

**Effects of "Tinka Tinka Sukh", A Radio Soap Opera in India, on Gender Equality,
Women's Rights, and Family Planning*.**

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Abstract

The purpose of the present paper is to investigate the effects of “Tinka Tinka Sukh” (Happiness Lies in Small Things), a 104-episode entertainment-education radio soap opera that promoted gender equality, women's empowerment, small family size, family harmony, environmental conservation, and HIV prevention. Here we summarize the history of “Tinka Tinka Sukh’s” creation, analyze its storyline and educational themes, investigate its portrayal of positive and negative role-models, discuss the letter-writing phenomenon in the program, and compare the differences between its listeners and non-listeners.

Effects of “Tinka Tinka Sukh”, A Radio Soap Opera in India, on Gender Equality, Women’s Rights, and Family Planning¹.

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The purpose of the present paper is to investigate the effects of “Tinka Tinka Sukh” (Happiness Lies in Small Things), a 104-episode entertainment-education radio soap opera that was broadcast in India from February, 1996 to February, 1997. Its purpose was to promote gender equality, women's empowerment, small family size, family harmony, environmental conservation, and HIV prevention. Here we summarize the history of “Tinka Tinka Sukh’s” creation, analyze its storyline and educational themes, investigate its portrayal of positive and negative role-models, discuss the letter-writing phenomenon in the program, and compare the differences between its listeners and non-listeners.

Here we are able to present only preliminary findings from our research study. We collected multiple types of data in a methodological triangulation to evaluate the effects of “Tinka Tinka Sukh”: (1) content analyses of the 104 scripts; (2) personal interviews with key officials involved in the production of the soap opera; (3) a before-after survey in a treatment area (Gonda District) and a control area (Allahabad District) in Uttar Pradesh State in India (Figure 1); (4) content analyses of a random sample of 237 letters (of the 150,000 letters) written by listeners; (5) a questionnaire survey of letter-writers; and (6) an in-depth case study of Village Lutsaan in the state of Uttar Pradesh, India where the radio program seemed to have especially strong community effects.

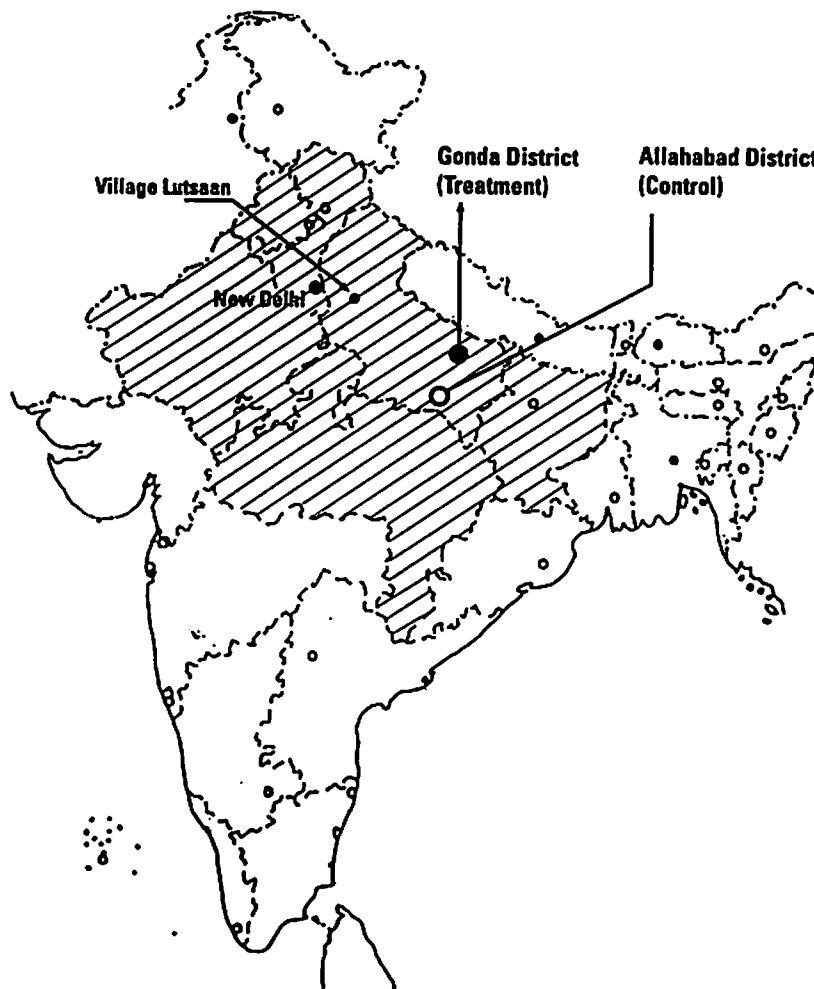


Figure 1. The radio soap opera "Tinka Tinka Sukh" was broadcast by 27 stations of All India Radio in the Hindi belt of North India (shaded).

Survey data were gathered from households before and after the 12-months of broadcasts (from February, 1996) in Gonda District and Allahabad District (the control area, in which "Tinka Tinka Sukh" was not broadcast). An indepth study of the effects of the radio soap opera was conducted in Village Lutsaan.

Source: Singhal and Rogers (in press).

The Creation

The idea for "Tinka Tinka Sukh" was mooted in a 1994 meeting by David Poindexter, then President of Population Communications International and Shashi Kapoor, Director-General of All India Radio (AIR) in New Delhi. Poindexter's organization had previously helped launch two popular entertainment-education television serials in India -- "Hum Log" (We People) in 1984-1985 and "Hum Raahi" (Co-Travelers) in 1992-1993 -- on Doordarshan, the Indian national network television. Both TV serials had attracted large audiences in the Hindi-speaking area of North India (with ratings of up to 90 percent). Both dealt with issues of gender equality, family harmony, and family size (Singhal & Rogers, 1989; Rogers et al., 1994). Kapoor entrusted the task of producing "Tinka Tinka Sukh" to Mrs. Usha Bhasin, then Director of Programmes at All India Radio, who had previously produced three highly popular and provocative radio serials at AIR dealing with such issues as adolescence ("Jeevan Saurabh" in 1988), marriage incompatibility ("Jeevan Saurabh II" in 1989), and teenage sexuality ("Dehleez" in 1994-1995)² (Bhasin & Singhal, 1998).

PCI helped conduct a workshop at AIR in June, 1995 to share with Usha Bhasin and her team Miguel Sabido's methodology of producing entertainment-education soap operas. The AIR workshop helped sketch the general outline for "Tinka Tinka Sukh", including the careful delineation of its educational values, positive and negative characters, and the locale of its storyline. Bhasin identified a core group of eleven scriptwriters and six producers for this radio series, several of whom had participated in the writing and production of the previously broadcast AIR radio series "Dehleez" (in 1994-1995). The writing of "Tinka Tinka Sukh" began almost immediately after the PCI workshop at AIR,

and its production began in September, 1995. Based on feedback received from the listeners to previous AIR serials, it was decided that the radio serial would be “music-heavy”. However, the music had to be selected carefully in order to appeal to audiences in the entire Hindi-speaking belt. India’s renowned poet Gulzaar, who is well-known for his lyrics of several Hindi film songs, wrote the theme song for “Tinka Tinka Sukh”. The famous Bombay-based music director Vishal Bharadwaj composed the catchy tune, and well-known playback singer Kavita Krishnamoorthy lent her voice.³

Bhasin and her production team also decided to use a musical base for delivering the epilogues at the end of each episode. In order to distinguish the music of the theme song from that of the epilogues, and also to find a common musical base appropriate for the entire Hindi-speaking area, the epilogues were written in the form of dohas (couplets). Dohas are universally popular in Hindi-speaking India. Religious and educational sermons are commonly associated with this genre of song and poetry. The dohas for “Tinka Tinka Sukh” were written by Acchar Singh Parmar, who served both as a producer and an artist for “Tinka Tinka Sukh”. He was thus familiar with the storyline and the educational context of the radio serial.

Once the storyline was outlined and the major characters were planned, several well-known artists from radio and theater were hired. Writing tasks were divided among the eleven scriptwriters, each of whom brought unique strengths to the storyline. For instance, a writer with a legal background was hired to write the episodes dealing with women’s rights and divorce law. A radio studio was hired outside of AIR and production began in September, 1995. A sponsor, Primetime, was found, who in turn sold the

episodes to other commercial sponsors. Each episode of "Tinka Tinka Sukh", including costs for artists' salaries, studio charges, music, etc. cost about Rs. 20,000 (\$500 U.S.).

A great deal of pre-program publicity over six months preceded the first broadcast of "Tinka Tinka Sukh". This pre-program publicity was carried out via radio, television, and the national, regional, and vernacular press. Promotional spots of "Tinka Tinka Sukh" with its catchy theme song, character voices, jingles, and narration were broadcast on all of the 27 radio stations where the radio series would be broadcast. In addition, these spots were also broadcast on the commercial channels of All India Radio, the youth channel, and the national network radio channel. Similar spots were broadcast on Doordarshan, the Indian national television network, emphasizing the family-orientation of the forthcoming radio serial and its long duration (by Indian standards) of 12 months. Once the broadcast dates and times of "Tinka Tinka Sukh" were finalized, these were publicized on radio, and TV, and in press publicity materials.

"Tinka Tinka Sukh" was broadcast from February 19, 1996 for one year, over 27 radio stations of All India Radio, covering seven Indian states in the population-rich Hindi-speaking area of northern India: Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Delhi (see Figure 1). Some 600 million people comprising 100 million households live in these seven Indian states. Based on our 1997 survey, we estimated the regular listenership of "Tinka Tinka Sukh" to be about 6 percent⁴, which translates to an audience of 36 to 40 million people, the largest audience for a radio soap opera broadcast by All India Radio, and perhaps worldwide.

The Storyline

Our analysis of the scripts showed that "Tinka Tinka Sukh" (Happiness Lies in Small Things) tells the story of how everyday, ordinary acts of human interaction are what happiness is all about. Navgaon is a farming community struggling to understand the value of modern traditions, and moving in progressive directions. Suraj, his father Chaudhri, and mother Chaudhrian, represent an ideal family (Table 1). Chaudhri and his wife understand, on one hand, the role of tradition, and, on the other, the progressive ways that are of growing importance. The couple represent pro-women's causes -- anti-dowry, marriage and divorce, women's empowerment -- and the importance of creating an integrated harmonious community based on cooperation and self-sufficiency. They raised their son Suraj to appreciate the importance of agriculture and individuals' relationship with their environment, particularly the community. This family's virtuous ways earn the loyal support of their workers Jumman and his wife Rukhsana. A poor couple, Jumman is a farmhand in the Chaudhri's fields, while Rukhsana does household work.

Chacha, his wife Chachi, and their children Ramlal, Nandini, Sundar, Suman, and Pappu, are the antithesis of the Chaudhri's family. Chacha believes he is absolved of all parental responsibilities since he is the breadwinner. Chachi is domineering, blindly traditional, and very vocal. She is the village gossip of Navgaon. She is indulgent of her eldest son Ramlal, a delinquent, and critical of her daughters. Her eldest daughter Champa quietly grows out of the family's shadows to become a famous singer, with the help of her friends.

Table 1. Description of the Main Characters in “Tinka Tinka Sukh”.

Characters	Description
Chaudhri	Head of village Navgaon, an ideal husband, a model father and community elder, who upholds pro-social values.
Chaudhrian	Chadhari’s wife, a model mother and female elder, who upholds pro-social values.
Suraj	Son of Chadhari and Chaudhrian and a model youth who upholds pro-social values.
Chacha	A cuckolded husband and negligent father of a large family.
Chachi	Chacha’s wife who is coquette, a village gossip, and blindly partial to her sons.
Ramlal	Chacha and Chachi’s eldest son, a village delinquent who troubles everyone, is pampered by his mother, and is ultimately reformed by Nandini’s love.
Champa	Chacha and Chachi’s daughter and a positive role-model who overcomes her parents’ neglect, her elder brother’s abuse, and the burdens of tradition to become a famous singer.
Sundar	Champa’s younger brother who is neglected by his parents. He tries to be self-dependent, fails and resorts to drugs; and is finally rehabilitated by his community’s support
Suman	Sundar’s younger sister who is a confused witness to her parents’ neglect but understands Sundar’s affection and his caring for her.
Jumman	A poor farmhand in Chaudhri’s fields who wishes to be rich and change his family’s lot. He is addicted to tobacco and alcohol and contracts HIV.
Rukhsana	Jumman’s wife who works very hard to make ends meet for large family. Is sometimes assertive but mostly puts up with her husband’s alcoholism
Gareebo	A poor widow in Navgaon who tries to be traditional yet open-minded in raising her three daughters – Nandini, Kusum, and Lali..
Nandini	A positive role-model for gender equality who overcomes hardships of an all-women family through her determination, courage, and perseverance.
Kusum	Nandini’s sister who dislikes school and dreams of a leisurely life. She marries young and dies in childbirth.
Lali	Follows eldest sister Nandini’s footsteps and becomes the village’s first trained medical doctor.
Poonam	Tries to save herself from torture by her husband and his parents over dowry by returning to her parents home. She succumbs to pressures by committing suicide.
Sushma	Kusum’s sister-in-law who is tortured by her husband and his parents for insufficient dowry. She returns home with her son and takes charge of her life with the help of her parents, brother, and other community members. She establishes a flourishing sewing school in Navgaon, where other women gain personal efficacy.

Source: Sood, Singhal, and Law (1997).

The lives of Gareebo (a widow) and her daughters Nandini, Kusum, and Lali show the trials of being a woman in a patriarchal society. Gareebo feels societal pressure to get her daughters married since they have come of age. Nandini, the eldest, will not marry until she becomes self-dependent as a teacher. Kusum gets married early and dies in childbirth. Lali becomes a medical doctor, the first in Navgaon.

A tragedy occurs in Navgaon when Poonam is abused by her husband and his parents because her family does not pay an adequate dowry. She commits suicide. Sushma, sister-in-law of Kusum, finds herself abandoned by her husband, also for dowry. Encouraged by Nandini, Champa, and Suraj and supported by her parents, Sushma overcomes her trials and establishes a sewing school, which provides her with economic independence.

Ramlal is transformed by the quiet determination of Nandini, and realizes how his delinquent acts upset the peace of the community. He becomes a Block Development Officer in Navgaon so that he can contribute to his village. Champa starts an adult night-school, while Sushma's school expands and creates economic opportunities for more women. Jumman is momentarily swayed by urban glamour, contracts AIDS, and disrupts his family's harmony, but he finally accepts his wife's view that life's happiness lies in small things.

Educational Themes

"Tinka Tinka Sukh" promoted women's issues. Women's empowerment was addressed in 80 percent of all episodes. Some 86 percent of the episodes discussed ways for suppressed women to restore their self-confidence. Women's education was featured in 51 percent of all episodes. Some 32 percent of all episodes addressed the subject of

women becoming self-reliant. Women's right to equal nutrition with men was dealt with in 18 percent of all episodes, and women's right of equal access to health care was dealt with in 15 percent of all episodes.

Although it is illegal to give or receive dowry in India, the custom is widely practiced. The negative consequences of the dowry system were examined in 21 percent of the radio soap opera's episodes. Torture of a bride (Poonam) for an insufficient dowry is emphasized in 25 percent of the episodes. Some 8 percent of the episodes dealt with not victimizing a woman if she does not become pregnant and deliver a son. Some 41 percent of the episodes showed that harmonious relations could exist between the woman and her husband's parents and family.

Some 62 percent of "Tinka Tinka Sukh's" episodes advocated that parents should talk to their children about education, future plans, and so on. The soap opera dealt with the preferential treatment of male children in half of its episodes. "Tinka Tinka Sukh" proposed in 29 percent of its episodes that sons should participate in domestic chores. This attitude is demonstrated by Suraj, the model youth of the village, and reinforced by his parents and by his friend.

Positive and Negative Characters in "Tinka Tinka Sukh"

The educational purposes of "Tinka Tinka Sukh", namely women's empowerment, gender equality and others, were portrayed by the central characters as positive/pro-social, negative/anti-social, or neutral behaviors (see Table1). The transitional characters in "Tinka Tinka Sukh" reflect the inner struggle that challenges an individual when faced by a multitude of choices and who is uninformed, morally weak, or ethically indecisive.

Among the positive role-models, Chaudhri, his wife Chaudhrian, and their son Suraj, make up an ideal family. Suraj is rewarded for his pro-social behavior in 68 percent of the episodes. In other situations, he is rebuffed, unrewarded for taking a pro-social stand, or even punished, as when another village youth, Ramlal, and his delinquent friends try to harm Suraj by staging a fake accident.

Chaudhri is rewarded in 80 percent of the episodes in which he is present, and his wife is rewarded 75 percent of the time. Despite Chaudhri's unambiguous pro-social character, Chachi, the village gossip, criticizes him and tries to foment skepticism about his leadership. If Chaudhrian represents the best in woman's empowerment, Chachi represents the worst (she is anti-social in 71 percent of the episodes). Chachi is deservedly not rewarded in 90 percent of the episodes and is punished in 17 percent. The worst punishment she receives is when she is rebuked by her eldest son whom she blindly indulged for her own selfish reasons.

The tragedy of Poonam provides a lesson for listeners to this radio soap opera. Her father Birju (pro-social in 71 percent of cases) arranges her marriage in the traditional Indian way, with a substantive dowry. But Poonam's husband and his parents torture her out of greed for more dowry, and she is driven out of their house. At first she sees her situation as hopeless, but she is encouraged when the village justice court gives her a favorable decision. Upon her return to her husband's home, however, she is tortured until she commits suicide.

So various positive, negative, and transitional characters were presented in "Tinka Tinka Sukh" to dramatize its educational themes. These characters are rewarded or punished to serve as a moral lesson for the radio program's listeners.

Letter-Writing

As in the case of the television soap opera "Hum Log" broadcast in 1984-1985, a large number of letters were written to the broadcasters. Approximately 150,000 letters were received by AIR in response to "Tinka Tinka Sukh" during its one year of broadcasts. Why do people in India write so many letters in response to entertainment-education soap operas? First, we must remember that while the number of such letters is impressive, as a percentage of the total listeners, the response by letter is not so large. For example, we estimate the total audience of listeners to "Tinka Tinka Sukh" at 36 to 40 million. So only 0.4 of 1 percent of the total listeners wrote a letter to All India Radio as a result of our soap opera of study. Further, the notion of writing letters is an important part of Indian culture. Finally, the involving nature of entertainment-education interventions in any country seems to encourage audience letter-writing.⁵ Each episode of a radio soap opera typically ends by encouraging letter-writing, and by providing the broadcaster's address.

We randomly selected 260 letters from the 5,000 letters that we obtained from All India Radio. They were content-analyzed (23 were discarded due to difficulties in reading them) in order to understand the perceptions of the letter-writers regarding the radio soap opera.

Audience members who wrote letters to "Tinka Tinka Sukh" are highly untypical (1) of all listeners, and (2) of the Indian population. Nevertheless, the letters provide valuable data for understanding the effects of the entertainment-education strategy employed by "Tinka Tinka Sukh". Approximately, 67 percent of the letter-writers were men, which is particularly noteworthy, given that 67 percent of listeners in our sample

survey were also male, and that men might be expected to be less interested in women's issues. Some 93 percent of the letter-writers were Hindu, and 5 percent were Muslim. Two-thirds of the letter-writers were from villages; only 12 percent of the letter-writers resided in cities. Some 90 percent of the letters were written by individuals, and the remaining 10 percent were written jointly by family members, groups, and organizations. A male writer from Uttar Pradesh wrote on behalf of a conference where the participants took the following oath: "We swear that to our very last breath we will work for the upliftment of women (self-reliance, courage). We will keep in mind the problems raised by "Tinka Tinka Sukh" and will work to eradicate these problems from our country. This is our decision, our right, and our duty."

The letter-writers indicated that they had learned about a variety of social issues from "Tinka Tinka Sukh" (Table 2). The main educational themes in "Tinka Tinka Sukh" explicated by the letter-writers dealt with gender equality. The empowerment of women was mentioned by 42 percent of the letters, the status of women before marriages was highlighted in 25 percent, and the status of women after marriage was referred to by 20 percent of the letters. One letter, responding to Poonam's suicide, indicated that "Poonam had a number of options. She could have learned from the examples of Sushma who is running a successful sewing school, or Nandini, who despite being born into a poor family is strong, brave and very firm in her decisions, or Champa who is doing so well in life."

Approximately 10 percent of the letter-writers explicitly mentioned having learned to recognize the preferential treatment given to men and to male children as a result of listening to "Tinka Tinka Sukh". One letter-writer suggested that "Tinka Tinka Sukh" should: "Show Champa gathering strength to stand up for her rights, thus also portraying

Table 2. Educational Themes Explicated in Letters to “Tinka Tinka Sukh”.

Education Themes Explicated in Letters to “ <u>Tinka Tinka Sukh</u> ”	Percent Mentioning the Theme (N = 237)
1. Learned about status of women in developing skills and capability	42%
2. Learned about dowry-related issues	29%
3. Learned about youth issues	27%
4. Learned about substance abuse (alcohol)	25%
5. Learned about status of women pre-marriage	25%
6. Learned about marriage and fertility	23%
7. Learned about community living	21%
8. Learned about the status of women post-marriage	19%
9. Learned about family life communication	16%
10. Learned about divorce, separation and legal issues	15%
11. Learned about preferential treatment of boys	10%
12. Learned about family planning	8%
13. Learned about breast-feeding and pregnancy	6%
14. Learned about HIV/AIDS-related information	6%

Source: Sood, Law, and Singhal (1998).

the importance of education for girls.” Some 29 percent of the letters mentioned that “Tinka Tinka Sukh” has made them more aware of dowry issues, especially after Poonam committed suicide. An additional 15 percent indicated that their knowledge about divorce, separation, and legal issues related to marriage increased as a result of Sushma’s actions. Child marriage, fertility regulation and family planning, and maternal and child health issues were mentioned by 23 percent, 8 percent, and 6 percent of the letters-writers, respectively. Most were specifically due to Kusum’s untimely death in teenage childbirth.

Substance abuse, specifically alcohol, was a main educational theme highlighted by “Tinka Tinka Sukh” and was the subject of 25 percent of the letters. As one of the letter-writers indicated: “Sundar abused his own parents after he had consumed alcohol. It is difficult to imagine a sweet boy like Sundar behaving in this negative fashion. This is what alcohol does to a man.” Almost 6 percent of the letter-writers said they learned about AIDS-related information from “Tinka Tinka Sukh”. Some letter-writers connected alcohol with HIV/AIDS by stating that alcohol consumption made Jumman more prone to promiscuous behavior, which in turn led to his HIV infection.

Letter-writers also exhibited a high degree of parasocial interaction with the radio soap opera and its characters (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7). Many listeners said that they rearranged their schedules in order to be able to listen to “Tinka Tinka Sukh”. A female letter-writer from Madhya Pradesh wrote: “I listen to “Tinka Tinka Sukh” regularly. I might forget everything else, but I never forget to listen to “Tinka Tinka Sukh”.” Some letter-writers claimed that they heard each episode twice. One viewer insisted that he arranged his day around “Tinka Tinka Sukh” broadcasts and listened to it

daily as broadcast by the various radio stations across Uttar Pradesh. Letter-writers listened to "Tinka Tinka Sukh" regularly because they perceived that "Tinka Tinka Sukh" kept them company; and that "Tinka Tinka Sukh" covered the issues that the letter-writers wanted to know about. One letter stated that the writer was amazed that "Tinka Tinka Sukh" was always on target with what was on the listener's mind. Some letter-writers indicated that they could compare their ideas with those presented on the radio program. As one letter-writer stated: "A few episodes ago, I disagreed with the Chaudhri and thought he was in the wrong, however, subsequent episodes have helped me understand and empathize with him. He is a great man and I apologize to him for mistrusting him and questioning his motives."

Parasocial interaction with characters led individuals to write that they viewed the characters as natural and down-to-earth people, and they made up their minds based on the opinion presented by the radio characters. As one letter-writer stated: "Poonam's suicide, Kusum's death at childbirth, Sushma's struggle to stand on her own feet and Rukhsana's life and problems have filled my heart with sentiments, Nandini has taught me to stick to my ideals and fight against injustice, Champa has inspired me to realize my inner potential, Suraj has taught me to be proud of heritage and culture."

Letter-writers thus demonstrated the many ways by which they became involved in the radio soap opera's characters and themes.

Comparing Listeners versus Non-Listeners

As mentioned previously, the research design for the study of the effects of "Tinka Tinka Sukh" included a before/after survey in a treatment and a control area. The broadcasts of "Tinka Tinka Sukh" were blocked in Allahabad District, which served as the

control area. Gonda District in Uttar Pradesh was selected as the treatment site, since it was comparable to Allahabad on key demographic variables. "Tinka Tinka Sukh's" broadcasts ended in mid-February, 1997 and the post-broadcast survey for "Tinka Tinka Sukh" was conducted in March-April, 1997.

The total sample size for the post-broadcast survey was 1,950, with 1,472 respondents in Gonda District and 478 in Allahabad District. The sample consisted of men (63 percent) and women (37 percent). The post-broadcast survey revealed only 6 percent of our respondents in the treatment area (N=88) listened to "Tinka Tinka Sukh" (no listeners were found in Allahabad District which suggests our control area was adequately preserved). The listeners represented a high-priority audience for the soap opera's educational messages: Over 90 percent of them were based in rural areas, 75 percent had monthly household incomes of less than 1,500 Rupees (\$38 U.S.), and 49 percent were illiterate. Among those who listened to the radio soap opera, there was a high level of involvement with "Tinka Tinka Sukh" and its characters. At least 66 percent of the listeners had heard "Tinka Tinka Sukh" at least once a week. The respondents indicated that fairly high levels of interpersonal communication about "Tinka Tinka Sukh" occurred after exposure to the episodes, with over 36 percent of the listeners indicating that they had discussed "Tinka Tinka Sukh" with others. Some 25 percent indicated that the interpersonal discussion about "Tinka Tinka Sukh" occurred with their spouse.

Almost half the listeners (50 percent) had enjoyed the radio soap opera so much that they made changes in their daily schedule to listen to the episodes. Some 60 percent of the listeners found "Tinka Tinka Sukh" to be both entertaining and educational and 70 percent indicated that "Tinka Tinka Sukh" was realistic and reflected the daily life in their

villages. The listeners exhibited a high degree of involvement with the individual characters in "Tinka Tinka Sukh." Some 43 percent of the listeners wanted to give advice to some character in "Tinka Tinka Sukh" and over 36 percent of them chose Suraj as the character they wanted to give advice to. Over 56 percent of the respondents indicated that they were most familiar with the character of Suraj, a positive role-model, and over 39 percent stated that Suraj was closest to them in character.

The low numbers of listeners (N=88) in Gonda District makes it problematic to assess causal changes as a result of listening to "Tinka Tinka Sukh". However, an analysis of listeners (N=88) versus non-listeners (N=1,384) in Gonda District showed that:

1. Listeners and non-listeners differed with respect to "starting to send a daughter to school" with more listeners (57 percent) than non-listeners (46 percent) responding in the affirmative.
2. Listeners and non-listeners differed with respect to "participation in community activities" with more listeners (11 percent) than non-listeners (5 percent) responding in the affirmative.
3. Listeners and non-listeners differed with respect to "visiting [health] sub-centers or clinics more often" with more listeners (47 percent) than non-listeners (35 percent) responding in the affirmative.
4. Listeners and non-listeners differed with respect to "seeking family planning information" with more listeners (42 percent) than non-listeners (20 percent) responding in the affirmative.

5. Listeners and non-listeners differed with respect to “adopting family planning methods” with more listeners (43 percent) than non-listeners (25 percent) responding in the affirmative.

As mentioned previously, these listener/non-listener differences in Gonda District were probably not due solely to listening to “Tinka Tinka Sukh”.

Conclusions

“Tinka Tinka Sukh” was highly popular with its listeners in the Hindi-speaking, high-fertility area of North India. Among the educational themes promoted by the radio program, gender equality, women’s empowerment, and harmonious community living were especially salient. Letters written by listeners indicated a high level of involvement with the storyline and its characters. Our post-broadcast survey revealed differences between listeners and non-listeners in educating a daughter, seeking advice on family planning, and visiting a health clinic.

Notes

¹ This paper draws upon Sood, Singhal, and Law (1997); Papa et al. (1998); and Sood, Law, and Singhal (1998).

² In 1998, Bhasin produced another highly popular entertainment-education radio serial on the environment, "Yeh Kahan Aa Gaye Hum" (Where Have We Arrived?), which was broadcast by AIR on 31 radio stations in the seven Hindi-speaking states of North India. The epilogues in this serial were delivered by Shabana Azmi, a popular Indian film actress, a social activist, and a member of parliament.

³ A playback singer actually sings the songs in Indian films that are mouthed by the actors seen on-screen.

⁴ Our estimates of "Tinka Tinka Sukh's" listenership are derived from the random sample survey we conducted in Gonda District, which according to AIR's Audience Research Unit typically lags behind other districts in the Hindi-speaking region in radio listenership. So our estimate of 36 to 40 million regular listeners of "Tinka Tinka Sukh" represents, in our opinion, a modest one.

⁵ The animated entertainment-education television series, "Superbook", based on Bible stories, engendered a high degree of letter-writing from viewers in several of the 50 countries where it has been broadcast to date (Fraser & Brown, 1997).

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