

Community Media Persuasion for Rural Audience: Tuning in to Local Needs

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ABSTRACT

This research paper presents a comprehensive survey conducted to evaluate the need, effectiveness and utility of a Community Radio Station (CRS) planned to be established at Sirsa, India. The study aims to understand the media consumption habits, socio-economic conditions, and specific needs of the local residents, as well as their attitudes towards community radio.

A random sample of 510 respondents from Sirsa city and its neighboring villages participated in the survey, which included 44 questions covering various aspects of media usage, community issues, and demographic data. Key findings reveal that while television remains the dominant medium, there is a significant presence of mobile phone usage with FM capabilities, indicating a potential audience for radio broadcasting. The survey indicates that pollution, water scarcity, and mosquito problems are the most pressing local issues, and there is a substantial interest in educational and health-related radio programs.

The results also show a promising level of interest and willingness among residents to engage with the CRS, both as listeners and participants. With 75.8% expressing interest in participating in radio shows and 70.2% interested in becoming Radio Jockeys, the data underscores the community's enthusiasm for active involvement.

This paper concludes that the CRS at CDLU Sirsa has a strong foundation for success, supported by community interest and a clear understanding of local needs. The findings provide valuable insights for developing targeted content and fostering community engagement, thereby enhancing the CRS's role in local development and education.

KEYWORDS: Community Radio; Media Consumption; Audience Engagement; Local Issues; Media Habits; Rural India; Sirsa; CDLU

INTRODUCTION

Community Radio in India began in 2002, with the government initially granting licenses to well-established educational institutions. Subsequently, the policy expanded to include non-profit organizations, broadening participation in the sector. The inaugural Community Radio Station was launched by Bharat Ratna Shri L.K. Advani on 1st February 2004.

Government efforts have led to significant growth, with the number of Community Radio Stations increasing. Recent proactive steps, including online application processes, have facilitated ease of setting up Community Radio Stations.

Encouraged by such government initiatives and smooth processes, the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa also established its Community Radio station/ This station has been receiving a lot of love from the locals and has been acting as a training ground for its Mass Communication students. Some of the students have gained huge popularity around the area. It is a heartening

sight when a local comes to the station with a Mithai box to share his happiness on becoming a grandfather with his favourite RJs; or when a lady wants to announce on radio that she has started her own sewing and tailoring business from her small home, encouraged by the programs on this CRS. This station, which is a testimony to the efforts of young students and teachers can credit its success to the robust field research that was carried out before the launch. This research gauged and mapped the local needs, mood and demands before the establishment. In this paper, the data of this field survey is presented.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Gauge the usefulness and utility of the CRS for residents of Sirsa (20 km radius)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CDLU Sirsa was in the process of installing a Community Radio Station that was expected to reach audience up to a radius of 10-20 Kms. For this purpose, an initial user survey was conducted by the University, staff and students. This survey was undertaken with the objective of gauging the usefulness and utility of the CRS for the local residents. The questionnaire used for the survey was provided by the overlooking authorities. This questionnaire was administered to 510 respondents in Sirsa city and the adjoining villages. The results that were found are being conveyed through this report.

This survey was undertaken using a questionnaire with 44 questions. Random sampling technique was used to choose the respondents. The 510 respondents were uniformly divided into five age groups. No other quota or stratification was used. However, an attempt has been made to cover people from various walks of life. Males, females, urban, rural, professionally qualified, merely illiterate and people belonging to various socio-economic status were covered during the randomly administered survey. An attempt has been made in this report to not only present the obtained data but also to discuss the reasons behind the kind of responses or even no responses in some cases. The following data has been calculated from all the structured field questionnaires.

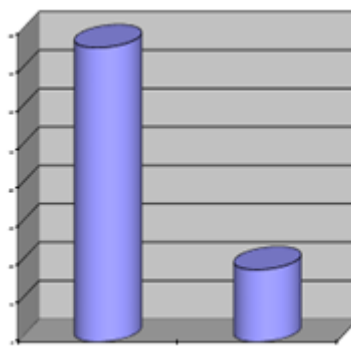
- **Sample Size:** 510 respondents from Sirsa city and adjoining villages.
- **Sampling Technique:** Random sampling, ensuring diverse demographic coverage.
- **Questionnaire:** 44 questions covering media habits, socio-economic status, and community needs.

RESULTS

TABULATION AND GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION

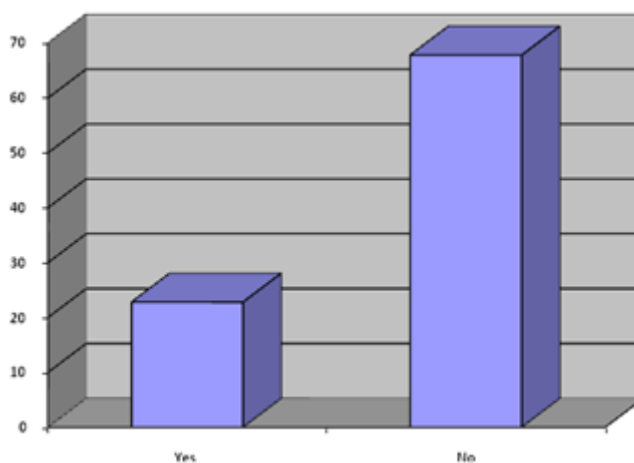
1. Respondents who receive a Newspaper at home:

Yes	No
76.6%	18.8%



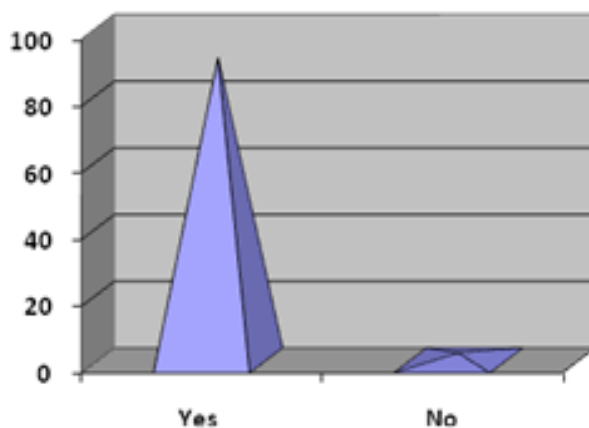
Respondents who receive a magazine at home:

Yes	No
22.8%	67.8%



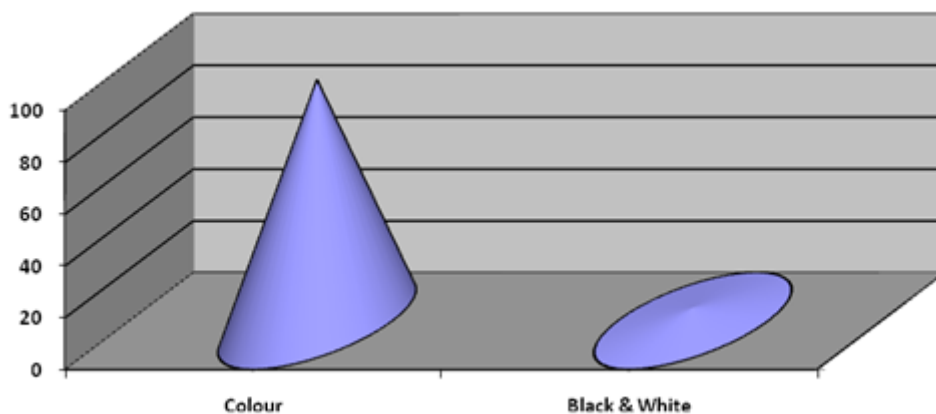
Respondents who own a Television Set:

Yes	No
90.8%	2.2%



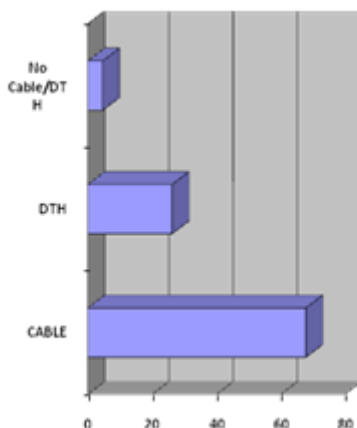
Type of TV that the respondents own:

Coloured	Black and White
93%	5.25%



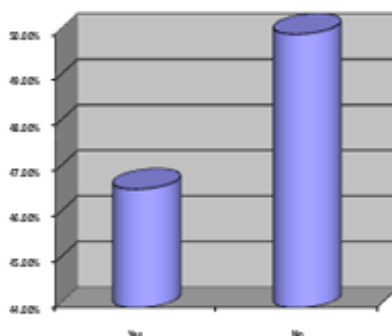
Respondents having some kind of Cable or DTH connection:

CABLE	DTH	No Cable/DTH
67.8%	26.2%	4.6%



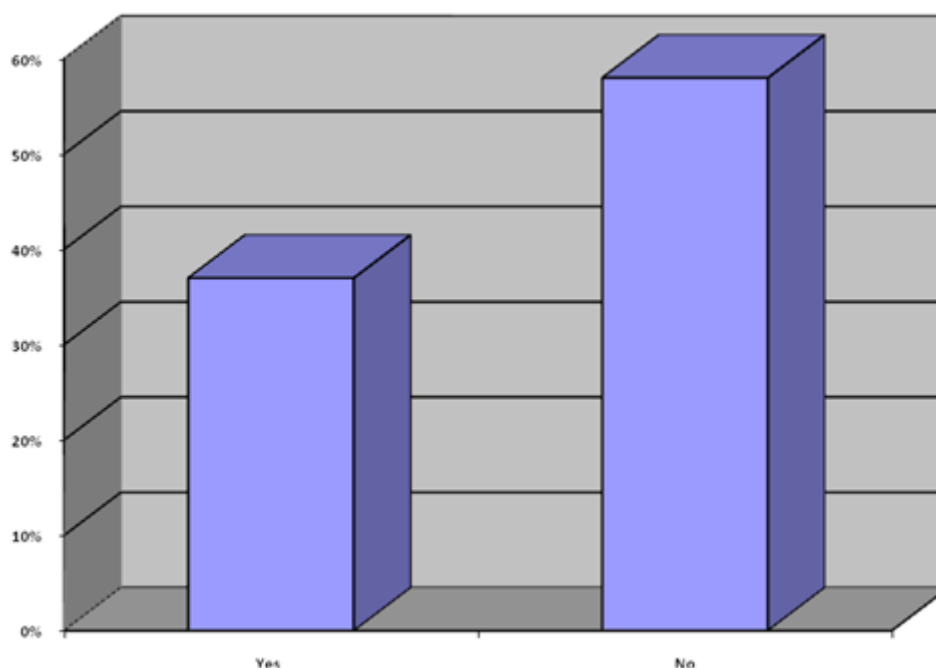
People who own a Radio Set:

Yes	No
46.6%	50%



People having Radio sets with FM Band:

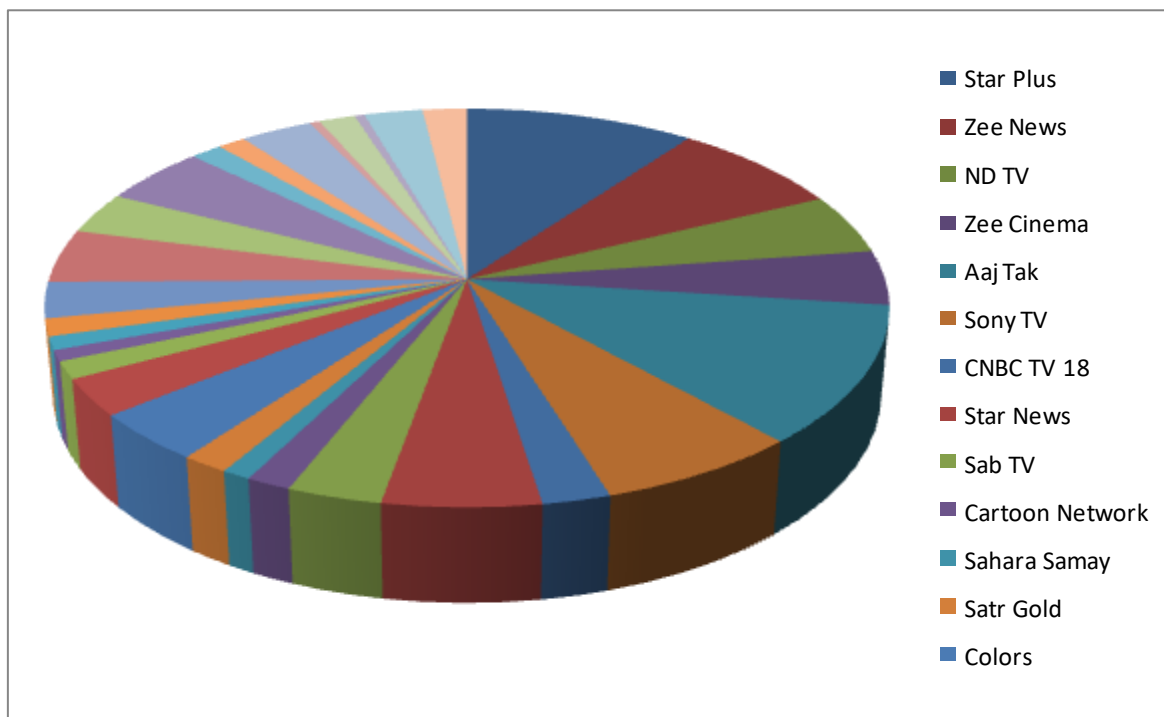
Yes	No
37%	58%



Most watched TV channels:

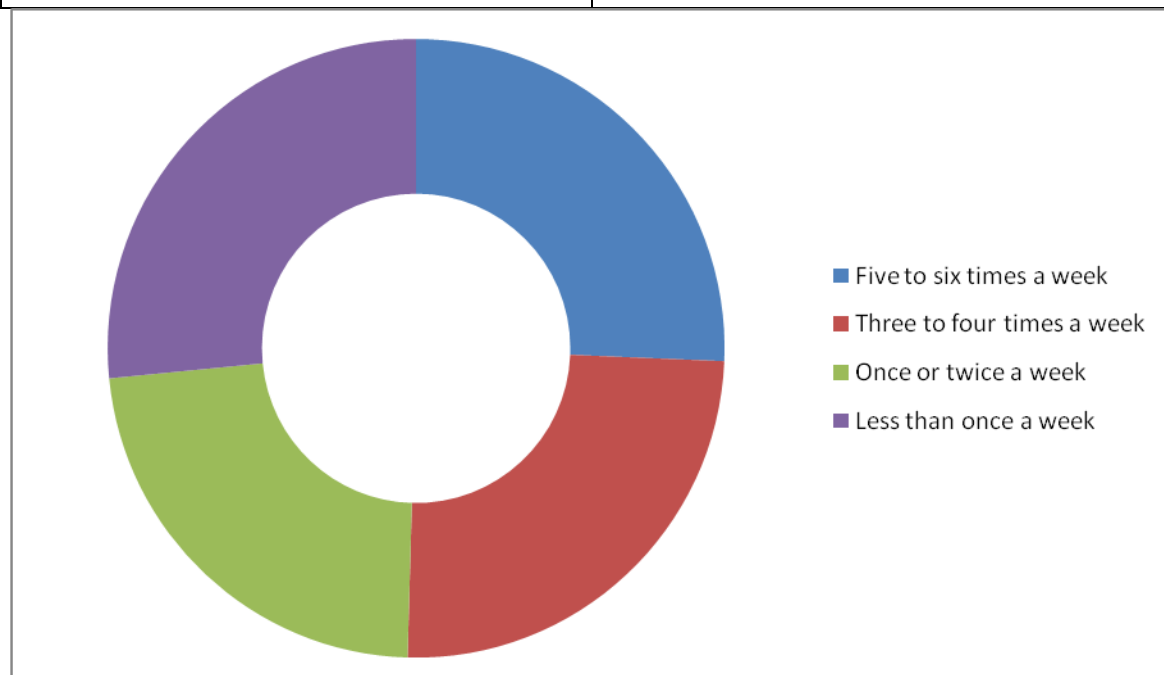
Channel	Percentage Viewers
Star Plus	22.8%
Zee News	17.4%
ND TV	11%
Zee Cinema	10%
Aaj Tak	25.4%
Sony TV	15.6%
CNBC TV 18	5.2%
Star News	12%
Sab TV	7.2%
Cartoon Network	3.4%
Sahara Samay	2.2%
Star Gold	3.6%
Colors	9%
MH One	6.8%
IBN7	3.2%
India TV	2%
DD Jalandhar	2.4%
Total TV	3.2%
Set Max	6.6%
Ten Sports	9.8%
9x	7.6%
Discovery	10.6%
Neo	3.2%
Cricket	2.8%
DD	7.2%
Zoom	1%
F TV	3.6%

B4U	1%
Star Sports	5.8%
Axn	4.4%



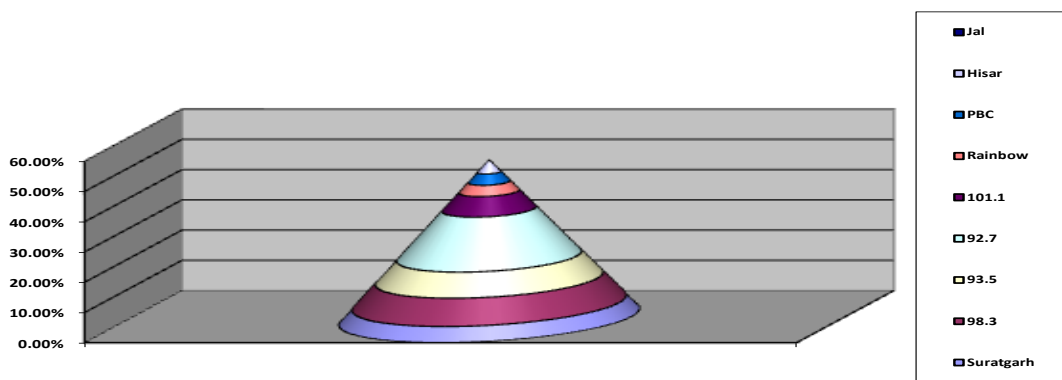
Frequency of listening to Radio:

Daily	20%
Five to six times a week	5.8%
Three to four times a week	5.6%
Once or twice a week	5.2%
Less than once a week	6%
Do not listen	57.4%



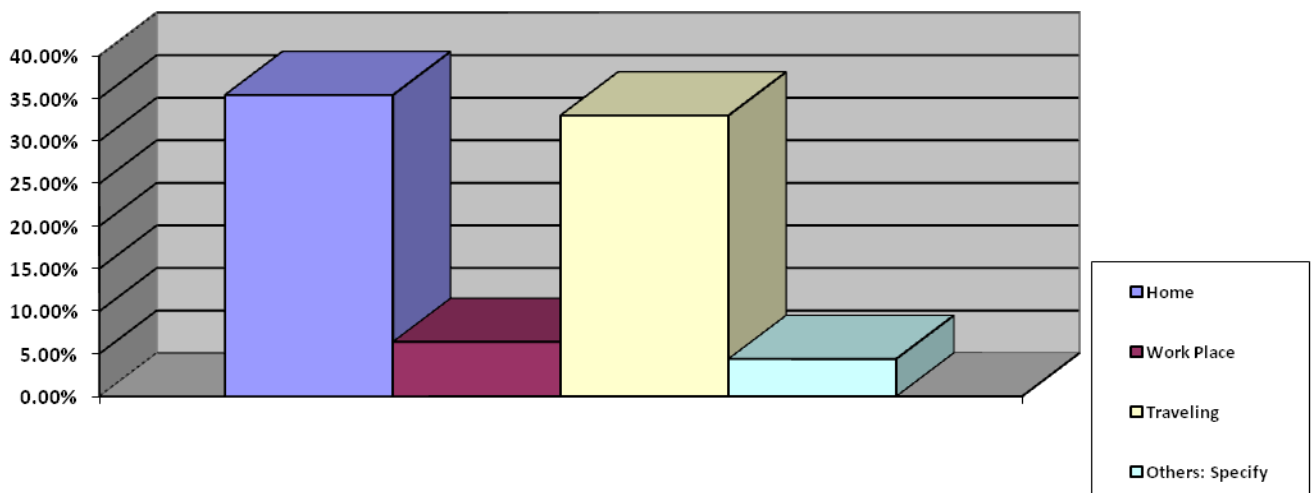
Most listened to Radio Channels:

Suratgarh	4.6%
98.3	8%
93.5	7.4%
AIR Gold	15.6%
101.1	5.8%
Rainbow	3.2%
PBC	3.2%
Hisar	3.8%
Jal	0.2%



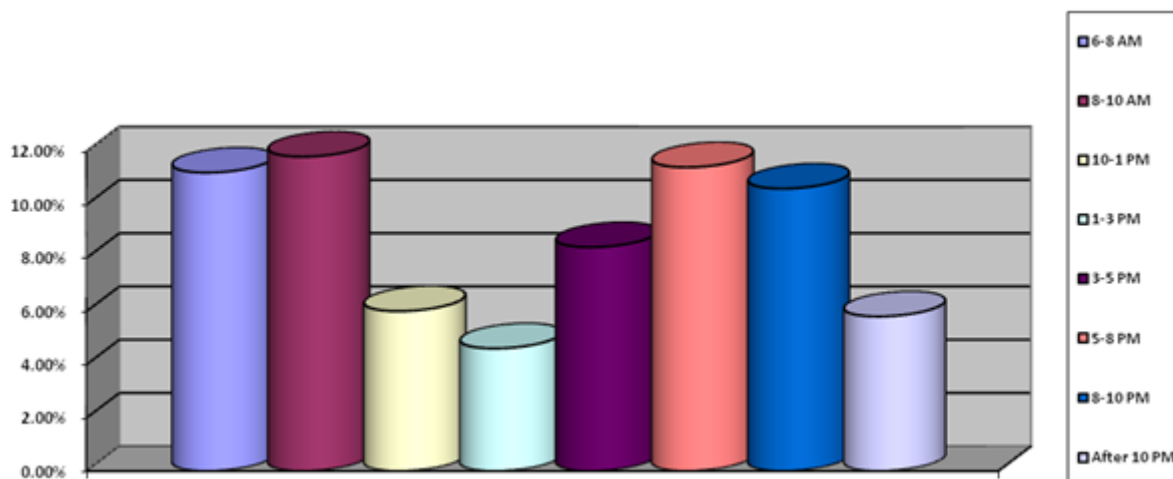
Places where people listen to Radio:

Home	35.4%
Work Place	6.4%
Traveling	33%
Others	4.4%



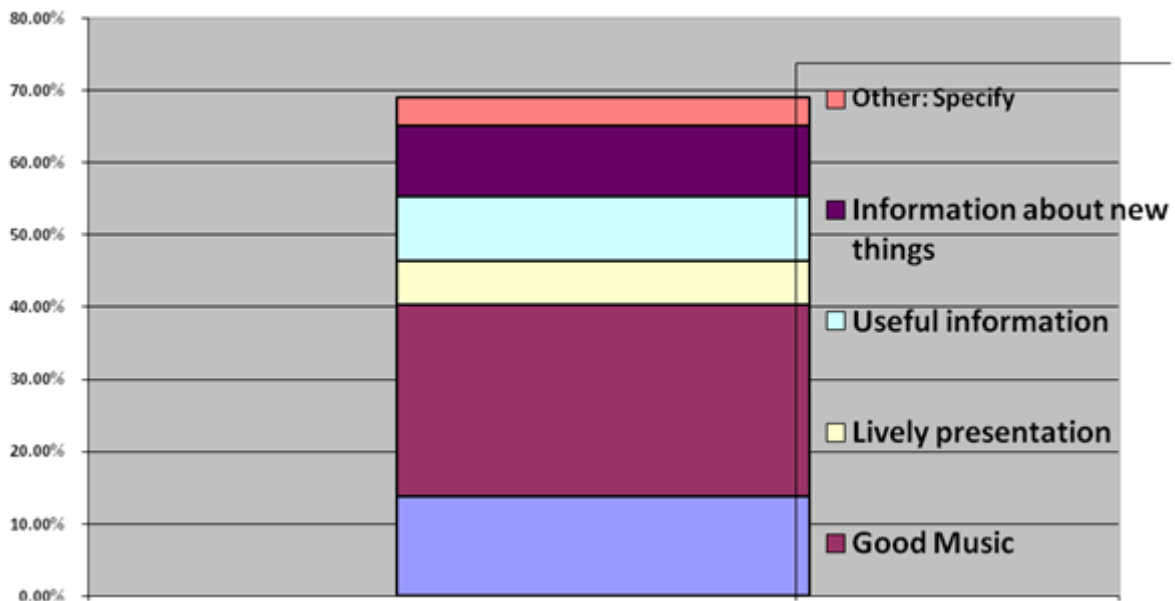
Popular time zones for listening to Radio:

6-8 AM	11.2%
8-10 AM	11.8%
10-1 PM	6%
1-3 PM	4.6%
3-5 PM	8.4%
5-8 PM	11.4%
8-10 PM	10.6%
After 10 PM	5.8%



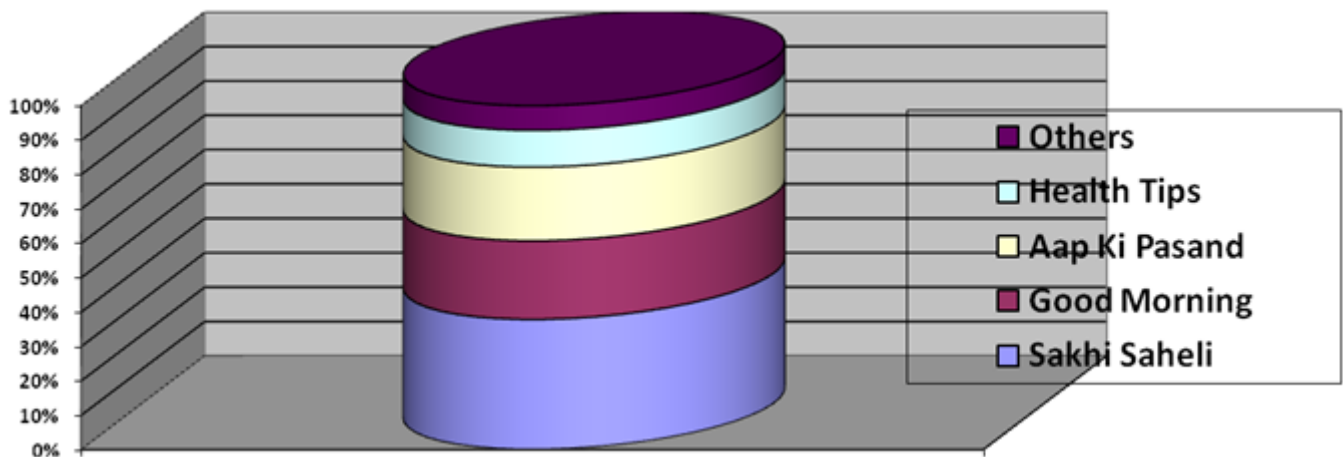
Best liked features of FM Channels:

Radio Jockey	13.8%
Good Music	26.6%
Lively presentation	6%
Useful information	9%
Information about new things	9.8%
Others	4%



Peoples' favourite Radio Programme:

Sakhi Saheli	53%
Good Morning	32%
Aap Ki Pasand	30%
Health Tips	15%
Others	10%

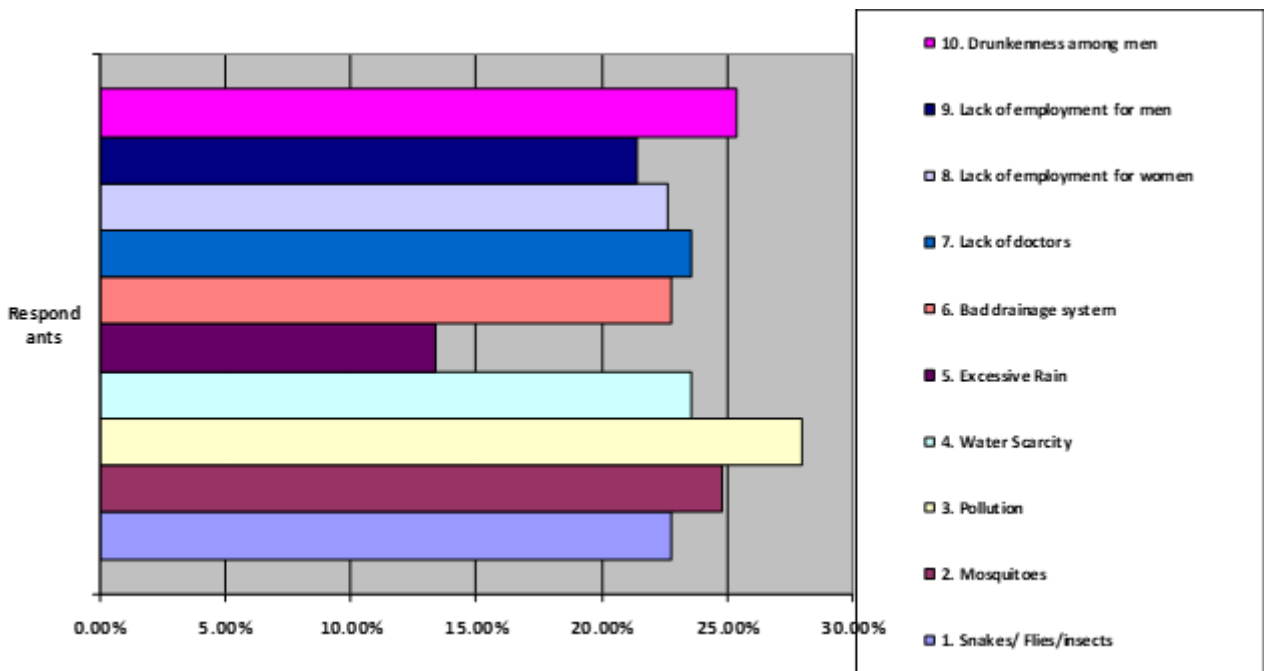


PART B: CHANNEL AND AUDIENCE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Common problems faced by women in their community as per people:

Problems	%age
1. Snakes/ Flies/insects	22.8%
2. Mosquitoes	24.8%
3. Pollution	28%
4. Water Scarcity	23.6%
5. Excessive Rain	13.4%
6. Bad drainage system	22.8%
7. Lack of doctors	23.6%
8. Lack of employment for women	22.6%

9. Lack of employment for men	21.4%
10. Drunkenness among men	25.4%



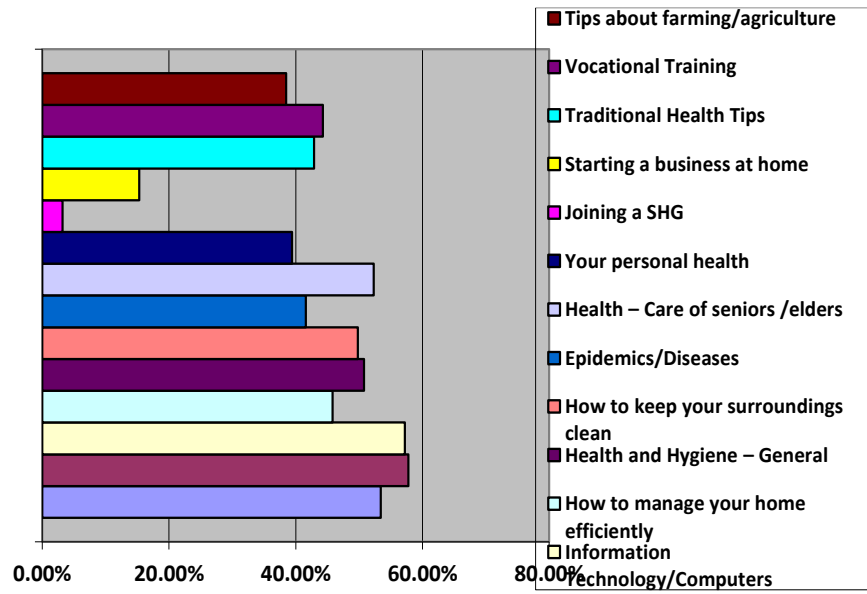
Sections that people trust the most with information of the following:

Topic	Trusted Sections	% age
Children’s Health	Elders/family	39.2
Nutritious food for the family	Doctors/health workers	58
Your own Health	Doctors/health workers	32
General Family Health	Elders/family	38
Preventive care during epidemics	Media	22
Pregnancy Care	Doctors/health workers	43
Adolescent girls’ health	Friends/relatives	29.2
Senior Citizens Health	Doctors/health workers	18.6

People who would like to listen to Radio Programmes on the following:

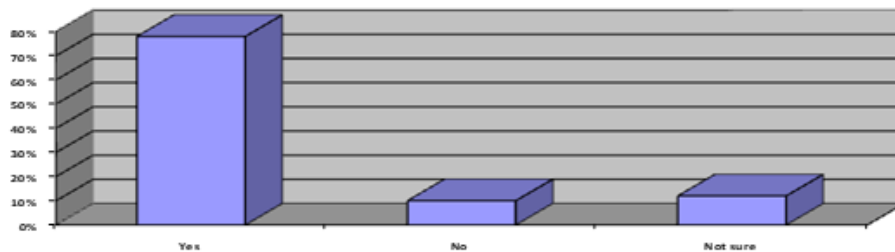
Pollution Control in your surroundings	53.4%
Literacy programmes in your area	57.8%
Information Technology/Computers	57.2%
How to manage your home efficiently	45.8%
Health and Hygiene – General	50.8%
How to keep your surroundings clean	49.8%
Epidemics/Diseases	41.6%
Health – Care of seniors /elders	52.3%
Your personal health	39.4%
Joining a SHG	3.2%
Starting a business at home	15.3%
Traditional Health Tips	42.9%

Vocational Training	44.3%
Tips about farming/agriculture	38.5%



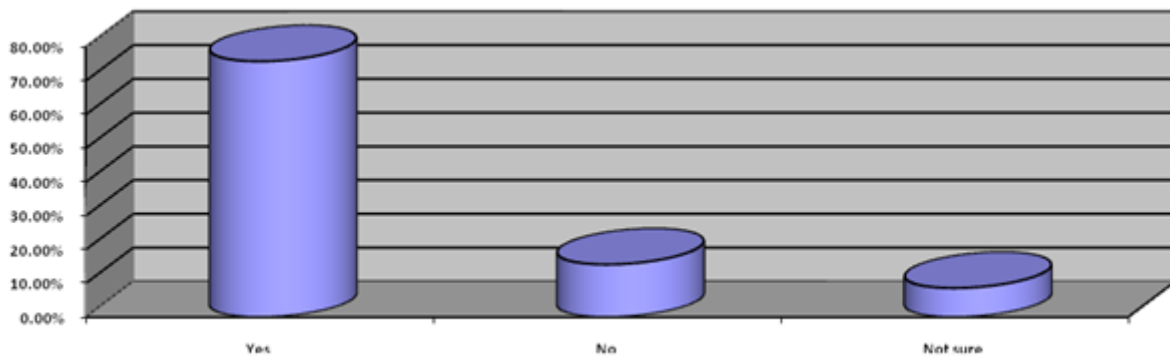
People would trust Radio for problem solving:

Yes	No	Not sure
78%	10%	12%



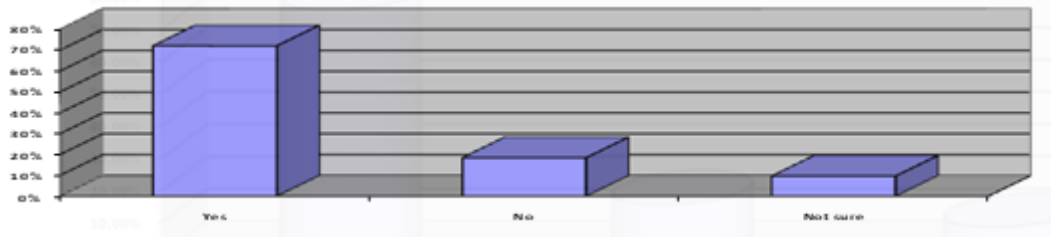
People who would like to participate in a Radio show:

Yes	No	Not sure
75.8%	15.6%	8.6%



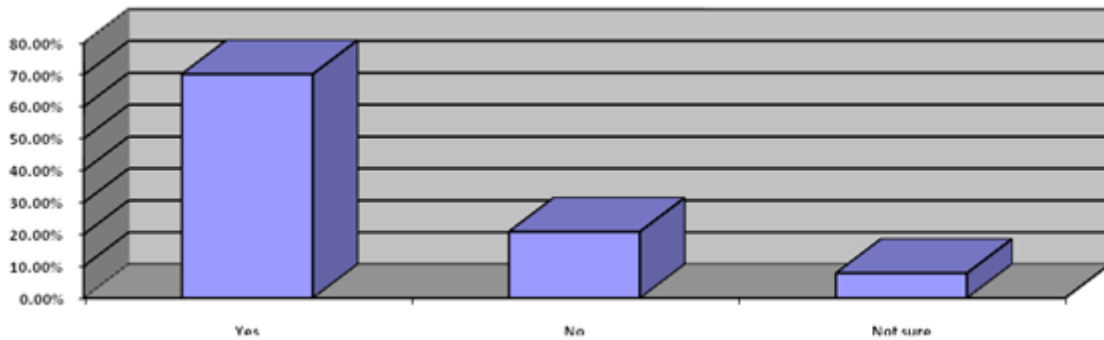
People who would like to be a community representative:

Yes	No	Not sure
72%	18.4%	9.6%



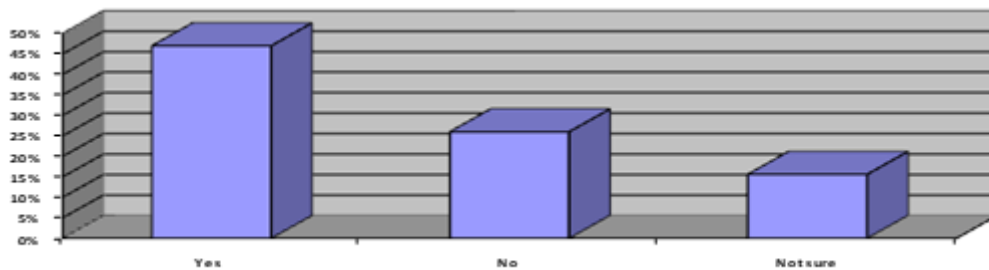
People who would like to be a Radio Jockey:

Yes	No	Not sure
70.2%	20.8%	7.8%



People who like listening to radio in a group:

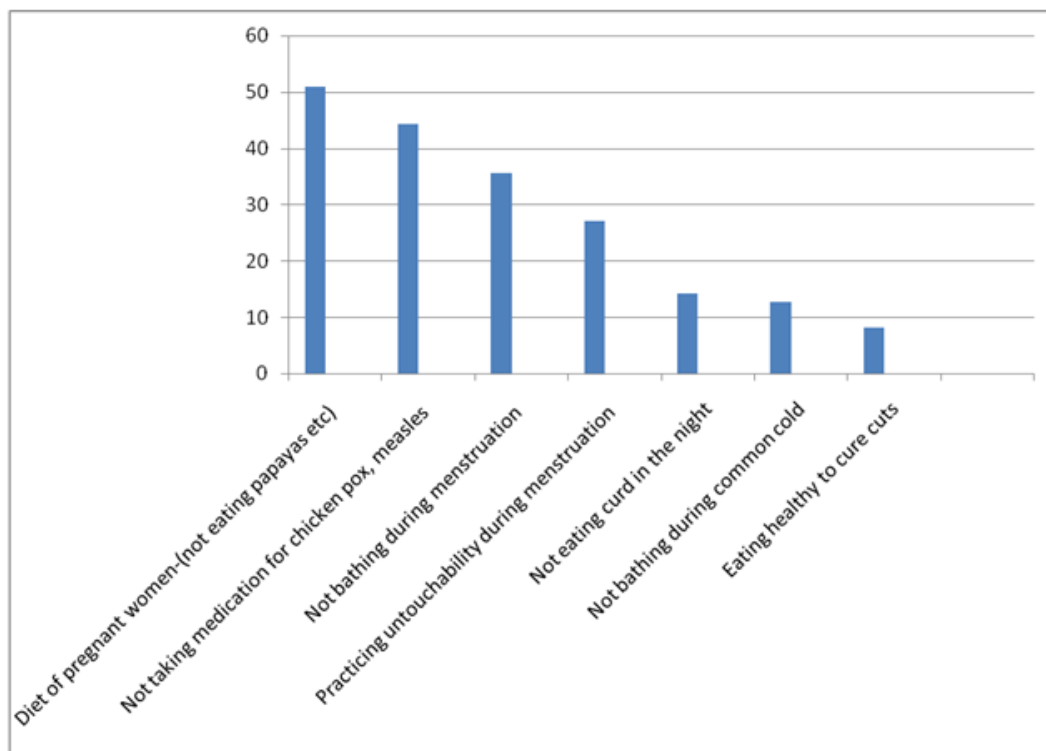
Yes	No	Not sure
47%	26%	15.6%



Common believes about illness in their community according to people:

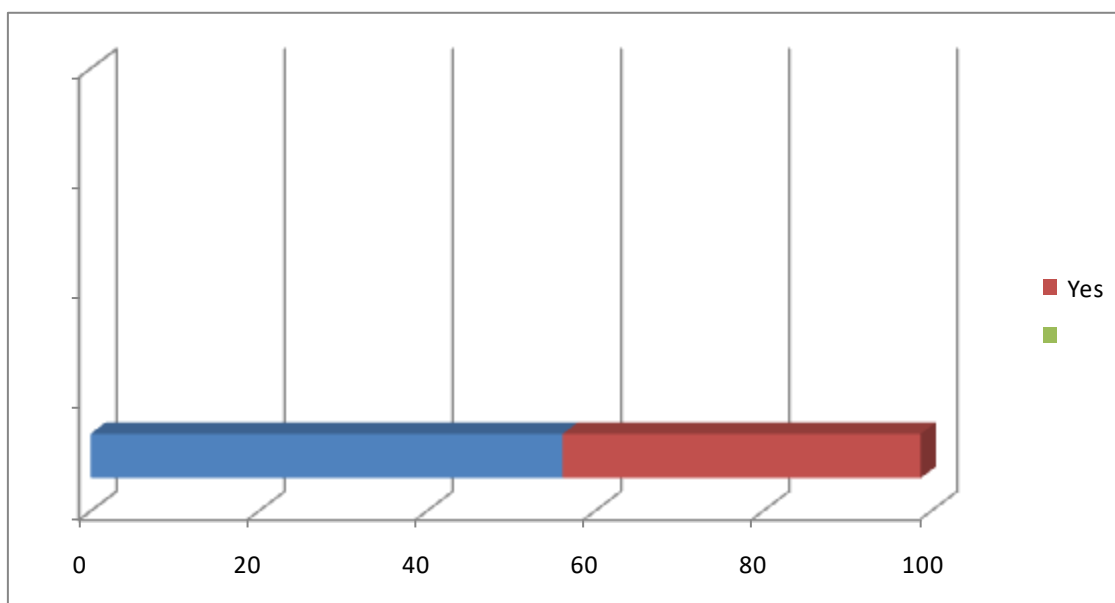
Beliefs related to	%age
Eclipse and pregnant women	38.2
Diet of pregnant women-(not eating papayas etc)	51
Not taking medication for chicken pox, measles	44.2
Not bathing during menstruation	35.6
Practicing untouchability during menstruation	27

Not eating curd in the night	14.2
Not bathing during common cold	12.6
Eating Huldi to cure cuts	8.2



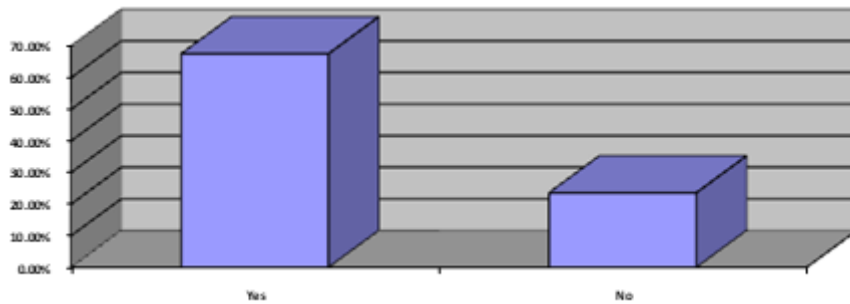
People having telephone connections:

Yes	No
42.6%	56.2%



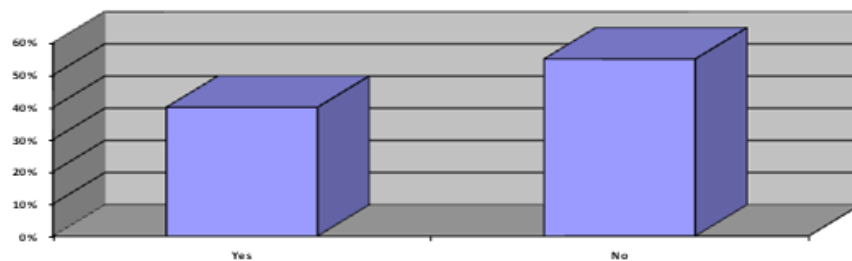
People having mobile phones:

Yes	No
67.6%	23.6%



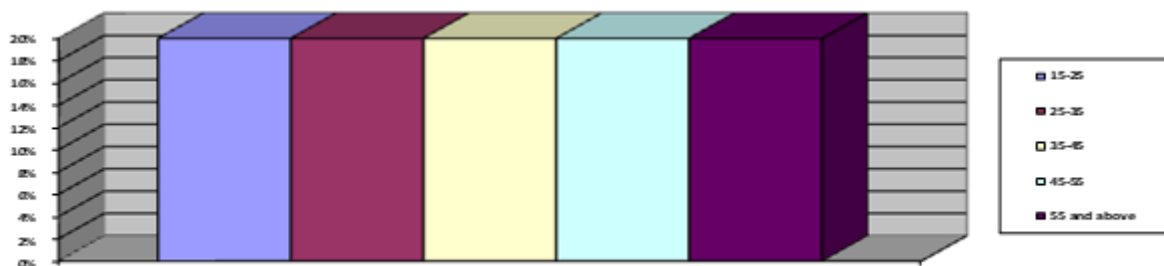
People with mobile phones having radio:

Yes	No
40%	55%



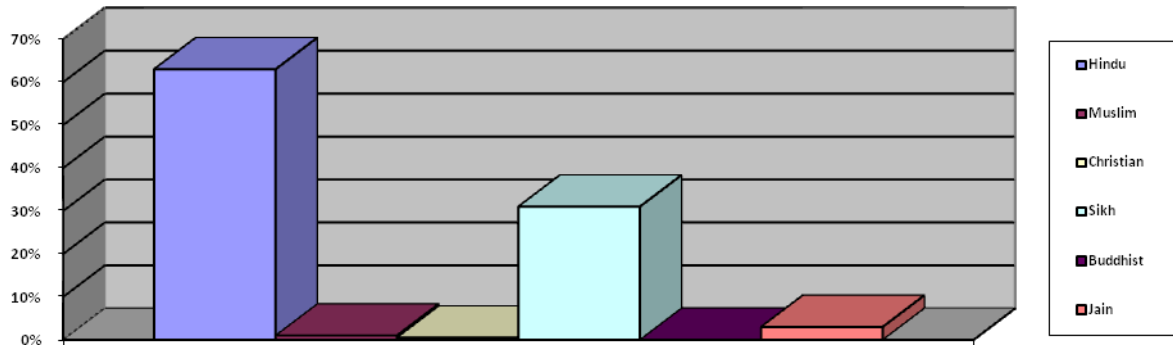
Age groups of respondents:

15-25	20%
25-35	20%
35-45	20%
45-55	20%
55 and above	20%



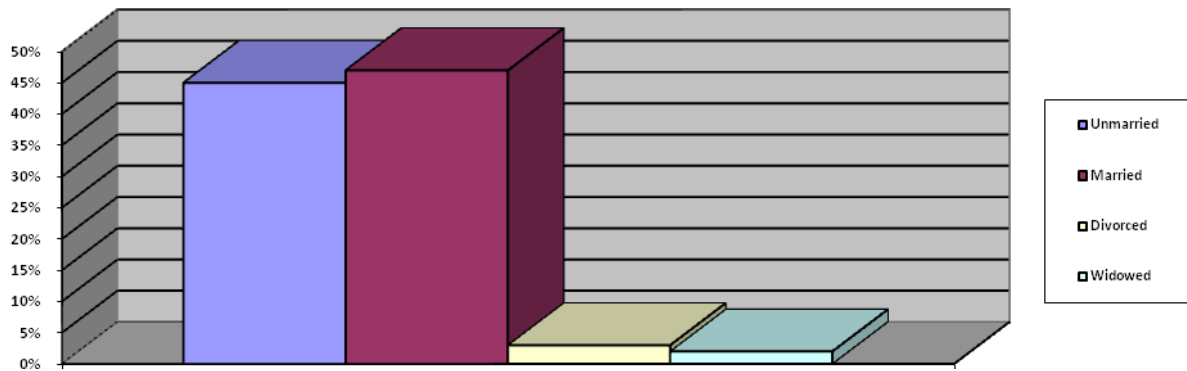
Religions that respondents belong to:

Hindu	63%
Muslim	1%
Christian	0.5%
Sikh	31%
Buddhist	0%
Jain	3%



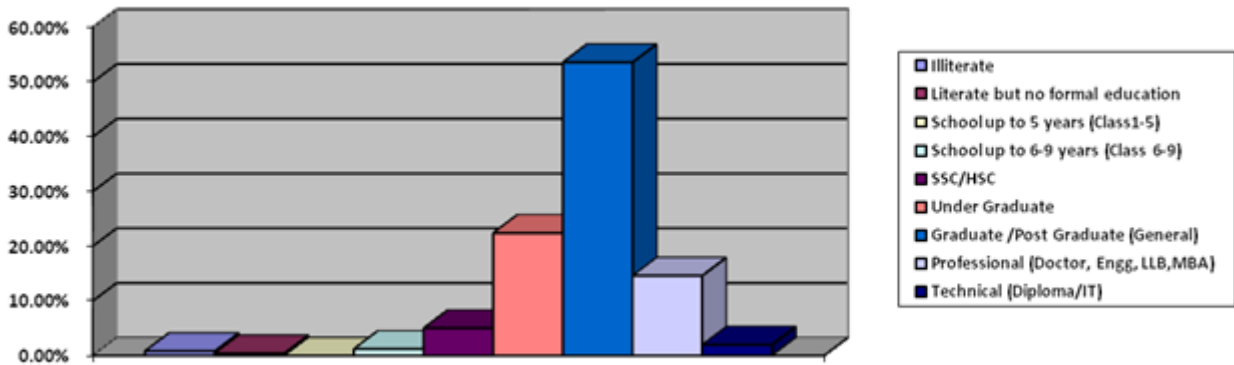
Marital status of respondents:

Unmarried	45%
Married	47%
Divorced	3%
Widowed	2%



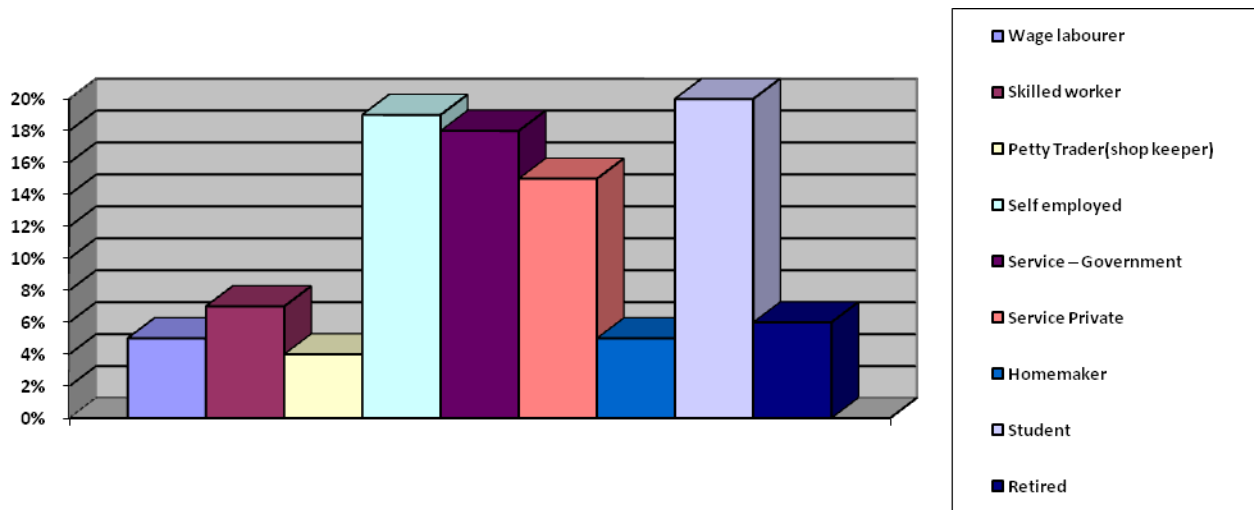
Education level of respondents:

Illiterate	0.8%
Literate but no formal education	0.4%
School up to 5 years (Class1-5)	0%
School up to 6-9 years (Class 6-9)	1.2%
SSC/HSC	5%
Under Graduate	22.4%
Graduate /Post Graduate (General)	53.6%
Professional (Doctor, Engg, LLB,MBA)	14.6%
Technical (Diploma/IT)	2%



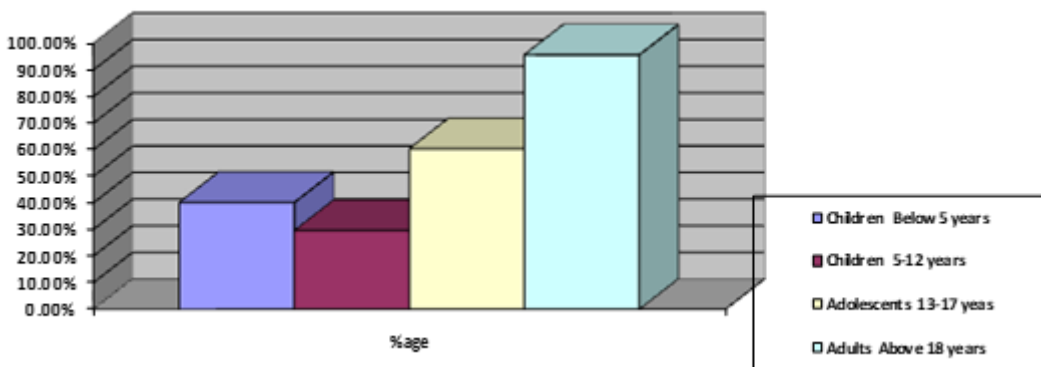
Occupation of the respondents:

Wage labourer	5%
Skilled worker	7%
Petty Trader(shop keeper)	4%
Self employed	19%
Service – Government	18%
Service Private	15%
Homemaker	5%
Student	20%
Retired	6%



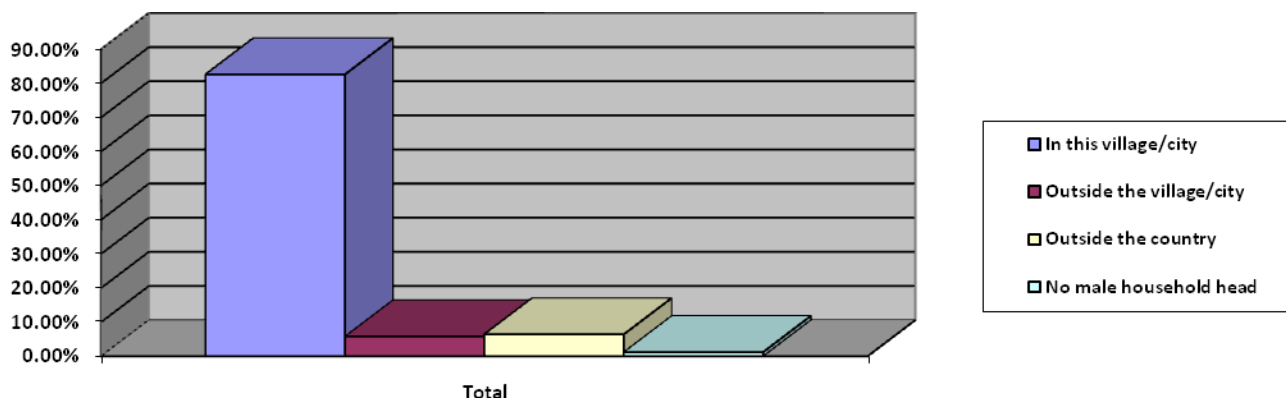
People living in their house:

	%age
Children Below 5 years	40.2%
Children 5-12 years	29.7%
Adolescents 13-17 yeas	60.4%
Adults Above 18 years	95.7%



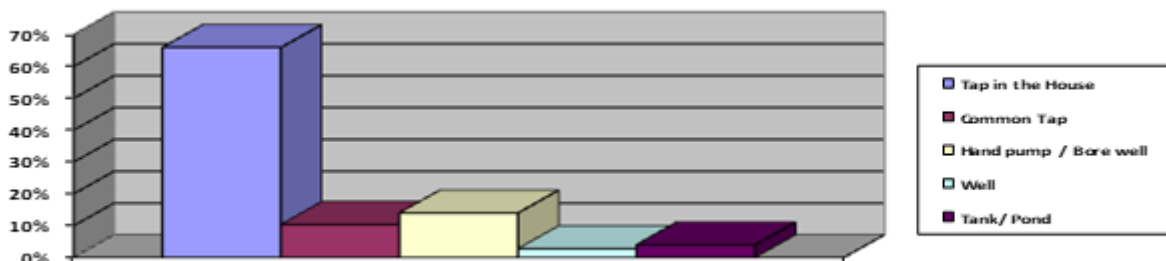
Place of living of the male head of the family:

Place	Total
In this village/city	82.6%
Outside the village/city	5.8%
Outside the country	6.4%
No male household head	1.2%



Place where people get their drinking water from:

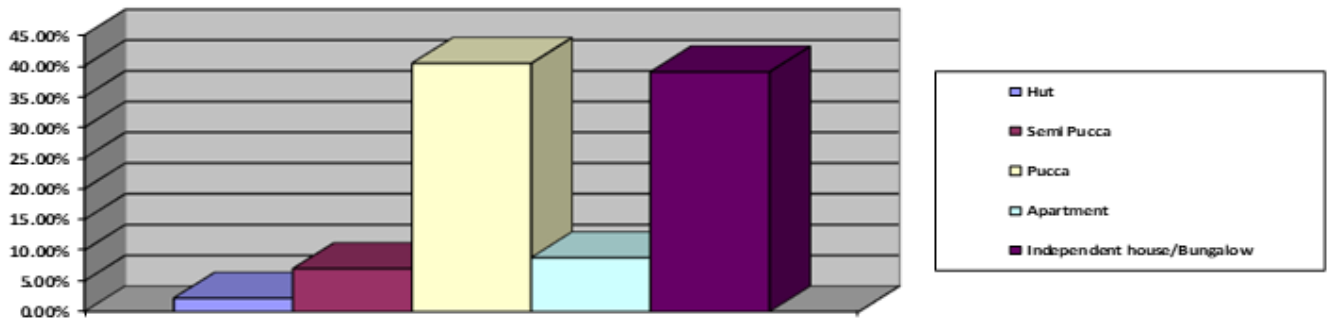
Tap in the House	66%
Common Tap	10.4%
Hand pump / Bore well	14%
Well	2.8%
Tank/ Pond	4%



Kind of the house respondent live in:

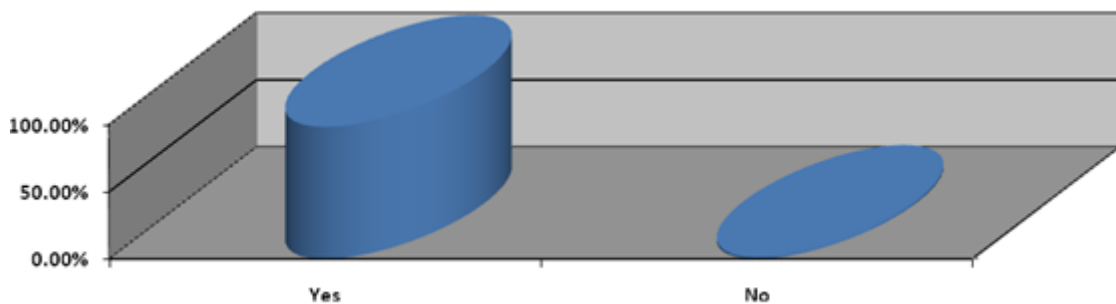
Hut	2.2%
Semi Pucca	7%
Pucca	40.4%

Apartment	8.8%
Independent house/Bungalow	39%



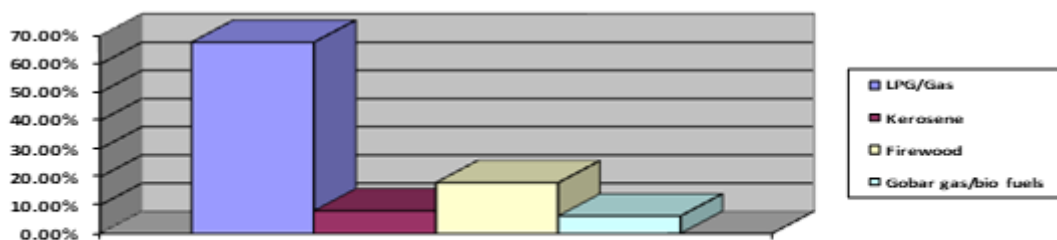
Respondents having electricity connection:

Yes	No
98.4%	1.6%



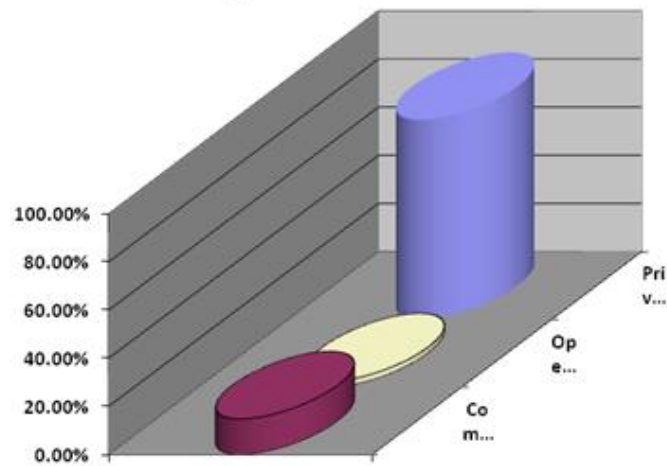
Type of cooking fuel that respondents use:

LPG/Gas	67.8%
Kerosene	8%
Firewood	18%
Gobar gas/bio fuels	6.2%



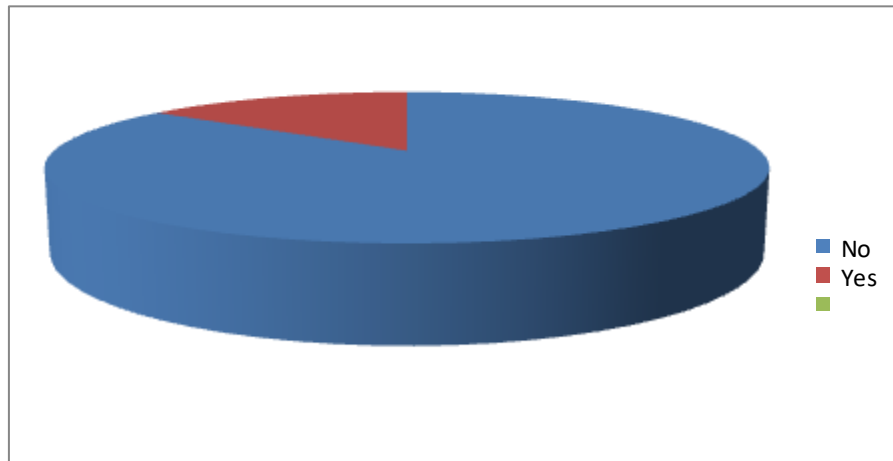
Kinds of toilet arrangements that respondents have:

Private (in own house)	82.8%
Common (Shared by others)	14.8%
Open fields	2.4%



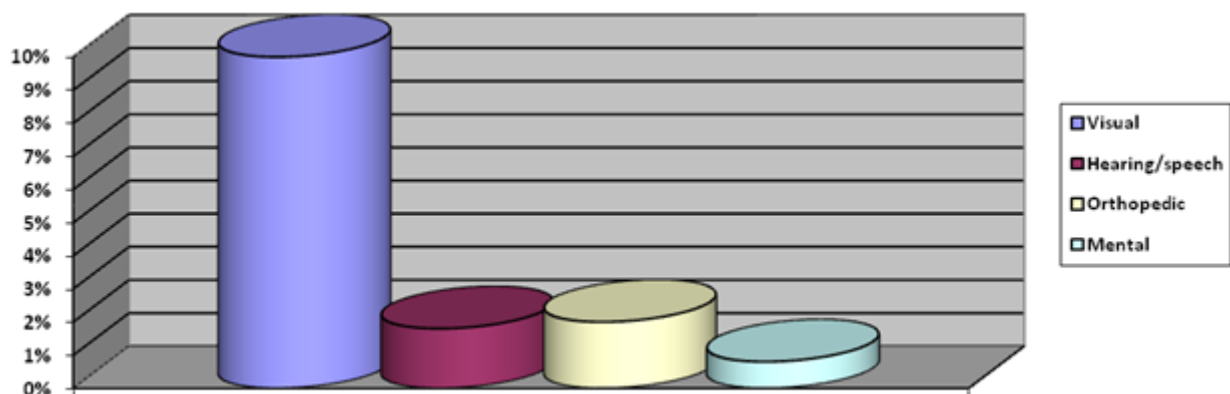
Respondents having disabled family members:

Yes	No
14.6%	84.2%



Nature of disability of the disabled family members:

Visual	10%
Hearing/speech	1.8%
Orthopedic	2%
Mental	0.8%



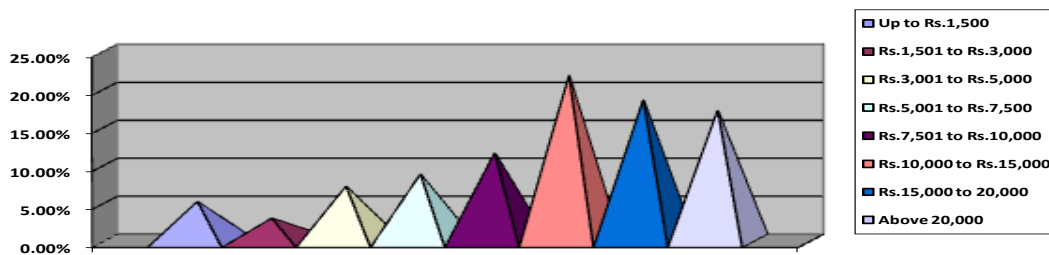
People who are members of Self Help Groups:

Yes	No
24.8%	68.8%



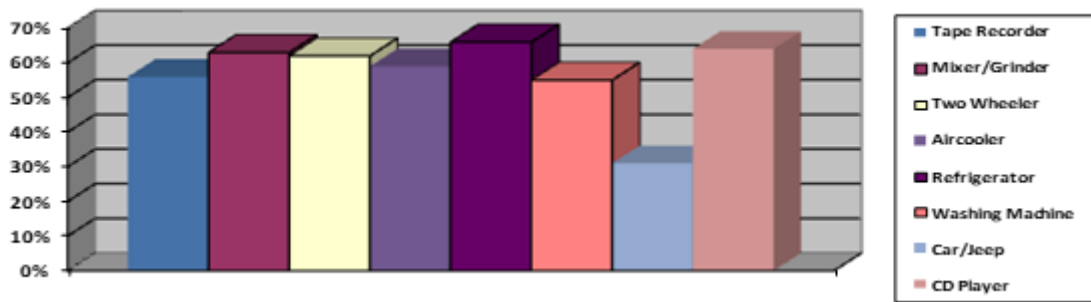
Monthly household income of the respondents:

Up to Rs.1,500	5.2%
Rs.1,501 to Rs.3,000	3%
Rs.3,001 to Rs.5,000	7.2%
Rs.5,001 to Rs.7,500	8.8%
Rs.7,501 to Rs.10,000	11.6%
Rs.10,000 to Rs.15,000	21.8%
Rs.15,000 to 20,000	18.6%
Above 20,000	17.2%



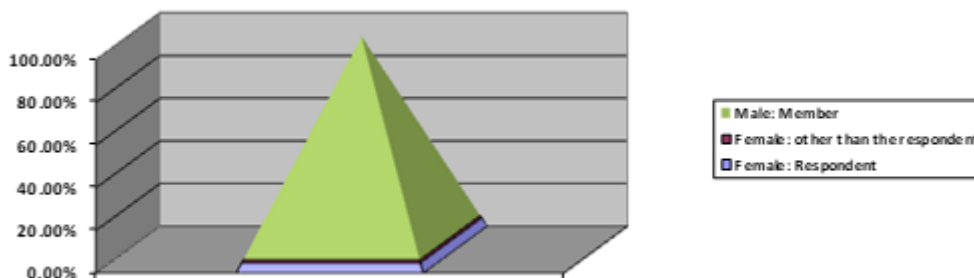
Respondents own the following luxury gadgets:

Tape Recorder	56%
Mixer/Grinder	63%
Two Wheeler	62%
Aircooler	59%
Refrigerator	66%
Washing Machine	55%
Car/Jeep	31%
CD Player	64%



Head of the Household to which the respondent belongs:

Female: Respondent	4.4%
Female: other than the respondent	1.2%
Male: Member	94.4%



KEY FINDINGS

Media Consumption:

- **Newspapers:** 76.6% receive newspapers at home.
- **Magazines:** 22.8% receive magazines.
- **Television:** 90.8% own TV sets, 93% of which are colored.
- **Cable/DTH:** 67.8% have cable, 26.2% have DTH.
- **Radio:** 46.6% own radios, 37% with FM bands.
- **Mobile Phones:** 67.6% have mobile phones, 40% with radio

Radio Listening Habits:

- **Frequency:** 20% listen daily, 57.4% do not listen at all.
- **Popular Channels:** AIR Gold (15.6%), 98.3 FM (8%).
- **Listening Locations:** 35.4% at home, 33% while traveling.
- **Preferred Times:** 8-10 AM (11.8%), 6-8 AM (11.2%).

Community Issues and Needs:

- **Common Problems:** Pollution (28%), Water scarcity (23.6%), Mosquitoes (24.8%).
- **Trusted Information Sources:** Doctors/health workers for family health (58%).
- **Interest in Radio Programs:** Literacy (57.8%), IT/Computers (57.2%), Health and Hygiene (50.8%).

Demographics:

- **Age Groups:** Evenly distributed among five age brackets (15-55+).
- **Religions:** Hindu (63%), Sikh (31%).
- **Education:** Majority with undergraduate or higher education (76%).
- **Occupation:** Students (20%), Government service (18%), Self-employed (19%).

Living Conditions:

- **House Type:** 40.4% live in pucca houses, 8.8% in apartments.
- **Electricity:** 98.4% have an electricity connection.

- **Cooking Fuel:** 67.8% use LPG/Gas.
- **Sanitation:** 82.8% have private toilets.

Participation and Engagement:

- **Radio Participation:** 75.8% interested in participating in radio shows.
- **Community Representation:** 72% willing to be community representatives.
- **Interest in Becoming RJs:** 70.2% interested in being Radio Jockeys.

Health Beliefs and Practices:

- **Common Beliefs:** 51% avoid certain foods during pregnancy, 44.2% avoid medication for chickenpox/measles.

Socio-Economic Data:

- **Income Levels:** Diverse, with 21.8% earning between Rs. 10,000-15,000 monthly.
- **Luxury Gadgets Ownership:** 66% own refrigerators, 62% have two-wheelers.

The survey highlights significant interest and potential for community radio in Sirsa, with a clear understanding of media habits, community issues, and a strong inclination towards active participation in CRS activities. The data supports the establishment and tailored content development for the CRS to meet local needs effectively.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The first part of the questionnaire aimed at judging the media profile of the audience. The results show that an amazing 77% of the respondents subscribe to newspapers in their homes. However, only 23% of the people claimed to be getting magazines at their place. A general discussion with them revealed that majority of the readership habits are in favour of Hindi print media. Popular newspapers and magazines are the ones that cover local news and problems.

91% of the people have television sets at their homes. Out of which a huge 93% say that their TV is a coloured one. However, as little as 5% of them watch non-paid entertainment channels. Others rely on the dose of satellite and private channels. 68% of them get these through their cable operator. As much as 27% of our covered Sirsa residents watch television using DTH services. This seems to be a modern trend as many new DTH service providers are appearing on the scene.

A useful discovery that was made during our survey is about radio listenership of the people of and around Sirsa. 50% of our respondents do not own a radio set. Out of those who have one, very few have an FM band in it. To be specific, only 37% of the 510 people surveyed say that their radio supports an FM frequency. While getting the questionnaires filled out an analysis of the reasons behind the responses was attempted by casual discussion with the audience. Upon asking that why do people not have radios or do not indulge in listening to FM stations; it was found that hardly any FM frequency reaches Sirsa. Many of the students even said that their mobile phones have FM bands, which are almost useless in this area. People even claimed that they love to listen to the radio when they are traveling and once, they cross this region; it is a treat to listen to the FM which plays in their cars, buses when they reach near Rohtak or Hisar. It was found out that they even miss some of the radio programs that their friends or relatives are able to listen to by virtue of their location.

This strengthens our belief that a radio station worth listening to will surely attract many a listener and even add to the joys of the local public.

The TV viewing habits of the people covered in the survey reveal that television is a popular medium of entertainment in this area. Star Plus, Aaj Tak, Zee TV and Sony TV are the most loved TV channels. People also like to watch Discovery, Ten Sports and DD. Many people said that whichever channel shows cricket matches become their favourite for the time being. Other news channels, cartoon network and sports channels are also popular though a little lesser. A detailed mention of the TV channels along with the percentage of viewers watching them has been made in the tables and Pie charts provided on the subsequent pages.

Maximum (20%) of the people who listen to the radio are habitual of doing so daily. However, 5 to 6% of the radio listeners say that they listen to it once a week to six times a week. As high as 57% of our respondents do not listen to the radio at all. The reasons behind this lack of listenership are not far to seek. A huge television viewership and craze for cable and DTH channels coupled with the non-availability of any good radio frequencies leads to such results. People who listen to the radio love to do so in their own homes. 36% of the listeners say that they prefer enjoying the radio at home as against 33% who do so while traveling. Only 7% listen at their workplaces. Other locations like college canteens, village chaupals and even bathrooms are preferred by 4% of the listeners.

The radio channels those are most popular are Rainbow, PBC, Jal, Radio Mirchi and Red FM. One amazing fact that came to light is that people recognize the channels more by their frequencies than by their names. Even the names of the cities of relay are popular, like many respondents said that they love the Suratgarh or Hisar Radio stations. The most popular time zones for listening to radio are 6-8 AM, 8-10 AM, 5-8 PM and 8-10 PM. 11 to 12% of the listeners fall in each of these time zones. The least listened to time is the early afternoon between 1 and 3 PM. When the reasons were fished out for these time preferences it was observed that most of the people either sleep or rest after half a day's tiring work.

People who listen to the radio say that they love the music and the related programs relayed on their sets. As high as 27% claimed that the best feature of the FM channels is the good music. A liking for the Radio Jockey comes in at 14% choice level. Apart from the RJ, music, good presentations, useful information and latest know how, the phone in programs and the choice programs like Aap Ki Farmish are the reasons behind radio listenership. People are very fond of programs that read out their names or SMSes and the hosts that talk to them over the phone. Among the favourite radio programs is Sakhi Saheli with high listenership of 53%. This women's show aired by AIR Gold is famous not only among the females but also has a loyal male listenership.

The next section of the questionnaire tries to assess the channel and audience needs of the concerned public. The question pertaining to the common problems faced by the women of their area revealed pollution to be the most dangerous. The 28% people who marked pollution as the worst women enemy said that the field and cotton industry where most of the women are employed in cause health hazard for them. However, mosquitoes, water problem, lack of doctors, snakes and insects, bad drainage system, employment problems of men and women are also seen as probable problems for the women folk. 21-23% of people marked yes for all these issues. 25% of the people see the drinking habit of men of the family as the worst problem that the females of the Sirsa regions face. This is not a very astonishing fact owing to the high rate of drug abuse and liquor consumption in the area. Awareness against these bad habits are a must for this region.

The people say that elders in the family are the most trusted section for children's health and general family information. 58% of them trust doctors and health workers for information related to nutrition and food. Doctors are also the most consulted section for personal health, pregnancy care and senior citizens health. People would rather go to friends and relatives for consultation on the health of adolescent girls. Only 22% of the people would rely on the media for gaining knowledge on preventive care during epidemics.

Most of the respondents (58%) say that they would listen to radio programs for knowledge on information technology and computers and literacy schemes for their area. The area for which people displayed the least inclination for listening to the radio is information on joining a Self Help Group. 48 to 52% respondents admit to liking radio programs on health and hygiene, cleanliness and pollution control. Home management tips, information about diseases, health tips and vocational training are also the preferred topics for radio shows. 39% of people are fond of agriculture related shows. 78% of people would trust radio for problem solving.

Craze for the audio medium reins high. This is evident from the 76% of people who wish to participate in a radio show. As high as 72% of respondents say that they would like to be community representatives. The

dream of being a Radio Jockey is also nurtured by many. Over 70% of the people say that they wish to do the job. Listening to the radio in a group seems to be a popular habit with 47% of the respondents saying yes to the option.

The common belief about illness in their community according to 44% people is not taking medication for chicken pox and measles. 38% people talked about myths related to eclipse and pregnant women. However, the highest grossing illness belief is about the diet of pregnant women, ticked by 51% of the respondents. Other rumours like not eating curd in the night, not bathing during common cold and taking turmeric for curing cuts are also prevalent in the community. All this shows the need for creating awareness about health and proper curing methods among the community. The media, especially the radio can play a pivotal role in doing so.

43% of the people in the region have landline telephone connections as compared to 68% with mobile phones. Out of these only 40% have cell phones with a radio provision.

All the respondents were uniformly divided into five age groups ranging from 15 years of age. Thus 20% of each of the respondents belonged to the age groups of : 15-25, 25-35, 35-45, 45-55 and 55 years and above. This was done to make sure that appropriate sampling is done to judiciously cover the entire universe.

The religious division of the respondents is as follows. 63% Hindus, 31 Sikhs and very few Jains, Muslims or Christians. No person belonging to Buddhism is among our respondents. This division is easy to understand as Sirsa is a district in Haryana which primarily has a Hindu population. As it is the neighbouring state of Punjab and very close to its border, a good section of Sikh population is found here. Other sects are rare in this region.

The majority of our respondents, i.e. 47% were married as against 45% unmarried people. 3% of divorcees and 2% widowed respondents were found. In the area of Sirsa, people get married very young. Even among the student population it is not rare to find a married girl or boy. This is a common place trend here. 53% of the respondents are at least Graduates with less than 1% being illiterate. The respondents were basically contacted at public places like colleges, community parks and shopping centers. This probably gave us the majority of a well-educated group. In the villages housewives and agriculturists were contacted. Thus 20% of students, 19% self-employed and 15 to 18% service class people fall among our respondents. Homemakers, retired people, wage labourers, skilled workers and shopkeepers were also covered. Each of these sections from 4 to 7% of the audience.

41% of the respondents have children below 5 years living in their house and 60% said that they have a male or female adolescent family member. A major chunk, i.e. 96% of the respondents have some adult who is above the age of 18 in their house. This division of age groups is quite understandable as maximum respondents were above 18 years themselves. Some school students who live in hostels amounting to about 3% of our respondents say that they do not have an adult living with them presently.

83% of the male head of the respondents' family lives in the village or city. Over 6% of the people say that the male head of their family lives outside the country.

66% of respondents have a tap in their house to procure drinking water. Very few (3%) go to a well to get their daily water supply. Hand Pump or a Bore Well is the source for 14% of them as against a common tap for 10%. About 4% of people still rely on unhygienic means like a tank or pond to get drinking water. 40% of the respondents live in Pucca houses and 39% says that theirs is an independent one or a Bungalow. Only 2% of our respondents claim to be living in huts. A whopping 90% have an electricity connection while 68% use LPG Gas as a cooking fuel. 18% also use firewood for cooking, which is a common trend in this area as many people use Tandoors for cooking chapattis and other exotic dishes. Kerosene and biofuels like Gobbar Gas are comparatively less in use.

83% of the respondents claim to have private toilet arrangements in their own house. Whereas 15% share a common sanitation system. Use of open fields for such purposes is also existent though in a marginal number.

Only 15% of the people agreed to having some disabled family members. Among whom 10% are visually impaired, 2% face orthopedic ailments and 1% even have mental problems. Hearing and speech disabilities are also faced by 2% of people. Still only 25% agreed to be members of Self-Help Groups. The trend of joining an SHG seems to be a rare one in this area as people had hardly displayed any interest even in radio programs related to such groups.

The monthly household income of our respondents varies from Rs. 1500 to above 20,000/-. The random sampling was done to ensure that people from all the income groups are covered to some range. Maximum (22%) have income in the bracket of 10,000- 15,000. Only 3% of our respondents have an income ranging from 1,500-3,000. Most of our respondents own high profile luxury gadgets. 66% have a refrigerator, 64% use a CD player and 63% even own a mixer grinder. 62% have a two-wheeler. Air conditioners, tape recorder and washing machines are also owned by more than half of the public covered. However, a car or a jeep is a rare luxury belonging only to 31% respondents.

Our society is primarily a patriarchy. This is reinforced by the responses to the question asking the respondents who the head of their family is. Over 94% people say that a male member heads their family. 4% also agree to having a female head. Upon discussion it was found that a grandmother sometimes rules over the family decisions by virtue of being the eldest.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results obtained from 510 respondents through the survey questionnaire provided to the Department have been displayed with the help of tables and graphs. They have also been discussed in the above paragraphs. Even additional knowledge gained from informal discussions and casual interactions with the respondents have been included. This survey gives us an in-depth understanding of the public of the Sirsa region to whom our Community Radio Service will cater.

However, some suggestions are indispensable. While conducting the survey our team observed that the language of this questionnaire poses a hindrance while interacting with the local public. English being the rarely understood language by the local community the researchers had to act as language translators majority of the times. If the questionnaire had been in Hindi, it would have been much easier and relevant for the laymen.

The percentages of the responses have been calculated and tabulated. Sometimes it is observed that they do not total to 100%. This is quite understandable as some casual attitude on the part of the respondent is inevitable. Any and all the researchers from any field always experience such conditions. We have tried our best to report the responses exactly in the way they were procured. Honesty has been practiced to the utmost. Some responses reveal the commonly held views, however others show certain new glimpses. We hope that this research will help the concerned authorities in understanding the audience profile, their needs, media habits, socio-economic and demographic divisions. This research is sure to provide revealing insights into the audience and the tentative community radio service that we shall begin with.

CONCLUSION

This detailed survey that was conducted within a radius of 20 km from the city of Sirsa, Haryana, gives some revealing insights. The field surveyors chosen were the students of the Mass Communication Department of CDLU. This being a local university, most students were familiar with the resident language and could converse with the audience in their own dialect. This lends validity to the results, as the locals were more willing to interact with them. The analysis of the results shows clearly that there is a crying need of a Community Radio Station in this area- A radio that can talk to the people, about the people and by the people of the community. There is a dearth of any cultural entertainment sources and hence most audience rely on television for entertainment. This area bears cultural sentiments of three States of Punjab, Haryana and

Rajasthan, thus making it unique in terms of the customs and traditions. Many issues like girl child equality, education, skill development, technological advancement, need to be discussed and pondered over by the community to garner the support of the authorities. There exists a void among the local communities of a common public platform where they can voice their opinions and from where they can get the encouragement and knowledge to grow technically, culturally and economically. The unique linguistic arena and the felt needs are a clear indication that a Community Radio Station will be welcomed with open arms in this area. Also, it will prove to be a extended public space, if administered appropriately.