A CASE STUDY

An evaluation on youth training for community media participation by CASP/ Plan NGO

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ABSTRACT : Urban slum youth trained under the (Community Aid Sponsorship Programme) / Plan as CRIC (Child Right Information Centre) members when compared with their audience and other community youth using knowledge inventory as a tool showed significant (at <.50) knowledge differences. Reference to printed information by the CRIC team as also face to face interview revealed that five members past and present who had gained confidence and knowledge to pursue higher studies and find jobs, thereby showing the benefits of community media training.

KEY WORDS : Youth training, Community media, Participation

INTRODUCTION

Community media organizations are increasingly being shaped and defined within mainstream systems, as a "third" tier of media, in relation to the "first" and "second" tiers of commercial and public media (Fairbairn,2009).

This is a shift from the past, when community media developed in opposition to mainstream, to represent and give voice to oppressed, marginalized, and excluded communities. A defining feature of community media was its origins in people's struggles against oppressive regimes, poverty, and exploitation. Recognition of community media pioneers and activist's thinking and contributions led to new policies (Fairbairn, 2009).

Community media are thus oriented towards a community, regardless of the exact nature of this community (defined geographically/spatially or otherwise), but the relationship between the community medium and the actual community transcends 'ordinary' one-way communication,

where topics are chosen in the same way, by professional communicators and targeted towardsthe apparent needs and interests of the audience (Berrigan, 1979).

Participation implied a wider range of activities related to involving people directly in station programming, administration and policy activities (Prehn, 1991).

Community media played a significant role in informing and mobilizing communities at grassroots level, against apartheid" (National Community Radio Forum, 1999).

It also provides opportunities to the public to choose varied and relevant programmes and to have means of feedback to transmit its reactions and demands to production organizations (Servaes, 1996).

The nature of community participation and media interact with the community in three ways namely; institutional or organisational mechanisms, specific communication strategies and the actual provision of goods and services. Organisational mechanisms were set inplace to facilitate community participation by empowering representatives from the

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community through workshops and skills training (Kitchin *et al.,* 2002).

Community participation and access are the major tenets that characterise and upon which community media are credited. Other tenets include issues of ownership,control and funding which are rooted in the hands of community members and they empower them to have control over the communication systems. They also empower marginalised communities to define and manage their own development (Matthews, 2004).

CASP (The Community Aid Sponsorship Programme) / Plan is an NGO in Delhi, which launched a sponsorship project with the aim of aiding the development of under privileged children in India. This NGO was selected for the study since they are involved in engaging youth in various media forums. They have experience of using community media for youth development. For over ten years, CASP/Plan has used different community media for bringing about development change. Community media or people's media essentially puts the ownership and control of the media in the hands of community itself. People design, produce and consume media that they themselves have produced. Community media reiterates the basic philosophy of CASP / Plan and over the years it has acquired an important role in its campaigns and programmes. CASP /Plan has explored various media forum and endeavored to empower communities to gain ownership and production control over them. CASP/ Plan has primarily focused on young people and using the media to provide voice to young people's ideas and concerns. The community media programme began in 1999. Experts were invited to train the youth groups. Today different media are being produced by the youth group.

Objective:
–To study the role of community media training in gain of knowledge for youth development.
–To study the reasons for participation by the youth.
–To understand the perceptions of different stake holders involved in community media.
–To assess the gain of knowledge by the community youth.

METHODOLOGY

Locale:
The study was conducted at CASP/ Plan, No.66, Tughlakabad Institutional Area, Near Batra Hospital Badarpur Road, New Delhi as a consequence of merger of CASP and Plan in 1979the NGO namely CASP/ Plan with the aim of aiding the development of under privileged children by means of sponsorship. This NGO was selected for the study as they are involved in engaging youth in various media forum. They were using Community Media for youth development.

Participants:
For the study comprised of seventy five youth involved with different community base media of CASP / Plan NGO. CASP (The Community Aid and Sponsorship Programme) is an Indian.

Selection of the sample : Participants working in community media (Group 1 A+ B):
This group composed of 25 participants who had been trained under Casp/ Plan programme since 1986. This group actively involved in the community media activities. This group of participants recognized as functional and active group.

Audience of community media (Group 2):
The 25 audience group participants were selected from among the youth who were attending the programme from last six month organized by peer educators under community media of CASP / Plan NGO. This group was recognized as passive group as they were listeners and an active or action worker.

Other community group neither participants nor audience (Group 3):
These 25 number of participants were neither trained nor part of any programme of Community Media of CASP / Plan NGO.

Total 75 number of mixed (girls and boys) participants of 13-24 years of age group was taken for the study.

Three different levels of youth participation in community media activities are shown in Fig. A. The three levels of participants differed in the young person's involvement with the organization activities and hence, their
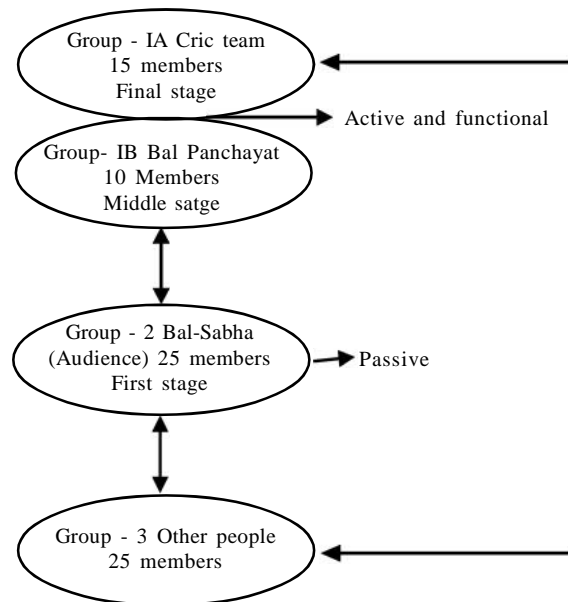

Fig. A: Stucture of community media

training and orientation to various issues. Active/ Functional participation refers to the group which proactively initiates programmes and activities and are not driven by any external facilitation. Functional participation refers to forming and participating in groups or committees to achieve predetermined goals. Passive participation is when youths participate by being told what is going happen or has already happened with no ability to change it. This refers to the audience as in group 3. Sustained engagement with the programmes and activities led to building their skills, shape and develop their personality and enhance the level of confidence to make them more aware and knowledgeable about issues affecting their own and their community development.

Tool:

Two different tools via knowledge inventory and face to face interview were use as follows.

Knowledge inventory:

The knowledge inventory was developed based on different issues raised through the communities. It is made according to the key information imparted through all kind of media of community media in the last six to eight months. A detailed analysis of the issues was done by youth participants and stake holders and the key issues emerged was identified. Preliminary close ended questions were prepared which had two options 'Yes' or 'No'.

The inventory was given to CASP / Plan functionaries (Joint Executive Director, Programme Officer and Advocates) for content validation. Discussions were held with them to seek their opinions and suggestions as to the adequacy of existing statements and weather they reflected the issues addressing through community media. To check the validity test-retest method was used and 20 young participants were selected at a gap of a week. A correlation co-efficient was obtained.

Selection of issues:

The issues addressed through the different community media usually reflect the current problems or challenges faced by young adults. CRIC members and the Bal Panchayat members worked together closely in identifying the issues, discussing various dimensions, developing media content that reflect the concern and perspectives of young adults. They majorly worked on young adult issues such as career, bad habits, hygiene and bad elements of society. Issues are also related to women empowerment and empowering children because they are the most important and vulnerable section of society. Issues selected were also based on the need, currently prevalent amongst the group and or community at large. The CRIC team and Bal Panchayat members together worked by using traditional, print and electronic media.

Apart from its local members, technical experts, NGO personals also indirectly or directly guided the ideas of the young people on deciding agenda of the media they produce. These persons focused on national campaigns as well as issues that are not yet perceived as felt needs by the youth groups but would becomes important and relevant later.

Thus, the process of setting the agenda for the media involves a continuous exchange of ideas among young people within this group as well as with outsiders, External process of constant deliberation, discussions and prioritization helped to decide the agenda collectively, and focus on the key issues concerning their lives.

Issues adressed:

Issues concerning Women empowerment, Child rights, Birth Registration, Career, Hygiene etc. were discussed and content developed into the atre, puppetry and print formats. The knowledge inventory was used to assess the knowledge of community media participants, audience of community media and other youth making a total of 75.

Face to face interview:

Face to face type of interview was used to have the insights and perception of some of the youth participants. Annual magazine of CASP / Plan was also utilized to understand their reasons and long run benefits after joining the CASP /Plan.

OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

On the basis of knowledge inventory (Table 1), it was found that the knowledge scores of youth involved in Group 1 A+B was 87.2 per cent and that of Group 3 was 62.08 per cent. The difference in knowledge was significant at <0.05. On the basis of knowledge level, it was observed that Group 1 A+B had much more knowledge on reproductive health issues etc. They also had better communication skills than the other community youth. It was seen that Group 3 could not answer any question and their confidence level was low in comparison to youth involved in community media. It was summarized that youth participating in community media(Group1 A+B) had better confidence and knowledge level which the other youth (Group 3) did not have.

Table 1: Difference in the knowledge scores of youth of Group 1 A+B and Group 3

Group	Average score	Maximum score
Group1A+B	21.8 (87.2%)	25
Group3	15.52 (62.08%)	25

Tobtained = 17.44, Tcritical = 1.984, Level of significance = .05

It is evident from Table 2 that significant difference existed between the youth and their audience. It clearly indicates that the Group 1A+B had much higher level of knowledge. Further the Group 2 had lower levels of knowledge

clearly indicating the positive impact on audiences of community media. The process of engagement in community media activities became a means of the process for significant growth and learning about critical issues concerning their lives.

Table 2: Difference in the knowledge scores of youth of Group 1 A+B and Group 2

Group	Average score	Maximum score
Group 1 A+B	21.8 (87.2%)	25
Group 2	17.97(71.7%)	25

Obtained = 4.61, tcritical = 1.984, Level of significance = .05

Reason for participation in community media:

Community media is the vehicle through which youth can enhance their capabilities.Children are free to join community media but every participant has his own reason for his involvement.

Career:

Career is a big reason for participation in community media CASP/Plan because youth gets good information for career prospects. Community media also provides certain trainings and workshops for youth for their better future.

"Renuka 23 year old girl had graduated and was working in a full time job with an NGO called 'Pathfinder'. She had been involved with Bal Panchayat and CRIC team for nine years. Her reason for involvement was stated "My parents are not so educated so they are not able to guide me about my aims and my teachers never guided me career wise. In CASP / Plan facilitator gave me full support and counsel me about my career"

"Bharat, 24 year pursuing B.A. was working full time in an automobile company. He was involved with Bal – Panchayat and CRIC team for four years and his reason for participation were: "teacher provides only bookish knowledge, parents tells us about right thinking and good ways but CASP/Plan's facilitator gives us general knowledge and guide us for future".

Knowledge growth:

Community media provide opportunities and for learning for acquiring new skills. Youth involvement with community media make them able to talk on many issues such as health, hygiene, child rights, child protection, birth registration, environment, women empowerment etc. This kind of knowledge provides personal and professional development.

Saroj Rawat, 24 year old girl was pursuing masters in Human Resource Management and doing a part time job with CASP / Plan NGO as a coordinator in community media. She was involved with Bal – Panchayat and CRIC team from past 10 years. Her reason for participation were "I joined the Bal Panchayat because I was keen to receive my rights because being a girl I was not receiving my rights. Now I see myself as a responsible, self -confident person. I think that in the eyes of society, I am seen as an educated person".

Jyotsna, 20 year old girl working towards her Bachelor of Arts and also had obtained an elementary teacher education diploma, was looking for a job. She has been involved with Bal-Panchayat and CRIC team for six years. Her reason for involvement were: "as a member of the Bal Pancayat, I see myself as one of those youths who live apart from the world, lost and know nothing about themselves. Earlier, I used to feel my thoughts are not important for others which is changed after joining community media of CAS/Plan. Similar work on knowledge growth was done by Babar (2003) and Walke *et al*. (2005).

Networking:

Another reason for participation is good networking because community media provides communication with other NGOs, experts and also further job because of their networking and as CASP/Plan is an international organization, sometimes its conference also held at abroad therefore it provides good networking to their participants.

Nirmala, 22 year old girl was studying in B.A. and working part time with CASP/Plan as a facilitator. She had been involved with Bal Panchayat and CRIC team for eight years. Her reason for participation were: " The family encouraged me a lot to join the Bal Panchayat because it increases confidence and also gives advices career wise as it gives good exposure for different tasks or activities, my network has been increased and I can approach for a good job now".

Savita, 20 year old girl studying two bachelor degrees together in B.S.W. and Political Science and also doing part time job in CASP/Plan as a facilitator. She has been involved with Bal Panchayat and CRIC team for nine years. Her reason for involvement were "earlier I used to think it would make no difference whether I worked or not. After joining the Bal Panchayat, I started thinking about career. I started to fulfill my task without laziness and with complete interest. I worked with video magazine and animation films and now with the Bal Sabha and CRIC. It also provided good networking with other NGOs and in other fields for better job opportunities." Bisht *et al.* (2007) and Backer and Fruit (1982) worked on media selection and media consumption behaviour on agriculture graduates.

Conclusion :

Youth training and community media participation helped the young people to gain knowledge, self - confidence and even find employment. The youth interviews were positive and enthusiastic about the programme and felt ownership towards it.

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