

College Radio as a Mechanism for Participatory Learning: Exploring the Scope for Online Radio Based Learning Among Undergraduates

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Abstract: This paper explores the prospects of online college radio at Sur College of Applied Sciences, its need among students and the possible scope of its contributions to student learning, engagement and community service. It explores the method of developing a holistic mechanism to capture the possibilities of maximizing learning experience by employing college radio as an educational tool to understand the micro-dynamics and localized necessities that deem it necessary or unnecessary. Through this, it attempts to locate an appropriate mechanism, and targeted use of the college radio in contributing to the learning outcomes and educational experience of the students. The study finds considerable scope for radio based learning at Sur College of Applied Sciences across a range of uses and gratification indicators consistent with the primary objectives of the college. The study discusses the theoretical and practical implications of the findings, and the pedagogical significance of the college radio as an alternative.

Keywords: College radio, online radio, student radio, participatory learning, gratifications, Oman.

Introduction

Many scholarly studies have established the importance of college radio in student learning and development, and argue for the need for a participatory approach to knowledge sharing and dissemination with the help of new media (Cheatham, 2008; Copley, 2007; Johnson, 2008; Merrill, 2008; Read, 2005; Yu, 1995; Zwibelman & Rayfield, 1982). Targeted use of mass media, especially among students, is arguably an effective method for inducing behavioral changes for overall development of students and has been a matter of deliberation since the first ever college radio called 9XM went on-air in 1912 at the University of Wisconsin (e.g., DeJong, 2002; Rinks, 2002; Wakefield, Loken, & Hornik, 2010). Participatory media production and consumption has also been proved to affect the self-learning and training abilities and its effects on retaining and using information have been widely documented (see Herrington, Parker, & Boase-Jelinek, 2013; Matzat & Vrieling, 2015).

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This paper aims to explore the prospects of college online radio, hereafter referred as college radio, at Sur College of Applied Sciences, its need among students, and the possible scope of its contributions to student learning, information dissemination, engagement, and community service. The need for this study stems from the desire to explore fresh dimensions in order to strengthen the pedagogical mechanism for an enhanced learning experience for students. It aims to explore the method of developing a holistic mechanism to capture the possibilities of maximizing the learning experience by employing college radio as an educational tool. In addition to traditional educational and learning approaches, employing radio as an instructional medium can redefine the learning experience, have integrative effects, trigger active participation, enhance educational experience, and maximize community engagement.

It is important to note that every mass media is space and culture bound. This means that, while technically its reach may not be spatially bound, its functions and responsibilities may be, and so will be its roles and challenges depending upon the nature of the target community and its expected reach and functions. In this case, the envisaged college radio is to be limited to the Sur CAS campus with a target community of approximately 900 undergraduate students, teachers, and administrative staff.

Against the existing scholarship, while it can be comfortably argued that college radio can be a great learning medium for student development, its viability and scope, especially in the local context, deserve a thorough investigation to document the possible achievements and challenges that may emerge during its operation, and to devise a framework that delivers maximum benefits while feeding into the key objectives of the college aimed at the holistic growth of the student community.

The Case for College Radio and Its Significance in Learning and Engagement

In this media saturated world with maximum local penetration, the foremost and inevitable question here is whether to have college radio or not. Any rationale to setting up a college radio can be only justified on the basis of its *want* and *need* by the target community, Sur CAS students in this case. From the prism of *want* and *need*, the aim is to give charge to students in exploring their own uses and gratification of needs and desire for a radio for that purpose.

While the need for the radio can be established using the existing scholarship in this area, such an approach will take away the opportunity to consider the micro-dynamics and localized necessities that deem college radio necessary or unnecessary, its appropriate mechanism, and its targeted use that could produce desired results. As the paper further explores in the next sections, while there exists a strong research base that can be employed to argue for college radio, the counterargument could be that, in the media saturated lives of students where most of the time is consumed by new media, in addition to other contenders such as local radio and television, how can a student radio stand any chance of acceptance? Will it not struggle for listeners who already subscribe to a range of new and traditional media?

A radio being thrust upon students taking a non-participatory and top down approach might carry a degree of uncertainty over its acceptance among them, no matter how innovative the initiative. Hence, to explore the case radio's success, given the counterarguments, a thorough research among the target community is imperative to minimize the degree of uncertainty and maximize its acceptance. Furthermore, in order to compete for time with other media platforms, college radio will require targeted and tailor-made programmes that aim to address the very specific needs of the students at Sur CAS and subdue the competition for content with mainstream media. A sense of ownership is another strong reason that could help college radio compete for

time with the mainstream media, which can only be acquired by taking the participatory approach to its functions and operations.

Against this background, this study seeks to understand how college radio can be an effective medium to reach out to students on issues of educational importance such as advising, English language learning, information sharing between teachers and students, and college news and events. It aims to ask, and infer using preliminary data, whether the college radio, through a range of information oriented programs produced by the students themselves under the active guidance of teachers, can influence student attitudes towards important issues that are necessary to their overall performance in both education and the job market. More importantly, it seeks to address whether college radio can prove to be an effective educational aid that provides both a voice and a sense of ownership to students through active participation in program planning, production, and consumption. While the paper briefly touches upon the various challenges and opportunities around the idea of college radio, at this point, it primarily aims to seek answers to three foremost questions that revolve around the *need* for radio in college, the *want* for radio among students, and suitable *content* for radio focused on the core needs of students. Exploring the questions of *want* and *content* among students is important for several reasons, such as:

- a. to make them active participants of the study;
- b. to take the constructivist approach in setting up the radio;
- c. to make them active stakeholders of the envisaged project;
- d. to back the project with a substantial introductory study; and
- e. to explore the audience base and their expectations.

Through this study the aim is to give students the right to envisage the idea of the college radio and acquire a sense of ownership right from the get-go, and to avoid the imposition of a radio mechanism taking a top-down approach. The three key research questions that guided this study are:

RQ1. Is there a need for a college radio at the Sur CAS campus?

RQ2. Do students want college radio for both participatory learning and uses and gratifications perspectives?

RQ3. What content should a college radio at Sur CAS carry that could qualify it as a medium of participatory learning and gratification?

As noted earlier, RQ1 is aimed at establishing the need for a college radio among students in terms of exploring questions such as what objectives a college radio can fulfill and how it can augment the learning process among students through participatory means of learning and information sharing. This question is answered using the various theoretical approaches and the existing studies about participatory communication and learning. The second research question is aimed at establishing the desire of the students to hear and have their voices heard among the student community, which will be inferred from the questions asked in the survey (see methods section) about their desire to listen to the radio and participate in its operations. The question about *content* is as important as the *need* and *want* for the college radio given the fact that content will justify its necessity by creating and producing thematic and targeted programs that are necessary to maximize their educational experience at the college. Questions regarding content can give a sense of ownership to students necessary for their maximum participation and interest in running the radio through participatory approaches. The third research question is approached using the survey questionnaire itself, which is further explained in the methods section of this paper.

These questions could be analyzed using various theoretical frameworks, such as participatory communication and participatory media, participatory learning, and uses and gratification theory. While participatory communication, participatory media, and participatory learning can be used to argue for the need of the radio, the uses and gratification theory, that explains users make active choices in media consumption, can provide a foundation for *want* for radio among students. Given that media consumers have different needs and often have different expectations from the media content, and interpret media messages differently, a theoretically oriented study about the needs and expectations of the target audiences can offer a significant context and insight into the educational role that college based online radio at Sur College can fulfill. Also, a great number of studies on participatory approaches to learning and media usage advocate the need for action and participation oriented learning while employing media aids. Hence, asking questions to the student about the *need* and *want* for the radio and the type of *content* they prefer on college radio would help pinpoint the subtleties of the localized media consumption and need. A detailed review of these theories is sketched out in the ensuing section.

Concepts and Theories Informing the Research

A host of theories in both media communication and learning provide a foundation to this research, such as participatory communication, participatory media, participatory learning and action (PLA), and the uses and gratification approach. Except for the uses and gratification approach, which holds that audiences are active media consumers and make informed choices in media consumption, participatory communication, participatory media, and participatory learning and action (PLA) are “grounded in constructivist theories of learning (Piaget, 1928; Vygotsky, 1978), which suggest that knowledge is actively constructed by, rather than transmitted to learners. People learn by applying their knowledge to meaningful problems (Brown et al., 1989; Hawkins & Pea, 1987), actively building their own understanding” (Shen, Wu, Achhpiliya, Bieber, & Hiltz, 2004, p. 2). Through the discussion of these theories, along with the relevant literature, this study will establish how participatory approaches of engagement with the traditional mass media can prove to be an effective tool for learning, education, and community engagement among the students.

Participatory communication and participatory media and the relevant application to college radio

Based on Paulo Freire’s idea of participatory development, Servaes (1996, 1999, 2000, 2005), in a series of works, posited the idea of participatory communication and thereafter introduced the participatory communication model. In arguing for more participatory approaches to communication practices, he notes,

the notion of Participatory Communication stresses the importance of cultural identity of local communities, and of democratisation and participation at all levels - international, national, local and individual. It points to a strategy, not merely inclusive of, but largely emanating from, the traditional 'receivers'. (Servaes, 1996, p. 75)

Building on the works of Servaes and other scholars, Mefalopulos (2003) held that “participatory communication is an approach capable of facilitating people's involvement in decision-making about issues impacting their lives - a process capable of addressing specific needs and priorities relevant to people and at the same time assisting in their empowerment” (p. viii). Since its origin, various scholars have hailed participatory communication as “a necessary component” for the holistic development of the communities at the grassroots level in envisaging and executing the locally conceived socio-cultural and socio-economic growth plan that ensures “genuine

ownership” to the actual “beneficiaries” and participants (2003, p. viii). With the participatory communication model in the backdrop, an array of issues and subjects have been evaluated by the scholars in terms of participatory media practices and its effects, defense of culture, and protection of cultural identities and grassroots community development. In the same sense, student learning and education can be approached by maximizing participatory approaches among students that can help them envisage alternative and novel ways of learning and information sharing in taking a shift from traditional means of learning to embracing an orientation toward practice and action oriented learning with the help of new media technology. Servaes (1996) posited the “multiplicity paradigm” approach to argue that, “[t]here is no universal path to development... each community or grouping must proceed from its own plan in consideration of its own situation” (p. 81). Even students as distinctive groups with unique needs must develop alternative learning and engagement mechanisms and tools to maximize their educational benefits.

Many researchers have identified participatory media as a tool for the participatory communication mechanism with community media, such as community radio and newspapers as its foremost examples. Waisbord (2001), for example, argued that, “[t]he value of participatory media is not in being instruments of transmission but of communication, that is, for exchanging views and involving members. Community media dealt with various subjects: literacy, health, safety, agricultural productivity, land ownership, gender, and religion” (p. 20). Huesca (2002), in tracing the history of participatory communication approaches to development from a Latin American perspective, noted that:

systematic attention has been given to various aspects of participatory media, including audience involvement in message creation (Mody, 1991; Nair & White, 1993a; 1993b; 1994b; Thomas, 1994), identity construction (Rodriguez, 1994), and institution building (Díaz Bordenave, 1985; Fadul, Lins da Silva & Santoro, 1982. (p. 28)

Uses and gratification and radio

The starting point that led to the foundation of the uses and gratifications (U&G) theory, as raised by Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955), was “what do people do with the media?”, which was further developed Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974) in a series of research works to counter the proposition made by media effects theories that assume the audience to be passive media consumers. The uses and gratifications approach assumes that the audience is active and that mass media use by the audience is goal-oriented. Early U&G research primarily focused on the audience motivations behind selections of different kinds of media which slowly shifted to the more specific questions about the specific uses and gratifications that audiences derive from the media. Several studies have focused on audience uses and gratification needs related to various type of media technologies from radio (Albarran et al., 2007), television (Rubin, 1983), mobile phones (Leung & Wei, 2000), and internet and new media technologies (Ruggerio, 2000) to more specific program categories such as soap operas, reality television, news, and social media (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008).

Katz and Foulkes (1962), in their essay, argued that media is used as an “escape” by the audiences. The various dimensions to “escape” were later developed by Katz, Gurevitch and Haas (1973) in studying the social and psychological needs that media satisfy. These needs, they argue, “typically, take the form of (1) strengthening or weakening, (2) a connection—cognitive, affective, integrative (3) with some referent—self, friends, family and tradition, social and political institutions, others” (Katz et al., 1973, p. 19). More recent studies have focused on the application of uses and gratifications on the use of mobile phones, internet, social media, and user generated

content. Ruggiero (2000), for example, argued that “computer-mediated communication has revived the significance of uses and gratification” (p. 3), making uses and gratification theory a necessary inclusion to the future of mass communication studies. Albarran et al. (2007), in their study, examined how the new audio technologies such as MP3 players are impacting the needs and gratifications met by traditional radio. They concluded that MP3 technologies are a preferred listening format and traditional radio is only preferred as a source of news and information (2007, p. 99).

Shao (2009), in investigating the user generated content on social networking websites and content sharing websites from the uses and gratification perspective, argued that user generated media is consumed for three interdependent needs that include fulfilling information, entertainment, and mood management needs, enhancing social connections and virtual communities, and self-expression and self-actualization (p. 7). Given the immense scope of the uses and gratification theory and its wider application across a range of media vis-à-vis the audience, it can effectively provide a framework to this study.

Participatory learning and the radio

The work of Shen et al. (2004) on participatory learning and action (PLA, pronounced “play”) is worth discussing here since it considers students as active stakeholders in taking collaborative approaches to the learning process. In it, they noted students act as “active participants in the full life cycle of homework, projects and examination” including question or project design, execution, assessment of peers work to “observe (read) everything their peers do so they can learn further from others efforts” (2010, p. 1).

Participatory learning approaches have been applied to a host of situations. Ramirez (1998), for example, used participatory learning and communication tools for a better understanding of natural resource management and notes that “in a pluralist context all stakeholders are legitimate users, providers and managers of information” (p. 49). Ajiboye and Ajitoni (2008), in their study about environment education and consciousness among Nigerian school students using full and quasi participatory learning techniques, concluded that both quasi and full participatory learning techniques help students perform better than their counterparts in the conventional lecture groups. However, they also noted that students who took part in the quasi participatory learning techniques performed better than the participatory learning groups as “quasi mode offers the learners a unique opportunity to work together in a more flexible way, to read, accept and internalize the basic environmental concepts” (2008, p. 58). The use of radio as a participatory learning mechanism has been widely advocated given its potential to render target communities as active stakeholders in learning and development.

Links to Other Literature in the Field: Trends of Radio Consumption and Its Effect on Learning and Education

Studies conducted both in the West and non-Western countries have categorically emphasized the role of radio in student learning and development. The research prior to the dot-com boom focused on uses and gratification effects of the traditional media including radio, television, and newspaper (Katz et al., 1973; Mendelsohn, 1964; Rubin, 1983; Towers, 1985, 1987). However, in the past decade and a half, most of the focus on uses and gratification research has shifted from traditional media to the use of new media and new technology among youth and college students, with radio as a relatively minor concern of the research (Albarran et al., 2007; Bonds-Raacke, 2008; Egede & Chuks-Nwosu, 2013; Mehmood et al., 2014; Mohamad et al., 2014; Ruggiero, 2000; Shao, 2009; Teixeira & Silva, 2009). Nevertheless, the role of radio

as an instructional and learning medium among students and communities, especially the Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI), continues to be a key area of research and discussion (Bosch, 1997; Bosch & Crespo, 1995; Dirir, 2005; Evans & Pier, 2008; Hartenberger & Bosch, 1996; Ho & Thukral, 2009; Rudd, 2003; Merrill, 2008).

Rudd (2003), in his conclusion to the role of radio production as a means of teaching and learning among undergraduate students, found the evidence for a “positive learning experience” (p. 102) among the participants of the study. Mehmood and Hameed (2014), in exploring the role of radio in imparting education at Allama Iqbal Open University in Pakistan and Al-Qudus Open University Jordan, repeatedly emphasized the importance of radio and television in “promoting educational process, improving curriculum and methodology” for students (p. 263). Among the key conclusions that they draw in comparing the radio stations at the said two universities are that “radio programs...promote education effectively, provide help in understanding the difficult concepts; radio programmes...supplemented with written material help with learning; printed schedule of radio programmes...provided to the students...presented in simple language [is] useful for teaching learning process” (2014, p. 265). Aqrabawi (2006), for example, in discussing the role of community media in political and social development in Jordan, highlighted the role of school radio in giving students the platform to share “badly needed” local cultural programs that “expose[d] new artists and literary talents to the students” in addition to sharing local sports and news coverage. The school radio, as he notes, “empowered high school students to express themselves without school teachers or other adult pre censorship” (Aqrabawi, 2006). Sweis and Baslan (2013), in their report on digital media in Jordan, held that “community radio is growing strong in Jordan and is low cost” (p. 63). They further noted,

[s]tudent-operated stations, including the station of Yarmouk University, and others in the southern and northern parts of the country show citizens’ willingness to access not only news about their local concerns but also to voice their concerns through these outlets. (2013, p. 63)

In exploring the “educative-communicative” role of radio Rádio Universitária do Minho among the Portuguese undergraduate course students, Teixeira & Silva (2009), noted that “university radios are not restricted to generalist or informative functions anymore, but figure as a complementary or alternative mean for people’s formation” through their “social, cultural, educative and formative activities, both on conventional and web formats” (p. 26). For Teixeira & Silva (2009), the “combination of various elements common to the radio” that make it a success for learning and education are:

the ubiquity (accessible everywhere) – the flexibility – the low cost of production and program broadcasting –the emission in real time (integral) – the synchronous communication (communication intermediated by computers in a simultaneous way) – the multi-directed connectivity – the multimedia sharing – the streaming (listen/see directly from the Internet) – the collaboration (exchange of information in cyberspace) – and the interactivity, integrated to e-learning (system of learning on the Internet). (p. 19)

A more intriguing study about the role of Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) in improving student learning outcomes has been presented by Ho and Thukral (2009). Developed on the radio platform, “Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) is an instructional tool designed to deliver active learning by radio [that] exposes students to regular, curriculum-based learning content while modeling effective learning activities and classroom organization techniques for teachers” (2009, p. 1). Developed in 1970 by Stanford University and funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), IRI helps “enrich” learning environment by creating a “blend

of good teaching and learning practice” by engaging teachers and local community members in using existing learning resources (2009, p. 2). Ho and Thukral (2009) found “convincing evidence” of IRI’s positive impact on improvement of student learning outcomes on varying levels and extents (p. 15). Pinnock (2014), in exploring the relationship between radio and a small rural community, concluded that radio continues to be the “most important source for local information, creating shared experiences that helps order people’s days, and creates common talk that deepens their connections” (p. 103). He further noted that internet use among the community had “not displaced” the radio station, and the new technology is used to gratify needs that radio cannot fulfill. A similar view is held by Ayyad (2011), who argued that young people use television and radio to gratify their need for entertainment, while the Internet fulfils their educational, psychological, and social needs. (as cited in Miliany, 2014, p. 43). Stark and Weichselbaum (2013), in their analysis of the radio use among listeners, noted that radio has “reinvented” itself both in terms of its “scope and listening experience” with the advent of new media. From the gratification perspective, they concluded that “compared to other online media, listening to radio is ranked highest among affective gratification items” (p. 185).

Methodology

This study employs a quantitative approach to investigate the *need* and *want* themes as explained in the previous sections of this paper. A survey was conducted among students of Sur College of Applied Sciences with questions addressing the three key themes viz. the *need*, *want* and *content* that this paper aims to address. A survey questionnaire was designed for analysis which contained close ended questions given the limited time and primarily quantitative nature of the research. The results were tabulated using the SPSS software. The survey questionnaire consisted of 12 questions addressing three key themes (viz., need, want, and content). The questions asked students about whether they would prefer listening to and participating in college radio and the kind of content they would prefer to hear on the college radio. A pretest of the survey questionnaire was conducted among a small group of students to establish its appropriateness. A total of 150 surveys were completed by full time undergraduate students between ages of 18 and 25 using a random selection method. A total sample size of 150 students represents approximately 17% of the total student population of 879 undergraduate students currently enrolled at Sur CAS. Of the 150 respondents for the survey, 26% (39 subjects) were male and 74% (111 subjects) subjects were female.

Findings

The initial part of the survey was dedicated to gauging the interest of respondents in radio and its general importance in education, information, and community engagement. Among the participants surveyed, 112 (74.7%) indicated listening to radio. Approximately 62% of the respondents indicated a ‘yes’ response to the question about radio’s role as a source of information, entertainment and community engagement.

Of particular interest in the study was to find to what extent students welcome the idea of a web based college radio. For this, respondents were asked whether it is a good idea to have a college radio, to which 69.3% indicated ‘yes’ and 29.3% indicated ‘no’ in their response. Respondents were also asked about their willingness to listen to the college radio, to which 69.3% indicated a positive response. Another key interest in the study was to explore the perceived uses and gratifications that respondents feel college radio can fulfill.

In response to the usefulness of the college radio, 78.7% of the respondents, as opposed to 18.7%, indicated that college radio can help in education and overall development of the

students. When asked to rate on a 4-point¹ Likert scale (where 1= 'strongly agree', 2= 'agree', 3= 'disagree' and 4= 'strongly disagree') whether college radio can help enhance engagement with the college, the mean was 2.01. A follow-up question, measured on a similar Likert scale, regarding perceived usability of college radio as a platform for learning and sharing information about college events, teachers, and students delivered the mean of 1.87. This further established the need and want for the college radio as an educational tool with certain uses and gratifications specific to the needs of students.

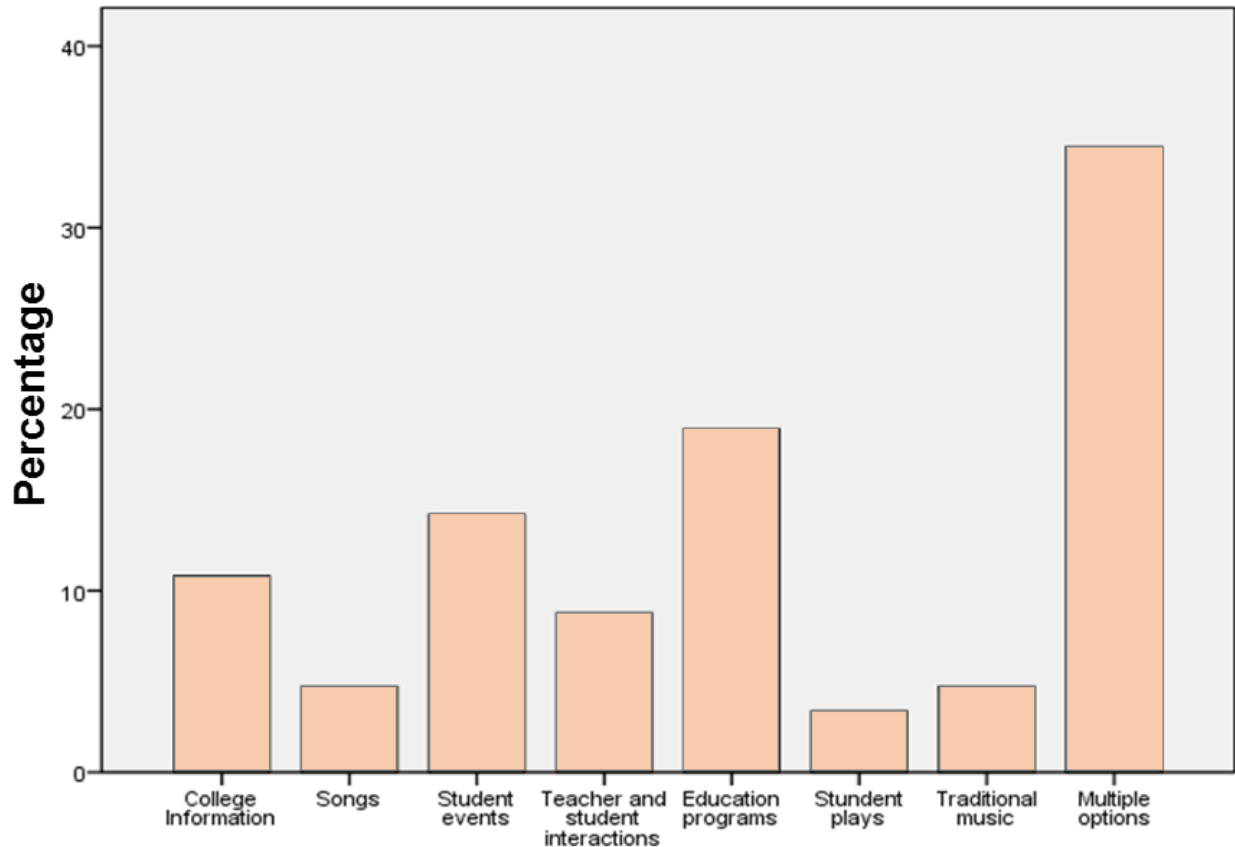
An additional question referring to the possible uses and gratifications that college radio can fulfill generated a majority of responses in favour of 'multiple responses' (37.1%) in addition to more specific categories such as 'information about college news and events' (28.5%), and 'educational information' (11.3%), among others (see Table 1). The responses were identified under four broad overlapping and flexible uses and gratification categories for easier classification. With respect to preferences for content, most respondents indicated 'multiple preferences' (33.8%) for programs in addition to specific categories such as 'educational programs' (18.5%) and student events (13.9%) (see Figure 1).

Table 1. *Specific Uses and Gratification Items Indicated by Respondents*

Perceived U&G	Specific Items	Percent
Educational learning &	Educational information	11.3
	Tips about exam, job interviews, assignments, homework	4.0
Information	Announcements by registration and the deanship	1.3
	Information about college news and events	28.5
Participation	Connect with teachers and other students (participation and learning)	2.6
	Informative discussions among students (participation and learning)	4.6
Entertainment	Plays produced by CAS students	5.3
Any other input*	Additional inputs by students	4.0
Multiple options**	Combination of various options	37.1
Total		98.7
Missing	Respondents did not answer	1.3

Note. n=150

¹ Due consideration was given to the academic debate around 4- point vis-à-vis 5-point and 6-point Likert scales (see Chang, 1994).



Uses & Gratification: Content Preference

Note. $n=150$

*Multiple options indicate a combination of options chosen by the respondent.

Figure 1. Content preference as indicated by respondents.

Another key variable of the study was participation. Respondents were asked about their willingness to participate in radio programming and production, to which 69.5% indicated 'yes' as opposed to 29.1% who indicated 'no'. Similarly, when asked who should operate the radio station, approximately 78.1% indicated both teachers and students jointly while 13.9% marked their responses in favour of teachers and 7.3% in favour of students.

A comparative analysis of some categories was conducted using the Pearson Chi-Square test with a two-tailed significance level of $\alpha = p \leq .05$. A chi-square test of respondents favoring the idea of college radio and their belief in the role of radio in student development presented strong evidence of relationship, $\chi^2(1, N = 150) = 8.278, p = .005$. A similar observation of relationship between those who would listen to the college radio and those in favor of the idea of college radio too presented strong evidence of relationship, $\chi^2(1, N = 150) = 34.013, p = .001$.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study tried to measure the possibility of introducing radio and its probable acceptance among students, using limited yet reasonable indicators. The focus of this study was to explore

the need for radio at Sur College of Applied Sciences. But more importantly, the aim was to explore the audience base—Sur CAS students in this case—and their expectations from the college based radio given the assumption that they are already occupied with an array of traditional and mainstream media which makes it imperative to understand the additional role and place that college radio could find in their media saturated lives. Exploring the question of *want* and *content* among students was important for several reasons that have already been mentioned elsewhere in this paper.

The results show a considerable support for the college radio, which is consistent with the educational and informational role that college radio is expected to fulfill. The results also indicate that students are keen on participating in the production and programming activities. The theoretical foundation of the study adds credibility and strength to the findings in providing a framework and direction that reinforce the role of college radio as an alternative medium of learning and engagement, further complementing classroom teaching and learning outcomes.

In regard to the second research question addressing the *want* for college radio among students from both uses and gratifications and participatory media perspectives, the data from this sample suggests ample willingness among students to make positive use of radio in their education and learning activities. Data shows a substantial support among respondents when tested on various variables such as radio as a potential source of learning and development, deeper engagement with college, and information and community service. The data also shows a strong willingness of students to be part of programming and production, which further emphasizes the principles of participatory media practices. The majority expressing the willingness to run the radio jointly with teachers emphasizes the sense of community relation and desire for continual training and guidance from college teachers in running the station.

As for the *content* part, the majority of student responses, as per the data, appear to be favoring a combination of overlapping responses such as educational programs, tips about exams and job interview preparation, and information about the college events, inter alia, that fulfill various uses and gratifications that are expected from a college radio. Nonetheless, the educational programs are the primary content that most students expect the radio to carry. The listenership base justifies the existence of any radio and the chi square tests performed on the data helped deliver the strong evidence of the relationship between respondents' faith in radio's role in education and learning and their willingness to tune in to radio.

This study only attempts to give a cursory idea into the need for college radio among students and is in no way exhaustive in nature. While this study provides a propaedeutic base for making a decision to set up the radio and the relative research, any final decision, we believe, would necessitate detailed planning and consultation with the students. Given the limited time and scope of this research, it could not capture several nuances such as the perceived use of college radio among students vis-à-vis the new/traditional media and any cultural and linguistic aspects that may prove to be an opportunity/challenge to this medium. Nevertheless, using the popular theoretical frameworks, this study lays out an alternative possible perspective to approach the issue of student learning and education in maximizing the effectiveness of the college with regards to its commitment to higher education and community service. Though limited in scope, it offers a starting point, a fresh and reliable view, and evidential direction to considering the participatory form of learning in employing new media technologies at Sur College of Applied Sciences.

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