

## This Review Identifies Key Areas of Interest and Gaps for Further Study, Focusing on the Interplay Between Narrative Techniques, Regional Contexts, and Audience Interpretations of Indian True Crime Podcasts

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### Literature Review on Podcasts

#### Introduction

Podcasts have emerged as a significant medium for content consumption, blending entertainment, education, and communication. Since their mainstream adoption in the early 2000s, podcasts have evolved into a versatile platform, reshaping traditional media consumption habits. This review focuses on examining the existing literature on podcasts, evaluating key sources, identifying prevailing themes and debates, and highlighting gaps in current research.

#### Evolution and Scope of Podcasts

Early studies focus on the origin and growth of podcasts as a media form describes the rise of podcasts as a "democratic medium," enabling diverse voices to bypass traditional gatekeepers such as broadcast networks [1]. Research highlights the accessibility and low production costs of podcasts as critical factors in their widespread adoption [2]. Additionally, underscores the potential of podcasts to redefine journalism, entertainment, and education in digital landscapes [3].

Despite their versatility, there remains limited longitudinal research on their broader impact on media consumption trends. Future studies could explore the long-term influence of podcasts on traditional media like radio or television.

#### Themes in Podcast Research

##### 1. Podcasts as an Educational Tool

- a. A growing body of research evaluates the educational

potential of podcasts. Argues that podcasts enhance learner engagement by delivering content flexibly and creatively. Similarly, finds that podcasts improve student outcomes when integrated into traditional classroom teaching. However, debates linger over their efficacy, with scholars like questioning their ability to sustain long-term student engagement [4,5].

- b. Research gaps in this area include how podcasts might address diverse learner needs, such as multilingual students or individuals with disabilities, in an inclusive manner.

##### 2. Podcasts and Content Creation Democracy

- a. An essential theme revolves around podcasts as a democratized medium. Markman argues that the relatively low barrier to entry allows for broader representation, fostering diverse perspectives often excluded from mainstream media. However, Russo discuss the challenges of discoverability for creators, particularly marginalized voices, in saturated podcast markets [7]. The debate around discoverability indicates a gap in research on algorithms and their potential biases in amplifying or suppressing podcast creators.

##### 3. Podcasts as a Media Genre

- a. Podcasts blur the boundaries between traditional and new media formats. McHugh identifies podcasts as a space where genres such as documentary, talk shows, and fiction intersect. This hybridity raises questions about audience expectations and how podcasts influence storytelling

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techniques. Investigating how podcasts influence audiences' media literacy remains underexplored.

### Debates and Gaps

1. Monetization and Economics: Monetizing podcasts has led to debates about whether the medium's independence is compromised. Scholars like Lindsay argue that the reliance on advertising threatens the integrity of content creation. Further research is needed to explore alternative business models and their sustainability.
2. Cultural and Regional Studies: There is a significant lack of research on podcasts within non-Western contexts. Much of the literature focuses on Western nations, leaving cultural influences and regional patterns in podcast adoption understudied.
3. Impact of Technology on Podcasting: While some work explores the role of platforms (e.g., Spotify and Apple Podcasts), the influence of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence on podcast creation and consumption requires deeper investigation.

### Conclusion and Directions for Future Research

This review reveals that podcasts are an emerging field of academic inquiry with diverse implications across education, media studies, and digital culture. Research on podcasts' educational benefits, democratized content creation, and unique genre characteristics has established the medium's significance. However, gaps persist in areas such as alternative monetization models, non-Western podcasting trends, and the role of technology in shaping future developments. Addressing these gaps can contribute to a holistic understanding of podcasts as a transformative medium.

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