

Monitoring the development of community radio: A comprehensive bibliometric analysis (2000–2024)

Amit Verma¹,

Manipal University Jaipur

Preeti Singh,

Sharda University

Abhishika Sharma,

Manipal University Jaipur

Tanu Dang,

Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, New Delhi

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Abstract

In order to promote cultural variety, encourage local involvement, and provide a voice to underrepresented groups, community radio stations (CRS) have become essential venues. Using information from 339 publications in the English language indexed in the Scopus database between 2000 and 2024, this bibliometric analysis attempts to map the research landscape on CRS methodically over the previous 20 years. This timeframe was chosen to capture significant developments in community radio stations, including policy shifts, technological advancements, and the rise of CRS movements in regions like South Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The analysis pinpoints important patterns in the field's publication output, research hotspots, significant writers, and foundational publications. The data shows a consistent rise in scholarly interest, especially concerning the contribution of CRS to media democratization, community empowerment, and social transformation. A thematic analysis reveals recurrent research themes, such as CRS's role as an alternative medium, how it affects local development, and the difficulties it faces in maintaining operations. Citation analysis reveals patterns of scholarly collaboration by highlighting the

¹ Corresponding author:

Amit Verma, Manipal University Jaipur.

E-mail: amitve4@gmail.com

most significant publications and the growth of research networks. This study highlights how CRS has influenced the media environment and how they might support community-based projects. This work advances theoretical knowledge of CRS's development and continued significance by thoroughly analyzing the scholarly discourse on the subject.

Keywords

Community radio stations, bibliometric analysis, media democratization, social change, marginalized voices, community empowerment.

Introduction

In the past few decades, community radio has become a potent vehicle for grassroots communication, local empowerment, and social transformation (Howley, 2005). According to Pavarala and Malik (2007), community radio stations have been essential in amplifying the voices of marginalized individuals, conserving cultural heritage, and promoting democratic discourse. They prioritize community engagement and focus on topics distinctive to one's community. Community radio has evolved from its early experimental beginnings to become a recognized and regulated sector in many national media landscapes; this growth indicates broader changes in the paradigms of participatory development, media democratization, and technology accessibility (Gordon, 2012). Dugin (2024) suggests that a study of how media communication and journalism have changed over time shows that computing and digital, as well as information and communication, are impacting the growth of modern media communication and journalism theory.

The origins of community radio may be found in the middle of the 20th century when pioneers first appeared in the US, Bolivia, and Colombia (Girard, 2001). These early community-based broadcasting projects established the foundation for a worldwide movement that now includes thousands of stations in a wide range of cultural, political, and economic situations (AMARC, 2007). Several factors have contributed to the rise of community radio, such as the acknowledgement of the right to free speech, the democratization of media, and the expansion of accessible and reasonably priced broadcasting technologies (Rennie, 2006).

Academic interest in this topic has increased dramatically along with the maturity of the community radio sector. Numerous academic fields, such as media studies, sociology, anthropology, and development communication, have produced a wealth of literature delving into community radio's possibilities,

difficulties, and effects (Rodríguez, 2020). This interdisciplinary approach has produced insightful information about how community radio might support political engagement, social inclusion, and cultural expression (Carpentier et al., 2003).

Nevertheless, a thorough assessment of community radio studies research is still required, even with the growing interest from academics. A study of this kind can offer insightful information about the changing areas of emphasis, methodology, and theoretical frameworks that have influenced how we view this dynamic topic (Jankowski, 2002). A thorough literature review can also pinpoint knowledge gaps and recommend exciting new lines of inquiry for future studies.

Community radio has faced opportunities and challenges due to the rapid technological advancements over the last twenty years. Community radio stations can now interact and reach a wider audience using digital broadcasting, internet streaming, and mobile technologies, allowing them to reach listeners outside their specific locations (Scifo, 2015). In addition, these technological changes have sparked concerns about whether traditional FM broadcasting will remain viable and if community radio can continue to focus on the local community in an increasingly globalized media landscape (Moyo, 2013).

Legislative and regulatory frameworks have significantly influenced the evolution of community radio. In many nations, community broadcasting's acceptance as a separate media tier alongside public and commercial media has been a major turning point (Buckley et al., 2008). However, implementing supportive policies and allocating broadcasting frequencies to neighbourhood projects is challenging in many situations (Pavarala, & Malik, 2007). Evaluating community radio's existing and future possibilities requires understanding the interactions between regulatory contexts and the sector's growth.

A major issue in a large portion of the material now in publication is the effect of community radio on social development and community empowerment. Several case studies have shown how community radio can help with health awareness campaigns, education programs, and disaster planning and response (Myers, 2011). Reaching underprivileged and illiterate communities has proven to be very successful for the media because of its capacity to transmit in regional tongues and handle challenges unique to specific cultures (Jallof, 2012). Longitudinal research and creative methodological techniques are necessary to fully assess the long-term social benefits of community radio, which is still a difficult task.

Another crucial area of investigation has become the sustainability of community radio stations. As opposed to their commercial counterparts,

community broadcasters frequently depend primarily on volunteer efforts and have little funding (Lush, & Urgoiti, 2012). Building organizational capability, creating sustainable funding models, and sustaining community participation over time are ongoing issues that many stations encounter (Fairbairn, 2009). The sector's sustained expansion and significance depend on investigating effective ways to achieve sustainability and the elements contributing to community radio ventures' longevity.

Scholars have also examined the connection between more significant social movements and community radio. Community radio stations have frequently sprung from and been closely associated with grassroots associations, social justice initiatives, and fights for the rights of indigenous people (Rodríguez, 2011). Because of this relationship, community radio can now be an advocacy vehicle and inspire group action. Studying how community broadcasting and social movements interact dynamically can shed light on how participatory media functions in social change and political transformation processes (Downing, 2000).

New research areas are emerging as the community radio sector continues to change. There are now more opportunities for audience involvement and content creation thanks to combining digital technologies and social media platforms with conventional broadcasting methods (Gaynor, & O'Brien, 2017). Community radio's ability to help peace-building initiatives in conflict-affected areas and facilitate reconciliation in post-conflict communities is becoming more widely acknowledged (Brisset-Foucault, 2011). Furthermore, research is increasingly focussing on the function of community radio in tackling global issues like sustainable development and climate change (Bassar, 2022; Abdulai, 2021; Harvey, 2011). Dunas et al (2024) suggest that online communities under examination serve as a platform for Russians from Generation Z, also known as "digital youth", to connect. While not always typical of Russian culture, the traditional spiritual values of the Russian people contribute to this idea of shared similarities.

A thorough bibliometric examination of the state of community radio studies research is the goal of the present work. Researchers aim to map the intellectual structure of the discipline and identify important areas of scholarly attention by looking at publication trends, citation patterns, and topic clusters within the literature. This report will provide an overview of community radio research today and highlight any knowledge gaps and new trends that may be developing. Using this systematic review, we intend to add to a more sophisticated comprehension of community radio's development as a practice and a topic of

scholarly study. This study will include insights into methodological approaches, theoretical frameworks, and the evolution of research issues in community radio studies in the following parts. This analysis also discusses how these trends affect potential future avenues for research and policy issues. This paper is a valuable resource for academics, practitioners, and policymakers involved in community radio's continuous development and research by combining insights from many disciplinary perspectives and geographic locations.

Literature review

The past few decades have seen a major evolution in the study of community radio, spanning a broad spectrum of theoretical perspectives and empirical investigations. This literature overview emphasizes the various viewpoints that add to our comprehension of the function and significance of community radio by focusing on major topics that have surfaced in current research. Many people in any country share a common language, history, culture, and traditions, and the media plays a crucial role in safeguarding this group. Information security puts into action the idea of national security when people's lives are at risk. It implies the suppression of freedom of speech, respect for diverse viewpoints, and open discussions (Vartanova et al, 2023).

Participatory communication and empowerment

The ability of community radio research to promote democratic communication and strengthen local communities is one of its central tenets. Academics have investigated how community radio stations function as venues for civic involvement and democratic participation (Atton, 2015; Tacchi, 2003). Research has demonstrated that community radio can improve social capital and encourage group action on neighbourhood problems (Mhagama, 2015; Oso, 2011). In this regard, voice has been a fundamental concept. Scholars have studied how marginalized groups can express themselves and shape public opinion through community radio (Couldry, 2010; Pettit et al., 2009). This feature of community radio has proven particularly significant in situations where the mainstream media falls short of fairly representing a range of viewpoints.

Cultural preservation and identity formation

The importance of community radio in maintaining cultural legacy and promoting identity development is another recurring issue in the literature. Studies (Meadows et al, 2002; Pietikäinen, 2008) have shown how indigenous

groups use radio to preserve language vitality and convey traditional knowledge. Other investigations have examined how diaspora communities use community radio to stay in touch with their cultural heritage and manage their hybrid identities in new social settings (Georgiou, 2005; Moylan, 2013). The local media in Antalya, along with the government, want to help improve relations between Turkey and Russia from the point of view of the tourism business. This point of view needs to be more practical than emotional (Atabek, & Atabek, 2023).

Technological adaptation and convergence

Research on the effects of digital technology on community radio has been expanding. According to Dunaway (2014) and Gazi et al (2011), researchers have looked into how community broadcasters adjust to the digital age by integrating social media, podcasting, and internet streaming into their daily operations. Studies have examined how mobile technology might improve listener engagement and increase community radio's reach (Moyo, 2013; Willems, 2013). However, studies have also brought attention to the problems caused by the digital divide and the necessity for community radio to strike a balance between technological innovation and accessibility for a range of listeners (Mudhai, 2011; Pavarala, 2007).

Policy and regulatory frameworks

One of the most important research areas has been the regulatory environment for community radio, where scholars have looked at how legislative frameworks affect the industry's growth. Comparative studies have examined how various national regulatory frameworks affect community radio's expansion and long-term viability (Buckley, 2011; Siemering, & Fairbairn, 2007). Research has also examined community broadcasters' licensing and spectrum allocation difficulties, especially in areas where state and commercial media predominate the airways (Ali, 2012; Ramos et al., 2009). Media and information education is crucial in this digital age, mainly because individuals are increasingly susceptible to the impact of fake news, hate speech, and other digital threats. A new generation of technology-savvy individuals is emerging in Egypt. As broadband speeds improve and more ICTs become available, more Egyptians can go online (Jamil, & Alazrak, 2023).

Sustainability and organizational dynamics

There is a growing corpus of scholarship on funding strategies, organizational

structures, and volunteer management, all of which highlight how important it is to keep community radio stations sustainable. Scholars have investigated novel strategies for achieving financial sustainability, such as hybrid models that integrate several revenue streams (Pettit, Salazar, & Dagon, 2009; Lush, & Urgoiti, 2012). The internal workings of community radio stations have also been studied (Foxwell et al, 2017; Gordon, 2015). Topics covered include governance, decision-making procedures, and balancing professionalization and community involvement.

Practical frameworks for evaluating CRS's long-term community impact

One noteworthy case study is the community radio station Radio La Voz de Nandayure in Costa Rica, which caters to rural and indigenous communities. The station has been instrumental in fostering cultural identity and local growth over the years and offering vital information on health, education, and local government. Through implementing participatory programs, the radio station improved local advocacy for social and environmental issues and supported community-led decision-making. The station's impact was especially evident during a drought crisis, when it served as a vital informational resource on water conservation and relief initiatives, resulting in noticeable increases in community collaboration and resilience (Monge, 2017).

In a different instance, the Kachin Development Networking Group (KNG) in Myanmar used a community radio platform to deliver vital news and educational information, particularly to isolated ethnic populations who were marginalized. KNG's radio station promoted social inclusion and gave local voices more clout by reaching groups usually shut out of mainstream media. Because of their broadcasts, which addressed issues like health awareness, ethnic rights, and education for girls, local literacy rates rose, and the population became more knowledgeable about local governance (Grove, 2020).

Radio Nzé in Gabon is another example of how community radio may be used to promote indigenous cultural rebirth. By incorporating cultural history into contemporary media formats, the radio station started educational programs targeting youth to conserve regional customs and languages. Over ten years, these initiatives have generated a renewed interest in Gabonese music and folklore, which has led to the preservation of indigenous knowledge and a resurgence of local pride. Participatory radio programming allowed the community to integrate cultural traditions into the broader socio-economic framework while preserving them (Ngoma, 2018).

The Voice of Kalangala community radio station in Uganda is another noteworthy example. It has played a significant role in advancing women's

rights and providing agricultural expertise to rural areas. Voice of Kalangala was instrumental in improving the socio-economic status of women in the area by airing programs that addressed issues such as women's health, legal rights, and economic autonomy. Gender equality and local government significantly improved because it became a crucial forum for rural women to express their experiences and fight for their rights (Nabulo, & Nakibuuka, 2020).

Impact assessment and evaluation

Researchers have continuously faced the difficulty of creating sound approaches for evaluating the impact of community radio. Although case studies have yielded significant insights into certain circumstances, there is an increasing focus on creating more methodical evaluation techniques (Jallov, 2012; Lennie, & Tacchi, 2013). According to some academics (Pavarala, & Malik, 2008; Van Vuuren, 2006), participatory evaluation frameworks can capture outcomes that traditional measures could miss and align with the philosophy of community media.

Emerging research directions

Novel facets of community radio have been the subject of recent literature (Ong'ong'a, 2024; Abdulai, 2021; Shivakoti, 2021). These facets include the medium's application to environmental communication and climate change adaptation. Notably, post-conflict countries have shown a special interest in the possibilities of community radio in conflict resolution and peace-building processes (Brisset-Foucault, 2011; Olorunnisola, 2002). In addition, the relationship between community radio and larger media ecosystems and information networks is becoming more productive as scholars look into how community broadcasters function in and contribute to increasingly complex media environments (Malik, 2015; Rodríguez et al., 2014). Personal commitment to an idea or attitude is crucial to Defense Motivation. Researchers have identified several factors contributing to motivated skepticism, including confirmation bias, disconfirmation bias, the previous attitude effect, attitude polarization, and a sophistication effect (Pandey, 2023).

These literary works demonstrate the extensive and varied knowledge surrounding community radio. Although much progress has been made in understanding different facets of this medium, there are still plenty of prospects for additional research to expand our understanding and address new problems in the field.

Method

The bibliometric analysis method was applied to comprehend the present status of community radio research. To find patterns and trends in the literature, bibliographic data, such as publication records, are analyzed and interpreted using the bibliometric assessment method (Moed, 2005). We selected this method to determine the most researched subjects, the most productive nations/organizations, and the most cited literature.

The Scopus database, popular among bibliometric researchers, was used for the analysis. The search used the terms “community radio broadcasting” and “community radio” to be restricted to papers released between 2000 and 2024. The 20 years (2000–2024) were chosen to capture the pivotal changes in community radio driven by digital transformation, evolving regulatory frameworks, and its growing role in socio-political advocacy. Starting from 2000, when digital broadcasting began to expand, it allowed for a clear view of how community radio adapted to technological shifts, gained policy recognition, and became a tool for social empowerment and local governance. This timeframe thus encapsulates key trends that define community radio’s modern evolution and impact.

A total of 339 articles from the search results were used in the analysis. Utilizing the Biblioshiny program, which is popular among bibliometric researchers, the bibliometric analysis was carried out. To illustrate the connections between the terms and phrases used in the articles, the program was utilized to generate visualizations like co-word maps. Along with identifying the most referenced publications, the software was also utilized to identify the top productive countries/institutions.

A keyword analysis determined the subjects most often researched on community radio. Keywords were retrieved using Biblioshiny, and the keyword analysis was based on the abstracts and titles of the publications. The frequency of various subjects was then computed after the keywords were divided into groups. A productivity analysis was carried out to determine which countries/institutions fell under this research topic. The productivity analysis computed the number of publications for each nation or institution based on the authors’ affiliations.

A citation analysis was conducted to determine which articles in the field were the most cited. The citation analysis was conducted based on the articles’ total citations. Based on the quantity of citations, articles were ranked. Understanding the most influential articles in the field of community radio research is possible through the findings of the citation analysis. The study’s approach is intended

to offer a thorough grasp of the present status of community radio research. This research aims to identify the major areas of research, productive nations/institutions, and significant articles in the field of community radio through an established database and bibliometric analysis software, as well as a comprehensive search strategy incorporating particular keywords and a time constraint (*Table 1*).

Table 1

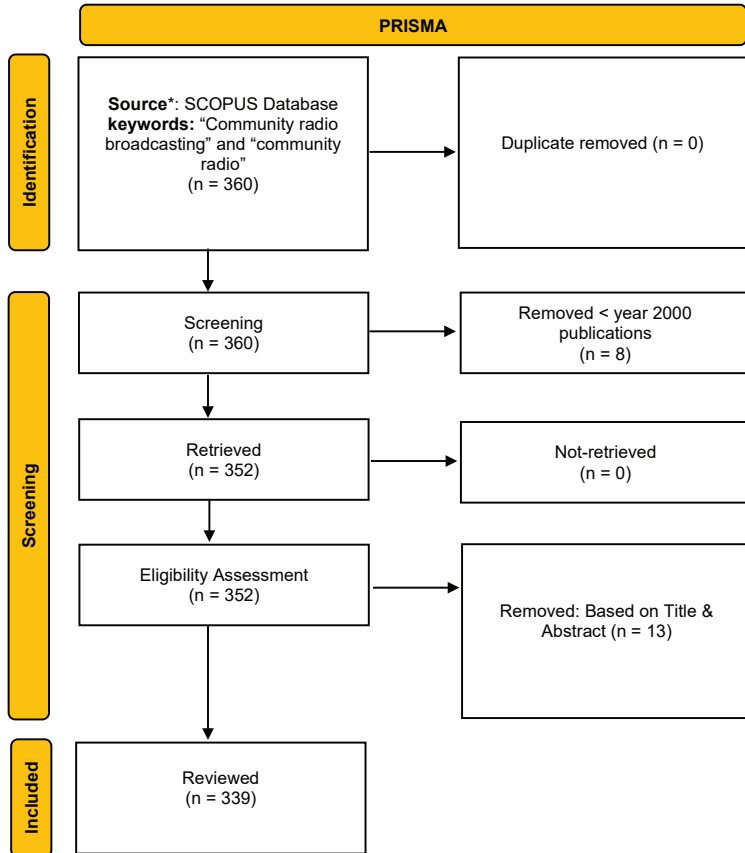
Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Time period	2000–2024	Studies before 2000 or after 2024
Language	English, with consideration for regional publications, if relevant	Non-English without translations
Document type	Research articles, reviews, and conference papers	Editorials, book reviews, commentaries, and non-research items
Subject area	Focus on community radio, media studies, and communication	Studies unrelated to media or communication
Geographical scope	Global, with emphasis on community radio in various regions	Studies focused solely on commercial or government radio
Data source	Indexed in databases (mainly Scopus).	Non-indexed publications or inaccessible sources
Relevance to topic	Directly related to community radio progression or impact analysis	Peripheral mention of community radio without focus

Below is a PRISMA diagram that explains the research process (*Figure 1*).

Figure 1

PRISMA for search selection of articles for bibliometric analysis



Results

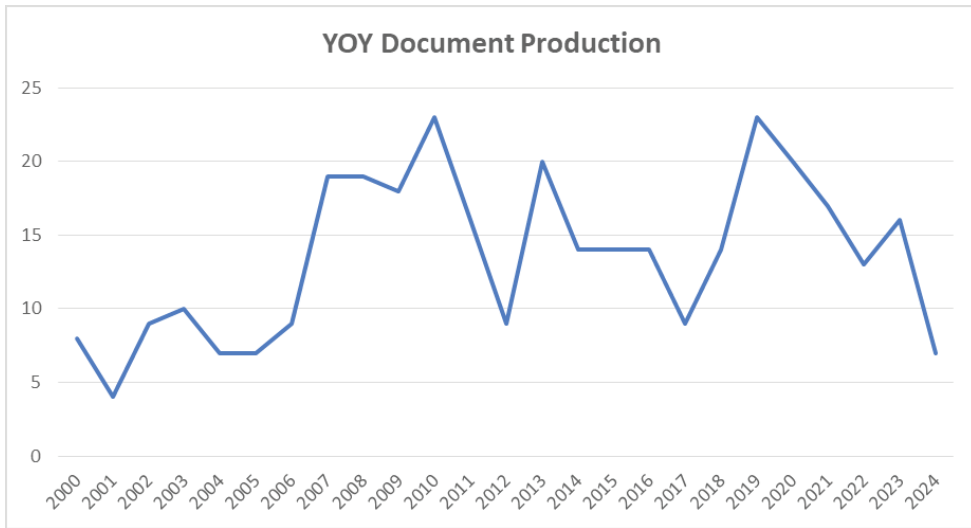
Annual document distribution

Between 2000 and 2024, there have been a variety of trends in the number of publications (Figure 2) that concentrate on community radio stations. The early 2000s saw varying levels of attention, peaking in 2007 with the publication of 19 articles, signalling a rising understanding of community radio's significance. Twenty-three articles were published in 2010 and 2019, the two peaks of this trend that show the ongoing scholarly interest in the topic. A steady number of publications was noted between 2011 and 2018, with some variations. There has been a minor fall in recent years, with 2024 exhibiting a considerable

decline to seven articles. This loss may indicate a change in the research focus or other influencing variables that impact the publication trends in this field. The evidence demonstrates an evolving pattern of focus shifts and instances of heightened scholarly contribution with community radio stations over time.

Figure 2

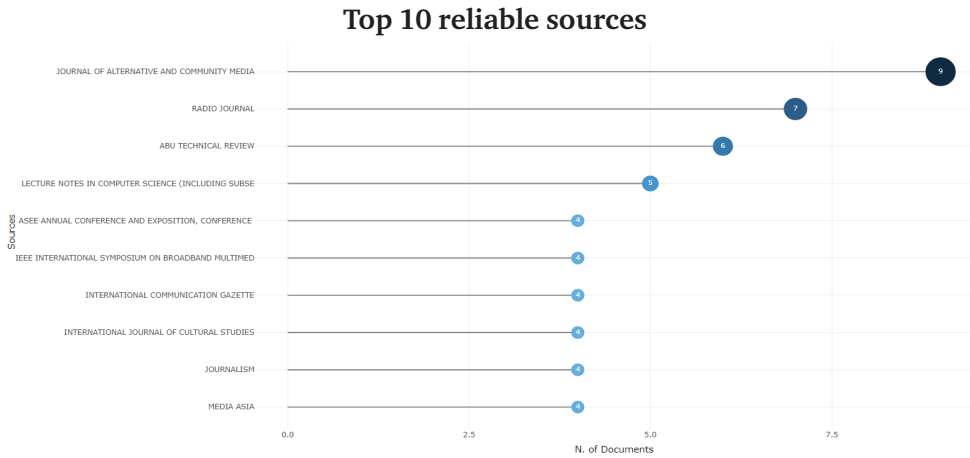
Annual document distribution



Top 10 reliable sources

As shown in Figure 3, out of all the publications on community radio stations, *Journal of Alternative and Community Media* stands out as the most authoritative source (with nine publications). *ABU Technical Review* has six articles, and *Radio Journal* has seven articles that trail closely behind. These sites are probably important forums for discussing different facets of community media, like how community radio affects social change, local development, and media democratization. These publications' prominence in influencing scholarly debate and expanding knowledge in community radio studies is demonstrated by the numerous articles published.

Figure 3



Top 10 most reliable authors

With six publications, Backhaus B. is the most referenced author on community radio studies (Table 2, Figure 4), according to the fractionalized count of articles. Closely behind with four articles apiece are Anderson H., Bedford C., and Meadows M. These authors, who most likely studied community radio’s function in media democratization, local empowerment, and social engagement, have made important contributions to the academic literature. Their work sheds light on important problems and trends in the community radio industry, highlighting their impact in promoting knowledge and influencing the conversation in this niche of media studies.

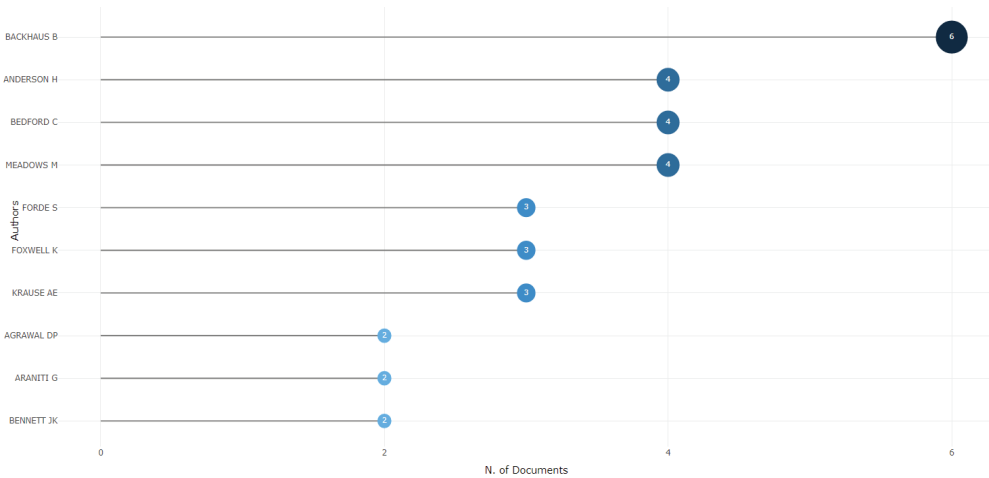
Table 2

Top 10 most reliable authors

Authors	Number of articles	Articles fractionalized
BACKHAUS B.	6	3.92
ANDERSON H.	4	1.42
BEDFORD C.	4	2.08
MEADOWS M.	4	1.92
FORDE S.	3	0.92
FOXWELL K.	3	0.92
KRAUSE A. E.	3	1.03
AGRAWAL D. P.	2	0.53
ARANITI G.	2	0.4
BENNETT J. K.	2	0.67

Figure 4

Top 10 most reliable authors



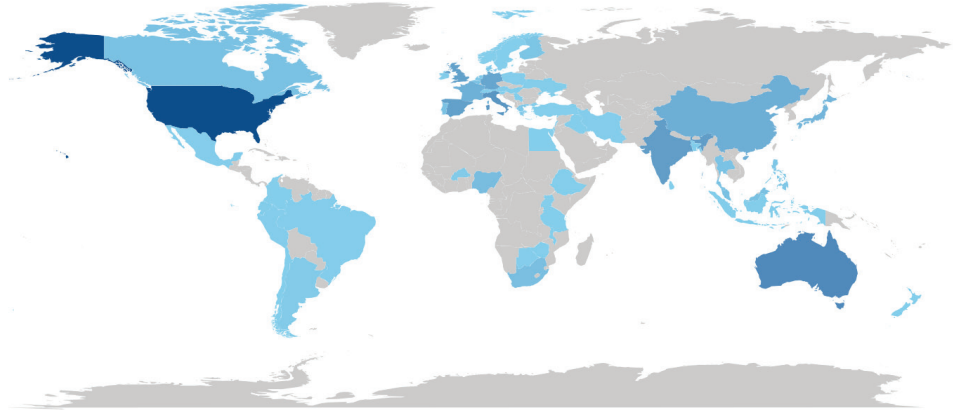
Country-wise document production

Each country has a very different process for producing documentation on community radio (Figure 5). The United States of America has the most papers (167), suggesting that community radio is a topic of great interest to researchers. Australia comes in second place with 85 documents, demonstrating its active participation. With 69 and 60 documents, respectively, Italy and India also make substantial contributions. The UK and Spain produced 55 documents demonstrating their participation in community radio studies. Notable participation was shown by Germany (49 documents), China (37 documents), and France (36 documents).

As evidence of the significance of community radio in these areas, Nigeria and South Africa have provided 22 and 19 documents, respectively, while Japan has given 30. There are about 15 documents in each of Portugal, Canada, and Malaysia. Finland contributed 12 documents, Belgium 14 documents, and Thailand 14 documents. These are the other countries that stand out for their contributions. India, Bangladesh, Ecuador, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Philippines, Netherlands, Denmark, Greece, Argentina, Burkina Faso, Brazil, Iran, Lebanon, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Switzerland, Chile, Ethiopia, Malawi, New Zealand, Serbia, Singapore, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Turkey, and Zimbabwe are among the other nations that have contributed between ten and two documents.

Figure 5

Top 10 country wise document production



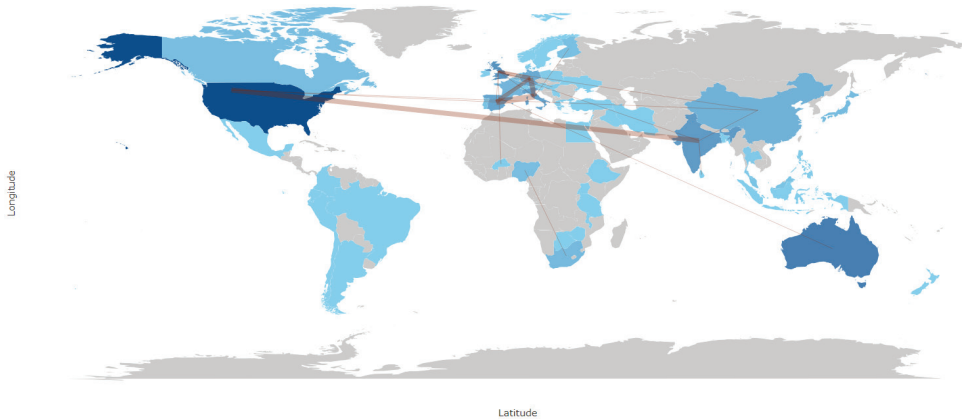
Country-wise collaboration

The data shows the global interconnection of research efforts, demonstrating a wide range of international cooperation in community radio studies (Figure 6). Strong academic linkages within Europe are demonstrated by notable partnerships, such as the numerous collaborations between Italy, Germany (4), and Spain (5). Cross-continental academic exchanges are reflected in the USA's notable collaborative engagement, especially with India (4). In addition to its two partnerships with France, Australia has cooperatively worked with the Philippines and Finland. China's wide-ranging global influence is demonstrated by the multiple alliances it has formed, such as those with Israel, Malaysia, Nigeria, Singapore, and Norway. The UK is another vital actor, working with nations such as Burkina Faso (2), China (2), Germany (3), and Hungary (2), to name a few. China (2), Malaysia, Nigeria, Portugal, Singapore, Sri Lanka (2), and the United Kingdom (2) are among the nations with whom India collaborates. Nigeria collaborates internationally with countries such as Ethiopia, Canada, Finland, Malaysia, and South Africa (2). Finland's global and European participation is evidenced by its collaborations with Ethiopia, Greece, the Netherlands, and the Philippines. The UK's partnership with China (2), Spain's partnerships with Japan and Germany (3), and Germany's partnerships with France (2) and Hungary are among the other noteworthy collaborations. Through these partnerships, the study of community radio in many cultural and

geographic contexts is being advanced, and ideas are being shared, illustrating a rich tapestry of worldwide academic cooperation.

Figure 6

Country-wise collaboration



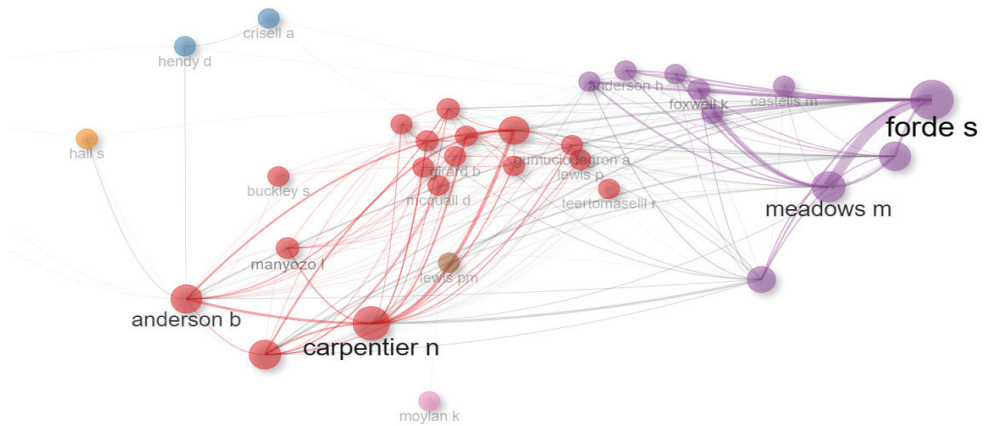
Network of co-citation

A community of authors who have collaborated on pieces concerning virtual reality, augmented reality, and the metaverse. In the diagram (*Figure 7*) below, the names of many researchers are displayed; some are related to each other, while others are not. The scholars' connections are visually represented by clusters of complementary hues and connecting lines between their names. These clusters' formation indicates that there may be specialized regions or sub-domains within the more prominent topic these groups are investigating.

The highest level of collaboration was seen among seven groups of authors. The largest cluster is Cluster 1, which is indicated in red. This cluster of researchers is closely networked and has substantially contributed to community radio studies. This cluster has eminent academics like Downing J., Pavarala V., and Carpentier N., among others. Another significant cluster in the field is Cluster 4 (highlighted in purple), which includes essential authors such as Forde S., Meadows M., and Rodriguez C. The smaller size and fewer affiliated researchers in other clusters, such as 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7, suggest more specialized or infrequent collaboration patterns.

Figure 7

Network of co-citation

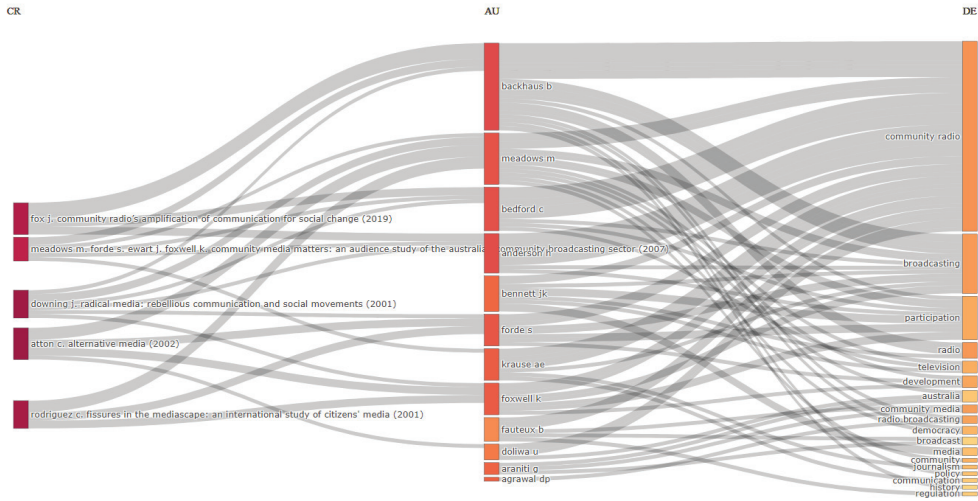


3-field plot

The Sankey diagram (Figure 8), a visual aid used in bibliometrics for scholarly literature analysis, is similar to the three-field plot. The topic of communication studies is the subject of this specific diagram, which also examines the relationships between various authors, keywords, and publication sources. The diagram's left field displays many academics in the field, the middle field displays keywords from their research, and the right field displays the particular subject of study. The width of the lines indicates the strength of the relationships between the fields. For instance, the academic journal *Fox 1, Community Radio's Amplification of Communication for Social Change* (2019) by scholar Backhaus B. is associated with the terms "community radio" and "communication for social change". Backhaus' study focuses on how community radio can effectively promote social change, as seen by the publication's connections to important topics like "community radio" and "communication for social change". In order to contribute to transformative societal outcomes, the study examines how community radio empowers marginalized communities, amplifies voices, and encourages participatory communication. In line with a major concentration in the media studies field, Backhaus' work emphasizes the vital role that community radio plays in fostering inclusive communication and accelerating social change.

Figure 8

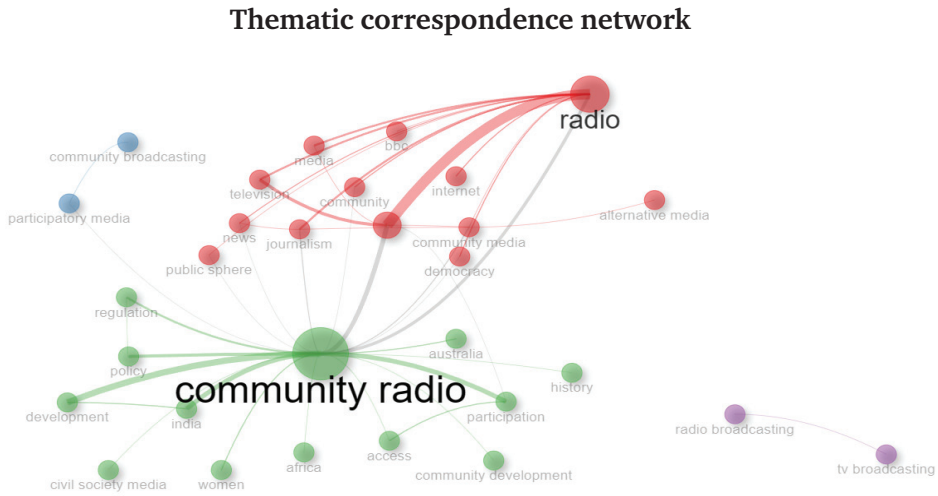
3-filed plot



Thematic correspondence network

The following concept map (Figure 9) is centred around “community radio,” a type of broadcasting that gives the neighbourhood a voice. Outward-pointing textual branches highlight the several facets and relationships associated with community radio. A division on the left combines “alternative media” and “participatory media” under one heading. Community radio is an alternative to conventional media by giving the community a platform to express itself. Another branch that links community radio to the “public sphere,” the arena of public discussion and debate on issues of general interest, is also readily apparent. This suggests that democratic processes are fostered by community radio. Another component of community radio is regulation and policy. This suggests that laws and policies govern community radio broadcasting. The concept map’s right side depicts a link between community radio and development. Typographic entries such as “Africa,” “India,” and “access” suggest that community radio is considered a means of enhancing the quality of life for people in developing nations. The idea map presents community radio as a multifunctional media platform that fulfils a range of functions inside a community. It provides a forum for alternative and participatory media, augments democracy, and encourages development.

Figure 9



Discussion and conclusion

The bibliometric analysis results highlight that community radio stations are receiving increasing scholarly attention and have diverse effects on local communities and media environments worldwide. A thorough analysis of 339 publications in the Scopus database between 2000 and 2024 yields numerous essential conclusions.

First and foremost, there has been a steady rise in the amount of research done on CRS, indicative of growing interest in their contribution to social transformation, media democratization, and community empowerment. This is consistent with earlier research, such as Pavarala and Malik (2007) and Carpentier et al (2017), which emphasize the importance of CRS platforms for raising the voices of the marginalized and promoting cultural diversity. Regional research results show that regions with active community radio movements, notably South Asia, Africa, and Latin America, have made major contributions. These results support Atton;s (2003) and Manyozo's (2012) study, highlighting the distinctive sociocultural settings in which CRS function and their influence on regional development. The analysis highlights recurring research issues on a thematic level, such as the function of CRS as alternative media, their impact on community identity and involvement, and the funding and sustainability challenges they confront. Girard et al (2015) and Anderson (2011) have also examined related themes, highlighting the importance of CRS dynamics on a global and local level.

In the future, several paths present interesting opportunities for CRS study. First, longitudinal studies are required to follow the development of CRS effects over time. These studies should expand on the knowledge gained from previous research, such as Lewis et al (2020) and Hendy (2018), which examine how community dynamics and media consumption habits change over time. Further research into how CRS adapts and flourishes in the face of shifting legal and technological environments could come from comparative studies conducted in various socio-political contexts. Initial frameworks for these kinds of comparison analyses are provided by studies conducted by Tacchi and Foxwell (2014) and Ewart (2017).

Another worthwhile topic for future investigation is integrating social media and digital technology into CRS operations. Digital convergence may present new chances for audience contact and community involvement, but it may also present difficulties with digital literacy and access, according to studies by Hall and Moylan (2021) and Lewis (2018). Furthermore, our comprehension of the broader societal effects of CRS can be enhanced by multidisciplinary approaches that integrate knowledge from political science, sociology, development studies, and communication studies. Innovative insights on the role of CRS in achieving social justice and participatory democracy could be produced through collaborative efforts similar to those shown in research by Castells (2009) and Cottle (2013).

This study offers several theoretical implications for the field of community radio studies. Firstly, it contributes to theoretical frameworks surrounding media democratization by highlighting the pivotal role of community radio stations in amplifying marginalized voices and fostering cultural diversity. The findings underscore CRS as an alternative media platform that challenges dominant media structures and empowers local communities to participate actively in media production and dissemination. Secondly, the study enriches theoretical discussions on communication for social change by demonstrating how CRS contributes to social transformation through enhanced community engagement and empowerment.

The study improves theoretical knowledge of the difficulties in maintaining community-driven media efforts by highlighting recurring themes, such as the role of CRS in local development and its practical challenges. Finally, the study's citation analysis and identification of key authors aid theoretical discussions on scholarly collaboration and knowledge generation within community radio studies. In doing so, it advances theoretical understanding of academic impact and collaboration dynamics by highlighting the development of research

networks and sharing essential concepts and discoveries among academic circles.

This study presents practical implications for policymakers, practitioners, and community stakeholders engaged in community radio initiatives. First, it emphasizes how crucial it is to support CRS as an essential venue for encouraging local involvement, fostering cultural variety, and providing a voice to marginalized communities. With the help of these results, policymakers can push for funding sources and supportive legislative frameworks that maintain CRS's operational sustainability. Second, practitioners working in places like South Asia, Africa, and Latin America with active community radio movements can benefit from the study's regional analysis, which offers valuable insights. Offering helpful advice for enhancing programming efficacy and community involvement tactics, it outlines the obstacles and successful tactics that CRS has faced in various situations. The study also provides a practical approach to improving sustainability and resilience by critically examining CRS's operational problems, including financial limitations and technology adjustments. With these findings, practitioners can create creative strategies for community outreach, fundraising, and digital integration in CRS activities.

Future studies on community radio stations could explore several exciting directions. The effectiveness and sustainability of CRS in promoting social change could be better understood through longitudinal studies that monitor the changing effects of CRS over time. Comparative investigations across various socio-political scenarios enhance our knowledge of how CRS adapts and flourishes in regulatory frameworks and technology environments. Another area of research that could be very beneficial is incorporating digital technology and social media platforms into CRS operations. We can identify new opportunities and difficulties in the digital age by comprehending how digital convergence affects CRS's audience interaction, media sustainability, and community participation.

We could better comprehend the broader societal effects of CRS by utilizing interdisciplinary techniques that incorporate insights from political science, sociology, development studies, and communication studies. New insights into the contribution of CRS to the advancement of social justice, participatory democracy, and community resilience may be obtained through cooperative initiatives. Several obstacles must be overcome to pursue these research directions, including the necessity for extensive databases that include grey literature and non-English publications and linguistic biases in academic literature. By addressing these constraints, forthcoming research endeavours

can enhance our comprehension of the profound capacity of CRS to effect change and its sustained significance in cultivating inclusive and collaborative media spaces across the globe.

This study has several limitations. First, relying solely on the Scopus database limited the analysis's comprehensiveness by excluding pertinent papers indexed in other databases or non-indexed sources. More extensive searches using several databases and grey literature sources might benefit future research. Bibliometric assessments may overlook subtle facets of CRS effects and community dynamics because they naturally favour quantitative metrics over qualitative findings. An integrated view of the societal relevance of CRS may be possible by integrating bibliometric data with qualitative approaches. Finally, since English is not the primary academic language in areas where CRS is expected, the study's emphasis on English-language publications may have missed essential contributions written in other languages. Addressing these linguistic biases would improve the study's inclusivity and global perspective. This research provides insight into how CRS is developing. However, future efforts must overcome these limitations to fully realize its revolutionary potential and maintain its relevance in promoting inclusive and participatory media environments worldwide.

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