

CONVERGENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND RADIO

Dr. Yuki Azad

*Associate Professor, Department of Development Communication & Extension
Institute of Home Economics, University of Delhi*

Prabhjot Kaur

*Assistant Professor, Department of Development Communication & Extension
Institute of Home Economics, University of Delhi*

Abstract: The social media is a powerful tool to project and display the current affairs, news, entertainment and infotainment in today's world. It is considered to be the fastest medium for providing any information with the expectation of getting instant feedback. It has become very popular medium to connect with mass listener. Now-a-days, almost every industry is using social media for its benefit to introduce, promote or to create awareness about their new products, policies or schemes.

The paper focuses on the contribution of the social media that has penetrated immensely and extensively in radio industry. FM Radio Channels have started connecting with their listeners via social media apart from their regular FM broadcasting. Social media has given the radio channels an additional platform to deliver their social messages to the listener. The listener is also getting opportunity to express themselves freely in response to the social media messages of the FM radio channels. The dynamics of listening to radio has changed into watching the radio jockeys and connecting sometimes live with them on the social media. This change has given a different perspective of how we see radio and has boosted the radio business in this era.

Keywords: Listeners, Radio, Radio Jockey, Social Media.

Introduction: Convergence of Media is the merging of previously distinct media to create entirely new forms of communication expression.

Concepts of convergence provide the analytical framework for various aspects of change, and bridge different disciplines together. It integrate conflicting processes of convergence and divergence as two sides of the same phenomenon (Jenkins, 2006). In other words, concepts of convergence embrace both blurring traditional boundaries between old media and novel diversification and differentiation of new media. Convergence as a metaphor has the function of simplifying the complexity of media change. It fits nearly all aspects of digital media development, and it is also used as a 'rhetorical tool' to convince stakeholders of certain reforms (Fagerjord and Storsul, 2007)

A social platform is an internet based technology that facilitates the development, deployment and management of digital services. Oxford has defined social media as, "Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking". Social media is an interactive internet-based platform. The one who uses the social media develops content, such as text posts, photos or videos and data generated through all online interactions, are the essence of social media. Social media provides the development of online social networks by connecting a persons profile with those of other individuals or groups. The engagement of the people using social media services is highly interactive as individuals, communities and organizations share, co-create, discuss and modify any content online.

The use of social media is not restricted to any individual, group or institution. Perhaps, it is widely being used by anyone and everyone to become more and more interactive and hence gain popular amongst their social groups. The radio, which is very well known as a blind media, is also getting connected to their listeners on social media. Now, almost every radio station has their social media accounts on all possible platforms and they have a dedicated social media team or department to manage these accounts.

The Radio Jockeys have also made their own social media accounts to promote them not just as the voice behind the mic rather as brands or celebrities. Some are very actively managing their accounts on their own and others accounts are handled by the radio station they are associated with. Many Radio Jockeys have also hired some PR agencies to manage their social media accounts so as to gain more popularity and build a strong fan following.

The demand of social media presence of radio jockeys have increased considerably in the past few years. It has become essential for the radio jockeys to be present and “visible” on all possible social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, Snapchat etc. Unlike earlier times when one could only imagine a fantasy face behind the voice coming out of the radio sets now the listener very well recognizes the radio jockeys by their face and can connect immediately through any social media.

In this changing era of digital India, almost every person is using a smart phone with unlimited internet facility and can download numerous social media applications in their phones using them every now and then. The reach of the listener to the Radio Jockey has become just a click away on the social media. The paper focuses on the amount of

Objectives of the Study:

1. To understand the popularity of RJs in relation to social media amongst youth listener.
2. To find out the Radio Jockey’s perspective on developing content for the social media.

Methodology: To meet the objectives, a research study was designed to generate data on the subject using both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection.

1. *Questionnaires:* Questionnaires were developed to learn which RJs are popular among youth.

An effort was also made to understand the level of listener involvement on RJ’s social media activities listener

2. *Interviews:* Interviews of Radio Jockeys were conducted to find out the reason of presence on social media and content, developed by them for the social media.

Selection of Participants: Students of University of Delhi were selected.

Age group: 17 years to 21years.

Selection of Radio Jockeys: Three RJs were selected for the study as per their different genres of radio and social media content.

Sl.No.	Radio Jockey	Radio Channel
1.	Sukriti	98.3 FM (Radio Mirchi)
2.	Sayema	98.3 FM (Radio Mirchi)
3.	Heena	93.5 FM (RED FM)

Period of Study: From August to November 2017

Findings: The Objective Wise Findings Are Presented Staring With First Objective That Is:

Findings of Objective: Popularity of Radio Jockeys (RJs) in relation to social media amongst youth

The questionnaire was developed to analyze the popularity of the Radio Jockeys amongst the youth on social media along with radio.

The questionnaire was administered to a total of 45 students of Delhi University out of which 33 questionnaires were found to be complete and included for analysis.

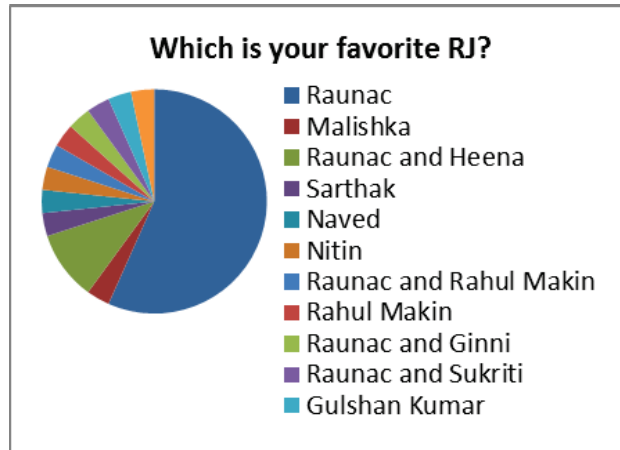


Fig. 1: Favourite Radio Jockey of listeners in Delhi

The data represents that the listeners have their favourite Radio Jockeys which they follow on both radio and social media. Amongst 13 popular Radio Jockeys of Delhi, RJ Raunac (FM 98.3 Radio Mirchie) was liked by 57% of the listeners, RJ Raunac and Heena combined are liked by 10 % of the listeners and other RJs like Ginni, Sukriti, Rahul Makin, Gulshan Kumar, Sarthak, Naved and Nitin are liked by 3 % each by the listeners.

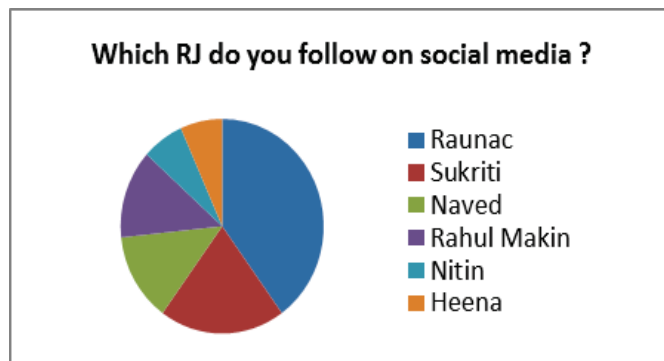


Fig 2: Radio Jockeys Followed On Social Media by Listeners

When asked that which Radio Jockey they follow on social media the listeners follows RJ Raunac, RJ Sukriti, RJ Naved, RJ Rahul Makin, RJ Nitin and RJ Heena, According to the responses RJ Raunac was followed by maximum number of respondents i.e. 40%, followed by RJ Sukriti 20%, RJ Naved and Rahul Makin 13 %, RJ Nitin and Heena share almost same and least amount of followers i.e. 7% on social media.

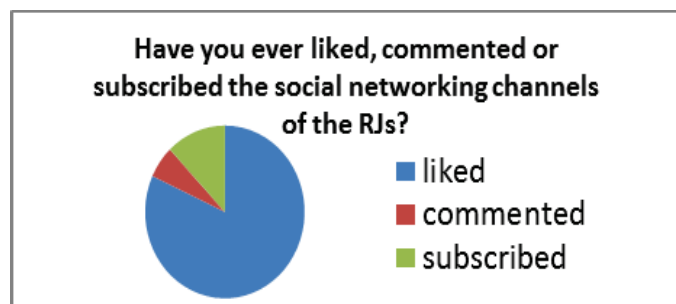


Fig 3: Percentage of Listeners Liked, Commented or Subscribed the Social Media Channels of RJs

According to the responses, it shows very clearly that almost 82% of the listeners had liked the social media posts of the Radio Jockeys whereas 12% have subscribed their social media channels and 6 % of the listeners have also commented on the social media post of the Radio Jockeys that they follow.

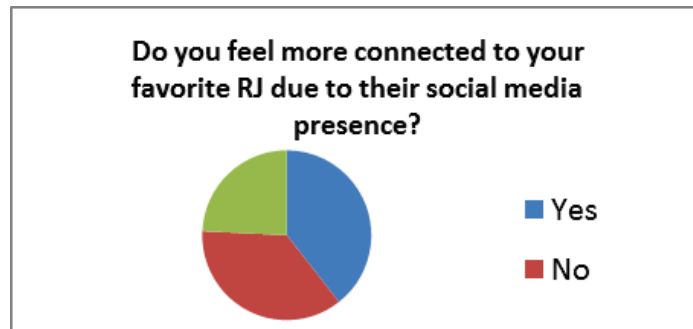


Fig 4: Result of Listeners Who Feel Connected to Their Favourite Radio Jockey Due to Their Social Media Presence

The connection of the RJ and the listener on the social media was analyzed through the responses and it was concluded that 40 % of the listeners feel that the connection between their favourite Radio Jockeys and them became stronger and they feel more connected due to the presence of the Radio Jockey on social media. 24 % of the listeners responded that they can't say that they felt connected but they enjoy their posts for sure. On the other hand, 36% of the respondents did not feel any connection because according to them they are following the Radio Jockeys on social media just to have fun and entertainment.

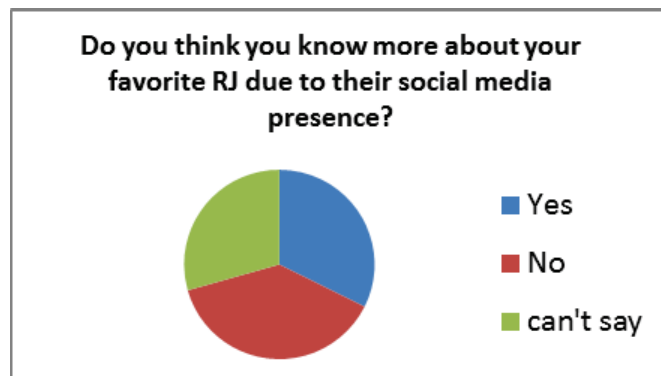


Fig 5: Result of Listeners Who Feel They Know More about Their Favourite Radio Jockey Due To Their Presence on Social Media

When asked that if the listeners know more about their favourite RJ due to their presence on social media then 32 % respondents agreed that they do know more about the RJ, 30 % responded that they can't say and 38% disagreed that they do not know much about their favourite Radio Jockey due to their presence on social media.

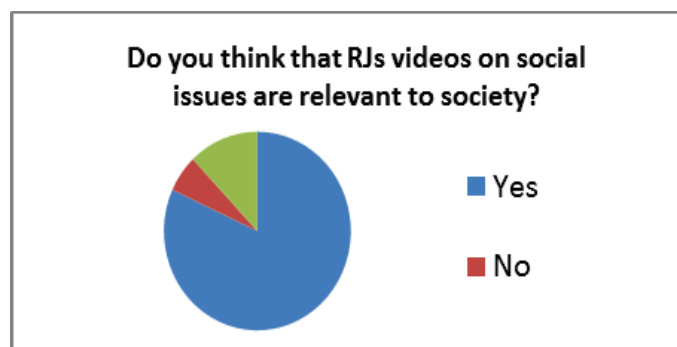


Fig. 6: Results Showing the Radio Jockeys Videos Being Socially Relevant

When asked about the Radio Jockey's videos on social issues and their relevance to the society, 82 % respondents agreed that these videos have the relevance to the society, 6% feel no relevance and 12 % responded that they have never seen social issues videos of the Radio Jockeys.

Result: From the analysis of the questionnaire it was found that listeners feel more connected to their RJs when they follow them on social media which in turn increases the popularity of RJ. Listeners also feel that the content created by RJs are socially relevant.

Findings of Objective: Radio Jockey's Perspective on Developing Content for the Social Media: To understand the viewpoints of RJs on reasons of developing social media content in-depth interview was conducted. Following were the main themes which were discussed:

Reason of Starting A Social Media Account: RJs wanted to connect to their listeners and social media was considered as a best way to stay in direct touch with their listener. During the interview RJ Heena mentioned that social media like Facebook, Twitter or Instagram is a great platform where she connected with her listeners actively. She also talked about the earlier times when the RJ was just a voice behind the radio, people used to recognize the RJ's voice which created a curiosity amongst the listeners about how the RJ looks like. To answer this curiosity in 2012 RJ Heena created a page on Facebook where she used to post her videos recorded during her RJ show. This gave listeners an idea how the RJ works and could relate to the voice and the person behind the radio. RJ Sukriti referred that during the show they are unable to connect with most of their listeners but social media gives them an opportunity to do so. RJ Sayema chose not to be a hidden reality and come out brave to project how the RJ looks like through social media page.

Visibility of the RJ on Social Media: Radio Jockeys give major importance to their social media pages and believe that they should have consistency in doing so. During the interview RJ Heena mentioned that on social media RJ is a promise and listeners get to see the other side of them. She said that the RJ is as normal person as the listeners are and have similar likings as of an ordinary listener like roaming out with friends, eating junk food from streets, shopping from local markets etc. RJ Sayema referred that by showcasing the interests, hobbies, opinions and other qualities or talents the RJ becomes more visible to the listener on social media. Social media is an open window to talk and discuss about issues and views for the listeners as well as the RJ. Moreover, the listeners can discuss the issues that concern them on daily basis on social media. RJ Sukriti added that to be on social media makes the RJ recognized by the listeners. It's not just their voice that the listener could have imagined instead they very well recognize today's Radio Jockeys.

Popularity of the RJ on Social Media: RJs want to get more popular amongst their audience for which they try to come up with interesting and creative ideas for discussion or debate during their program on radio. RJ Sukriti mentioned that radio and social media are two different platforms and on both medium there are different set of people who follow the RJ at different timings and places. There are people who are only following the RJ on social media and have never heard them on radio. Likewise, RJ Sayema referred about her fans from Pakistan and other countries that follow her Urdu poetry and moral stories on her Facebook page, where there is no access of Radio Mirchi for these people at all. Similarly, RJ Heena shared that whatever the audience of the social media want to see, the RJ would love to do that for them and this is the only key to create a strong bond with the audience and hence gain popularity amongst them.

Developing Content for Social Media: Developing content for social media is an art and every RJ applies different ways to make it interesting for the social media audience. RJ Sukriti develops content for social media mostly according to the upcoming festival or event and few of her videos are related to any generic topic which is a concern for the society in the current scenario. RJ Sayema mostly posts videos of her passion that is for Urdu Poetry, social moral stories and singsongs on her guitar requested by her follower on her Facebook page. She reads the famous poetry of different poets and relates those on applying in real life as well. RJ Heena shared that she consistently posts everything she develops for her radio show on her Facebook page. Therefore, those who do not follow her on radio knows what she delivers on radio and it is an added advantage for those who might miss any of her show on radio.

Relevance of RJ Videos to the Audience: RJ Sukriti said, "When you are making a relatable content then the audience comment, like or share that particular content and likability and acceptability of that content totally depends on how much the audience is able to relate to it." In RJ Heena's opinion people look up to the RJs and they follow them very critically. The videos that the RJ post on social media are taken as a mirror to the society and people believe that Radio Jockey will provide the hidden answers they are looking for any particular issue through these videos. RJ Sayema mentioned that the listener always want to know about the stand or view point of the RJ for anything and everything. And if the RJ is not present on social media then it creates a big

barrier for the audience to know about the RJ. It is like denying the world a chance to connect with the RJ which actually means that may be the RJ is socially shy or not giving any opportunity to get in touch with him/her and that is actually blocking the audience to get into the life of the RJ. It also means that the RJ has non-opinionated.

Creating Content on Social Issues: Social media provides the opportunity to be able to share or speak up for the social issues in an open platform. RJ Sukriti said that anything that can hit the masses which can make the audience think, laugh, cry or any emotion that hits them, she try to develop them and keep doing it consistently. RJ Sayema mentioned that a public figure has a lot of social responsibility and he/she should feel it much more than a normal person. It is essential to raise the voice where it should be raised and break the silence where one can sense the silence is building up. It is very important to get the right out of another person, to make them feel that they should stand up for certain causes. RJ Heena referred that the RJ creates the content on social issues that she strongly feel for not just to gain popularity or for the sake of it.

RJs Videos on Social Causes: The Radio Jockeys talk about today's facts and mostly their videos are based on the true social realities of the society's current scenario. Radio Jockeys influence their followers who in-turn participates actively on the social platforms and join hands to accomplish social goals together. The social videos that the Radio Jockeys upload are essentially a medium to express their personal views and to find out the opinions of the listener on that issue.

RJs aware and create impact on the people who follow them and leads the steps towards bringing about social behavioral change amongst the masses. For example, the recent RED TOWEL campaign by 93.5 Red FM on distributing RED Towel to those men who publically urinate on the public walls. Through this campaign the Radio Jockeys of 93.5 Red FM tried to motive men to use public toilets instead to urinate outside on any public wall. The team set up a water shower sprinkler on the walls that were used for urination by the men. The RJs urged the radio listeners to inform them about any such wall if they are aware about so that the RED FM team could install these water sprinkles over the walls. And when any men tries to urinate on that wall the hidden water sprinklers wets them so they require a towel to dry themselves.

The live videos of the execution of this campaign went viral on social media and the discussion and interaction of Radio Jockeys of 93.5 Red FM increased. People's participation in this campaign was immensely remarkable.

Current Trend: RJ Heena mentioned that everybody is active these days on social media and digital is going to go many folds ahead and it is very well understood that RJ cannot just do much only with radio and to be impactful it is very important to be digital. And these days nobody likes to be a hidden identity and she would love people to recognize her and knowher by face, voice and work.

RJ Sayema referred that a Radio presenter who is not on social media is also considered as presenters who have no opinions and how can anyone aspire to be a person who is non-opinionated.

RJ Sukriti said, "When the world is on social media then the RJ should also be on social media. It totally depends on the RJ and his/her personal choice if they want to be on social media but if the RJ is on Social media so that is an added advantage for an RJ to be on social media apart from radio".

Conclusions: According to the respondents, the Radio Jockeys in a light and comic manner provide information and simultaneously keep the entertainment factor alive on radio and social media as well. The RJs who are active on social media are more connected to the listener as they know what kind of shows they do, where they go, what they like, whom they meet etc. The lifestyle of the radio jockey is also followed by many of their fans. Through social media the Radio Jockey widens the connect he/she has with his/her fan base. They are able to connect in broader terms with the viewers, as they are able to express their point of views on the current affairs or social issues, in a better manner, without any time constrains. They express themselves more openly on the views or issues they feel strongly about.

Being on social media makes the Radio Jockeys famous amongst all age groups as everyone in this era active on social media, so they grab more public attention and gain publicity and popularity at a large scale. The reason for this is the potential for more frequent interaction between the listener and the radio jockeys that become more intense with the instant responses by both. RJ who is active on social media is followed more by the

listener as compared to the one who isn't present. Also, he/she can viral his/her thought and become more expressive as the youth is turning towards social media platforms in the current scenario.

The RJ who is active on social media keeps his listener updated about not only his personal or professional life but also provides insight on upcoming events, current affairs and news and this makes him/her more appealing to the listener. They express themselves more on the social media, so the listener knows them more closely and becomes more active towards following them. The listener is able to see the Radio Jockeys and know how they look and relate to them more significantly. Through social media Radio jockeys display their special talents other than their mesmerizing voice that the listener loves to explore about them. People like to watch the videos and pranks Radio Jockeys do to promote any social activity and easily & directly connect to their fans, by expressing those things too which they cannot through radio. This helps them to gain more attentions, attraction, and interaction with the listener.

The most important factor of getting feedback is instantly given by the listener on the social media platforms. The listener like, share, comment or subscribe every content they relate to that is posted by the Radio Jockeys on their social media sites.

Acknowledgement: This research was supported by Radio Mirchi 98.3FM and Red FM 93.5 FM. We thank all the Radio Jockeys for sharing their deep insights, knowledge and experiences to felicitate the research. We would also like to thank all the respondents for providing us the valuable information helping us conclude the study.

References:

1. Jenkins, H. (2006), *Convergence Culture. Where old and new media collide*, New York and London: New York University Press.
2. Fagerjord, A. and T. Storsul (2007), 'Questioning Convergence', in T. Storsul and D. Stuedahl (eds) (2007), *Ambivalence towards convergence. Digitalization and Media Change*, Göteborg: Nordicom
3. Obar, Jonathan A.; Wildman, Steve (2015). "Social media definition and the governance challenge: An introduction to the special issue". *Telecommunications policy*. 39 (9): 745–750. SSRN2647377.
4. Kaplan Andreas M., Haenlein Michael (2010). "Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media" (PDF). *Business Horizons*. 53(1): 61. doi10.1016/j.bushor.2009.09.003
5. boyd, danah m.; Ellison, Nicole B. (2007). "Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship". *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*. 13 (1): 210–30.
6. Retrieved on 5.10.2017 from <http://www.technopedia.com/definition/23759/social-platform>
