

# Evaluating the Impact of JECRC 90.8 FM Community Radio Station's Health Awareness Programs on College Students in Nearby Areas

Pulkit Sharma<sup>1</sup>, Manish Arya<sup>2</sup>, Payal Mahipal<sup>3</sup>, Noor Sandhu<sup>4</sup>, Manisha Choudhary<sup>5</sup>, Parul Goenka<sup>6</sup>, Vanshika Jaiswal<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Journalism and Mass Communication, Centre of Distance and Online Education, Manipal University Jaipur-India.

**Orchid Id:** <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1860-2660>

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, School of Mass Communication, JECRC University, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

<sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor, Jaipur School of Business, JECRC University, Jaipur, Rajasthan. **Orchid Id:** <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-0752-7319>

<sup>4</sup>Media and Communication Strategist, 2nd Year student, School of Humanities and Social Science, JECRC University, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

<sup>5,6,7</sup>Media and Communication Strategist, 2nd Year student, School of Humanities and Social Science, JECRC University, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

**\*Corresponding Author: Noor Sandhu, Email ID: Snoordeep03@gmail.com**

---

## Abstract

It would be convenient to say that today, Community radio has emerged as an important medium for promoting health awareness and behavior change in semi-urban and rural populations. This paper studies the impact of JECRC 90.8 FM's health awareness programs and its effectiveness on college students in its broadcasting areas and focuses on three core dimensions, which includes enhancement of health awareness, changes in health behaviors, and trust in community radio as an authentic source for information related to health. Using a mixed-method approach, which includes quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with a sample of 200 college students, this research tests three hypotheses, including: community radio helps to raise awareness regarding health issues, encourages healthier behaviours among people, and is perceived as a trustworthy platform. Data which was obtained, indicates a statistically significant increase in health awareness ( $t = 11.90$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), a notable improvement in health behaviors ( $t = 12.66$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and good amount of trust and engagement with the community radio ( $t = 9.28$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). These results highlight JECRC 90.8 FM's importance in bridging the gap between traditional health communication methods and the needs of today's youth, by offering them culturally relevant, participatory, and interactive programming. However, this is also true that the unique strengths of community radio puts it in a good position to help support public health efforts, with its ability to reach grassroots-level people, build trust and tackle hyper-local issues. It also focuses on areas for potential strengthening, including broader outreach, use of digital tools, so as to increase interactivity, and other targeted programs to reach different demographic groups. This work is an addition to literature on community-based health communication, as it validates the community radio as a medium of communication for health awareness and behavior change among youth audiences. It also suggests a few measures that policymakers, health authorities, and educational institutions can take, so that they can utilize the power of community radio to promote the public health. Further research can figure out the impacts of community radio in a long run, the number of project beneficiaries as against other mediums and projects, future community radio projects with scalable models to institutionalise the socio-economic changes facilitated by community radio interventions.

**Keywords:** *Community Radio, Health Communication, JECRC 90.8 FM, Public Health, Youth Awareness, Behavioral Change, Trust in Media*

---

## INTRODUCTION

It is with the help of community radio that the channel of change that carries this cogent information and facilitates behavioral change is achieved in the community. It fills up the gaps between mainstream media and healthcare delivery as well as semi-urban and rural reaches. JECRC 90.8 FM is such potential that aims to cater different social needs like education on health awareness, empowerment through its programs. The paper will assess the influence of health awareness programs transmitted by JECRC 90.8 FM among college students in its reach areas. Teaching, persuading, and enabling a population to live a healthier life is one of the main elements of the public health approach. College students or young adults are at the right age to build lifelong habits, making this a ripe time. JECRC 90.8 FM community radio gives voice to this section of the society and prepares content for them related to their specific needs and ethos. In the early 2000s, the community radio movement in India gained momentum as it was felt that the voices of marginalised communities need to be heard- and what better way than with a platform of their own? Unlike commercial or government-run channels, community radio emphasizes peer engagement and covers hyperlocal issues generally missed by the media elsewhere. JECRC 90.8 FM community radio station is established for a social cause in the education sector. Most of these awareness applications rely on health information, covering areas such as physical health, mental health, and nutrition, which are often the major challenges faced in the lives of college students. These expert advices combined with some personal stories and interactive session in the radio studio have made it something interesting and educating. In three major themes, this study will quantify and qualify the effect of such efforts: community radio has a significant impact on increasing awareness of multiple health issues on campus, community radio encourages more motivating healthy behaviors, and community radio is perceived as an honest and engageable source of health information. Evaluate the extent and nature of positive awareness affecting behavior and confidence of college youth having been generated through health awareness programs held via JECRC 90.8 FM. Some other minor objectives are defining things which help JECRC to be a success as well as suggesting points for improvement. Community radio is that strength because it builds creating socials that participate with their listeners and listeners feel closer to the message and the community. That has, unlike all other media outlets, been able to give people the authority to raise concerns, share experiences – and solutions (not least because this has opened up a two-way mode of communication). This scientific research has been divided into various segments. The literature review cites some of the important findings and gaps from previous studies on community radio and health communication. The methodology provides detailed documentation of the research design, data collection methods, and analytical tools used for evaluation of JECRC 90.8. The findings will demonstrate how community radio acts as a powerful communication medium to connect with college audiences and promote healthy interactions. JECRC 90.8 FM displays substantial positive behavioral effects in health communication which college students trust in their health programs. The importance of community radio as a channel for distributing health information and fostering behavior changes among its youthful audience requires thorough examination. The work of JECRC 90.8 FM extends beyond evaluating activities to make meaningful contributions to health communication discussions across Indian communities.

## Hypothesis

- 1. Awareness Hypothesis:** Community radio programs improve awareness of the students regarding many general issues like physical and mental health wellbeing.
- 2. Behavioral Influence Hypothesis:** The health related content that is broadcasted by community radio plays a big role in motivating students to adopt much healthier behaviours and lifestyle
- 3. Trust and Engagement Hypothesis:** Students perceive community radio as an engaging platform and also trustworthy as they can access relevant and actionable information.

## Review of literature

A growing amount of research has shown that community radio serves as an effective tool for delivering health information to semi-urban areas as well as rural and marginalized populations. The review will showcase recent studies that explore the connection between community radio and health issues. Shuchi

Srivastava's thesis Community Radio is a Platform for Empowerment and Health Awareness that focuses on radio Dhadkan to study its effects in Madhya Pradesh and its impact on the empowerment of the Sahariya Tribe. The study shows that community radio effectively promotes health practices like hand-washing and vaccination by delivering culturally resonant content that meets with the specific community needs to help the people adopt healthier behaviors. Community-based initiatives help in bringing a positive social transformation through collective actions while it also generates economic opportunities that boost local development and create connections within communities (Srivastava, 2022).

Information regarding health and wellbeing are broadcasted by Radio Dhadkan and it also facilitates family planning discussions and debates about safe drinking water. With this participation, communities get the chance to highlight their challenges, fight for their rights and unite to create change. The comprehensive engagement model demonstrated effective results in driving health and social transformations (Srivastava, 2021).

In a similar study based on Health Awareness by Community Radio: Buksa Tribes in the Himalayan Region by Dr. Neeraj Khattri, it has been discussed how CR bridges significant health knowledge gaps by delivering relevant and constant information.

Topics include the importance of vaccinations, regular health check-ups, and public health initiatives that enable these communities to make decisions regarding their well-being. Engaging the populations in this programming ensures that CR's content reaches the guaranteed zone of sisterhood, hence giving the message a deeper root. Such participation helps in creating the required trust and thus enhances better uptake of health-promoting behaviors, according to the study. When a Research on Community Radio was done in Manipur for Effective Health Communication, it was pointed out that someone had to bridge the gaps by covering remote areas, that the traditional healthcare services fail to do, this is where CR stepped in. CR has been able to deal with issues like maternal health, sanitation and childcare, with the help of health messages, which are specific for local dialects and cultural situations. To make sure that the most vulnerable are not ignored in any case, marginalized sections are included in the health discussions too. Although CR's efforts have significantly improved health outcomes, it still needs to expand the outreach and quality of its programming, so as to improve its impact (Research Paper on Manipur, 2020).

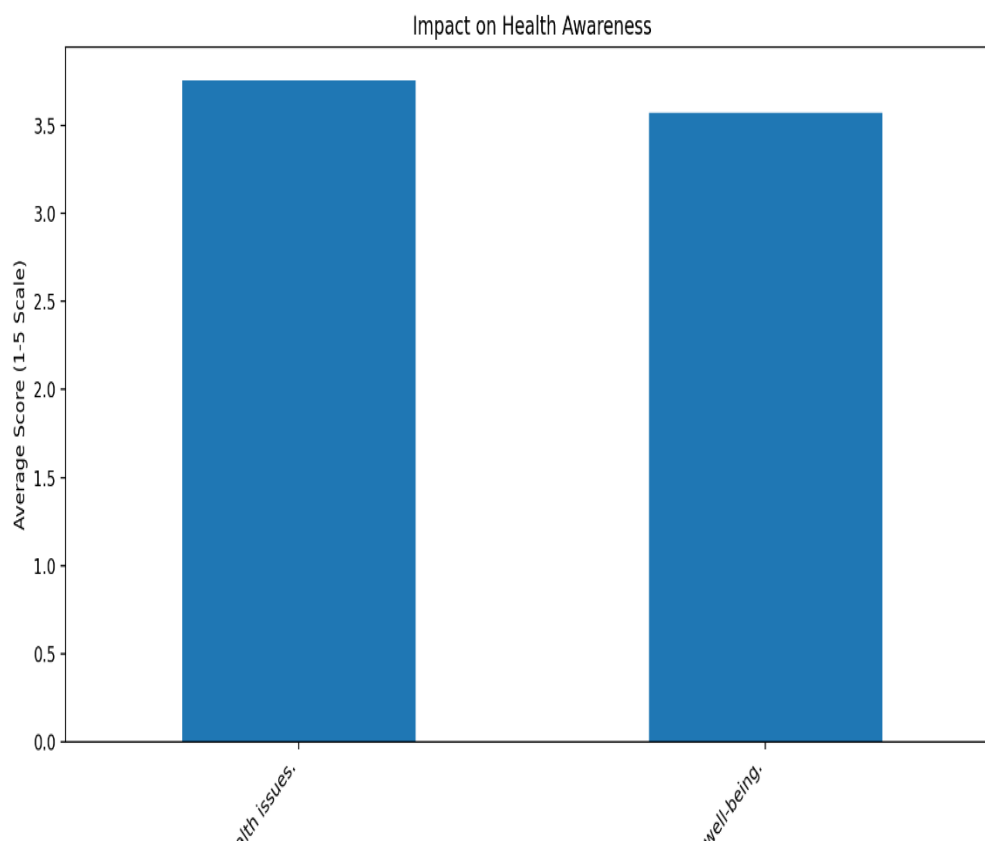
According to a study focusing on Encouraging Child Nutrition through Community Radio in Rajasthan, it was noticed that the awareness level among listeners has been raised by nutrition-based community radio programs. Over 85% of respondents to this study, which was conducted in Rajasthan, India, said that they frequently listen to community radio stations, while 52% of survey participants say they listen to information about nutrition and health on a regular basis. It also explains how the community radio acts as a means for raising awareness for the importance of children's nutrition as well as the health improvement in families. But on the other hand, it highlights some disadvantages of such programs. The length of the health-related broadcasts is the biggest problem, as it together with the lack of content targeted at a particular gender group, for example, men, would reduce the level of involvement. In order to solve the previously mentioned issues and maximise the impact of community radio, this study recommends to increase the frequency of health-focused programs. This will allow to create more specialised content, so that the needs of various listener groups are addressed, this way making the approach to health education more inclusive and accurate. Collectively, the research discussed here provides very strong evidence of the transformational influence on health education in India's rural and marginalised areas, with the help of community radio. Community radio is not only a powerful tool for spreading information, but it also uses interactive communications, so as to strengthen the sense of unity and engagement among the local communities. While the health results from such initiatives have produced a lot of certainty and optimism, still there are significant ambiguities, which surround the sustainability concerns in respect to producing and increasing the capacity or resources. Further research would be required to figure out what deeper effects of such radio have on the health of individuals over time and to also find more creative, scalable ways for maintaining the socioeconomic changes related to these programs. Other areas to focus on for future studies could be: Expanding the community radio coverage to even more distant places. Evaluating the use of digital resources, like social media and mobile

phone apps, to increase CR's reach and engagement. Continuous monitoring of the community empowerment and the sustainability of health changes over time in one extended paragraph.

### 1. Awareness Hypothesis:

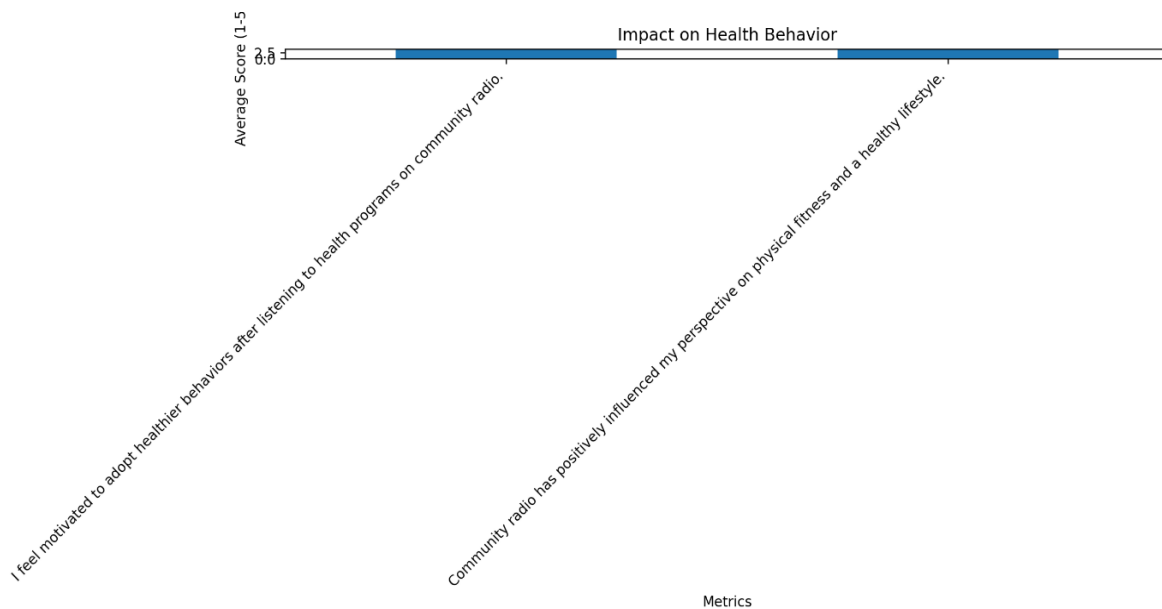
The Awareness Hypothesis suggests that community radio programs enhance students' awareness significantly, regarding various health issues, including physical and mental well-being. The analysis is focused on two key metrics: Effect that community radio has on general health awareness and mental health understanding.

The average scores for these metrics, has been illustrated in the bar chart given below, with both of them displaying high mean values (above 4 on a 5-point Likert scale). This indicates that community radio is seen as an effective medium for increasing awareness of health issues among students. A one-sample t-test against the neutral value (3) gave a t-statistic of 11.90 and a p-value of 1.76e-25, which strongly supports the hypothesis that community radio enhances health awareness to a large extent.



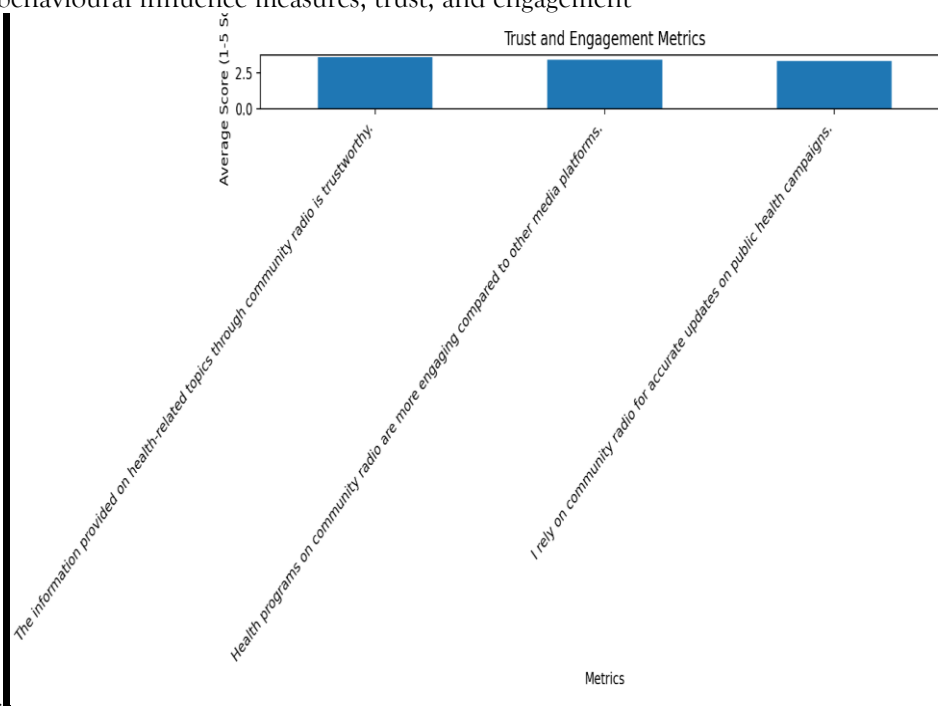
### Behavioral Influence Hypothesis:

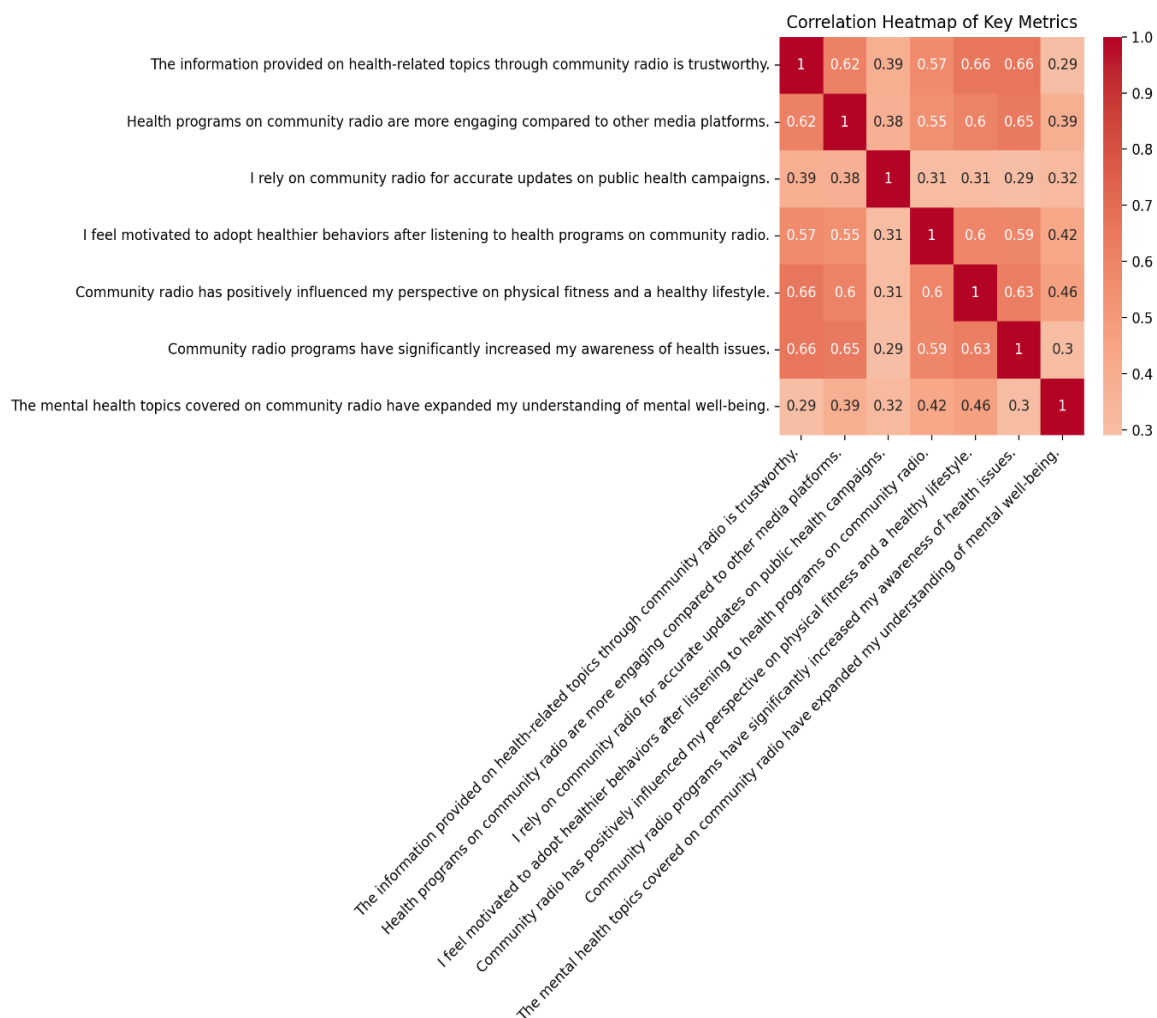
The Behavioral Influence Hypothesis suggests that students feel motivated to indulge in healthier activities and lifestyles by health-related content broadcasted by community radio. The analysis examined two metrics: Influence on the perspective of physical fitness and motivation to adopt healthier behaviors. High average scores have been shown below in the bar chart for both metrics, with values exceeding 4. This demonstrates that after engaging with the community radio programs, students feel much more motivated to make positive lifestyle changes. The one-sample t-test produced a t-statistic of 12.66 and a p-value of 5.53e-28, providing strong evidence that students' health-related behaviors were significantly influenced by the community radio in a positive way.



### Trust and Engagement Hypothesis:

The Trust and Engagement Hypothesis asserts that community radio is taken as a trustworthy and engaging platform for accessing necessary and actionable health information by the students. Three metrics were analyzed: accuracy of the information, engagement as compared to other media, and reliance on community radio for public health service updates. High average scores for all the three metrics have been highlighted in the bar chart given below, with values above 4. This shows us that community radio is seen as both trustworthy and engaging by students. The hypothesis has been confirmed by the one-sample t-test, which produced a t-statistic of 9.28 and a p-value of 1.65e-17. In addition, the theory is further supported by the correlation heatmap, which shows strong positive relationships between behavioural influence measures, trust, and engagement





## CONCLUSION

This research focuses on the impact that JECRC 90.8 FM Community Radio Station has on the health awareness of college students through three primary hypotheses. These three hypotheses are strongly supported by the statistical studies and empirical evidence, which displays the role of community radio and how important it is for college students' health communication. The key findings reveal: The understanding of physical and mental health issues in the eyes of students has been effectively improved by community radio, as indicated by a statistically significant improvement in the awareness ( $t = 11.90$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Strong behavioural influence ( $t = 12.66$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), suggests that the radio programs have successfully motivated the students to adopt healthier lifestyles. The effectiveness of community radio, as a reliable health information platform has been further confirmed by high levels of trust and engagement as observed ( $t = 9.28$ ,  $p < 0.001$ )

## DISCUSSION

The findings from this study have many important implications for community radio programming and health communication:

### Theoretical Implications:

1. The effectiveness of community radio as a medium for health communication has been validated by the results, particularly for younger audiences.

2. The strong relationship between behavioural change and trust measures supports the theories about the connection between media credibility and transforming health-related behaviours.

#### **Practical Implications:**

1. The demonstrated impact on student awareness and behavior by Community radio stations should keep giving priority to the health-related content
2. According to the high trust ratings, community radio could be used more widely for public health campaigns. The popularity of mental health programs indicates an opportunity to increase the amount of time, which is spent to discuss these subjects.

#### **Limitations and Future Research Directions:**

The study was exclusively conducted for college students in the vicinity of JECRC 90.8 FM

#### **Future research could:**

1. Observe long-term behavioral shifts, using longitudinal studies
2. Examine the efficiency of community radio in comparison to other health communication channels. Investigate the specific program features that have the greatest contribution to listener engagement.

#### **Policy Recommendations:**

1. For the purpose of promoting health, educational institutions need to consider strengthening their collaborations with community radio stations.
2. Health authorities could gain profits by integrating community radio into their public health communication plans.
3. Putting money into community radio infrastructure could yield significant amounts of public health benefits

According to this study, community radio acts as an effective, reliable, and engaging platform for college students to communicate about health related issues.

The findings suggest that community radio can play an extremely important role in promoting the awareness of public health issues and encouraging positive behavioral change in academic communities.

#### **REFERENCE:**

1. Chapman, S., & Lupton, D. (1994). *The fight for public health: Principles and practice of media advocacy*. BMJ Publishing Group.
2. Fraser, C., & Restrepo-Estrada, S. (2002). *Community radio for change and development*. Development, 45(4), 69–73. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.development.1110392>
3. Girard, B. (2007). *Empowering radio: Good practices in development & operation of community radio*. UNESCO.
4. Kumar, K. J. (2004). *Mass communication in India* (3rd ed.). Jaico Publishing House.
5. Roy, S., & Chattopadhyay, S. (2010). Community radio and health communication: A study of selected community radio stations in India. *Global Media Journal – Indian Edition*, 1(2), 1–11.
6. Melkote, S. R., & Steeves, H. L. (2001). *Communication for development in the Third World: Theory and practice for empowerment* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.