FM RADIO AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN QUETTA CITY

Media

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ABSTRACT:

FM Radio is a device that can influence to its listeners in worldwide areas. It has capacity to increase one's knowledge, ideas, and understanding on any issue while maintaining personal relationship with its transmission. It is a medium by which its listeners interact with their environmental subjects. It can also be noteworthy, such as bringing change into a person's attitudes, culture and can cause for social change. Social change is the process of fetching development in social structures that can make people learn the ways of living styles in a particular community circle related to cultures and traditions. This study would call attention to the role of FM Radio in causing development, change, and listeners' adjustment in the given social environment with special focus on informative programmes and effects on the local populace particularly in Quetta city which is distinguished by multi cultural and multi linguistic mass land.

Introduction:

The last ten - twelve years have been witnessed a rapid growth in the broadcasting industry of Pakistan. The trend is mainly a result of the forces of globalization, chiefly liberalization, privatization and the free market economy. Government sets the regulatory bodies to regulate the operation of the electronic media that are also being charged with enforcing an ethical code of broadcasting. In Pakistan, FMs' operations are mainly funded by

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advertising and other sources. Some FM radio stations on air the programmes related to the community based problems and issues but many depend on entertainment without logical reasons. Another drawback of the medium is that they focus on only city based communities. Radio has proved itself as a powerful medium in all over the world where it has become a tool for disaster management. Likewise in Ghana, it was used for educational purpose after tsunami **(Website)**. Therefore, FM Radio stations must be proliferated throughout the country in order to fulfill the needs of its audience in rural areas particularly in Quetta where Frequency Modulated radio can replace the other media with its super injecting qualities in the masses.

Emergence of PEMRA and FM Radio:

An independent corporate body PEMRA was established on 1st March, 2002 with the four major objectives to improve the standard of information, education and entertainment. It was started to enlarge the choice available to the people of Pakistan in the media for news, current affairs, religious knowledge, art, culture, science, technology, economic development, social sector concerns, music, sports, drama and other subjects of public and national interest**(PEMRA:2008:8).** Airwaves in Pakistan were privatized and FM radio stations are allowed in all provinces, the Tribal Areas have been kept out of the sphere and the outcome is that with no 'legal radio' allowed, 'illegal radio' is alive here. It has learnt that many extremist groups are running their illegal FM channels for propaganda against US and Pakistani forces in the Tribal Areas Pakistani Government can't control them **(Azmat, 2004: 38).**

A total of 129 FM Radio licenses have been awarded for the entertainment and educational purposes through open and transparent bidding. Of these, 106 FM Radio stations are functional in the country, whereas four FM radio stations are operational in Quetta city **(PEMRA:2009:35)**. Mainly these stations broadcast programmes on topics related to education, health, civic hygiene and local trade & commerce.

FM Radio and Social Change: theoretical Framework
Social change has been a social science researchers' subject of interest for a long time. The media scholars have been studying upon special effects of mass media in bringing social change. The debate on the impact of mass media started even before the arrival of screen media. There are various studies that tried to determine the impact of early medium of mass

communication like puppet show, theater, telephone, telegraph and radio. Radio itself is not a recent trend but FM radio is a new influx principally in underdeveloped countries. To gauge its impact, it is pertinent to have a look on past researches conducted on the impact of this medium. Radio's role in propagating the cause of war in World War II is a big success of the tool **(Tim, 1998: 194)**. This has led the social scientists towards views, disagreements and discussions about the impact of media in formulating the culture, social norms and public opinion of society.

Since the mid of 20th century, 'development' has become a term synonymous with 'growth', 'modernization', and 'social change' **(Mattelart: 1998:36).** Researchers have not been able to agree on a single definition of development or Social Change – perhaps because of the diverse nature of the concepts built up in different regions with different physical environment, culture, natural resources and general ways of life **(Silvio: 2001).** Of course there are some similarities (common features) but each country remains unique in its own settings. The best definition of development can be: "a multidimensional process that involves change in social structures, attitudes, institutions, economic growth, reduction of inequality, and the eradication of poverty" **(Thomas L. & Shirley: 1996).**

Social Change can also be described as the conversion of traditions, institutions and values or changing the mode of life.

Theories for Social Change: Social change occurs in the societies but confusion mixes social change with cultural change though there is a big difference between cultural and social change. Social change brings changes only in the social organization whereas cultural change includes changes in art, science technology philosophy and even the very social organization **(Mukhi: 2001:447)**. Here are some important studies briefly describing social change.

August Comte's Theory

Comte said that society has passed through stages namely Theological, Metaphysical and Positive. In the theological stage society believed in supernatural powers and accepted the idea that these powers controlled our social behavior. During the second stage his ideas about supernatural powers changes and from gods he came to abstraction and tried to explain social behavior through abstractions **(Trevor: 2000:44)**. The society is now in the third stage in which everything is being empirically studied and all this is going on in a cyclical order.

Karl Marx's Theory

Karl Marx is of the view that economic factors and conditions alone are responsible for social change. According to his philosophy, economic conditions are deciding Factors in social change. He says that a stable and regular trial and resist is going on in society in which economically weaker sections of society are being broken by those who are economically strong, are trying to live and endure. According to him when society gives up one economic order and accepts the other, there is always a social change. Thus he feels that society has passed through oriental, the ancient and feudal stages and at each stage there was a social change (**Friedrich: 1973:20**). He says that when capitalism replaced feudal order, a social change was witnessed. According to him social change was likely to come because capitalism was bound to die and would be replaced by socialism.

Theory of Religion

Marx Weber says that religion is responsible for bringing about the change in society. He quotes from history that emergence of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity or Judaism brought considerable social change (**Jeffrey: 1983:33**). Thus they give more importance to religion rather than to economic aspects of life in social change.

Theory of Systematic Efforts

Ludwig Stein and Hobhouse are the supporters of this theory. They believe that social change occurs with planned ways and conscious efforts plus these efforts include knowledge and literacy (**Mukhi:2001:449**).

Effects of Media

Soon after the advent of radio and later television, their capacity to influence the minds and deeds of the masses aroused numerous social inquiries. The social scientists started that whether it has capacity to bring about any influence for the audience or it is harmless at any cost. Theorists presented many studies related to media and its influence or effects.

Two-step flow theory

This is a popular media effects theory, and to some extent is related to the diffusion of innovation hypothesis. Lazarsfeld and his colleagues developed the notion of a 'two-step' flow of media messages, and that the audience has the ability to "select and interpret media messages" (**Bob: 2005:266**).

Their conclusion was that messages filtered through the mass media to opinion leaders, peers or relatives, who then play roles in decisions that

people make after being exposed to media messages. It is still a relevant theory for studying the relationship between FM radios and the development in the developing countries like Pakistan.

Marshal Mcluhan and Cultural Studies
Many scholastic researchers of 1960s were indulged in the research types that were said to be as Cultural Studies. These studies depend upon the watchful views and observations rather than controlled experiments and statistics. Mcluhan said that it was the nature of communication technology itself, rather than the content that was carried on it, that changed society in radical ways__ or, as he famously put it, "The medium is the message**" (Terraence, Mcluhan: 1997).** Because it is suggesting that mass media gently massages its users into a state of oblivion that destroys rationality and critical thinking. Mcluhan also advanced the idea of the global village, information about people of different cultures, in different countries thousands of miles away, becomes as meaningful to media consumers as things happening in their own neighborhoods (**Terraence, Mcluhan: 1997**).

Cultivation theory
Cultivation theory was an approach developed by Professor George Gerbner; He began his query with the question that how television watching may influence viewers' ideas of what the everyday world is like. Cultivation theorists argue that television has long-term effects which are small, gradual, indirect but cumulative and significant. According to George Gerbner media shapes the people's view of the world **(George :1994:17-41).** The theory helps to understand that how a person's perception shapes or sometimes it is distorted by media. Cultivation theory explains that with the passage of time, the usages of media will "cultivate" inside users a distinct view of the world.
In this theory, the researcher is actually explains that how media can be a source to change in the perceptions, attitudes and behavior.

Agenda-Setting Theory
Another theory about media effects is "Agenda Setting Theory". In this theory the way of political campaigns is studied. The investigators of this study recovered the main effect of media to be agenda setting, telling people not what to think, but to think about. Any issue that is discussed in media effects its importance. The main thrust of agenda setting is that media content will not change your point of view about any particular issue but it will change your perception of what is important. In present era researchers think that once any issue captures people's attention, they have tendency to

influence government policy **(HansBernd:1996:561-80).** Media has tendency to capture public's attention that's why it is used in political campaigns.

Uses and Gratification Theory

In an effort to explain the 'motive for attending to media' came in form of a set of studies that are denoted as the Uses and Gratification Theories. This Theory was developed to explain the

active role of audience in selection of the medium as well as the content of the messages rather than waiting messages from the media. The basic idea of these theories is that "People put specific media and specific media content to specific use in the hope of having some specific need or set of needs gratified" **(Stanley: 2000:210).**

This theory was established on audience choice for media very first time. Before the advent of this theory, social scientists paid attention on what media do with audience rather what audience does with media.

Bullet Theory

Bullet theory implies that media effects flow directly from the media to an individual like a bullet. According to this theory, people who watch violent movies become violent and those who read immoral comic books become morally wrong. Later on, some other studies like People's Choice Studies suggested as two-step flow in which media influence takes place most of the time in interaction with interpersonal communication **(Melvin: 2008:163).** For example, one may or may not buy a book depending on what his friend has commented about it. A new super hit movie can earn millions of rupees simply because of the advertisement and publicity.

The studies have tried to integrate many theories of development, and the role and effects of mass media (including FM radio). The theories have proved that media has capacity in bringing change in social set ups if the target audience can access towards it. But sometimes when the audience does not choose the medium to receive the messages, media cannot cause for change. Media can be a big tool for the purpose of changing the opinion of the masses in terms of propaganda and even boosting development processes.

Discussion

FM radio is considered to be community-based and catering to local audience; it is captivating that PEMRA has been unwilling to issue licenses to foreigners. The issuance of licenses is conditional to the security clearance

from Ministry of Interior - manage to secure licenses. Also, the open bidding process through which a license is awarded is expensive and only those with tons of money and influence seem to get them. PBC does not fulfill the needs of the local populace according to the people. BBC and VOA have the programmes based upon the needs of the public of Pakistan but do not have devoted local bulletins. PEMRA refuses to award licenses to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or community based organizations (CBOs) in country. The reason is to avoid the prevailing of foreign agenda in the country, even if they have reliability, local suitability and valuable outreach (**Aurangzeb:2011:45**). If the stake holders pay attention in promoting FM transmission with special concern on Journalism, this industry will flourish in the provinces on ground roots.

The largest of Pakistan's four provinces in land mass – in general and provincial capital Quetta in particular has visibly expanded since 2000 in a trend that largely reflects the shifting media landscape in the rest of Pakistan. With the doors thrown open to private ownership of the airwaves, independent TV channels and FM radio stations have come to be a part of daily life. And with competition has come the rush for news or breaking news. Even one still has to observe a critical group of private, independent radio stations, locally owned and voicing local concern in languages of Balochistan – something needed and often harshly demanded. In a province long engaged in a monologue with itself - cut off as it is from the rest of the country through distances, lack of infrastructure and the Pakistani state's control over news and information from Balochistan - the proliferation of media in few years has fueled a desire for information, a wish to have a say and be heard **(Aurangzeb: 2010:12)**.

Sachal FM 105, Chiltan FM 88, FM 101 and Noori FM 96 (with no proper set up) are on airing the transmission while keeping in view the culture of Quetta city ((**PEMRA:2012:22**). The DJ's style of communication and bulk of entertainment with Indian songs is a big phenomenon of some of these FM radio's transmission. However, it is a start, with the passage of time; it will cover the issues which really need to be addressed.

Population= Quetta

Sample= Balochistan University 20, Sardar Bahadur Khan University 20, BUITMS 20, Government Girls College Quetta 20, Government Science College Quetta 20.

:1	Do you listen to FM radio?	Yes =39%	No = 61%	-	-	-
Q:2	What do you listen in FM transmission	News and Current Affairs 13%	Entertainm ent 77%	Other 10%	-	-
Q:3	How much time you spend in listening FM radio?	1-2 hours 71%	More than 2 and less than 3 hours 23%	More than 3 hours 6%	-	-
Q:4	Are you satisfied with the contents of FM radio transmission?	Highly Satisfie d 37%	Satisfied 32%	Neutral 14%	Dissati sfied 11%	Diss atisfi ed 06%
Q:5	Are you satisfied with the number of cultural programmes in FM transmission?	Yes 37%	No 45%	Don't Know 18%	-	-
Q:6	How you benefit from listening to your desired FM programmes?	A. You are up-to-date on issues concern ing your daily life 29%	B. Healthy source of relaxation 36%	A waste of time. 22%	No effect. 13%	-
Q:7	Do the transmissions of FM radio reach to all segments of social sector?	Yes 31%	No 42%	Don't know 07%	-	-
Q:8	Do you think the regional languages programs result in propagating harmony among the	Yes	No	Don't Know 27%	-	-

	different sections of society?	69%	24%			
Q:9	**The news and current affairs program present unbiased and neutral picture of social issues?**	Yes 58%	No 33%	Don't Know 09%	-	-
Q: 10	**Do you feel your language proficiency has increased due to the DJ's style of communication?**	Yes 27%	No 59%	Don't Know 14%	-	-
Q: 11	**The approach of RJs towards social life is often:**	Pragmatic 28%	Idealist 43%	Pessimist 20%	Don't know 09%	-
Q: 12	**How would you evaluate the effects of FM radio programs on the youth of Pakistan?**	Positive 35%	Negative 30%	Neutral 35%	-	-

Total sample size 100.

Findings

> ➤ The findings of the research are that FM radio is listened by the young generation of Quetta due to their main focus on entertainment and interactive programmes with feedback. It is assumed that this forum can be used as an effective tool of Social Change in Quetta.
> ➤ People prefer to listen FM broadcasting due to the interesting contents and better sound quality. The following results have been developed on the basis of data collected through survey research method.
> ➤ In accordance with the responses, people like listen to programmes containing news and current affairs segments whereas most of the respondents listen to entertainment programmes and very few people prefer listening the programmes fall in other category.

- The amount of time spend on listening Fm radio has relevancy to the research. The collected data shows that most of the respondents spend 1-2 hours in listening FM radio transmission.
- Listeners' satisfaction with the contents of FM transmission is indirectly related to the main theme of our research and total respondents were found highly satisfied with the programming of FM radios. Moreover, very few respondents were highly dissatisfied with the contents of FM radio programmes in general.
- Maximum respondents believe that the news and current affairs programmes present unbiased and neutral picture of social issues.
- The majority of respondents believe that influence of FM radio programmes on youth is positive, while some respondents consider it negative.

Recommendations

- Quetta needs to have more Frequency Modulated radio stations as agent of social change to counteract the social issues like sectarianism, prejudice, ethnicity, ignorance, starvation, joblessness, feudalism and tribalism widespread in the society. FM radio can produce awareness about social justice, human rights and can create sense of gender balance among different communities. Through radio these communities will start developing harmony among all segments of social sections.
- Some FM stations are airing the programmes based on entertainment only. The audience of FM radio is Youth. So, it is recommended that social awareness programmes, current affairs, educational programmes, different up dates, and public interest announcements must be broadcasted. Therefore, the part of the society which is listening to FM radio as audience can turn into a well informed citizen.
- Social awareness lacks regarding economics, politics, health care, women issues and other phenomena in Quetta city due to some constrains. The programmes must also be based upon the issues related to daily life of the people.
- FM radio must be turned into the form of community radio so that the small social issues can be addressed in broader way and the intrusion of change can knock at the doors of local, towns, villages and small vicinities. In this way, the acceptability for the social change can grow on grass root level.

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