent on and off about seven months. In my first meeting, the management at CRM showed an interest in an audience survey that was not in my proposed research plan and I did not have budget to do. CRM found a sponsor to cover the expenses and the audience survey was carried out. Not only was the audience survey added on the request from the station, I also opened an Internet website for the station and put a couple of pages online. The radio staff were comfortable sharing all kinds of information; some were so personal I have not reported it in my dissertation. I was an outsider, studying the station, and was quickly becoming a part of the station.

I knew Madanpokhara as one of the model villages in Nepal dominated by communists. As a member of a democratic party, I did not expect a high level of cooperation from the station management composed of active communist leaders in the region. To my surprise, no one in the management team as well as the programming staff asked me about my political affiliation. I still do not know whether they already knew and decided not to ask or they did not care about my political affiliation. Everyone affiliated with the station provided whatever information and assistance was asked for.
As discussed later in the methodology chapter, this study uses both quantitative method such as an audience survey as well as qualitative research methods such as participant observation and in-depth interviews. In the participant observations and in-depth interviews, I was personally involved and often times my experiences have been reflected in my writing. However, in case of the audience survey, I was neither a participant nor an observer. Rather, I was an outsider collecting objective knowledge about the audiences of Community Radio Madanpokhara. In such cases, I have used third person instead of reflecting my personal experiences.

I have divided this dissertation into seven chapters. Chapter 1 provides an introduction and the background to the study. Chapter 2 aims to provide the theoretical foundation for the study. Chapter 3 deals with the development of radio broadcasting in Nepal. Most of the dates were converted from the Nepali calendar into the Western system and might have minor discrepancies. A chronology of major political and media developments has been attached as an appendix. Chapter 4 explains the methodologies used for the study. Similarly, Chapter 5, based on interviews and observations, deals with CRM. Chapter 6 is about the audience survey. Chapter 7 consists of discussion, summaries and conclusion. At the end, I provide appendices and references.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Background

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* (CRM) is nestled in the beautiful village of Madanpokhara in the Palpa district in western Nepal, about 300 km west of the nation’s capital Kathmandu, with views of the adjoining Madi Plain, of the district headquarters Tansen and of other villages facing it from the slopes of the hills in the north and of Himalayan peaks further north. CRM is unique in the sense that the station began as a community entity with active support and participation from community members in initiating, planning, establishing, managing and financing of the station, and in creating broadcast programs that are relevant to its community members. CRM has greatly contributed to local development as well as the preservation of the local culture and identity. The establishment of CRM was possible because of the opening of electromagnetic frequencies for independent broadcasting, a result of the liberal political environment after the restoration of parliamentary democracy in 1990.

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* has helped to make the radio accessible to ordinary people of the region. It is also helping in the overall development of the villages – it gives importance to the local language, it helps to identify the local problems and makes the relevant authorities aware of them so that they can be addressed. It mobilizes people’s participation in local development activities and it channels the creative energy of the youth of the community in the right direction. It broadcasts programs in the Magar language, thereby widening access to radio in the Magar communities and helping them
to preserve their language and culture. This is important since the 2001 census indicated that the highest percent (46.21%) of the population in Palpa is from the Magar ethnic/caste group (See Appendix A for caste/ethnic composition in Palpa). The Magar ethnic/caste group comprises only 7.1 percent of the national population with the largest of these ethnic/caste groups in the Tanahu, Myagdi, Baglung, Palpa, Nawalparasi, Pyuthan and Rolpa districts (CBS, 2004).

Figure 1. View of Madi Valley and Madanpokhara from Tansen, the district headquarters
**Figure 2:** Station tower and view of Tansen municipality

**Figure 3:** A section of Tansen municipality
State-owned Radio Nepal’s monopoly on broadcasting came to an end in 1997 when an independent radio station, Radio Sagarmatha, was established. By February 1, 2005 when king Gyanendra took over power through a coup, 56 FM stations all over Nepal – two-thirds of them outside the Kathmandu Valley -- had received licenses. Although the Nepalese laws and regulations do not make any distinction between commercial and community radio stations, there were 20 self-declared community radio stations in different parts of the country. After the public uprising of April 2006, popularly known as Jana Aandolan II, the government decided to issue licenses to over 80 new applicants and 50 of them fulfilled all the requirements and received licenses to operate FM radio stations raising the number of licensed FM radio stations to over 100.
Based on the ownership of the station, present-day community radio in Nepal emerged in three different models: a non-governmental organization (NGO)-owned model, such as Radio Sagarmatha and Swargadwari FM; a cooperative owned model, such as Lumbini FM and Muktinath FM; and a local government-owned model, such as Community Radio Madanpokhara.

Community Radio Madanpokhara, which began broadcasting on April 5, 2000 on FM 106.9 MHz, was the first community radio station in Nepal to be based in a village. The license is held by Madanpokhara Village Development Committee (VDC) – the local government. The names Madanpokhara and Madanpokhara VDC (Village Development Committee) are often times used interchangeably. However, Madanpokhara VDC is a political unit whereas Madanpokhara is a village that stretches an area of two wards out of 9 wards in Madanpokhara VDC. There used to be a pokhari (pond) in the middle of the ground in present-day Madanpokhara village. The village was named after it and was called Madhya Pokhari [Pond in the middle], which later became Madanpokhara.

Nepal has a two-tier system of local governance: village and municipal bodies as the lower tier and district bodies as the higher, for the implementation of developmental activities and wider political participation. The village bodies are called village development committees (VDCs), municipalities serving the same function in cities, and the district bodies are called district development committees (DDCs). There are 75 districts, 58 municipalities and about 4,000 village development committees.
The Village Development Committee (VDC) is the lowest-level governing unit. All VDCs are further divided into nine wards whereas municipalities are divided into a minimum of nine wards but the maximum number is not specified. A VDC is composed of 11 elected leaders whose tenure lasts for 5 years. A VDC is comprised of the president, vice-president and one member each from its 9 wards. The VDC chairperson, VDC vice-chairperson, ward members are elected through adult franchise. The Village Council consists of all the members in the VDC and four additional representatives from each of 9 wards. VDCs run local government affairs. Local governments have some taxation and revenue authorities. Normally, village councils meet biannually to approve VDC policies, programs and budgets (However, there has been no elected leader in the local bodies for a long time because of insurgency and political instability in the nation.)

It is the Madanpokhara VDC that appoints the station manager and Board of Directors. The VDC has a population of slightly more than six thousand. It is about 12 km from the Tansen municipality, the district headquarters of Palpa and home to approximately 20 thousand people. Using a 100 watt transmitter, a group of 16 volunteers produce and broadcast 12.5 hours of daily programming on air to a potential audience of 800,000 in the surrounding rural and semi-urban areas.

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* has a network of more than 70 Listeners Clubs and 91 Friends of Radio Groups with 1,365 members and strong participation from women, farmers and youth. These clubs and groups have an annual action plan to stimulate creative and sustainable development activities in their localities and their
activities receive significant space in the station’s coverage. The station members have observed that the broadcast of the activities of such clubs and groups is motivating other community members to follow suit (Somnath Aryal, personal communication, March 12, 2004).

Free from commercial interests, CRM is innovative in sustaining the station through wider public participation. Somnath Aryal, the station coordinator, said,

This station is run with people’s active participation. We (the station) organized religious programs Srimad Bhagawat Mahapuran and Dhanyachal Mahayagya some years ago in order to collect funds. I know people offer and donate money and goods in the name of God. Nevertheless, it was the first time in my life that I saw people offering money and goods in the name of community radio. The people’s participation in the CRM-sponsored religious programs was higher than in other regular religious programs of a similar kind in the region. The station managed to collect Rs. 500,000 [1 US $ = Rs. 65 as of July 2007], which was used to buy a house for the station. (Somnath Aryal, personal communication, August 10, 2003)

For these reasons, Community Radio Madanpokhara was among the five most outstanding rural communication projects selected as a candidate for the 2003 Rural Communication Prize of UNESCO’s International Program for the Development Communication (IPDC). According to UNESCO guidelines, the prize is awarded for “particularly meritorious and innovative actions aimed at improving communication and
facilitating the participation of rural populations, especially in developing countries, in the economic, cultural and social life of their countries” (UNESCO, 2004).

Nepal’s experiences can be helpful to other South Asian countries where conditions are somewhat similar. Most South Asian countries are densely populated and the bulk of their populations lives in villages. Rural communities are often separated by mountains, valleys or water. Transportation and communication infrastructures in all these countries are either underdeveloped or semi-developed. Community radio can help overcome such barriers and Nepal’s experiences in the establishment and operation of community radio stations can be of great value for other countries wishing to run their own community radio stations and run them efficiently. This research on Community Radio Madanpokhara is one small step toward creating a basis for such regional efforts.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The emergence of independent electronic media in Nepal in the late 1990s changed the media landscape in the nation. However, a systematic study of Nepalese community media does not exist except in limited studies about Radio Sagarmatha. It appears as a case study from Nepal in “Making Waves,” edited by Dagron (2001), and in some other studies (Koirala, 2002; Pringle, 1999). Literature about community media outside the capital is almost nonexistent except for a study by Wilmore (2002) about indigenous media, especially Ratna Cable in Tansen, Palpa. Furthermore, Community Radio Madanpokhara, is operating in a rural area and represents a community radio
station licensed to and operated by a local government as opposed to one owned by a nongovernmental organization like Radio Sagarmatha.

In Nepal, the laws and regulations do not distinguish between commercial and community broadcasting. However, there have been 20 self-declared community radio stations. The figure would go up when 50 newly (October 2006) licensed radio stations go on the air. There is some literature about the nature and extend of ownership of radio sets and listening to radio in Nepal. However, the study was conducted in 1997 by Radio Nepal and it does not provide knowledge about the emerging radio broadcasting from non-governmental sectors. None of the present day independent electronic media existed at the time of the study and the survey does not provide a clear picture of present day audiences and their choices (Maung & Ghimire, 1997).

Because of inexpensive radio receivers (with FM band) from China in the Nepalese markets and the growing number of independent radio stations, it is believed that there has been a rapid increase in the number of families owning radio sets. Village-based FM stations have been providing entertainment and information and have been contributing to the increased level of awareness among community members. However, existing literature does not provide any information on the performance of such radio stations and the nature of relationship between the non-governmental broadcasters and governments in different political environments.

Nepal is diverse not only in terms of geography but in terms of culture, languages, ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds. Bordering China in the north and India in the
east, south and west, Nepal is a land-locked, Tennessee-sized country, looking like a brick, placed length-wise, between the two Asian giants on the map. The southern plains, beginning at 60 meters above sea level, give way to the central hills that terrace north to the Himalayan peaks. The ethnic and cultural diversity of Nepal was very aptly summarized by King Prithivi Narayan Shah, the founder of the current royal dynasty: *char barna chhatis jats ko phulbari [A garden of four races and 36 castes]*. The country is a cultural cauldron for the Hinduism and Buddhism of continental Asia. Known around the world for Mt. Everest, the highest mountain peak, Nepal is also famous as the birthplace of Buddha.

Nepali is the national language as well as the link language for many people in Nepal. The census of 2001 listed 92 mother tongues, Nepali being the mother tongue for the highest percent (48.61%) of the population, followed by Maithili (12.3%), Bhojpuri (7.5%), Tharu (5.8%), Tamang (5.2%), Newari (3.6%), and Magar (3.6%). Most (85%) of Nepal’s population lives in small communities in rural areas known as *gaun* [villages]. Oftentimes, these communities are separated by high hills, mountains or rivers.

Before 1990, almost all sectors of the economy, such as manufacturing, public utilities, banking, trading and social services, were under government control as public enterprises. The Nepali Congress (NC) government in 1992 started economic liberalization/privatization in Nepal and that helped increase investment in the development of private media, and in community media initiatives. The political changes of 1990 affected every sector in the country, including the media. Newspaper publication,
the only private media before 1990, no longer is a family business; rather it has
developed into an industry. Investment from the private sector in media resulted in a few
big media houses that functioned more to serve private business interests than to promote
an independent fourth estate dedicated to the public interest. Access to the mainstream
media remains limited to a small section of the population, and a huge gap exists between
those with access to abundant information and the vast majority who have little access.

Most rural villages in Nepal remain unserved or underserved by mainstream
media. The national newspapers are not accessible to the majority of people, especially in
rural villages, because of a lack of good transportation facilities and the formidable
barriers of illiteracy. Moreover, newspapers in Nepal “deal predominantly with politics,
are targeted at the urban elites, use difficult Sanscritized language, and contain very little
material of educational value for the masses of people and are, therefore, of little
relevance to the bulk of the population” (Koirala, 2002:7).

Similarly, television in Nepal is not accessible to most people because only 15%
of the population has access to electricity (CBS, 2004), and most people cannot afford
television sets. Besides, television in Nepal, accessible and affordable to about 10 percent
of the population, was until very recently a total state monopoly. Moreover, Nepal
Television is said to be “nothing more than an ugly tool of downright political
propaganda” (Sharma, 1999, August 4).

In contrast, the broadcast of Radio Nepal – also a state-owned entity – reaches a
large number of people in Nepal. Radio sets, powered by batteries, are relatively
inexpensive and the production cost of the radio programs is not huge. However, *Radio Nepal* lacks credibility. Sharma said, “it has all along been an unabashed tool for political propaganda for the powers-that-be” (Sharma, 1999, August 4). Furthermore, the programs at *Radio Nepal* are centrally produced by professionals in Kathmandu, and have little relevance to the rural masses (Koirala, 2002: 10).

There are many sectors, communities, and minorities whose access to information and self-expression are not always guaranteed by the mainstream state-owned media, and local and community media are crucial in filling this gap. The mainstream media in Nepal are to a large extent irrelevant to the concerns of the common people because they are controlled and run by the state, political parties and Kathmandu’s ruling elite, “who in reality have forged a hand-in-glove relationship instead of an adversarial one,” says Sharma. Community media, therefore, could be effective, credible, cheap and accountable in Nepal (Sharma, 1999, August 4).

Radio can be the most appropriate medium of mass communication in developing countries with very low literacy rates, poor transportation systems and very low purchasing power. Community radio is considered an appropriate medium in geographically and culturally diverse countries like Nepal. Community radio stations in Nepal are trying to break the tradition and open space for the marginalized people with greater access to information and opportunities to participate. Bruce Girard (1992: ix) has provided one of the best descriptions of community radio:
Community radio (is) a type of radio made to serve people; radio that encourages expression and participation and that values local culture. Its purpose is to give a voice to those without voices, to marginalized groups and to communities far from large urban centers, where the population is too small to attract commercial or large-scale radio station.

Lewis & Booth (1990) summarized the philosophical approach that distinguishes community radio from commercial and public service radio:

Community radio emphasizes that it is not commercial and does not share what it would call the prescriptive and paternalistic attitude of public-service broadcasting… The key difference is that while the commercial and public service models both treat listeners as objects, to be captured for advertisers or to be improved and informed, community radio aspires to treat its listeners as subjects and participants. (Lewis & Booth, 1990: 8)

Schramm (1964) observed that local media are familiar with the needs and desires of their community members, and are important for social and economic development of their community. Similarly, John Vilanilam argued that villagers need timely information provided by fellow villagers who are familiar with their realities. He argued:

What the villages need is timely information given to them regularly by people who are part of the village scene- people who live with them, speak their language, follow their lifestyle and share in their hopes and dreams. Others who report the rural scene once in a while are news gatherers from a different world,
and not participants in the village communication scene. Communication by local people at the grassroots is a must in order to achieve local group cohesion, to mobilize local resources and to solve problems with local initiative and local know-how to the furthest extent possible. (Cited in Maslog, 1985: x)

Community radio stations talk about every specific problems in the communities they serve. They know community members and they are sensitive to what their listeners want. “Community radio provides the platform for debates in communities that formerly relied on media which seldom bothered to present their views or ask questions which plagued them” (Patel, 1998:3-4).

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* is a *gaunle radio* [village radio] located in one of the rural villages in Nepal. The physical location is important because it can influence the format and program content. As Girard (1992) stated, community radio in urban cities in North America tend to be more culturally and/or politically engaged and serve communities that are outside the ‘mainstream’ because of their language, race, cultural interests, or politics… In contrast, rural stations tend to be more in tune with the majority of their community, although the majority of a remote community often has little in common with the ‘mainstream’ images and debates presented by urban-based radio stations. (Girard, 1992: 9-10)

Community radio stations in Nepal have shown some degree of success. However, they currently are struggling in their effort to provide a voice to the
marginalized sections of the population. As Freire (1970) would argue, the oppressed tend to act like an oppressor once they get into power. Changes in the nation’s political system directly influence the condition of community radio stations like other media in Nepal. It was during the rule of democratically elected governments in the 1990s that the Nepalese airwaves were opened for independent broadcasters. However, the same leaders who helped to liberalize the airwaves tried to ban news broadcasts by FM radio stations.

The government of Nepal issued a directive following the cabinet decision of January 16, 2001 that directly affected all private (community as well as commercial) FM radio stations. The government directive prevented all privately-operated FM radio stations from collecting and broadcasting their own news programs. They were only allowed to broadcast secondhand news collected by state-owned media. The constitutionality of the directive was challenged at the Supreme Court of Nepal on January 26, 2001, arguing that the government's directive violated constitutional provisions and the 1995 National Broadcasting Regulations. On July 26, 2001, the special bench of the Supreme Court cancelled the government's directive, stating that it was against the constitutional provision related to "right to freedom" and "right to information" (Mainali, 2002).

The coup of February 1, 2005, by King Gyanendra resulted in a total ban on Nepalese FM radio stations broadcasting anything other than entertainment programs. As a result, more than 1000 radio journalists working in news programs across the country lost their jobs. The World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC), an
international NGO serving the community radio movement in more than 110 countries, stated that “Nepal has been among the countries in Asia where the community radio movement has been most successful and it played a vital role in disseminating information and promoting dialogue for peace” and appealed to the government to remove the restrictions imposed on community radio stations (“AMARC appeals,” 2005).

In 1932, Bertolt Brecht was quoted as saying, “Radio could be the most wonderful public communication system imaginable… if it were capable, not only of transmitting, but of receiving, of making the listener not only hear but also speak” (Soley, 1999: ix). Similarly, McChesney argued that mainstream media today are truly “mass” in terms of consumption but they are extremely limited in terms of participation (Hamilton, 2000: 558). Furthermore, broadcasting systems in Nepal, as in most Asian countries, were developed as centralized, state-controlled operation during the king’s autocratic rule. As Girard (1992: 5) argued, “Designed as a means of propagating government thought, Asian broadcasting has never developed mechanisms to accept feedback or to provide the population with a means of articulating their aspirations and frustrations.”

The major objectives of community radio are to encourage community participation in broadcasting, provide an opportunity for horizontal communication, encourage more free and open debate of community issues and reflect the cultural and social diversity of the community (White, 1990:4). Community radio stations play an important role in providing the community members a platform for participation. As Girard (1992:13) pointed out:
Community radio … aims not only to participate in the life of the community, but also to allow the community to participate in the life of the station. This participation can take place at the level of ownership, programming, management, direction and financing.

Many community media projects failed to maintain the original goal of participatory communication and the new forms of communication such as community radio, are at risk from commercial interests (Rodriguez, 2001). Unlike commercial or state radio, audience members of a community radio station are believed to be active participants in initiation, establishment, management, administration and program production, and the boundary between the sender and receiver is blurred.

According to Barlow, in the era of globalization of communication that threatens local identity, community broadcasting plays an important role in minimizing the negative implications of globalization at the local level (Barlow, 1997: 129). As Alfonso Gumucio Dagron (2001: 34) put it, “the main elements that characterize participatory communication are related to its capacity to involve the human subjects of social change in the process of communicating.” He further argued that participatory communication raises the issue of power and identity. “Participatory approaches contribute in putting decision-making in the hands of the people… favor the strengthening of an internal democratic process… and contribute to installing cultural pride and self-esteem” in communities that have been marginalized or neglected for decades (Dagron, 2001: 34). When given the opportunity, people can acquire the appropriate knowledge and gain the
ability to determine the course of their own lives. This develops their sense of self-confidence and it empowers them. The citizen empowerment can be “looked at as a positive, holistic outcome of self-discovery, successful human interaction, and the ability to have a dialogue with people different from one’s self” (White, 1994:23).

Except for Dagron’s writings (2001), none of the literature in Nepal focuses on participatory communication in community radio. A limited number of studies discuss participation in development in Nepal (Belbase, 1987 & 1994; Lohani, 1978) and in health communication (Jacobson & Storey, 2002). *Jan sahabhagita*, people’s participation, is one of the most commonly used expressions in Nepal. Lohani (1978) argues that participation in Nepal has been largely limited in commitment and general statement by those in power. Thus, people’s participation has been a concept rarely practiced,

> The basic fact remains that a scheme of people’s participation that can resolve the economic and cultural contraction will ultimately threaten the economic and political power of the existing elite. (Lohani, 1978: 148)

There is a lack of clear understanding of the concept of people’s participation. Those who demonstrate the understanding of participation have usually expressed the participation in physical terms: e.g., contributions, construction work or attendance at class. For most local people, participation means their involvement in programs and projects identified and designed by other people (APROSC/FAO, 1988: 166).
Subhadra Belbase (1987), in her “Development Communication: A Nepali Experience,” documented various experiences while working with World View Foundation’s project in Ramghat village of the Surkhet district in Midwestern Nepal. The project used ‘video letters’ produced by villagers to express their concerns, issues and problems to decision makers at the center. Belbase argued that the project was important because the process gave the village women experience in identifying and solving their problems.

Furthermore, most of the research about community radio is based on the information provided by managers (Forde, Foxwell & Meadows, 2001). Such studies provide very limited information about the audiences of these community radio stations. Lack of resources and no need to find advertisers might have contributed to the lack of audience research by community radio stations. Thus, the lack of funds in small scale radio stations and concern about commercialization kept audience research limited to the larger stations (Stavitsky, 1995).

It is important to explore community radio stations in terms of their objectives and the communication process rather than their audience size and advertisement revenue they collect. Besides, the social and cultural benefits that community radio stations contribute are very difficult to quantify in monetary or economic terms (Foxwell, 2001). However, it is equally important to understand the audiences. No radio station can achieve success in its objectives if no one is listening. As Tom Church (who had worked at Arbitron and later joined the Corporation for Public Broadcasting), commenting on
audience research for public radio, argued, “while non-commercial stations may define success in more esoteric terms than profit, the bottom line for all radio stations is that a mission… cannot be achieved if there are no listeners” (quoted in Stavitsky, 1995:4).

Audience research is not new in the developed countries. In Australia, Roy Morgan Research found in 1999 that only 5.6 percent of the population was estimated to listen to some community radio in comparison to 63.5 percent of the population that listened to commercial radio stations during the period of March 1998 – April 1999 (Foxwell, 2001). Foxwell (2001) argues that the “audience measurement undermines the social and cultural role of community radio and the comparison to commercial services is inappropriate.” However, Forde, Foxwell and Meadows (2001) mention that 70 percent of community radio stations in Australia conducted audience surveys in the preceding five years to understand what their listeners think about.

Not only Community Radio Madanpokhara but also other radio stations have declared themselves as “community radio” stations. However, CRM was chosen for this study because it is unique in the sense that it is located in a rural area (first rural-based radio station in Nepal), represents the model of a local government-owned radio station, and is run with active participation from its community members. CRM has been well-established at the community level and is not totally dependent upon donors for its day-to-day operation. From the researcher’s perspective, the community itself is in charge of the initiative and enjoys active participation from the public in terms of financing, administrative work, and training, as well as in the technical aspects of the station. CRM
has been strengthening democratic values, cultures, and peace through collaboration with community-based organizations. It has contributed to the preservation of the cultural identity of the community. The researcher also noted that CRM adopted new technologies without jeopardizing local values and languages, and engaged in horizontal networking and knowledge sharing. All of these features contributed to the selection of CRM for a case study of community radio in Nepal.

1.3. Research Questions

Using triangulation methods, this study explores Community Radio Madanpokhara as a way to answer the following questions:

1. What political conditions in the nation and in the Palpa district contributed to the establishment of Community Radio Madanpokhara (CRM)?

2. How has CRM developed over time? How does CRM contribute to local development and to preserving the local culture and identity? What challenges does CRM have?

3. What are the patterns of ownership of electronic media (radio and television) in Palpa district?

4. What are the uses of electronic media (radio & television) in Palpa district?

5. What is the level of public ownership of FM band radio sets, and what are the patterns of listening Community Radio Madanpokhara, total hours of listening per day; and the programs that are most often listened to?
6. What are the characteristics of listeners (age, sex, education, ethnicity, occupation) and non-listeners of *Community Radio Madanpokhara*?

7. What is the public opinion about *Community Radio Madanpokhara*, its ownership, management, financing, programs and producers?

8. What is the level of public participation in different activities of CRM?
Chapter 2: Community Radio and Participatory Communication

2.1. Introduction

Community radio stations throughout the world have emerged in different political conditions initiated by individuals and groups with diverse backgrounds. These include priests, community and civic groups, governments as well as non-governmental organizations. Developed in various forms depending upon its environment, community radio provides greater access and participation to its community members in every aspect of the station. Known by different names – popular or educational radio in Latin America, rural or local radio in Africa, public radio in Australia, low power radio in the US and free radio in Europe – community radio broadcasting often employs participatory communication, providing greater access and participation to their community members. Serving local communities with relevant information, such radio stations have contributed to the development of local communities.

2.2. Political Environment and the Emergence of Community Radio

Community radio stations emerged in different parts of the world under diverse political and social environment and served the needs of the communities in which they operated. In Latin America, it was the social struggle of the 1960s and 1970s and the resistance to military dictatorship that contributed to the proliferation of thousands of independent and community radio stations. In Latin America, poor farmers and miners
started operating stations of their own to challenge the monopoly of state media and to have their own voice heard (Dagron, 2001).

Community radio stations in Latin America have been greatly affected by the political environment. In Colombia, Accion Cultural Popular (ACPO) changed its status to a religious body in order to protect Radio Sutatenza from government pressures and from a take-over by an non-governmental organization (NGO) owned by the daughter of President Rojas Pinilla. The change of status to a religious body had an unexpected outcome – the station faced pressures from the Catholic Church. Furthermore, a 1960 evaluation study by Camilo Torres, the priest and sociologist who later joined the guerillas and became famous, claimed that the programs of Radio Sutatenza were harmful for the peasants. He further argued that the campaigns of Radio Sutatenza against communism incited hate and violence (Dagron, 2001: 41).

Similarly, Radio Miners in Bolivia had to face political repression. The Bolivian army destroyed some of the stations several times. Further, abrupt changes in the economy in the 1980s had a drastic negative effect on Miners Stations in Bolivia. The government shut down the state-owned mines because mining was no longer important in terms of exports. Miners were forced to migrate to the cities for jobs that weakened their union and reduced their influence, and only a few radio stations managed to survive (Dagron, 2001: 47).

In Europe, the Free Radio movement started as a response to a centralized state-owned broadcasting system. Europe had state monopolies in broadcasting until the 1970s,
when the free radio movement swept through Western Europe. At the peak of this
movement, there were thousands of pirate radio stations rebelling against the state’s
monopolies of the airwaves. However, the free radio movement in Europe slowed down
when government monopolies ended and high-powered commercial radio networks were
established. Free radio survived only in countries in which the state refused to give up its
monopoly (Girard, 1992: 7).

In the U.S., community radio began in 1949, when a California pacifist received a
license to operate an FM station when most people did not have FM receivers. At the
time when radio was used to stir up the passions of war, the pacifists were eager to use
the same medium to promote peace and community development. Known as KPFA, it
was started with the premise that radio should be run by journalists and artists to provide
enlightening programs instead of by entrepreneurs motivated by profit (Girard, 1992;
Soley, 1999).

Despite the early beginnings of community radio, the U.S. media is largely
dominated by big companies. Furthermore, the 1996 Telecommunication Act eliminated
the restriction on the number of stations that one owner could control nationally, resulting
in a loss of localism in terms of formats, local DJs and talent, local musicians, local
programs and local call-in-hosts, and local news. The opportunities for citizen forums
where they could voice their concerns, and the democratization of broadcasting, were
diminished under the act (Huntemann, 2003).
Furthermore, the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) voted to authorize Low Power FM (LPFM) radio service in the US on January 21, 2000. LPFM licenses required that the radio broadcast be below 100 watts transmitter capacity, be non-commercial in nature, and not air advertisements. It could allow sponsored programs. However, the U.S. House of Representatives (H.R.) 3439 on April 13, 2000 eliminated over 80% of the potential Low Power FM radio stations in hundreds of communities around the country. Responding to this, then FCC Chairman Kennard stated,

Special interests triumphed over community interests today. While the National Association of Broadcasters frequently opposes new competitive services, I'm particularly disappointed that National Public Radio joined with commercial interests to stifle greater diversity of voices on the airwaves. I can only wonder how an organization that excels in national programming could fear competition from local programming by these tiny stations operated by churches, schools, community groups and public safety agencies. (Federal Communication Commission, 2000 April 13)

Generally, the broadcasting system in the United States favors broadcasting corporations over the general public. According to Soley, since the establishment of the Federal Radio Commission (FRC) in 1927, government policy has consistently favored big business (Soley, 1999: 46). Furthermore, the growth of community radio was hindered by the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967, which established the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and National Public Radio (NPR). These quasi-governmental
agencies promote and fund centralized, nationally oriented, and highly professional noncommercial radio stations against the norms of community radio. Soley concluded the Act killed many community radio stations because these stations had to meet CPB’s standards in order to receive affiliation and federal funding. The criteria required radio stations to have a minimum of 18 hours a day of broadcast, maintain at least five full-time professional staff and have an annual operating budget of $80,000. These requirements disqualified many college and community stations, radio stations with low budgets serving the poor and marginalized and the radio stations with low power transmission, said Soley (1999: 42).

In Africa, community radio emerged under diverse political conditions and was severely affected not only by dictators but also by democratic governments. For example, in Guinea-Bissau, the change in power from the absolute reign of Nino Viera to democracy did not favor conditions for media in the nation. Kumba Yala’s government considered the freedom of expression as his enemy. Media persons were closely watched by the security forces in order to punish those who disseminated information that was not in favor of the government. In addition to the independent media, the government terrorized the state-owned media, dismissing the chief editor of the national radio station for covering a news item unpopular with the government (Mboyo, 2003).

In Asia, the growth in the number of stations was due to the privatization of media after 1980 as a part of neo-liberal economic policy. For example, privatization contributed to the growth in the number of stations in Singapore and Malaysia. In
Vietnam, about eighteen thousand people were employed in broadcasting, mostly in radio. However, the increase in the number of private radio stations did not bring media pluralism in a real sense. For the most part, the authorities arranged the privatization in such a way that people close to political parties held a great number of stocks in the new media, ensuring the government or the ruling class always controlled it (McDaniel, 2002).

Similarly, alternative media were negatively affected by the government regulations in some countries in the region. As Ke (2000) argued, the underground radio stations in Taiwan lost support from listeners after the government legalized such stations. The underground stations used to provide alternative value programming that reflected social reality. Their attractive features no longer remained once the government regulations made such features legal. “… [B]y legitimizing underground radio and giving them freedom but no subsidy to contribute their public service work, the government, perhaps not cynically, has succeeded in emasculating the dissidents and silencing minority voices” (Ke, 2000: 428). There are still illegal radio stations in Taiwan. As of June 2004, the illegal radio stations (200) outnumbered the legal ones (170). The illegal stations were accused of affecting the safety of air travel and interfering with reception for the legal stations. Licensed radio broadcasters urged the government not to legalize underground radio stations, arguing that the illegal stations had a negative effect on the media industry (Yiu, 2004, June 10).
In Sri Lanka, community radio started in 1981 with the establishment of *Mahaweli Community Radio* (MCR), the first of its kind in South Asia. Set up by the government-owned Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC), it was a branch of the national broadcasting system rather than an autonomous community radio project. The main objective of the radio station was to provide information to the people who had been resettled due to a huge irrigation scheme. Its goal was to facilitate the socioeconomic development of the settlers. Although MCR was operated as a branch of the national broadcasting system, it was an important step forward and the model was adopted for use in a number of Asian countries. The central theme of MCR programs was development based on the democratic participation of people (de Silva & Siriwardene, 1977).

Community radio in Sri Lanka emerged as government-supported media rather than an independent broadcaster. It is not unusual to find a radio station established with support from local or international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), but is unusual to find a station established and funded by the state. Kothmale Radio in Sri Lanka is one such example (Dagron, 2001). Although MCR was the first of its kind in Sri Lanka, the establishment of Kothmale Radio, with the financial support and management of Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, overshadowed it. Kothmale Radio was started in 1989 and the Internet component was added in 1998. The station is unique, with features including “radio browsing,” community radio as a mini-Internet Service Provider, and community database development.
India, despite being the largest democracy in the world, lags behind when it comes to the establishment and development of community broadcasting. Following the Supreme Court ruling of 1995, which declared airwaves as public property, citizens’ groups and activists have been pushing for legislation freeing the airwaves from government control. However, instead of allowing community radio broadcasting, the government of India auctioned its airwaves to private businesses for entertainment programs. The only entities that were allowed to set up their radio stations were some elite colleges.

India allowed some elite colleges to set up and run campus radio stations. For example, Delhi’s first community radio stations operated from the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) and Jamia Milia Islamia University. The station at Jamia involves people in universities and even slum-dwellers. Campus radio stations in India cater to people living within 8-10 km of the campus. Mostly managed by students, the main objective of such stations is to contribute to building its students’ capacity and to empower people living in the vicinity by involving them in the communication process (Lakshmi, 2003, September 17).

The government of India decided to expand community radio stations in its cabinet meeting held on November 16, 2006, by allowing non-governmental organizations to apply for community broadcasting licenses. It held that the community radio stations operated by NGOs should be designed to serve a “well-defined local community and have an ownership and management structure reflective of the
community these radio stations seek to serve.” Moreover, community radio stations from non-profit organizations would not be allowed to broadcast news or current affairs programs (“Government clears,” 2006, November 17).

In India, the government regulations once allowed only educational institutions to set up community radio (as of March 2005, six educational institutions had received licenses for community radio) whereas NGOs had to buy airtime on All India Radio (AIR) to broadcast their programs. Despite such limitations, community radio in India has changed rural life there. It now offers a platform for villagers to voice their opinions as well as access information. Community radio service in India has programs on community development, farm techniques, health and the like, which are reported to have received overwhelming response from citizens in the communities (Purkayastha, 2005, March 6).

Similarly, the Indian government used to prohibit independent groups or communities from owning and operating their radio stations. Within five months of its initial broadcast, the government seized the equipment of low-power Mana Radio, or “Our Radio,” run by a women’s group in Oravakal village in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh and shut it down. Justifying this, Pavan Chopra, secretary of India’s Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, argued that the villagers were not equipped to run radio stations. He believed that they were unprepared, and the station could have become a platform to air provocative, political content that might have divided people (Lakshmi, 2003, September 17).
In Nepal, the growth of electronic media in the late 1990s is credited to the liberal political environment that provided space for radio broadcasting from commercial as well as nongovernmental organizations. In 1997, Nepal became the first country in South Asia to grant a license to operate a radio station run by nongovernmental sectors. The government of Nepal provided licenses to 50 more FM radio stations in October 2006, bringing the total number of radio stations to 106. Twenty of the radio stations already on air are self-declared community radio stations started mainly by community groups and nongovernmental organizations.

2.3. Community Radio and Participatory Communication

Community radio stations often apply participatory communication approaches. The nature and extent of community participation in a community radio station varies from minimal participation -- when outsiders make the decisions -- to full involvement of the community members in the decision-making process beginning from the initiation to the establishment, management, financing, administration, program production and evaluation. Participatory communication approaches place decision-making in the hands of ordinary people. It can democratize communication and empower the marginalized people. It tends to stress the importance of the cultural identity of local communities and participation at all levels -- international, national, local and individual (Dagron, 2001: 34; Servaes, 1996: 15).

Some people favor community participation as a means of reaching certain goals since it makes projects and programs more humane, effective, and sustainable.
However, others see participation as an end in itself. For them, participation is a set of desired processes and relationships (Chambers, 1999). Public participation is important for preventing the monopolization of communication. It fosters a fair balance between different parties involved in the communication process. Public participation enhances media autonomy and promotes a plurality of opinions. Thus, communication facilities may serve not just those in power but society as a whole (MacBride, 1980).

Community participation is not simply a dichotomy variable with a yes and no answer; rather it is a continuous one having varying degrees. According to Eng, Brinscoe & Cunningham, “… Successful community-based programs require a substantial, sustained input from properly-trained external collaborators in the planning, execution and operational phases of a project” (Eng, Brinscoe & Cunningham, 1990: 1358). Similarly, “External change agents bring money and access to technical resources that communities cannot hope to amass themselves. Community members -- organizations and individuals both – bring the promise of participation, local legitimization, and sustainability that external sponsors cannot hope to buy” (Dearing, 2003: 210).

Public participation ranges from non-participation, token participation to citizen power. “Non-participation” occurs when the role of community members is limited to compliance with the decision made by external experts. “Token participation” takes place when the community members’ opinion is sought without allowing them to take part in the decision-making process, whereas “citizen power” refers to a higher degree of
decision-making power for members of the community, with equal partnership requiring full control over decisions and resources (Arnstein, 1969).

The participatory communication model assumes the potential of people and is viewed as the key agent of change. It recognizes everyone’s right and duty to influence decision making. It acknowledges, understands, and appreciates the diversity and plurality of people. The participatory communication model believes in upholding and enhancing the dignity and equality of people. It emphasizes the local community, dialogue and emancipation rather than the nation state, monologue, and alienation. It emphasizes the democratic processes and institutions at the community level (Servaes, 1999; Servaes, Jacobson, and White, 1996; White, Nair, and Ascroft, 1994).

The concept of “participation” is not new; it has as long a history as that of humankind. However, the discourse of participation gained momentum in the 1970s with the criticism of the top-down, unidirectional or “modernistic” approaches of the 1950s and 1960s. The mode of communication in the modernization theory or in the dominant paradigm was top-down and linear, aimed to achieve Western-style material development rather than participatory aims to empower the community members. The role of communication in developing countries was considered as a tool to achieve a society like those in the West with democracy, freedom of speech and fair and legitimate participation (Huesca, 2002; McQuil, 2000: 84).

Scholars of developing countries have argued for a more balanced flow of information in and out of their countries. According to Singhal and Sthapitanonda, they
believed that “developing countries could develop on their own if they were independent and if Western countries did not dominate their political, economic, and socio-cultural ideology and values” (Singhal and Sthapitanonda, 1996: 17). Similarly, McQuil argued that for media to have a positive role, a major structural change would be required, giving ownership and real autonomy to the developing countries, especially to the local communities (McQuail, 1983: 45-46).

The alternative paradigm, which emerged in the mid-1970s as an alternative to the dominant and dependency perspectives, emphasizes community participation. Bamberger (1988) pointed out several factors that contributed to the increasing interest in community participation: some evidence of the positive impact of community participation on project efficiency in the World Bank’s projects; local and national governments allowing a more prominent role for non-governmental and community organizations because of the difficulty of managing ever-growing development projects; shift of non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies’ objectives to empower the underprivileged populations; and the growing sensitivity towards gender issues in project design and implementation (quoted in Melkote, 1991: 236).

The alternative perspective focuses on “multiplicity, smallness of scale, locality, deinstitutionalization, interchanges of sender-receiver roles, horizontality of communication at all levels of society.” In this approach, the main emphasis is placed on two-way interactive and participatory communication (Jacobson, 2003: 20). McQuail (2000) proposed a democratic-participant theory to take into account of the many ideas
expressed on behalf of alternative, grassroots media that expressed and looked after the needs of citizens. The theory challenged the dominance of centralized, commercialized, state-controlled and professionalized media and favored media that would be small in scale, non-commercial and often committed to a cause (McQuail, 2000:160).

The new approaches could help in the development of cultural identity. Community radio could act as a medium for community members’ self-expression, or serve as a tool to diagnose community problems. Melkote says the communication models in the new approaches are both sender and receiver-oriented, allowing for knowledge-sharing on a co-equal basis rather than be a top-down transmission of information and persuasion (Melkote (1991: 270). Proponents of these approaches argued that communication is not a vertical process of information from the knowledgeable to the less knowledgeable; rather it is a horizontal process of information exchange and interaction. The model of dialogue is a catalyst for individual and community empowerment largely adopted from the work of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1970).

There are two major approaches to participatory communication widely accepted today. The first is the dialogical pedagogy of Paulo Freire, and the second involves the ideas of access, participation and self- management articulated in the UNESCO debates of the 1970s (Servaes (1996: 17).

Freire (2001) argued that true participation involves a subject-subject relationship, that is people must be treated as fully human subjects in any political process. Elaborating on this, Singhal (2001: 14) argued,
Subjects are those who know and act. Objects, in contrast, are known and acted upon. Man is a subject who acts upon and transforms his world, and in doing so moves towards ever new possibilities of a fuller and richer life, individually and collectively. The world is not a given reality which man must accept and to which he must adjust, rather it is a problem to be worked on and solved.

The goal of communication should be conscientization, which Freire defined as free dialogue that prioritizes cultural identity, trust and commitment. His approach has been called “dialogical pedagogy,” which emphasizes active grassroots participation as central principles. Every human being, no matter how “ignorant” or submerged in the “culture of silence,” is capable of looking critically at the world in a dialogical encounter with others. The individual can gradually perceive his or her personal and social reality and deal critically with it if the proper tools for such encounters are provided (Freire, 2001). Freire used the term empowerment for this process, which has been defined as “the process through which individuals acquire the knowledge and skills needed to take control of their lives” (Nair and White, 1993: 60). Nair and White (1993:60) further argued:

The concept of empowerment suggests that power itself would be spread across a greater number of persons in a community and that every enlightened individual would hold some measure of power, if not for shaping community decisions, for shaping their own decisions about the community environment which affect his/her own life… this notion stems from the belief that empowerment is not so
much a matter of sharing existing power, but a matter of developing new sources of power, i.e., it is a matter of generating power rather than distributing power.

Servaes (1996) pointed out weaknesses in Freire’s theory. Freire’s theory of dialogical communication is based on “group dialogue rather than such amplifying media as radio, print and television” and gives little attention to the “language or form of communication, devoting most of his discussion to the intentions of communication actions” (Servaes, 1996: 17-18). The focus on interpersonal relations underplayed the potential of the mass media in promoting development as participation and process. Little attention was paid to the uses of mass media in participatory settings, an issue that is particularly relevant considering that populations, even in remote areas, are constantly exposed to commercial media messages.

The second approach to participatory communication comes from UNESCO’s self-management, access and participation from the 1977 meeting in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. According to Berrigan (1988), the final report of that meeting defined the terms in the following way:

1. **Access** refers to the use of media for public service. It may be defined in terms of the opportunities available to the public to choose varied and relevant programs and to have a means of feedback to transmit its reactions and demands to production organizations.
2. *Participation* implies a higher level of public involvement in communication systems. It includes the involvement of the public in the production process, and also in the management and planning of communication systems.

3. Participation may be no more than representation and consultation of the public in decision-making. On the other hand, *self-management* is the most advanced form of participation. In this case, the public exercises the power of decision-making within communication enterprises and is also fully involved in the formulation of communication policies and plans. (Servaes, 1996: 18)

There are some differences between Freire’s theory and the language of UNESCO. Singhal (2001) argued,

While both sets of participative approaches share several commonalties, their arenas of communicative application have been somewhat distinct. For instance, the Freirean theory of dialogic communication is based more on interpersonal and group dialogue in a community setting, and hence, has found more application in the practice of community development, participation, and transformation (Singhal, 2001: 13)

Similarly, Servaes (1996: 18) argued that the UNESCO discourse included “the idea of a gradual progression. Some amount of access may be allowed, but self-management may be postponed until some time in the future. Freire’s theory allows no such compromise.” Servaes pointed out other differences as:
The UNESCO discourse talks in neutral terms about the public. Freire talks about the oppressed… The UNESCO discourse puts the main focus on the institution. Participatory radio, for example, means a radio station that is self-managed by those participating in it. (Servaes, 1996: 18)

2.4. Participatory Communication in Nepalese Context

In Nepal, participation is one of the widely-used terms in development sectors. However, public participation in media is a new phenomenon. There have been some experiments of participatory communication considered to be fairly successful programs. One of such program is the “Participatory Video” project.

Participatory video was launched in the Surkhet district in the 1980s, followed by the Madanpokhara village of Palpa and Palung of Makwanpur districts. “The program allowed the village women to ventilate their views and grievances, and contributed substantially to empowering the downtrodden” (IIDS, 2000 May). However, quoting her own field notes, Belbase mentioned that defining community participation was one of the major problems. “Did community participation mean that everyone got to use all equipment, and that the entire community’s daily activities be documented on video? Most people liked to watch themselves and their work on video” (Belbase, 1987: 222).

Belbase (1994: 455), discussing the factors that lead to participation in a project in Ramghat village of Surkhet district of Midwestern Nepal, argued:

Participation means that all sectors from the top to the bottom must be involved… We cannot have segmented participation. Some projects fail because they are top-
down, others fail because locals are not brought into the process. This project (Ramghat village project) was successful in involving the top, that is, secretaries of various ministries, and also the bottom; that is, the women from the villages.

Participation in the Ramghat project was similar to the “transactional model” suggested by Nair and White (1987). It focused the communication processes that take into account indigenous knowledge and self-reliance gained through increased access to information. The participatory approach made people feel more a part of the process (Belbase, 1994: 455). Belbase observed that the community members participated in a project in the Ramghat of Surkhet district in Nepal because they observed and experienced for themselves that “the project was not serving individual needs but community needs” (Belbase, 1994: 459).

It was common or natural for men to be threatened when a project focused on women. But when men realized that the goal of the project was to serve community needs, they become involved. Women of the Ramghat of Surkhet district in Nepal learned their rights from videotapes. Once the rural men and women in the community learned about the rights women had, the men started giving more respect to the women. Wife-beatings, which were a common practice in Surkhet, were reduced. Belbase further argued that “when space for action is present, participatory communication can occur” (Belbase, 1994: 460).

Jacobson & Storey (2002) used the Johns Hopkins University Population Communication Services (JHU/PCS) program in Nepal as a background for conceptual
analysis of participatory communication, applying Habermas’ theory of communicative action. Contrasting participatory communication processes with mass media processes, they argued that mass media are not necessarily non-participatory, depending upon the their purpose. Jacobson and Storey (2002) described the programs of JHU/PCS not as a campaign, but rather as a multifaceted program of activities addressing issues from the individual level, to family level, to that of policy issues at the national level. They argued that these activities were intended as participatory by design. For them, participatory communication should be seen as both a means to behavior change and an end-state of its own. However, the authors suggested further study to determine to what extent clients perceive Nepal programs as participatory.

2.5. Contribution of Community Radio

Historically, access to mainstream media across the world has not been equal; some communities have been excluded or marginalized from the public sphere of political, cultural and social debate. Jeffrey writes that “Community radio stations throughout the world aim to redress this exclusion by providing disenfranchised communities with an opportunity to ‘go public’- that is to represent themselves on air, in their own languages and their own way” (Jeffrey, 2002: 46).

In the U.S., despite a large number of broadcasting outlets, sections of the population do not have access to the corporation-owned stations:

Not only are representatives of labor and community groups rarely used as sources in new stories, but they are oftentimes not even permitted to buy
advertising time from the commercial media to express their views….For example, television stations in Minneapolis-St. Paul refused to sell commercial time to the Prairie Island Sioux community, who produced a commercial critical of Northern States Power Company’s plan to store spent nuclear fuel rods on the island. (Soley, 1999: 44)

In Africa, as Johan Deflander of PANOS Mali stated, radio stations emerged as development radio to carry on the role of village chief. He argued that participatory radio in Africa is still in an early stage of development:

I think the term community radio doesn’t apply to stations in Africa. It implies that a station has evolved from a group of people or a community, a village. That’s not the case in Africa. Most private radio stations in Africa are commercial stations. It doesn’t mean they broadcast commercials all day long but it does mean that they were set up with the sole purpose of making money. And most radio stations are important for the development of the country. I’d prefer to speak of development radio. More of these stations are popping up across West Africa. African culture is based on oral history. Radio now adopts the role of village chief, who used to tell stories sitting under a village tree. (Dagron, 2001: 15)

According to Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) News Online, more than seven million Australians tune in to community radio each month. The research by McNair Ingenuity found that 45% of people aged 15 and over listened to community radio each month, and that more than 1.4 million people in remote and rural areas relied
on community radio as their prime source of information (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2004).

Community media are credited for their contributions to the development of local communities by providing relevant information in local languages and accents, increasing access to information and empowering the communities. Buckley says, the emergence of community media has been founded on the recognition that “core development goals like reducing poverty can be more effectively achieved by empowering and giving a voice to poor people themselves” (Buckley, 2004, June 18). Furthermore, community radio has been credited with operating in a way that democratizes communication, giving a voice to the voiceless, marginalized groups and communities. Such radio stations are providing greater access to their community members, and more and more people depend upon their community radio for information (Derlome, 1992: ix).

Small and local radio stations usually start airing music that makes an impact on cultural identity and community pride. The announcements and dedications from local radio stations contribute to the strengthening of the local “social networks.” With the passing of time and the gaining of experience and skills, local stations begin addressing health, education and other social issues and share information on important issues that affect the community. Similarly, local radio would facilitate production of programs relevant to needed community development, stimulate community participation, and provide the opportunity for diversified cultural expression (Dagron, 2001: 15; MacBride, 1980: 256).
Local radio is not the same as community radio. However, sometimes people find local low-power radio as useful. Unlike national radio stations, local radio stations broadcast relevant information to the communities where they operate. For example, India’s Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (S.I.T.E.), the national broadcast, was designed to enhance farmers’ skills and supplement children’s education in 2,400 Indian villages spread over six states. However, the S.I.T.E., which broadcast from August 1, 1975 to July 31, 1976, was not successful because the programs were not relevant in terms of crop practices and soil conditions. Also, the marginalized sector of the rural population did not see their problems reflected in programming (Lent, 1978: 8).

Contrary to their feelings about national broadcasts like S.I.T.E, people of remote indigenous communities living in the Nilgiri hills, South India, consider their local radio to be an important medium for information, entertainment and development. Jayaprakash (2000) wrote,

The low power status (1 KW) and its location in the land of indigenous people enable Ooty Radio Station (ORS) to function like a community radio… They feel that agricultural programs from ORS are highly relevant to what they practice in their everyday lives because the programs are largely produced in the field and are region specific. (Jayaprakash, 2000: 237)

Dagron (2001) documented how the community participation in many community radio stations is neglected. *Radio Sutatenza*, the world’s first community radio station, had to abandon community participation components in order to broadcast a nationwide
formal and informal education campaign. The station could not maintain the participatory approaches as the educational project evolved towards an increasingly centralized model with headquarters in Bogota, the capital of Colombia. Although the station was successful in terms of its educational outreach, it lost its participatory components (Dagron, 2001: 41).

2.6. Summary

The concept of participatory communication lacks a single widely-accepted definition; participatory communication means different things to different people. However, it is such a popular term that everyone wants to use it. No organization, no electronic medium that claims to be people-centric, and no campaign aimed to help people can afford to be called non-participatory. Although it is easy to call an organization, medium, or any campaign participatory, it is equally challenging to prove it by action. Community radio stations in Nepal, including Community Radio Madanpokhara, have claimed to be participatory media. True participatory media would provide its community members a platform to participate in its initiative, establishment, management, financing, program development, and evaluation. The basis of this research, therefore, is to explore Community Radio Madanpokhara in order to examine how it has, by its actions, been run as a form of participatory media.
Chapter 3: Radio Broadcasting in Nepal

3.1. Introduction

Radio broadcasting in Nepal traces its history to radio services of the Nepali Congress Party during the armed struggle to liberate the nation from autocratic rule in 1950. At the time, the government had only print media, which had begun on Nepali soil a half century earlier. A long time has passed since then and Nepali media has seen ups and downs with many changes in the political landscape of the nation. Significant developments occurred in the broadcasting sector in the capital city as well as in its periphery after the return of the Nepali Congress Party to the government following the political changes of 1990. This chapter explores media development in Nepal during the Rana regime, in the first democratic environment, during the king’s direct rule in 2005, after the restoration of democracy, and during recent times. There might be some inconsistencies in dates because dates of Nepalese media history were converted from the Nepali calendar into the Western calendar. (See Appendix B for the chronicle of events in Nepal.)

3.2. Dark Period: Rana Regime (1846 to 1950)

The period during the Rana regime, which started in 1846 and lasted over a century, is considered as the dark period in Nepalese history. The Rana regime was a hereditary oligarchy that did not tolerate any dissent. There was no free press. Neither the private sector nor the government had radio broadcasting. In 1950, Tarini Prasad Koirala of the Nepali Congress Party began radio broadcasting during the armed struggle
against the establishment. The first broadcast from the Bhojpur district in eastern Nepal featured the voice of Jayendra Bahadur Thapalia saying, “Yo prajatantra Nepal radio ho, hami muktisangramko morchabata boliraheka chhaun” [This is democracy Nepal Radio, we are speaking from the frontline of the battle for freedom] (Kasajoo, 2000; Devkota, 1995).

Although radio broadcasting was started in 1950, radio sets entered Nepal earlier, in the mid 1920s. They were limited to the Rana Prime Minister, people close to power, and some public individuals. Nevertheless, the government collected radio sets from the public in 1939 to prohibit them from listening to war news during World War II. Rana Prime Minister Padam Sumsher withdrew the prohibition and allowed public ownership of sets in 1946. During this period, the government publication *Gorkhapatra* was the only media outlet for ordinary citizens (Devkota, 1995; Regmi & Kharel, 2002).

The weekly *Gorkhapatra*, the first government newspaper in Nepal, started on May 6, 1901, during the premiership of Dev Sumsher Rana. Eventually, *Gorkhapatra* became a daily newspaper 60 years after its establishment, and it is one of the largest newspapers in Nepal today. No newspaper from the private sector existed during the Rana regime except for a few Nepali language monthly publications. Any publication critical to the establishment was impossible since the Rana autocratic regime established by Jung Bahadur Rana prohibited such publication from Nepali soil (Devkota, 1995). The Rana oligarchy did not tolerate even a hint of dissent. One author, Subba Krishna Lal Adhikari, was imprisoned for writing a book, *Makaiko Kheti* (1920), about corn farming.
The author was accused of trying to “influence collective thinking of the Nepali people on possibilities of social change” (Pandey, 2006).

Jung Bahadur Rana and his brothers extended their absolute of power in 1846 through a massacre, commonly known as Kot Parba, of several varadar (king’s counselors), including Prime Minister Phatte Jung Shah and former Prime Minister Mathwar Singh (Jung Bahadur’s own maternal uncle). Jung Bahadur Rana set up a system that made the post of Prime Minister hereditary to only his brothers. By appointing close family members to critical positions, maintaining marital relationships with the king’s family members and keeping a close relationship with British India, the Ranas tightened their control over the state machinery for a long time, shifting power from the Shahs to Ranas for 104 years, until 1950. Although the kings were powerless, Nepal remains a monarchy as of this writing.

The Shah dynasty traces its ancestral line to the Rajputs, who fled to the Himalayan region because of the Muslim conquest of Rajasthan (India) in the 14th Century. Present day Nepal was unified from small municipalities into a nation by King Prithivi Narayan Shah. King Birendra, who was killed in the royal massacre of June 1, 2001, was the tenth king in the Shah Dynasty from King Prithivi Narayan Shah. The current King Gynendra is the only surviving brother of the late King Birendra.


The period after the overthrow of the Rana regime and the introduction of democracy saw the birth of newspapers from the private sectors as well as the
establishment of radio broadcasting in Nepal. The radio station, which was set up by the Nepali Congress Party during the armed uprising against the Rana regime, was moved to Kathmandu and Radio Nepal was born on April 2, 1951. (It was named Nepal Radio in the beginning.) Radio Nepal used a 250-watt short-wave transmitter and broadcast for 4.5 hours a day during the early days (Kasajoo, 2000).

The armed uprising for democracy ended in 1951 with the signature of the Three-Party-Agreement (The Congress, the King, and the Rana government) in the presence of Indian leaders in Delhi, India. The Interim Constitution of 1951, which was introduced after the end of the Rana regime, provided fundamental human rights, including freedom of speech, press and publication (Dahal, 2002). Subsequent governments were unstable in the absence of an election mandate. King Tribhuvan’s promise of an election to the constitution assembly did not materialize. Rather, King Mahendra, who ascended to the throne in 1954, provided a new constitution in 1958 with a multiparty democracy and agreed to hold an election for the parliament. The Nepali Congress Party won a two-thirds majority in the first parliamentary election and its leader, B.P. Koirala, became the first elected prime minister in Nepal in 1959. However, the government of B.P. Koirala could not function for more than 18 months because King Mahendra dismissed the government through a coup.

The period (1951-1960) saw an increased number of publications, the beginning of radio broadcasting, and the introduction of rules and regulations governing the media. However, the newspapers at the time were less concerned about creating an informed
society; rather they were pushing the agendas of particular groups or political ideologies (Dahal, 2002). In broadcasting, Radio Nepal remained under the direct control of the government. Existing regulations at the time were aimed to regulate the print media and there were no regulations for radio broadcasting in the nation. Although the government had adopted the Radio Act of 1957, it was not related to radio broadcasting. Rather it required a license for holding, making and using a radio machine. Any hope for further development of free media died with the coup by the king in 1960.

Despite political confusion due to the absence of an elected government in place after the overthrow of the Rana regime in 1951 until the formation of an elected government in 1959, and the short-lived elected government, the period between 1951 and 1960 gave birth to newspapers from the private sector and saw the establishment of radio broadcasting.

3.4. Back to Media Regression: King’s Direct Rule (1960-1990)

King Mahendra – father of the present King Gynendra – dismissed the elected government of B.P. Koirala in 1960, put the leaders in prison and banned the activities of political parties. He then began ruling the country with his hand-picked followers in the name of the Panchayat system. Some of the leaders spent more than 10 years in prison. King Mahendra introduced a new constitution in 1962, which prohibited operating any organization with a political motive. In addition, the government introduced the Press and Publication Registration Regulation in 1962, which restricted press freedom. As a result, the government closed down many newspapers (Dahal, 2002).
King Birendra ascended to the throne in 1971. Responding to the pressure against the Panchayat system in favor of democracy, King Birendra announced a referendum in 1979 to choose between the multiparty democracy or the king’s direct rule under the “modified Panchayat system.” Although the multiparty democracy could not win the election, the press became comparatively active and began writing critically against the people in power in the 1980s. However, the environment remained dangerous for those journalists who dared to write against the powerful. For example, journalist Padma Thakurathi was shot because he dared to cover high profile corruption cases.

In the absence of broadcasting from the private sector, the history and development of Radio Nepal is the history of radio broadcasting in Nepal during the royal direct rule. State-owned Radio Nepal remained the sole broadcasting agency in the country. The station extended its short-wave broadcast and added medium wave (AM) frequency in 1969 and the broadcast was up to ten hours a day.

Radio remained the most accessible and effective medium in Nepal because of geographic conditions, lack of transportation, illiteracy, and the poor economic condition of the people. However, in the absence of radio broadcasting from non-governmental sectors, Radio Nepal enjoyed a monopoly of the airwaves and remained a propaganda machine of the government during the 30 years of the Panchayat system. According to a 1997 survey of radio ownership and listeners, nine out of ten radio listeners mentioned listening to Radio Nepal (Maung & Ghimire, 1997).
Similarly, newspaper publication was not a business during the king’s direct rule under the Panchayat system. Newspapers were known by the name of publishers and editors. It was basically a one-man show. During the king’s rule, the average investment in newspapers did not exceed Rs. 1 million (US $ 1 = Rs. 65 as of July 2007). Less than a dozen newspapers earned enough to support production and editorial expenses through advertisement and sales. The newspapers with their own printing facilities were sustaining themselves using income generated from other printing jobs. Very few staff members were fully paid. For many editors it was honorary work. They worked full or part-time with some other organization (Kasajoo, 2002).

In the sixties, Buddha Ratna Shakya of Tansen, Palpa, tested his homemade AM transmitter in Tansen. It was probably Nepal’s first ever non-governmental radio broadcast. However, it remained only an experiment. Radio Nepal remained the sole broadcasting station in Nepal and the governments under the king’s leadership used it as a propaganda tool under the Panchayat system.

3.5. Restoration of Democracy Until the Takeover by the King (1990-2005)

The public uprising of 1990 restored the multiparty democracy, and the press enjoyed unprecedented freedom. The Constitution of 1990 guaranteed political rights and civil liberties to the people. In line with the constitution, the government introduced media-friendly policies that made it possible to operate FM radio stations from community as well as commercial sectors, resulting in pluralism in media ownership. The media-friendly environment not only encouraged increasing investment in media but
also encouraged the search for diverse sources to finance it. Nepalese media continued its development until the king took over power through a coup. The post 1990 era is characterized by the presence of media friendly regulations, broadcasting from non-governmental sectors, pluralism in electronic media ownership, and diversified media with greater public participation.


The broadcasting media experienced rapid development under the multiparty democracy. It was only possible because of the restoration of democracy and the 1990 Constitution of Nepal, which guaranteed freedom of expression and the right of every citizen to demand and receive information on any matter of public importance. Article 16 of the Constitution guaranteed the right to information on matters of public importance:

Every citizen shall have the right to demand and receive information on any matter of public importance; provided that nothing in this Article shall compel any person to provide information on any matter about which secrecy is to be maintained by law.

In line with the constitution, the government adopted the National Communication Policy of 1992, which opened the door for private sector broadcasting ending the state monopoly on airwaves (HMG, 1992).

Similarly, the Broadcasting Act of 1993 provided specific guidelines for obtaining broadcast licenses and operational principles. The Act encouraged broadcasters to develop programs geared towards national interests, national development, moral
development and national awakening, social awareness, and cultural development.

Article 12 of the act encouraged the public and the private sector to participate in making programs fair, simple, efficient and effective. However, the act has some provisions that provided tools for the government to place restrictions. Article 4 of the act prohibited broadcasting any program without a license. Similarly, Article 7 of the act provided the government the authority to “prevent any program pertaining to any particular subject, event or area from being broadcast… for a period not exceeding six months at a time” and Article 8 provided the government the right to cancel the license obtained by an institution, giving it a reasonable opportunity to defend itself (HMG, 1993).

Likewise, the National Broadcasting Regulations of 1995 outlined the license fees, application procedures, government taxes, payment of fines, etc. License fees depend upon the power of transmitters: Rs 500,000 (US $ 1 = Rs. 65 as of July 2007) for a station with a transmitter more powerful than 500 watts; Rs 200,000 for one with a 500 watt transmitter; Rs 100,000 for one with 250 watts; Rs 50,000 for a 100 watt transmitter; Rs. 25,000 for a 50 watt transmitter and Rs. 10,000 for a 20 watt transmitter (HMG, 1995).

Since independent broadcasting is a new phenomenon in Nepal, many rules and policies related to the sector need to be interpreted. One such issue is related to the right of private FM stations to broadcast news. Article 12 (2) (1) of the Constitution of Nepal 1990 allows the imposition of reasonable restrictions on any act that
… undermines the sovereignty and integrity of the kingdom of Nepal, or which may jeopardize the harmonious relations subsisting among various castes, tribes or communities, or on any act of sedition, defamation, contempt of court or incitement to an offence; or on any act which may be contrary to decent public behavior or morality.

However, the existing acts and regulations are not very specific in setting principles that must be followed by private broadcasters, including FM radio. In January 2001, then Information and Communication Minister Jaya Prakash Gupta issued a directive banning independent news and current affairs programs from non-government broadcasters. Fortunately, the Supreme Court declared the government move unconstitutional. During the period when the government banned FM broadcasters from airing news, most FM broadcasters aired the news anyway, calling the program “flash” or “daily diary” (Rai, 2002, February 22).

Financing the independent media has been another controversial issue in Nepal. Article 13 of the National Broadcasting Act of 1993 allowed selling time slots to foreign media and broadcasting agencies. However, it did not allow foreigners to invest in or establish broadcasting agencies in Nepal. In other words, the act allowed foreigners only to purchase time from national broadcasting agencies, rather than allowing them direct investment or establishment of broadcasting agencies in the nation (Pandey, 2001, September 7).
Not only the broadcasting but also the print media saw significant development in the democratic political environment. Within 10 years, over 1,600 newspapers were registered across the nation, and big business companies started investing in the print and electronic media. Broadsheet daily newspapers published from the private sector, non-existent before 1990, dominated more than 50 percent of the market in 2001, with the circulation of about 300,000 copies a day (Pandey, 2001, September 7). As of January 2004, there were 3,617 newspapers registered for publication throughout the country. Among them, 253 were daily, 9 twice a week, 1262 weekly, 252 biweekly, 1066 monthly, 252 bimonthly, 383 tri-monthly, 19 four monthly, 56 biannually and 65 annually (Bhattarai, 2004, February 3).

In sum, despite shortcomings, the media-friendly regulations adopted during the democratic political environment are credited for making the establishment of community and commercial radio broadcasting possible in Nepal. Although the government has not been able to fully implement the recommendations the committee made to promote community radio, “FM has developed as an alternative largely because of the new policy,” said Narhari Acharya, who was chairman of the drafting committee of the National Communication Policy (Rai, 2002, February 22).

b. Audio tower: Women empowerment through broadcasting.

One of the results of the media-friendly policies and regulations of post-1990 governments is the beginning of broadcasting from non-government sectors, ending the
state monopoly over airwaves. There has been upward movement of communities in terms of their use of media – from audio tower to radio broadcasting.

Community broadcasting in Nepal began with the establishment of an audio tower in Palpa. The technology used in an audio tower is simple and does not cost much. Loud speakers are tied atop poles, a tower or the roof of a house and news and commentaries are read into the microphone. Drama, songs, market news and jokes are also featured in the program. Community members close to the reach of the audio tower receive information being broadcast from it.

A community audio tower was first experimented with by a group of enthusiastic women in Madi Valley in Palpa in 1997. A committee comprised of representatives of seven villages, including Madanpokhara in the Madi Valley, initiated the project. The Madi Valley Audio Tower was first started in Madanpokhara-6, Damkada, as a mobile tower and was moved to Rupse, Kaseni and Chidipani VDCs. Aimed to empower women, the audio tower provided local women a platform where they broadcast the issues important to local people. The audio tower, the first of its kind in the nation, was replicated in Danda Bazar in Dhankuta, Palung in Makawanpur, and some villages in the Morang district (Gunakar Aryal, personal communication, 2002, August 10).

Run by local women, the Madi Valley Audio Tower operated for one year. Women of Madanpokhara and the other six VDCs ran this tower for two to three days a week. Information was broadcast using a big microphone. After a week of broadcast in
Madanpokhara, the audio tower was moved to Rupse, Kaseni, Chidipani and other VDCs (Somnath Aryal, personal communication, February 6, 2004).

When I asked how Kasajoo became involved in Community Radio Madanpokhara, he explained:

One day Denis M. Peter came to visit me at my home in Tansen, Palpa. I was milking a buffalo and Peter went right there. We discussed the literacy situation in Palpa and agreed that only a few could read newspapers. Peter put forth the idea of having an audio tower, similar to what he had seen in Bangkok, Thailand. We discussed about the possible area for such an audio tower and came up with Madi Valley because 7 of 11 VDCs in the Madi Valley had electricity at the time. (Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo, personal communication, March 2, 2004)

Kasajoo further explained that he contacted Somnath Aryal and discussed the possibility of having an audio tower. An audio tower, as mentioned earlier, consists of speakers tied to a pole; then news and information is broadcast live. Somnath took the issue to Yam P. Pandey – Chairman of the Madanpokhara VDC. It was decided to have an audio tower in Damkada, Madanpokhara-6 as a mobile tower and move it to seven of the 11 VDCs in the Madi Valley. Thus, seven women committees in seven VDCs with electricity and one coordination committee were formed, and the idea was implemented. In 1997, area women established mobile audio towers in seven VDCs. MS Nepal, a Danish International Agency, provided technical assistance and helped in training.

Women of the movements were assured that their experiences would be an asset to
running a radio in the village. Local youth, males and females, volunteered for the audio towers. Most of the individuals who worked in the audio towers later joined *Community Radio Madanpokhara*, including Gita Gyawali, Rajesh Aryal, and Ramesh Aryal (Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo, personal communication, March 2, 2004).

Similarly, Gita Gyawali comes from a Brahmin family in the Telgha VDC. She has been involved with the station for more than 4 years as an Assistant Producer for *Local Activities, Women’s World, Srijana Sangeet* [songs], etc. She had worked with the Madi Valley Audio Tower, where women from seven VDCs in the Madi Valley run a mobile audio tower and broadcast information, educational and entertaining programs using a mike and an amplifier. Gyawali was a student while working with the station. In personal communication, she explained the power of local broadcasting:

> I was running the Women’s Program for the audio tower. One day I received a letter from a woman telling about her relation with her mother-in-law and the bad treatment she was receiving from her family members. We did further studies and aired her story with her own voice. I received another letter after a couple of days later from the woman thanking me for airing her story. She mentioned that she was receiving better treatment from her family members, including her mother-in-law, after the program was broadcast over the audio tower. Realizing the power of media in terms of giving voices to the voiceless, I became more dedicated in my work. (Gita Gyawali, personal communication, February 7, 2004)

**c. Broadcasting from non-governmental sectors.**
Although it adopted the National Communication Policy 1992, enacted the National Broadcasting Act 1993, and the National Broadcasting Regulations 1995, the government did not immediately grant a license to a single independent sector to operate an FM radio station. Rather, the government granted a license to Radio Nepal to operate in FM band in Nepal in order to help it to stay ahead of the competition. Radio Nepal begun broadcasting on an FM-Channel covering Kathmandu valley and the surrounding area on November 16, 1995. The FM Channel aired programs on 100 MHz through a 1 KW transmitter at Khumaltar, Lalitpur.

Non-governmental or independent operators had to wait two more years for licenses to establish radio stations. After a long struggle, Radio Sagarmatha began broadcasting on May 22, 1997, and became the first independent community radio station in Nepal as well as in South Asia. Following this, Radio Lumbini, a cooperative-owned community radio station in the Rupendehi district, and Community Radio Madanpokhara, a local government-owned community radio station in Palpa, started in 2000. By the time King Gynendra took over power in February 1, 2005, there were 56 licensed FM stations in Nepal (20 of them self-declared community radio stations) and 46 of them were on the air.

d. Diverse ownership.

Radio broadcasting in Nepal took on a different ownership pattern from their print counterparts. There have been government-owned and run radio stations like Radio Nepal as well as many forms for independent radio stations. The independent radio stations are
both commercial and community-oriented. While commercial radio stations are owned by business houses and run with profit motives, ownership of community radio stations varies but are intended to provide greater access and participation for the general public. Present-day radio ownership shows three types of community radio stations in Nepal – radio stations owned by non-governmental organizations, like Radio Sagarmatha and Swargadwari FM, radio stations owned by cooperatives, such as Lumbini FM and Muktinath FM; and local government-owned stations, such as Community Radio Madanpokhara.

Radio Nepal is state-owned. Despite the fact that the government adopted liberal economic policies and privatized many government-owned companies, Radio Nepal remained under its control. Radio Nepal, established on April 1, 1951, has roots in the armed struggle led by the Nepali Congress Party. Although administered under the Radio Broadcasting Service Development Committee, it is not free from government interference. In fact, the secretary of the Ministry of Information and Communication is also the chairman of the committee. Other members of the committee include a senior bureaucrat from the Ministry of Finance, journalists and the Executive Director of Radio Nepal. With over 800 staff members, Radio Nepal aims to emerge as “the media for the millions” (Radio Nepal, 2007).

Similarly, Kantipur Publications Pvt. Ltd. is an example of one of the successful commercial media houses established after the restoration of democracy. Kantipur, which
also publishes two broadsheet dailies, 3 magazines and an online newsportal, is arguably Nepal’s leading private sector publisher.

Not only commercial media but also media owned and operated by non-governmental and non-commercial sectors have been successful. Community radio stations owned and run by cooperatives, NGOs, and local government are such examples.

A noticeable trend regarding media ownership in Nepal is the establishment of media cooperatives. Although the Cooperative Act of 1977 allows the profits to be distributed among the shareholders, cooperatives in Nepal are motivated neither totally by profit nor solely by public service. Cooperatives in Nepal traditionally have been active in income generation initiatives in different parts of the country. Lately, cooperatives have been formed for FM radio broadcasting.

*Radio Lumbini* in western Nepal is a good example of a radio station owned and run by a cooperative of journalists and businesspersons. Operating since early 2000 on FM 96.8 MHz, it is run by a local cooperative called *Lumbini Sahakari Sansthan Ltd.* [Lumbini Cooperative Ltd.] with people of different religious affiliations, gender, political ideologies, ethnicity, and occupations; including teachers, journalists, businesspersons, and social workers. The station, located in Manigram in the Rupandehi district of Western Nepal, has the potential to reach 1.2 million listeners in the southern plains, including Butwal and Bhairahawa (Siddharthanagar) municipalities, with a 500-watt transmitter (Bharat Bhusal, personal communication, 2003, February 10).
Nonprofit, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), that used to be limited to research and development activities and were mostly funded by international donor agencies, have also entered broadcasting. Radio Sagarmatha, the first independent radio station in South Asia, is owned and run by a non-governmental organization. It is an initiative of NGOs - the Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ), Himal Association, Nepal Press Institute and Worldview Nepal. The NEFEJ continues to be the organizational umbrella for Radio Sagarmatha. The station is headed by a seven-member autonomous Board of Directors which has representation from all partner NGOs and meets monthly to review and plan activities, to set policy and to provide direction for the station. Radio Sagarmatha aims to serve as public interest broadcasting in the country by addressing the needs of all sections of the society, produce a cadre of journalists for community and public interest broadcasting, establish Radio Sagarmatha as Nepal’s leading organization in development media, assist community radio stations in various parts of the country, facilitate democratization and pluralism by increasing people’s access to information and advocate a free and more responsible press (Koirala, 2002).

In summary, the restoration of multiparty democracy provided a favorable political environment in the nation. The media-friendly policies adopted by the government resulted in the establishment of radio broadcasting from diverse sectors, leading to pluralism in media ownership in the nation.
e. Diverse sources of financing.

As the ownership of radio broadcasting in Nepal is diverse, its financing also comes from multiple sources. For Radio Nepal, the government-owned and run station, resources come from financial support from the government and advertising revenues. Similarly, commercial broadcasting obviously depends solely upon its advertising revenue to run the station and make a profit for its shareholders. However, community broadcasters have varied sources – assistance from donor agencies and local government as well as from different interest groups and community members.

Almost all of the community radio stations in Nepal have received financial and/or technical support for setup and startup from donor agencies and international organizations. Such stations have been continuously receiving support from such organizations. The major international organizations assisting Nepalese community radio stations include DANIDA, UNESCO, MS Nepal and others. Similarly, the Community Radio Support Center of the Nepal Forum for Environmental Journalists (NFEJ) provides necessary help for community radio stations, ranging from getting licenses to securing financial and/or technical assistance from donor agencies.

Although international organizations helped in the setup and startup of the station, it was the local community that contributed to the planning phase of Community Radio Madanpokhara. Forest User Groups, Women’s Groups, the Village Development Committees and individuals contributed resources for the initial funding required for the station (Gunakar Aryal, personal communication, October 1, 2003). However,
Swargadwari FM, a community radio station in the Dang district in Mid-western Nepal, started borrowing Rs. 1 million from a bank as credit. Later, DANIDA provided equipments. The station was running with monthly expenses Rs. 100,000, including salaries for the staff, and was collecting about the same amount of revenue from advertisements (Dada Ram Subedit, personal communication, 2004, February 5).

In addition to receiving assistance from the donor agencies, community radio stations generate revenue from the limited advertisements they broadcast. Although the volume of advertisement varies from station to station, it is not the main source of revenue as for commercial radio stations. Besides, it is very difficult for the general public to distinguish between community and commercial radio stations since both have similar programs and both accept advertisements to varying degrees. Community radio stations distinguish themselves when it comes to the types of advertisements they broadcast. For example, Community Radio Madanpokhara declined attractive offers of broadcasting advertisements from multinational companies. CRM does not accept advertisements that are not in favor of local development, that are against the public health or against the community interest. CRM declined broadcasting advertisements of foreign as well as domestic products that do not have nutritional value and impose unnecessary financial burdens on families (Gunakar Aryal, personal communication, 2004 February 12).

Although the main objectives and roles of community radio stations are different from their commercial counterparts, the latest trend indicates that community radio
stations are competing with commercial radio stations in terms of the power of their transmitters.

*Radio Sagarmatha* was established as a community radio station, but since it has been providing its service to listeners in the whole Kathmandu Valley, its role has gradually changed from that of a community station to a popular public service station. It has been expanding its program time and adding new programs. The government of Nepal approved 24 hours of broadcasting up from 13 hours approved previously. The government lifted restrictions on advertising and reserved the frequency FM 102.4 MHz exclusively for *Radio Sagarmatha* throughout the country. In addition, the station increased its transmitter's power from 100 watts to 500 watts (*Radio Sagarmatha*, 2007).

Similarly, *Swargadwari FM* 102.8 MHz was established in 2000 and started broadcasting in 2002 with a transmitter of 100 watts to approximately 600,000 listeners. The station increased its transmitter capacity to 500 watts in 2003. The new transmitter would cover about an area with a 25 km radius, including all parts of the Dang district and some parts of the Puythan district, and have 1.2 million potential listeners (Dadi Ram Subedi, personal communication, February 5, 2003). Swargadwari FM is not alone in the race to increase the stations’ transmitters’ capacity. Lumbini FM’s transmitter capacity was increased to 500 watts from the original 200 watts. Similarly, CRM reportedly increased its capacity to 250 watts without permission to do so. Although some of the staff agree with this on the condition of anonymity, CRM would not verify it officially.
Some of the media houses have reportedly welcomed investment from foreign companies, sparking controversies. Although Nepal has adopted liberal economic policies and welcomed foreign investment in various sectors for the economic prosperity of the country, foreign investment in media has been a very controversial issue. Many people believe that foreign investment in media will weaken Nepalese nationalism. However, Pratyoush Onta argued that foreign competition would actually enhance professionalism in Nepali media. "What is really at work behind this bogey of nationalism is fear that the mediocrity of those who rule the Nepali media world will be further exposed" (Onta, 2001, August 10).

People who oppose foreign investment in media argued that the media represents Nepali culture and it would be unfortunate if foreigners decide Nepali culture and history. Besides, foreign investment in media may be problematic in times of national difficulties because media, unlike any other commercial ventures, can create public opinion. Chairman of the Editors’ Society, Govinda Biyogi, argued, "Foreign investment will turn our voice into a foreign voice. Instead of our public opinion, it will be their (foreigners’) opinion" (Pokheral, 2001, October 23).

In summary, ownership of Nepalese radio broadcasting demonstrates media pluralism, and its financing is no less diverse. While state-run Radio Nepal receive funds from the government as well as advertisements, commercial radio stations are purely based on advertisement revenue. However, community radio stations have diversified their revenue sources – from community contributions to donor assistance, partnership
programs to advertisements. Although the boundaries between community and commercial radio stations have blurred when it comes to airing advertisements, community radio stations claim to be socially responsible when accepting advertisements.

3.6. Media Under the King’s Dictatorship (February 1, 2005 to April 26, 2006)

On February 1, 2005, just before 10:30 am, King Gynendra went on radio and television and announced a coup, dismissed the government, declared a state of emergency, suspended fundamental human rights and cut off both national and international communications links. In addition, the government under the King’s leadership shut down media companies, put a ban on news broadcasting from independent FM radio stations, and arrested journalists.

The king’s proclamation dismissed Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and put him and his cabinet members as well as the senior leaders of the national political parties under house arrest. Many more leaders were arrested and put behind bars. On the state television, King Gynendra accused the government “failing to conduct parliamentary elections and restore peace” (New York Times, 2005, February 1). King Gynendra, justifying the coup, said that the measures were necessary to allow the security forces a freer hand to deal against the Maoists. In his speech, the king asserted that free expression is among “the inherent features of multiparty democracy” and that the press “serves as the medium for raising the level of democratic consciousness” (Lak, 2005, April 28).
Despite the reassurance from the king in his speech, the actions of his security forces were against his rhetoric. The Nepalese Army [Royal Nepalese Army] was deployed to enforce the newly imposed restrictions on the media even before the king’s address to the nation began. Armed security forces went to newspapers and radio stations with instructions to prevent them from publishing or broadcasting anything that violated “the letter or spirit” of the royal proclamation. For example, Narayan Wagle, editor of Kantipur, the nation’s largest circulated national daily, encountered 40 to 50 armed security forces when he reached his office. Some of the security personnel were surrounding the building of Kantipur Publications while others were occupying the newsroom. Holding M-16 rifles, the security officers went through every page and dictated to them what to write (Lak, 2005, April 28).

Similarly, Gopal Guragain of Communications Corner, which supplies programs to 14 FM radio stations across the country and runs its own Nepal FM, observed three army jeeps parked in front of the office building. The station unsuccessfully assured the security officers that it would put out the king’s speech and nothing else. But the solders stayed with their guns and demanded that it close down and stop broadcasting (Lak, 2005, April 28). Furthermore, in May 2005, the Ministry of Information and Communication shut down Communication Corner, charging it with operating without a proper license (Ojha, 2005).

In addition, the king’s government put a ban on independent news broadcasts, which were a primary source of information in Nepal, especially in rural areas. FM was a
flourishing news venue, “offering news in many languages, helping build a national identity and fostering debate on vital issues” (Lak, 2005, April 28). An estimated 1200 FM radio journalists remained idle since the news bulletin and discussion programs, which were the most popular programs, were replaced by music (Lak, 2005, April 28).

On February 3, 2005, the Ministry of Communication and Information invoked provisions allowing for censorship and restrictions on reporting under the Print and Publications Act of 1991. The king’s government curtailed press freedom, banning “provocative” statements about the monarchy, imprisoning journalists, and shutting down newspapers and radio stations.

In March 2005, the king’s government issued new directives to control media and ordered editors to publish information provided by the security forces. The king’s Minister of Information and Communication warned of action against media that encouraged terrorism and published or broadcast materials that were against the February 1 Royal Proclamation (See Appendix B for chronological events in Nepal).

By placing a ban on news broadcasts from the independent radio stations, the king’s government clearly wanted people to listen to its propaganda. The government under the king’s leadership did everything possible to silence the independent media because the king’s propaganda could better work under the media monopoly than with different independent media competing with different viewpoints. In August 2005, the king’s government ordered Nepal FM 91.8 to surrender its operating license because it defied the ban and aired news. However, the Supreme Court (SC) ruled in favor of the
FM stations – the court issued a stay order against the government. This ruling prompted many FM radio stations to resume news programs (Banjade, 2006, June).

The government authorities seized the transmission equipment from Kantipur FM, and the Ministry of Communication and Information gave Kantipur FM 24 hours to explain why its operating license should not be cancelled. The Supreme Court issued a stay order preventing the government from canceling the license of the station. However, the Supreme Court refused to issue a stay order against the controversial media ordinance in November 2005.

The royal government’s intimidation continued. Radio Sagarmatha went off air and four journalists were taken into custody after police raided the community radio station during the relay transmission of BBC Nepali Service live from London. It was carrying an exclusive interview with a Maoist leader, Puspa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda). The station had planned to replace the live broadcast of BBC Nepali Service by music as soon as Prachanda started speaking. Furthermore, the government blocked the BBC Nepali Services’ Website in Kathmandu, which contained the interview with Prachanda. Mr. Prachanda was talking about the 12-point agreement reached with seven political parties regarding the establishment of absolute democracy and the election of a Constitutional Assembly (Banjade, 2006 June).

In February 2006, the king’s Minister of Information and Communication, Shrish Shumshere Rana, said that the government was planning to establish a new media council
and introduce the National Broadcasting Authority ordinance, which would increase FM radio license and renewal fees.

In addition, the king’s government granted a license to the Nepalese Army, formerly known as the Royal Nepalese Army, to run 10 FM radio stations throughout Nepal in March 2006. The Nepalese Army had sought permission from the Ministry of Information and Communication (MoIC) to operate mobile FM stations across the country. The Army was planning to operate four FM stations with the capacity of one kilowatt and six others with the capacity of 250 watts. It was decided at a meeting of the Central Security Committee, chaired by Chief of Army Staff Pyar Jung Thapa, on June 24, 2005. The Nepalese army consists of nearly 90,000 personnel. The MoIC not only granted the army a license, but also it exempted the license fees. The Nepalese military intended for FM radio stations “to counter the Maoists’ propaganda,” to jam or block the Maoists’ mobile and static FM broadcasts, to raise the morale of the army personnel, and to report the daily activities of the military and the king’s government (Banjade, 2006 June).

The Nepalese army could use the government-owned and run Radio Nepal and Nepal Television to counter the Maoists’ misinformation. In fact, the Nepalese Army has been operating a television program through NTV entitled, Aaphaile dinu parcha, dhartile magdinan, “One must give it, the soil does not ask for it” once a week in order to disseminate information against terrorism in the country. Furthermore, the Nepalese army airs Nepali Army radio programs for 15 minutes every Tuesday and Friday evening.
Growing popularity of FM radio stations throughout Nepal and the weaker credibility of the government-run media could be one of the reasons why the Army wanted to go after FM radio stations. This could give them unlimited broadcast time, unlike with Radio Nepal and Nepal Television. However, simply operating the FM stations was not going to be an achievement in itself. It depended how effectively the army could put out its propaganda campaign. Furthermore, people would not have taken the message coming out from the military radio as the only truth; rather they would have interpreted the messages based on their beliefs (Banjade, 2006 June).

3.7. Summary

The King had argued that the political parties failed to control the Maoist insurgency. However, the situation did not improve during his direct rule. The king’s alienation of parliamentary parties forced them to sign a 12-points agreement with the Maoists in November 2005 with the common agendas of establishing democracy and election to the Constitutional Assembly. Following the agreement, the popular uprising, termed as Jana-Aandolan II (the first being the 1990 movement), resulted in the restoration of the House of Representatives, which curtailed most of the king’s power.

The Maoists seem headed towards the political mainstream. The Maoists’ leadership, including its supreme commander Prachanda, spoke with the independent FM radio stations many times instead of their own FM radio stations in order to reach a wider audience. Following the inclusion of the Maoists in the government, a Maoist leader became the minister at the Ministry of Communication and Information.
Although the king promised that he would provide a clean government free from corruption and control the Maoists insurgency, his actions were the opposite -- he did not provide a clean government, nor could he control the Maoist insurgency. Rather, announcing a new media ordinance, the king’s government suppressed the independent media. As soon as the king took control of executive power, his army took control of the nation’s independent media houses.

The public uprising of 2006 (Jana Anadolan II) ended the king’s direct rule and put the Seven Party Alliance (SPA) in power. The SPA government resumed the issuing of licenses to independent broadcasters and decided to issue licenses to more than 80 applicants to operate FM radio stations. However, only 50 applicants fulfilled the legal procedure and got licensed by October 2006. Others will be issued licenses once they pay the required fees, and there will be a total of 136 FM stations throughout Nepal.

With the recent issuing of licenses, all 14 administrative zones have at least three FM radio stations. Bagmati zone has the highest number of FM radio stations (25) followed by Lumbini and Narayani with 13 each, Gandaki, 8; Koshi and Janakpur, 7 each; Rapti and Bheri 6 each; Seti and Makakali 4 each; and Sagarmatha, Karnali and Dhaulagiri with 3 radio stations each. Recently, Krishna Bahadur Mahara, the Minister of Communication and Information and the Maoist leader in the government, told reporters that all five Maoists radio stations will be legalized.

In summary, some of the changes could have happened without the multiparty democracy. However, providing private sector licenses to operate radio stations was
made possible by the liberal policies that the Nepali Congress government adopted. Community radio, although a new concept, have achieved some degree of success in their development. This cheap, affordable, credible and useful medium has been reviving the tradition and spirit of community ownership and participation in the various parts of Nepal. Community radio stations aim to raise awareness of people's problems, create awareness about relevant subjects, give a voice to the people and advocate for social change.
Chapter 4: Methodological Triangulation

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapters provided background, literature review and basic introduction of radio broadcasting in Nepal. This chapter discusses the rationale behind selecting Community Radio Madanpokhara for the study. It also explains my choice of methodological triangulation and an introduction to qualitative as well as quantitative methods used for the study. Furthermore, it discusses why an audience survey was added, which was not in the original plan, and what challenges came about during the study.

4.2. Community and Community Radio

Community radio has many names and operates with different objectives. Some community radio stations are oppositional broadcasters -- anti-establishment activists working at the local level. Other stations are run by people without a particular political agenda in order to serve people with a humanitarian and grassroots development motive. And, there are radio stations that serve local minority language populations. Because community radio has emerged from many origins, different terminology has been used: popular or educational radio in Latin America; rural radio or bush radio in Africa; free radio in parts of Europe; low-power radio in the United States; and ethnic or aboriginal radio in Australia. There might be differences in terms of operations, but all such radio stations have one thing in common – they serve their communities in various capacities. Michel Delorme, president of AMARC, argued that “all these names describe the same
phemonenon: that of giving a voice and democratizing communication on a community scale” (Girard, 1992: ix).

Conventionally, communities are identified with a limited geographical region. It could be a neighborhood, village, and town or, in some cases, a city. The concept of community determined by geography is often contrasted with ‘communities of interest,’ where members share some cultural, social, or political interests independent of geographical proximity. The development of the Internet and the World Wide Web has added a new dimension to the concept of community by allowing so-called “virtual communities” (Jankowski, 2002: 5-6). Similarly, the MacBride report defined community as “an aggregation of groups which vary in social class, economic status, often in political or religious affiliation and also in outlook and opinion. Any community, large or small, is held together by a nexus of communications” (MacBride, 1980: 1150).

According to Merriam Webster’s Dictionary (2002), community can be defined as a unified body of individuals; the people with common interests living in a particular area; the area itself; a group of people with common characteristics or interests living together within a large society, such as a community of retired persons; a group linked by a common policy; a body of persons or nations having a common history or common social, economic, and political interests, such as the international community; or a body of persons of common and especially professional interests scattered through a larger society, such as the academic community.
Depew and Peters reviewed the history of the ideas of communities from Aristotle to the American progressives and the Chicago school of sociology. According to Aristotle, every state is a community that ‘makes something one and common’ out of separate households. Elaborating Aristotle, Depew & Peters wrote,

a state should be no bigger, either in territory or in population, than is required for all adult male citizens to participate in public affairs by responding to and judging the un-amplified speech of deliberative, judicial, and apodictic speakers. Political community is an assembly in which all may hear and speak. (Depew and Peters, 2001: 4)

Anderson talked about the role of printed words in the formation of “imagined community,” which he defined as any community that is larger than the smallest village because most people never know most of their fellow community members, meet them, or even hear of them, “yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (Anderson, 1983: 6). In fact, all communities larger than primitive villages of face-to-face contact are imagined. Although the people residing in different geographic locations within a country might speak very different dialects and might not understand each other, books are printed in the standard form of the language. Thus, the people who read the same book are connected through their reading and understanding of it even though they might not have been able to understand each other if they had communicated verbally. This new connection among people enables them to became members of imagined communities based on printed words (Anderson, 1983).
Similarly, Anderson applied the notion of imagined community to the people who sing the same songs. They sing together “for the echoed physical realization of the imagined community” (Anderson, 1983: 145). Community media could be the extension to books that create many imagined communities as with listeners to a particular station and listeners to a particular program. Although they might not meet or speak to fellow listeners, they feel connected through the common information they receive from their radio station and are familiar with the issues and problems in the community brought in the debate by the station. Similarly, Ferdinand Toennies looked at the local community (gemeinschaft) versus the larger society (gesellschaft) in his book Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, published in 1887, which contributed to the foundation for many American sociological theories (Lyon, 1987).

Community media refers to a diverse range of ‘mediated forms of communication.’ It can be print media, such as newspapers and magazines, electronic media, such as radio and television, and an electronic network, with characteristics of both print and electronic media (Jankowski, 2002: 6). Though there may be differences in actual operations of community radio stations, in one way or the other they all still meet the fundamental aspects of the definition of community radio: community representation and commitment to meeting local community needs and aspirations (White, 1990).

Downing used the term “radical media” to describe the many different forms of small-scale media that express an alternative vision to hegemonic policies, priorities, and
perspectives. He used the metaphor of the yeast enzyme for radical media and argued that radical media have the capacity to alter their environment (Downing, 2001).

Clemencia refers to these media as citizens’ media, in which a marginalized community controls a communication medium and uses it for its own agenda. She argued that defining alternative media as non-mainstream suggests that they are powerless, and limits their potential to resist other media (Rodriquez, 2001).

The two terms access television and community television are used very often in the U.S. Community television is different from public access television. Jansowski (2002) argued,

Community members become involved in all facets of station activities and exercise control over day-to-day and long-range policy matters. Unlike access stations, community television stations generally strive to produce a coherent and coordinated overall programming package that reflects, represents, and involves members of the community. (Jankowski, 2002: 6)

Radio has not been used only for development; it has also been used for political propaganda. Free radio has a long history of being used for political purposes. “Free radio stations are a community organizing tool. A free radio station can inform citizens about public hearings, boycotts, meetings, and protests—something that leaflets, word-of-mouth, or telephoning can also do, but much less efficiently” (Soley, 1999:47). For example, the first free radio station, which was established in Czechoslovakia in February 1931, called workers to unite against the fascist European leaders. Similarly, the Indian National
Congress started the Congress Broadcasting Station in 1932 to protest against Great Britain and to help the independence movement (Soley, 1999: 7). During the Second World War, Japan sponsored ‘ersatz freedom stations’ (stations that claimed to be free radio stations but were actually sponsored operations) in India using the names *Free India Radio*, *Radio Himalaya*, and *Radio Hindustani* (Soley, 1999: 12).

There are at least four types of free radio stations. (1) Clandestine stations, sometimes called guerrilla stations, advocate revolution and broadcast during periods of civil war or social rebellion, asking people to overthrow the repressive ruler. (2) Pirate stations are culturally oriented stations that carry music and entertainment programs because government – licensed stations often fail to carry enough music or entertainment programs. (3) Micro radio stations, seek to change restrictive radio licensing laws in order to provide alternative news and information to their neighborhoods. (4) Ghost stations are unlicensed transmissions that “surreptitiously interrupt the broadcasts of licensed stations, providing an alternative view to that expressed by government-licensed stations” (Soley, 1999:3).

Community newspapers are distinguished from the national newspapers in terms of their size, paper quality, printing quality and the content they cover. While the national newspapers are commonly broadsheets, community newspapers are tabloid. Most community papers are printed on cheap paper and print quality is not good. Although the community papers carry local and people-related stories, their story mix is not as varied as the national papers. The producers of most community papers lack professional skills,
do not seem to have clear marketing plans, and are mostly financially weak. The newspapers published from different districts are local newspapers and serve the local communities. However, most of the regional and district level newspapers with a wider readership would claim to be national newspapers rather than local or community newspapers because of a false sense of pride that comes from being a national paper. In some cases, it is also possibly because of the advertisement policy and regulation, which allow big tender notices and bids to be printed only in the national newspapers. For this reason regional and district newspapers hesitate to be called community newspapers. (Kasajoo, 2002)

In addition, the intended readers, ownership and control, and content distinguish the community press from the national press. A typical community newspaper would be based outside the Kathmandu Valley with circulation less than 10,000 copies and without a national chain of distribution. It could be published daily, bi-weekly, weekly or fortnightly in tabloid or magazine size. Investment in such paper would come from local people or institutions or organizations and the majority of revenue would come from local advertisements and sales and subscripts. With more than 75 percent of editorial staff coming from the community and more than 50 percent of editorial content on local issues and problems, such newspapers are dedicated to raising the living standard of the local people by providing them relevant and essential information and knowledge. More
importantly, they give voice to the voiceless people and advocate socioeconomic development in the community (Kasajoo, 2002).

Similarly, community radio stations are distinguished from commercial or government-owned radio stations in Nepal in terms of audiences, ownership and control, content and the degree of participation in media through such outlets. Community radio stations throughout the world are known for their role of providing a platform for participation in media for those neglected or marginalized by the mainstream media. Community members are those living in the area served by the community radio station. This could include the local leaders, including elected representatives. The community of a station also includes community structures, such as civic or religious groups and sports clubs, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and government officials, who could play a role in promoting or obstructing the work of the station. Outsiders, including donor organizations, volunteer organizations, consultants and experts are also parts of the community.

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* demonstrates one of the successful community radio stations in terms of people’s participation in its initiation, establishment, management, financing and programming. The station enjoys active support and participation from community members and has been recognized on the national and international levels. In addition, in my visits to the station, I found people in management, in administration as well as in programming to be very cooperative. For these and other reasons, I chose *Community Radio Madanpokhara* for my study, which
has incorporated a wide range of research methods that consider various aspects of the station.

4.3. Choice of Methodology

In order to deepen understanding and provide a holistic analysis, the research strategy of methodological triangulation was used, which employs qualitative methods, such as participant observations and in-depth interviews, and quantitative methods, such as an audience survey. The two traditions should have equal status and they should interact. Triangulation is aimed not only at validating but at deepening and widening the understanding of the subject under study.

One major difference between qualitative and quantitative research is the underlying assumptions about the role of the researcher. In quantitative research, the researcher is ideally an objective observer that neither participates in nor influences what is being studied. In qualitative research, however, the researcher learns about a situation by participating in it. Furthermore, quantitative research often forces responses into categories that might not fit in order to create meaning. Qualitative research, on the other hand, sometimes focuses on individual results and fails to make connections to larger situations or possible causes of the results. Qualitative research is appropriate for answering certain kinds of questions in certain conditions and quantitative is suitable for others. Thus, the most effective strategy is to incorporate the elements of both methods to ensure that the study is as complete as possible.
Both qualitative and quantitative methods can be used simultaneously to answer a research question or to get better knowledge of the subject under study. Miles and Huberman (1994) and many other researchers agree that these two research methods need each other. A combination of perspectives is required in order to attain a holistic analysis. Norman Denzin terms it “triangulation,” which he defines as:

Comparison of data relating to the same phenomenon but deriving from different phases of the fieldwork, different points in the temporal cycles occurring in the setting, or, as in respondent validation, the accounts of different participants in the setting. (Denzin, 1978: 198)

Different types of triangulation -- data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, methodological triangulation, and environmental triangulation – are applied to check and establish the validity of studies. Data triangulation involves the use of different sources of data or information whereas investigator triangulation involves several different investigators studying the program. Similarly, theory triangulation involves the use of multiple theoretical perspectives when interpreting a single set of data or information whereas environmental triangulation involves the use of different locations, settings and other significant factors related to the environment, such as time of the day, day of the week or season of the year. Likewise, methodological triangulation involves the use of multiple qualitative and/or quantitative methods in the study of the program (Denzin, 1970).
Denzin (1970) argued that the use of multiple methods is a plan of action that helps researchers overcome the personal biases that come from a single methodology. By combining methods in the same study, one can partially overcome the deficiencies that arise from one method. Similarly, Olsen argued that “methodological triangulation” combines multiple techniques in order to improve validity, to provide rich and comprehensive results, to deepen and widen one’s understanding, and to make the research as holistic as possible (Olsen, 2004). However, the use of triangulation has been criticized by some researchers.

Blaikie (1991:131) argued that, “triangulation means many things to many people and none of the uses in sociology bears any resemblance to its use in surveying.” Blaikie (1991) described the aim of the original concept of triangulation in surveying, navigation and military strategy as establishing the position of a point. Furthermore, a point can be located “from two others of known distance apart, given the angles of the triangle formed by the three points” (Clark 1951:145).

Similarly, Massey & Walford (1998) argued that the adaptation of the term triangulation by the social sciences is often inappropriate. It is mistaken to believe that triangulation can yield the same kind of certainty about social reality as land surveyors can about physical reality. Thus, triangulation suggests that the absolute position of a point can be established only if the absolute positions of the two reference points are known.
Various social scientists (Campbell 1956; Campbell and Fiske 1959; Garner 1954; Garner, Hake and Eriksen 1956) used triangulation symbolically in the social sciences to characterize the use of multiple methods to measure a single construct. Webb et al. (1966: 3) used triangulation in relation to the idea of an unobtrusive method and suggested, “Once a proposition has been confirmed by two or more independent measurement processes, the uncertainty of its interpretation is greatly reduced. The most persuasive evidence comes through a triangulation of measurement processes.” Similarly, various researchers (Knafl and Breitmayer, 1989; Jick, 1983) argued that consistent findings, when multiple data collection methods are used, increase the researchers’ confidence in the credibility of the results.

In order to get a holistic picture, I applied qualitative research methods, such as participant observation and in-depth interviews, as well as quantitative research methods, such as an audience survey. Methodological triangulation was used more to increase the understanding about the community radio station rather than to validate the findings from one method with another one. Participant observation included staying in the community radio station, being with staff and radio representatives in formal as well as social settings, and observing and making notes on community members’ activities. In-depth interviews, on the other hand, were carried out with prominent figures in management and programming as well as experts on the community radio movement in the nation. Similarly, the audience survey includes a sample study of potential listeners of CRM. Each method has a unique population, and explores different aspects of community radio
in Nepal, and CRM in particular. Thus, each method deepens and widens information for a holistic understanding rather than one method validating another.

4.4. Qualitative Research Methods

The goal of qualitative techniques should be to develop concepts in order to gain a better understanding of the phenomena represented by the concepts themselves (Morse and Micham, 2002). Qualitative techniques are generally used to explore new or little-known phenomena. They are also used to explore phenomena that was not conceptualized or adequately understood. In the course of qualitative research, hypotheses and theories emerge from data during the data collection or data analysis. In such a naturalistic tradition, the prime sources of data are the words and actions of the people being interviewed or observed. These are recorded using notes as well as via photographs, films, and actions through a combination of observing, listening, and asking (Lofland and Lofland, 1984: 47).

Qualitative research techniques for this study included participant observations and in-depth interviews with community members, community media activists, community radio staff (volunteers, board members, and staff) and NGO/INGO personnel, and donor agencies as well as government officials. It also included the analysis of relevant documents.

**Participant observations**

Participant observation refers to “the process in which an investigator establishes and sustains a many-sided and relatively long-term relationship with a human association
in its natural setting for the purpose of developing a scientific understanding of that association” (Lofland and Lofland, 1984: 12). Participant observation involves looking and listening, watching and asking. Becker and Geer provided one of the best definitions of participant-observation:

By participant observation we mean that method in which the observer participates in the daily life of the people under study, either openly in the role of researcher or covertly in some guised role, observing things that happen, listening to what is said and questioning persons, over a length of time. (Becker and Geer, 1957: 28)

At the community level, I observed and recorded whether or not community members have a radio set. If there was a radio in the family, who turned the radio on? Who chose the channels? Who listened and how attentively? Was it the men or the women? After observing, I was engaged in conversations with the individuals/family members. At Community Radio Madanpokhara, I observed who did what. Was there fair representation of women and minority groups? Who decided what to air? I engaged the staff as well as the radio representatives in conversation. Furthermore, while in the area for research, I lived with staff members, most of the time with the station manager and station coordinator. In the Tansen municipality area, I observed which radio station was tuned in; what the people at tea shops and barber shops were listening to, etc.

_In-depth (intensive) interview_
In-depth interviewing is a commonly used research method to investigate people’s experiences. It attempts to extract the interviewees’ experiences and their inherent meanings. Intensive interviewing, which is also known as ‘unstructured interviewing,’ is a guided conversation that can be used in qualitative analysis. It seeks to discover the informant’s experience of a particular topic or situation (Lofland & Lofland, 1995: 18).

I visited the *Community Radio Madanpokhara* (CRM) studio and gained experience in the operation of a community radio in rural Nepal. I visited CRM once in 2002, spending about three days there in order to study it as a possible choice for my research project. I found the staff members and the persons in the management very cooperative. Furthermore, I was very impressed by the work the station was carrying out, providing a platform for its community members to participate in the communication process. I returned in 2003 for a detailed study.

I made four rounds of visits between September and December 2003, spending roughly twenty days, and three rounds of visits in January and February 2004, spending roughly fifteen days. In August 2002, I conducted 3 in-depth interviews with the program coordinator, station manager and program producer of CRM. I had informal discussions with two board members and social workers. These interviews were audio-taped and transcribed from Nepali into English. In 2004, I conducted in-depth interviews with the station manager, station coordinator, and program coordinator as well as the president of the CRM board and other members. Most of the interviews were videotaped,
transcribed and translated. (See Appendix C for the list of individuals contacted for information and in-depth interviews).

In addition, Community Radio Madanpokhara made its various unpublished documents available and these were analyzed and included wherever they were appropriate. (See Appendix D for the list of documents analyzed).

4.5. Quantitative Research Method: an Audience Survey

An audience survey for potential listeners of Community Radio Madanpokhara was not in the original research plan. It was included after accepting a request from the radio station. Management and program staff at Community Radio Madanpokhara were eager to know about their listeners and non-listeners and about how the station was performing, and whether it met the community’s expectations. Because of a lack of human resources for conducting a scientific study, the station had to rely upon its best guess about its listeners. After carefully listening to the original research plan and the methods, the management and the program staff requested that I include an audience survey as a part of my study. The station also promised to request its radio representatives become involved in the data collection, with a minimum remuneration, and requested the Local Initiative Support Program of Helvetas (Swiss International Organization) provide funds to collect the data. Since my reason for selecting a community radio station was not only to complete the requirements for my dissertation, but also to contribute in an initiative that was providing a voice to the marginalized section of the population, I accepted the request and conducted an audience survey. The purpose of the audience
survey was to obtain objective knowledge of Community Radio Madanpokhara, its programs, level of public participation and the characteristics of listeners and non-listeners.

a. Objectives

The main objective of the audience survey was to examine access to, listening to and public participation in different aspects of Community Radio Madanpokhara in the Palpa district. The following were the specific objectives of the audience survey:

- to explore the ownership and use of different electronic media, such as radio (including FM radio) and television in the Palpa district
- to explore radio listening patterns, including habits of listening to radio, total hours of listening per day, and which program most often listened to
- to explore the habits of CRM listeners during prime-time airing, including peak listening hours
- to explore the characteristics of radio listeners (age, sex, education, ethnicity, occupation) and non-listeners of Community Radio Madanpokhara
- to explore public opinion about Community Radio Madanpokhara, its ownership, management, financing, programs and producers
- to explore the level of public participation in different activities of CRM

b. Population and sampling

There were more than 77,000 people living in the area covered by the audience survey. Among them, 46.21% were Magar, followed by Brahmin with 19.17% whereas
lower-caste families comprised 12.37% of the total population (See Appendix A for the details).

This audience survey used a sample survey method. It was conducted from December 2003 to January 2004 in 15 out of 66 VDCs and the Tansen municipality in the Palpa district in western Nepal. There were 690 respondents from 690 families in the sample design. The selection of the respondents followed the steps below:

1. The area covered by 15 VDCs and the Tansen municipality was considered as the population area for the survey because CRM considered these VDCs and the municipality as its community at the time of the survey. CRM had its representatives in these areas.

2. Six hundred ninety (690) families were selected from the selected VDCs and Tansen municipality. The number of families from each VDC and municipality was decided based on the population proportion of each VDC and the municipality. The number of families in the sample from VDCs ranged from 20 in Rupse to 58 in Pipaldada VDC. The Tansen municipality had 190 families selected for the sample survey.

3. Two wards were randomly selected from each VDC and municipality and the assigned numbers of families were selected from the selected wards. (Each VDC in Nepal has nine wards. However, the number of wards in municipalities varies. The Tansen municipality has fourteen wards).

4. Within the selected wards, a list of families was developed by updating the information available at the respective VDC or municipality office. Assigned
numbers of families from each ward were selected using a random start and the sampling distance.

5. Within the selected family, individuals aged 10 years and above were identified, and one individual was randomly selected for the interview.

c. Questionnaire design, training and interviewers

A questionnaire for the study was drafted, incorporating suggestions from the Station Manager of CRM Gunakar Aryal. The draft was pre-tested with help from the station staff members in the village of Madanpokhara and finalized, incorporating the experiences (See Appendix E and Appendix F). A training session for the field workers was conducted with assistance from the Station Manager of CRM Gunakar Aryal on Thursday, December 25, 2003. The one-day training was conducted at CRM and lasted until the evening. Rajesh Aryal, Program Coordinator of CRM, helped in printing the questionnaires on time and in putting together the questionnaires with the help of radio representatives. The Radio Representatives worked until 10 p.m. preparing for the field work.

All of the seventeen interviewers were radio representatives of CRM and all were males, except those from Madanpokhara and Pipaldada VDCs. The respective member VDC appoints its radio representative for CRM. These are volunteers working as reporters in the region for the station. The radio representatives were hired for the field work in order to:
(1) Reduce the cost: Hiring the radio representatives (RRs) was more cost-effective than bringing field workers from the outside. At the station’s request, all of the RRs worked with a minimum remuneration. It was not possible to hire the field workers from outside with the financial constraints on the study. All of the field work was completed with a budget of less than US $ 500. It could otherwise have cost at least US $ 10,000.

(2) Reduce security risks: Since all of the radio representatives worked in their respective villages and were familiar with the situation, it reduced any possible security threat from the Maoist insurgency in Nepal. Because of the Maoist insurgency that started in 1996, it was not safe for outsiders to visit the villages. There were many instances when the Maoists stopped the field workers from various non-governmental organizations and destroyed the materials in different parts of the country.

(3) Enhance the quality of the research: The population for the survey included a significantly larger proportion of ethnic groups (Magar for example). Since the radio representatives from such villages were from the same ethnic group, they did not have language or cultural problems, which enhanced the quality of the research.

(4) Empower the station: The survey provided a good experience for radio representatives. Since the management, administrative as well as programming staff, were involved one way or another, the survey provided a good learning
opportunity. It helped the station to be ready for the survey and be better prepared for similar studies in the future.

However, involving people from the station, especially hiring radio representatives for the field work, had a downside as well. Radio representatives are familiar in their respective villages, so it is possible that the respondents answered questions in favor of CRM when they were survey by reporters. Furthermore, it is also possible that the radio representatives recorded answers in favor of CRM or framed the questions to favor CRM.

d. Field work

Data collection for the survey was done between December 27, 2003, and January 24, 2004. I visited CRM from January 11 to 13, 2004 and met with radio representatives (field workers) who were there for a regular meeting. At that time, I learned of the progress of the field work. I participated in a picnic jointly organized by the radio representatives and CRM, where all the radio representatives, Somnath Aryal (Coordinator of CRM), Gunakar Aryal (Station Manager of CRM) and former Palpa District Development Committee Chairman and CRM Board Member Ghapendra G.C., were present. The informal conversation provided the field workers’ experiences in data collection. In addition, I had an opportunity to observe the data collection in the Tansen municipality during that time and found it to be satisfactory.

e. Data processing and analysis
The completed questionnaires were collected at CRM. Ramesh Aryal, Office Assistant of CRM, was trained on how to design and enter the data using an Excel software program. Neither CRM nor any office or business in Palpa had SPSS software at the time. Mr. Aryal did most of the data entry for the survey. The Excel file was later converted into a SPSS file. I did further data editing and processing using SPSS. Data analysis included frequency tables as well as cross-tabulation and statistical analysis of the desired variables wherever appropriate, and the interpretation followed the output.

4.6. Research Environment

The political, weather, and security environment in Nepal and in the Palpa district added difficulties in carrying out the research activities. Because of political unrest, frequently-called banda [strikes] made free movement within the city and across the country difficult. The rainy season added to the misery when long-distance travel was required. Beyond these factors, the Maoists insurgency made it impossible to move around without fear.

Remote villages, especially those villages where lower caste families and Magars reside, could not be reached because of fear of the Maoist insurgency. It was not safe for an outsider like me to visit villages. Madanpokhara, being close to the district headquarters, was safer for travel. Besides, most of the residents in Madanpokhara were supporters of the United Marxist-Leninists rather than of the Maoist insurgency.

The weather was not favorable during the research period. In one visit, I left Kathmandu for Tansen, Palpa early in the morning by microbus. It was a rainy day.
After traveling five hours, we found the road ahead blocked because of a landslide. Not knowing the level of damage, we waited for three to four hours before the microbus driver and the passengers decided to return to Kathmandu. However, we were upset knowing that the road to Kathmandu, which was fine a couple of hours earlier, was also blocked because of a landslide. There were hundreds of buses, car and trucks stranded. I spent that night along with hundreds of others, sleeping in the bus seat. I was planning to stop by and see my wife’s parents in Chitwan on the way to Palpa. There was news on national media about the landslides, floods and many people missing. I was safe, but there was no means of communication to tell my family members about my condition. Not knowing what happened to me, everyone panicked. I managed to return Kathmandu after 48 hours. I left for Palpa after one week, and the road was so damaged that it took two days (normally it takes eight to ten hours) to get there.

Not only the weather but also the Maoist insurgency added to the misery. I traveled to Palpa many times during my stay in Nepal. None of my travel was without any disturbance from the Maoist-imposed travel banda (strike or closure). On one occasion, I was stranded in Chitwan for three days (Thanks to my wife’s parents, who live there, I did not have to stay at a hotel.).

The Palpa district was also affected by the political instability in the country and the Maoist movement. On February 11, 2004, while playing with the ‘new toy’ he had come across, eight-year old Ait Rana was killed when the grenade exploded in the Khalibang Village Development Committee (VDC) some 43 km east from Tansen. Three
other children also sustained serious shrapnel injuries. I was in a hotel in Tansen while a reporter was filing the news to the Kathmandu-based national newspaper. In another instance, a team of government officials, including Nepalese military personnel, faced a Maoist-planted bomb on a small bridge in Madi Valley in Madanpokhara, on the way back to the district headquarters from a village. The bomb damaged the small bridge but the officials escaped unharmed. After a couple of days, I visited the area with Rajesh Aryal (program coordinator of CRM), who showed the damaged bridge and explained what had happened.

Since my home district, Arghakhanchi, borders Palpa and is about 70 km by bus plus about two hours of walking, I was contemplating visiting my 100-plus-year-old grandmother. However, I had to abandon my goal when I receive news that Maoists had killed one of my family members in my home village. Humananda Banjade was in his late thirties and running a small retail shop in his village. In the last week of September, 2003, the Maoists went to his place. First, one insurgent attacked him from his back with a *khukuri* (Nepali knife). Another shot him with a pistol and later chopped off his head and put it on display in a public place. All this happened in daylight, but no one dared go and rescue him. A week earlier on September 21, 2003, Maoists had killed one of my friends in Arghakhanchi (Shiva Lal Pokharel) in his village. All these events and other atrocities committed by the Maoists were on my mind while I conducted this research. Because of such harsh conditions, I could not personally visit many remote villages included in the audience survey.
Chapter 5: Community Radio Madanpokhara

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter I explore how Community Radio Madanpokhara was envisioned, initiated, and established. I also explore community participation in ownership, management, and content development as well as in financing the station. In addition, I will explore how the listeners participate in different activities and how the radio station facilitates its community members in creating listeners’ clubs and friends of radio groups and how such clubs and groups have contributed to local development. Finally, this chapter explores the challenges and constraints faced by the station.

5.2. Background

Community Radio Madanpokhara is located in Madanpokhara - a very beautiful village in Palpa with views of the adjoining Madi Plain, of the district headquarters Tansen and of other villages facing it from the slopes of the hills in the north and of Himalayan peaks further north. About six thousand people live in Madanpokhara VDC. Brahmin, Magar, Kami, Damai and Sarki are the major ethnic groups of the community. Madanpokharites are very progressive in their attitudes – in accepting, learning and practicing new ideas. Madanpokhara is known all over the country as a model VDC. Most recently, Madanpokhara has become well-known for pioneering the participatory community radio station.

Palpa, especially Tansen, has been an important power center throughout Nepalese history. Palpa was the strongest kingdom in Western Nepal and was the last to
be defeated and conquered by King Prithivi Narayan Shah, who unified Nepal. Tansen, in Palpa, was an important outpost and a power center with a Rana Badahakim [Chief Officer] for the region, which covered the present-day Gulmi, Arghakhanchi, Parbat and Baglung districts during the Rana regime (1846 to 1951). In addition, Tansen remained a business hub for these districts. However, the situation has changed. The relocation of the district headquarters of present day Gulmi, Arghakhanchi, Baglung and Parbat from Tansen had an adverse effect in terms of the political as well as economic importance of Tansen (Figure 1).

Figure 5. Map of Nepal showing all 75 districts.

Furthermore, the road link from the Tansen to Gulmi district drastically reduced the importance of Tansen as a business center, since the merchants could buy goods from Butwal, a town closer to the Indian border. However, Tansen is charming because it is
unspoiled by modernity, pollution, or an urban lifestyle. A panoramic view of some of the Himalayan giants, Dhaulagiri, Annapurna, Manaslu, Gauri Shankar and others, can be seen from the Srinagar hilltop. Furthermore, present-day Tansen is famous for its *dhaka* and metal-ware. Dhaka is the most popular textile, a hand woven cloth of Nepal that is used for Nepali topi [national cap], shawls, and blouses. Tansen is famous for metal-ware, including handmade metal crafts, especially the karuwa [water jug].

Whoever visits Madanpokhara and the district headquarters Tansen would ask this obvious question first: Why would there be a radio station in Madanpokhara but not in Tansen? My observations and the information I gathered from my key informants indicate that people in Madanpokhara are innovative, have a relatively stable political environment, are ready to struggle for a cause, are educated, occupy leadership positions in the district and have previous media experience. Leaders of the community media in Nepal Bharat Dutta Koirala (Bharat Dutta Koirala is a well-known media specialist in Nepal. He received the prestigious Magsaysay award for his contributions to media development in Nepal.), Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo and Hem Bahadur Bista might have chosen Madanpokhara for such qualities. They might have been involved in Madanpokhara in order to put pressure on the government to open the airwaves.

Community members of Madanpokhara village provide a role model for community initiatives for development activities. For example, the concept of Community Forestry in Nepal, which advocates that forest conservation and development will be enhanced if it is managed and owned by the community, is said to have first taken
root in Madanpokhara in 1962. Further, women of Madanpokhara and Madi Plain
became the first in the nation to establish and operate a mobile “audio tower.”

One individual in Madanpokhara gives a striking example of the regional
character. Hindu tradition used to forbid Brahmins, the highest caste in the Hindu caste
system, to plow the land. Brahmin people are supposed to be teachers and priests
professions, while Chhetries are in government and security. Similarly, Baishavs serve as
merchants while Sudhras (lower-caste) serve the others.

Although caste system has been in practice for several centuries in Nepal, the
*Muluki Ain* (1854) was a written version of social code introduced by Prime Minister
Jung Bahadur Rana. The code legalized Nepalese community into two broad categories –
the castes whose water is allowed and the castes whose water is defiled. The civil code of
1963/64 tried to establish legal equality between the so-called high-caste and low-caste
communities. There are said to be thirty-six castes under four main classes or Varnas, i.e.
Brahmin, Chhetri or Kshatri, Vaishya or Baishya and Shudra. However, this is just a
rough estimate usually made in the mountains and hills. There are many sub-castes that
fall under each of these four classes. Also many Tibeto Burman ethnic groups do not
follow the caste system since they have their own culture, tradition, religion and values
that do not fall under the caste system. Likewise, Magars, Tharus, Gurungs, Thakalis,
Sherpas, Tamangs, Rais, Limbus, etc. are defined ethnically rather than in terms of
castes. Similarly, the Newar community which is considered by many as a separate ethnic
group consists of many castes within it. Besides, some castes within the Newar community follow Hinduism while others follow Buddhism.

Brahmins are supposed to be priests, scholars and teachers, Chhetris are supposed to become warriors and rule the country, Baishyas are supposed to become traders and agriculturalists and Sudhras are supposed to be manual workers and serve the others. Only Sudhras are considered lower-caste and, therefore, untouchable. Although untouchability has been outlawed, some upper caste groups often prevent people from the lower-castes from entering Hindu temples.

Ghanta Prasad Aryal of Madanpokhara challenged this tradition in 1951 and was sentenced to jail for 11 days. In addition, he was among the early adopters of family planning in 1962, and possibly the first one to do so in the village, despite huge opposition to it. In a personal communication (Oct 1, 2003), he claimed that he was the first in his village to buy a radio set in 1957 and a TV set from Gorakhpur, India, in 1982. Like Ghanta P. Aryal, many people in Madanpokhara are innovative and early adopters of new ideas.

Besides the character of the people, the stable political environment contributed to the establishment of Community Radio Madanpokhara. Madanpokhara VDC holds the license for CRM. After the restoration of democracy in 1990, except during the “black days” or February 1, 2005 to April 26, 2006 when the king ruled the country, Nepal enjoyed a multiparty democracy and in most cases, people voted according to their party affiliation. Thus, it is possible for people from different political parties to win in
elections, and this has been the case in many VDCs in Nepal, where different political party candidates were elected. However, Madanpokhara has a different story. The Communist Party of Nepal United Marxist-Leninist (UML) candidates won in the local election in Madanpokhara because it has a strong party base in Madanpokhara. Its candidates won in the local elections after the restoration of democracy and the trend will likely continue in the coming elections as well. Although different leaders may win positions in the VDC, it is very likely that they will come from the same political party. In this sense, there is political stability and the election for local body and changes in VDC leadership will have little effect on the running of the station.

Similarly, the relatively higher numbers of educated people in Madanpokhara as compared to residents in other hilly villages in Nepal provide a favorable environment for establishing a radio station. People in Madanpokhara give very high importance to education. In a personal communication (February 6, 2004), Somnath Aryal asserted that most schools in the Palpa district had teachers from Madanpokhara. He revealed that it was a part of the political movement, i.e., spreading communist ideology to different parts of the country. During the king’s direct rule (before 1990), activities of political parties were underground and mostly conducted by schoolteachers.

Furthermore, the previous media experience of the people of Madanpokhara helped in the establishment of a community radio station. There used to be an Audio Tower run by area women established in 1997. There has been a gradual upward trend in
terms of media use in the village. Recalling the means of communication over time, Yam Prasad Pandey, Madanpokhara, VDC President and the Chairman of CRM board, said:

There used to be *ghopa partha* [a person would carry a mike made of hard paper and would go to different parts in a city and would make the public announcements loudly] in cities whereas a *katale partha* [a person would go to a hilltop or any other place and loudly announce messages] was used in villages. Later we moved to wall newspapers. Important announcements and news would be handwritten and posted in public places. Later, we used electronic media through an audio tower run by enthusiastic women of the Madi Valley. Now we have a radio station. This is a gradual movement toward modern means of communication in our village. (Yam P. Pandey, personal communication, February 5, 2004)

There was a “Listening Center” in Madanpokhara even in 1962. Ghanta Prasad Aryal, then *Pradhan Pancha* (VDC Chairman), started *Sarban Kendra* [Listening Center], which ran for 2-3 years. However, it was different from the women-run audio tower operated in 1997. The Listening Center used a radio connected with a couple of amplifiers and broadcast whatever was being broadcast on radio. It provided access to radio to those without a radio set in the area. The Listening Center was located in Ghanta Prasad Aryal’s residence, and the local people did not have control over the content of the program. However, the mobile audio tower was run by women from the region who broadcast over it whatever they thought was important to them.
People in Madanpokhara unite for developmental work in their village. During the king’s direct rule (1960-1990), Madanpokhara was known for its active communist movement, which provided a sanctuary for political activists and students leaders when political activities were outlawed. Villagers always supported political descendants. Because of its anti-government political activities, Madanpokhara used to receive less government resources than other neighboring Village Development Committees did. Despite this, Madanpokhara did far better in terms of local development than other villages that received favorable treatment from the government. This was possible only because people in Madanpokhara were united when it came to development activities in their village.

People in Madanpokhara have quite unique attitude. Unlike in most parts of Nepal, educated people in Madanpokhara work in farming and harvest a lot of vegetables, fruits and other farm produce. Vegetables produced in Madanpokhara have found markets in Tansen and Butwal cities, and the farmers have benefited from the price of its vegetables being broadcast over CRM. Organic coffee produced in Madanpokhara is becoming famous not only in the region but also on the national level. In addition, there have been, and continues to be, very good relationships among members of different political parties in the village, which is certainly not the case in other parts of the country. People from different political ideologies in Madanpokhara work in harmony (Gunakar Aryal, personal communication, August 10, 2002).
After the restoration of democracy in 1990, fighting between political activists from different parties was common throughout Nepal. With my two friends (Maoists murdered one of them), I had to travel to the district headquarters of Arghakhanchi at the suggestion of the Nepali Congress Party. A fight had broken out between the Nepali Congress and UML activists in the district and we were instructed to defuse the situation. Madanpokhara did not experience such fighting, possibly because the area is heavily dominated by UML.

5.3. First Gaunle Radio

Community Radio Madanpokhara is located in the Madanpokhara VDC of Palpa district, about 300 km west of the capital city Kathmandu. Normally, it takes about 10 hours of vehicular travel from Kathmandu to Madanpokhara. Air travel can significantly shorten the Katmandu-Madanpokhara trip. A 45-minute flight to Bhairahawa, the closest airport for the Palpa district, can be followed by the 50 km motor journey to Naya Pati on Siddhartha Highway in the Madanpokhara VDC. An uphill stretch of a dusty road of 1600 meters in length, which allows vehicular transport and which requires about half an hour on foot, links Naya Pati to Community Radio Madanpokhara at an altitude of 1046 meters (3,340 feet) above sea level.

Community Radio Madanpokhara (CRM) spreads its waves to about 800,000 dwellers in 33 of 65 VDCs, to the Tansen municipality of the Palpa district as well as to some parts of neighboring Syangja, Gulmi, Parbat, Rupandehi and Arghakhanchi districts. The early radio stations, commercial or community, operating in Nepal were
physically located in cities. For example, *Radio Sagarmatha*, the first community radio in all of South Asia, is located in Kathmandu Valley. Another early beginner, *Lumbini FM*, is located in Manigram, between the two municipalities Butwal and Siddharthanagar (Bhairahawa), whereas *Swaragadwari FM* is located in the Ghorai municipality in Dang and *Himchuli FM* is in the Pokhara municipality. In this respect, CRM is a *Gaunle radio* [village radio] and the first such community radio station in South Asia operating at the village level.

*Figure 6. A studio of Community Radio Madanpokhara*
The station broadcasts programs at 106.9 MHz with a 100-Watt transmitter. Licensed on January 3, 1999 for 9 hours of daily broadcast, the station began its broadcast on April 6, 1999 for 6 hours. The station now broadcasts 12.5 hours a day. Launched with a simple analog mixer and transmitter, the station received new equipment in 2003 and managed to construct a new studio and a new antenna (92 feet), increasing the quality of its transmissions. Members of other proposed FM radio stations in Palpa, in a personal communication, claimed that the station was actually using a 250-watt transmitter in violation of the license agreement. One of the CRM staff, on condition of anonymity, admitted that the station has been using the 250-watt transmitter. Pashupati Paudel, Section Officer at the Frequency Division of the Ministry of Information and Communication, was not aware of any violation of the license.
agreement and noted there was no complaint from anyone. He further said the ministry monitors the capacity of transmitters from time to time (Pashupati Paudel, personal communication, March 3, 2004).

Including the new addition, the station has (1) a mixer machine with a 14-channel capacity, (2) a Mini Disc that was being used for public service announcements and studio live recording, (3) a compressor/limiter/gate that sends programs from the mixer to transmitter antenna, (4) a telephone hybrid that was being used to relay programs from Communication Corner in Kathmandu (such as Kayakiran), (5) a patch bay that connects all the equipment; a compact disc player; stereo double cassette tape deck that was being used to record and play, (6) TASCAM 302 MKII cassette player and (7) a computer with 80 GB hard drive and audio editing software Cool Edit. In addition, there were two more computers – one used for office work and the other simply for word processing. Most of the equipment was received from DANIDA/Hougou – Danish International Development Assistance. The old studio was used for recording and for occasional transmission (Aryal, Ramesh, personal communication, February 5, 2004).

Community Radio Madanpokhara (CRM) is in a two-story old house, with floor space of about 1200 sq ft on a 29 ana piece of land, which is roughly about one-fifth of an acre (A 74 x 74 sq ft piece of land is 16 ana or 1 ropani). In a personal conversation, Gunakar Aryal (August 10, 2002) said,
Figure 8. *Community Radio Madanpokhara* in 2002. Picture was taken during first visit to the station.

Figure 9: *Community Radio Madanpokhara* in 2007. Pictured received from Ramesh Aryal.
I provided rooms in my house for free for the first one and a half years and CRM paid minimal rent for 6-7 months. The station later bought my house from the money collected from CRM-sponsored religious programs.

When I visited CRM on August 10, 2002, it was sharing the house with the station manager Gunakar Aryal. The station occupied two rooms on the first floor while Gunakar Aryal’s family was living on the second floor. The area on the first floor, where the new studio is located, was used for keeping domestic buffalos. Referring to the situation, Ian Pringle wrote, “The atmosphere is quite informal with the buffalo housed right next to the on-air booth surrounded by hillside farmlands” (Pringle, 2002).

There have been many changes since those early days. The radio station bought Gunakar Aryal’s house for five hundred thousand rupees, which is a little over seven thousand US dollars, and Gunakar Aryal and his family have moved into the new house they built near the station. The radio station is now more spacious. The ground floor has two studios and a library, which is used by radio representatives for their work of writing out the programs, collecting news and the like. An office, a meeting room and a store occupy the first floor.

In order to establish a community radio station, Madanpokhara VDC adopted the Constitution of Community Radio Madanpokhara, exercising the power provided by VDC regulation 2048 B.S. (1991) Section 59(2). The preamble of the constitution of CRM says the purpose of establishing Community Radio Madanpokhara are:
to practice the rights guaranteed by the constitution of Nepal 1990 and to have public participation in preserving these rights,
- to empower people by informing them about the issues that affect them,
- to develop a democratic culture, and
- to strength democratic politics.

As outlined by the Constitution of CRM, its objectives are to bring social change through education, information and entertainment, to raise awareness through programs on education, health, forestry, agriculture, environment and population issues, to help development initiatives with the slogan, “Communication for Development,” etc.

5.4. Community Initiative

It was not that easy to get a license and to establish a radio station. The establishment of Community Radio Madanpokhara (CRM) was only possible because of dedicated personalities like Somnath Aryal, Yam Prasad Pandey, Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo, Bharat Dutta Koirala, and others. Somnath Aryal is a retired schoolteacher of Sarada Secondary School and a faculty member at Mandabya Multiple Campus, Madanpokhara-6 in Palpa. When I visited the campus on December 14, 2003, Campus Chief Radha Krishan Sharma, who is also an Executive Committee Member of CRM, expressed pride in Somnath Aryal as a teacher at his college. As Somnath Aryal put it, he had difficulties in his life, especially when he was in school. He could not continue further studies after completing 8th grade in 1965 because it was the highest-grade taught in the village at the time and his family could not support him financially for further studies outside his
village. However, he was fortunate to receive a teaching opportunity at the same school in 1965, was selected for the teachers’ training program, and became a permanent teacher after completing the training course. Financial difficulties did not stop him from pursuing further studies outside his village. He continued his studies as a private student and completed his M.A. while teaching at the school. He already served as the station manager and has been serving as the coordinator and a member of the 21-member Executive Committee for CRM. He remembers the days of struggling to get the station license:

Social worker Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo of Tansen, Palpa, had been in contact with media specialists Bharat Dutta Koirala and Hem Bahadur Bista since the Panchayat era (before 1990). In the mid 1990s, Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo contacted me, our VDC chairperson Yam Prasad Pandey and others in the Madanpokhara VDC and brought the idea of having a community radio station in the Madanpokhara VDC. The Madanpokhara VDC formed a five-member Radio Operation Committee including myself, Nagendra Pandey, Ghapendra G.C., Urmila Aryal and Yam Prasad Pandey in order to explore the possibility of establishing a radio station and to do the groundwork for it. A public meeting was called and Vinaya K. Kasajoo, Hem B. Bista and Bharat Dutta Koirala were invited. The VDC provided Rs. 10,000/- for the start-up activities for the initiative. A joint account was opened in the name of two of Radio Operation
Committee members Ghapendra G.C. and myself. (Somnath Aryal, personal communication, February 5, 2004)

Kasajoo had studied journalism in Banaras, India, and became a reporter for *Dainik Nirnaya* [Daily Decision] published from Bhairahawa in 1965. The newspaper used to cover only politicians or high profile personalities and national news, but when he started reporting news from villages and local activities, sales of newspapers increased. Born in Ridi of the Gulmi district and having served as the Pradhanpanch [VDC Chairman] of his village, he would not call himself a communist, but Mr. Kasajoo was close to the leftist movement in the region. People from the Gulmi and Arghakhanchi districts living and studying in Banaras, India, used to publish a weekly newspaper, *Bihanipakha* [Morning]. Later it was published from Ridi, Gulmi, as a weekly newspaper and Kasajoo was associated with it. In 1970, Kasajoo served as a reporter for various newspapers published from Kathmandu. He was a reporter for *Srinagar Digest* in 1971. He published *Pahur* [Gift] from Tansen, Palpa, in 1975, the first Nepalese entertainment magazine printed in color. Kasajoo was involved in publishing *Hawaii Patrica* [Air newspaper] in 1975. He became involved in the political referendum of 1979. According to Kasajoo, he became closer to Communists since the people of Madanpokhara were very active in politics, and most of the speakers for the political campaigns were from Madanpokhara. He started *Satya* [Truth] weekly newspaper in 1983, which stopped being published in 1994, after publishing 500 issues.
As Somnath Aryal recalls, it took four to five years of struggle before convincing the government to grant a license to the Madanpokhara VDC to establish and operate a radio station. The government granted a license to the Madanpokhara VDC because the VDC played a very active role in requesting a license and there was no other organization in Madanpokhara that the government could grant the license to (Somnath Aryal, personal communication, February 5, 2004).

As Kasajoo argued, Nepal felt the need for the establishment of people-oriented media, print and broadcasting, to empower the public. Giving an example from India, he explained that despite a long history of more than 50 years of democracy, people in India had elected leaders like Phulendevi, who had been a criminal. People elected the criminals because they lost hope with the political leaders who gave priority to their own personal development and their party colleagues. Learning some lessons from this, Kasajoo started publishing the weekly development newspaper *Gaunle Deurali* in Tansen, Palpa, to give priority to villagers and empower them (Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo, personal communication, March 2, 2004).

As Kasajoo remembers, the idea for a community radio station came from Hem Bahadur Bista. Elaborating it, Kasajoo said:

Hem Bahadur Bista told me that an application had been filed for a license with the government for the establishment of *Radio Sagarmatha* in collaboration with the Federation of Nepalese Environmental Journalists, an NGO. He asked me to register a similar application for a radio station in Palpa. Since I was serving as
the editor in chief of *Gaunle Deurali*, published by Rural Development Palpa (RDP), I registered an application on behalf of RDP for a radio station. (Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo, personal communication, March 2, 2004)

According to Kasajoo (personal communication, March 2, 2004), there were some discussions about different scenarios. Rural Development Palpa did not have enough money to start a radio station. Again, RDP is an NGO, which might not exist in the future, i.e., the structure is not reliable for a permanent medium, like a radio station. On the other hand, the VDC is an elected, more stable body. Furthermore, the government provided Rs. 300,000 every year to each VDC (now the amount is Rs. 500,000). If a VDC agrees to spend Rs. 100,000 of its resources annually, it can start a radio station.

Bista called Kasajoo from Kathmandu and asked whether the people in Madanpokhara were willing to take on the responsibility. Thus, one meeting was called with the Madanpokhara VDC. Yam P. Pandey, Nagendra Pandey, Somnath Aryal and others gathered and discussed the proposal and decided to explore the possibility of establishing a radio station under the Madanpokhara VDC.

As Kasajoo further explained, Bharat Dutta Koirala, then president of World View International Foundation, and Hem Bahadur Bista participated in the meeting, where they demonstrated a 20-watt radio transmitter. Madanpokhara VDC members, members of the Forestry User Groups in the area, and the community members participated in the meeting. Participants were impressed by a transmitter that was small enough to carry around and cost Rs. 40,000. With an antenna it was enough to start a
radio station. At the meeting, four enthusiastic Forestry User Groups pledged to contribute Rs. 10,000/ each for the proposed radio station. Then a formal meeting of the VDC was called. In the meeting, Prem Nath Basyal, then DDC Chairman of Palpa (Nepali Congress) and people from different walks of life, including ethnic minorities, women, and others gathered at the local high school. The public gathering decided to form a committee to run a community radio station under the Madanpokhara VDC. The gathering appointed Yam P. Pandey as the president and Ghapendra Bahadur G.C. as the secretary of the committee. Thus, Rural Development Palpa did not take any further initiative and Madanpokhara became the sole initiator for a license to operate a community radio station in the region (Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo, personal communication, March 2, 2004).

5.5. Community Ownership

How can a station owned by Madanpokhara be a community radio for people living in other VDCs? The name Madanpokhara does not represent other areas. Mohan Pandey of Western FM in a personal communication (December 12, 2003) argued that Madanpokhara signifies the Madanpokhara VDC and its people. Since people from Madanpokhara are famous for their leanings towards communist ideology, the radio station is considered communist radio station. It does not represent people from other VDCs nor does it represent people from other political ideologies within and outside Madanpokhara.
However, Yam Prasad Pandey, Chairman of the CRM board and former Chairman of the Madanpokhara VDC, argued that naming the station *Community Radio Madanpokhara* was a necessity of the times. In spite of the name, the work of the station, the listeners it reaches and the community participation it attracts make it everyone’s radio station. He further said,

The naming of the station *Community Radio Madanpokhara* was a necessity of the times. In spite of the name, the work of the station, the listeners it reaches and the community participation it attracts make it everyone’s radio station. (personal communication, February 5, 2004)

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* provides access and participation to its community members, including schoolchildren. Students learn how the station works and participate in program development. The broadcast of fellow students’ voices and programs inspires others to follow. The following example demonstrates how this process works.

One Saturday, only the station helper Parbati Bhattarai and her young child were around when primary level students from River Valley Boarding School visited the station to learn how the radio station works and record their poems, as suggested by their teachers. They waited a couple of hours at the station because there was no one who could help them to record their poems at that time. Parbati acted as host, showing them around and explaining various pieces of equipment and their functions. At the end, the students were more comfortable with the station and how it works and were able to
record their poems successfully. This was not possible previously, when only the
government-run Radio Nepal was operating in the nation. People do feel more
comfortable when visiting a community radio station than with any other type of radio
station. Community members of all genders, educational and socioeconomic status, as
well as from all ethnic origins, feel comfortable visiting, asking questions about, and
participating in various aspects of the station because they have a sense of ownership.

Community Radio Madanpokhara is owned and run by the Madanpokhara Village
Development Committee (the local government), and the public feels the station belongs
to them. Some might question the validity of a community radio station being under a
local administrative body. However, management officials argue otherwise. Although the
Madanpokhara VDC holds the license for the station, it does not interfere with the
operation of the station. Technically, the local government owns the station, but the
station works as a community station. The board makes policy decisions and its
members’ tenures expire in 3 years. Thus, the VDC does not have direct influence on the
operation of the station. Yam Prasad Pandey said,

In a public gathering we discussed that radio should be under an organized body
or stable organization or institution. The VDC is one of the stable institutions
because it constitutes the publicly elected people. Thus, the public gathering
decided to have a radio station under the VDC. However, not all the good people
get elected. Important figures like Krishna Prasad Bhattarai \(^1\) also lost elections.

Thus, we include people from various walks of life, including women and people from minority ethnic groups as well important persons with different political ideologies. (Yam P. Pandey, personal communication, February 5, 2004)

Although the tenure of local bodies expired in 2001, the government neither conducted fresh polls for local bodies (for political and security reasons) nor extended their terms throughout the nation. In the absence of elected personnel, the central government appointed the secretary of the VDC to exercise the local executive powers. As Yam Prasad Pandey explained, and as has been mentioned in the Constitution of CRM, the existing board members continue after their tenure if for some reason the election is not held on time.

5.6. Community Participation in Management

Although CRM is owned by the Madanpokhara VDC, the organizational setup outlined in the Constitution of CRM makes the management participatory. Section 2 of

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\(^1\) Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, former President of Nepali Congress Party and former prime minister of the coalition government formed after the restoration of democracy, is a very famous and influential leader. He has been credited for his role in bringing in the new constitution and successfully conducting an election for the parliament in 1991. Although his party, Nepali Congress, won the majority in the parliament, despite being the president of NCP and the Prime Minister, he lost in the election to UML leader Madan Bhandari (who died in a controversial road accident later) in the Kathmandu constituency. Bhattarai’s election loss shocked many.
the Constitution of CRM 1999 lists the organizational setup of the station, which includes *Gaun Sabha* [Village Council], *Gaun Bikas Samiti* [Village Development Committee], *Sanchalak Samiti* [Executive Committee], *Esthaniya Paramarsa Samiti* [Local Consulting Committee], and *Sallahakar Samiti* [Advising Committee].

The Village Council includes the VDC President, Vice-President, 9 members from 9 wards, and 4 representatives from each of 9 wards. Thus, the Village Council has 47 members. The Village Council appoints the members of the Executive Committee of the radio station. There could be up to 21 members on the committee comprised of people from various sectors. The Constitution of CRM identifies the Madanpokhara VDC as the highest body of CRM. The VDC members’ tenure lasts for 5 years. However, the tenure of CRM’s Board Members last until the next election or until new board members are selected. This gives continuity even in situations where local elections are delayed. The Village Council can amend the constitution of the station by majority vote, discuss the issues about CRM presented by the VDC, and decide on the annual budget for the station.

An elected eleven-member team makes up a Village Development Committee – a President, a Vice-president and 9 members, one each from 9 wards of a VDC. The Village Development Committee nominates members for the Local Consulting Committee and the Advisory Committee. The VDC can appoint a maximum of 11 members to the Advising Committee and 11 members to the Local Consulting Committee. The Member of Parliament in the region where the station is located [there are three MPs in the Palpa district] heads the Advising Committee, and its members...
include the Chief District Officer, the Army Chief, the Police Chief, the Local Development Officer, the Forestry Chief, the Officer of Agricultural Development, a representative from the municipality, an NGO representative, and individuals, businessmen, intellectuals, women, scheduled caste and NGO representatives from the Madanpokhara VDC. Although the various advising and consulting committees aim for the greater participation, the real power remains with the Executive Committee.

Since the elections in the Madanpokhara VDC have consistently been won by the United Marxist-Leninist Communist Party candidates, this has naturally influenced the
running of the radio station. Nevertheless, Yam Prasad Pandey says that important people of the village, women and members of the minority communities, are included in the overall running of the radio station. However, of the 17 members of the Executive Committee of the radio station, three are organizational representatives and two are women members. Looking at the ethnic and caste composition, one of the 17 members is a Chhetri, one is a Magar, and the rest are Brahmins.

The VDC and its members are active in order to make CRM financially strong and to expand its physical facilities. The VDC can advise the Executive Committee if it perceives a need. The VDC presents the audit report to the Village Council and makes decisions on behalf of the Village Council if the Village Council cannot meet. The VDC receives annual program proposals, policies and budgets from CRM and presents them to the Village Council. Moreover, the VDC can create and drop job titles for staff and volunteers.

The Executive Committee is comprised of up to 21 members. Under the constitution of CRM, the Village Council of Madanpokhara nominates members of the Executive Committee. However, the President and Vice-President of Madanpokhara VDC become the de-facto President and Vice President of the Executive Committee and the station manager becomes the member secretary of the committee. In general, the Executive Committee conducts and manages the day-to-day activities of CRM. The VDC generally nominates members from various sectors of the society. As Yam P. Pandey, former VDC Chairman and the President of the Executive Committee suggested, usually
women and people from minority groups are nominated to the committee. If the committee feels it necessary, it can appoint seven members to *Karya Sampadan Samiti* [Working Committee]. The committee’s tenure lasts for 3 years but remains active until the next committee is formed. The committee meets at least once a month and the majority of total number of votes is valid for any decision.

Membership of CRM is open to all interested. One can become a life-long member by contributing one time Rs. 1000/- to the station. I expressed my desire to be a lifetime member and I became the 78th life member of the station. Other members include individuals and VDCs (21 VDCs plus Tansen municipality), interest groups, such as Mahila Kalyan Samuha [Women’s Welfare Group]. Individuals from anywhere, including foreigners, can be life members. One visitor (British) became a life member when I was at the station. Several schools and Forest Users Groups are also members of the station.

5.7. **Community Participation in Newsgathering**

CRM, although it can be heard in many villages in the Palpa district and parts of neighboring districts, regards 22 VDCs (increased from previous 16) in the Palpa district as its member VDCs. These VDCs are relatively closer to the station and have a radio representative (RR) appointed by the respective VDCs. The RRs act as reporters in the region. Besides sending news from the region, RRs produce a program called *Paribesh Bolchha* [Environment Speaks Out]. They decide on the subject of their program, identify the issue, interview key persons on the issues, and come to the station to record or
develop a program. Neither the VDC nor CRM pay monthly salaries for the RRs; rather they are treated as volunteers. When visiting the station, the RRs receive daily allowances and transportation allowances that are barely enough to cover their costs. When asked what motivated them to work as RR, one representative said (February 6, 2004):

Once I started working as a radio representative, everyone in my village knew me. People respect me. People come to me to share news and ask my advice. I feel good; I feel that my status has gone up. This gives me satisfaction that I am doing something good for my community.

Not only are many VDCs official members of the CRM, but also other VDCs also participate. A radio representative from Rampur was very active, just like his counterparts from member VDCs. The Rampur VDC is far from the radio station and CRM reaches only parts of the VDC. A local storeowner volunteered as the radio representative for Rampur and was actively sending news from his area and participating in each activity. He actively learned more about the station and how it is run. He was so satisfied by the respect that he received from his fellow villages as a RR that he expressed the desire to establish a community radio station in his hometown.
Radio representatives are mostly working people – some of them are schoolteachers and others work for government offices in their villages: some have their own businesses and others are students. Although the station asked the member VDCs to nominate females as their radio representatives, only two of the radio representatives were women. In order to increase female participation, the station appointed 22 female representatives in 22 VDCs. They are comparatively new in the field and have less experience than do radio representatives. In VDCs where both the regular radio representative and female representative are new (since such VDCs recently joined CRM’s community), such as in the Khasauli VDC, both lack experience and feel they are in competition with each other (Somnath Aryal, personal communication, February 6, 2004).
Radio representatives were enthusiastic about their work and like what they have been doing. However, they were not very happy about their future. Some of them said that they wanted this volunteer job so they could gain some experience for a similar job with a commercial radio station. As I asked how long could they work as volunteers, another RR mentioned:

I cannot work my whole life as a volunteer. The station has to find a way to accommodate the needs of volunteers like us. Radio stations, especially those who are in management positions, should think about it soon. Otherwise, the station is going to lose its representatives. There are three more radio stations opening soon in the region. Two of them will be commercial radio stations. One of the commercial radio stations has already advertised for the post of radio representative for different areas. It will certainly pay and CRM’s representatives might apply for the job. If the station wants to keep us, it has to accommodate our needs. (Radio Representative, personal communication, February 6, 2004)

Gunakar Aryal, in personal communication (February 6, 2004), said that many people approached the station and expressed their desire to work as volunteers, especially after they heard that three more radio stations were planning to operate in the near future. They wished to work with CRM so their resume would look good, increasing their chances for finding a similar job, but with a salary, at a commercial radio station.

Although three more radio stations planned to broadcast in the region, the management staff at CRM was not worried about losing their staff to the new radio...
stations. However, the station was providing training for its staff to do multiple tasks. For example, instead of depending on one technician, the station was training all the program producers about the technical aspects so the station would be in a better position. Although the management would not acknowledge this fact, the station anticipates losing its staff and volunteers and was prepared.

5.8. Participation in Program Production

Developing relevant programs is an important issue when there are limited numbers of staff members and the station depends heavily on volunteers. Community radio stations have to prioritize the issues that are important to the community they are a part of and wisely use the limited resources they have. They have to strike a balance between the quality of programs and community members’ participation in such programs. Community Radio Madanpokhara provides its community members an avenue to participate in content/stories, providing opportunities in program development for local youth. One of the main characteristics of community media is that community members participate in every aspect of the station, including recording songs, producing programs, and broadcasting local activities in the local language and dialect. Community members are senders as well as receivers and program producers as well as consumers.

One of the widely accepted contributions of FM radio stations to their communities is the preservation of local culture, promoting local songs, and cultural programs. As Somnath Aryal said in a personal conversation (August 10, 2002), anyone can record his or her songs at CRM. There is no limitation by age, sex, ethnic origin or
political ideology. Either volunteers from CRM go to villages and produce programs with the villagers, or the community members come to the station and record their songs. For example, Suresh Gaire, a graduate student at Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus of Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu, who is originally from the Telgha VDC -8, Palpa, had already recorded three songs at CRM and was planning to record more. Gaire, a young talent from the region, had already produced the albums *Lahure ko gindagi [life of an immigrant worker]* and *Swekirti [acceptance]*, and the CRM helped him to increase his self-esteem (Suresh Gaire, personal communication, October 1, 2003).

CRM, by hiring volunteers from local communities and from various ethnic origins, provides greater access to information for marginalized sections of the population. CRM's programs are not only geared towards the minorities but also are produced by people from such groups.

*Figure 12. A female program producer on the air*
Sukum Nepali, who runs *Utpidit Aabaj [Voices of marginalized]*, a program against social discrimination, has been with CRM for more than 2 years. A primary school teacher, Sukum comes from a lower-caste family. In personal communication, Sukum expressed:

I have mixed feelings when working as a producer for a program geared towards lower-caste families. I am happy to work on issues that are important to lower-caste families and I would like to see other people from so-called lower caste families getting opportunities to express themselves. However, I am not happy in the sense that we have to have such programs to address untouchability and caste-based discrimination in the 21st century in the first place… Although my job as a teacher adds to my credibility, it has been an obstacle because I could not find much time for training, seminars, workshops and other opportunities to enhance my capacity in the field of media. (Sukum Nepali, personal communication, February 7, 2004)

Like Sukum, Bir B. Nepali also comes from a lower-caste family from the Telgha VDC. With an education level of 12th grade, this 21-year-old Nepali has been living in the Madanpokhara VDC and has been involved with CRM for more than a year as an Assistant Producer. He has been actively involved in programs such as *Village News*, *Utpidit Aabaj [Voices of Marginalized]*, *Saitako Bela [Auspicious Time]*, and others. Before joining CRM, he was working with different non-governmental organizations.
involved in the uplifting of marginalized groups of people. In personal communication, he said:

I considered myself a social worker rather than an employee at CRM. Coming from a lower-caste family, I understand the realities in the society. I can develop rapport with lower-caste people easily; and very importantly, people trust me. I believe CRM involved me because of their goal of uplifting the marginalized groups of people, and my background and previous work experiences matched perfectly… The moment I started speaking over the radio was the best moment in my life. I felt that I was gaining status in the society… I found more people liked me after I began working with the radio… The radio has given me an opportunity to talk for many marginalized groups of people like me in the local dialect. It also gave me opportunities to understand the problems in the villages. I believe that radio should be entertaining and educating. The audiences should have feelings while listening to the radio. (Bir B. Nepali, personal communication, February 7, 2004)
Yamuna Saru comes from a Magar family. The coverage area of CRM has a large proportion of the Magar population and they are considered as a relatively marginalized section. A 12th grade student, Saru is a young (18 years old) assistant producer of the Magar program, *Kanug Lam*, at CRM for over a year. She was a student helping her parents with household chores before joining CRM. She was very happy when she heard an advertisement for a position for an Assistant Producer to run a program in the Magar language and thought she could do the job. “Since the Magar ethnic group has been lagging behind, I thought it was the best opportunity for preserving Magar culture and language through radio,” she said. With only three days of basic journalism training, she began her work, and the moment she spoke over the radio was the best moment in her
life. She is dedicated to working to preserve her language and culture through media. She emphasized that one should help those who are trying to learn instead of discourage them and one should not look down the people from marginalized groups. She also felt that one should provide equal opportunities without discriminating based on caste. Programs in Magar not only help to preserve the language but also increase the audience size for other programs. Interest in CRM has increased among Magars, and people listen to other programs while waiting for their language programs (Saru, personal communication, February 7, 2004).

Unlike Sukum, Bir B. and Yamuna, Muna Devi Ghimire comes from a Brahmin family in Madanpokhara. She joined CRM during the station’s early days and has produced various programs, including Bal Karyakarma [Children’s Program], Geevan ko Goretoma [On the path to life] drama with songs, Lokh Juhari [folk songs], Aapanga Sachetana [awareness about disability] and a phone-in program. She was a graduate student who helped her parents with farming. She would take vegetables to the Tansen and Butwal markets for sale before she joined the radio. In a personal conversation, she said,

I did not have any idea how a radio station works. Like others in the region, FM was new to me before CRM started broadcasting. Because of my involvement in extra-curricular activities, such as writing and singing songs, writing poetry, and public speaking, my teachers encouraged me to apply for a volunteer position that CRM had advertised. I like my work here because it has given me an opportunity
to speak to many people and share my thoughts with others. I have received training for anchoring, newsgathering, interview techniques, conflict management, gender equality, and more, but I do not have any training in technology, which I would like to have. (Muna Devi Ghimire, personal communication, February 7, 2004).

However, Ram Chandra Basyal, who comes from a Brahmin family, has a different story of how he joined CRM. Unlike others, who responded to an advertisement for a position, Basyal contacted the radio station himself and asked whether he could join it. A former law practitioner in Tansen, Palpa, 28-year-old Basyal lives within walking distance of the station -- about two minutes. He has been with the station from the very beginning as an Assistant Producer. In a personal communication, he said he feels happy when he meets his fans. The habit of working in media is addictive; it is hard to discontinue. He likes everything here except the management and lack of teamwork (Ram Chandra Basyal, personal communication, February 7, 2004).

These examples demonstrate that CRM empowers local community members through the programs produced by volunteers who come from the local community with little or no previous experience in media. Such producers empower local people through programs with relevant information in local languages and dialects. Furthermore, the program producers usually provided voice services for local advertisements broadcast over CRM. Advertisements, if they air in local dialect, empower people. This was observed during a bus trip from Tansen to Damkada in Madanpokhara on Dec 13, 2003:
A woman, pointing to the CRM volunteer traveling on the bus, proudly told her daughter of 5 or 6 years that the voice in the advertisement for Saris – Nepali clothing for women, was hers. The CRM volunteer was very happy to know that people could recognize her and appreciate her. The mother of the young girl did not appreciate the radio volunteer because she advertised Saris; rather she held the volunteer in high regards as someone she knew talking on the radio. This indicates that advertisements on local radio stations can empower people if the characters in it are from the local community (from researcher’s personal notes, December 13, 2003).

Because producers and programs are relevant to local people, everyone in the area listens to CRM. I spent a night at the Laxman’s home, where early the next morning, I woke up to dense fog. I could sense people’s movements but could hardly see things outside. I could clearly hear the sound of radio from where I was sleeping. I did not see who turned on the radio, but it was clear to me that everyone at home could listen to it. As I had expected, the daughter-in-law started the daily chores of cleaning the buffalo shed and preparing food for them. Laxman’s father milked the buffalos while his mother prepared tea for us. Whatever they were doing, everyone could listen to the radio – the station was, of course, Community Radio Madanpokhara. Unlike television, which requires one to sit and watch, radio has the advantage that people can do whatever they have to do and still listen to it.
5.9. Participation in Financing the Station

Almost all of the community radio stations in Nepal received some kind of technical and/or financial support for their start-up from international organizations. CRM is no exception to this, and it received support from both international and local organizations, local government, district-level government, community-based organizations, and individuals. Moreover, the station was innovative in generating revenue and collecting limited resources from advertisements for local goods and services and from sponsored programs.

Community Radio Madanpokhara has received equipment, training and technical support from the UNESCO. Other partner organizations include the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Danish International Assistance Program (DANIDA), MS Nepal, and Local Initiative Support Program/Helvetas. Some have provided technical/equipment support while others provided support through sponsored programs.

Moreover, CRM has received support from local governments. The District Development Committee (DDC) of Palpa and various Village Development Committees (VDCs) are providing financial support to the station (Somnath Aryal, personal communication, February 5, 2004). Local governments are also helping community radio stations in other parts of the country as well. For example, the DDC of Dhankuta passed a proposal on February 2002 that included a provision that each VDC in the district provide annually Rs. 5,000 from their budget for community radio stations (Rai, 2002, February 26).
CRM has been exploring multiple ways of collecting resources for the station. The various sources of revenue include service charges, individual and group contributions, sales of CRM-produced albums, CRM-sponsored religious functions, and others kinds of support.

Although it is not mandatory, the CRM station expects Rs. 200.00 when a group visits the station for an educational tour. Also, individuals – locals as well as outsiders – may contribute to the station. The contribution could be for the general treasury or for a particular project. For example, 163 persons contributed to the purchase and reconstruction of the station building. The contributions ranged from Rs. 501/- to Rs. 40,000/-, with the majority of contributions being Rs. 500/- and Rs. 1000/-.

The station invites everyone to participate and opens the membership to anyone interested. There are two types of memberships – one regular membership for anyone, with an annual renewal, and the other a lifetime membership. Anyone can become a member by contributing Rs. 5.00 to the station, while lifetime members pay Rs. 1000.00 one time. Again, this ensures greater participation in the ownership and revenue generation and helps to make the station a community station in the real sense.

Contributions from different individuals and social groups have been one of the major sources of income for CRM. Not only does it generate much needed revenue for the running of the station, but also it instills a feeling of ownership among individual community members and social groups. There were more than 70 lifetime members by April 2004.
Furthermore, CRM generates revenue from contributions from Listeners’ Clubs and Friends of Radio Groups. For example, Mahila Radio Sangi Samuha [Women Friends of Radio] of Madanpokhara collected Rs. 12,000/- from Musthidan and gave Rs. 8,000/- to the station, keeping the rest for itself. The roles of such clubs and groups will be discussed in detail later.

One of the significant public participation activities for collecting resources for the station has been the station-sponsored religious programs. CRM mobilized community members to organize such programs. But not everyone appreciated the CRM sponsored religious programs. As Yam Prasad Pandey said, “Some people did not like it [the religious program]. They said that communists of Madanpokhara had lost their mind sponsoring religious programs.” Similarly, others were unhappy with the programs, saying that women are not supposed to read religious text at such functions. However, Pandey (personal communication, February 5, 2004) argued:

We used these events not only to collect money, but also to show that women are equal to men and that they can do all the work that traditionally only men were doing. Therefore, we invited women as bachikas (religious text readers) at these religious programs. Some people were against it – because they believed this was

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2 As in other parts of the world, Communists in Nepal are not expected to organize religious functions. The public was made aware during the parliamentary election that communists are opposed to religious practice, so they should not vote for the candidates from community party. It was thus surprising for many people to see Communists organizing such major religious functions.
not religiously allowed or correct. In the same year, this area suffered from
drought and heavy floods. Many people blamed us for these natural calamities
and claimed that such disasters happened because women were allowed to read
the religious text. However, most people were positive.

CRM-sponsored religious programs were important not only because they
succeeded generating a huge amount of resources for the station but also because they
broke with tradition by inviting women to be religious text readers. Traditionally, only
the male priests read the religious text in such functions. According to Yam Prasad
Pandey, Chairman of the Madanpokhara VDC, CRM deliberately invited Mrs. Shanti
Subedi to read the religious text in order to demonstrate that men and women are equal to
men. Thus, CRM station played an important role in breaking with tradition.

5.10. Participation in Programming: a Case of Saita ko Bela

Community members participate in every aspect of Community Radio
Madanpokhara, including program development and transmission. Community members
are not the passive receivers of the content delivered to them; rather, they are active
participants in creating the contents for such programs, blurring the line between the
senders and receivers. Saita ka Bela [An Auspicious Time] is one such program. Here is
my observation of Saita ka Bela in February 2004:

It was Monday, February 9, 2004 and I was at the station. Ram Chandra Basyal
was hosting the program Saita ka Bela and Rajesh Aryal was guiding the participants,
while Birendra Gimire was taking care of technical aspects and Bir Bahadur Nepali was assisting the team in locating songs. The program lasted 45 minutes.

The topic for the program was “a letter from an immigrant in a foreign country to his family members at home.” The topic was announced at the beginning of the program and listeners were asked to participate. The first caller had to begin the letter – the first paragraph- and request one Nepali song related to the story line. The second caller had to continue the content of the letter further and request one more song to go along with the story line, and so on.

First, one participant called. Rajesh Aryal picked up the phone. He briefly explained the program and inquired whether the caller knew the theme of the letter. He gave an idea about how to develop the story for the letter and asked which song the caller would request for the story line. Once the station and the caller agreed on the song, the caller was transferred to the program host, i.e., Ram Chandra Basyal, who was listening to the conversation between the station and the caller from the studio. By the time caller spoke on the live broadcast and began his/her story, Bir Bahadur Nepali had located the requested song. If the caller’s requested song was not available at the station or the station would not broadcast it, Rajesh would ask the caller to choose another song (CRM does not broadcast songs that it feels degrade the values of women or are not appropriate for families.) He would suggest the available songs that would be appropriate for the story of the letter being developed. Bir Bahadur Nepali would locate the song and bring it to Birendra Gimire, the technician. One caller requested the song “Bhatkai dinchhu….,”
However, Rajesh Aryal told the caller that the station did not broadcast such songs and requested a change. This ensured that a caller would not request an unavailable or inappropriate song. Moreover, it ensured that the caller would not say embarrassing things on a live program.

Figure 14. Program coordinator Rajesh Aryal busy in writing a program

The story of the letter moved very smoothly as if someone had previously written a nice letter on a paper. Although the callers were from different areas and even from outside the district, the story and the accompanying requested songs were matched to the story line, and the program was very interesting, entertaining, and educational. In my observation, all of the callers were young people. Some of them were undergraduate
students. They included both males and females. Some callers would write a letter based on the story and read it over the live program while others would simply make a story of the letter once they were live. Most of the time callers would present or tell the story of the letter in more interesting, entertaining, and emotional ways than Rajesh had suggested. Most of the callers were from the Tansen municipality, the nearest town. Two of the callers were students from the Gulmi district living in Tansen. Because of the lack of telephone services, villagers rarely participate in such programs.

The content of the letter was this: It is not easy to live and work in a foreign country. The writer chose to go to a foreign country to make some money to pay back his loan. He would return home as soon as he made enough money to pay the credits. He wanted to return home soon to live in his village, and he asked about the security situation. The songs requested were a very good match with the content of the letter and very sentimental.

Besides phone-in-programs, community members and listeners participate in various programs by writing letters. Most of the letter writers are from the Tansen municipality, as is the case of phone-in-programs. There are two collections centers in Tansen city where anyone can drop a letter that goes to CRM without any stamps. The station volunteer or staff collects the letter from such centers every day. There were about 100 letters each day –collected at such centers and coming through the regular mail. The senders usually marked the letters with an appropriate program name.
5.11. Listeners’ Clubs and Friends of Radio Groups

There are multiple ways community members can participate in their radio stations, including participation through Listeners Clubs and Friends of Radio Groups, among others.

In order to bring about more community participation, CRM has helped its community members to establish Listeners’ Clubs and Friends of Radio Groups. These clubs and groups mobilize communities to adopt a feeling of ‘ownership’ of their station. Participation in such listeners’ clubs or Friends of Radio is itself a pledge of commitment to the cause of radio. Furthermore, club members generate resources, help community members to participate in, and get access to, the inner workings of the station, and help build rapport and understanding between the station and the community members.

Listeners clubs are effective in bringing community news to radio and radio news to community. Broadcast of local news and activities over radio raises the level of awareness among the people, empowering them and giving them a sense of importance. These feelings of importance inspire and encourage people to work in the group and community. Local news and activities make the community members the newsmakers and an important part of the society. This encourages others to follow – i.e., to be engaged in development activities and to participate in radio activities. It also helps participants to generate more community news.

Listeners’ clubs have been helping the station to receive news from villages. Radio cannot be sustainable broadcasting only national and international news. People
listen to radio only if it broadcasts their stories and they can participate. Broadcast of local news makes them feel the station belongs to them. As Somnath Aryal argued, establishment of radio listeners’ clubs increases the radio family size. The listeners’ involvement increases their knowledge and prepares them to run the station in case the staff fails to do so (personal communication, February 5, 2004).

There are about 70 active CRM Listeners’ Clubs with annual programs. The listeners clubs not only listen to and encourage others to listen to CRM in groups and discuss the matters broadcast, they also have their own activities. The station helps them to design annual programs of their own and covers their activities as local news. The planned activities of CRM’s Listeners’ Clubs include the collection of Musthidan [donation of one palm of grains to the radio station each time a family cooks their meals], cleaning the environment, social development, awareness programs about HIV/AIDS, literacy programs, community development, discussions about alcoholism and its effects, club anniversaries, radio program development, warnings about playing cards in the community, celebrating religious functions, family planning and reproductive health awareness programs, personal development programs, cultural programs, sports, toilet construction and empowerment of women (Somnath Aryal, personal communication, February 9, 2004).

Programs have listener clubs too. One example is the radio program Good Governance, with its main slogan “general people’s access to authority.” Produced by the non-profit organization Pro Public, it had 71 Clubs in the Palpa district alone. According
to information provided by Pro Public, there were about 2,400 such clubs throughout the country. The good governance radio program aims to create a “vibrant civil society” by developing zero tolerance against corruption. The 30-minute weekly radio program has been broadcast through Community Radio Madanpokhara and Radio Nepal, Swargadwari FM in Dang, Saptakoshi FM in Sunsari, Kalika FM of Chitwan and Himchuli FM of Pokhara. The majority of the members of the listeners’ clubs are educated, socially recognized and sensitive to social concerns. One club has at least seven members, including men and women. In March 2004, there were more than 20,000 members of listeners’ clubs (Kedar Khadka, personal communication, March 3, 2004).

Radio Listeners’ Clubs collect grains and cash as Musthidan for the station. They decide themselves how much to keep and how much to send to the station. Some clubs have provided 25%, while others have given 80% of the revenue they collected to the station, keeping the rest for the clubs’ activities. The clubs engaged young people in creative activities. Once youth from different ethnic backgrounds were involved in such clubs, intercultural communication in the villages improved. The clubs have helped undo the traditionally rooted practices of untouchables by actively participating in awareness programs (Somnath Aryal, personal communication, February 9, 2004).

Besides Listeners Clubs, community members actively participate through Radio Sangi Samuha [Friends of Radio Groups]. According to Somnath Aryal, a meeting of Friends of Radio Groups decided to produce a program and broadcast over CRM, publish its mukhpatra [an official paper], organize a cultural program and generate resources for
the station by selling its tickets to the public. They wanted to broadcast a drama over the station. Each Sangi Samuha group paid Rs. 50/- in order to register with the station and Rs. 25/- per year for renewal. The station corresponds only with the registered Sangi Samuha, which are allowed to take part in different activities. Madanpokhara VDC has nine Sanghi Samuha – one in each ward. Other VDCs have one main Sangi Samuha. Two representatives from each VDC belong to the district assembly and elect an executive body of the Friends of Radio Groups.

5.12. Musthidan, a Million Dollar Idea

Community Radio Madanpokhara uses other innovative ways to generate resources. Oftentimes such innovative ideas come from its community members. Musthidan is one such idea that came from a participant in a CRM-sponsored meeting. Musthidan refers to an idea in which each household sets aside a handful of rice grains from their daily consumption and gives it to the radio station.

Community Radio Madanpokhara organizes meetings where community members are encouraged to speak about the activities of the station. They are then given the opportunity to critically evaluate those activities and make suggestions. Tuk Lal Khati, a participant in such a meeting in Bandipokhara, reluctantly put forward his idea of helping their radio station to collect resources in the form of Musthidan. Somnath Aryal put this idea before the station’s Board Members. The idea was accepted and Friends of Radio Groups were given the responsibility of implementation. If a family donated one musthi [palm] of grains each day, there would be 365 musthis of grains collected from a
family. If one musthi is worth Rs. 1, then one family could contribute Rs. 365/- in a year. If all the family members in the member VDCs contributed in such a way, the station would be able to run smoothly, without financial constraints. Some of the families contributed grains and others have provided cash. However, the cash was not equivalent to Rs. 365; sometimes it was more and other times less. A member of the group would go home to home to collect whatever people wished to donate to the station (Somnath Aryal, personal communication, February 5, 2004).

The listeners’ clubs collected musthidan in their respective areas; some provided rice grain and others provided equivalent amounts in cash (oftentimes not equal to that amount of rice). The clubs kept a portion of the funds raised for their own local activities and sent 25 to 80 percent of the collected amount to the station. Funds raised through musthidan represent a significant percentage of CRM’s budget. After over 70 local listeners clubs were mobilized as part of the campaign, this amount was expected to exceed USD 4,000 annually (Somnath Aryal, personal communication, February 4, 2004).

The contributions of the community members in cash and in kind have benefited the station and the radio listeners clubs in various ways. It has improved the sustainability of the station, and increased the community members’ sense of ownership and responsibility over the radio station. Community members feel that they have more authority in decision-making, programming, and policies of the station. At the same time, the radio clubs have also been able to expand and strengthen their social, cultural, and
advocacy activities since such clubs keep a portion of resources for their local activities. Furthermore, at a time of increasing media commercialization and globalization, Tuk Lal’s simple idea of musthidan for their radio station could be a practical way to increase both local participation in the radio station and the sustainability of local community radio.

5.13. Community-centered Programming

The types of programs community radio stations produce and broadcast distinguish them from both commercial and government-run radio stations. Community Radio Madanpokhara broadcasts 25 percent educational programs, 25 percent informational programs and 50 percent entertainment programs, all in Nepali and Magar languages. Although CRM focuses on information and education, music and entertainment is also an essential part of the station’s programming. The broadcast of local songs and other folk songs seems very popular. “People enjoy music from the station, especially we villagers who don’t have our own cassette players,” according to one local resident.

CRM produces and broadcasts programs with active participation from its community members and different interest groups, such as women and farmers. Unlike mushrooming commercial FM stations and the government-run Radio Nepal, which do not work for the public interest, CRM broadcasts information that is important to the community. A typical local news broadcast (6:30 PM Local Event by Rajesh Aryal. Oct 1, 2003) would be like this:
1. An NGO’s plan to conduct research about Magars in the region,
2. Importance of cleaning and security during Dashain festival (Hindu festival when offices and schools are closed for a couple of days) organized by a local club,
3. Discussion about family planning and gender issues organized by a local club,
4. Journalists’ recent visit to India,
5. News of Bishow Hindu Mahasang [World Hindu Federation],
6. Radio representative’s telephone reporting about burglaries in villages,
7. News of an educational workshop organized by a club for children, and
8. News about the opening of an electricity facility in the Geja VDC.

The news items were short except for the news of the journalists’ educational tour to India. A team of journalists from Nepal, including a program producer at CRM, had gone for an educational tour to India, and the news about the tour was unusually long. It was a rare case when radio workers called attention to themselves more than the community they served.

The local news is followed by the national news from Radio Nepal at 7:00 pm as required by regulations. Radio Nepal broadcasts advertisements during its news broadcast, considered the peak listening hour. CRM carried the Radio Nepal news as mandated by law but played music instead of the advertisements. It disappointed sponsors who paid a very high rate for the time slot. Instead of playing music, CRM could insert local advertisements or public service announcements.
CRM gives priority to the development of programs that focus on uplifting women’s status, and that empower the marginalized and the disadvantaged sectors of the community. Theoretically, the law abolished the caste system a long time ago. However, this practice is observed almost everywhere in Nepal, especially in rural areas. CRM, with the help of Helvetas/LISP, produces Janjati ko Uthan “Empowerment of scheduled castes” to help members of the so-called lower castes, who have been marginalized. Similarly, CRM’s Garikhane ko Paurakh “The bravery of the worker,” produced with the help of Helvetas/LISP, is geared towards increasing the self-esteem of marginalized people (Somnath Aryal, personal communication, August 10, 2002).

Not only does CRM broadcast the regular developmental and local news, it also airs breaking news as it happens. One such example is the breaking news of a bus accident. Local residents who witnessed the accident first, called the radio station before they called police for help. The station went on air with the news, which helped the local hospital to plan for the treatment of the wounded and encouraged local people to donate much-needed blood. Many people died in that accident and many more were seriously injured. Because of CRM’s news, there was no shortage of volunteers and blood donors, it helped to save many lives (Rajesh Aryal, personal communication, February 6, 2004).

5.14. Challenges

Community Radio Madanpokhara (CRM) is one of the success stories in the establishment and operation of a participatory community radio station. However, it is not exceptional when it comes to the problems or challenges community radio stations
face. These challenges include financial sustainability, instilling community ownership, managing management conflicts, keeping the station free from political influence, and reducing the effects of political instability in the nation. Other challenges include technical difficulties in networking with similar radio stations, and producing and airing programs with active participation from the local community members.

**Financial Challenges.** Like many community radio stations throughout the world, CRM also has formidable financial challenges, and sustainability is one of the big problems. A large proportion of resources collected goes toward paying the license fees. The station has to pay Rs 55,000 [1 US $ = Rs. 71] per year for its license. To meet this expense, the station must minimize its operating costs. The administrative as well as the programming staff provided voluntary services in the early days of the station. Even now, all staff at the station receive a monthly salary lower than the normal rate for such work. In addition, daily travel allowances has been kept at a minimum. For example, executive committee members, members of the advisory committee and local consultation committee, the station manager, and station coordinator receive only Rs. 200/- [US $ 3.00] per day travel allowance, and the rest of the staff and radio representatives receive only Rs. 150/- daily travel allowance. Despite limiting operating costs, the station has been struggling to maintain its financial condition (Gunakar Aryal, personal communication, February 5, 2004).

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* has further challenges ahead since it no longer is the only radio station broadcasting in the region. CRM is worried about commercial
radio stations since these stations must divide revenues for sponsored programs in the region. Besides, one of the newly opened stations is a community radio station. A conversation among travelers in a bus demonstrates what lies ahead for CRM.

I was traveling by bus with Laxman Devkota from Tansen to his village of Damkada in Madanpokhara Ward Number 6. Laxman was associated with CRM in the early days of the station and worked as a journalist for local as well as national newspapers before he left for Portugal for further studies. A male passenger recognized Laxman. After exchanging greetings, they entered into a discussion of media. The passenger was aware of three more radio stations planning to broadcast in the near future. The passenger, drawing a parallel to retail shops, argued that the competition in media helps the listeners and that the increased number of radio stations would help the local community. However, he was worried about their surviving the competition. Mentioning Darwin’s theory, he said that a big and strong station might unfairly lower the price for advertisements, killing the other stations, and later monopolize the market, as happens in other sectors (personal notes, December 13, 2003).

Managing the Internal Conflict. It would be very rare to find any management without some level of conflict. Some of the conflicts in management are invisible to outsiders while others became the topic of everyday gossip. Conflict in this CRM management team became very public.

Binay Dhital of MS Nepal, which provides technical support to and help with sponsored programs, noticed the internal conflict within the executive body of CRM. The
conflict comes from political affiliations of senior management staff. There have also been conflicts on issues of nomination in the Executive Body and the skills/training required to run as a station manager, and so on. However, the conflict in CRM is less damaging than the conflict in *Lumbini FM*, another community radio station. At *Lumbini FM*, the problems are mainly due to the involvement of high profile political leaders. One of the board members is a national leader of the Communist Party of Nepal and his brother is among the high-ranking staff. This makes some people believe that this is not a community radio station as claimed by the station; rather it is more inclined to leftist political agendas (personal communication, November 12, 2003).

Community members in Palpa are more committed and their political and social environment is better as compared to that of *Lumbini FM*. People in Madanpokhara have a strong volunteer spirit. Involvement of people on different issues raises their confidence and instills ownership of the station (Binay Dhital, personal communication, November 12, 2003).

MS Nepal has been involved for more than one year with *CRM* and *Radio Lumbini* in advocacy for good governance. Instead of buying airtime, MS Nepal support the existing programs. Assistance to *CRM* goes mainly to its institutional development and training for volunteers rather than towards expensive hardware. However, MS Nepal helps in acquiring small pieces of equipment for the station (Binay Dhital, personal communication, November 12, 2003). Dhital further stated,
Working with CRM is not a problem. We do not want to launch any program competing or parallel to local authority. Since CRM is owned by a VDC, our contribution or activities are not parallel to those of the VDC and the VDC does not feel that we are competing with or challenging them. We want to cooperate, not compete with the local authority.

Despite internal conflict, the staff members cannot talk openly because most of them are relatives or family members. Station manager (Gunakar Aryal), station coordinator (Somnath Aryal), program coordinator (Rajesh Aryal) and office assistant (Ramesh Aryal) all have the same last name Aryal and are from the same village. Bhagwan Bhandari complained that the management of CRM is not efficient and needs change. He did not communicate with the station manager for a long time. Mr. Bhandari, the secretary of the Nepalese Journalists Federation, Palpa Branch, and one of the insiders of CPN-UML Palpa, did not like the way the station manager was treating him. Similar criticism of the station manager came from Basyal, who is not from the Aryal family.

There have also been conflicts because of the generation gap between the management and programming staff. People in management are from a relatively older generation whereas people in programming are from the new generation. Young people want to make the station more competitive with commercial radio stations in the region and they are ready to accept commercials allowed by government regulations. Besides, persons in programming have become more popular, and respected in the society than
those in management. For example, program producer Rajesh Aryal is more popular than the station manager Gunakar Aryal and station coordinator Somnath Aryal. This made the management staff feels threatened. Furthermore, the generation gap between management and the programming staff can be seen in the way the station staff behaves with radio representatives in the following observation:

I was at the station for a planned audience survey. There were 17 radio representatives who came for survey training. The training lasted until very late evening. Most of the radio representatives lived far from the station and it would be impossible for them to reach home if they left the station that late. Furthermore, making copies of survey questionnaires took more time than expected. By the time everyone received questionnaires for the survey, it was already dark. The radio representatives had expected some kind of help, but the station manager, Gunakar Aryal, made no attempt to help them (RRs) to stay overnight. Rajesh Aryal, who was returning to the station from Tansen, met the RRs some 20 minutes walking distance from the station and suggested that they return to the station for an overnight stay. The RRs were very pleased with Rajesh and not so happy with the station manager. Rajesh, being the program coordinator and coming from a younger generation, treated the RRs as friends and equals. However, the relationship between the station manager and the RRs was like the relation between a boss and his or her subordinates (researcher’s personal notes, January 13, 2004).

Challenges of Making the Station Politically Balanced. Management of both small and large institutions can have problems. However, the problems might not be
visible to the public or have much effect on the workings of the organization. Some of the problems could be because of personality conflicts while others arise from differences in political ideologies among management team members. The conflict in CRM’s management is mainly due to the differences in political ideologies, i.e., the effect of the split in the UML party at the national as well as local levels.

All the persons in CRM’s management team were members of CPN-UML. Thus, the conflict in UML at the national level and its split into two factions had a great impact on station management. The station manager, Somnath Aryal, sided with the Marxist-Leninist (ML) faction, becoming a district leader of the faction. He was the candidate for parliament from the ML party. However, almost all of the staff and management team members remained with UML. As a result, Somnath Aryal was removed from the post of station manager and Gunakar Aryal was appointed in his place. The community was not in control of the station, at least at the management level; a political party controlled it instead.

Many people, including Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo, are critics of the influence of politics on CRM’s management. Kasajoo recalled a conversation with Gunakar Aryal and his lack of interest in media before he was appointed as the station manager. Kasajoo argued that Gunakar’s personality was not acceptable in the teachers’ community (Gunakar Aryal was a school teacher before he joined CRM.) or in media. Gunakar did not allow young people to participate in workshops and seminars. Even so, nobody spoke
openly of this because most of the people working for the radio were related (Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo, personal communication, March 2, 2004).

Furthermore, Kasajoo saw a problem in the way the RRs are selected. Since the VDC selects its radio representative (RR), there might be problems in terms of the continuity of these volunteers’ work. Although the volunteers appointed by the previous VDC were working at the time, there might be different parties or leaders in the management positions after new elections, and the continuity of RR appointments could be disrupted (Kasajoo, personal communication, March 2, 2004).

Furthermore, there was a case in Nepal’s Supreme Court from Madanpokhara because of the division in UML. After the split, UML had the majority in the Village Council and ML had the majority in the VDC. The conflict arose regarding who would nominate two members to the CRM Advisory Council. This illustrates how difficult it would be for people from other political ideologies to get involved in the station.

*Challenges of Dealing with Political Instability.* Political instability in the nation has adversely affected all the radio stations, community and commercial alike. The Maoist movements and the struggle of the political parties to restore a multiparty system have drastically affected radio stations in Nepal.

When I was talking to different people about CRM in Palpa on Feb. 12, 2004, news came in about a bomb blast. A bomb left by the Maoists was found by children in Khaliban VDC-5 Armising, about 43 km east of Tansen on the Aryabhargyant – Rampur section of the road. The bomb went off while the children were playing with the object,
and a local eight-year-old boy, Aaet Rana, died on the way to the hospital in Tansen. Other wounded children included a ten-year-old girl, Kesari Rana, an eleven-year-old boy, Bil B. Rana and a ten-year-old girl, Bishnu Rana. Gham B. Desuwa, age 50 was injured, who was not aware of what the children were doing.

On the same day, in Tansen, the district headquarters of the Palpa district, public school teachers were gathered to protest government policies for a second day. All the public schools in the district were closed and teachers gathered under the auspices of the joint struggle committee (there are two main teachers’ organizations affiliated with two main political parties – the Nepali Congress and the United Marxist and Leninist Party of Nepal). They had gathered in front of the District Education Office, and there was a confrontation between those office staff members who wanted to enter and the teachers who wanted to block them entering the office. Despite political turmoil in the county and similar conditions in the district, CRM was on the air, covering those events for its community members, just as did on other days.

The next day, bombs went off in many places in Nepal, which was the main news in all national and local outlets. This was mainly due to the anniversary of the Maoist movement. Also, there was a rumor in the town of Tansen that the Maoists had called another banda [strike]. The rumor led many people to cancel travel, including me. However, no strike occurred. The Maoists had called a day off for their cadres on its anniversary of armed struggle in the country. Even so, a rumor paralyzed everything in the region.
In addition to the problems they experience due to the Maoist movement, radio stations in Nepal have been harassed by the government. The Maoists demanded that radio stations broadcast news stories in their favor and cover their movements positively. On the other hand, the government accused the radio stations of broadcasting inflammatory news stories and helping the Maoists. Thus, the radio stations had to balance news reporting and apply self-censorship in order to save themselves from both sides.

Then Minister of Information and Communications Kamal Thapa of the royal government accused private media of boosting the Maoists’ morale. Thapa said that the media was exaggerating the Maoists’ strength by overplaying Maoist-related news reports. FM radio stations were accused of spreading terror by broadcasting news about Maoists and were asked not to play up news reports that promoted the Maoists. Thapa had warned the media that the act of boosting the Maoists’ morale was in violation of the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act (TADA). He warned the media not to treat the Maoists and the government equally (“State and media,” 2004).

Despite the volatile political situation, media experts in the nation had not imagined that the state could impose more harsh regulations. Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo had predicted that the government was unlikely to restrict media. He had argued that with access to the Internet and telephone, it was not possible to suppress the information people wanted to know. Even in Pakistan, media was freer after Parwaj Musaraf took power. In Nepal too, it was unlikely that the government could restrict the media. Media
was helpful for both the government and Maoists in Nepal (Kasajoo, personal communication, March 2, 2004). However, Kasajoo was wrong. When the king assumed power on February 1, 2005, he banned FM radio news broadcasting, and closed Internet and telephone services. It seems no one had expected this.

Challenges in Programs. Community Radio Madanpokhara does not broadcast every kind of program. Only those programs which are educational and useful to farmers are allowed. In a personal conversation (August 10, 2002), Somnath Aryal said:

We (the station) receive recordings from Music Nepal, a recording studio, as well as from individual artists, for free. We do not broadcast “rough” songs. For example, we do not broadcast songs like Malai tehi keti chainchha... [I must have that girl...] because people do not like such songs. The aim of broadcasting songs is to save the lok Sanskrit [folk culture]. We broadcast only Nepali songs – not Hindi or English songs-- as commercial stations do. Other songs that degrade the status of women are not broadcast from the station. We broadcast the opinions of the villagers recorded by our volunteers on the spot. We also broadcast live song competitions in order to encourage community members to participate in program production.

The song Malai tehi keti chainchha… is widely played in commercial radio stations. It is targeted at young people as entertainment. Many people (Somnath Aryal of CRM for example) object to the broadcasting of such songs. However, I have witnessed many young people humming and singing the songs. When I asked Nepalese students at
Ohio University what they thought about this song, they all said they have listened to it and have no objection to it. Besides, the song was not forbidden by the government from broadcasting.

*Community radio stations* like *Community Radio Madanpokhara* can not afford to hire paid reporters to cover the news. Neither do they have resources to verify news reports coming from individuals. Except in its member VDCs, where it has radio representatives, CRM has to take news reports send by individuals at face value. As Rajesh Aryal, program coordinator, recalled, one day (January 1, 2004) Yadav Bhandari, a 21-year-old resident of Tunibot, Malunga-7, Sangja district, visited the station and expressed his desire to broadcast the poem that he wrote for his wife. Later on January 2, 2004, he called again, identifying himself as the secretary of a VDC in the Rupandehi district, to report that Yadav Bhandari had died from suicide. Since the news reporter claimed to be a VDC secretary, the station broadcast the news on the same day.

After three days, the station received another call claiming that Yadav Bhandari was alive and the news of his suicide was wrong. The caller did not say he was the one who gave the false news. Once the station asked him to come to the station, Bhandari came and recorded in his one voice that he was alive and the news was not true. Rajesh Aryal, after talking to him, concluded that the person was mentally disturbed. Aryal theorized that his wife had left him and joined the Maoist insurgency. He lost contact with her and wanted to see her again, so he broadcast his suicide, expecting that his wife would come for the last ritual of her husband. However, she did not. When I talked to
Rajesh Aryal, he said there was no way to verify the information before broadcasting. The caller had identified himself as a VDC secretary, and that was enough for the radio station.

Phone-in programs are one of the most participatory programs, allowing listeners to participate on the air live by telephone. However, they are also challenging since the listeners, not the station, are in control of the situation. There have been many instances that challenged to the programming staff. Rajesh Aryal recalled a case when a caller spoke out of context on a live program. Although Rajesh was not running the program, he took the microphone from the host and asked the caller to behave. As a result, the caller stopped. When this caller later left the village to work overseas, he sent a very nice letter regretting his behavior on the live program. Those who were listening to the program appreciated the role Rajesh played. Although he used strong words, no one took offense because of his good reputation (Rajesh Aryal, personal communication, February 6, 2004).

5.15. Summary

In summary, Community Radio Madanpokhara has shown itself to be a successful community radio station operating in a rural village in Western Nepal. This was possible because of liberal political environment after the restoration of democracy in 1990 coupled with other favorable conditions in Madanpokhara. The government of the Nepali Congress that returned to power following the parliamentary election of 1991 adopted media-friendly policies and ended the state monopoly over airwaves: as a result, many
aspirants received FM radio operating licenses. Madanpokhara was among the early adopters of this media. A large pool of educated people, politically-aware locals, the presence of early adopters of innovations, previous media experience, and other factors provided a firm foundation for a community radio station in Madanpokhara.

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* has developed over time as a part of the local community’s upward movement. As with any other development initiatives, the residents in the region moved upwards in terms of their means of communication. Starting with primitive means, such as Ghopa and Katale systems to Wall Newspapers, the locals have now moved to a radio station. The station has developed in terms of physical infrastructure, from having its own house to modernizing its operation by adding a new studio and enhancing reception by improving its transmitter. With the passage of time, as in any other fields, the station has developed further, gaining experiences in producing quality programs.

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* enjoys wide participation from locals in every aspect of its operation, from the days of its launch to day-to-day operation. Although well-wishers from outside the community brought forth the idea of applying for a FM radio station license, it was the locals who acted upon it. Local residents participated actively in its establishment, management and programming as well as in financing its operation. All of the management and programming staff members are from the local community, and none had previous experience in radio broadcasting. In addition, the
station enjoys community involvement in generating resources that have been used to buy a house for the station and to cover the day-to-day operational costs.

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* has contributed in the development of the area. It has provided not only through news and information to the community but also access to the station to anyone interested. By listening to their fellow villagers discuss the issues important to them and inviting them to visit the station and see how it works, the station is demystifying the technology so that not only the highly-skilled professionals but also people with no previous experience can run the station if given an opportunity.

Like any other community radio station, *Community Radio Madanpokhara* faces many challenges. The station has to solicit the residents’ involvement in every aspect of the station and make them feel that the station belongs to them. It faces the challenge of making the management inclusive of all political ideologies in the community it claims to serve. Community radio throughout the world, including CRM, claims to serve the marginalized population by giving them a voice. As the survey revealed, a large proportion of people from lower castes do not listen to radio and do not have access to any other medium. The station has to work hard to reach marginalized people and give them a voice. Similarly, it has to continue to find innovative ways to secure resources for its day-to-day operation, freeing it from dependence on advertising money. Similarly, the station has to work hard to provide quality programs and involve volunteers and fellow villagers in its development, making their voices heard.
Chapter 6: Audience Survey

6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the audience survey of Community Radio Madanpokhara. The audience survey included Tansen municipality (city) with a population of over 20,000 and 15 Village Development Committees (VDCs) with a combined population of more than 56,000 in the Palpa district of Western Nepal. In this chapter, I provide the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents and their access to electronic media, especially FM radio. This chapter includes radio listening patterns in the region, and local residents’ participation in the affairs of their community radio. In addition, I provide the survey results of the local residents’ opinion towards community radio and the popularity of different programs and producers of CRM.

6.2. Characteristics of the Respondents

The Table 6.2 indicates that one-fourth (25.9%) of the respondents were from the city, i.e. Tansen municipality, and the rest from villages. The sample consisted of the highest number of respondents from Magar ethnic group (292), followed by the Brahmin (195), and the Lower-caste families (84). A large proportion of the Magar, Lower-castes and Chhetri respondents was from villages, whereas Newar respondents were mostly from the city. The Brahmin respondents were equally from the city and the villages. Most of the Brahmin respondents were from Tansen municipality (49.7%) and Madanpokhara (19.5%) whereas there were no Brahmin respondents in Koldada, Bandipokhara,
Devinagar and Darlamdada VDCs. Among the 65 Chhetri respondents in the sample, almost one-third (32.3%) of them were from Tansen municipality followed by Bandipokhara (24.6%), Masyam (15.4%), and Pokharathok (6.2%), Nayarnamtalesh, Humin and Bhairabsthan, each with 4.6% (Figure 4).

In the Hindu caste system, Brahmins are at the top of the hierarchy and are expected to be teachers and priests. Similarly, Chhetries are supposed to be in governance and security, Baishav (Newar for example) in the business and trade and Suddra (lower-caste) in serving the others. Lower caste people are often called untouchable and people from higher castes would not allow them to enter their homes and would not eat or drink anything touched by them. Although caste-based discrimination has been outlawed, it is still practiced in most parts of Nepal, especially in rural areas. All people from upper caste are not rich nor are all lower caste people poor. However, in general, people from the upper castes are considered financially and socially superior and the lower caste people are considered as marginalized.

As Table 6.2 shows, Magar respondents in the sample come from every VDC and Tansen municipality, the only ethnic group to do so. A high percentage of Magar respondents were from Pipaldada (16.7%) followed by Chirtundhara (11.6%), Kaseni (10.6%) and Baughapokharathok (9.6%). There were only 28 respondents from the Newar ethnic group in the sample, mostly from Tansen municipality (67.9%) and Devinagar (21.4%). Respondents from lower-caste families (Kami, Damai, Sunar, Sarki, etc.) were from all VDCs and Tansen municipality except Nayarnamtalesh and
Darlamada VDCs. Among the 84 respondents from lower-caste families, a high percentage of them were from Humin (16.7%) followed by Bandipokhara (14.3%), Tansen municipality (13.1%) and Madanpokhara (10.7%). Respondents included in the others category came mostly from Tansen municipality and they were from Kumal, and Gurung castes.

Table 6.2 indicates that most of the respondents are young – more than two-thirds of them are younger than 40 years and less than eight percentage were aged 60 years and above. A high percentage of respondents were 20 to 39 years old. The mean age of the respondents ranged from 33.05 years for Magars to 37.69 years from Chhetris.

Table 6.2 shows that the audience survey included interviews with a higher number of males (55%) than females (45%). Although those interviewed within a family were chosen randomly, it is a tendency in Nepal that males tend to come forward for such interviews unless a female is explicitly requested to respond. There were almost equal numbers of male and female respondents from the lower-caste families whereas the Newar ethnic group included a very high number of male over female respondents.

Almost half of the respondents were either illiterate (13.2%) or up to 5 grade of schooling (35.2%) and only 17.6% of the respondents had some college level education. The group “illiterate” included those who could not read and write whereas the group “literate” included those who could read and write and those up to 5 grades of school education. A high percentage of the lower-caste (25.0%) and Magar respondents (16.4%) were illiterate whereas all of Newars were literate. Furthermore, a high percentage of
Brahmin (36.4%) and Newar (35.7%) respondents had some college level education whereas only 3.6% of the lower-castes and 6.5% of Magar respondents had some college level of education (Table 6.2).

### Table 6.2

**Characteristics of the Respondents in Palpa District, 2004**

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<tr>
<th>Caste/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Brahmin</th>
<th>Chhetri</th>
<th>Magar</th>
<th>Newar</th>
<th>Lower Caste</th>
<th>Others</th>
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**Age Distribution**
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<td></td>
<td>98.8%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63.6%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>72.5%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>100.0%</th>
<th>100.0%</th>
<th>100.0%</th>
<th>100.0%</th>
<th>100.0%</th>
<th>100.0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* School Leaving Certificate
Figure 15. Map of Palpa district showing Village Development Committees and district boundaries.
Table 6.2 shows that almost half (49.4%) of the respondents identified themselves as farmers whereas 22.0% were students. There were 28.6% respondents in the “others” category that included service holders, businesspersons, and self-employed. A high percentage of Magars (62.1%) and people from lower-castes (50.0%) were farmers whereas only 14.3% of the Newar respondents were farmers. As indicated earlier, a high proportion of Magars and lower-caste people were illiterate and living in villages. But all Newars were literate with most of them living in the city and were either in services or in business.

As Table 6.2 indicates, the sample includes a high percentage of Hindu respondents (90.4%) and a high percentage of Magar (14.3%) and Newar respondents (14.3%) were non–Hindu. Most probably they followed Buddhism. Similarly, almost all of the lower-caste and Brahmins spoke Nepali language whereas more than half of the Newars (57.1%) and Magars (54.9%) spoke non-Nepali language. Newari people speak the Newari language and Magars speak the Magar language.

6.3. Ownership of Radio Receivers

In Nepal, radio was seen as an expensive communication device in the past by those who had the receivers as well as by those who did not. It was an indication of socioeconomic status. However, the radio set has become ubiquitous and a common household item available for many families in Nepal. According to a study in 1974, there were approximately 115,000 radio sets in Nepal, or 1 out of every 100 individuals or 1 out of every 18 families. Radio ownership was limited to the most wealthy, educated
people because of the extremely high cost of radio sets at that time. Only 5.5% of families owned a radio set. Even if a family had a radio, tuning in was a prerogative of male household head or other adult males in the family. Very few women owned radio sets or had access to them very often (“Radio listening,” 1974). After almost a quarter century later, the national survey of radio listeners conducted in 1997 by Radio Nepal interviewing 3038 individuals of 13 years or older in 15 out of 75 districts of Nepal revealed that 60% of the household possessed a radio set. An estimated 1.7 million radio sets were in Nepal mostly with people living in urban areas, having jobs, as well as with rich people in other parts of the country (Maung & Ghimire, 1997).

The national census 2001 – the latest census in Nepal – indicated that only half (53.1%) of the households in Nepal had access to radio, whereas TV was limited to only 22.5 percentage of the households. Overall, 41.3 percentage of the households had no access to a radio or a TV. Furthermore, the access to radio and television was not homogeneous across the region. Almost two-thirds (64.7%) of people in the urban areas had access to radio whereas only half (50.9%) of their counterparts in the rural areas had access to it. The census data has revealed the great divide in terms of access to television between people in cities (54.9%) and villages (16.4%) in Nepal. Almost one-fourth (24.0%) of people in cities and almost half (44.5%) of the people in villages did not have access to either radio or television (CBS, 2004).

There has been rapid increase in access to radio in rural areas over the years. This may be due to the availability of low cost radios from China in the Nepalese market.
However, data does not indicate a consistent pattern. The 1991 NFHS (Nepal Family Planning and Health Status) survey indicated that 31.7 percentage of people in Nepal had access to radio whereas the access to TV was only 3.7 percentage. The 1996 NDHS (Nepal Demographic and Health Status) survey indicated that the access to radio increased to 36.5 percentage and TV to 6.6 percentage. Radio Nepal’s own survey in 1997 revealed that 60 percentage of the households had a radio set. However, the recent census of 2001 indicated that the average household access to radio was 53.1 (CBS, 2004). However, there is no sufficient information regarding peoples’ access to electronic media in rural areas.

A study in Palpa in 2000 revealed that most of the illiterate people listened to entertainment programs whereas most of the literate people listened to news. A large number of farmers tended to listen to the agriculture programs of Radio Nepal. However, the farmers found such programs less relevant to their problems. The centrally-produced agricultural programs were not useful because the cultivation and harvesting time varies in different parts of the country and programs designed for one area have no relevance for the others. In addition, Radio Nepal’s regional broadcast from Pokhara was neither popular nor effective because of a heavy bias towards Pokhara. All India Radio could be heard clearly, and some people listened to it. In some parts, (Bauhaus, Pokharathok VDCs for example) Kantipur FM from Kathmandu could be heard. People, mostly those who were educated and interested in news, listened to the BBC Nepali and Hindi
programs as well as to the Voice of America. For them Radio Nepal’s news coverage was inadequate (IIDS, 2000).

The present audience survey in Palpa district in Western Nepal describes whether or not the residents owned a radio set (with or without FM band), a television set and a VCR. Since only a few respondents reported having a VCR, it was dropped from the analysis. Furthermore, the Internet was accessible only through a couple of cyber cafes in the city; it was not included in the survey. As Table 6.3 indicates, 86.7% of families in the survey area had at least one radio set. As expected, a higher percentage of families in the city had a radio set (98.3%) than people living in villages (82.6%).

Table 6.3 indicates differences among various ethnic groups in terms of the proportion of families owning a radio set. All the Newar families owned a radio set followed by a high percentage of Brahmins (96.9%), Chhetris (86.2%) and Magars (82.9%) and relatively lower percentage of lower-caste families (72.6%). In general, a higher percentage of families in the city than in villages owned a radio. But the difference was not big among Brahmin and Newar families living in villages and in the city.

Furthermore, the ownership of a radio set with FM reception capacity was found 10 percentage point lower than the ownership of a set without FM reception. FM radio is new in Nepal and most of the radio sets in the past came without an FM band. Although there were a couple of service centers in Tansen, Palpa that could add FM reception compatibilities to existing radio sets, people preferred to buy a new set. Besides, adding FM band was not more cost effective than buying a new FM radio set. In the survey area,
77.2% of households had at least one FM radio. A higher percentage of families in the city had at least one FM radio (85.1%) compared to people in villages (74.5%). A big difference was noticed in terms of family ownership of a FM radio among different caste/ethnic origins. Almost 90% of the Brahmin and Newar families owned a FM radio whereas only 60.7% of the lower-caste families had it. This demonstrated that a large section of the marginalized groups of people did not have a radio set limiting their access to information (Table 6.3).

Table 6.3

Radio Ownership in Tansen Municipality and Different Villages in Palpa District, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caste/Ethnic groups</th>
<th>Brahmin</th>
<th>Chhetri</th>
<th>Magar</th>
<th>Newar</th>
<th>Lower caste</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have a radio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>79.5</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>82.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>97.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>98.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>96.9</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>82.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a FM radio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>74.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>85.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>89.7</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>77.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a TV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>70.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have electricity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages</td>
<td>96.8</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>66.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>96.8</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There were differences between families from the same ethnic origin living in villages and living in the city in terms of their access to FM radio. In general, a higher percentage of families in the city had access to the media. However, a higher percentage of Brahmin and Chhetri families living in villages had FM radio compared to their counterparts in the city. A higher percentage of Magar and lower-caste families in the city had FM radio than families in villages. This demonstrated that people from lower-castes have been marginalized and their media access has been limited no matter where they lived.

Similarly, Table 6.3 shows that 43.0% of households in the area had a TV set. A relatively high percentage of households in the city had access to TV (70.9%) compared to those in villages (29.1%). Only 66.1% of the families in the villages had access to electricity as compared to 97.1% in the city. This may be one of the factors why a much higher percentage of families in the city had access to TV as compared to people in villages. This finding is somehow similar to one conducted in 1995. Wilmore conducted a survey in Tansen in October 1995. The sample included 6% of the total number of 3,211 households in the municipal area that yielded 195 interviews. The study revealed that a little over 72% of the respondents said that their families owned television sets (Wilmore, 2001).

Ownership of a television set varied widely according to the residents’ caste/ethnic origin. Like radio, a high percentage of Newar (75.0%) and Brahmin (73.8%) owned a TV set, followed by Chhetri (58.5%). However, only 28.6% of lower-caste
families and only 19.1% of Magar families owned a TV set. A relatively higher percentage of households in the city had access to TV than their counterparts in villages. This was true for all the caste/ethnic groups. Almost 95% of Newar families in the city had a TV set whereas only one-third (33.3%) of Newar families in villages owned it. Similarly, higher than 90% of the lower-caste families in the city owned a TV set against less than 20% of their counterparts in villages. The pattern was similar among Magars as well. Not all the villages in the study areas had electricity. The city and the surrounding areas had access to electricity and had a TV set. A high percentage of Newars and Brahmins owned a TV set because they lived in Tansen and Madanpokhara (Table 6.3).

In summary, FM radio ownership was highest among Brahmins and it was lowest in lower-caste families (Kami, Damai, Sarki, etc.). The radio was universal in Newar families who are mostly found in the Tansen municipality. The same group of people had the highest level of TV ownership. Families from the lower castes and Magar ethnic groups, which are considered marginalized groups of Nepal, reported the lowest level of electronic media ownership. Despite the availability of radio programs locally and in case of Magars in their own language, a large proportion of people from these caste/ethnic groups lack a radio set limiting their access to information.

6.4. Radio Listening in Palpa

Free from the barriers caused from illiteracy, relatively low cost, portable and run by batteries, and accessible in most parts of the region, radio listening is believed to be high as compared to the use of other media in Nepal. Various studies suggested that not
only those who own a radio set but also those without it report listening to radio regularly in Nepal ("Radio Listening," 1994; Maung & Ghimire, 1997).

Radio Nepal’s 1997 survey estimated that about 0.4 million of people in Nepal listened to radio on a daily basis. The study revealed that 28% of the respondents did not listen to the radio and 13% listened to the radio but not to Radio Nepal. Among those who did not have a radio set, 56% did not listen to the radio. Other non-listeners included non-Nepali speakers (50%) and those who were illiterate (44%). Similarly, 43% of village farmers, poor and homeless people also did not listen to the radio (Maung & Ghimire, 1997). A study by Radio Nepal back in 1970s indicated that more than half of non-owners listened to the radio at least twice a week, usually at a local shop or at a friend’s house ("Radio listening," 1974).

Table 6.4 indicated that almost 90% of the respondents in Palpa listened to the radio. All the respondents in the city listened to the radio whereas higher than 86% of residents in villages did. The percentage of respondents listening to the radio from different caste/ethnic groups was varied. All the Newar respondents listened to the radio, followed by Brahmin (97.4%) and Chhetri (92.3%). But a lower percentage of Magars (85.7%) and the lower-caste families (83.3%) listened to the radio. This could be because radio ownership was varied across the residents from different caste/ethnic groups.

Table 6.4 indicated that radio listening was universal (100.0%) in the city and this was true for all caste/ethnic groups. All the respondents from Newar families living in villages and in the city listened to the radio. Almost 95% of the Brahmin respondents
listened to the radio followed by 88.6% of the Chhetri respondents in villages. A relatively lower percentage of the respondents from Magar (84.7%) and lower-caste families (80.8%) living in villages listened to the radio.

Table 6.4

Radio Listening in the City and Villages in Palpa District, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caste/Ethnic groups</th>
<th>Brahmin</th>
<th>Chhetri</th>
<th>Magar</th>
<th>Newar</th>
<th>Lower caste</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening to Radio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>88.6</td>
<td>84.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>97.4</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>89.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to FM Radio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>96.9</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>76.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>41.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey indicated that the percentage of the respondents listening to the radio (any radio – FM or AM) and listening to FM radio was not the same. Relatively lower percentage of the respondents reported listening to FM radio. In the survey area, 80.8% of the respondents reported listening to FM station. Higher than 94% of the respondents in the city listened to an FM station whereas 76% of their counterparts in villages did. Furthermore, the study revealed a difference in the proportion of respondents from
different caste/ethnic origins that reported listening to an FM radio station. All the Newar respondents listened to an FM station followed by Brahmin (94.9%) and Chhetri (84.6%). A relatively lower percentage of the respondents from the lower-caste families (75.0%) and Magar (70.3%) listened to an FM station (Table 6.4).

As Table 6.4 shows, all the respondents from Newar families living in villages and in the city listened to an FM radio station. Similarly, a large proportion of Brahmin respondents living in the city (92.8%) and those living in villages (96.9%) listened to a FM radio station. Except Newar and Brahmin families, listening to a FM radio station was higher in the city than in villages. For example, higher than 94% of Magars in the city listened to an FM station whereas only about 69% of their counterparts in villages did. Similarly, all the respondents from lower-caste families in the city listened to CRM but only about 71% of such respondents in villages did. Brahmins and Newars, no matter where they lived, listened to an FM radio station in a high proportion. But listening to a FM radio among the lower castes and Magar families depended upon where they lived.

In order to provide a better picture about the media use in the region, the survey included questions regarding the television viewership. In the survey area, 53.1 of the residents watched television. Furthermore, the study revealed a big difference in terms of TV viewership between the city and villages. Almost 87% of the respondents in the city watched TV but only 41.3% of residents in villages did. Similarly, people from different caste/ethnic origins had different levels of TV viewing. A high percentage of the Newar (89.3%), followed by Brahmin (81.0%) and Chhetri (70.8%) respondents, watched TV. A
lower percentage of the respondents from lower-caste (40.5%) and Magar (30.0%) watched TV (table 6.4). As mentioned earlier, Newars in the sample mainly came from the district headquarters Tansen and Brahmins were mostly from Tansen city and Madanpokhara. Brahmins and Newars were better off in terms of economic development and lived in areas with electrification.

In summary, the media use (listening to the radio, and watching television) was not homogeneous. Listening to the radio was universal in the city and yet almost 15 percentage people in villages reported not listening to a radio. Almost all (94.3%) of the respondents in the city listened to FM radio whereas 76.0% of the residents in the villages did. Overall 89 percentage listened to a radio but only 80.8 percentage listened to an FM radio. This could be because the difference in the ownership of a radio with an FM reception and without it was 10 percentage point.

Interestingly, a higher percentage of respondents reported listening to the radio and watching TV than the percentage of families owning these media. This was because people who did not have a set also listened to, or watched at a neighbor’s home or at a tea shop. More than 7% of the respondents reported listening to the radio either at a shop or at a neighbor’s place (not shown in the table). It has been a common practice in many villages across the country that people (mostly men) hang around at their local tea shop and engage in all kinds of gossips. Radio is always turned on in the background and people listen to it, especially the news programs.
The findings indicated different levels of listening to a radio (both general and FM radio) among the different caste/ethnic groups. Listening to both radios was universal among Newar families who generally live in the city whereas it was the lowest in the marginalized groups of people. This indicated that community radio, which claimed of providing access to information and a platform for marginalized sections of the population, has many challenges to get message across to such groups of people.

6.5. Hours of Listening to Radio

Table 6.5 indicates that a high (31.3%) percentage of the residents in villages listened to the radio for 1-2 hours daily, followed by 24.4% of the respondents listening to it for 2-4 hours and 19.2% for more than 4 hours daily. Similar patterns were observed in the city. A high percentage (33.7%) of the residents in the city listened to the radio for 1-2 hours daily followed by 21.1% of them listening to it for 2-4 hours daily.

As Table 6.5 indicates, a high proportion of Brahmins (44.9%), Newars (33.3%), and lower castes (26.0%) listened to the radio for 2-4 hours everyday whereas a high percentage of Chhetris (40.9%) and Magars (35.3%) listened to the radio only for 1-2 hours. Similarly, in the city, a high proportion of Brahmins (34.0%), Chhetries (33.3%), Newars (52.6%) and lower castes (27.3%) listened to the radio 1-2 hours everyday whereas a high proportion of Magars (27.8%) listen to it only for up to one hour everyday.
### Table 6.5

*Listening to the Radio Everyday in the City and in Villages in Palpa District, 2004*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caste/Ethnic groups</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Chhetri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-½ hour</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½-1 hour</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 hours</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4 hours</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4+ hours</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn’t listen</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-½ hour</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½-1 hour</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 hours</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-4 hours</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4+ hours</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn’t listen</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Generally, people in the villages listened to the radio for longer than in the city. It could be because radio was the only means of information for most people in the villages. But most people in the city had access to television as well as other means of entertainment taking away listeners from radio.
6.6. Peak Listening Hours

The audience survey indicated that the highest percentage of the residents in the area turned their radio on during evening, from 6 to 8 (68.8%), followed by morning, 6 to 8 (63.5%), morning, 8 to 10 (32.1%) and evening, 8 to 10 (24.7%) [not shown in the table].

Table 6.6

Preferred Time for Listening to the Radio in the City and Villages in Palpa District, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Ethnic groups</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Chhetri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8 am</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10 am</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8 pm</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>77.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10 pm</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>38.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Ethnic groups</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Chhetri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8 am</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10 am</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8 pm</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10 pm</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CRM was broadcasting its programs 6 to 10 in the mornings and 5 to 9 in the evenings at the time of the survey. Six to 8 in the evening is the time when everyone in the family -- of all service holders, farmers, businesspersons and students-- return home.
It is the time for the national news from Radio Nepal, which is relayed by all the FM radio stations in Nepal as required by law.

Table 6.6 shows that, in villages, the listening time starts from 6 in the morning until 10 pm, with a peak between 6 to 8 pm. This was true for all the caste/ethnic groups except Chhetri, most of whom reported listening to the radio between 6 to 8 am. In the city, people listened to the radio from early morning until late at night, with a peak between 6 to 8 am. This was true for all the ethnic groups. Radio listening was low during other times [not shown in table. Categories are not mutually exclusive and do not add to 100%]. In the city, the peak hour of listening to a radio was 6 to 8 in the morning whereas the peak listening hours in the villages was 6 to 8 in the evening. Television viewing in the city during evening times might be the reason for this difference.

6.7. Favorite Radio Stations

Table 6.7 indicates that the favorite radio station in the survey area was *Community Radio Madanpokhara*, which was favored by 76.5% of the respondents followed by Radio Nepal (7.4%) and Lumbini FM (4.3%). About 10% of the respondents did not respond or they had not listened to the radio, whereas only 1.7% of the respondents favored other radio stations (All India Radio, BBC).

The favorite radio station in villages as well as in the city was *Community Radio Madanpokhara*. CRM was the favorite station for 71.9% of the respondents in villages and for 89.7% of those in the city. In villages, Radio Nepal was the second most popular station, which was the favorite station for 8.6% of the respondents. However, in the city,
Lumbini FM was the second most popular station, which was the favorite station for 4.6% of the respondents. It is interesting to see that the national radio, Radio Nepal, was chosen as the favorite station by only 8.6% in villages and by only 4.0% in the city (table 6.7).

Table 6.7

*Most Often Listened to Radio Station in Palpa District, 2004*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Radio Stations</th>
<th>Place of residence</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Villages</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRM</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>89.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Nepal</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumbini FM</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Broadcast of CRM provided the residents an alternative to Radio Nepal. With clear reception, CRM was local broadcasting providing the residents relevant information. This shift in listeners from Radio Nepal to local or a community radio station demonstrates that people rather choose a non-governmental broadcasting if they have a choice. Lumbini FM is also a community radio station. But it is located in the southern plain in Rupendehi district and only a few areas in Palpa can receive its signals.

6.8. Knowledge About Community Radio Madanpokhara

The respondents were asked whether they knew where the *Community Radio Madanpokhara* was located, how long it had been on the air, what the broadcast hours
were and the name of the radio representative for their area. The study suggested that higher than 71% of the respondents knew the location of the radio station and the daily broadcast time. Slightly more than half of the respondents knew their radio representative for *Community Radio Madanpokhara*. However, only 37.3% of the respondents could recall how long the station had been on the air (Table 6.8).

A higher percentage of people in the city knew the physical location of *Community Radio Madanpokhara* (Tansen municipality is close to Madanpokhara where the station is located) than people in villages. A similar pattern was found in terms of their knowledge about the station’s daily broadcast hours. In contrast, a higher percentage of people in villages knew their radio representative than residents in the city. Each member Village Development Committee (VDC) appoints its radio representative (RR) for CRM whereas Tansen municipality appointed two RRs for CRM. VDCs appointed local residents as their RRs but Tansen municipality appointed two of its employees as RRs who were not familiar faces for community members. Besides, in villages people know each other but people often do not know the next door neighbor in cities.

Not surprisingly, almost all (98.2%) residents in Madanpokhara knew the location of the station. After Madanpokhara, a higher percentage of the residents in Darlamdana (96.3%) followed by Chirtungdhera (94.9%), Baughapokharathok (94.1%) and Nayarnamtalesh (92.3%) knew the physical location of the station whereas only 24.1% of the residents in Pipaldada knew it. Similarly, after Madanpokhara (90.9%), a high percentage of the residents in Baughapokharathok (64.7%) knew how long the station
had been on air whereas only 5.2% of the respondents from Pipaldada knew this. Likewise, after Madanpokhara (96.4%), a high percentage of people in Tansen municipality (87.4%) knew the station’s daily broadcast hours whereas only 31.7% of the respondents in Kaseni and 39.7% of the respondents from Pipaldada knew this (Table 6.8).

As Table 6.8 indicated, everyone in Darlamdada knew their radio representative whereas only 20.7% of the residents in Pipaldada and 29.1% of the locals in Madanpokhara knew their radio representative for *Community Radio Madanpokhara*. Since the station is located in Madanpokhara and all of the senior management staff and most of the programming staff are from here, the station did not feel a need for a radio representative for Madanpokhara for a long time. Pipaldada was added as a member later than others. Madanpokhara and Pipaldada VDCs had recently appointed females as their radio representatives; so they were new to their communities.

A high percentage of the Brahmins (90.3%) knew the location of the station (Most of the Brahmins were from Tansen municipality and Madanpokhara itself). Besides Brahmins, the knowledge about the location of the station was not that much different among the respondents from other caste/ethnic origins. A similar pattern was observed about the knowledge of how long the station had been on air.

Besides Brahmins, a relatively higher percentage (82.1%) of Newars (most of them live in Tansen municipality) knew the station’s daily broadcast hours, followed by Chhetri (70.8%). A relatively lower percentage of the respondents from the lower-caste
families (59.5%) and Magars (61.4%) knew the daily broadcast hours. A high percentage of Chhetris (55.4%) knew their radio representative whereas only 42.9% of Newars and lower-caste respondents knew their radio representatives. Newars mostly live in Tansen municipality and not many residents in the city knew their radio representative (Table 6.8).

Table 6.8

Residents’ Knowledge about Community Radio Madanpokhara in Palpa District, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of residence</th>
<th>Knew the location of the station</th>
<th>Knew since when the station was on air</th>
<th>Knew the daily broadcast time</th>
<th>Knew the radio representative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDCs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koldada</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masyam</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>48.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tansen</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bandipokhara</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>58.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baughapokharathok</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>55.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chirtungdhara</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>87.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nayarnamtalesh</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>65.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>84.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>Devinager</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humin</td>
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<td>57.7</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhairabsthan</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Chhetri</td>
<td>Magar</td>
<td>Newar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darlamdada</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>98.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rupse</td>
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<td>65.0</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>29.1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>70.8</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>82.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>42.9</td>
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<td>42.9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
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<td>71.2</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>51.2</td>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Chhetri</th>
<th>Magar</th>
<th>Newar</th>
<th>Lower-cast</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmmin</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhetri</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magar</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>62.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newar</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower-cast</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>35.7</td>
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<td>63.6</td>
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<td>18.2</td>
<td>54.5</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>71.6</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>71.2</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
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<th>Chhetri</th>
<th>Magar</th>
<th>Newar</th>
<th>Lower-cast</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
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<td>61.3</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td>82.9</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literate</td>
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<td>30.7</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>80.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 9 grade</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>88.6</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLC</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>49.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>49.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>37.3</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Brahmin</th>
<th>Chhetri</th>
<th>Magar</th>
<th>Newar</th>
<th>Lower-cast</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>37.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The respondents’ knowledge about the location of the station, how long the station had been on air, its daily broadcast hours and who the radio representative was related to the educational level of the respondents and their occupations. Only about 43%
of illiterate people knew the location of the station whereas almost 92% of the people
with some college education knew it. The patterns were similar in terms of the
respondents’ knowledge about how long the station had been on air. Slightly higher than
20% of illiterate respondents knew how long the station had been on air whereas almost
54% of the respondents with some college education knew it. Furthermore, only about
45% of the illiterate respondents knew the daily broadcast hours whereas 89.1% of the
respondents with some college education knew it. Similarly, only about 26% of the
illiterate respondents knew their radio representative. A high percentage of the students
(80.5%) knew the location, how long the station had been on air (43.0%), its daily
broadcast hours (83.9%) and who their radio representative was (56.4%) compared to
farmers and respondents with other occupations (Table 6.8).

6.9. Opinion About Community Radio Madanpokhara

Madanpokhara Village Development Committee (VDC) holds the license for
Community Radio Madanpokhara and appoints the management team. The name of the
station “Samudayaik Radio Madanpokhara” [Community Radio Madanpokhara] gives an
impression that the station belongs to Madanpokhara VDC. However, people associated
with the station claimed that the station is a community radio station and it enjoyed
people’s participation in management, financing and program production. Thus, it was
important to get public opinion what the listeners thought about the station.

Concerning the question who owns the station, a high percentage (72.3%) of the
residents believed that the community itself owned the station. Many people in the city
(90.3%) as compared to the villages (66.1%) believed that the community owned the station. Furthermore, a large percentage of the respondents from the Newar (92.9%) and Brahmin (91.3%) caste/ethnic groups believed that the station belonged to the community. However, only 60.1% of Magars and 61.9% of lower-castes believed it (Table 6.9).

A greater percentage of young people than older people believed that the community owned the station. A higher percentage of males (77.4%) than females (67.7%) believed that the station belonged to the community. The study revealed that the respondents’ opinion about the ownership of the station was directly related to their educational level. Almost 96% of the respondents with School Leaving Certificate and 94.1% of the respondents with some college level education, as compared to only 42.7% of illiterate respondents, believed that the community owned the station. The study also revealed that large proportion of farmers did not know who owned the station. Only 61.7% of the farmers believed that the station belonged to the community as compared to 83.2% of the students (Table 6.9).

Similarly, Community Radio Madanpokhara operates with active participation from local people. It has five administrative staff/volunteers and 11 staff/volunteers in program production. All of them worked as volunteers in the early years and now receive salary, but it was much less than they would receive if they worked for a commercial radio station. In order to get public opinion, a question was included: what they thought about who managed the station.
### Table 6.9

*Residents who Believed that the Community Owned, Managed, Financed and Produced Programs for the Station, Palpa, 2004*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Proportion of respondents who believed that the community itself</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Owned</td>
<td>Managed</td>
<td>Financed</td>
<td>Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caste/Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhetri</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magar</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newar</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower castes</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 20</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 40 years</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>41.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>40 – 60 years</td>
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<td>42.2</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>61.2</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>36.7</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>77.4</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>41.4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>67.7</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>57.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literate</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 -9 grades</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
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<td>SLC</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>88.6</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>50.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As Table 6.9 indicates, 55.5% of the respondents believed that the community itself managed the station. In addition, a higher percentage of the respondents in the city (80.0%) as compared to people living in the villages (46.9%) believed that the community itself managed the station. A high percentage of the Brahmins (73.8%), followed by the Newars (64.3%) and the Chhetries (52.3%) believed that the community managed the station. However, less than half of Magars (46.8%) and the lower-caste (44.0%) respondents believed it. A high percentage of the younger residents, compared to the senior citizens, in the area believed that the community managed the station. A large percentage of males (59.1%) than females (52.0%) agreed that the station is managed by their community itself.

Like ownership, the study revealed that the people’s opinion about the management of the station was directly related to their educational level. More than 81% of the respondents with School Leaving Certificate (SLC) and 78.2% of the respondents with some college level education as compared to only 25.8% of illiterate respondents believed that the community managed the station. The study also revealed that only 43.7% of the farmers believed that the community was managing the station as compared to 67.1% of the students who believed it (Table 6.9).

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* received technical as well as financial assistances in its start-up phase. The station has received donations and financial
contributions from local residents. A question was included in order to get public opinion what they thought who financed the station.

Table 6.9 shows that a greater percentage (63%) of the residents in the area believed that it was their community itself financing the station. A higher percentage of people in the city (84.6%) as compared in the villages (55.9%) believed that the community itself was financing the station. This belief was shared by a high percentage of Brahmins (79.0%), followed by the Newars (67.7%) and the Chhetries (67.7%) and a low percentage (53.6%) of the Magars and the lower-caste people (56.0%). Most of the young residents than seniors and males (69.5%) than the females (57.0%) believed that the community itself was financing the station.

Like ownership and management, the respondents’ educational level was directly related to their opinion about who was financing the station. More than 88% of the respondents with School Leaving Certificate (SLC) and 83.2% of the respondents with some college level education believed that their community was financing the radio station. But only 33.7% of illiterate residents agreed with them. In addition, a lower percentage of farmers (52.4%) as compared to students (77.2%) believed that the community itself was financing the station (Table 6.9).

The staff or volunteers and radio representatives of Community Radio Madanpokhara were producing most of the programs for the station. Some of the programs broadcast over the station were produced by the sponsoring organizations. The
station claimed that the station was providing access to everyone willing to produce programs and broadcast over the station. The survey results were in favor of the claims.

The study revealed that more than 40% of the respondents believed that the community was involved in producing the programs for the station. A relatively higher percentage of the residents in the city (52.0%) than in the villages (35.9%) believed that the community was involved in producing the programs broadcast over the station. A high percentage of the Brahmins (52.8%) and the Newars (42.9%) and a low percentage (29.2%) of the Chhetries and the lower-castes respondents (32.1%) believed that the community was involved in program production for the station (Table 6.9).

There was no clear pattern about the respondents’ age and their opinion about who was producing the programs for the station. Similarly, there was not much difference in terms of the percentage of the males (41.4%) and the females (39.0%) who believed that the community was involved in the program production for the station. The residents’ educational level, however, was related to their view about who was producing the programs for their community radio station. Again, a higher proportion of students than farmers agreed that community members were involved in programming for the station. More than half of the students believed that the station involved its local residents in the program production whereas only 35% of the farmers in the region agreed to this (Table 6.9).

The main objective of Community Radio Madanpokhara was to serve its community members by providing greater access to relevant information rather than
making profit. The station management claimed of serving the local communities with useful information and providing them space without worrying about making profit. However, the study revealed that a larger proportion of the marginalized sections of the population was not aware that the station belonged to them, they did not believe that community itself was managing and financing the station. The station has to work hard to educate the less advantageous fellow residents making them aware that it is their radio station and the station is being managed by fellow villagers and they have to contribute financially to make it running.

6.10. Listening to Community Radio Madanpokhara

In the survey area, more than 80% of the residents listen to Community Radio Madanpokhara (CRM). Listening to CRM in the survey area varied among different caste/ethnic groups and it differed between people in the city and in the villages. All the Newars followed by almost 95% of Brahmins and about 85% of Chhetris listen to CRM. However, a lower percentage of the marginalized group of people such as lower castes (75%) and Magars (70%) listen to it (Table 6.10).

The study revealed that the residency affected the listening to CRM. More than 94% of people in the city listened to CRM whereas 76% of people in villages did so. Furthermore, the percentage of people listening to CRM was different among different caste/ethnic groups in the city and in the villages. All Newars listen to CRM regardless of their residency. Similarly, proportion of people listening to CRM was not that much different among the Brahmins living in the city (92.8%) and those living in villages
(96.9%). On the other hand, listening to CRM was higher in the city than in villages for the respondents from other caste/ethnic groups. Higher than 94% of Magars in the city listened to CRM whereas only about 69% of their counterparts in villages did so. Similarly, all the lower-caste families in the city listened to CRM against only about 71% of their counterparts in villages (Table 6.10).

Furthermore, listening to CRM was largely dependent on family owning a radio set with FM reception. Higher than 91% of the respondents from families owning a radio set with FM band capability reported listening to it as compared to only 45.5% of the people without an FM radio set (who listened at neighbors’ place, or tea shops). Furthermore, a relatively higher percentage (75.0%) of the Brahmins listened to CRM although their families did not own an FM radio set. A relatively lower percentage (31.2%) of the respondents from Magar families without an FM radio set listened to an FM station (Table 6.10).

All age groups of people in the survey area listen to CRM. However, a higher percentage of younger and older respondents listened to it than people from middle ages. Likewise, listening to CRM was not different between males and females from different caste/ethnic origins except for Magars. Higher than 74% of the male Magars listen to CRM as compared to only 67.2% of their female counterparts (Table 6.10).
### Table 6.10

*Listening to Community Radio Madanpokhara in Palpa district, 2004*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caste/Ethnic groups</th>
<th>Brahmin</th>
<th>Chhetri</th>
<th>Magar</th>
<th>Newar</th>
<th>Lower caste</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Residence</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>96.9</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>76.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>94.3</td>
</tr>
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<td>FM radio</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to FM</td>
<td>97.1</td>
<td>95.8</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>91.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without FM</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
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<td>95.9</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>86.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-40 years</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>79.1</td>
</tr>
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<td>40-60 years</td>
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<td>62.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>60- plus</td>
<td>95.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>83.7</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>83.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>85.2</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>76.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>79.3</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>56.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literate</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>73.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9 grades</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLC</td>
<td>96.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>95.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>96.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>71.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>91.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Furthermore, listening to their community radio varied among people with different educational levels as well as their occupations. Almost 97% of the residents with some college level education listen to CRM as compared to only 56.2% of their illiterate counterparts. Interestingly, a high proportion of Brahmins and Newars listen to CRM irrespective of their educational levels. But a large proportion of literate Chhetries, Magars, and lower-caste people listen to it as compared to their illiterate counterparts. Likewise, listening to CRM varied from 71.6% among farmers to 91.3% among students (Table 6.10).

*Community Radio Madanpokhara*, being the first FM radio in the region, was listened to by a vast majority of people in the city as well as in villages. As the ownership of a radio set capable of receiving FM signals varied among people in the city and in villages, as well as it varied among people from different caste/ethnic groups, listening to CRM was also varied. CRM was listened to by a high proportion of people in the city. However, almost one-fourth of the villagers did not listen to it. Similarly, one-fourth of the lower-caste people and even a higher proportion of Magars did not listen to their community radio station. There is no doubt that affluent groups in the region as well as a large proportion of previously neglected sectors benefited from their community radio station. However, there is still a large section of population that has no access to radio set and is not listening to it. Success of a community radio rests on the process by which it provides voices to such marginalized groups rather than adding one more media outlet for socially advanced people.
6.11. Participation in the Affairs of Radio

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* provided an avenue for the locals to participate in different aspects of radio broadcasting. Participation in the affairs of their community radio included visiting the station, sending letters, participating in the station sponsored public gatherings and religious programs, providing financial assistance and helping the station as a volunteer.

As Table 6.11 shows, more than 19% of the residents in the survey area reported that they had visited *Community Radio Madanpokhara*. A high percentage of people in the city (24.6%) have visited the station as compared to people in villages (17.2%). The station is close to Tansen municipality (about 12 km) and accessible by road. However, many villages are far from the station and it takes hours of walking and traveling by bus to reach the station.

Obviously, a very high percentage (80.0%) of people in Madanpokhara have visited the station. After Madanpokhara, a high percentage of people from Tansen municipality (24.6%), Pokharathok (24.0%), Chirtungdhara (23.1%), Darlamdada (18.5%) and Humin (15.4%) have visited the station. Madanpokhara shares borders with Tansen municipality, Telgha, Masyam, Koldada, Kaseni, Pokharathok, and Chirtungdhara. Thus, it was expected to see a higher proportion of the respondents visiting the station from Tansen as well as from Pokharathok and Chirtungdhara. However, a high percentage of people from Darlamdada and Humin VDCs, which do not share border with Madanpokhara, visited the station (Table 6.11).
A relatively low percentage of Magars (10.6%) and Chhetris (10.8%) visited the station as compared to Brahmins (37.4%), who were mostly from Tansen city and Madanpokhara itself. Visiting the radio station was associated with the respondents’ educational level as well as their occupation. Very few (4.5%) of the illiterate respondents visited the station whereas almost 32% of residents with some college level of education did. Likewise, a high proportion of students (27.5%) than farmers (14.1%) visited the station (Table 6.11).

*Community Radio Madanpokhara*, being the first radio station in the region, was something new for everyone and generated curiosity among many people. However, not everyone was equally enthusiastic about it and eager to visit it and see how it worked. Although the station was opened for everyone and welcomed anyone interested to visit and see how it worked, those who visited the station most were upper class and educated people from nearby areas not the people from lower-caste families living in remote areas with less or no education.

As Table 6.11 shows, almost 19% of people in the region wrote letters to their community radio station. A high percentage of city dwellers (23.4%) than villagers (17.2%) sent letters to the station. It could be because of the mailing facility available in the city. Most villages in Nepal lack post office nearby. However, in addition to post office, there were two letter collection centers in Tansen municipality sponsored by *Community Radio Madanpokhara*. Anyone interested could drop their letters to the station at these centers without putting postal stamps. Again, a large proportion of people
in the city were educated as compared to those in the villages. Many students who wrote letters to the station were from the city.

Although a very high percentage (80.0%) of the respondents from Madanpokhara visited the station, only 18.2% of the respondents sent letters. The highest proportion of respondents sending letters were from Nayarnamtalesh (38.5%), followed by Chirtungdhara (30.8%) and Baughapokharathok (26.5%). A lower percentage of the respondents from Koldada, Masyam, Bandipokhara, Rupse and Pipaldada sent letters to the station (Table 6.11). Since people in Madanpokhara could visit the station and talk to the station staff personally, they were less likely to send letters.

Similarly, a high percentage of students (45.6%) wrote letters to the station as compared to farmers (8.1%). A high proportion of Newars (25.0%) followed by Brahmins (23.1%) and a lower proportion of people from lower-caste families (13.1%) sent letters to the station. A high percentage of the younger (below 20 years) residents (41.0%) sent letters to the station as compared to other age groups. Both males and females wrote letters in almost equal proportion. Similarly, sending letters to the station was directly associated with the educational level of the residents. A high proportion of people with School Leaving Certificate (34.3%) sent letters to the station. Interestingly, 2.2% of the illiterate respondents also sent letters to the station. Illiterate respondents included those who could not read and write and they managed to send letters to the station by asking someone to write on their behalf (Table 6.11).
More than six percentage of the residents in the area participated in *Community Radio Madanpokhara* sponsored public gatherings. CRM organized many public gatherings in different villages to make the locals aware of its programs, make them involved in the station’s activities, and to receive feedback for the station. As many such gatherings took place in villages, a high percentage of people from villages (6.8%) participated in such gatherings than from city (4.0%). Besides Madanpokhara, where 27.3% of the respondents participated in such gatherings, people from Darlamdada (14.8%) followed by Bandipokhara (12.9%) and Kaseni (12.2%) also participated in such gatherings. Oddly, very few people from Bandipokhara had visited the station or sent letters despite their higher level of participation in gatherings. A high percentage of Brahmins (10.8%), followed by Chhetri (6.2%) participated in public gatherings of *Community Radio Madanpokhara*. Very few people from lower-caste families participated in these gatherings (Table 6.11).

Almost 14% of the respondents participated in CRM-sponsored religious programs. CRM had sponsored or organized “Dhanyachal Mahaparba” – a religious function in order to collect much needed resources for the station. A high percentage of villagers (14.6%) than city dwellers (11.4%) participated in such programs despite the city being closer to the station. Obviously, a very high proportion of people from Madanpokhara (87.3%) participated in the religious programs organized by the station in their neighborhood. Other villages with large number of participants in the religious
function included Rupse (30.0%), Darlamdada (14.8%), Bandipokhara (12.9%), Pokharathok (12.0%) and Baughapokharathok (11.8%) (Table 6.11).

Madanpokhara shares borders with Tansen municipality, Telgha, Masyam, Koldada, Kaseni, Pokharathok, and Chirtungdhara. Thus, it was expected that a higher proportion of people from these areas would participate in the CRM-sponsored religious programs. However, there were no participants from Koldada and Masyam. It could be because these villages are separated from Madanpokhara by hills. A very high percentage of the residents in these villages are Magars and many Magars identified themselves as Buddhist. The religious programs that CRM organized were Hindu programs. This could be another factor for the very low or no participation from such villages. More than 29% of the Brahmins participated in religious programs followed by 11.9% of the lower-caste people. Furthermore, a high percentage of women (17.2%) participated in such religious programs than did men (11.2%) (Table 6.11). It was interesting to see a high proportion of lower-caste people participating in religious programs. Lower-caste people were from Hindu community. Despite social discrimination against lower-caste people, they participated in religious program.

As Table 6.11 indicates, most of the participants in the station sponsored public gatherings and religious programs were people with secondary school level education. Interestingly, a high proportion of young people also participated in such religious program as well.
Table 6.11

Residents’ Participation in Various Aspects of Community Radio Madanpokhara, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Visited CRM station</th>
<th>Sent letters to CRM</th>
<th>Participated in CRM sponsored Gatherings</th>
<th>Religious programs</th>
<th>Financial support</th>
<th>Voluntary services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>8.2</td>
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<td>City</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>11.4</td>
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<td>12.6</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>12.6</td>
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<td>12.9</td>
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<td>3.8</td>
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<td>7.7</td>
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<td>3.7</td>
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<td>5.0</td>
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<td>12.2</td>
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<td>16.8</td>
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<td>19.3</td>
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<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
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<td>17.3</td>
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<td>7.0</td>
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<td>6.2</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magar</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>6.8</td>
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<td>3.6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower-caste</td>
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<td>13.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>7.1</td>
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<td>Others</td>
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<td>18.2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>18.2</td>
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<td>9.0</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literate</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>7.6</td>
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<td>10.6</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>8.8</td>
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<td>SLC</td>
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<td>34.3</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>13.4</td>
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<td><strong>Occupation</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A high proportion of students participated in public gatherings and religious programs organized by the station. However, farmers also participated in such functions in great numbers. More than 9% of the students and 5.7% of the farmers participated in public gatherings whereas 18.8% of the students and 12% of the farmers attended religious programs (Table 6.11).
Local residents’ participation in the station sponsored programs was high. A high participation was expected in religious programs. People would attend such religious programs in huge numbers no matter who organized it. However, the public gatherings were special functions and unique in the sense no other gathering other than political campaigns were seen in the villages. The local residents’ participation in such gathering and their engagement in the affairs of radio providing useful feedback enhanced the public ownership of the station.

As Table 6.11 points out, more than 13% of the respondents provided some kinds of financial assistance to the station. It could be a donation at the religious programs or a Musthidan for the station. Almost equal proportion of people in the villages (13.6%) and in the city (12.0%) provided some sort of financial contribution. Almost every family (91%) in Madanpokhara provided some kind of monetary assistance to the station, followed by people from Humin (23.1%), Rupse (15%) and Pokharathok (12.0%).

Similarly, more than 9% of the respondents provided some kind of voluntary services to the station. A larger percentage of people in the city (12.6%) and in villages (8.2%) provided such assistance. Almost equal or higher proportion of people in Baughapokharathok (23.5%) than people in Madanpokhara (22.0%) provided some voluntary service to the station (Table 6.11).

Residents’ financial as well as their voluntary services to the station varied depending upon their caste/ethnic origins. A high proportion of Brahmins (31.3%), Newars (10.7%) as well as lower-castes (9.5%) people provided some kind of financial
support to the station. Similarly, a higher percentage of Brahmins (15.4%) provided voluntary services than people from other caste/ethnic groups (Table 6.11).

Furthermore, those who provided financial as well as voluntary services were people with higher educational levels. However, a large proportion of illiterate people also made financial contribution and provided voluntary services to their community radio station (Table 6.11).

A higher percentage (16.8%) of the middle aged (40 to 60 years) contributed financially than other age groups did whereas a higher percentage of younger respondents provided voluntary services to the station. Interestingly, a higher proportion of women (17.3%) than men (9.8%) provided some kind of financial support to the station whereas a higher percentage of men (11.4%) than women (7.0%) provided some kind of voluntary service (Table 6.11).

6.12. Station Providing Space to its Community Members

A large proportion of the residents wrote letters to the station. Most of the letters consisted of requesting songs. The Table 6.12 shows that a high proportion (68.8%) of such senders’ letters from villages as well as more than half (53.7%) of the people in the city were included in the programs. All the residents’ letters from Bandipokhara and Chirtungdhara were included whereas non of the residents’ from Koldada were included in the program.

A large percentage (31.5%) of the residents had heard their name on the radio. It could have been in the news or simply in the requested songs programs. Almost equal
proportion of people in the city and in villages had heard their name on CRM (Table 6.12).

Table 6.12

*Community Radio Madanpokhara Providing Participation to its Members in Palpa District, 2004*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Letters by respondents</th>
<th>Respondent heard</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sent to CRM</td>
<td>Included</td>
<td>own name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDC</td>
<td>Koldada</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Masyam</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tansen</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>53.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bandipokhara</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baughapokharathok</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chirtungdha</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nayarnamtalesh</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pokharathok</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Devinager</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humin</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bhairabthan</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Darlamdada</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rupse</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kaseni</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Madanpokhara</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pipaldada</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
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<td>Age</td>
<td>Below 20</td>
<td>20 – 40 years</td>
<td>40 – 60 years</td>
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<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>43.9</td>
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<td>47.5</td>
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<td>60.0</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>30.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhetri</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magar</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newar</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower-caste</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
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<td>Others</td>
<td>18.2</td>
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<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>Literate</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 9 grades</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
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<td>SLC</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>41.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Students</td>
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<td>43.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
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</table>

As shown in Table 6.12, a great percentage of letters from the younger respondents were included. Although almost equal proportion of males and females in the region wrote letters to the station, a high (66.2%) percentage of males’ letters were
included than females’ (60.7%). Interestingly, a high percentage (75%) of Magars’ letters had been included in the programs. It could be because CRM has one special program in the Magar language and the program might have included a large proportion of letters in the program.

Among those who had sent letters to the station, only 50.0% of the illiterate respondents reported that their letters had been included in the programs. However, more than 73% of people with 6 to 9 grades of schooling reported that their letters had been included in the programs. A relatively higher percentage of respondents with 6 to 9 grades (42.5%) and an SLC (45.7%) had heard their name broadcast over the radio than had the respondents from other educational levels. Similarly, a high percentage of respondents with an SLC level of education (84.3%) and 79.4% of the respondents with 6 to 9 grades of schooling had heard their relatives’, friends’ or neighbors’ name broadcast over the radio (Table 6.12).

A higher percentage of students (45.6%) had sent letters to the station than had farmers (8.1%). Among those students who had sent letters to the station, more than 76% reported that their letters had been included in the programs. Similarly, larger percentage of students (45.0%) had heard their name broadcast their name over radio whereas only 25.1% of the farmers had heard their names broadcast over the radio (Table 6.12).

Most of the letters requested songs from the station. One hundred twenty-seven of the 676 respondents reported to have sent letters to the station. Almost 68% of such respondents were from villages and 32.3% were from the city. Most of the letters were
for requesting songs in the programs such as *Aanurodha ka anjuli*, *Srijana sangeet* and other CRM programs. 90% of the 40 respondents who had sent letters for *Aanurodha ka anjuli*, were from villages. Similarly, 81.3% of the respondents who had sent letters for *Srijana sangeet* were from villages. This indicated that villagers mostly sent letters for music programs (not shown in table).

6.13. Popularity of Programs

All the programs broadcast from *Community Radio Madanpokhara* were listed and the respondents were asked whether or not he or she had listened to it and if yes, how the program was. As Table 6.13 shows, the program “Local Activities” was listened to by a high percentage of the residents, followed by “Kayakiran” (73.2%), News (72.9%), “Saita ka Bela” (69.5%), “Folk Songs” (68.2%), “Madi ko Pahur” (66.9%), “Patrika ka Kura” (63.6%) and “Lok Juhari” (61.8%).

The program “Kayakiran” is a news and information program produced and broadcast through several FM radio stations by Communication Corner in Kathmandu Valley. It contained news, newspaper headlines from the capital city and information. Most areas in Nepal do not get the elite newspapers published in Kathmandu or they receive them very late. Kayakiran provided many listeners of FM radio stations in remote villages a chance to get what was being published in newspapers even before people in the capital get to read them.
Table 6.13

Percent of the Respondents Listening to Various Programs of Community Radio

Madanpokhara and their Opinion about the Programs in Palpa District, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program and broadcast time in minutes per week</th>
<th>Have listened to the program</th>
<th>If listened to, how was the program?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Religious program (105 minutes)</td>
<td>53.0 (358)</td>
<td>62.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sero phero ma aaja (70 minutes)</td>
<td>55.3 (374)</td>
<td>66.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Kayakiran (210 minutes)</td>
<td>73.2 (495)</td>
<td>89.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. News (245 minutes)</td>
<td>72.9 (493)</td>
<td>76.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Local activities (420 minutes)</td>
<td>77.1 (521)</td>
<td>78.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Paka pusta (15 minutes)</td>
<td>55.0 (372)</td>
<td>66.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Utpidit aavaj (15 minutes)</td>
<td>52.5 (355)</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Sancho bisancho (15 minutes)</td>
<td>39.9 (270)</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Sahitya pratibha (15 minutes)</td>
<td>44.5 (301)</td>
<td>59.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Aaphnai paurakh aaphnai gaurab (15 minutes)</td>
<td>53.8 (364)</td>
<td>61.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Mahila sansar (15 minutes)</td>
<td>55.2 (373)</td>
<td>63.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Gaun thaun ka kura (15 min.)</td>
<td>44.5 (301)</td>
<td>60.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. National songs (75 minutes)</td>
<td>46.2 (312)</td>
<td>59.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Folk songs (150 minutes)</td>
<td>68.2 (461)</td>
<td>81.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Modern songs (215 minutes)</td>
<td>55.2 (373)</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Janata ko adhikar pahucha basne sanga (15 minutes)</td>
<td>18.5 (125)</td>
<td>54.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Chhino phano (45 minutes)</td>
<td>45.9 (310)</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Aalo palo (45 minutes)</td>
<td>44.1 (298)</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Aapanga sachetana (45 min.)</td>
<td>30.3 (205)</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Saha asthhtoo (45 minutes)</td>
<td>33.1 (224)</td>
<td>62.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Ganthan (105 minutes)</td>
<td>48.4 (327)</td>
<td>50.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Saita ka bela (315 minutes)</td>
<td>69.5 (470)</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The program “Local Activities” is a local news program. Community Radio Madanpokhara broadcast the activities in the area that did not get space in the national media outlets but important to the local residents. The local news was important since it involved the residents as news makers and sources of news and people listen to it to know what was happening in their neighborhood.

Similarly, the program “Lok Bhaka” contained folk songs. CRM and other FM radio stations in Nepal have revived the local culture giving space to folk songs. Radio
Nepal also broadcast folk songs but it could not give much space because of long lists of programs it has to broadcast. Likewise, the program Jeeven Ko Goretoma [in the path of life] is a drama with songs.

The program “Saitaka Bela” [an auspicious time] is a participatory program with a story. Listeners call the station and contribute in the story (every time the station would announce the theme of the story at the beginning of the program) and request a song that goes with it. Since the program involves listeners calling the station, those in the city and those in villages with telephone access get chances to participate in it. Thus, a high percentage of Newars and Brahmins favored this program because they have better access to telephone. And the program “Kanung Lam” is a Magar language program and only Magars listened to it.

Kayakiran, Local Activities and News are news related programs. A high percentage (55.4%) of the Chhetri respondents favored news related programs whereas only 23.9% of the Magar respondents did so. Similarly, more than 39% of Brahmin and 35.8% of Newar respondents favored the news related programs (Table 6.13).

Since Kayakiran and Local Activities both are news and current affairs related programs, Saita ka bela was the most popular non-news program broadcast over CRM. It is an interactive or participatory program (Table 6.13).


The choice of program varied among the respondents from different caste/ethnic origins. Almost 30% of Brahmin and a slightly smaller percentage of Newar respondents
considered *Kayakiran* as the best program whereas only 8.3% of the respondents from the lower-caste families and 14% of the Magar respondents considered it as the best. Among the lower-caste families, almost 17% considered the program *Local Activities* as the best program (Table 6.14).

**Table 6.14**

*The Most Popular Programs as Reported by Different Caste/Ethnic Groups in Palpa District, 2004*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Best radio program</th>
<th>Brahmin</th>
<th>Chhetri</th>
<th>Magar</th>
<th>Newar</th>
<th>Lower cast</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kayakiran</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local activities</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lok bhaka</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeevan ka goretoma</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saitaka bela</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanug lam</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other programs</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other than CRM</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn’t listen to/no</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.14 shows that a high percentage of Brahmins (29.7%) considered *Kayakiran* as the best program and a second high percentage (13.3%) *Saitaka Bela*. Similarly, for Chhetri respondents, *Local Activities* (20.0%) followed by the *News* (12.3%) were the best programs after *Kayakiran* (23.1%). The Magar language program
Kanug lam (7.5%) and Lok bhaka (7.5%) were the popular programs after Kayakiran among Magar respondents. The program Kayakiran was rated as the best program by all caste/ethnic groups except people from lower castes who favored Local Activities (16.7%) and Lok Bhaka (9.5%) over Kayakiran (8.3%).

6.15. Summary

This study revealed that radio set no longer remained a luxury affordable only by the rich people in the society. Rather, it has become ubiquitous and affordable by most people even in rural Nepal. The fact that a large proportion of residents in the study area had an FM radio set, which was unknown to most of them until a couple of years back, was a result of the availability of local broadcasting. This demonstrated that people in the region were eagerly waiting for an alternative to the national broadcasting. However, in this 21st century where people in the developed countries are bombarded with information and have many outlets for information, a high proportion of people in rural Nepal still lack a radio set. Those who lack a radio set are also socially and economically marginalized groups of people.

Establishment of community radio greatly increased the percentage of people listening to radio. It not only took away listeners from the government owned Radio Nepal to local broadcasters, but also created new listeners. However, there are still challenges in bridging the gap between villagers and city dwellers in terms of their access to information. As the study points out, one-fourth of the residents in the area did not listen to their community radio. Community radio, no matter how good programs with
relevant information are produced and broadcast, can not achieve its objective of giving voice to the socially marginalized sections of the community if they do not listen to such programs due to lack of access or for other reasons.
Chapter 7: Discussion, Summary, and Conclusion

7.1. Introduction

Community radio stations throughout the world have achieved varying degrees of success in terms of establishment, operations and increasing access to information for marginalized sections of the population. The role of community and alternative media, however, pose many unanswered questions. For example, who should control these media? To whom should they be responsible? How can they avoid being propaganda machines? Should such media follow the sender-receiver communication model of the mass media, or should they be two-way means of communication? How should they achieve sustainability? Alternative media activists have rarely asked such questions (Bruck & Rabby, 1989:12). In addition, what political environment has contributed to the establishment of community radio? This chapter discusses these and other issues in the context of this study on Nepal, and in particular community radio in the country.

7.2. Political Environment and Community Radio

What political environment or condition gives rise to community radio stations? Community radio around the world has emerged in different political environments. In Latin America, alternative media emerged as a challenge to mainstream media controlled by military dictators. It was not the democratic political environment that encouraged the establishment of community media; rather it was the absence of it. In Nepal, the establishment of community media is connected with politics. No alternative media could operate before the restoration of democracy in 1990 because the suppression of
opposition voices by then government. It was the democratic political environment of post-1990 that encouraged citizens to establish community radio stations. The political changes at the national level in multiparty democracy, liberalization of public airwaves, and social and political awareness in the region contributed to the establishment of Community Radio Madanpokhara. Human agency was a big factor, too. Few highly motivated individuals made it happen. Furthermore, unlike in most of the Latin American countries, where community radio stations were opened to counter the state monopolies and to challenge the central powers, community radio stations in Nepal began with development and humanitarian motives rather than a clear political agenda.

As noted, in Nepal, media could develop neither during the autocratic rule of the Ranas (1846-1950) nor during monarchy (1960-1990). Recently, the king’s direct rule (February 1, 2005 to April 26, 2006) saw setbacks in the development of media. The political change in the nation in 1990 from the king’s direct rule to a multiparty democracy followed the introduction of a new constitution in 1991 that put high values on human rights, freedom of expression and the public’s right to information. Following the spirit of the constitution of 1991, the government adopted the National Communication Policy in 1992, which allowed the possibility of non-governmental broadcasting in the nation. In line with the National Communication Policy, the government enacted the Broadcasting Act of 1993 and the Broadcasting Regulations of 1995. It was in this liberal environment that media activists lobbied effectively to free the airwaves from governmental control. As Dagron (2001: 14) put it: “As soon as the
state monopoly cracks down, small organizations and communities lift their antennas
over the villages.”

The government, formed after the restoration of democracy, adopted liberal
economic policies and began to privatize state-owned corporations. Along with this, the
government adopted policies of reforming the media. However, despite privatization of
some government-owned companies, the government was not willing to relinquish its
control over the state media. Privatization of government-owned media (Nepal
Television, Radio Nepal and Gorakhapatra Corporation) remained a hot issue, but none
of the 12 successive governments formed in 12 years after the restoration of democracy
could go beyond lip service. The political leaders demanded the end of government
interference in state media when they were in the opposition. However, the leaders would
do the same as their predecessors when they gained power, i.e., using the state media to
provide flattering publicity for the ruling party leaders.

Furthermore, political leaders were aware that independent media would not
provide flattering publicity for government authorities; rather, they would evaluate every
action of the government and criticize it, if needed. For the ruling party, losing control
over the state media meant losing their channel for propaganda. This might be one of the
reasons for political leaders’ lack of interest in giving up control over the state media.

Before 1990, during the partyless Panchayat system, successive governments used
the state-owned media heavily to disseminate information in favor of the system. The
state media at that time served to spread the view that the political parties were illegal and
were anti-nationalist elements. The leaders, who came in power after the restoration of democracy in 1990, were the victims of the state propaganda machinery. Ironically, when in power, those same victimized leaders kept the media under the government instead of privatizing them. As Freire (2001) termed, when the oppressed get in power, they become the oppressor.

Although the government took the positive step of ending its control over airwaves, media activists had to fight hard to realize their goals. It took almost a decade of struggle to obtain a license to start an independent radio station. The power struggle between media activists and government authorities ended with the issuing of a license for an independent radio station, Radio Sagarmatha, in 1997.

The development of media under different political environments -- during the Rana autocracy of 1846-1950, during the first democratic environment of 1951-1960, during the king’s direct rule of 1960-1990, and during the democratic period of 1990 and following it -- demonstrated the fact that democratic governments in Nepal favored media pluralism rather than autocratic governments. Furthermore, the media’s suppression under the royal direct rule reinforced the fact that the autocratic regimes were always the obstacles to media development in Nepal.

Radio broadcasting from non-governmental sectors is a new phenomenon in Nepal and there are many implications of new media in every society. As McDaniel (2002:18) argued, technological changes in the media sector after 1980 gradually reduced the capacity of Southeast Asian political leaders to manage public opinion. Arrival of
new technologies -- first VCRs, then cable and satellites, and finally the Internet -- weakened government control of information. As in the Southeast Asian cases, the arrival of FM radio stations from non-government sectors captured radio listeners from Radio Nepal and reduced the power of the government to manage or influence public opinion in the country. Furthermore, using alternative sources of information, the new radio stations provided information at times against the central authorities. Bans on news program in FM radio during different periods were a desperate step by the government to maintain power over information dissemination.

The establishment of FM radio stations tilted power toward local levels because the leaders at local communities had access to media outlets. While most of the Nepalese villages and cities were without a single broadcasting station, the town of Tansen in Palpa district hosted three radio stations, bringing the number of radio stations in the area to four, including Community Radio Madanpokhara.

Why did many individuals or groups enter in the affairs of FM radio in Palpa despite the lack of markets in the region? One of the reasons might be that it is characteristic of Nepalese entrepreneurs to enter a successful field rather than becoming an innovator by finding new avenues for businesses or services. Dinesh Chapagain gives two reasons why the Nepalese private sector is reluctant to invest in new fields like the IT industry – a cultural deficiency and the Baniyanism. First, there is a cultural tendency toward a vendor attitude instead of an entrepreneurship attitude. Nepalese businessmen prefer to buy something and sell it immediately for a quick return on their investment.
Second is *Baniyanism*, which he says is “reducing the quality, identifying the loopholes in the government regulation, and cheating the customers to get easy profit” (Chapagain, 2000, January 28).

The field of media is different from others because it involves a business of information that can create favorable and unfavorable opinions. Many individuals or groups might have been challenged by CRM and the possible use of it during the election to create an unfavorable opinion towards particular candidates, and they have entered the field to counter-balance the negativity and provide airwaves for their causes. People would like to use media that favors their political positions, especially at election time. Newly opened FM radio stations at the local level provide a new forum for political struggle – sites for local political leaders to sustain their struggles as well as ways to practice democracy.

In the case of Nepal, the National Broadcasting Act clearly states that radio stations should not be used for political purposes; rather they should be a medium for education and entertainment for the people. However, experiences from CRM indicate that community radio stations have also been influenced by politics and have been less than balanced when covering the political issues.

Not only the political environment in the nation but also the conflict within a political party can severely affect the operation of a community radio. The political divide in United Marxist Leninist (UML) at the central level adversely affected CRM. The removal of the station manager (close to the breakaway faction Marxist-Leninist,
(ML) and the appointment of a new manager close to UML was a result of political divide in UML. Political observers in the region argued that CRM provided favorable coverage of UML and negative coverage of the breakaway faction, ML, which sparked a revolt by individuals from the breakaway faction and initiated the Muktinath FM station in the same area. This shows how community radio stations, and for that matter, other FM radio stations have been sites for political power struggles. The phenomenon of radio stations close to a single political party is also mirrored in Nepalese newspapers, especially the weeklies. Although some of the newspapers have moved towards professionalism, others remained the mouthpiece of political parties. Only professional newspapers seem successful, and this might be repeated in the case of radio too.

The Maoist insurgency also greatly influenced radio as it did every sector of Nepalese society. The effects ranged from intimidation by both the Maoists and the government to the seizure and closure of radio stations.

The government bureaucracy often cited the possibility of a radio station’s falling into the hands of the Maoists when refusing an applicants a license to operate. But the Maoists had their own radio stations even without government authorization. The Maoists reportedly began their own three clandestine radio stations in September 2003. By June 2004, they had six FM radio stations nationwide – one each for the Seti-Mahakali region, the Bheri-Karnali region, the Rukum-Rolpa region, the Gandak region, the Kathmandu Valley and the eastern region. Beginning with the aim of airing all activities of the Maoists broadcasting, voices from villages and news from international revolutionaries,
the Maoists later used their FM radio stations to counter news from state-owned Radio Nepal. They even experimented with jamming broadcasts of state radio (Banjade, 2006 June). Recently, the Minister of Information and Communication (who is the Maoist leader in the 8-parties coalition government) announced that the Maoists radio stations will be legalized (Kantipur Report, April 3, 2007).

As just suggested, FM radio stations were affected by the insurgency when purchasing necessary equipment. The Maoist insurgency was the principal reason given by the Nepalese Army when blocking any purchase of equipment for FM radio stations. Srinagar FM, Muktinath FM and Western FM in Tansen, Palpa could not start broadcasting on schedule because of delays in getting necessary equipment. Furthermore, the insurgents physically attacked Swargadwari FM radio in Ghorahi in Mid-west Nepal and Western FM in Tansen, Palpa was damaged by the cross-fire between the Nepali army and the Maoists.

Furthermore, the government arrested a program producer of Swargadwari FM who was believed to be close to the Maoists and reporting from the insurgency-affected areas. The station’s listeners include villagers, local civil service and even the Maoists. During the emergency, the Maoists cadre depended heavily on Swargadwari and the BBC Nepali Service for news of what was happening in the country (Rijal, March 21, 2003).

The government of Nepal under royal direct rule closed down Radio Sagarmatha on Sunday night November 26, 2005, forcefully seizing transmission equipment and arresting five employees, including volunteers and technicians. The government raided
Radio Sagarmatha accusing it of carrying a BBC Nepali Service relay broadcast that included the interview of Maoist leader Puspa Kamal Dahal alias Prachanda.

Even democratic governments in Nepal have intimated FM stations. For instance, a government directive of 16 January 2001 prevented all privately operated FM radio stations (community and commercial) from collecting and broadcasting their own news programs. They were only allowed to broadcast secondhand news collected by state-owned media. This had an adverse effect. Radio and television stations played around the directive; they would not call their news program “news,” but use other words like “news flash,” and “daily diary” to name the news program. Furthermore, they started reading news from newspapers instead of their own news. The constitutionality of the directive was challenged in the Supreme Court of Nepal on 26 January 2001. The Supreme Court ruled that the directive was against the constitutional provision related to the "right to freedom" and "right to information."

Democracy is a favorable condition for the emergence of community radio, but it is not the only necessary condition for community media to flourish. For example, India, the largest democracy in the world, opted for the auction of airwaves instead of creating robust community media policy. Although the Supreme Court of India in 1995 declared that the airwaves belong to the public, the government is more inclined to provide the private sector more frequencies and has opened a second phase of radio licensing.

The history of electronic media development in different political environments clearly indicates that it has tended to develop in positive ways during multiparty
democracy and experienced setbacks during royal direct rule. Despite attempts from democratically elected governments to control media contents, Nepal’s experience suggests that a democratic political system provides a better environment for the development of community radio stations.

7.3. Participation in the Affairs of Community Radio

Community media is credited for providing its members a platform for participation at every stage - establishment, management, financing and programming. However, in practice community members need to be willing and eager to participate in order to realize the vision. Not everyone in a community participates in the affairs of their community’s radio station; few community members actually participate through a process of volunteerism or through feedback and interaction with stations. Those who participate do it at various levels. This might be because of a lack of communication infrastructure, or a lack of interest and commitment (Singhal and Sthapitanonda, 1996:21).

Similarly, Barlow (2002: 158) found that Australian community radio stations provided indigenous Australians and people from English and non-English speaking backgrounds and different political affiliations opportunities to participate in the ownership, management, and operation of radio stations. However, the notion of access and participation was interpreted and used in quite different ways in those three community radio stations in Australia.

Participation in the ownership of CRM
Community radio stations are credited for providing their members a platform for participation in the affairs of the radio station, including the ownership of it. However, there have been many unsettled questions: Who should be granted a license to operate a community radio station? What should the community participation be? How can a community radio ensure community participation? In other words, what are the modalities of community radio stations in terms of ownership?

Variety in ownership of radio stations in Nepal is an indication of national media pluralism. Rather than domination by government at the center, the post-1990 era radio stations are owned by institutional entities such as commercial media companies, cooperatives, local governments, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Despite the lack of regulations differentiating between commercial and community radio stations during the term of an operational license, radio stations in Nepal fall into three broad categories based on their ownership: government radio stations such as Radio Nepal, commercial radio stations such as Kantipur FM, and community radio stations such as Sagarmatha FM, Lumbini FM and Community Radio Madanpokhara. Furthermore, based on the ownership, there have been three types of community radio stations: a radio station owned by an NGO, a radio station owned by a cooperative, and a radio station owned by a local government. Each ownership model has merits as well drawbacks.

Non-government organizations (NGOs) are one of the sectors that has been active in Nepal, mostly in research and lately in development activities with financial and technical support from international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and donor
agencies. Operating community media by such NGOs is not new -- NGOs have been operating community development newspapers and Vitte Patrica [Wall Newspapers] as well as audio towers in various parts of the country. As for radio, a group of NGOs first began Radio Sagarmatha in 1997.

Non-governmental organizations are registered under the NGO Act of 1977. The act does not require community support and consent in order for an organization to register itself with the government authority and implement its activities in the communities. Except for some NGOs, most lack direct participation of people because they are mostly a family affair (most of the board members are from the same family and friends’ circle). Such NGOs, considered as “dollar-making” projects rather than service organizations, are not accountable to the communities they claim to work for.

Recently, some of the NGOs have entered into radio broadcasting. There is no doubt that the establishment of radio stations from the NGO sector helps increase public access to information in the areas they operate. It is less likely for NGO-operated radio stations to be political propaganda machines like the government-owned radio station. Thus, broadcasting from the non-governmental sector has definitely increased media pluralism in Nepal. It is also important to note the fact that NGOs, and not the communities themselves, began to establish and operate radio stations, such as Radio Sagarmatha or Swargadwari FM. No community collectively asked for a radio station. Rather, NGOs established radio stations and termed them community radio stations. Thus, radio stations sought communities for their identity.
Similarly, there are radio stations owned and operated by cooperatives. Cooperatives are registered under the Cooperative Act of 1959, later amended in 1986, and again in 1992. Supervised by the Department of the Cooperative of the Ministry of Agriculture, there are community-based cooperatives, such as “Banking with the Poor Program”, “Small Farmers Cooperative,” “Village Bank,” and so on.

In general, “cooperative” comprises an entity that is owned and controlled by its members. In the U.S., most cooperatives are corporations or limited liability companies (LLCs) either for-profit or non-profit. In for-profit cooperatives, any surplus may be distributed among its members. In Nepal, although the Cooperative Act allows distributing the profits among the shareholders, cooperatives are neither totally motivated by profit nor solely by public service. Rather, they have traditionally been active in income generation initiatives in different parts of the country. Lately, cooperatives have entered into radio broadcasting, such as Radio Lumbini and Muktinath FM, which are owned and run by cooperatives of journalists and business persons.

The license for Lumbini FM is held by Lumbini Sahakari Sansthan Ltd. [Lumbini Cooperative Ltd.], which started with 25 members from different occupations, religions, genders, political backgrounds, and ethnicity. It also includes teachers, journalists, business persons, and social workers. When explaining the rationale for operating a cooperative-owned radio station, Lumbini FM pointed out the challenges of obtaining a license, and the financial and technical constraints for running a radio station in the absence of a government or non-governmental organization’s financial backing.
Furthermore, the station did not want to fall into the hands of a big commercial company. Desiring to be independent of donors and/or business in its establishment, aiming to secure broad participation of diverse political beliefs, social classes, and professions, the founder decided to run Lumbini FM under a cooperative (personal communication, February 2, 2004). However, the station’s wish to be inclusive in terms of broad political ideologies has proven difficult to achieve.

The third category of community radio station is the one owned by the local government, such as *Community Radio Madanpokhara*. The Village Development Committee is the smallest political unit with 11 members, including the popularly-elected President and Vice-President as well as one member each from its nine wards. Also, there is a provision for the Village Council with broader participation that includes all the members in the VDC and four more representatives from each ward. All these representatives serve for a 5-year tenure.

The license for CRM is held by the Madanpokhara Village Development Committee (VDC). Some would question how a local government-owned radio station can be a community radio station. Why was CRM’s license held by the Madanpokhara VDC? How can a station run by a VDC provide unbiased information? Is it possible that a VDC-owned radio station would become simply promotional machine for the local elite?

The CRM management argued that it was the decision of the public in the region to ask the VDC to assume the lead for establishment of a radio station. Again, there was
no other reliable organization at the time when the license for CRM was sought except the VDC itself. In addition, leadership in the VDC played a crucial role in securing a license for the radio station. Unlike Mahawali Community Radio in Sri Lanka, which was run by a state-run entity, Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, CRM had no connection to Radio Nepal; rather, it was independently organized by the local government.

One of the benefits of having a radio station under a VDC is that if the government tries to suppress the station or take action against its director, local citizens will be behind their elected leader. Therefore, there is less chance of political leaders in the center working against the interest of a community radio station licensed to a VDC. CRM is not against any government, but it would rather be closed down than function as a propaganda machine of the government (Yam P. Pandey, personal communication, 2004, February 5).

Politicians could try to hijack small radio stations – community or commercial -- with their own political agenda. However, Bharat Dutta Koirala suggested there are enough safeguards to prevent this from happening. First, the legal framework should provide the initial safeguards. Second, the community should appoint board members to oversee the work of the station in a balanced way, ensuring no individual or party can hijack the station. Third, the stations should be able to reach members of the community who react promptly to any attempt by politicians to impose their agenda (Ninan, 2002).

However, licensing provisions for radio stations are not sufficiently specific, leaving room for the exercise of discretion by decision-makers. Pandey said,
… Applications may be rejected or accepted, not on logical grounds, but merely according to the wishes and preferences of decision-makers. Some applicants may receive licenses quickly whereas others might have to wait even years. Therefore, the country needs to improve its broadcasting policies to remove uncertainties and ambiguities experienced by both investors and the government. (Pandey, 2001).

Raghu Mainali of Community Radio Support Center in Kathmandu argues that there should be a provision requiring the applicant of community radio to secure at least five percent of the signatures from the community the station intends to serve (personal communication, 2004, March 4).

In the U.S., the fine imposed for operating a station without a license is a high priority to prevent small-scale or pirate radio stations. The $10,000 fine for operating a station without a license is the highest fine set for any rules violation. It is higher than the amount levied for committing fraud by wire, radio or television ($5,000), broadcasting indecent or obscene materials ($7,000), or violating political rules, such as giving free commercial time to one but not other political candidates ($9,000) (Soley, 1999: 120).

Generally, community radio stations in Nepal are identified by the power of the transmitters they use. The license fees are based on the transmitter's capacity, from Rs. 50,000 for using a 100 watt transmitter to Rs. 200,000 for using a 500 watt transmitter. Since the community radio stations have very limited financial resources, they prefer to use low power transmitters. There have been some changes – the growing trend of using a higher-power transmitter by community radio stations as well. Government regulations
do not distinguish or give priority to community or commercial radio stations while issuing licenses. The Eighth World Assembly of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC8), held in Kathmandu called on governments to give community media first access to the radio airwaves. However, there is no such legal provision in Nepal.

Madanpokhara Village Development Committee holds the license for Community Radio Madanpokhara. The name of the station also signifies Madanpokhara. However, people associated with the station claimed that the station is a community radio station and it is everyone’s radio. A high percent of community members agree.

The audience survey conducted for this dissertation indicated that 72.3% of the respondents (90.3% in the city and 66.1% in the villages) believed that the community owns the station. A large percent (20.2%) of the respondents in the villages did not know who actually owned the station. A relatively larger proportion of respondents from Brahmin and Newar families, young and educated, believed that CRM is owned by the community, as compared to the respondents from Magar and lower-caste families, older and illiterate. This demonstrates that community members perceive CRM as their own radio station. Ownership of CRM rests with the people of the region not because they legally own the station, but through their meaningful participation in the affairs of the station.

An uninformed community can be a major problem for a community radio station since it cannot survive without full support and involvement of its community. Freire (1987) insisted that people should facilitate their own liberation through motivation,
dialogue and participatory communication. For Freire (1971), communication is a vehicle 
*par excellence* for liberation from mental and psychological shackles. He glorifies 
*conscientization* as a way in which communication channels can be used to generate 
dialogue, to enable people to talk together and understand each other.

Some members of community radio stations can feel that, because they come 
from the same community, they already know the place, the people, the language, the 
culture and beliefs. Because of this, they may not see the necessity of going through the 
process of involving their community in the initiation, establishment, management, 
financing, and programming of the radio station. They assume that they know their 
community well enough to understand everybody's needs, wants, priorities and concerns.
These assumptions are very dangerous. Others feel that by consulting with their 
communities a couple of times at the beginning of the project, community participation 
has been achieved and that there is not really a need to consult and keep residents 
informedit through regular forums and meetings. The station will not know people's wants 
and needs without discussing with them on an ongoing basis. A great danger of 
community radio is how easily the staff, volunteers and management staff can forget the 
fundamental importance of involving and consulting with the community in decision-
making processes. When a community radio station stops being sensitive to the needs of 
the community it is serving, it loses its identity and reason for existing.

Community participation in the affairs of a community radio station should not be 
confined to a few isolated meetings; rather, it should be a process where everybody gets
together to hear and discuss an idea or proposal. It should be an ongoing interaction between the radio station and the community. This ensures that the community radio station is really the voice of the community, representing and clearly putting forth the needs, wants, concerns, feelings and prioritized issues of the people in the area.

**Participation in the management of CRM**

Public participation, termed as *Janasahabhagita* in Nepali, is a commonly used term in development initiatives in Nepal. Almost all of the government-funded development projects in Nepal are initiated at the center by the top level leaders and the bureaucrats, and people’s participation is sought only if their contributions are needed. However, the establishment of community radio stations tried to break this tradition by providing a means of participation for community members in every aspect of affairs of community radio stations, including active participation in their management. All of the staff at *Community Radio Madanpokhara* are members of the local community who have provided voluntary service during the station’s launch and are serving in management and programming positions with minimal remuneration, whereas the radio representatives are still volunteer workers.

Volunteer services provided by the locals demonstrate a strong commitment by the community members and that instills a feeling of ownership. In Australia, between 20,000 to 25,000 Australians volunteer at their community radio stations each week. On an average, each community radio station receives services from 60-70 volunteers, demonstrating a strong commitment by these communities to their local radio station. In
the majority of cases, volunteers in Australia perform a range of duties, including the role of station manager (Forde et al., 2001; Foxwell, 2001).

CRM enjoys active participation from its community members. All of the staff in management and in programming are from the local community and have no previous experience in radio broadcasting. Everyone learned various aspects of radio broadcasting on the job and each performs multiple tasks. Once seen as a job possible to be done only by highly skilled members of the elite, the establishment of CRM demystified the task of programming and managing of a radio station among cities.

The participation of locals in the management and programming instills feelings of ownership and enhances their skills in the running of their station. However, it is possible that those trained at their community radio station to join commercial radio stations in order to earn better salaries. As a precaution, CRM has begun training its staff for multiple tasks in order to cope with unexpected departures. A community radio should not expect volunteers to remain with the station indefinitely. One of the purposes of community radio station is to provide its community members an opportunity to get trained in the field of radio broadcasting and help them to move on for better training and opportunities elsewhere.

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* is providing space to traditionally neglected and marginalized sectors of the community by training members from such communities in programming. CRM’s programming staff reflects somewhat the community it serves - - it has staff from lower-caste families as well from the Magar community -- and
indicates that the station gives a high priority to the needs of marginalized groups by providing space for their voices. Inclusion of people from the marginalized sector in programming empowers them and makes them an important part of the society hence helping in the upward movement in the social status of their caste/ethnic group.

All of the staff, including the station manager, provided voluntary services in the early days of the station. Although the management and the programming staff are currently paid, the remuneration has been kept very low as compared to similar positions elsewhere. All of the radio representatives are still providing volunteer services to their community radio station. However, unlike Australia, where the Broadcasting Service Act 1992 requires that the community radio stations encourage their communities to participate in the station operation and program, Nepalese regulations do not distinguish between commercial and community radio stations and has no requirement that volunteer services be secured from the community.

As Bharat Dutta Koirala argued, the community must be involved in the planning, establishment and operation of their community radio station. Once the community members feel that it is their radio station, they will feel responsible for its operation to serve their community. Any outside support should be limited to acquiring new equipment and training in technologies and management skills (personal communication, March 2, 2004).

A number of women’s stations and radio training projects in Europe moved forward the notion of gender-based space. Community radio training programs for
women were based on the premise that women would be able to participate in program production if they are given access to broadcasting. The factors and processes that helped women to gain confidence, skills, and training in radio might have helped to formulate a theory of alternative media as a development tool for women’s participation in the public arena (Mitchell, 2002).

Similarly, inclusion of community members, both males and females, from different caste/ethnic groups indicates that CRM has provided space to every sector of the society. However, not everyone at CRM is happy with their existing condition. Female program producers expressed dissatisfaction with the way other coworkers behave towards them or each other and the lack of support among program producers, while male program producers were more vocal to management team. Female program producers at CRM have proved the notion that women are not less capable of producing radio programs when they are given an opportunity.

Participation in financing of CRM.

Community radio stations, unlike commercial or government-owned radio stations, operate with active participation and contribution from the community members. The community contribution to Community Radio Madanpokhara (CRM) included monetary contribution from forestry groups, cash and/or grain offerings during the station-sponsored religious programs, funds from Village Development Committees and the Palpa District Development Committee, and financial/technical/material assistance from international non-governmental organizations and donor agencies, as well as
contributions from different individuals. Only a very small portion of revenue comes from local advertisement. The station’s claim of community participation has been reflected in the audience survey.

As the audience survey indicated, more than 13% of the respondents in the survey area provided some kind of financial assistance, including donation to the station-sponsored religious program called Dhanyachal Mahaparba or through Musthidan for the station. That the station managed to buy a house for office space using the resources collected during the station-sponsored religious program indicates a high level of community contribution. Nine out of ten respondents in Madanpokhara, where the station is located, reported providing some kind of monetary assistance to the station. Furthermore, a large proportion (63%) of the respondents believe that the community has itself been financing the station.

It is a wide practice in Nepal for communities or organizations to sponsor religious programs in order to collect resources for their causes. Narayan Pokharel, who was murdered by the Maoists (recently the Maoists denied their role on it), was the first choice for such programs. He was successful at motivating people to offer cash/grain/materials/land for the organizers. However, religious rites as sources of support have stirred some controversy. CRM management are known for their affiliation with the communist party, which considers religion as “an opiate.” However, they have been careful in avoiding criticism. For example, the CRM invited a female priest to read some religious texts at a program. A female as a priest is out of normal practice. The
function was successful in collecting resources to buy that office building. Many people in the region participated in the CRM-sponsored religious program. However, the participation level was different among people from different villages.

Despite sharing a border with Madanpokhara, two other villages--Koldada and Masyam--had no participants. There could be many reasons. First, these villages are on the other side of the hill that requires a long walk in difficult terrain. Second, a very high percentage of the residents in these villages are Magars, who identify themselves as Buddhist. One might argue that the CRM management, all of whom are Hindus, alienated people from other religious affiliations by organizing Hindu religious programs. More than 29% of the Brahmin respondents reported participating in religious programs organized by CRM, followed by 11.9% of the lower-caste respondents (also Hindus). Furthermore, a higher percent of women (17.2%) participated in such religious programs than did men (11.2%). Thus, participants for such religious programs were predominantly Brahmin, women, and villagers.

The Nepalese government does not provide any financial waiver for community radio stations when issuing an operating license. Acknowledging the role played by the media in the April uprising of 2006, the government announced a total waiver of the FM radio license renewal fee in July 2006. According to existing broadcasting laws, FM radio stations are required to pay Rs. 55,000 to Rs. 550,000 in renewal fees and four percent of their income to the government as royalty. The only government funds a community radio station receives are the funds provided by local VDCs and the District
Development Committee (DDC), if there is any. Thus, a community radio station in the region does not provide much to the national treasury and of course VDCs and the DDC could spend the money on other things. Financial and/or technical assistance to community radio stations come from international non-governmental organizations’ (INGOs’) communication budgets. However, this is not the case in other parts of the world. For example, the Australian Productivity Commission’s Final Report (2000: 275) notes that “… the major cost to the general community of community broadcasting is the opportunity lost of the spectrum they use. Community broadcasters receive free access to scarce spectrum and thus exclude other potential broadcasters” (Foxwell, 2001). However, “the social and cultural benefits of community radio are priceless” (Foxwell, 2001:6).

Unlike commercial radio stations, community radio stations do not rely on advertisement revenue because such radio stations either are not allowed to carry advertisements or allowed advertising only in limited scale. In the Nepalese context, it is not the government regulations that limit advertisements in community radio stations; rather the stations themselves limit the types and levels of advertisement they accept.

Gunakar Aryal, Station Manager of CRM, argued that a community radio station like CRM should not broadcast advertisements at all, if possible. If such stations have to broadcast advertisements for their survival, they should consider not accepting advertisements of any type. He argued that a community radio station should not broadcast ads that encourage people to buy things, such as food products, that are not
necessary and have no nutritional value. CRM rejected ads with attractive incentives from companies like Coca Cola and the noodles industry because the station could not ask people to “give their corn and soybean to rats and buy noodles from the markets which has no nutritional value” (personal communication, February 5, 2004).

Advertisement of sodas or fast foods through CRM may encourage the poor families in the region to spend much-needed cash on such items. This gives community radio stations an argument for their gate-keeping, controlling not only what programs get on the air but also what advertisements should receive space. However, the decision is not what the community wants, but what the CRM thinks the community needs. Again, by considering that the public will accept advertisements from CRM at their face value, CRM implies that the audiences are passive and vulnerable recipients needing protection.

Community radio stations received not only financial/material/technical assistance from donor agencies but also receive assistance in program development through sponsored programs. Newly-opened radio stations lack a skilled workforce to produce quality programs. Community radio stations in Nepal, like any other newcomers, obtain assistance from donors in the form of sponsored programs to fill the airwaves until the stations themselves master the production of quality programs. Such programs help lower the financial burden, but the programs are not necessarily relevant to locals. Programs produced by the sponsoring organizations might not give priority to community needs. The process only shifts the power from locals to sponsoring organizations.
Does assistance in program development from donor agencies help to increase the public access to information? Kamal Mani Dixit (1997), examining the US $ 3.7 billion that Nepal received as foreign aid between 1951 and 1995, argued that it did not help to upgrade living standards of the population in a way Nepal might not have been able to achieve otherwise. Similarly, sponsored programs in the early days of a radio station might be helpful, but overdependence upon donors might take away the control over media content from the community members.

There has been an initiative from various organizations, mainly UNICEF, UNDP, and others, for digital broadcasting in Nepal, India, Laos, Malaysia and Indonesia. This includes radio broadcasting directly via satellite. Under this initiative in Nepal, content is developed by an NGO called Communication Corner, with support from various organizations, and the programs are sent to Australia to uplink to the World Space Satellite. An NGO under UNDP called Equal Access has provided satellite receiver sets to 10 FM radio stations, including CRM, as well as about 400 listener groups in the different parts of the country. The radio stations, using these satellite receivers, retransmit the programs broadcast over satellite. Such an initiative involves high technology that shifts power to professionals and away from locals. Even to fix a satellite radio set, Equal Access had to invite a technician from India. When asked, Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo termed the initiative as a “dollar making project” that is good for those who are involved to generate income, but not in the favor of participatory communication (personal communication, March 2, 2004).
Although community radio stations lack resources and donor agencies’ help is greatly appreciated, in the absence of clear regulations, self-declared community radio stations are using their “community radio” status to seek assistance from donor agencies. Kasajoo argued that the donor money has not done well; asking the donor agencies for monetary assistance has destroyed the very concept of community radio. Using an example of BASE, an NGO working for the Tharu community in the western districts, Kasajoo mentioned that it approached DANIDA with a proposal of Rs. 40 lakhs (4 million) to establish a community radio station. According to him, the very concept of a community establishing a medium for themselves has been eroded and been replaced with high-tech and high-power radio stations supported by donor agencies, where the locals have nothing to say (personal communication, March 2, 2004).

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* was envisioned as a small radio station. It was believed that community members could run a radio station with their limited resources and it would provide an outlet for participation in the communication and development process. The station was supposed to have an antenna high enough to reach its entire community. However, CRM has upgraded its transmitter capacity. The station management defended this upgrade citing a need for better reception among its community members. However, Kasajoo argued that having a powerful antenna is unnecessary. Instead, one should have multiple re-transmitters in order to cover the areas not covered by the direct broadcast of the station because of hills (personal communication, March 2, 2004).
Community radio stations, CRM and others, are becoming bigger and more sophisticated in terms of the technology they use and the programs they broadcast. CRM, the first and previously the only one in the area, faces three new radio stations in the region. This might have pushed CRM to be more competitive in terms of generating resources, improved quality of programs and upgrading every other aspect of the radio station. All three competing radio stations have higher capacity transmitters. This might have tempted the management of CRM to improve its transmitter capacity from 100 watts to 250 watts.

The establishment of more radio stations in the region put pressure on stations not only to provide quality programming and reception but also to look for additional resources. One of the new entrants in the region is a community radio station (Muktinath FM) owned and run by a cooperative. This means it also draws resources from the same funding base – i.e. international non-governmental organizations promoting community media. Also, like CRM, the new community radio station accepts pro-social advertisements and sponsors public service announcements. This put more pressure to the CRM management to consider other revenue sources. Expanding coverage and improving programming is one of the methods used to compete with the growing number of radio stations in the region.

Community radio is a new phenomenon in Nepal. The success of a community radio station depends on the way it provides an opportunity for participation by community members not on catering to advertisers for its listeners. However, because of
the lack of adequate training, community radio stations staff members often lose sight of their role as community media and begin to behave like a commercial radio station. But station manager Gunakar Aryal argued that the arrival of new radio stations in the region would help CRM to explain to its community members how a community radio station is different from its commercial counterparts. Community members will find CRM different from the rest based on the programming as well as the kinds of stories and content and the process of participation in the communication process (personal communication, February 5, 2004). However, program coordinator Rajesh Aryal expressed his eagerness to compete with commercial radio stations. He argued that a community radio station should not limit itself to low quality technology and poor programming. Rather, it should be equipped with technology matched with its commercial counterparts, and programming should be developed with high quality in order to attract a larger audience. The objective of the station to serve its community members through radio would be better fulfilled if a larger number of the community members tune in to its programs (personal communication, February 5, 2004). Station coordinator Somnath Aryal argued for more community involvement through CRM’s listeners’ groups, friends of radio groups, and citizens. In his view, this would ensure community ownership of the station and make the program and operation of the station more participatory (personal communication, February 6, 2004).

As previously mentioned, one of the major financial contributions to the establishment of community radio stations comes from international non-governmental
organizations or donor agencies. The assistance includes financial assistance to start up the station, and for technical assistance, broadcast studio equipment, and help through sponsored programs. But accepting the assistance from wherever available creates problems. FM stations, especially community radio stations, collect necessary equipment as a donation from various organizations. Thus, it is not surprising to see equipment from different countries and different companies as well as both new and old technologies in a radio station. In the absence of an appropriate authority or organization to provide technical advice, some of the community radio stations had to use hybrid technologies (Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo, personal communication, March 2, 2004).

Furthermore, adaptation of a high technology requires hiring skilled technicians, who are usually not available in remote village communities, and this forces stations to hire from outside the community, diminishing control over the station. However, a community radio station should not remain primitive nor should it produce and broadcast only low quality programs. Instead, it should be flexible enough to adopt new or high technology and produce and broadcast high quality programs. Community radio stations could train their staff and gradually upgrade the technology.

In Palpa, media history shows that many newspapers vanished after publishing for a short time, mainly due to financial problems. Furthermore, Tansen and villages in Palpa and in surrounding hilly districts lack the industrial base and commerce to provide an adequate advertising base. In such situations, operating a radio station in the commercial sector would be risky. Western FM and Srinagar FM in Tansen, Palpa have begun as
commercial radio stations. However, it is too early to tell the fate of these radio stations. Because government regulations do not distinguish between community and commercial radio stations in applications, it is a very attractive option for an entity to declare itself as a community radio station in order to receive donor assistance. Any declaration as a community radio station will not prevent such stations from getting advertisements.

Participation in the Programming of CRM

The success of a community radio station depends on how it involves community members in every aspect of the station, including in the programming at various levels. How can community radio stations avoid a linear mode of communication and become a tool for two-way communication? How to ensure community needs and desires? How to ensure participation in programming? Community Radio Madanpokhara provides a platform through which the marginalized population sectors gain access to information not available otherwise through mainstream media. Community participation in the programming of their community radio station includes listening to the station, writing letters, recording their poems and songs for broadcasts, sending news of local activities, and participating in interactive programs, like phone-in-programs.

There are some similarities and differences in the nature of programs the commercial and community radio stations in Nepal broadcast. Local news, local events and local issues are the dominant features in radio stations, commercial and community alike. However, they are different in terms of the volume and type of commercial advertising and the music they air. Samir Nepal of Manakamana FM expressed his
reservations when drawing a line between community and commercial services saying, “We broadcast the same commercials as the so-called public service broadcasters, yet I am branded a commercial radio. Our objective is to cover our expenses and do something for the community” (Pringle, 2002, February 26).

However, there are differences between private and state-owned media in Southeast Asia when it comes to presenting views and issues. Although private media tended to present information and programs from a greater variety of sources than state-owned media, the diversity of opinion in programs has not increased as expected. Private broadcasters have catered more to viewers’ preferences than the state-owned media (McDaniel, 2002: 40). Rai (2002, March 1), discussing the nature of programs in community and commercial radio stations in Nepal, wrote, “Community radios that focus on locally relevant information and discussions, and co-operative stations have a good mixture of entertainment and news, while the commercial stations are almost entirely entertainment-based and cater to the younger generation of music listeners” (Rai, 2002, March 1).

CRM, giving priority to locals, empowered the community members otherwise neglected. Broadcasting a program in the Magar language is one of the ways to give more deserved space to the local dialects. CRM has helped in the preservation of the local culture by increasing the diversity of sources, providing space for the marginalized section of the society in management as well as in programming, and providing space for local dialects.
CRM management claims the station is truly a community radio station, providing space to the locals in every aspect of the station. However, not everyone is convinced. Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo argued that most of the people in the management are from the Brahmin caste, who are reluctant to provide sufficient opportunities for other caste/ethnic groups. Kasajoo, giving an example from the Tansen municipality, where the majority of people are from the Newar caste/ethnic group, pointed out that there is not a single program in the Newari language (personal communication, March 2, 2004).

Contrary to Kasajoo’s suggestions, Wilmore found no such demand for a Newari language program in his study of Ratna Cable Television (RCTV) of Tansen, Palpa. He further writes,

There are no Newari language programs in the RCTV broadcast, but it is possible that the producers of the program are ignoring audience demand for these sorts of programs. I found no evidence for such demand, either during participant observation or when I explicitly asked respondents to describe how they would change the local programming in the detailed interviews that followed my fieldwork survey. (Wilmore, 2001: 378)

As Wilmore further argued,

These factors (the lack of demand for Newari language programming from the audience, the limited multiethnic/lingual background of the producers of the broadcasts, and the institutional framework within which the programs are produced) act together to prevent the local program from developing as a medium.
to express a specific ethnic identity or a means to give voice to the ethnic and linguistic diversity that exists in the Tansen and in Palpa districts. (Wilmore, 2001: 380)

Nepali cities and villages have many caste/ethnic groups in restricted geographic areas. Separated by hills, mountains and rivers, there are problems of transportation, and people in such villages depend on one another. People live in coexistence, and no single caste/ethnic group can dominate the other. Thus, a community for a radio station refers to geographic boundaries instead of caste/ethnic or interest groups in rural areas, and an ideal community radio station would include all groups in the station’s programming.

There would be no reason for the existence of a community radio station if the community members did not tune in to it. Programs, no matter how nicely they are produced, are useless if the intended audience does not listen to them. CRM, as reflected in the audience survey, reaches wider audiences and engages them in the communication process.

The audience survey indicated that more than 80% of the respondents in the survey area tuned in to CRM. Listening to CRM varied from 70% to 100% of the respondents in the different parts of the survey area. Although there is no data available on the national level about the listenership for FM radio, the listenership of this community radio station (CRM) is higher than the national average of general radio listening. This clearly indicates that community members participate in the program of CRM.
Community members not only listen to what is being broadcast, they actively participate in it. One such participatory program in CRM is Saita Ka Bela [an auspicious time]. Normally, the program runs smoothly. In one instance, a caller went off the line in an on-air program and the program coordinator had to intervene. Similarly, McDaniel (2002) mentioned,

In one broadcast, a telephone caller called Malaysia an ‘overwhelmingly authoritarian state.’ Embarrassments such as this led to production changes which, in addition to eliminating call-in participation, ensured topics were more carefully screened to reduce the possibility of upsetting comments. (McDaniel, 2002: 175)

It is crucial for a local FM radio station or a community radio station to develop programs reflecting listeners’ perspectives and knowing what people really need and like. Radio stations can achieve this by involving listeners, making them both information seekers and information givers. Equally important is to identify listeners’ needs as individuals and citizens of different ethnicities. Gathering listeners’ opinions in the form of letters is one of the best ways of learning their interests and program reactions. This also indicates the listeners’ participation in the affairs of a radio station. Although most of such letters tend to focus on requests for a particular song, a sizable number of letters also deal with how the station has been doing. Not only the volume of letters received daily but also the audience surveys indicate a very high level of community members’ participation through letter-writing.
One-fifth of the respondents of the audience survey reported sending letters to CRM for various reasons. Interestingly, 2.2% of the illiterate respondents (those who could not read and write) reported sending letters to the station. They did this by asking someone to write on his/her behalf. This is indeed a very high level of civic participation, not only limited to those who could write. However, those who wrote letters were mostly students; a few were farmers. Overall, the survey also demonstrates poor participation, at least in letter-writing, from the section of the population CRM is supposed to engage. Also, a relatively lower proportion of people from lower-caste families participated through letter-writing. However, the audience survey found women in the region not significantly behind their male counterparts in the number of letters sent to the station.

listeners of CRM are encouraged to write letters since most of them are aired. This might one be reading the names for requested songs. A high percentage (68.6%) of the villagers and more than half (53.7%) of the city dwellers reported their letters being read on air by the station. Furthermore, almost one-third (31.5%) of respondents had heard their name on the radio. This may have been in news reports or simply in the requested songs or programs. This finding reveals a very high participation from community members in the affairs of CRM and the high priority given by the station to its community members.

The audience survey demonstrated that a radio program in local dialect increases radio listening. One program had especially been designed for Magar in their local dialect. Interestingly, among the Magar respondents who sent letters to the station, 75%
of the letters were included in the programs. Similarly, a relatively higher percent of students (45.0%) had heard their name being broadcast over the radio whereas only 25.1% of the farmers and 32.1% of respondents of other occupations had done so. A similar pattern was observed in terms of respondents who had heard their friends’ or relatives’ names broadcast over the radio.

7.4. Contributions of CRM

Back to communities

Benedict Anderson, in *Imagined Communities* (1983), explored nations as “limited political communities.” McDaniel (2002: 23) further elaborates Anderson’s perspective, stating that “nationhood’s tangible qualities are the product of human creation and do not arise from ‘naturally’ bounded properties.” As Anderson argued, the nation is “imagined because the members of even the smallest nations will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (cited in McDaniel, 2002: 23).

The community of CRM is also an imagined one. Initiated by a small group of people, this “community” expanded to include people from wider sections of the society in its management, programming, and membership in the Listeners’ Clubs, etc. Not all members of the community of CRM know each other or or speak to each other. But, as the listeners of CRM, members of its Listeners’ Clubs and Friends of Radio Groups, they all feel that they belong to a community.
Another imagined community consists of listeners of specific programs. It could possibly be a phone-in-program, or an agricultural program or a dedicated songs program. Except for those who listen to programs in a group, such as at a teashop, most listeners listen alone. However, the listener is not truly alone; hundred of others are listening to the same program. The listener will never meet most of the others, but he or she feels like a member of such listeners’ group— an imagined community. FM radio has created many such imagined communities of fans of particular stations, specific programs or their hosts (Onta, 2001, January 12).

Not all community radio stations were established by the community. Rather, a group of people establish a community radio station and then hope to create a community. Instead of a radio station looking for its community after establishment, it would be better if the conditions are set when applying for a community radio station license requiring that the proposed community station has the support of local residents. One way of certifying this would be get signed petitions supporting the radio station. A proposed station should be able to collect thousands of signatures. It should not be assumed that because a station has strong support from petitions, no further outreach is needed. Stations must continue to involve people in all aspects of the station.

Re-emerging the grassroots discussion: Listeners’ club and Friends of Radio

Community Radio Madanpokhara provides its community members a means to participate in every aspect of the radio station, including their contributions to news gathering, independently or as a member of the Friends of Radio Group. CRM has Radio
ko Sathi [Friends of Radio] in many villages which, besides other activities, sends news about local activities to the station for broadcast. In the absence of the station’s own village correspondent (except for volunteer radio representatives), members of the Friends of Radio are the main source of news and information concerning their village. This ensures that the community members determine what is important and brings the community into discussion through their radio station.

The media can serve democracy, but they can also become a democracy’s threat because they may become a substitute for grassroots democratic discussion. When this happens, the media tend to allow oligarchic control over the public agenda. To avoid these non-democratic tendencies within the media, it is necessary to recognize citizens’ role as receivers as well as senders. In other words, mass communication gatekeepers ought to become gate-openers and catalyst for grassroots discussion (Manca, 1989: 172-173).

Hamelink (1990) argues that community-based forms of communication such as songs, theater, radio, video, and other activities require group intervention. Such interventions can provide opportunities to identify common problems and solutions, reflect upon community issues, and mobilize resources. Small media offer easy access to information in countries where mass media are usually controlled by governments and urban elites. Group media help marginal groups to speak to one another, to articulate their thoughts and feelings in the process of community organizing.
CRM, in helping its members with grass-root discussion, did not become a substitute for it. The members of the Listeners’ Clubs and of the Friends of Radio Groups listen to programs in groups and discuss its content/messages. In one study, audience participation in the form of listening groups was found to enhance the impact of family planning initiatives in Nepal. A significant relationship between membership in radio listening groups and radio listening and knowledge behaviors was found (Sood, Sengupta, Mishra and Jacoby, 2004).

The development of a similar concept was found in Nicaragua. “Popular correspondents live and work in poor isolated rural areas and, in their free time, act as community journalists, sending information to local and regional media. With some exceptions, popular correspondents are employed as wage-laborers in coffee, tobacco, or cotton plantations” (Rodriguez, 2001: 65). Unlike popular correspondents in Nicaragua, who were a part of a revolutionary movement, Friends of Radio of CRM in Nepal are ordinary people in communities who are not necessarily the members of any political movement.

The Mahawali Community Radio (MCR) in Sri Lanka had similar activities. The MCR would send teams from village to village and produce programs with the direct participation of local inhabitants in the planning, recording and editing of its programs. The MCR’s Listeners’ Clubs were bringing listeners close to the services. They produced their own audiocassettes containing reactions and comments for MCR programs (Case
study: MCR). Parallel to the example of MCR, the members of CRM’s Listeners’ Clubs send their written comments to the community radio station.

*Providing greater access to information*

Community radio stations provide easy access to its members for recording their songs, to school children to see technology demystified, and to empower and provide opportunities for local musicians.

Access to a station by its community members is an important feature of CRM. Radio Nepal, the state-run broadcaster, is situated inside the Singh-durbar complex, which houses the office of Prime Minister and other ministries. For most, it would be difficult to gain access to the Singh-durbar complex, let alone to Radio Nepal. However, CRM, located in a village in Palpa, is open to all, and community members feel comfortable while visiting the station. This is supported by the survey findings, which show that more than 19% of the respondents (24.6% in the city and 17.2% in villages) in the area reported visiting the station. The station is close to the Tansen municipality (about 12 km) and accessible by motorable road. However, as indicated earlier, many villages are far from the station and it takes hours of walking and traveling by bus to reach it. Despite this fact, a large number of villagers had visited the station. It could be because CRM was the first radio station in the region that triggered curiosity and interest among the masses; or that being a community radio station, CRM was open to its community members, resulting in the high number of people visiting the station, or a combination of both.
A very high proportion (80.0%) of respondents from Madanpokhara where the station is located had visited the station, followed by people from the Tansen municipality (24.6%) and other neighboring villages. Not only people from villages close to the station but also a large number of villagers from faraway villages such as Darlamada and Humin VDCs had visited the station. However, a relatively low percent of Magar (10.6%) and Chhetri (10.8%) respondents reported visiting the station as compared to Brahmins (37.4%), who were mostly from Tansen city and Madanpokhara itself. Furthermore, visiting the radio station was associated with respondents’ educational level as well as their occupation. Very few (4.5%) illiterate respondents visited the station whereas almost 32% of the respondents with some post-secondary education did. Likewise, a relatively higher percent of students (27.5%) than farmers (14.1%) and people of other occupations (21.2%) visited the station.

The level of public access to information in Nepal varies inside and outside of Kathmandu Valley. Furthermore, access to information outside the valley is not homogeneous -- people living in big cities have relatively better access to information than those in small cities and rural areas. Furthermore, access to information within a city or in a village setting varies by ethnic/caste group, among other factors.

There are villages and cities with no radio broadcasts available in the local language, restricting public access to information. Others have to rely on government-run broadcasting. Many families are without a radio set even if broadcasts are available. Although access to electronic media was very low throughout Nepal before the
establishment of independent radio stations, things have been different in locations where FM radio stations are operating.

Radio Nepal, the government radio station, was the only source of information for most people before the establishment of independent, commercial and community radio stations in Nepal. Although one can buy advertising time, the public generally has no input on programming content and management of the station. Most of the news sources are political leaders and high-level bureaucrats, and the information is often not relevant to the general public.

Independent FM radio stations in Nepal, community and commercial alike, definitely increased the public’s access to information, providing diverse and relevant viewpoints from multiple sources. Radio, a luxury affordable only by the nation’s elite until a few decades back, has now became ubiquitous item in every household. However, not quite everyone has equal access to a radio set and to information.

The latest census of 2001 shows that only half (53.1 per cent) of the households in Nepal have access to a radio, and TV is limited to only 22.5 percent of households. Overall, 41.3 percent of the households have access to neither a radio nor a TV. Furthermore, the access to radio and television is not homogeneous across the region. More than one-third (35.3 per cent) of people in the urban areas and almost a half (49.1 per cent) of their counterparts in the rural area did not have access to radio. Almost one-fourth (24.0 per cent) of people in cities and almost half of (44.5 per cent) people in villages did not have access to either radio or television (CBS, 2004).
The Table 7.1 showed a rapid growth in access to radio in rural areas over the years. However, the available data does not indicate a consistent pattern. The 1991 NFHS (Nepal Family Planning and Health Status) survey indicated that 31.7 percent of people in Nepal had access to radio. The 1996 NDHS (Nepal Demographic and Health Status) survey indicated that access to radio increased to 36.5 percent. The most recent census of 2001 revealed that access to radio had reached 53.1 percent.

Table 7.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Place of residence</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban Radio TV</td>
<td>Rural Radio TV</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Radio Nepal</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>NFHS</td>
<td>31.7 67.2 38.9</td>
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<td>NDHS</td>
<td>36.5 59.7 42.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Radio Nepal</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>BCHIMES</td>
<td>49.7 71.0 55.4</td>
<td>13.9</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>CENSUS</td>
<td>53.1 64.7 54.9</td>
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</table>

In Palpa, there has been no single study to gauge the number of radio listeners in the district. Wilmore (1995) conducted a survey in Tansen in October 1995. The sample included six percent of the total number of 3,211 households in the municipal area, which yielded 195 interviews. In the study, a little over 72 percent of the respondents said that their family owned a television set.
This present study indicated that more than 86 percent of the families in the study area owned a radio set, and more than 77 percent reported owning a radio set with FM reception. FM radio is a relatively new phenomenon in Nepal. Even in Kathmandu, FM radio became familiar only during the 1990 uprising when affluent students learned that they could listen to police communication over FM radio sets and direct their movements accordingly. The number of families in the CRM’s broadcast area owning a radio set, especially the number of families owning a radio set with FM reception, is high and can be attributed to the availability of CRM broadcasts.

*Multiple layers of empowerment*

Establishment of community media in a rural setting similar to *Community Radio Madanpokhara* empowers people at various levels. Nepal has herself been marginalized in the global market of access to information, and the development of Nepali media should be viewed as an important step towards giving power to Nepalese people and countering the cultural domination of foreign media.

Whether in the city or in villages, affluent members of society have already benefited from the development of media in their region. In this respect, the establishment of CRM surely increased the access to information for those who otherwise would not have such access. However, a portion of marginalized group, that is lower caste families, do not have access to radios and hardly listen to radio at all.

People in rural areas do not have access to foreign media except for foreign radio stations. Only a few people understand English, and the vast majority would not care to
listen to any foreign station except ones broadcasting Hindi language songs. An increasing number of Nepali FM stations, including CRM, play Nepali language songs, popularizing them as a way of countering the popularity of Hindi songs.

The establishment of CRM has increased access to entertainment and information in the city as well as in villages. It has created new listeners instead of simply sharing radio listeners. People’s access to and use of media in Nepal is not homogeneous. In general, people living in the capital city have greater access than in villages. The populations outside Kathmandu Valley, including the Palpa district of western Nepal, can be considered marginalized in their access to mainstream media. Thus, the development of any media in regions outside the Kathmandu Valley can empower their residents. The establishment of CRM in the Palpa district no doubt empowered the people in the region by giving them greater access.

Furthermore, villages have been marginalized in comparison to district headquarters. At newspaper stands, people in Tansen have access to at least local newspapers as well as newspapers published in the capital city. Not only geographic location but also affiliation in different caste/ethnic groups determines access to information. Although there are many illiterate and poor Brahmin people, the people from the lower-caste families are considered more left out than other groups. Thus, empowerment should be studied at various levels.

Rodriguez (2001) presented four international case studies in grassroots electronic media, framing the discussion by the democratization of communication and the survival
of cultural identities. She explored numerous examples of "citizen's media" around the world: revolutionary Nicaragua in the 1980s; Catalonia, Spain; Colombia; and Latino radio in the U.S. Based on her research, Rodriguez concluded:

Despite their differences in terms of sponsorship, community participation, broadcasting coverage, funding sources, and legal status, these four cases present a recurrent theme: a group of citizens who, not satisfied with what the dominant media offer, attempt to intervene in the established mediascape by reappropriating a mediated communication technology as a vehicle for their own voices.

(Rodriguez, 2001: 164)

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* has certainly increased access and use of media in its region and empowered villagers. Since the station broadcasts more local than international news, it has voiced the use of Nepali and local languages and cultures and countered the cultural influence of the dominant media.

*Contributing to local development*

Observers of CRM will not only see how a local radio station has been broadcasting music, they will see how the station has fulfilled its social responsibilities. CRM is local development radio. CRM reports development activities and the activities of clubs in the region. Its coverage of the activities of clubs, mostly advocacy activities to raise awareness of social issues, has encouraged other youth in the area to form similar clubs and to engage in development activities. This shows how radio can be a tool for
behavior change and it can persuade people to act collectively on issues that are important to them.

By providing relevant and up-to-date information to local residents, community media help society by shaming wrongdoing, by promoting success stories, and by helping guide decision-making. In Palung of the Makawanpur district, villagers have stopped playing cards and drinking alcohol excessively for fear that their indulgence will be broadcast over the village audio tower. Similarly, school teachers in Morang district reportedly stopped weaving sweaters in classes, fearing their practice would be in the news of the Children’s Wall Newspaper (Gautam, 2001). In Madi Valley of the Palpa district, a daughter-in-law began receiving better treatment from her mother-in-law and other family members who feared their threatening behavior would be broadcast over the Audio Tower (Gita Gyawali, personal communication, February 7, 2004). Community Radio Madanpokhara, giving priority to news and activities from its community and clubs and their development work, encouraged other individuals to follow suit. Farmers in Palpa get the right price for their produce by deciding where to take their produce for sale after listening to market values in Tansen and in Butwal city via CRM.

In Africa, popular theater has been successfully used to increase women's participation and improve their ability to deal with primary care problems. Through songs and storytelling, women were able to raise awareness and direct attention to problems to be addressed. Community participation through popular theater motivated rural communities to become involved in health care, which helped to reduce the prevalence of
preventable diseases and to improve sanitary conditions (Mlama, 1991; Kalipeni & Kamlongera, 1996). In a like manner, CRM contributed to community health through its organizing of clubs, helping them to formulate their programs, including health awareness programs, and broadcast those activities.

**Contributing to national integration**

Prithivi Narayan Shah, an ancestor of the present monarch, unified small municipalities with different caste/ethnic groups and languages into a nation. Some would argue that the nation was politically unified using force, not a proper basis for promoting cultural diversity. During royal direct rule (1960-1990), the government perceived opposition voices critical of the government to be as anti-national elements. These steps were taken for political benefit of the ruling class rather than as a genuine effort to develop nationalism.

How can community radio stations that promote local languages and culture help with national integration? The linguistic and ethnic diversity of Nepal reduces the usefulness of a centralized mass media system. There is always value in an alternative media that can not only complement the mainstream media but also independently serve as a strong communication tool for development (IIDS, 2000). The argument of using only the national language (Nepali) for national integration seems logical. However, “such a policy is counterproductive to its own goals when it simply forces individuals in certain minority linguistic groups to listen to foreign stations. That does not increase national integration; it decreases it” (“Radio listening,” 1974: 99). CRM has contributed
to increasing the number of people listening to songs in Nepali and local dialects and to national integration. “Unfortunately, in recent years, new radio stations operated by obscure religious denominations, mostly evangelic, have contributed to the exact opposite, dividing communities, thus affecting their social and cultural tissue” (Dagron, 2001: 36). The CRM station is selective not only with advertisements, but also with music. The station manager of CRM argued that a community radio station should not broadcast just any type of music, especially not music that portrays women negatively, is indecent, or that family members find difficult to listen to together (Gunakar Aryal, personal communication, February 5, 2004).

*Magnifying voices*

There are good examples of networking among community radio stations. For example, the *Tambuli Foundation* coordinates the exchange of cassettes, training, and meetings among stations in the Philippines. *Pulsar*, a news agency in Latin America, provides daily reports and news through e-mail and the Internet to several hundred community radio stations in South America (Dagron, 2001: 17). However, there has always been a challenge in networking community media. Top-down networking, which is common in commercial ventures of highly centralized organizations, does not work as easily when dealing with independent radio stations owned by diverse communities (Dagron, 2001: 16).

In Nepal, Communication Corner in Kathmandu has been working with community radio stations for the exchange of news, current affairs reports and other radio
magazine programs. Communication Corner works with seven radio stations and sends daily 15-minute news and current affairs programs, and encourages member stations to exchange material with each other (Gopal Guragain, personal communication, August 20, 2002).

Communication Corner tried to link stations together through the Internet, but this did not work because of the too-narrow bandwidth available in Nepal. Thus, Communications Corner exchanges materials via phone lines and plans to upgrade to Internet audio files as soon as the bandwidth makes this possible. Gopal Guragain of Communication Corner says, “What we are trying to do is to magnify the voices of small community stations... By making them a part of a network, the whole is bigger than a sum of the parts” (Rai, 2002, March 1). From his studio in Kathmandu Valley, Guragain beams out a news package every morning, which is heard simultaneously in Butwal, Hetauda, Pokhara, Itahari, and Kathmandu (Gopal Guragain, personal communication, August 20, 2002).

Apart from news, a half-hour program called Aalo Palo [turn by turn] and Radio Ma Pustak [book on radio] and the 15-minute KayaKairan (a daily news and views program based on press reviews and live interviews, and radio reportage) airs on member stations. The member stations pay for the daily KayaKairan and get the two additional programs free. In exchange, the member stations share their productions (Aalo Palo) with other members (Rai, 2002, March 1). The Palpa district audience survey revealed that Kayakiran was the best rated program by radio listeners in the region.
Aalo Palo is simultaneously broadcast by all member FM stations – CRM, Annapurna FM, Radio Lumbini, Koshi FM, Metro FM, Sagarmatha FM, and Swargadwari FM. In the past, when CRM lacked a telephone line, it received Kayakiran by audio tapes. There were times when CRM had to halt the broadcast of Kayakiran temporarily because tapes from Kathmandu were lost or delayed (Somnath Aryal, personal communication, August 10, 2002).

CRM has been linked with the digital broadcasting initiative in Nepal. A UNDP Public-Private Partnership Project intends to deliver development information to the underserved. The satellite-based channel broadcast in digital format is rebroadcast by CRM and other FM stations as well as by Radio Nepal. One of the objectives of the initiative was to involve community participants as the central stakeholders in the process. The initiative that started in April 14, 2003, included two radio programs: Kura Khasra Mita, a radio drama set in a Nepalese village and Khojhabar, a magazine style program that incorporates a variety of educational programs. One of the programs in Khojhabar was “Cut Your Coat According to Your Cloth,” which was originally produced by the Johns Hopkins University, and the author was one of the employees involved in its production. The program was originally broadcast over Radio Nepal. Communication Corner converted the programs to digital format and broadcast them by satellite.
7.5. Summary and Conclusions

Community radio is a new concept in Nepal. As community radio stations are credited with providing public participation and giving voices to the marginalized sections of population, Nepalese community radio stations, including Community Radio Madanpokhara (CRM), are truly helping to fulfill some of these objectives. Participatory communication means different things to different people. For CRM, participatory communication means that a local radio station is initiated, managed, programmed and financed by local residents with the objective to provide greater access to relevant information in a timely fashion. It means that community members now have a platform where they can voice their concerns, making themselves heard. CRM is a medium that raises public awareness about people’s problems and that advocates for social change.

Establishment of community radio stations in Nepal, including Community Radio Madanpokhara, was made possible under the nation’s democratic political system. The democratic environment and the liberal policies adopted by the Nepali Congress Party made it possible for private businesses and community organizations to receive licenses to operate radio stations. The nation’s democratic political system enables Nepalese to initiate community radio stations and these stations are now helping people to participate in the democratic process by making them aware of their rights and responsibilities and giving them a channel to express their opinion.

CRM demonstrated that a local government owned radio station was possible and its success has been recognized at the national and international levels. In other parts of
the world, there exist radio stations owned and controlled by churches as well as trade
unions. It is difficult to pinpoint which model is best for Nepal.

Some lessons have been learned when operating a radio station under a local
government. Because of political instability created by the Maoist insurgency, the local
bodies remained without any elected leaders for a long period of time. This was not
foreseen at the time of adopting the constitution for Community Radio Madanpokhara. In
a politically unstable country like Nepal, there are some risks in situations like this. On
the other hand, it is still a conjecture what could have happened to the station
management if the new leadership had been elected in the Village Development
Committee. As is apparent in the case of Radio Nepal, every government influences its
media outlets and uses them in its favor. This problem could be repeated in the case of
CRM.

Community Radio Madanpokhara enjoys wide participation. Local residents have
been involved in the affairs of the radio station, from its inauguration and its day-to-day
operations. They have been active in management, and have added resources to the
station. All of the management and programming staff members are local residents
without any previous experience in radio broadcasting. The station solicits the residents’
involvement in every aspect of the station and makes them feel that the station belongs to
them.

This study reveals that radio sets are no longer a luxury affordable only to the rich
people in the society. Rather, they have become ubiquitous and affordable to people even
in rural Nepal. Establishment of community radio greatly increased the percentage of people listening to the radio. It not only took away listeners from the government owned Radio Nepal, it also created new listeners. Community radio throughout the world, including CRM, claims to serve marginalized peoples by giving them a voice. CRM has fulfilled this objective to a great extent.

However, as the survey revealed, a large proportion of the people from lower castes do not listen to radio and do not have access to any other medium. Not everyone listens to Community Radio Madanpokhara; one-fourth of the villagers do not listen to it. There exists a wide gap between urban (Tansen) and village audience. Access to radio and becoming a listener is, in part, based on one’s ethnic background. It was found that a large proportion of people from the lower-caste and Magar families living in villages do not listen to CRM.

In the 21st century, when people in the developed countries are bombarded with information and have many outlets for expression, a high proportion of people in rural Nepal still lack a radio set and have no means to communicate their voices. These are usually the socially and economically marginalized groups. There are still challenges in bridging the gap between villagers and city dwellers in terms of their access to information. As this study points out, one-fourth of the residents in Palpa did not listen to any radio. Community radio, no matter how good the programs are with relevant information, stations cannot achieve their objective of giving voice to the socially marginalized sections of the community if they do not listen to such programs.
Radio is believed to have an advantage over print in terms of reaching out to the illiterate, and community radio is well positioned to provide for such disadvantaged groups. Most educated people listen to CRM but only half of the illiterate people reported that they listened. This fact highlights the challenges for community radio stations reaching out to disadvantaged populations. However, people reported listening to CRM more than Radio Nepal or any other radio station, implying that at least they favor CRM over the government-run national radio.

Community participation should involve local residents in the decision-making process. It is about ownership and sharing the benefits of the station. It is about identifying what people want and operating the station with the aim of addressing those needs. Radio stations can facilitate public participation in planning, establishment, operation and evaluation. People can participate once only, or at different stages in the development of the station. They can participate on a voluntary basis or for some kind of remuneration. People can participate directly as individuals or as a member of a group or organization. Not only does public participation help a station, it also helps the participants, not necessarily in financial terms, but in terms of gaining skills in particular fields, and gaining access to training and self-reliance and respect in the society.

The efforts of those community radio stations should be appreciated. However, in the absence of any clear national policy, there are many areas and villages that have no option other than to listen to the government-owned and run Radio Nepal. On the other hand, there are now four radio stations in Palpa district in western Nepal, where people
have only two locally published weekly newspapers. This was a result of the lack of
government policy regarding how many radio stations in a particular area are desirable.

The experiences gathered from the establishment and operation of *Community
Radio Madanpokhara* (CRM) are largely positive. CRM enjoys full support of the
community. There are different ways and processes for achieving community
participation. Each community is unique and should develop its own ways of doing
things. Most important of all is to have a radio station that is owned, managed and
programmed by the community that it serves. This is not easy to achieve, as there are
always challenges, conflicts and obstacles.

*Community Radio Madanpokhara* has contributed in the development of the
region. It has brought the issues that are important to locals into the spotlight and made
the authorities aware of them. It has helped preserve local culture and identity. The world
is not a global village but rather the world is made of countless villages. The world would
be better and richer if local identities, cultures and languages of these countless villages
are preserved. Whatever the size, every community has right to preserve its language and
ethnic and cultural identity.
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Press Council Nepal.


Appendix A: Caste/Ethnic Composition in Villages and Tansen Municipality, 2001

<table>
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<tr>
<th>VDCs and municipality</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
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Note: Figures were calculated based on 2001 Census data.
Appendix B: Political and Media Timeline in Nepal and in Palpa

Political Timeline During Rana Regime (Before 1950)

1768 - Gorkha ruler Prithvi Narayan Shah conquers Kathmandu and lays foundations for unified kingdom.

1792 - Nepalese expansion halted by defeat at hands of Chinese in Tibet.

1816 - Anglo-Nepalese War 1814-1816 and treaty establishes Nepal's current boundaries.

1846 - Nepal falls under hereditary prime ministers known as Ranas, who dominate the monarchy and cut off country from outside world.

1923 - Treaty with Britain affirms Nepal's sovereignty.

1950 – Nepali Congress Party forms alliance with monarch to end the Rana regime.

Media Timeline During Rana Regime (Before 1950)

1851 – First modern printing press started in the country

1878 – Establishment of Postal Services

1881 – Publishes first postal stamps for postal fees

1881 – First monthly literary paper *Sudhasagar* publishes on August

1901 – First newspaper *Gorakhapatra* (Nepali language) started as government owned weekly newspaper on Monday May 6.

1901 – The government issues a directive to publish *Gorakhapatra* – the first media regulation

1911 – First hydro power project in Pharping

1913 – First time trunk-telephone services introduced
1913 – Establishment of Gorakha Bhasa Prakasan Samiti [Gorkha Language Publication Committee]

1920s – Radio sets enter in the county in mid 1920s. They were limited to the Prime Minister, Ministers, and few influential people

1934 – Monthly literary paper Saradha starts

1939-45 – The government collects radio sets from the public to prohibit them listening to the war news

1946 – Prime minister Padma Shemsher allowed the public to have a radio set

1947 – Prime Minister Padma Shemsher starts radio broadcasting from then Bijuli Aadda [Electricity Office] at Tudikhel in Kathmandu. The broadcasting included only religious songs, speeches and public service announcements. There were 2-4 loud speakers in Tudikhel for the public and broadcast for an hour a day. It died with the ousted of Padma Sumsher. Mohan Shemsher becomes prime minister. Mohan Shemsher resumes the broadcasting to counter the Nepali Congress’s radio with no success.

1948 – Last Rana Prime Minister Mohan Shemsher establishes Prachar Bibhag [Communication Department]

1948 – Press and Publication Regulation under the pressure from the movement for democracy – defined various terms in media, limited freedom.
1948 – Press and Publication Regulations under the pressure from the movement for democracy. The regulations defined various terms in media. However, it limited the press freedom.

1950 – Nepali Congress Party, fighting to establish democracy in the country, establishes first radio services in the nation from Bhojpur district in eastern Nepal. Jayendra Bahadur Thapalia becomes the first person to speak on radio

1950 – Weekly Jagaran (Nepali) starts its publication 3 days before the establishment of democracy

*Media Timeline in Palpa During Rana Regime (before 1950)*

1946 – Handwritten paper Pathak Pardasak [Road Guide] was published.

*Political Timeline During First Democratic Environment (1950 – 1960)*


1953 29 May - New Zealander Edmund Hillary and Nepal's Sherpa Tenzing Norgay become the first climbers to reach the summit of Mount Everest.


1955 - King Tribhuwan dies, King Mahendra ascends throne.

1955 – Citizens’ Right Act erected

1958 - Multi-party constitution adopted. First parliamentary election held. Nepali Congress Party wins two-third majority

*Media Timeline During First Democratic Environment (1950 – 1960)*
1950 – First daily newspaper *Aabaj* [Voice] starts its publication from Kathmandu, one day after the establishment of democracy.

1951 – Establishment of Prachar Prasar Bibhaj [Information and Communication Department] under Home Ministry with its own director. Radio Nepal also headed by a director but it did not get the status of a department. Director of Information and Communication Department served as the director for Radio Nepal during 1958 to 1961.

1951 – Establishment of Nepal Journalism Association first time.

1951 – Radio Nepal starts with 250 KW.


1951 – Production of the first movie in Nepali language “Satya Harischandra” from Calcutta, India.

1952 – Press and Publication Registry Regulation. It cancelled the previous regulation of 1948.


1957 – Radio Act that required a license for holding, making and using a radio machine. It was not related to radio broadcasting.
1957 – Establishment of Press Commission. It gave a report after 4 months that included the establishment of a news agency, press advisory council and financial support to newspapers.

1958 – Press and Publication Registry Regulations 1952 – Second amendment

1958 – The government issues a directive that included a provision of providing identity card for journalists

1957 – Government puts regulations that require newspapers to be registered with the government

1958 – The government started providing advertisement to different newspapers

*Media Timeline in Palpa During First Democratic Environment (1950 – 1960)*

1951 – Newspaper *Sangharsh* [Struggle] was started publishing

1952 – *Pragati* [Progress] handwritten monthly paper started by Dhawal Library

1953 – *Balasakha* [Children] monthly paper was started

1955 – *Upahar* [Present], an official magazine of Janata High School, started

1956 – *Uabak* [Adolsecent], a contemporary bulletin was published

1957 – *Neyakiran Saptahik* [New Hope Weekly], first weekly newspaper in Palpa, started

*Political Timeline During King’s Direct Rule (1960 – 1990)*

1960 - King Mahendra seizes control and suspends parliament, constitution and party politics after Nepali Congress Party (NCP) wins elections with B. P. Koirala as premier.
1962 - New constitution provides for non-party system of councils known as "panchayat" under which king exercises sole power. First elections to Rastriya Panchayat held in 1963.

1972 - King Mahendra dies, succeeded by Birendra.

1980 - Constitutional referendum follows agitation for reform. Small majority favors keeping existing panchayat system. King agrees to allow direct elections to national assembly - but on a non-party basis.

1985 - NCP begins civil disobedience campaign for restoration of multi-party system.

1986 - New elections boycotted by NCP.

1989 - Trade and transit dispute with India leads to border blockade by Delhi resulting in worsening economic situation.

Media Timeline During King’s Direct Rule (1960 – 1990)

1960 – Establishment of Sagarmatha Sambad Samiti [Sagarmatha Communication Committee]

1961 – Establishment of Rastriya Sambad Samiti [National Communication Committee]

1962 – Nepal Sambad Samiti & Sagarmatha Sambad Samiti developed to National News Agency

1962 – First TV film in Nepal – King Mahendra’s 42nd birthday

1963 – Establishment of Department of Information and Department of Broadcasting as two separate departments
1964 – Establishment of Ministry of Information and Ministry of Communication as two separate ministries


1965 – Ministry of Communication formed as a separate ministry

1965 – First movie produced in Nepal “Aama” [Mother] produced by the government

1969 – Radio Nepal extends its short waves and adds medium wave (AM) frequency.


1970s – Television sets enter in Nepal

1971 – King Birendra, in his speech to the Rastriya Panchayat, mentioned the need for media for development.

1971 – Government approves the National Communication Planning 1971 with the main slogan “Communication for Development”

1980s – Press becomes comparatively active and writing critically against the power holders. As a result, Padma Thakurathi got gunshot but he survived. He was targeted because his newspaper exposed the corrupt persons.

1980 – Royal Press Commission formed and asked to advice the problems and possible solution to the press sector

1980-81 – Nepalese started watching foreign TV channels/programs
1984 – Radio Nepal was brought under a cooperation applying Development Committee Law 1956

1985 – An office opens for television project in Nepal on Wednesday January 30. It aimed to broadcast television in Kathmandu valley and establish community television centers in Village Councils in the valley.

1985 – First television broadcasting begins in Nepal. It was successfully broadcast right after the program “Youth Mass Communication Conference” organized jointly by International Youth National Committee Nepal and Nepal Press Institute on Tuesday August 13, 1985.

1985 – Nepal Television broadcasts news bulletin of king Birendra’s official visit to Australia

1985 – Nepal Television converted to a corporation on Friday December 27, 1985

1995 – Nepal Television broadcasts regularly since Sunday December 29, 1985

1987 – Nepal Television’s programs develop in quality during the third SAARC summit in Kathmandu

1987 – New communication policies and programs introduced after evaluating the existing policies and programs

1987 – Gaon Ghar [Village], the nation’s first development oriented wall newspaper starts in Dang

2001 – Nepal Television goes satellite on July 4, 2001. It becomes accessible in almost all parts of the country and about 20 countries around the world
Media Timeline in Palpa During King’s Direct Rule (1960 – 1990)

1961 – Palpa Weekly newspapers started

1960s – Buddha Ratna Bajracharya tested homemade AM radio in Tansen, Palpa

1974 – Government prohibits publishing any contemporary bulletin without government approvals

1974 – Srinagar, 3-monthly contemporary collection, started

1975 – Pahur Ramaila Masik [Present/Gift Entertaining Monthly] started

1978 – Tansen Digest started

1979 – Jamarko [Initiative] started

1982 – Aabaj [Voices] monthly started

1982 – Buddha Ratna Bajracharya started cable casting in Tansen

1983 – Satya Saptahik [Truth Weekly] started

1983 – Aayam bi-monthly started

1983 – Bela weekly started

Political Timeline After the Restoration of Democracy in 1990

1990 - Pro-democracy agitation coordinated by NCP and leftist groups. Street protests suppressed by security forces resulting in deaths and mass arrests. King Birendra eventually bows to pressure and agrees to new democratic constitution.

1994 - Koirala's government defeated in no-confidence motion. New elections lead to formation of Communist Party of Nepal United Marxist-Leninist, as it was the biggest party in the parliament.

1995 - Communist government dissolved. Radical leftist group, the Nepal Communist Party (Maoist) begins insurrection in rural areas aimed at abolishing monarch and establishing people's republic.

1997 - Continuing political instability as Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba is defeated and replaced by Lokendra Bahadur Chand. Chand is then forced to resign because of party splits and is replaced by Surya Bahadur Thapa.

1998 - Thapa stands down because of party splits. GP Koirala returns as prime minister heading a coalition government.


2000 - Prime Minister Bhattarai steps down after revolt in Nepali Congress Party. GP Koirala returns as prime minister, heading the ninth government in 10 years.

2001 1 June - King Birendra, Queen Aishwarya and other close relatives killed in shooting spree by drunken Crown Prince Dipendra, who then shoots himself.

2001 4 June - Prince Gyanendra crowned King of Nepal after the late King Birendra's son, Dipendra - who had been declared king on 2 June - died of injuries sustained during the palace shooting.
2001 July - Maoist rebels step up campaign of violence. Sher Bahadur Deuba becomes prime minister, heading the 11th government in 11 years, after Girija Prasad Koirala quits over the violence.

2001 July - Deuba announces peace with rebels, truce begins.

2001 November - Maoists say peace talks have failed, truce is no longer justified. Launch coordinated attacks on army and police posts.

2001 November - State of emergency declared after more than 100 people are killed in four days of violence. King Gyanendra orders army to crush the Maoist rebels.

2002 February - Maoists kill 127 in weekend raids on several government targets.

2002 April - Maoist rebels order five-day national strike, days after hundreds are killed in two of bloodiest attacks of six-year rebellion.

2002 May - Intense clashes between military and rebels in the west. Rebels declare one-month ceasefire, rejected by government.

2002 May - Parliament dissolved, fresh elections called amid political confrontation over extending the state of emergency. Deuba expelled by his Nepali Congress party, heads interim government, renews emergency.

2002 October - Deuba asks king to put off elections by a year because of Maoist violence. King Gyanendra dismisses Deuba and indefinitely puts off elections set for November. Lokendra Bahadur Chand appointed to head government.

2003 January - Rebels, government declare ceasefire.
2003 May/June - Lokendra Bahadur Chand resigns as prime minister. King appoints his own nominee Surya Bahadur Thapa as new premier.

2003 August - Rebels pull out of peace talks with government and end seven-month truce. Rebels call three-day general strike in September.

2004 April - Nepal joins the World Trade Organization (WTO).

2004 May - Royalist Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa resigns following weeks of street protests by opposition groups.

2004 June 2 – King Gyanendra appoints Sher Bahadur Deuba as new Prime Minister

**Media Timeline After the Restoration of Democracy in 1990**

1992 – Radio Communication License Regulation

1994 – Radio Nepal begins to broadcasts news regularly in language spoken by at least one percent of the population


1993 – Broadcasting Act of 1993

1995 – National Broadcasting Regulations – active the license fee, application procedure, govt. taxes, payment and fines.

1996 – First FM radio broadcasting begins by Radio Nepal

1997- *Radio Sagarmatha* begins its broadcasting on May 22, 1997 and becomes the first independent community radio in Nepal as well as in South Asia.
2000 – Radio Lumbini, a cooperative owned community radio station stars in Rupendehi district in western Nepal

2000 – Nepal Television starts its Metro Channel with support from the Chinese support

*Media Timeline in Palpa After the Restoration of Democracy in 1990*

1992 – Rural Development Palpa, a non-governmental organization, starts the first barefoot journalism training in Palpa

1993 – Gaunle Deurali, a weekly development newspaper, starts publishing from Tansen

1997 – Madi Valley Community Audio Tower starts. Danda Bazar in Dhankutta district and Palung in Makawanpur district replicate it.

2000 – *Community Radio Madanpokhara* stars broadcasting

2004 – Muktinath FM, Western FM, Srinagar FM starts building stations in Tansen
Appendix C: Individuals Contacted for Information

1. Bharat D. Koirala, Vice president of AMARC Asia Pacific and recipient of the Ramon Magasaysay Award in 2002
2. Pashupati Paudel, Section Officer, Frequency Division of Ministry of Information and Communication, Singh Durbar, Kathmandu
3. Gopal Guragain, Director, Communication Corner (a non-governmental organization), Lalitpur
4. Mantessori Rajbhandari, Chair-person, Communication Corner (a non-governmental organization), Lalitpur
5. Raghu Mainali, Community Radio Support Center, Nepalese Federation of Environmental Journalists, Kathmandu [check the name]
6. Binay Dhital, Communication Coordinator, Mellemfolkelight Samvirke Nepal (Danish Association for International Cooperation), Kathmandu
7. Gunakar Aryal, Station Manager, Community Radio Madanpokhara, Madanpokhara-9, Palpa
8. Somnath Aryal, Station Coordinator, Community Radio Madanpokhara, Madanpokhara-9, Palpa
9. Rajesh Aryal, Program Coordinator, Community Radio Madanpokhara, Madanpokhara-9, Palpa
10. Bhagawan Bhandari, Program Producer, Community Radio Madanpokhara, Madanpokhara-9, Palpa
11. Ghanta P. Acharya, Board Member, *Community Radio Madanpokhara*, Madanpokhara-9, Palpa

12. Laxman Devkota, journalist, Madanpokhara -6, Palpa

13. Vinaya Kumar Kasajoo, Chief Editor, Gaunle Deurali Weekly (Nepali language development newspaper), Tansen, Palpa (interview was conducted in Kathmandu at Media Service International’s office)

14. Meghraj Sharma, Editor, Gaunle Deurali Weekly, Tansen, Palpa

15. Rajan Pant, President of Nepali Congress Party Palpa and Chairman of Western FM, Tansen, Palpa

16. Mohan Pandey, Board Member, Western FM, Tansen, Palpa

17. Jagadish Bhattarai, Board Member, Srinagar FM, Tansen, Palpa

18. Ghapendra Gahire, President of Federation of Nepalese Journalists Palpa Branch and Vice-Chairman, Muktinath FM, Tansen, Palpa

19. Bhagirath Basyal, Program Coordinator, Muktinath FM, Tansen, Palpa

20. Buddha Ratna Shakya, Chairman, Community Development Program, and Chairman, Subha Srinagar Cable Pvt. Ltd., Tansen, Palpa


22. Ghapendra G.C., Ex-chairman of District Development Committee Palpa and Board Member of CRM

23. Radha Krishna Sharma, Board Member, CRM and Campus Chief, Mandabaya Multiple Campus, Madanpokhara-6, Damkada

25. Ghanashaym Pandey, Monitoring Officer, Local Initiative Support Program/Helvetas, Tansen, Palpa

26. Kishor Pradhan, Program Manager, Media Center of Panos South Asia, Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur
Appendix D: Documents Analyzed

1. Soyamsewak prasaran nirdesika 2059 B.S. [Volunteer Administration Guidelines 2002]


4. Sandesh prasaran niti 2056 B.S. [Advertisement broadcasting policies 1999]

5. Samudayaeik Radio Madanpokhara FM 106.9 Radio Profile Baisak 2057 B.S. [Community Radio Madanpokhara FM 106.9 Radio Profile 2000 May]


7. Strategies of Community Radio Madanpokhara 2002
Appendix E: Questionnaire for Audience Survey 2004 (English)

Community Radio Madanpokhara
Audience Survey 2004

[My name is ............... I am a representative of Community Radio Madanpokhara. This audience survey is being done to study the programs aired from Community Radio Madanpokhara and other issues. The questions and their answers you provide will be secret and will be used only for the study of programs aired from Community Radio Madanpokhara. Your participation in this survey will be voluntary and you can end the interview process anytime you want.]

1. General information
   1.1. Date of interview
   1.2. Family number:
   1.3. Interviewer’s name:
   1.4. VDC/Municipality:
   1.5. Ward number:
   1.6. Village:
   1.7. Information regarding family members who have been residing for 6 months or longer [start from the household head asking question to a member who can provide such information]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Name and caste</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Main occupation</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Religion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Head….</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Looking at the information above identify those aged 10 and older. Following the processes mentioned in your training, select one person among family members aged 10 years and above. Circle the name of the person selected. All the questions onward should be asked to the person selected.]

2. Radio
Person selected: …………… [This person could be different from the person who gave household information]

(Now I am going to ask you few questions about radio).

2.1. Does your family posses a radio?  1. Yes  2. No
2.2. How many radios does your family have? …
2.3. How many of the radios are in working condition? …
2.4. How many of the radios in your family have FM band? … [Look the radios if needed]
2.5. Who turns on/plays play the radio most often? …
2.6. Does …… [Address accordingly looking the answer for question 2.5] he/she play the radio only for himself/herself or can other family members listen to it as well? 1. Only for himself/herself  2. For other people as well
2.7. Do you have electricity?  1. Yes  2. No
2.9. Have you or your family members bought a radio set after the establishment of Radio Madanpokhara (in the last 4 years)?  1. Have 2. Have not
2.10. If you have bought one, was it with a FM band or without a FM band? [Check the radio if needed]  1. Radio with FM band  2. Radio without FM band
2.11. [If none of the radio has a FM band], did you know that a FM band can be added to the regular radio?  1. Knew  2. Didn’t know
[After writing the answer, tell the interviewee that the service is available in the market]
2.12. Do you listen to the radio?  1. I do  2. I don’t
2.14. If you don’t listen to it, what are the reasons? ….
2.15. In general, how much do you listen to radio?  1. Half hour or less  2. ½ hour to 1 hour  3. 1 to 2 hours  4. 2 to 4 hours  5. More than 4 hours  6. No answer/don’t know
2.16. When do you listen to the radio very often? 1. Morning  2. Day  3. Evening
2.17. During what time do you listen the radio? (Multiple answers)  1. 6 – 8 am  2. 8-10 am  3. 10-12 noon  4. 12-2 p.m.  5. 2-4 p.m.
6. 4-6 p.m.  7. 6-8 p.m.  8. 8-10 p.m.  9. 10-12 p.m.  10. 12-2 am  11. 2-4 am  12. 4-6 am

2.18. Which radio station do you listen to the most? (Only one answer)
   4. Butwal FM   5. All India Radio   6. BBC Nepal/Hindi
   7. Voice of America   8. Other (write) …

2.19. Have you listen to these radio stations [tell the name of the stations and put a mark on the listened one] in the last week (in the last 7 days)?
   4. Butwal FM   5. All India Radio   6. BBC Nepal/Hindi
   7. Voice of America   8. Other (write) …

2.20. Which one is the best station or the one you like the most for news? …

2.21. Which one is the best station or the one you like the most for entertainment? …

2.22. Which program is the best or the one you like the most?
   2.22.1. Program….   2.22.2. Station….

3. Community Radio Madanpokhara

3.1. Do you know about Community Radio Madanpokhara?  1. Yes   2. No

3.2. Where is the station located?   1. Right answer 2. Wrong answer

3.3. How long has the station been on air?   1. Right answer 2. Wrong answer

3.4. Have you visited the station?   1. Yes   2. No

3.5. If yes, how many times in a year do you usually visit it? …

3.6. Have you listened to Community Radio Madanpokhara?   1. Yes   2. No

3.7. How many times a week do you listen to Radio Madanpokhara?

3.8. What time does Radio Madanpokhara broadcast?  
   1. Right answer 2. Wrong answer

3.9. What are the programs aired from Radio Madanpokhara? … … … … … …

3.10. Do you know the representative of Radio Madanpokhara for your village?  
   1. Right answer 2. Wrong answer

3.11. Have your heard your name aired from Radio Madanpokhara?  1. Yes   2. No [Consider as heard if the respondent’s name was aired but he/she didn’t listen to it personally]
3.12. Have you heard your relatives’ or friends’ or neighbors’ name broadcast from Radio Madanpokhara?  1. Have  2. Have not


3.15. Have you participated in any assembly of Radio Madanpokhara?  1. Yes  2. No

3.16. Have you participated in any social or religious program organized by Radio Madanpokhara?  1. Yes  2. No

3.17. Have you ever provided financial support to Radio Madanpokhara?  1. Yes  2. No

3.18. If yes, how much? … … When? … …


3.20. In your opinion, who owns the community radio?…

3.21. In your opinion, who runs the community radio?…

3.22. In your opinion, who finances the community radio?…

3.23. In your opinion, who produces the programs for the community radio?…

3.24. In your opinion, does the community radio make any profit or not?  1. Does  2. Doesn’t

3.25. In your opinion, if the community radio makes any profit, who keeps the profit? …


3.27. Are you involved in the affairs of Radio Madanpokhara?  1. Yes  2. No


3.29. Are you a member of any group?  1. Yes  2. No  If yes, which groups?… … … Since when? …


3.31. If yes, how many times in a month do you do so?…

3.32. What was the subject matter?…

3.33. Was the letter aired from the station?  1. Yes  2. No

3.34. Are you a member of the Listeners’ Club of Radio Madanpokhara?  1. Yes  2. No

3.35. If yes, how many times a week do you listen to the radio in a group?…
3.36. Are you a member of the village level Radio Committee of Radio Madanpokhara? 1. Yes 2. No

3.37. In your opinion, is your village becoming better or worse than in the past?

3.38. If you were able to do whatever you wanted, what would you do in your village?…. 

3.39. Do you feel at home in your village? 1. Yes 2. No

3.40. If you have to leave your village for some reason, would you be happy or unhappy? 1. Happy or doesn’t matter 2. Sad

3.1. **Community Radio Madanpokhara** [Now I am going to ask you a couple of questions regarding programs aired from *Community Radio Madanpokhara*]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program’s name</th>
<th>Have you listen to it?</th>
<th>How was the program?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious program</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serophero ma aaja</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayakiran</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local activities</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakapusta</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Utpidit aabaj</em></td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sancho bisancho</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahitya prativa</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaphnai paurakh aaphanai gaurab</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahila sansar</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaunthaunka khabar</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National songs</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk songs</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern songs</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People’s access to decision makers</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinophano</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aalopalo</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability awareness</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coexistence</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganthan</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saitko bela</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paribesh bolchha</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying the law</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kura khasra mitha</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khojkhabar</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lokh juhari</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children garden</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s voice</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madiko pahur</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good governance</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking water for village health</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable development/good governance</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listento</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace initiative</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From newspapers</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeevan ka goratoma</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aanurodh ka anjuli</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srijana sangeet</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthaka geet</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our district/our village and town</td>
<td>Listened to/didn’t listen to</td>
<td>Good/okay/bad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2. **Aaphani Paurakha Aaphani Gaurab**

3.2.1. Have you heard the program *Aaphani Paurakha Aaphani Gaurab*? 1. Yes 2. No

3.2.2. Which day is the program *Aaphani Paurakha Aaphani Gaurab* broadcast? 1. Right answer 2. Wrong answer

3.2.3. What time is the program *Aaphani Paurakha Aaphani Gaurab* broadcast? 1. Right answer 2. Wrong answer
3.2.4. What is the subject matter of the program *Aaphani Paurakha Aaphani Gaurab*? [multiple responses]
   1. Agricultural based production technology, quality and the market
   2. Income generation
   3. Don’t know

3.2.5. In your opinion, how useful is the program *Aaphani Paurakha Aaphani Gaurab* to improve a family’s financial condition?  
   1. Very much useful
   2. Useful
   3. Not useful at all

3.2.6. In your opinion, how is the subject of the program *Aaphani Paurakha Aaphani Gaurab*?  
   1. Good
   2. Okay
   3. Not so good

3.2.7. In your opinion, how is the language used in the program *Aaphani Paurakha Aaphani Gaurab*?  
   1. Good
   2. Okay
   3. Not good

3.2.8. What is the part you like the most in the program *Aaphani Paurakha Aaphani Gaurab*?  
   1. Subject matter of the program
   2. Presentation
   3. Information given during discussion and interview
   4. Other…

3.2.9. What inspiration did you receive after listening to the program *Aaphani Paurakha Aaphani Gaurab*?  
   1. Vegetable farming
   2. Coffee farming
   3. Ginger farming
   4. Herbs related work
   5. All of the above

3.2.10. What did you do after receiving inspiration?  
   1. Vegetable farming
   2. Coffee farming
   3. Ginger farming
   4. Herbs related work
   5. All of the above

3.2.11. What should we do to make *Aaphani Paurakha Aaphani Gaurab* program more effective?…

3.2.12. Do you or do you not feel that the program *Aaphani Paurakha Aaphani Gaurab* was developed for the people like you and me?  
   1. Feel
   2. Don’t feel
   3. Don’t know

### 3.3. *Utpidit Aabaj*

3.3.1. Have you heard the program *Utpidit Aabaj*?  
   1. Yes
   2. No

3.3.2. Which day is the program *Utpidit Aabaj* broadcast? (Monday)  
   1. Right answer
   2. Wrong answer

3.3.3. What time is the program *Utpidit Aabaj* broadcast? (7:30 am)  
   1. Right answer
   2. Wrong answer
3.3.4. What is the subject matter of the program *Utpidit Aabaj*? [Multiple responses]  
1. Ethnic discrimination  
2. Voicing against social discrimination  
3. Don’t know

3.3.5. In your opinion, how useful is the program *Utpidit Aabaj* to improve social conditions?  
1. Very much useful  
2. Useful  
3. Not useful at all

3.3.6. In your opinion, how is the subject of the program *Utpidit Aabaj*?  
1. Good  
2. Okay  
3. Not so good

3.3.7. In your opinion, how is the language/presentation used in the program *Utpidit Aabaj*?  
1. Good  
2. Okay  
3. Not good

3.3.8. What is the part you like the most in program *Utpidit Aabaj*?  
1. Subject matter of the program  
2. Presentation  
3. Information given during discussion and interview  
4. Other…

3.3.9. What inspiration did you receive after listening to the program *Utpidit Aabaj*?  
1. Should not discriminate based on caste/ethnicity  
2. Should not keep the tradition of un-touchablility  
3. Positive changes in traditional believes  
4. All of the above

3.3.10. What did you do after receiving inspiration?  
1. Treat everyone equally  
2. Changes in habits  
3. Stopped social discrimination in social work  
4. Inspire community to remove bad traditions

3.3.11. What should we do to make *Utpidit Aabaj* program more effective?…

3.3.12. Do you or do you not feel that the program *Utpidit Aabaj* was developed for the people like you and me?  
1. Feel  
2. Don’t feel  
3. Don’t know

3.4 **Airing vegetable pricing**

3.4.1. Have you heard vegetable price broadcast over the radio?  
1. Yes  
2. No

3.4.2. Which day’s the price of vegetable broadcast?  
1. Right answer  
2. Wrong answer

3.4.3. What time is the price of vegetable broadcast?  
1. Right answer  
2. Wrong answer

3.4.4. In your opinion, does the broadcast of vegetable price over the radio help the farmers?  
1. Yes  
2. No

3.4.5. If not, what should be done?…

3.5. **Miscellaneous**
3.5.1. Among the programs aired from Community Radio Madanpokhara, which are the first three programs you like the most? 1. First program … 2. Second program… 3. Third program…

3.5.2. Among the program producers at Community Radio Madanpokhara, who are the first three producers you like the most? 1. First… 2. Second… 3. Third…

3.5.3. In your opinion, what types of programs should Radio Madanpokhara add to make it better?……

3.5.4. Have you heard the program “Cut Your Coat According to Your Cloth” program aired from Community Radio Madanpokhara? 1. Yes 2. No

3.5.5. Had you already had listened to the program from Radio Nepal? 1. Yes 2. No

4. Television

4.1. Does your family possess a TV? 1. Yes 2. No

4.2. Where is the TV in your house?....

4.3. Who turns on/watches the TV most often? …. 

4.4. Is it a color or black and white TV? 1. Color 2. Black and white


4.6. How many channels do you receive?…


4.8. Do you also have a VCR or VCD? 1. Yes 2. No

4.9. Do you watch TV 1. I do 2. I don’t

4.10. Where do you watch it most often? 1. At home 2. Shop 3. Friends/neighbours’ place 4. Other…..

4.11. How much do you watch TV? 1. Half hour or less 2. ½ hour to 1 hour 3. 1 to 2 hours 4. 2 to 4 hours 5. More than 4 hours 6. No answer/don’t know

4.12. What time do you watch TV? (Multiple answers) 1. 6 – 8 am 2. 8-10 am 3. 10-2 noon 4. 12-2 p.m. 5. 2-4 p.m. 6. 4-6 p.m. 7. 6-8 p.m. 8. 8-10 p.m. 9. 10-12 p.m. 10. 12-2 am 11. 2-4 am 12. 4-6 am

4.14. Have you watched these channels [speak the name of the channels and put mark on the watched one] in the last week (in the last 7 days)?

1. Nepal TV  
2. Channel Nepal  
3. Nepal One  
4. Kantipur  
5. Doordarsan  
6. BBC  
7. CNN  
8. Star Plus  
9. Zee Cinema  
10. Discovery  
11. Animal Planet  
12. Other…

4.15. Which one is the best channel or the one you like the most for news? …. 

4.16. Which one is the best channel or the one you like the most for entertainment? …. 

4.17. Which one is the best channel for songs? …. 

4.18. Which one is the best channel for serials?…

4.19. Which one is the best or the one you like the most among Nepali programs? Program…. Station…. 

4.20. Which one is the best or the one you like the most among Hindi programs? Program…. Station…. 

4.21. Which one is the best or the one you like the most among English programs? Program…. Station…. 

5. Newspapers 

5.1. Do you or your family members regularly subscribe to any newspaper?  
1. Yes  
2. No 

5.2. If yes, which newspaper? ….. 

5.3. Have you read any newspaper in the last week (in the past 7 days)?  
1. Yes  
2. No 

5.4. If yes, which one?…. 

5.5. Do you know the names of newspapers published from Palpa district? If yes tell me. [Put mark on mentioned]  
1. Gaunle Deurali  
2. Nawa Janachatana  
3. Palpa Sandesh  
4. Other…. 

5.6. Have you read Gaunle Deurali?  
1. Yes  
2. No 

5.7. Have you read Nawa Janachatana?  
1. Yes  
2. No 

5.8. Have you read Palpa Sandesh?  
1. Yes  
2. No
Appendix F: Questionnaire for Audience Survey 2004 (Nepali)

Table 1: Questionnaire for Audience Survey 2004

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
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<th>Education</th>
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<th>Marital Status</th>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>Professional</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>Single</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
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<td>Jane</td>
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<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Educator</td>
<td>Low</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The questionnaire was administered to a random sample of 200 respondents. The respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the radio program on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. The overall satisfaction rating was 4.2 out of 5.
छनीटमा परेका व्यक्तिको नाम-छनीटमा परेका व्यक्ति / यी व्यक्ति पहले परिवारको सामान्य जानकारी दिने व्यक्ति भन्दा फरक हुन सक्छन्।

(अब म तपाईसँग रेडियोसंग सम्बन्धित केही प्रश्नहरु राख बाहानु)।

2.1. तपाईंको परिवारामा रेडियो छ या छैन ? क। छ। ख। छैन।

2.2. तपाईंको परिवारामा कति वटा रेडियो छन् ? .......

2.3. तपाईंको परिवारामा भएका मध्ये काठिन्ता रेडियोहरू चाँद अवस्थामा छन् ?

2.4. तपाईं कहाँ भएका मध्ये काठिन्ता रेडियोहरूमा एफ. एम. छ ? आवश्यक परेमा रेडियो हरी लेखे

2.5. तपाईं कहाँ रेडियो दैरेज्सों कबने वजाउँछ ? .......

2.6. अधिको प्रश्नको उत्तर हरी सोही अनुसार सम्मोहन गर्न ... ले एकलैं सुने गरी वजाउँछ ल्यस्न खसिना सबैलैं सुन्नेगरी?

क। एकलैं सुन्नेगरी ख। सबैलैं सुन्नेगरी

2.7. तपाईंको घरमा विजुलिका छ ? क। छ। ख। छैन।

2.8. रेडियो वजाउँने को प्रयोग गर्नुहुन्छ ? क। व्याट। ख। विधुन। ग। अन्य।

2.9. तपाईं बा तपाईंको परिवारको सदस्यहरूले सामुदायिक रेडियो भद्रपर्यन्त स्वयंप्रेरण भए पछि (विगत ४ वर्षमा) कूने रेडियो किन्नु मधएको छ ? क। छ। ख। छैन।

2.10. यदि किनिहो भए एफ. एम. भएको बा एफ. एम. नमएको कुनाको किन्नु भयो?

क। एफ. एम. भएको ख। एफ. एम. नमएको, आवश्यक परेमा रेडियो हरी बा प्रयोग गर्नेखा

2.11. यदि परिवारसङ्ग भएका कूने पनी रेडियोमा एफ. एम. नमएको, के साधारण रेडियोमा एफ. एम. राख सकिन्नु भन्ने तपाईंलाई जानकारी दिनिन्

क। विधिन  ख। बिविदन

उत्तर लेखिनुहुन्छ बजारमा उत्स बेवा उपलब्ध छ भने जानकारी गराउँछ।

2.12. तपाईं रेडियो सुनुहुन्छ ? क। सुन्नु  ख। सुन्नन्

2.13. तपाईं रेडियो धार्मिक कहाँ सुनुहुन्छ ?क। घरमा  ख। पस्तमा  ग। साथी/हिंदूमै क्षेत्रमा  घ। अन्य

2.14. सुनु हुन भने नसुनाका कारणहरू के के हुन ? .......

2.15. सामान्यतया दिनुहाँ कतिपय समय रेडियो सुनुहुन्छ?

क। आधा घण्टा बा कम  ख। आधा घण्टा-१ घण्टा  ग। १२ घण्टा  घ। २४ घण्टा
2. सामान्य रूप से रेडियो मदनपोखरा का तारीख बदला गया।

2.16. बिहान का मुफ्त समय रेडियो सुनने का समय हुआ? 
   a) बिहान   b) दिवसों   c) साक्षी नस्ल

2.17. कितने चौथे दोपहर रेडियो सुनने का समय हुआ?
   a) बिहान 6:00-8:00   b) बिहान 8:00-10:00   c) बिहान 10:00-12:00   d) दिवसों 12:00-2:00

2.18. वथे जमाने तपाई कौन रेडियो स्टेशन सुनने हुए? (एक्स्ट्रा मास उत्तर छानले)
   a) रेडियो मदनपोखरा   b) रेडियो नेपाल   c) लुम्बिनी एफ.एम.   d) बुटवल एफ.एम.

2.19. सामान्य रूप से रेडियो स्टेशन का नाम बदला गया?
   a) रेडियो मदनपोखरा   b) रेडियो नेपाल   c) लुम्बिनी एफ.एम.   d) बुटवल एफ.एम.

2.20. मनोरमनका लागि समय रोग अथवा मनपने रेडियो स्टेशन कौन हो?

2.21. तपाईलाई समय रोग अथवा मनपने कार्यक्रम कौन हो?

2. सामान्य रूप से रेडियो मदनपोखरा

2.1. तपाईलाई सामान्य रूप से रेडियो मदनपोखरा बारे बाहेर छ?
   a) छ   b) छैन

2.2. यो रेडियो स्टेशन कहाँ छ?
   a) सही उत्तर   b) गलत उत्तर

2.3. यो रेडियो स्टेशन कहाँ दुःख संघार से भएको छ?
   a) सही उत्तर   b) गलत उत्तर

2.4. तपाईलाई उक्त रेडियो स्टेशन जानू भएको छ?
   a) छ   b) छैन

2.5. यदि जानू भएको भए, एक कार्यक्रम कितने पटक जानु हुन सक्छ?

2.6. तपाईलाई सामान्य रूप से रेडियो मदनपोखरा सुनु भएको छ?
   a) छ   b) छैन
37 हजारा कते दिन रेडियो मदनपोखरा सुने गाना हुन्छ?
क) दिनहुँ
ख) कहिले काही
ग) कहिले नसुनेको
घ) बाह छैन
38 रेडियो मदनपोखरा कून समयमा प्रशारण हुन्छ?
क) सही उत्तर
ख) गलत उत्तर
39 रेडियो मदनपोखराबाट कून कायमक्षमहक प्रशारित हुन्छन?
.......
3.26 तपाईंको विचारमा समुदायाङ्का व्यक्तिहरू रेडियो मदनपोखराङको गतिविधिहरूमा सहभाग हनु पढ्न वा पदेन ? क) पढ्न ख) पदेन
3.27 के तपाईं रेडियो मदनपोखराङको गतिविधिहरूमा सहभाग हनु पढ्न ? क) छ ख) छैन
3.28 के तपाईं रेडियो मदनपोखराङका प्रशासन म्यान्को कृपाप्रिय कार्यक्रम उत्पादन गर्नुमा सहभाग हनु भएको छ ? क) छ ख) छैन
3.29 के तपाईं बनेसमहूको सवस्थ हनु पढ्न ? क) छ ख) छैन (भए कुन कुन समूह)
……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………)
3.30 के तपाईं रेडियो मदनपोखराङका बिट्टी पढाउनु भएको ? क) छ ख) छैन
3.31 यदि छ भने महिनामा कौर पटक .......
3.32 पत्रको विश्वसन्तु के चिह्नो………………………………
3.33 पत्र रेडियोमाले प्रश्नालाई भयो ल ? क) भयो ख) भएन
3.34 के तपाईं रेडियो मदनपोखराङको बोला समूहको सवस्थ हनु हुन्छ ? क) छ ख) छैन
3.35 प्रोफसर समूहको सवस्थ भए हफ्तामा कौर पटक रेडियो सृजन हुन्छ ? .......
3.36 के तपाईं रेडियो मदनपोखराङको गाउँ स्तरीय रेडियो समितिको सवस्थ हनु हुन्छ ? क) छ ख) छैन
3.37 के तपाईंको गाउँ पहले भन्ना राम्रो हैदैव वा नराम्रो ? क) राम्रो ख) उल्ले ग) नराम्रो
3.38 यदि तपाईंले चिन्को जो पनि गर्न सक्ने भएको भए तपाईंले आफ्नो गाउँमा के गनु हयो ? .......
3.39 के तपाईं आफ्नो गाउँमा बस्ना आनन्दको अनुभव गनु हुन्छ ? क) गनु ख) गद्दी
3.40 यदि तपाईंलाई गाउँ छोड्दे अले जान पनि भयो भने तपाईं बुझी हनु होला वा दुरी ? क) बुझी वा केही फरक गद्दी ख) दुरी
3.41 सामान्यतयाक रिपोर्टमा समुदायको अव स तपाईंलाई सामान्यतयाक रिपोर्टमा मदनपोखराङका प्रश्नमा हनु कार्यक्रमहरू बारे केही प्रश्न राखा थालेयुँ

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<th>कार्यक्रम सृजन हुन्छ ?</th>
<th>कस्तो बालो ?</th>
<th>प्रभावकारी बनाउन के गनु पला ?</th>
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3.2. आफ्नै पौरख आफ्नै गौरव:-

3.2.1. के तपाइँले आफ्नै पौरख आफ्नै गौरव कार्यक्रम सुन्नुभएको र पौरखमा प्रुशारण हुने? क) छ  ख) छैन

3.2.2. आफ्नै पौरख आफ्नै गौरव कुन वार प्रशारण हुने? (शुक्रवार) क) सही उत्तर  ख) गलत उत्तर

3.2.3. आफ्नै पौरख आफ्नै गौरव कुन समयमा प्रशारण हुने? (समय विहान ७.३० वदे) क) सही उत्तर  ख) गलत उत्तर

3.2.4. यो कार्यक्रम आफ्नै पौरख आफ्नै गौरव के विषयमा आधारित छ? (दुवै जबाब आएमा दुवै विन लगाउने)
क) कृषिमा आधारित वस्तुह्रुकों उत्पादन प्रविधि, गुणस्तरियता एवं वजार समविधि । ख) आय आजन समविधि ।

ग) बाहा है।

3.२।. तपाईको विचारमा आफ्नो पीरख आफ्नो गीरख काय्यक्रम परिवर्तन आर्थिक सुधार ल्याउन किति उपयोगी हो ?

क) उरै उपयोगी । ख) ठीक । ग) बाहेर उपयोगी है।

3.२।. तपाईको विचारमा आफ्नो पीरख आफ्नो गीरख को विश्वव्यवस्थू कस्तो हो ?

क) रामो । ख) ठीक । ग) रामो है।

3.२।. तपाईको विचारमा आफ्नो पीरख आफ्नो गीरखमा प्रयोग भएको भाणा/शेली कस्तो हो ?

क) रामो । ख) ठीक । ग) रामो है।

3.२।. आफ्नो पीरख आफ्नो गीरखमा तपाइलाई समवन्त पनन पने पक्ष कुन हो ?

क) काय्यक्रमको विश्वव्यवस्थू । ख) प्रस्तुति। ग) छालफल र अन्तर्बांतीमा आउने जानकारी घ) अन्य

3.२।. आफ्नो पीरख आफ्नो गीरख सुन्नेर तपाइलाई के प्रेणा मिल्यो ?

क) तरकारी खेती गनें। ख) कफ खेती गनें। घ) अदुबा लगाउने।

ख) जगदीश समविधि काम गनें। च) माधिका सबै

3.२।।० प्रेणा पाएको के काम गनु भयो ?

क) तरकारी खेती। ख) कफ खेती। घ) अदुबा खेती।

ख) जगदीश समविधि काम। च) माधिका सबै

3.२।।१ आफ्नो पीरख आफ्नो गीरख नाइ अभ प्रभावकारी वनाउन के गर्नु पर्नु ?

3.२।।२ आफ्नो पीरख आफ्नो गीरख काय्यक्रम तपाइ/हामीह्रुको लागि नै वनाको जस्तो लागू फि लागैदैन ?

क) लागू । ख) लागैदैन । ग) बाहा है।

3.३. उत्पीडित आबाजः

3.३।।१ के तपाइले आफ्नो उत्पीडित आबाज काय्यक्रम सुनुमाएरहो ? क) छ। ख) छै।

3.३।।२ उत्पीडित आबाज कुनै बार प्रश्नारण हुन्छ ? (सोमबार) क) सही उत्तर। ख) गलत उत्तर।

3.३।।३ उत्पीडित आबाज कुनै समवन्त प्रश्नारण हुन्छ ? (समय विहार ६.२० बजे) क) सही उत्तर । ख) गलत उत्तर।

3.३।।४ तपाइको विचारमा उत्पीडित आबाज काय्यक्रम के विश्वव्यवस्थूमा आधारित छ ?
350

3.14. तपाआंको विचारमा उल्पीडित आवाज कार्यक्रम सामाजिक सुधार न्यायनमा कर्तिको उपयोगी छ ।
क) अति उपयोगी ख) ठीक । ग) खासै उपयोगी छैन्

3.15. तपाआंको विचारमा उल्पीडित आवाज कार्यक्रम को विपयवस्तु कस्तो छ?
क) रामो छ ख) ठीक छ । ग) रामो छैन्

3.16. तपाआंको विचारमा उल्पीडित आवाज कार्यक्रम का विपयवस्तु कस्तो छ?
क) जातिय भेदभाव नराइने ख) चुवाभको नराइने ग) परमपरागत संस्कार नराइने

3.17. उल्पीडित आवाज कार्यक्रममा तपाआंकाँलाई सामाजिक मन पने पक्ष कृष कृष?
क) कार्यक्रमका विपयवस्तु ख) प्रस्तुति ग) छलफल र अन्तरवाता मातृ आउने जानकारी घ) अन्य

3.18. उल्पीडित आवाज कार्यक्रम मुन्ने तपाआंकाले के प्रेणा मिल्दो?
क) जातिय भेदभाव नराइने ख) चुवाभको नराइने ग) परमपरागत संस्कार नराइने

3.19. प्रेणा फाय पछिके काे गर्नु भयो?
क) सबै मानसिक समान रूपले हैन ख) सामाजिक आचरण परिवर्तन गरेको

3.20. यस कार्यक्रमलाई अभि प्रावकारी वनाउने कारण पने?
क) लाग्दक मानेका। ख) लाग्दै। ग) बाहा छैन।

3.21. तरकारी मूल्य प्रसारण

3.22. के तपाआंक तरकारी मूल्य प्रसारण कार्यक्रम सुन्नुम्भएको?
क) छ ख) छैन।

3.23. तरकारी मूल्य प्रसारण कुन वार प्रशारण हुन्छ?
क) सही उत्तर ख) गलत उत्तर

3.24. तरकारी मूल्य प्रसारण कुन समयमा प्रशारण हुन्छ? (समय साव ७५५ वटे)
क) सही उत्तर ख) गलत उत्तर

3.25. तपाआंको विचारमा तरकारीको मूल्य प्रसारणले किसानलाई फाइदा पुरएको छ?
क) छ ख) छैन।
ढ़ैन भने तपाईको बिचारमा के गरुङ्पछौं जस्तो लाग्छ?

विविध

2.4.1 सामुदायिक रेडियो मदनलोकराक्त प्रशारण हुने कार्यक्रम मध्ये तपाईलाई सज्जनोत्सव मन भन्ने कार्यक्रम कुन कुन हुन
का, स्व भन्ना मन पनि .................................ख) दोस्रो स्मरण गा रेखा स्मरण

2.4.2 रेडियो मदनपीडिका कार्यक्रम संचालकहरू मध्ये तपाईलाई मन पनि संचालकहरू कुन कुन हुन?
का) स्व भन्ना मन पनि .................................ख) दोस्रो स्मरण गा रेखा स्मरण

2.4.3 रेडियो मदनलोकरारले कस्ता कस्ता कार्यक्रम धर्म अङ्ग राखो होला?  ....

2.4.4 के तपाईले रेडियो मदनलोकराक्त प्रसारण हुने "घाटी हरेन हाड़ निकरी" कार्यक्रम सुनु माइको छ? का. छ. ढैन

2.4.5 के तपाईले उक्त कार्यक्रम रेडियो नेपालबाट सुनि सीनु भएको खियो?  का. बिए. ख. बिएन

4. टेलिभिजन

4.1. के तपाईको घरमा टि.भी.छ? का. छ. ख. ढैन

4.2. टि.भी. कन्यको कोटाला छ?  ....

4.3. धेरै दिनो टि.भी. सन्तालन कस्तो गरछ?  ....

4.4. तपाई कहाँ भएको टि.भी. गर्न हो वा सादा हो? का. गर्न सादा

4.5. टि.भी. के बाट सन्तालित क्यू? का. विखु ख. व्याटी गा अन्य

4.6. कार्य क्यानलहरू आउछन्?  ....

4.7. कस्तो एनटिटा क्यू? का साराग्रहण ख) डिशक गा. केबुल घा अन्य

4.8. के तपाईको टि.भी. भिन.भिन. वा भिन.भिन.छ? का. छ. ख. ढैन

4.9. के तपाई टि.भी. हेंनु हुनछ? का. हेंनु ख) हेंनु

4.10. धेरै दिनो कहाँ हेंनु हुनछ? का. घरमा ख) पस्तमा गा सादा/हिंसकमा घा अन्य

4.11. दिनमा कार्य समय टि.भी. हेंनु हुनछ? (एउटा उत्तर)

का) आधा घण्टा वा कम ख) आधा घण्टा-1 घण्टा गा. 1-2 घण्टा घा. 2-4 घण्टा ढ) 4 घण्टा भन्दा बढी

4.12. तपाई कुन कुन समयमा टि.भी. हेंनु हुनछ? (एक भन्दा बढी उत्तर)
4.13. सबसे बड़ी कुंज च्यानेल हें? एन्टर उत्तर:
क) नेपाल टी. बी.
ख) च्यानल नेपाल
ग) नेपाल बन
घ) कानपुर
ड) स्टार प्लस
च) जी सिनेमा
छ) डिस्कारी
ज) एनिमेशन प्लानेट
झ) अन्य

4.14. यो हन्ता (विगत 7 दिनमा) कुं'चं च्यानेलहरूहें भयो? (नाम भने)
(च्यानेलका नाम भनी हेर्का च्यानेलमा ठिक ( ) वा यो ( ) चिन्न लगाउने)
क) नेपाल टी. बी.
ख) च्यानल नेपाल
ग) नेपाल बन
घ) कानपुर
ड) स्टार प्लस
च) जी सिनेमा
छ) डिस्कारी
ज) एनिमेशन प्लानेट
झ) अन्य

4.15. चमाचारको लागि सबसे मनपने च्यानेल कुं' हो?

4.16. मनोरञ्जनको लागि सबसे मनपने च्यानेल कुं' हो?

4.17. गीत संगीतको लागि सबसे मनपने च्यानेल कुं' हो?

4.18. सिरिएल टेलिसिनमको लागि सबसे मनपने च्यानेल कुं' हो?

4.19. टपाइलाई सबसे मन पने नेपाली कार्यक्रम कुं' हो?

4.20. टपाइलाई सबसे मन पने हिंदी कार्यक्रम कुं' हो?

4.21. टपाइलाई सबसे मन पने अंजी कार्यक्रम कुं' हो?

5. पत्रपत्रिका

5.1. के टपाइल बा टपाइलको परिवार कुन' पत्रपत्रिकामा नियमित याहक हुन्छ? क) छ

5.2. छ मने कुं' कुं च्यानेल कुं' करिके पत्रपत्रिका

5.3. टपाइल गएको हन्ता (विगत 7 दिनमा) कुन' पत्र पत्रिका पहिनु भयो क) पढे

5.4. पढे को मध्ये कुं च्यानेल पत्रिका.
5.5. के तपाइलाई पाल्या जिल्लाबाट प्रकाशित हुने पत्र पत्रिकाको नाम भाला छ ? छ भने भन्दौलोस्।
क) गाउँले देउराली ख) नव जनवेचिता ग) पाल्या सन्देश घ) अन्य (लेखन)
ड) भाला छैन

भाला भएको सबैभन्दा चिन्न लगाउने।

5.6. के तपाइले गाउँले देउराली पत्रिका पढ्नु भएको छ ?
क) छ ख) छैन

5.7. के तपाइले गाउँले नव जनवेचिता पत्रिका पढ्नु भएको छ ?
क) छ ख) छैन

5.8. के तपाइले गाउँले पाल्या सन्देश पत्रिका पढ्नु भएको छ ?
क) छ ख) छैन

.............समाप्त ............