Assessing Sustainability of Rural Community Radio in Kenya: A Case of Radio Mangelete

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Abstract

Rural communities rely on radio for communication and community radio remains the most accessible medium of communication. Rural community radio is the voice of the unprivileged members of the society. In Kenya, community radio stations are growing rapidly and extensively. Radio Mang'elete has been in existence for more than ten years but still struggling with sustainability challenges. The study was conducted in a natural setting which involved in-depth interviews and Focused Group Discussions (FGD's). Data was collected and analyzed. The study revealed lack of quality management, lack of community involvement, lack of quality programs, unprofessionalism among others as contributing factors towards Rural Community Radio (RCR) sustainability.Qualitative research focusing on insight and understanding from the perspective of those being studied offers the greatest promise of making a difference in people's lives (Merriam2009). Based on findings, the study recommends that RCR should improve on financial resources, policies and regulation, professionalism, management skills, and training of staff /volunteers should be frequent.

Introduction

Community radio is a medium owned and run by the community for the purpose of addressing community needs. Development affairs can be easily addressed through civic education by use of community radio. Information disseminated in native language deliversa message both to the illiterate and educated since it requires no reading skills thus liberating the powerless in the community and giving them a voice. The Kamba community associate themselves with Radio Mangelete through participation in various ways, i.e. program development, advertisements, call-ins, smses andthe radio only employs local presenters.

Lush and Urgoiti (2012) Study on Participation Pays: The Sustainability of Community Broadcasting in perspective,revealed that social sustainability is about community participation in the station and its programs. This involves having the power for decision making in programming, accessibility to station and its programming, and representation of the community.

Fraser and Estrada (2001), affirm when they defined community radio as a social process or event in which members of a community associate together to design programs, produce and air them, thus taking on the primary role of actors in their own destiny. Therefore, Rural Community Radio's sustainability is the responsibility of the community.

Accessibility and portability of a radio via the mobile phone has made it more convenient and friendly to listeners. Girard (2003) confirms that radio is still the most pervasive, accessible, affordable, and flexible mass medium available.

For any community radio to achieve its purpose there should be an enabling environment which includes sustainability. The sustainability of a community radio is in three ways: financial, institutional and social. This has been a challenge since sustainability has been attributed to community ownership and the few donors that come by sometimes pull out. Buckley (2011), emphasizes that community radio sustainability is done through social and economic models of operation and sustainability that would often not be viable on a commercial basis alone. He adds that community radio often builds an audience around those who do not have spending power.

The liberalization of the airwaves has allowed for the development of community radio stations that cater for community members needs by broadcasting community service programs. Kenya is among other African countries where media has been enjoying a period of liberalization, and this has led to increase in the number of radio stations, especially community radio across the country. Development intervention through community radio is part of the liberal approach to change in society. Other than community empowerment, the community radio is the only media that is able to take account of the nation's social, political, and cultural diversity (Ford, Maxwell and Meadows 2009). They argued that community broadcasting outlets have become the only media able to accurately represent the diversity of cultures.

Community radio provides the minority audience with a first level of service with regard to local news and information. Local news and educational programs can greatly enhance transparency, be a cornerstone of democracy on the other hand, better knowledge of development projects promotes higher levels of participation and ownership, and discourages corruption.

The community radio is the only station that on daily basis will provide information that directly affects

the lives of the community members. Community radio audiences see their local station as the primary source of news and information concerning their affairs.

1.3 Research Objectives

The general objective of the study is to assess the main challenges towards rural community radio sustainability and how these challenges can be addressed.

Specific objectives of the study include:

1. To assess how Radio Mangelete generates financial resources for their sustainability.
2. To examine the extent to which Radio Mangelete depends on donor support and to establish whether there are measures put in place by the station to enhance self-sponsorship
3. To identify the challenges facing rural community radio towards achieving social sustainability and establish how to overcome these challenges
4. To establish obstacles facing Radio Mangelete towards achieving institutional sustainability and identify how to overcome these obstacles.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Community Radio

Community radio station broadcast is for, by and about the community it serves and whose ownership and management are representatives of the community. Howey (2005) has the same view and he says, 'community radio is radio for the people and by the people'.

Rural Community Radio aims at improving lives of the community thus developing the society. The communities in rural areas usually lag behind in development activities due to lack of knowledge. Domatob, Juka&Nwaso (1987), emphasize that development is about change for betterment of the society and the media serve as an agent, and in this case rural community radio is an agent that stimulates and sustains this change provided it is used as vehicle of communication rather than as a channel for information.

The Kenya Constitution 2010 defines community broadcasting service as service that is fully controlled by a non-profit entity and carried on for non-profitable purpose. It also serves a particular community, promotes their interests, and encourages members of community served or associated with it, to participate in the selection and provision of programs to be broadcast. (Mefalopulos(2008),Buckley(2012), Chingamuka and Glenwright (2012) state that community radio is owned, managed and is accountable to the community. Therefore rural community radio is the channel through which different and dissenting opinions from within the community are voiced.

According to Odera and Kamweru (2000), the community radio has acquired a special place as one form of independent media, capable of evolving a community managed and more interactive communication and programming of issues affecting community. When commercial media focuses on profit-making, community media addresses issues affecting the audience making the station reliable as well as gaining audience trust. CIMA (2007) report on the other hand, maintains that community radio is a powerful source for empowerment, especially for the disenfranchised and marginalized groups in the society. Dikshit (1979) emphasizes that even though mainstream media may have development programs, community radio has made it more acceptable because of the language used. The common language spoken by a specific community defines the community, thus fostering a sense of belonging.

Chingamuka and Glenwright (2012) emphasize that community radio should be empowered with the means to tell their stories and be given platform as well to share real experience. By doing so, it will reach a point where knowledge transforms into action. Therefore community radio is the most accessed form of medium available for community members to tell their stories. Empowering rural community radio entails social, institutional and financial support from the community itself and well-wishers. Good relation between the station and other parties is an indication of sustainability.

Rural Community Radio improves communities in their totality, makes them literate, widens their horizon, raises their aspirations and creates in them willingness to find solution to their own problems (Moemeka (1994).

Challenges Facing Rural Community Radio

Rural community radio is established within the village of a specific community that the station serves. Such stations face environmental as well as other forms of challenges faced by that community in general. While it is easier to establish for instance a campus broadcasting because of the organized nature and financial capability of the academic environment, rural broadcasting must rely on the patronage and support of the government, county government and the local community the station is serving.

Fardon and Furniss (2000) revealed that the biggest problem that community radios face is that most of the community radio stations hardly know their audience and lack the methodological or material resources to

get to know them. He argues that rural radio has not been in practice as participatory as it is in principle and rhetoric and this has hindered fulfillment of its true potential. Globalization, access to training, quality equipment that are durable and easy to maintain, and legislative framework are among challenges that rural community radios face. Frequent audience research is a requirement for rural community radio since it helps the broadcaster to know the kind of audience the stations reach out to and adopt the programs to the aspiration and expectations of the listeners. Fardon and Furniss (2006) insist that lack of research has made the broadcasters address themselves to the potential public they imagine to share their own tastes and preoccupations.

The high rate of staff turnover may mean two things, either the station has done well in training volunteers to become good presenter or the volunteers are using the station as an avenue to pursue their careers then move to stations that pay them well. Mefalopulos (2008) points out that personnel shortage in the community radio and turnover of skilled staff and volunteers present a challenge. Staff and volunteers tend to migrate to better paying jobs in the commercial sector leading to continuous training of volunteers thereby costing the station a lot of money. Lush and Urugoiti (2012) suggest training of old members of the society; who are less likely to leave the station once they are trained so that they can run the station.

Howey (2005) has different views and he is concerned about competing interests of community radio that leads to demanding the station to address issues or concerns that are important to different people within the community. As a result, the scarce resources available to the organization for instance equipment, air-time, finances, personnel etc. become a site of intense struggle within and between competing groups. However continues to assert therefore that the strength that listener support brings to the community radio has the potential to undermine the station's ability to serve the disparate tastes and interests within community.

The CIMA report also revealed that lack of finance, inability to maintain equipment and other factors such as stations being unable to pay electricity bills, led to the closure of some stations. Although community radio is for the people and by people, Mefalopulos (2008) challenges this concept and argues that local news can at times be marginalized in favor of larger national news because of time or resources constraint whereby community broadcasters will just focus on general issues. Therefore community radio should give priority to local new/events especially those affecting the community

A seminar held in Nairobi in 2008 dubbed: *The Way forward for community radio in Kenya* revealed that there has been no consistent policy to encourage a vibrant sector. Some communities may want to own a station however they are not able to afford the license fee. The society has not been able to distinguish community radio from vernacular commercial radio stations due to lack of awareness. Community radio sustainability, lack of proper training and poor technology among other issues were discussed. Policies governing the station should address placement criteria where volunteers can sign a contract that will allow them to work for a certain period before they can leave the station.

Radio Mangelete, (RM)

Radio Mangeletewas established in 2004 and is currently facing stiff competition from Frequency Module (FM)stations broadcasting in the local kikamba language, the same as Radio Mangelete. The objectives of RM is to provide a platform for the community to engage in community development and to uplift their living standards, to promote community empowerment projects with a special focus on income generating activities for women and to enlighten the community on the local, national and international development issues. Just like any other community station, RM aims at achieving its goals by satisfying the community it serve. The station came up with strategic plan 2011-2015 to help the station achieves its goals. Plans can be laid down however what is important is the implementation of these plans.

Creation of awareness and sensitization of community for social change and transformation through listening groups is one away to reach out to the community. Mefalopulos (2008) maintained that good practice among community radio should be nonpartisan and nonsectarian and should be oriented to support the social development of the community they serve.

Radio Mangelete's strategic plan 2011-2015 emphasizes that the strategic considerations are the ways and means which can enable the station pursue all forms of sustainability without compromising its community development agenda. The mandate of community radio is to promote development at the grassroots by involving community members in seeking to bring about positive change in their living conditions and environment.

Radio Mangelete, in its strategic plan (2011-2015) identified challenges facing the station as follows: misunderstanding of the radio by the community, political interference, loss of staff to commercial stations, loss of audience as a result of competition from other media, mishandling of equipment by unqualified staffs and robbery, poor infrastructure, i.e. roads, insecurity, dissatisfied members, transition to digital transmission, internal and external conflicts. All these challenges affect social, institutional and financial sustainability

Sustainability of Rural Community Radio

Lush and Urgoiti (2012) defined sustainability as the ability to keep something going either continuously or for a

period of time. Being a nonprofit station, rural community radio should be in a position to operate on daily basis. Sustainability is the biggest challenge facing Rural Community Radio. Lush and Urgoiti (2012) emphasize that community broadcasters, in rich countries as well as poor, struggle to sustain themselves.Rural Community Radio sustainability issues entails social, institutional and financial sustainability. It is worthy to note that apart from management of staff and resources, and sourcing of funding for the sustainability of the community radio station, policy regarding its establishment and at times its mode of operation or guideline is also very important. Community participation that include developing of program content, giving feedback, volunteering, decision-making of various issues affecting the station enhance the aspect of ownership.

i. Social sustainability

Social sustainability refers to community ownership of the station and participation in the production and airing of programs at both decision-making and operational levels. Buckley (2011) on the other hand defined social sustainability as the relationship between media organization and the community or audience it serves. There is more to this than simply getting community members to use the equipment and to present programs. Community participation by member owning and controlling the station should be felt. Lush and Urgoiti (2012) adds that listeners seem to have more trust in stations that endeavor to be open and transparent, particularly when it comes to finances; and this transparency encourages these communities to support their station financially.

Mendel et al (2008) insist that support programs should recognize that social and other forms of sustainability are as important to the functioning and survival of community broadcast just like economic arrangement. Mendel et al (2008) insist that social based, authenticity and responsiveness of the station to its audience are crucial factors that are strengthened by interactive programing and accountable and participatory management structures.

ii. Institutional sustainability

Institutional sustainability as defined by Buckley (2011) is about structural arrangement for operational management and governance that include accountability to a sustainably constituted and representative governing body. This form of sustainability is influenced by the external environment, in particular the presence or absence of enabling laws, policies and regulations. Other than regulation, section 46 (I) of Information Communication Act 2009 urge community radio to be responsible by providing responsible and responsive programming that caters for the varied needs and susceptibilities of different sections of the Kenyan community.

Radio Mangelete strategic plan 2011-2015 identified the key stakeholder in the governance and management of the station. However, this cannot be successful when they are not actively involved.Stakeholdersshould operate under democratic policies that will ensure the representation of local people in decision-making. Lush and Urgoiti (2012) established that many existing boards appear to be holding back their stations by not providing the leadership needed and expected of them. Most boards are not involved in operational issues at all therefore communication between the board, staff and volunteers, and the community is generally poor and a source of tension

iii. Financial Sustainability

Rural community radio, just like any other organization requires financial sustainability to enhance daily operation of the station. Community radio seeks to build an economic model of sustainability in order to achieve success. Rural community radio has to meet financial ends by engaging in economic activities that can generate revenue (Buckley 2012, Lush &Urgoiti 2012, CIMA 2007 and Mefalopulos 2008). The income should be sufficient to cover the station's operational cost. As an enterprise which generates income, community radio makes savings. The savings are not profits and are not shared among community or the board members. Rather, they are ploughed back into its operations to grow and sustain the station or into other activities that serve the community.

Mefalopulos (2008) argues that financial sustainability of community radio lies in the directors' management skills. Donors and other external agencies have been offering help for development of community radio and most of these stations rely a lot on donor support. However Mendel et al (2008) warns that external donors usually end financial support within a few years and should not be considered a principal source of long-term assistance.Therefore rural community radio should find ways to sustain themselves when donors pull out. Findings of a study conducted by Pringle and Subba (2007) in Nepal, revealed that external donors reinforce traditional pattern of social dominance through their support. Overdependence on donor funding may result in culture imperialism affecting unique cultural values held by the community.

Although rural community radio stations need financial support, they should remain independent of the government, donors, advertisers or other institutions. The relationship with such institutions must be clear, transparent and ensure the non-partisan community-service nature of the radio station. In addition, sustainability of funding recipients should not be the primary objective of donor funding strategies and models should encourage financial sustainability in the long run. Lush and Urgoiti (2012) insist that financial sustainability is closely linked with the trust communities have in their broadcast. Therefore Rural Community radio stations are encouraged to practice transparency to the community they serve as well as the donor. Through the

management, the station should carefully design funding allocation strategies that should not distort the sector and not exclude community groups that may not necessarily fit into the legal definition of community radio but carry out such a mission.

Conceptual Framework

Rural Community radio station broadcast with the objective of reaching out to the community and address their needs by involving members of the community. The community should participate in all aspects of the community station, from establishment to management, AND administration to financing. Rural radio will provide unique accessibility for community members to contribute directly to address the community short- and long-term needs if all forms of sustainability are addressed. Therefore the study conceptualizes three important forms of sustainability of rural community radio. For rural community radio to become sustainable, the station has to succeed in all forms of sustainability. This will involve activities that will mobilize the right kind of resources.

Sustainability will involve ability of the station to perform through various activities put in place, flexibility especially by the changing needs of the community and good long-term plans by the management. Community involvement will bring about better understanding and clear differences between community radio and other vernacular commercial radio stations. However, participation aspect of rural community radio is not fully practiced since most of the rural community radio stations do not know their audience. Station governance and daily operation of the station will determine its success. Management is a determining factor of a rural community radio station impact and effectiveness. Good management will motivate staff and mobilize their attitude and approach to the work of the community radio.

Through the station management, they should encourage community participation in terms of time and money. On the other hand, the management should be aware of the interest the volunteers for instance might have in return for the support they give to the station. Some volunteers may want various benefits, like training, gaining status within the community or using the station as avenue for possible future jobs.

Policies governing Rural Community Radio should strengthen both internal and external relationship and support to enable the station fulfill its mandate of developing the society. This can be achieved by partnering with other organizations within the community as well as around the globe. However the station must remain independent and strictly perform its functions.

Financial sustainability of rural community radio can be achieved through mechanism put in place by the management to generate revenue. Income generation of Rural Community Radio should be continuous. Financial support is what most people including employees and volunteers of community radio refer to as sustainability. Both donors and community media workers are more concerned about financial sustainability, and even more specifically, financial self-sustainability. However the success of rural community radio is based on all forms of sustainability.

Donor funding has helped community radio but it is unreliable since it is usually short-term. Again, there is a high possibility of donor influence in activities of the community radio they fund. This is because the donor is more concerned with the prospect of creating dependency. Therefore rural community radio stations should plan for sustainability differently using the concepts of social, institutional and financial sustainability as a framework. Social and institutional sustainability if well addressed will influence financial sustainability positively.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted through a case study design aimed at seeking to describe a unit in details, in context and holistically. Case study according to Hancock &Algozzine (2006), helps the researcher to understand the situation under investigation from the participants and not researchers perspective. Also a case study design gave deeper insight and better understanding of the problem under study. There was full investigation of the research questions about the social, institutional, and financial sustainability of Radio Mangelete. The case study design allowed the research process of the context under investigation to take place in its natural setting. Also, the case study design allowed the use of multiple sources of evidence rather than relying on a single source alone to enhance data credibility (Yin 2011).

The population of this study wasthe people of Makueni County, Kibwezi Sub-County. However it was not possible to reach out to the entire population of Kibwezi and therefore the study settled for a sample. The individual in-depth interviews of twenty three representatives and two focused group discussions of five people per group responded. A sample was drawn from the community members who are the audience, Radio Mangelete management team, employees, Volunteers, donors, Community leaders and scholars/media consultant.

This study used interviews, focused group discussions and observation. In-depth interviews were conducted and an interview guide as a tool was used to gather information. Open ended questions were used to collect detailed

information. Focused group discussions on the other hand provided the required information and perception of the listeners within a short time.

The information was obtained from the primary source through face-face interviews. Face-to-face interviews enabled the researcher to probe further and at the same time observe body language of responded. Some of the answers were recorded while others were noted down. On the other hand, Focused group discussions were recorded.Raw data was stored and recorded interviews and focused group discussions were transcribed and stored as well. Thematic analysis was used to analyze data. Coding system was developed based on collected data.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE STUDY
Source of Finance for rural community radio
Donors supportbeing the main source of income, there are other sources of revenue for Radio Mangelete like: advertisement, program sponsorship, donations, grants, fundraising, selling of greeting cards among others. On-air adverts as well as recorded adverts run by the station especially at prime time earn the station income. Grants from County government, and individuals also recognized as friends of RM, organized events sometimes by the station or in concert with advertising partners generate income for the station. The station hass however, not receiving funds from donors since the beginning of 2015.

Advertisements
Business owners and the local people within the community advertise their product through RM earning the station revenue for instance Mwireri Business organizationadvertise its products through RM. On-air advertisements are common during breakfast show making up revenue for RM. Organizations like Safaricom, institutions like schools and churches and Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) advertise through RM. However adverts from IEBC are only common during the election period.Small businesses like barbershops, dry-cleaners hardware's etc. who wish to reach the audience with messages about their products or services advertise through RM. Announcements from County Government, Constituency Development Funds (CDF) also generate income for RM. Therefore the researcher concluded that the community advertises their product at RM.

Sponsorship-Donations and Grants
Rural Community Radio sponsorship is through donations, grants and well-wishers. For instance RM receives grants from its County Government to help support various projects run by the station. The Catholic Diocese of Machakos for instance has been sponsoring religious programs aired at the station. *"We have friends who always support us when we call for help"* Africa Medical Research and Education Foundation (AMREF) has been sponsoring health programs although they are not very active for now. World vision on the other hand has been sponsoring programs sensitizing the community about children rights however they are not doing it this year since there was no budget allocated to it.

The study also revealed that agricultural and health programs as being programs that attractsponsors. "Programs educating the society about good farming methods attract sponsorship" Live programs especially for big events happening within the community also generate income for the station. Well-wishers within the community and other areas support the station financially through individual contributions. Leasing land to Safaricom, who have their booster erected on RM land, also generate revenue for the station. Therefore the researcher concluded that RM gets financial support from the community.

Partners like Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) have contributed towards building sustainable relationship with the community bordering Tsavo West National Park through outreach programs aired on RM. Therefore KWS is ranked as one of RM friends who support the station when in need.

Fundraising
The study established other means used by the station to generate income. They are follows: fund-raising events organized by the station generate income; RM also organizes events in collaboration with celebrities, for instance Mangelete Night to generate income. The station also generates revenue through ticket sales and merchandising. In addition, such events aim at attracting new audiences as well as new advertiser. *"Radio Mangelete fans support us by paying gate fee to access entry to our events"* Sometimes the station organize for road shows which also aim at generating revenue.

The station also gets income through the introduction of computer classes where form four leavers are taught computer packages. They offer internship to students at a fee of KES 2000 per month for three months. *"Sometimes we do Road Shows and by doing so we sell our services to the audience"*Mangelete Community Integrated Development Project (MCIDP) members sometimes contribute towards boosting finance for the station. Some of respondents indicated that introduction of promotions like 'Nzau' promotion helped the station

to generate income. (Nzau means cow in Kamba language whereby the station used the promotion to raise funds by encouraging listener to participate and win a price in this case a cow)

Sale of Greeting Cards

Other than advertisement and program sponsorship, other sources of income for RM are selling of greeting cards, funeral announcement, call-in and text message. However, the station is not able to reach out to many people because of the following reasons: limited allocated coverage is a limiting factor for the station to reach out to many people, the station transmitter is not strong enough to allow them cover the allocated region. They lack standby generator forcing them to go off-air when there is no power.

As an organization, they have financial plans to help solve financial problems but these plans are not implemented due to lack finance. Therefore the researcher concluded that RM is facing financial sustainability affecting its performance. Poor performance is an indicator that RM is likely to lose its audience to commercial vernacular broadcasters. According to (Buckley 2012, Lush &Urgoiti 2012, CIMA (2007) and Mefalopulos(2008), financial income should be sufficient to cover the station's operational cost. However this is not the case as RM's income is low. Osiochru et al (2008) emphasize that financial sustainability for community radio is the ability to secure contributions from its own community.

Handling financial constraints

RM involved Community leaders and County leaders on matters finance. For instance, one respondent said, *"We involve County Reps to strategize how we can solve our financial issues"*.Sometimes the management team strategizes on the way forward for example seeking help from national and county government, business people among others. They also borrow from the bank. One respondent said, *"This year we borrowed from K-REP Bank to purchase a transmitter"*. In addition, payment of employees is not on a monthly basis; sometimes it is by installments and the budget is done depending on the cash available. To solve employees' delayed payment, the audience and well-wishers were requested to help solve the problem through fundraising. A key respondent indicated, *"Some two months ago, RM asked us to contribute some cash for house rent for employees"*.

Plans to enhance self-sustainability

The study concluded that there are possible ways to enhance self-sustainability although most of plans are not implemented due to sustainability challenges within the organization. RM is concerned about the few adverts they are receiving. As an organization, they have financial plans to help solve financial problems but these plans are not implemented due to lack of finance. Due to financial problems, employees are poorly paid and also payment is not on time. This contributes to low work moralethereby interfering with their performance. In addition, the station is not able to retain employees for lack of finance. For this reason, commercial vernacular speaking radio stations get their employees from RM. A respondent said, *"I used to send SMS and even call the station but now I am not doing it because my favorite presenter who used to air the program left the station"*.

Institutional sustainability challenges are due to lack of professionalism amongst the management team. *"The station needs people with knowledge, who understand leadership to head this station"* Some of the community members want new owners. *"Those women groups should not lead since they are not well knowledgeable in leadership skills" said responded.*

On social challengesthe station is no longer reaching out to its audience to seek opinion. "Like there was a time when they came to where I was working and asked questions concerning the station; but nowadays we don't see them"The study concluded that RM does not involve the audience in their activities.

Radio Mangelete sustainability

The study concluded that Radio Mangelete is not able to sustain itself as of now. The reasons are as follows: the station lacks quality management which has resulted to donors pulling out due to lack of accountability. *"The station lacks clearly defined roles that are overlapped within the management team leading to wrangles"* Poor management is as a result of illiteracy level within the management team. They lack quality staff and quality programs since they are not able to pay their employees well, resulting to employees opting for better pay in commercial vernacular broadcasting stations.

The station is struggling especially when donors pulled out clearly indicating that there was overdependence on donor support. Mefalopulos (2008) argues that financial sustainability of community radio lies on its directors' management skills. Also wrangles' being experienced within the management are affecting the station. The MCIDP group lacks other income generating activities to supplement donor support.The following are some of the comments given concerning self-sustainability of rural community radio in Kenya. They are:-there is need to increase coverage in order to reach to a wide audience. *"Coverage is very small and within covered area there are few established business persons who can advertise their products with us"* therefore there is need for a wider coverage. Community Radio should find ways to generate revenue. Therefore there should be a change of mindset and engagement in income generating activities rather than relying on

handout. *"There is need to seek advice from community radio expert since this is a unique anda good initiative for women like them"* Generating revenue is a challenge to community radio stations since the stations cannot compete with commercial station.

Addressing Community needs
The use of the local language established a good relationship with the community since they get informed, however there is concern that the station is not reaching out to the entire community due to lack of finances. They have programs that address the needs of the community. The station also helps community to look for market for goods boosting their business. The study also revealed that the station has been used to solve conflict between human and wildlife.Computer classes offered by the station are well received by the community since most form four leavers are engaged reducing chances of them participating in unwanted behavior. Some work at the station as volunteers learning new skills before they join higher learning institutions.

Some of the community members work with the station at a certain level for instance issues to do with theft in the community or if there is something that they want the community to know *"Through the station we address the changes that we want to take effect in our group, for instance when we want to increase the amount in our table banking"*. Some want to empower women therefore they use the station to teach women ways of generating income without depending on their husbands for help.

Community involvement in content development of programs
The researcher concluded that the community is not involved in content development of various programs aired on the station**.** The station lacks funds thereby not reaching out to its audience. In addition, the community is not represented in the management of the station.

Rural Community Radio Staffing
RCR staffs are not well paid because community radio stations do not have money to pay staff and as a result, they retain poorly skilled staff hence poor content development as well as copying of what private stations are doing. Due to poor skills, they are not able to create relevant programs for the community. RCR depends on sponsorship or the very little revenue generated through advertisements therefore poorly paid employees are exposed to hand outs from leaders who may want favors in return. Volunteers, on the other hand are not trained. *"Volunteers without skills may be passing time so it doesn't matter for them whether they have impact or not"* Lack of motivation has affected volunteers' performance. Some of the volunteers enjoy working for community radio stations because most of them are either students hoping to gain experience and later move to other organizations, or researchers doing some kind of study. Training of RCR staff happens however there is high employees turn over affecting the stations' performance. On the other hand organizations like KCOMNET, EACOMNET and UNESCO offer a series of training of staff and management of community radio station.

Policies and regulation of rural community radio
There are policies put in place to regulate RCR as well as board members. However some employees have neglected the rules and therefore they do not practice self-regulation.*"RCR is bound by law (constitution) however, this is not followed because they are not exposed to it"* In addition, other than the state laws, the station has its constitution. *"We have a constitution, laid down policies that govern the station"*

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Summary
Regarding the source of finance for rural community radio; advertisements, program sponsorship, donations, grant's, fundraising and well-wishers are the means RM uses to generate income. The study found out that the community advertises through RM. Through the program sponsorshipand grants,RM generates income. Well-wishers within the community and other areas support the station financially through individual contributions, live events among others.

Fundraising events, roads shows, ticket sales and merchandising, greeting cards,call-ins and smsare other means that generate revenues for the station. However the study revealed that although the station is engaging in income generating activities, the income is low and therefore the station is not able to sustain itself. In addition, the little income is not well distributed due to poor management skills.

The station is not reaching many people within the allocated area due to poor equipment. For instance they lack a standby generator, they have a low quality transmitter thereby affecting their transmission.

To address financial constraints, the station involves the community leaders, business people among others to strategize the way forward. However the audience is left out affecting social contribution towards self-sustainability.

Regarding plans to enhance self-sustainability, findings concluded that there are no plans to enhance its

self-sustainability. Other than programs, RM is working on other means to improve sustainability for instance, approaching sponsors/partners by writing proposal, request for wider coverage to reach a bigger audience.

RM is facing a lot of challenges due to poor management skills as revealed by the study. Wrangles being experienced within the management team are a contributing factor towards poor performance of the station. The station lacks clearly defined roles that are overlapped within the management team leading to wrangles. Poor management is as a result of illiteracy level within the management team. They lack quality staff and quality programs since they are not able to pay their employees well, resulting to employees opting for better pay in commercial vernacular broadcasting stations.

The study concluded that RM does not involve its audience in their activities. Also the station is not able to sustain itself. The use of the local language informs everyone within the region, they make the community aware of issues affecting them establishing good relation. The station also helps the community to look for markets for its goods boosting their business. The station has been used to solve conflict between human and wildlife. The introduction of computer classes at the station are well received by the community since most of form four leavers are engaged reducing chances of them participating in unwanted behavior. Some work at the station as volunteers learning new skills before they join higher learning institutions. Some Community members work with RM at a certain level for instance issues to do with theft in the community or if there is something they want the community to know.

The study revealed that majority of employees are not trained journalists and are inadequate i.e. both journalist and technician. They are not well paid because community radio stations do not have money to pay staff and as a result, they retain poorly skilled staff hence poor content development as well as copying what private stations are doing. Due to poor skills, they are not able to create relevant programs for the community. Volunteers on the other hand, without skills may be passing time so it doesn't matter for them whether they have an impact or not. Lack of motivation has affected their performance.

On the issue of policies and regulation of rural community the study revealed that there are rules guiding RCR activities, however they are followed because majority of the employees are not exposed to them. Some of the RCR employees are overstepping their boundaries out of negligence.

On the issue of training of staff and volunteers the study revealed that most of the staff and volunteers are being trained. They are trained by organizations like UNESCO. They offer training to both employees and volunteer, however this is not frequent now.

5.3 Conclusion

Findings from the study concluded that RM's source of income is from advertisement, program sponsorship, donations, grants, fundraising well-wishers, fundraising, entertainment, road shows, and sale of greeting cards.

The station also earns income from live broadcasts especially for events happening in the society. Other than that, the study also revealed that RM has a very active audience who call-in or send messages thus contributing towards financial sustainability. It is clear that RM is not able to sustain itself even though the station is engaging in income generating activities. It is a challenge for RM to broadcast to the allocated area due to poor equipment yet there is need for more coverage allocation from the authority. The station depended more on donors as shown by the struggle being experienced after donors pull out.

RM has measures put in place to enhance self-sustainability by involving community and County leaders. However, the community is left out in such activities emphasizing lack of ownership by the community. Strong community support is fading since the community feels excluded. On the other hand, scarce resources available could be the cause of struggle at RM. The station borrows from the bank to solve financial issues facing them. Other activities directed towards financial sustainability include: payment for adverts and proposal writing.

The study concluded that there are plans to enhance self-sustainability however; most of the plans are not implemented. Sustainability challenges of RM are due to poor management skills, lack of qualified staff and lack of quality programs affecting the performance of the station. Due to poor remuneration, journalists opt for better pay in commercial vernacular stations. RM is not reaching out to its audience to seek opinion regarding programs development. In addition, the community is not involved in decision making of the station activities. The study concluded that Radio Mangelete is not able to sustain itself. This is because of lack of accountability by those responsible scaring away donor as well as potential donor.

Study concluded that there are policies and regulations guiding RCR activities however they are not followed since majority of the staff/volunteers are not exposed to it. Failed responsibilities out of ignorance may result to harmful consequences. For this reason, journalistic values should always be observed regardless of the type of the station one is working for. In addition, journalistic value affects content development as well as the credibility of the journalist.

5.4 Recommendation

In line with the findings and conclusion of the study, the researcher made the following recommendations: There is need to improve on financial generating activities of the rural community radio. This can be achieved through good management. There is need for RM to reach out and involve the community especially now that audience is almost losing hope. There is need to improve on management skills, since the study revealed that there is lack of professionalism in the management team. There is need to improve in the understanding techniques in deficiency of programs. There is need to identify the needs of the community and address them because needs are different depending on where the station is located or the outreach.

There is need to improve on policies and regulation of rural community radio in Kenya, like regulating board of governors of rural community radio professionalism. There is need for Communication Authority of Kenya (CAK) to ensure that rules and regulations are followed and also the station itself to ensure that the constitutions (board and national) are respected by doing what is required as stipulated by the law. Staff and volunteers should be taught about media ethics. There is need for more media institutions to help in training of community radio staff and volunteer.

There is need for Radio Mangelete to partner with training institutions to help in training of its staff and volunteers on content development. Finally there is need for National Government to help RM solve leadership wrangle since the County Government of Makueni is also in wrangles.

Sustainability challenges of RCR in Kenya can be investigated further by comparing world's community radio stations that are doing well and learn from them.

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