

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Various methods of research such as investigations, surveys, questionnaires, interviews, case studies and workplace study methods were used during this study. Among others, different literatures related to FM radio stations produced by Association of Community Radio Broadcaster (ACORAB), its world association AMARC and policy of broadcasting communication of Ministry of Information and Communication have been reviewed for the data analysis.

#### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

A research design is a plan for the collection and analysis of data. It represents a series of guide posts to enable the researcher to progress in the right direction in order to achieve the goal. Many scholars have defined research design in different ways.

Kerlinger (1973) defines the research design as:

The plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions and control variance. The plan is the overall scheme or program research. It includes an outline of what the investigator will do from writing the hypothesis and their operational implications to the final analysis of the data. (p. 11)

Joshi (2002, p. 22) has described three types of research design, namely a) the sample design, b) observation design and c) statistical design. The entire research was based on descriptive design intended to obtain some more information on various matters and subjects as mentioned in the research objectives.

### **3.2 NATURE AND SOURCES OF DATA**

It is quite difficult to obtain a perfect research design free from its strengths and weaknesses. However, it is considered that it has four basic characteristics. They include objectivity, reliability, validity and generality. All data on the basis of which analyses have been made are primarily obtained from the field. The people inhabiting the areas that the respective community radio stations are covered constituted the sole source of data required to meet the research objectives.

### **3.3 UNIVERSE AND SAMPLE**

Community Radios of all over the country were under consideration in this research. From each five political development regions of the country, three stations were chosen as a sample. The geography was also taken into consideration. Date of establishment was also considered in selecting the community stations.. By capacity, from 100 watts to 2000 watts, which are the minimum and maximum capacity in community radio, are covered. Among the stations, one was taken from Himalayan region, the second from Hill side and the third one from plain area called Terai wherever possible. The audience of the same localities and the owner and/or program producers also formed the unit of analysis.

### **3.4 UNIT OF ANALYSIS**

At least ten audiences from nearby stations of all fifteen stations all over the country and five program producers and/or promoters/owners had responded the questionnaires. Involved in focus group discussion, in-depth interview and case studies were about fifty people. In the process of gathering facts and information about 25 peoples were contacted.

### **3.5 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE**

Population of active age and different professions were considered. Audience and the owners and/or the producers are separately asked about the program, and at least 10 audience and 5 owners/program producers in each sample radio have given the answer to the questionnaires. In each cluster, respondents were identified using the principle of stratified random sampling, sex, occupation, age, caste/ethnicity being the basis of stratification.

Keeping in mind the objectives of the research and characteristic of population, structured interview schedule was designed and developed. Moreover, almost all questions in the schedule were close ended. There were separate questions to the audience and the owners/producers to identify the priority given by the broadcasters and the received by the audience as well as the understanding about the development. Except the questionnaire survey Observation, Case study, Focus Group Discussion have been done. The Library consultation and the internet resources are also used.

### **3.6 FIELD WORK**

The entire field work was conducted on the spot. Some supports are taken from local journalists as the volunteer to cater the job more economically. Before going to field, the volunteers were familiarized with the objectives of study. The field work was conducted in the above mentioned 15 different station areas from May to December 2011. Updating and upgrading work was continued till the year of 2014.

### **3.7 TECHNIQUE OF ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

The data obtained were analyzed using statistical tool, primarily the percentage. In

order to summarize data, Epi Info software and SPSS were used. The summarized data have been presented in pie chart, column chart and bar chart as appropriate. All figures are in percentage except otherwise mentioned.

### **3.8 DATA ANALYSIS**

Qualitative and quantitative methods are used to obtain the data and information in this research. Qualitative analysis for descriptive information and quantitative analysis for data are followed. The investigation questions are made clear by ordering, summarizing, categorizing and properly structuring the obtained qualitative data. The data has also been tabulated, analyzed and presented in bars, charts, graphs and group charts, as required, for convenience.

Similarly, the qualitative data and information has been analyzed categorically. At the end of the study, all suggestions obtained and the books, magazines and materials referred are included in the appendix.

Triangulation is the appropriate methodology to get the holistic result of qualitative and quantitative research.

#### **3.8.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD**

In a research process the word qualitative has been used to refer to (1) a broad philosophy and approach to research, (2) a research methodology, and (3) a specific set of research technique. Qualitative researchers must pay attention to several different concerns that may call the credibility of their research into question. So, the researchers must pay attention to the reliability and validity of their data.

Rather than emphasizing reliability and validity, Maykut and Morehouse (1994)

address the trustworthiness of a qualitative research. Wimmer, R. D. and Dominick J. R. (2003) summarize four factors that help build credibility:

- Multiple methods of data collection: The use of interview and analysis of existing documents suggests that the topic was examined from several different perspectives which helps build confidence in findings.
- Audit trail: This factor is essentially a permanent record of the original data used for analysis and the researcher's comment and analysis methods. The audit trail allows other to examine the thought process involved in the researcher's work and allows them to assess the accuracy of his or her conclusions.
- Member checks: In this technique, research participants are asked to read your notes and conclusions and tell whether you have accurately described what they told you.
- Research team: This method assumes that team members keep one another honest and on target when describing and interpreting their data. Sometimes an outside person is asked to observe the process and raise questions of possible bias or misinterpretation where appropriate. (p. 115)

The goal of qualitative techniques should be to develop concepts in order to gain a better understanding of the phenomena represented by the concepts themselves (Morse and Micham, 2002). Qualitative techniques are basically used to explore new phenomena. These techniques are also used to explore phenomena that was not conceptualized or adequately understood earlier. In the course of qualitative research, Lofland and Lofland (1984, p. 47) describe that hypotheses and theories emerge from information during the data collection or data analysis. In such a naturalistic tradition, the prime sources of data are the words and actions of the people being interviewed or observed. These are recorded using notes as well as via photographs, films, and actions through a combination of observing, listening, and asking.

Qualitative research involves several methods of data collection. Generally, four methods- field observations, focus groups, intensive interviews and case studies are applied in this research methodology. For this study included participant observations and in-depth interviews with program producers, media owners including the board members. It also included the analysis of relevant documents.

### *3.7.1.1 Field Observation*

Field observation was rarely used in mass media research before 1980. But in the later days, it is very common and useful tools to collect data and generate hypothesis and theories. Like all qualitative techniques, it is concerned more with description and explanations than measurement and quantifications.

Field observation is another way termed as 'participant observation' that refers to “the process in which an investigator establishes and sustains a many-sided and relatively long-term relationship with a human association in its natural setting for the purpose of developing a scientific understanding of that association” (Lofland and Lofland, 1984, p. 12). Participant observation involves looking and listening, watching and asking. Becker and Geer (1957) provided one of the best definitions of participant-observation:

By participant observation we mean that method in which the observer participates in the daily life of the people under study, either openly in the role of researcher or covertly in some guised role, observing things that happen, listening to what is said and questioning persons, over a length of time. (p. 28)

Whether or not community members have tuned the community radio has been observed and recorded at the community level. Who chose which channels? Who and

how attentively listened to the development program? After observing such behaviors of listeners, a discussion was held with those individuals. Likewise, people and their tasks were observed- who did what- at community radio stations. Certain key points were taken into consideration as; was there participation of public in producing the program? How are they involved? And, who decided what to go on air?

#### *3.8.1.2 Focus group discussion*

The focus group discussion or group interviewing is a research strategy for understanding audience as well as program producers' attitudes and behavior. From 6 to 12 people are interviewed simultaneously, with a moderator leading the respondents in a relatively unstructured discussion about the focal topic. Focus group discussion allows researchers to collect preliminary information about a topic or a phenomenon. Focus group responses are more complete and less inhibited than those from individual interviews.

As fewer producers were involved in questionnaires, producers were gathered in a place. Firstly they were briefed about the issues and discussed on their program format in the point of view of audiences' participation. Radio program producers from western region were gathered in Pokhara and mid-western region in Nepalgunj. Major findings are incorporated in the text of content analysis and general findings and list of the participants is mentioned in the Appendix.

#### *3.8.1.3 Intensive interview*

Intensive or in-depth interviewing is a commonly used research method to investigate people's experiences. It attempts to extract the interviewees' experiences and their inherent meanings. Intensive interviewing, which is also known as 'unstructured

interviewing,' is a guided conversation that can be used in qualitative analysis. It seeks to discover the informant's experience of a particular topic or situation (Lofland & Lofland, 1995, p. 18). In-depth interview is done with the audience to find out the interest to produce or participate in the radio program. At the same time, the station manager and the program producers were interviewed to discover the community perception and the methods of public involvement in concerned stations.

As focus group discussion was concentrate on program producers of radios, In-depth interviews were done with the manager as well as the promoters of the radio stations. It helped in research to get ideas of understanding of community radio among those promoters. It also helped to understand the real situation of radio. Promoters of almost all parts of the country gathered in Chitawan, Sauraha to make a strategy of radio management were talked. (Name of the in-depth interviewees is enlisted in the Appendix D).

Also, Station Manager of Radio Sagarmatha was interviewed in detail. The thrust of the interviewed was to dig out how it is different as a community radio than other stations in diverse communities of Kathmandu Valley.

#### *3.8.1.4 Case study*

A case study uses as many data sources as possible to systematically investigate individuals, groups, organizations, or events. Case studies provide tremendous detail. Case studies are conducted when a researcher needs to understand or explain the phenomenon. The case study is particularly advantageous to the researcher who is trying to find clues and ideas for further research.

Two case studies have been done in this study. One was focused on the community

program producer to explore how a farmer of a community could be involved in a community radio. The next one was with a radio station involving a large number of people of the community to provide them the feeling of ownership.

### 3.8.2 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD: AN AUDIENCE SURVEY

An audience survey for listeners of community radio was the major part of this research. Firstly, the community radio stations are selected in consultation with the guide and experts. Three stations are being selected from each geo-political development regions of the country where the geographical location of the station is considered prominently. All Himal, Pahad and Terai belts of each development regions are tried to cover. Radio stations run by the women, dalit, NGO, and cooperatives are included in the study. Questionnaires are organized separately for each group of respondents; i.e. audience, the station owners/operators or program producers. At least 10 audiences were asked to fill up the questionnaire in each station area. Similarly five owners/producers were involved in responding the written queries.

The purpose of the audience survey was to obtain objective knowledge of community radio in their areas, their programs; level of public participation and the characteristics of listeners. The main objective of the audience survey was to examine access to, listening to and public participation in different aspects of community radio.

The following were the specific objectives of the audience survey:

- to explore the ownership and use of different FM radio
- to explore radio listening patterns, including habits of listening to radio, and which program most often listened to

- to explore public opinion about community radio, its ownership, and the content provided
- to explore the level of public participation in the production of development program

### 3.8.3 METHODOLOGICAL TRIANGULATION

In order to deepen understanding and provide a holistic analysis, the research strategy of methodological triangulation was used, which employs qualitative methods, such as participant observations and in-depth interviews, and quantitative methods, such as an audience survey. The two methods should have equal status and they should interact. Triangulation is aimed not only at validating but also to deepening and widening the understanding of the subject under study.

The term triangulation commonly used by marine navigators, frequently comes up in conversations about communication research. If a ship picks up signals from only one navigational aid, it is impossible to know the vessel's precise location. However, if signals from more than one source are detected, elementary geometry can be used to pinpoint the ship's location (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003, p. 48). In the media research, the term triangulation refers to the use of both qualitative methods and quantitative methods to understand the nature of the research problem.

One major difference between qualitative and quantitative research is the underlying assumptions about the role of the researcher. In quantitative research, the researcher is ideally an objective observer that neither participates in nor influences what is being studied. In qualitative research, however, the researcher learns about a situation by participating in it.

Furthermore, quantitative research often forces responses into categories that might not fit in order to create meaning. Qualitative research, on the other hand, sometimes focuses on individual results and fails to make connections to larger situations or possible causes of the results. Qualitative research is appropriate for answering certain kind of questions in certain conditions and quantitative is suitable for others. Thus, the most effective strategy is to incorporate the elements of both methods to ensure that the study is as complete as possible.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used simultaneously to answer a research question or to get better understating of the subject under study. Miles and Huberman (1994) and many other researchers agree that these two research methods need each other. A combination of perspectives is required to attain a holistic analysis.

Norman Denzin (1978, p. 198) defines triangulation as comparison of data relating to “the same phenomenon but deriving from different phases of the fieldwork, different points in the temporal cycles occurring in the setting, or, as in respondent validation, the accounts of different participants in the setting.”

Different types of triangulation - data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, methodological triangulation, and environmental triangulation – are applied to check and establish the validity of studies. Data triangulation involves the use of different sources of data or information whereas investigator triangulation involves several different investigators studying the program. Similarly, theory triangulation involves the use of multiple theoretical perspectives when interpreting a single set of data or information whereas environmental triangulation involves the use of different locations, settings and other significant factors related to the environment, such as time of the day, day of the week or season of the year. Likewise, Denzin

(1970, p. 303) has mentioned that methodological triangulation involves the use of multiple qualitative and/or quantitative methods in the study of the program.

In order to get a holistic picture, qualitative research methods, such as participant observation and in-depth interviews, as well as quantitative research methods, such as an audience survey have been applied. Methodological triangulation was used more to increase the understanding about the community radio station rather than to validate the findings from one method with another one. Participant observation included staying in the community radio station, being with staff and radio representatives in formal as well as social settings, and observing and making notes on their activities. In-depth interviews, on the other hand, were carried out with prominent figures in management and programming as well as experts on the community radio movement in the nation.

Similarly, the audience survey includes a sample study of potential listeners of the selected radio stations. Each method has a unique population, and explores different aspects of community radio in Nepal. Thus, each method deepens and widens information for a holistic understanding rather than one method validating another.

### 3.9 QUESTIONNAIRES AND TIME FRAME

Two different sets of questionnaires were developed, one for the audience of the radio and other is to the owners/operators of the media and the program producers. There were forty questions each with four options in each questionnaire. Some questions were subjective. The questionnaire were thoroughly checked and provided suggestions by Rama Krishna Regmee, a senior media academician. The draft questionnaire was modified with the help of media expert Dr. Pius Raj Mishra who

has done his PhD. in Development Communication and the expert guide of this research. (See questionnaires in Appendix F and Appendix G).

Many media people have provided support to complete this research in many forms. The major support taken from them is to fill up the questionnaires. They also provided support for other needy information from the radio stations. Except these supporters, all together 300 respondents were directly participated as the respondents in this research.

Data collection for the survey was done between May and December of 2011. Updates and upgrades of data were continued till the end of the year 2014. The researcher visited almost all part of the identified areas except Solukhumbu and individually talked and did in-depth interview with the program producers, station managers and the owners as required by the research design.