

A Case of Creating Awareness about Tuberculosis through Community Radio

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Abstract

Prime purpose, identified by researchers, of the community radio is to help with communities' local problems which overlooked by the commercial media. Aiming this, researchers identified the theme for the program to be radio broadcasted. This was related to an infectious disease, which is very common problem of the like communities identified by the researchers from Pune region.

Information in the community meetings disseminated through puppetry presented by collegestudents. This community radio program using FTII Community Radio was conducted with the support from anganwadis (Pre-primary schools), hospital, and NGO as well. Present study is part of the program that included a three-day training program on tuberculosis awareness for ten community radios. This study applied a combination of descriptive cross-sectional and exploratory design concluding that the symptoms of TB were understood by the identified and targeted community.

Keywords

CommunityRadio, Tuberculosis, Podcast Solution for Infectious Diseases, Success of Community Radio Program

Introduction

Community radio for community was a program for people to make them aware there is new idea radio FTII have come up with for everyone out there to express himself or herself through the medium of radio. It's not going to be just another radio station, it is going to be everybody's individual radio station where each one in the society can express themselves or tell society what they feel for the development of the society and what changes can bring to society. So that was the reason radio FTII made this program.

This program was made in the form of interview of group of people by asking questions such as: what's their opinion about this new idea and how it will be helpful for one to come out and express themselves through community radio station. There were many questions asked about community radio to them like how it will

be helpful? Will it really bring change for the development of the society and the everyone opinion was yes about it; one can express themselves because radio is such medium where people can raise their voice and convey message through their voice. There is no such kind of thing where people are afraid of facing camera. They are less expressible on camera or some people don't like to face camera. This is the medium where everyone can come and keep their opinion and express themselves.

Interview is the most common format of data collection in qualitative research. Author interviewed of the Head of Radio FTII, Mr. Sanjay Chandekar informed that he had a great achievement in community radio station, it was basically started in 2007 year, and many of the programs he and his team have broadcasted and educated people through it. The channel is 90.4 FM and they do many social awareness, environmental, youth, health and hygiene related programs i.e. talk shows. So, researcher asked him about program. Researcher in a study report concluded that radio can be utilized for the special programs which would help society (Bluebond, 1982). "People are acquainted with commercial radio and public radio. Community radio can emerge a new era of communication for the rural." (Md. Anowarul Arif Khan, Md. Mostafizur Rahman Khan, Mahmudul Hassan, Firoz Ahmed, & Shah Md. Raiful Haque, 2017).

Tuberculosis

"Tuberculosis (TB) is a potentially serious infectious disease that mainly affects your lungs. The bacteria that cause tuberculosis are spread from one person to another through tiny droplets released into the air via coughs and sneezes." (Mayoclinic, n.d.). How TB Affects Your Body can be understood from website (Lung).

Importance

Community radio is a type of radio service that offers a model of radio broadcasting beyond commercial and public service. Community radio broadcasting serves geographic communities and communities' interest. The content of broadcasting is largely popular and relevant to a local/specific audience, but which may often be overlooked by commercial or mass-media broadcasters. Community radio stations are operated, owned, and driven by the communities they serve. Community radio is not-for profit and provides a mechanism for facilitating individuals, groups, and communities to tell their own diverse stories, to share experiences, and in a media rich world to become active creators and contributors of media, in many parts of the world today, community radio acts as a vehicle for the community and voluntary sector, civil society, agencies, NGOs and citizens to work in partnership to promote community development. By the core aims and objectives of this model of broadcasting, community radio stations often serve their listeners by offering a variety of content that is not necessarily provided by the larger commercial radio stations.

Following are sentences that mark the importance of community radio which are extracted from of the questions and answers from Bob Garfield's interview published. "The future of high-quality audio content,

especially journalism, largely insulated from commercial interests that answer is complicated, too. The podcast Solution has obviously created a content boom, a bona fide Golden Age of audio. You can listen to great stuff 24/7 and never interact with public-radio entities for an instant.”(Forbes)

Research Design

This study utilized a combination of descriptive cross-sectional and exploratory design. This design offered researcher to use in-depth interview method for data collection.

Data collection

Since, community radio stations are made with a different meaning for every frame and to study them one needs to observe these with keen eye and put forth the relevant points from it. In this research, researcher used unstructured questionnaire and the methods for data collection used are Observations Method, and Interview Method. Researcher used observation as a tool for data collection to study the ‘radio as a tool for the development of society with special reference to community radio station of FTII. Researcher needed to observe different programs broadcasted and held in community radio of FTII and the motto behind every program to develop the society in one or the other way and their relevance in the society. Thus, observation method is necessary as it was a program related to health focusing on tuberculosis (TB).

TB Awareness Program and Study Method

The Radio FTII (90.4 MHz), the community radio station at the Film and Television Institute of India, in association with the Indian Medical Association, Pune chapter, kick started the Project Akshay, ‘TB-var Vijay’ a series of awareness programs on tuberculosis (TB) on August 16. Along with regular radio segments on the illness, the initiative had teams from Radio FTII, IMA (Indian Medical Association), and NGOs like Niramay Trust and Anahat Trust visiting various communities to spread awareness through interaction. “Community radio can also partner with local organizations to achieve the program goals of those organizations, for example, curbing crime as is the case with the local police station. This has the potential to build and enhance the community” (Lung). Further the guidelines from WHO for children are very helpful (Evidence gaps and research needs identified during tuberculosis policy guideline development., 2018). The program included guidelines given by (Mayoclinic, n.d.). These are, “See your doctor if you have a fever, unexplained weight loss, drenching night sweats or a persistent cough.”

As part of the project, sixteen 30-minute segments on tuberculosis and its treatment will be aired over the next six months. "We will air one episode three times a week. Our target listeners are primarily the 6,000-odd residents of Kelewadi slums behind the Law College 1 Road-based Fill premises. This initiative also comprises eight community meetings with the Kelewadi residents as well as Class IV employees of the FTII,

who will be given information on tuberculosis and the treatment available. The segments will be interactive and will invite participation from listeners," said Sanjay Chandekar, in charge of the Radio FTII.

The segments will be made interesting with five-minute features on trivia related to the illness, skits, poetry, folk art performances and songs composed on the treatment available, and interviews with doctors and stories of patients who successfully overcame the illness.

Information in the community meetings disseminated through puppetry that presented by the students of the SNTD College, Pune, Maharashtra state, India. These meetings invited suggestions, and feedback from the Kelewadi, Pune residents.

A few anganwadis (Pre-primary schools) and the 'SunclarabaiRaut hospital in Kelewadi slums area at Pune, which caters to 150 TB patients, have also supported the project, funded and supported by Reach, a Chennai based health advocacy NGO'. The NGO had conducted a three-day training program on tuberculosis awareness for ten community radios, including the Radio fill, last month.

This project consisted of interviews of TB patients, modules on the spread and treatment of TB, and the 2010-11 report on TB prepared by the ministry of health, among other topics," said Chandekar. Resource persons and creative inputs provided by the NGOs and medical experts involved in the project. Amit can still remember the young woman standing alone outside the Primary Health Centre in a rural district of Haryana, India. Her family had thrown her out of the house when she was diagnosed with TB and had since cut off her contact with her children. As Amit shared this woman's story over one of the many community radio stations working to raise awareness about TB in India, he spoke about the unfair stigma that continues to surround the men and women affected by TB. He explained that TB is curable and that patients do not need to be isolated from their families and cut off from their networks. He spoke of the urgent need for greater understanding of the disease, its symptoms and treatment. Amit is one of the many radio hosts participating in Project Axshya's Community Radio Initiative, which partners with community radio stations, equipping the presenters with information, talking points and personal stories about tuberculosis to encourage conversation in the communities where they are located. Since the Community Radio Initiative's inception in 2010, Project Axshya, supported by the Global Fund, has worked with 50 stations to produce over 2,000 hours of programming on TB in nine languages and across 17 states. TB broadcasts cover topics such as diagnosis, treatment, drug-resistance and socio-economic issues, but centre around two main messages: TB is curable, and free, high-quality diagnostics, treatment and care are available.

These community-owned and operated stations have a broadcast radius of 10-15 kilometres and focus on locally relevant information and development issues of importance to the community. The stations are often one of the few sources of credible information in remote areas, and they are an invaluable tool for broadening public knowledge and understanding of TB.

Project Axshya reaches out to these stations, training them to speak about TB, while helping them find and create interesting content to improve listenership. The Axshya team provides mentoring and support to the non-profit organizations, universities or other groups that run the stations and has developed Talking TB: A Handbook for Community Radio, a two-part self-study resource for broadcasters, educating them on TB and related issues, and helping them create more stimulating and engaging content.

As part of the project, sixteen 20-minute segments on tuberculosis and its treatment will be aired over the next six months. “We will air one episode three times a week. Our target listeners are primarily the 6,000-odd residents of Kelewadi slums behind the Law College Road-based FTII premises. This initiative also comprises eight community meetings with the Kelewadi residents, as well as Class IV employees of the FTII, who will be given information on tuberculosis and the treatment available. The segments will be interactive and will invite participation from listeners,” said Sanjay Chandekar, in charge of the Radio FTII. The segments made interesting with five-minute features on trivia related to the illness, skits, poetry, folk art performances and songs composed on the treatment available, and interviews with doctors and stories of patients who successfully overcame the illness.

Conclusion

Awareness on tuberculosis was introduced on the community radios by FTII’s radio department. Making aware about TB found important, Tuberculosis is a very common disease in such slum areas and some rural. The people involved in this program were doctors, patients, and people from various NGOs.

Respondents who were interviewed had a positive gesture toward the awareness about TB after this program on the community radio. Furthermore, after analyzing the feedback regarding the program from college students who visited community radio FTII and were part of this program in making people aware can conclude that the program was impactful. They were asked question related to community radio such as: how is it helpful to people? and what are the strategies used for the program which can help for the development of the society through such programs. Researcher concludes that community radio could bring a positive change in the society by making people aware about such key factors that could when understood in turn bring a change in the life of the listeners.

Limitations

The researcher has tried to cover all the points related to the ‘Radio as tool for development of the society with special reference to community radio station of FTII 90.4 FM. Radio FTII have a limited area for this program that falls under Pune region. It may be possible that responses are biased with the emotional nature of those interviewed and interviewee. Programs had a very different timeline as well.

Future research: Project Axshya partners with community radio stations to fight TB throughout India. Researcher expects variety inputs when it would be conducted throughout India. Study may be repeated with different samples, involving different areas and community radio stations as well.

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