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**Abstract:**

The concept of community radio has been gaining attention in India during the last four or five years. Essentially evolved to provide a platform for the local community, the issues to be addressed are mainly local, depending on needs, aspirations, ambitions and abilities of the local people.

Villages in rural India are not necessarily facing the same type of problems and expectations since they are culturally, geographically, educationally and economically vastly divergent. The local language, customs and social practices also vary from place to place and region to region. This is where the role of community radio becomes all the more important.

But for a vast nation like India, we must have thousands and thousands of community radio services to cater to the needs of the majority rural people. We have just made a beginning and a few stations have come up on their own, subject to the rigorous but necessary procedures of the licencing authority. Only educational institutions have been permitted in the first phase, mainly due to their accountability in one form or other. Many more may come from other NGO's, SHG's and other agencies which probably will have to invest reasonably for creating the studio facilities for producing and airing broadcasts. It may take a very long time in India to have community-owned radio services since ownership can create some local problems in the context of present commercial, political, economical and social divides.

However, the advantages of such enterprises cannot be overlooked. Opportunities for freedom of expression, for voicing the problems of the marginalized and disadvantaged communities and for probably finding solution to many local problems, may work to the advantage of community radio. A good number of radio reporters, team managers and eager participants may emerge ultimately. There will be ample chance for poor and even illiterate to voice their grievances and ambitions. All these when taken to the logical end may provide solution to many local problems.

The experience of Kongu FM Community Radio Services started in 2004 / 2005 in Kongu Engineering College Campus in a real rural set up will be highlighted. The recently launched "Science for Women" project catalyzed and supported by RVPSP – DST and its initial impact also will be highlighted.

**Bio-Data:**

Chief Engineering