

Citizen participation in community radio in the central region of Ecuador

Participación ciudadana en la radio comunitaria en la región central de Ecuador

Alex Hernán Mullo López

Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi

alex.mullo@utc.edu.ec

<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9876-9210>

Juan Pablo Toro Bravo

Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi

juan.toro@utc.edu.ec

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6647-0337>

Lorena Catherine Álvarez Garzón

Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi

lorena.alvarez@utc.edu.ec

<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4055-2729>

Abstract

The article analyzes the work done by community radio stations in the central region of Ecuador in order to promote social progress through the promotion of participatory processes that guarantee the empowerment of the community in the administration and creation of radio content. In this way, qualitative methodologies are used through interviews applied to 12 directors and 36 broadcasters in order to identify the management model of community radio stations, how the staff working in these stations are linked, the types of financing with which they are financed, the various strategies for participation in radio programming and the actions undertaken by the Government of Ecuador in favour of the radio stations studied. Finally, it is determined that added to the well-known economic problem, it is evident that there are no horizontal communication strategies that facilitate the empowerment of citizens around the media. The Organic Law on Communication does not diversify community radio stations so that, depending on their differences, an equitable intervention in the radio spectrum is promoted. Likewise, it does not promote the empowerment of people as volunteers. The issue of training is a need that can be satisfied from the academy.

Keywords

Community radio, management, organization, Law of communication, citizen participation.

Suggested form of citing: Mullo López, A. H., Toro Bravo, J. P., and Álvarez Garzón, L. C. (2019). Citizen participation in community radio in the central region of Ecuador. *Universitas*, 31, pp. 163-184.

Resumen

El artículo analiza la labor que cumplen las radios comunitarias de la región central de Ecuador a fin de promover el progreso social, mediante el fomento de procesos participativos que garanticen el empoderamiento de la comunidad en la administración y creación de contenidos radiofónicos. De esta manera se utiliza metodologías cualitativas a través de entrevistas aplicadas a 12 directores y 36 locutores, con el fin de identificar cuál es el modelo de gestión de las radios comunitarias, cómo se vincula al personal que labora en dichas emisoras, las tipologías de financiamiento con la cual se solventan, las diversas estrategias de participación en la programación radial y las acciones que ha emprendido el Gobierno de Ecuador en favor de las radios estudiadas. Finalmente, se determina que sumado al conocido problema económico se evidencia que no existen estrategias de comunicación horizontal que faciliten el empoderamiento de los ciudadanos alrededor del medio de comunicación. La Ley Orgánica de Comunicación no diversifica a las radios comunitarias para que en función de sus diferencias se impulse una intervención equitativa en el espectro radioeléctrico. Así mismo no impulsa el empoderamiento de la gente como voluntarios. El tema de capacitación es una necesidad que puede ser satisfecha desde la academia.

Palabras clave

Radio comunitaria, gestión, organización, Ley de comunicación, participación ciudadana.

Introduction

Communitarian, alternative or citizen media arise from the need to democratize the word in search of a more just, equitable and supportive society, therefore, they are “a critical tool for the social control of traditional media powers and for citizen empowerment and active participation in the public sphere” (Cerbino & Belotti, 2016, p. 50). A discourse management contrary to the dominant power, which empowers “the emancipation of the lowest strata of the population against the domination of the upper strata” (Beltrán & Reyes, 1993, p. 19), through participatory and inclusive communication that enables the colloquium of knowledge for common welfare. Seen in this way, a community media “cannot exist if it is not based on the social dynamics in which it develops” (Gumucio, 2005, p. 8). In fact, the media is involved in the social context to transmit a local reality on the

air, “valuing the own, the place, the identity, the culture as a political and tool to promote change, and promoting the collaborative and basic education, the own languages, the original forms of organization and, in turn, opening up to an increasingly connected world” (Ramos, 2018, p. 34). In summary, “community media are punctual responses to social needs” (García & Ávila, 2016, p. 278). And within the various types of alternative media, radio stands out, as an ideal space for the democratization of communication, through the oral participation of social actors. At the same time, the economic feasibility of the entire population to access radio receiving devices stands out.

Community radio stations are created to stimulate the participation of a large representative sample of the different socio-economic levels, organizations and minority groups that exist within the community. The mission of these radios is to facilitate the free circulation of information by stimulating freedom of expression and dialogue within the community. (Unesco, 1999, p. 152)

According to the World Association of Community Radio (Amarc, 2010), community radio and television are:

Private actors that have a social purpose and are characterized by being managed by social organizations of various nonprofit types. Its fundamental characteristic is the participation of the community both in the ownership of the media and in the programming, administration, operation, financing and evaluation. (p. 51)

From the perspective of the Cuban José Ignacio López, a community broadcaster:

Promotes citizen participation and defends their interests; when one responds to the tastes of the majority and makes good humor and hope our first proposal; when we report truthfully; when it helps solve the thousand and one problems of everyday life; when all ideas are discussed in our programs and all opinions are respected; when cultural diversity is stimulated and not commercial homogenization. (1995, p. 54)

In other words, a citizen radio must always be open to its audience and cannot dispense with its community, since “it always points towards the

democratization of communication and makes citizen participation a primary element” (Pincheira, 2013, p. 184). Always favoring a horizontal communication that “must be articulated in the sense that the listener demands his gratification, wants to be a producer and recipient of the information” (Abreu et al., 2010, p. 22). Thus, promoting the well-being and development of the community.

Looking back at the past, in Latin America community radio stations appear in the “first half of the 20th century, under the protection of social and political movements, linked to unions and progressive Catholic movements” (Ramírez, 2014, p. 119) that gave step to a great process of educational media construction that was born in Colombia, through the Hertzian waves of Radio Sutatenza. Project that “for more than 50 years, between 1948 and 1990, benefited about eight million illiterates, managing its five essential axes (health, alphabet, numbers, spiritual work)” (Arnedo et al., 2014, p. 242). Similarly, in the 50s, Bolivian stations close to the mining trade union movement appear. Radio proposal that was born by the decision of a “group of priests committed to the sector. It consisted of launching a radio station - which would become several - in which the voices of the miners and their families could be heard” (Villamayor, 2014, p. 91).

Later in the 60s the Popular Radiophonic Schools of Ecuador (ERPE) emerged, which generated “the creation of about half a thousand stations, dedicated to popular education, mostly sponsored by the Catholic Church” (Beltrán, 1996, p. 9). Finally, ERPE “in the 80’s abandoned its educational origin and linked to the idea of changing the structures of society and the search for a just society, with solidarity and equity” (Villamayor, 2014, p. 91). Obviously, community radio is exposed as an emancipatory proposal of the peoples, which opens communication channels for the dialogue of knowledge “from a political perspective that involves the community and not the interests of the market or the hegemonic powers” (Lizondo, 2018, p. 64).

In this way:

Actors can legitimately appropriate information that they themselves build with the demands and experiences that start from their social reality, and that is not imposed by media that build the news from other areas. (Navarro, 2017, p. 11-12)

A communication that stands in the local, in the everyday, for that reason “is considered as a close and emotionally charged medium” (Martínez & Ortega, 2018, p. 87). Regarding the presented ideas, this work aims to analyze the work that community radio stations in the central region of Ecuador fulfill, to promote social development, through the opening of participatory processes that allow social actors to engage in the administration (management model), operation (personnel working), financing (economic sustainability) and programming of the community environment (strategies for participation in content creation). Finally, the state support that community radio stations have received will be investigated in order to determine the actions undertaken by the Ecuadorian Government in favor of broadcasters.

Citizen participation in community radio

Social participation is a fundamental key for the construction of a community radio, this is evident from the first Latin American initiatives. Such is the case of the mining radio, which promoted participation through “its ‘open microphone’ strategy, they put workers and their families to talk freely about all the topics of their interest, to make claims to the authorities and even to criticize union leadership” (Beltrán, 1996, p. 9). Hence, the community broadcaster is a means that engages with its community, to tend to dialogue that fosters a critical society against the power of the day, so that it is not only “a channel of transmission to people, but also a means of receiving them” (Milan, 2006 p. 272). In this way, citizen participation in community radio “must be seen in the analysis of public space as the capacity and possibility of people and social groups to influence the transformation of conditions that affect one’s life” (Martínez, Yaguana & Rencoret, 2018, p. 19).

There are various types of participation in community radio, however, all are focused on the democratization of the media. Participation from management encourages the community to be involved in decision making in the administration of the station. For this purpose, a horizontal communication is executed for the hiring of staff, the appointment of the administrator or director, the maintenance of equipment and facilities, among others. Another priority task at this level of participation is the contribution of the community to the economic sustainability of the broadcaster.

Therefore, a community radio must “generate spaces for citizen participation from management, co-management and self-management, such as the highest levels of commitments to plurality and freedom of expression to achieve the best interests of communities (Mora, 2011, p. 140). Meanwhile, the participation from the field of content management implies the elaboration of the communication project and the decision making regarding the topics that will be transmitted in the programming grid. For this, the media must generate strategies that allow the town to be linked in the production and broadcast of radio programs that contribute to social development and intercultural promotion.

Finally, participation in the reception and feedback of radio programs, “through the expression of opinions, the generation of questions that broaden the understanding of the facts” (De la Noval, 2018, p. 36), are fundamental elements for the subsistence of the media. That the inhabitants of the community listen to the radio makes it possible to strengthen the *raison d’être* of the media. A station born from “a specific need of the community, or as a logical step in a community development process, will be a station in which the community participates” (Álvarez, 2008, p. 68). Participation is therefore a bidirectional commitment, on the one hand, the media has the responsibility of supporting its community to popularize the word, while the community maintains the duty to support the media in the administrative management, issuance and reception of the communicational product. In this perspective:

The radio must become a space for community participation and only the effective relationship with them will guarantee the necessary support for these communities to defend their radio as a communication tool for the development of their capacities and for the improvement of their own community life. (Romero & Artigas, 2013, p. 77)

The advantage of the community media lies not only in its geographical proximity to the community, but also in a communicational proximity that allows radio transmitters to listen and be heard by society. Hence, that success is achieved:

To the extent that the peoples and organizations are the protagonists in the production and circulation of messages, which break the canons established by the business media, which reproduce in their agendas, the pyramid

of the domination, where politicians, artists and athletes are important. (Galán, 2015, p. 30)

In other words, community media do not use the people, on the contrary, they serve the people by “accommodating new problems and profiles of participants, being the groups and collectives that suffer the most from exclusion, or with greater difficulties in the exercise of their rights, those that show greater interest in participating” (García, 2017, p. 40). Finally, it is convenient to note that, community radio stations are the calls to take the first step to create links that allow the cooperation and commitment of the population to work for the media, recovering “the role of citizens in the communicative process, including the elaboration of contents and the management of the media itself (Martínez, 2018, p. 271).

In this way, communities will be empowered by local community radio and will strengthen their social development through communication processes. In fact:

When communities appropriate the means of communication, they discover how useful they can be to weave their processes more solidly and make their reality and context visible in their own terms. (Peña, 2012, p. 200)

Community radio and its legal framework in Ecuador

The first community radios arise without a regulatory framework of the State and thanks to the support of the Catholic Church. In 1950 by the hand of Reverend Manuel Moncayo, Apostolic Administrator of the Vicariate of Zamora, the Voice of Zamora was founded, in the province of Zamora Chinchipe, which was created for the service of faith, and the increase of justice and the dissemination of culture (<http://lavozezamora.com.ec>). Similarly, in 1962 and at the initiative of Monsignor Leonidas Proaño, the Popular Radiophonic Schools of Ecuador (ERPE) arose in Riobamba, a radio project that was framed in liberation theology and that sought social justice for the indigenous peoples of the region. Through the impulse of:

Literacy, evangelization and education programs of indigenous peoples and peasants not considered by the State. The program promoted the mobiliza-

tion of Ecuadorian peasants towards the defense of their identity and the fight against inequality and poverty. (Sanmartín et al., 2017, p. 101)

Subsequently, in the province of Morona Santiago, located in the Amazon region, La Voz de Arutam radio arises. “It began in 1964 with the Salesian mission, and in the 1970s it developed the Shuar Intercultural Bilingual Radio Education System for the primary level” (Acosta et al., 2017, p. 7). Years later in 1972, the *Fundación Adelanto Comunitario Ecuatoriano* undertakes the creation of Interoceanic radio, “institution of communication and community service marking a model of life in the faith and commitment of the people” (Cerbino, 2018, p. 121). As of 1975, the broadcasting and television law was established that recognized only two types of media, public stations and private commercial stations. Therefore, from this regulatory framework, community radio stations that were in operation and new proposals would emerge as private broadcasters.

Subsequently, although with certain limitations, in 1995, community broadcasting concessions are finally implemented, for legally constituted organizations, in accordance with the Law of Organization and Regime of the Communes. For the year 2013 the Organic Law of Communication (LOC) would be created, which recognizes three types of social communication media, these being public, private and community. According to section III on community media, the LOC in its article 85 defines community media as “those whose ownership, administration and direction correspond to non-profit social groups or organizations, to communes, communities, villages and nationalities. Community media are not for profit and their profitability is social” (p.15). Within this perspective, the problem arises. How could they afford the expenses of maintaining a radio station and its social mission, if they are not for profit?

On the other hand, article 110 of the LOC states that the community media must compete with the private media to be able to acquire a frequency of the radio spectrum, complying with requirements such as the communication project, technical study and management and sustainability. Which would demand a strong economic investment for a community, people or nationality. To this is added the complexity that the volunteers of the communities themselves have to collaborate in the journalistic activities of the community media, since according to article 42 of the LOC, to work in a social commu-

nication media one must be a journalist or communication professional with the exception of collaborators who carry out programs in native languages.

Community radios are a tool to promote the participation of peoples and communities:

Because through it they will have the possibility to influence public and private decisions in the community (family and school) and local, promoting and demanding the fulfillment of their rights, through organization, mobilization, communication and training. (Barragán, & Garzón, 2017, p. 290)

Without doubt:

There is a lack of communication and work integrated with the community sectors in the construction of laws, which does not allow the State to understand the implications, needs and characteristics of the community radio stations. (Galarza & Culqui p. 1405)

And it is in these “differences where one must work to achieve the democratization of the media to give voice to those who have traditionally been excluded from public debate” (Barragán & Garzón, 2016, p. 212).

Materials and methods

The study is carried out on community radio stations in the central region of Ecuador, which include the provinces of Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, Chimborazo and Pastaza. The methodology used for the data collection process is qualitative, using the semi-structured interview technique to 12 directors and 36 radio speakers of said media. On the following study variables: a) Management model of the radios; b) Personnel who are part of community radio stations; c) Economic sustainability in the radios; d) Strategies for participation in radio programming; e) State support for strengthening community radio.

The management model of the radios is analyzed, in order to identify to whom the radio medium belongs to. The people involved in the administration of community radio, and the objective of programming as such. Then the personnel that is part of the stations, with the purpose of establishing how people who work in the radio station are hired and linked. Likewise, the number of people who work voluntarily in the media. Mean-

while, the economic sustainability of community radio stations is examined with the intention of knowing the different types of financing with which the radios operate.

Subsequently, the various mechanisms used by community broadcasters to promote community participation in the communication project are analyzed. Finally, the state support for strengthening Community radio is investigated with the objective of determining the actions that the Government of Ecuador has undertaken in favor of these stations. Regarding the use of the proposed methodology, it has certain limitations, such as subjectivity in qualitative results, since it is taken as a reference to community radio in the central region of Ecuador from the criteria of its directors and broadcasters.

Analysis and results

Management model of the studied radios

To understand the management model of community radios, interviews are conducted with 12 directors based on the following categories:

- To whom does the radio station belong.
- The people involved in the administration of the radio and the programming objectives of the stations.

Identify to whom the radio medium belongs

The study determines that seven stations belong to religious organizations, two to a private non-profit foundation, and five to indigenous peoples and nationalities. However, of the community radios that were investigated, only nine are in operation. As Chart 1 illustrates.

The people involved in the administration of community radio

When analyzing the dynamics with respect to the administration, the findings determine that the stations under the tutelage of religious groups have administrators and coordinators appointed by the authorities of said com-

munities, while, in the stations that belong to indigenous groups and private foundations, the administrators are elected by a General Assembly.

The objectives of community radio programming

Regarding the objectives that govern the programming of community radio stations, according to the study, it is determined that these are harmonized to the social reason of each one, that is, they focus on evangelizing, satisfying the social needs of the marginalized population, and strengthening communication in the political, cultural and social aspect within the community. For broadcasters, sustainability is a sensitive issue, it is clear from the interviewees that those who closed had to do so due to the lack of financial resources to face expenses such as energy payments and rental fees.

Chart 1
Community radio stations in the central region
of Ecuador registered in CORDICOM

Social reason	Name of the radio	Frequency/ channel	Province	On air
Federación de iglesias indígenas evangélicas de Cotopaxi	Radio Runatacuyac	1160 AM	Cotopaxi	Yes
Fundación ecuatoriana Juan Pablo II	Radio católica Riobamba	105.7 FM	Chimborazo	Yes
Asociación de comunidades indígenas de Arajuno	Radio Jatari kichwa 92.3 FM	92.3 FM	Pastaza	Yes
Nación Sapara del Ecuador	Radio Sapara 92.7 FM	92.7 FM	Pastaza	No
Nacionalidad Andwa de Pastaza Ecuador	Radio Andwa la voz de la frontera	95.9 FM	Pastaza	No
Nacionalidad Waorani del Ecuador	Wao apeninka 91.1 FM	91.1 FM	Pastaza	No
Nacionalidad Shiwiar del Ecuador	Radio Tarimiat 93.5fm	93.5 FM	Pastaza	No
Fundación escuelas radiofónicas populares	Fundación escuelas radiofónicas populares	710 AM	Chimborazo	No

Fundación escuelas radiofónicas populares	Fundación escuelas radiofónicas populares	91.7 FM	Chimborazo	Yes
Diócesis de Latacunga	Radio Latacunga FM	102.1 FM	Cotopaxi	Yes
Vicariato apostólico de Puyo misión dominicana	Radio Puyo	89.1 FM	Pastaza	Yes
Asociación indígena de la iglesia de cristo en Chimborazo	El Prado	980 AM	Chimborazo	Yes
Confederación de pueblos organizaciones comunidades e iglesias indígenas evangélicas de Chimborazo	La voz de AIIECH	950 AM	Chimborazo	Yes
Confederación de pueblos organizaciones comunidades e iglesias indígenas evangélicas de Chimborazo	La voz de AIIECH	101.7 FM	Chimborazo	Yes

Source: Own elaboration

Community radio staff

According to the 12 directors and 36 presenters of the community broadcasters in operation, the staff working and collaborating on the radio is linked through verbal and written contracts and agreements. The contracts are duly legalized in the Ministry of Labor Relations. Meanwhile, written or verbal agreements are made with collaborators or volunteers who support all types of communication activities, serving as speakers and community reporters. It should be noted that volunteers are people who belong to the community, foundation or organization that owns the station. In this way the radio is transformed into a space that does not generate economic returns, but satisfies support for the community. Hence the high number of volunteers in several stations is understood. This is illustrated in chart 2.

Chart 2
Personnel who are part of community radios

Radio	Number of collaborators	Number of volunteers:	Number of people hired:
		Through written or verbal agreements	Through remuneration
Radio Runatacuyac 1160 AM	5	3	2
Radio católica Riobamba 105.7 FM	14	12	2
Radio Jatari kichwa 92.3 FM	10	10	
Fundación escuelas radiofónicas populares 91.7 FM	59	50	9
Radio Latacunga 102.1 FM	11		11
Radio Puyo 89.1 FM	17	13	4
El Prado 980 AM	10	10	
La voz de AIECH 950 AM y 101.7 FM	20	17	3
Total	146	115	31

Source: Own elaboration

Economic sustainability in community radios

Economic sustainability is a sensitive and transcendental issue for broadcasters, according to the 12 directors, keeping a community radio operational requires an approximate monthly investment and expense between US \$ 5,000 and US \$ 10,000.

The financing for payments of basic services and to the personnel that collaborates in the radio, is sustained by the publicity of public and private institutions among others. However, some stations restrict advertising content that contains messages against their religious beliefs or ethical and moral principles. Consequently, they seek to generate economic resources through socio-productive enterprises or event transmission services, as well as international projects.

On the other hand, donations are made by people from the organization, foundation or community to which the station belongs. Donations from

other countries, which at a certain time were a great contribution of the broadcasters, have been limited by the bureaucratic procedures imposed by the Ecuadorian state. Next, chart 3 shows the main sources of financing for community radio stations in the central region of Ecuador.

Chart 3
Economic sustainability in community radio stations

Radio	Main sources of financing		
	Advertising	Donations	Other
Radio Runatacuyac 1160 AM		X	
Radio católica Riobamba 105.7 FM	X		
Radio Jatari kichwa 92.3 FM	X		
Fundación escuelas radiofónicas populares 91.7 FM	X		Income from an agricultural farm and organic shop
Radio Latacunga 102.1 FM	X	X	Live broadcasts of events
Radio Puyo 89.1 FM	X		
El Prado 980 AM		X	
La voz de AIIIECH 950 AM y 101.7 FM		X	Live broadcasts of events

Source: Own elaboration

Strategies for participation in radio programming

With reference to the radios of Pastaza province. Both Radio Puyo and Jatari Kichwa promote the participation of people in the community through the transmission of local information and cultural tradition. In this way, they seek to encourage the feedback of the listeners, so that they emit their criteria around the disseminated information, using telephone calls, messages to WhatsApp or social networks. Previously, programs were carried out with the community, but, due to lack of financial resources and journalistic and voluntary personnel, this work was suspended. Meanwhile, in the province of Cotopaxi. Radio Runatacuyac maintains spaces for days of praise and reflections of Christian doctrines, with the participation of the parishioners that make up the Federation of indigenous evangelical churches of Cotopaxi. For its part, Radio Latacunga conducts surveys in the communities to establish the contents required by the population. At the same time, it invol-

ves people from the same community to be community reporters or correspondents and report on the various activities or needs of citizens. Finally, in the province of Chimborazo. Radio ERPE, gets involved with the community to meet the various information and educational needs that the population requires. Then diversify them in the design of the programming grid. In addition, they prioritize spaces for vulnerable sectors. Therefore, people with disabilities and students in educational units keep programs on the air.

With regards to El Prado radio, participation strategies are framed in the micro-social life of rural sectors, that is, local information is sought by community leaders, and then generate feedback from the population, through telephone calls or written communications. Radio Católica, has a policy of opening microphones to those who need to express themselves. They do not generate their own cooperation processes from radio transmitters. Finally, Radio AIIECH's voice creates participation methods, including broadcasters belonging to the congregation that owns the station. In this way, pastors, leaders and members of the various churches participate, who, then, disseminate programs of religious doctrine and educational content. This is stated by the directors and broadcasters of the stations studied.

State support for strengthening community radio

For the analysis of state support for strengthening community radio, it is necessary to divide the community media into:

- Community radios of indigenous peoples and nationalities
- Radios of religious communities
- Community radios belonging to foundations of social interest.

In the findings it has been verified that state support for community media of indigenous peoples and nationalities has two specific moments: The first, the economic contribution of the government of former President Rafael Correa with the purpose of acquiring technological equipment for the operation of the stations, and on the other hand the training in the field of communication to the representatives of the indigenous communities who collaborated at the beginning of the communication project. A second moment is the current one, in which community media have not received state support in the economic, administrative and communication training field. To

this is added, the resignation of the first community members who were trained, who decided to abandon the project due to the lack of financial resources that would allow them to cover the basic needs of their families. As a result of these difficulties, most of the community media of the indigenous nationalities have closed or suspended their transmissions. From the perspective of the directors and broadcasters of the community media of religious communities and foundations of social interest state support has existed through few advertising contracts with government entities, which have meant limited economic support for the sustainability of the community environment. Regarding the contribution for professional development, it is indicated that there has been no support for the training of radio media collaborators.

Discussion and conclusions

In the central region of Ecuador, most stations belong to religious organizations and only in the province of Pastaza, indigenous peoples and nationalities have managed to access a radio frequency. These media have faced economic and training difficulties, which has resulted in only five of the community broadcasters still operating. Thus:

Communities remain oblivious to state and media action as long as they have not been invited to this decision-making process, from which they can encourage policies to consolidate their forms of existence, training and media training, and those laws that dignify their existence. (Tamarit, Cevallos & Yépez, 2014, p. 21)

Although a large part of the indigenous population of Ecuador is based in the provinces of Cotopaxi, Tungurahua and Chimborazo, there are no stations owned by indigenous nationalities. In this regard, Sánchez (2013) states that “in the Ecuadorian case, the 34% Bolivian model was taken for non-profit communication, but without influencing the differentiation between non-governmental organizations and nationalities or native peoples” (p. 166). Economic sustainability is one of the main problems facing community broadcasters. In a way, the essence and objectives of radios have restricted access to profitable advertising guidelines, which could undermine their beliefs or moral codes.

On the other hand, it should be analyzed that companies seek to advertise in the media that capture the attention of target audiences with purchasing power. On the other hand, community media are part of historically excluded communities, whose purpose is common welfare. Another element to take into account is the linking of the staff that collaborates in the community media. Since, unlike private or public media that hire professional staff, community media relies primarily on empirical volunteers.

Likewise, there is no community participation and commitment in the radio, specifically in the administrative, financial and communicational field. The people involved in the administration and financial management of the stations are appointed by authorities of the organizations or communities to which the station belongs. Meanwhile, the construction of the contents for the programming grid is decided through population surveys and under the criteria of authorities, in conjunction with the directors of the media.

In a certain way, in the majority of the stations, the population stays out of the communicational proposal. Reality that agrees with that presented by Viviana Galarza and Belén Amador in the research “Community radio in Imbabura: stations, programming and engagement with the audience” in which they conclude that “Community Radio in the province of Imbabura is a media with potential, but the main objective of the media, community participation, has been forgotten” (2018, p. 76). Therefore, there is a vertical participation, where the radio transmitter proposes when and why the population will participate. However, we must highlight initiatives such as Radio Latacunga and the *Escuelas Radiofónicas y Populares del Ecuador*, which have allowed the community members themselves to be involved in communication work, from their realities and in their own language. At the same time, they have allocated spaces for vulnerable sectors historically excluded from radio spaces.

Consequently, it is necessary to resignify the communicational proposals of the communities and social organizations:

From a regression exercise that takes the Community Radios to the starting point, of valuing a purposeful, critical audience, with points of convergence and disagreements, grown, diverse, with worldviews and particular identities, with different contradictions and cultures, praying to the God of one's choice, supportive, conflicting, passive, active, poor, rich. (Paiz, 2016, p. 104)

In another order of ideas, it is essential that the Organic Communication Law of Ecuador establishes a clear difference between religious community radios, non-profit organizations and community broadcasters of indigenous communities and nationalities. So that, depending on their differences, an equitable participation in the radio spectrum is encouraged. Likewise, from the legal framework, the collaboration of the community members themselves as volunteers must be promoted, in order to promote citizen participation and fulfill the social mission of the radio media. In addition, the State must create tangible policies that empower the economic sustainability of broadcasters. Hence, this type of media has an economic purpose to solve social purposes. Similarly, leaders of communities, organizations or nationalities must create horizontal communication strategies that allow citizens to be involved in the dialogue of knowledge for the common good. Finally, the Ecuadorian Government must rely on universities, so that through linking processes, technical, administrative, financial and communicational training is generated not only for the personnel of the media, but also for the entire population to the that the frequency be awarded. So that they can understand the benefits of communication in favor of local development and empower themselves with their processes of economic, social and communicational sustainability.

Bibliography

- Abreu, N., & Castro, E., & Plumacher, P., & Reyes, M. (2010). Situación legal de las radios comunitarias en el municipio Maracaibo del Estado Zulia. *Quórum Académico*, 7(2), 11-32. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/u6KTFj>
- Acosta, A., Calvopiña, V., & Cano, J. (2017). *Medios comunitarios y democratización de la comunicación en Ecuador: aporte para el debate sobre el Concurso Público de Frecuencias*, 1-60. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/zxAZsb>
- Álvarez Moreno, M. (2008). El desafío de las radios comunitarias. *Anagramas Rumbos y Sentidos de la Comunicación*, 6(12), 61-77. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/ePJ5WQ>
- Amarc (2010). *Principios para garantizar la diversidad y el pluralismo en la radiodifusión y los servicios de comunicación audiovisual*. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/BzVbAC>

- Arnedo, B., Hernández, D., & Jurado, J. (2014). El laberinto de las radios comunitarias en Bolívar: entre la subsistencia y el aporte social al desarrollo comunitario. *Palobra: Palabra que obra*, (14), 238-256. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/jWDr3k>
- Asamblea Nacional del Ecuador (2013). Ley Orgánica de Comunicación. Quito Ecuador.
- Barragán V. & Garzón, B. (2016). La interculturalidad en las radios comunitarias del Ecuador, las radios de las nacionalidades. *Redes.com: Revista de estudios para el desarrollo social de la Comunicación*, 4, 194-215. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/tH6cnq>
- Barragán, V., & Garzón, B. (2017). Radios de las nacionalidades en Ecuador. Un proceso de acción de los derechos a la comunicación. *Radios, redes e internet para la transformación social*, 8(73). Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/5VNWbp>
- Beltrán, L. R., & Reyes, J. (1993). Radio popular en Bolivia: la lucha de obreros y campesinos para democratizar la comunicación. *Diálogos de la Comunicación*, 35, 14-31. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/oSpvBR>
- Beltrán, L. (1996). La radio popular y educativa en América Latina. Chasqui. *Revista Latinoamericana de Comunicación*, 0(53), 08-11. <http://dx.doi.org/10.16921/chasqui.v0i53.994>
- Cerbino, M., & Belotti, F. (2016). Community Media as Exercise of Communicative Citizenship: Experiences from Argentina and Ecuador. [Medios comunitarios como ejercicio de ciudadanía comunicativa: experiencias desde Argentina y Ecuador]. *Comunicar*, 47, 49-56. <https://doi.org/10.3916/C47-2016-05>
- Constituyente, E. A. (2008). Constitución de la República del Ecuador.
- De la Noval Bautista, L. A. (2018). La radio comunitaria en función del desarrollo. *Revista Estudios del Desarrollo Social: Cuba y América Latina*, 6(2), 52-64. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/2q3rhg>
- Galán Montesdeoca, J. (2015). *Los medios comunitarios, un reto para la comunicación en el Ecuador*. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/gQjrFd>
- Galarza, V., & Amador, B. (2018). La radio comunitaria en Imbabura: emisoras, programación y compromiso con la audiencia. *Revista científica axioma*, (17), 69-77. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/M9JqLA>
- Galarza, V., & Culqui, A. (2017). La radio comunitaria y su legislación en la Comunidad Andina. En *Del verbo al bit* (pp. 1383-1407). Sociedad Latina de Comunicación Social. DOI: 10.4185/cac116edicion2

- García, N., & Ávila, C. (2016). Nuevos escenarios para la comunicación comunitaria: Oportunidades y amenazas a medios de comunicación y organizaciones de la sociedad civil a partir de la aplicación del nuevo marco regulatorio ecuatoriano. *Palabra Clave*, 19(1), 271-303.
- García, J. G. (2017). Transformaciones y aprendizajes de las radios comunitarias en España: hacia un modelo de radio inclusiva. *Anuario electrónico de estudios en Comunicación Social "Disertaciones"*, 10(1), 30-41.
- Gumucio Dagron, A. (2005). Arte de equilibristas: la sostenibilidad de los medios de comunicación comunitarios. *Punto Cero*, 10(10), 6-19. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/rTcgVa>
- Lizondo, N. L. (2018). La comunicación con identidad. Regulaciones y un estudio de caso. *Anuario Electrónico de Estudios en Comunicación Social "Disertaciones"*, 11(2), 50-65. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12804/revistas.urosario.edu.co/disertaciones/a.5745>
- López Vigil, J. (1995). ¿Qué hace comunitaria a una radio comunitaria? Chasqui. *Revista Latinoamericana de Comunicación*, 0(52), 51-54. <https://doi.org/10.16921/chasqui.v0i52.621>
- Martínez Ortiz de Zárate, A. (2018). Transformación social a través de la participación en procesos comunicativos comunitarios. En *II Congreso Internacional Move. net sobre Movimientos Sociales y TIC* (2018), (pp. 268-285). Grupo Interdisciplinario de Estudios en Comunicación, Política y Cambio Social de la Universidad de Sevilla (COMPOLÍTICAS). Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/yz9nGF>
- Martínez Ruque, H., Yaguana Romero, H., & Rencoret Quezada, N. (2018). Espacio público y políticas de comunicación: redefinición del término comunitario en Ecuador. *Dilemas Contemporáneos: Educación, Política y Valores*, 5(2). Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/KBa36>
- Martínez-Roa, O. G., & Ortega-Erazo, E. G. (2018). Percepciones y participación en emisoras de radio comunitaria en Nariño-Colombia. *Comunicar: Revista Científica de Comunicación y Educación*, 26(54), 81-90. <https://doi.org/10.3916/C54-2018-08>
- Milan, S. (2006). Medios comunitarios y regulación. Una perspectiva de comunicación para el desarrollo. *Investigación & Desarrollo*, 14(2). Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/TCKDLV>
- Mora, C. (2011). Formas de participación en las radios comunitarias habilitadas del Táchira: Estudio de campo. *Anuario Electrónico de Estudios en Co-*

- municación Social “Disertaciones”*, 4(1), Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/S1Kpmb>
- Navarro Nicoletti, F. (2017). *Neoliberalismo y radios comunitarias: los años noventa y la realidad actual. Improntas de la Historia y la Comunicación*. <https://doi.org/10.24215/24690457e014>
- Paiz, G. (2016). La Radio Comunitaria ¿Cómo resignificarla hoy? *Ciencia e Interculturalidad*, 18(1). Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/YECLGw>
- Peña Sarmiento, M. F. (2012). Voces y Sonidos de la Madre Tierra: Jujunula Makui-ra, the Radio which Strengthens Social Tissue in La Guajira (Colombia). *Anagramas-Rumbos y sentidos de la comunicación*, 10(20), 197-212.
- Pincheira Muñoz, L. (2013). Radio comunitaria, un espacio educativo no formal en la comunidad. *REXE. Revista de Estudios y Experiencias en Educación*, 12(24), 183-193. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/qtsVKT>
- Ramos Martín, J. (2018). Los medios comunitarios indígenas como construcción de memoria en resistencia en Bolivia. *América Latina Hoy*, 78, 17-36. <https://doi.org/10.14201/alh2018781736>
- Ramírez, J. (2014). En Chile ¿Radio comunitaria o ciudadana? *Revista Luciérnaga-Comunicación*, 6(12), 118-126. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/EkQmhR>
- Romero, M., & Artigas, W. (2013). Radios comunitarias del municipio Maracaibo: ¿autosostenibles? *Revista Científica Teorías, Enfoques y Aplicaciones en las Ciencias Sociales*, 6(13), 67-78. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/mF29XT>
- Sanmartín, J., Avelino, A., Reyes, C. y Cruz, M.J. (2017). La estructura mediática de los colectivos sociales en América Latina: los casos de Uruguay, Argentina, Ecuador y Bolivia. *Sphera Publica*, 2(17), 91-110. Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/s4wCqb>
- Tamarit, A., & Cevallos, J., & Yépez, J. (2014). Radios y comunidades en la región 5 del Ecuador. Existentes y resistencias entre la reterritorialización y las urgencias de una política comunicativa nacional. *Razón y Palabra*, 18(88). Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/zaySsw>
- Sánchez, R. (2013). Apuntes para el debate ecuatoriano sobre medios: Distribución de frecuencias, ¿posibilidades para la educomunicación? *Alteridad*, 8(2), 162-170. <https://doi.org/10.17163/alt.v8n2.2013.04>
- Villamayor, C. (2014). Las radios comunitarias, gestoras de procesos comunicacionales. *Mediaciones*, 10(12), 88-105. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.26620/uniminuto.mediaciones.10.12.2014.88-105>

UNESCO (1999). La radio. En: *Informe Mundial sobre la Comunicación. Los medios frente al desafío de las nuevas tecnologías* (pp.139-158. Madrid. Ediciones UNESCO-CINDOC, Fundación Santa María, Recuperado de: <https://goo.gl/mH2PU1>

Submission date: 2019/05/13; Acceptance date: 2019/07/26;

Publication date: 2019/09/01