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***Abstract***

COMMUNITY RADIO AND ITS IMPACT ON  
LAW AND ORDER ISSUES IN THE  
SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS PROVINCE

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This is a case study of the effectiveness of NBC Radio SHP in addressing law and order issues in its coverage in the Southern Highlands Province.

The research analyses how NBC Radio SHP, the only mass media widely accessible by the people of Southern Highlands, addresses lawlessness issues. The study assesses whether the coverage helps alleviate these problems. Eighty-seven respondents were randomly selected from around the province to identify their listening habits and sought their views on the law and order programs presented by NBC Radio SHP. The responses and views form the basis of this study.

Interviews conducted with Andrew Meles, the provincial station manager of NBC Radio SHP identified some problems faced by NBC Radio SHP. The study seeks to determine whether community radio, wholly community owned, managed and operated, could be used to educate and inform people to eradicate lawlessness and tribal warfare.

Literature review of the theories of communication, developmental media and community radio indicated that PNG and the Southern Highlands have similar information needs as to other developing countries. Interviews conducted with NGOS and peace advocate groups in Southern Highlands intended to determine the involvement of the civil society the validity of their programs that could be incorporated into community radio. This would substantiate the belief that the establishment of a Community Radio is inevitable. The study reveals the process of engaging police to curb lawlessness is not alleviating the problems, as police have their own limitations. Research undertaken further suggests that NBC Radio SHP has not effectively addressed lawlessness and tribal warfare in its coverage. All aspects of this study tend to underline the need for an alternative or community radio outlet that can address the lawlessness issues in the province better than NBC Radio SHP.