



Thesis
On
"Future Prospects of Radio Listenership: A Study on
Evolving Media Behavior and The Relevance of Traditional
Radio in Digital Age"

Submitted for the award of the degree of

B.A. (Honors) Journalism

By

HImanshi Jha

Under the supervision of

Dr. Nidhi Singhal

Department of Journalism

Delhi College of Arts and Commerce

University of Delhi, New Delhi- 110023

Phone: 011-24109821

DECLARATION

I, Ms. Himanshi Jha, here by declare that my research paper titled “Future prospects of Radio Listenership: A Study on Evolving Media Behavior and The Relevance of Traditional Radio in Digital Age” is original research done by the researcher , under the supervision of Dr. Nidhi Singhal, Department of Journalism, Delhi College of Arts and Commerce, University of Delhi. I further reaffirm that the research paper has not been published yet.

Himanshi Jha

Roll Number 348

BRA (H) Journalism

Batch 2022-2025/26

Department of Journalism

Delhi College of Arts and Commerce

University of Delhi



Department of Journalism

Delhi College of Arts and Commerce

University of Delhi, New Delhi- 110023

Phone: 011-24109821

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled “Future Prospects of Radio Listenership: A Study on Evolving Media Behavior and The Relevance of Traditional Radio in Digital Age” submitted Dr. Nidhi Singhal faculty, Department of Journalism, Delhi College of Arts and Commerce, University of Delhi, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Bachelor of arts in Journalism, is an original work carried out by Ms. Himanshi Jha

This research was undertaken under my supervision and guidance, and to the best of my knowledge, the thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship, or any other similar title at any university or institution in India or abroad.

Date: 21 April 2025.

Dr. Nidhi Singhal

Supervisor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This was a challenge within itself for an undergraduate student who had never even done any formal research before. Understanding the theoretical notions and prospects of radio listenership and then applying them to real surveys was not only a challenge, but also a fantastic learning experience. And having finished my dissertation gives me a sense of success and happiness. I take this opportunity to express my deepest sense of respect and sincere gratitude to Dr. Nidhi Singhal, my esteemed supervisor, for her scholarly guidance, insightful suggestions, and continuous encouragement she didn't only taught me the theoretical parts of qualitative research but also helped me throughout my dissertation, would not have been possible otherwise.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Neha Jhingala, Head of the Department, for her academic leadership, constant motivation, and for fostering an environment of learning and research within the department.

I am also profoundly grateful to Dr. Rajiv Chopra, Principal, Delhi College of Arts and Commerce, University of Delhi, for providing the institutional support and infrastructure that made this research endeavor possible.

I would like to acknowledge the faculty members, administrative staff, and fellow students of Delhi College of Arts and Commerce, for their cooperation and moral support during the completion of my work.

Lastly, I extend my special thanks to my family and well-wishers whose unwavering faith, patience, and emotional support have been my greatest strength throughout this journey.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLE.....	6
ABSTRACT.....	7
CHAPTER- 1: INTRODUCTION.....	8-12
CHAPTER- 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	13-17
CHAPTER- 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	18-20
CHAPTER- 4: OBJECTIVES.....	21-22
CHAPTER- 5: HYPOTHESIS.....	23-24
CHAPTER- 6: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	25-28
CHAPTER- 7: DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION.....	29-38
CHAPTER- 8: RESULT & FINDINGS.....	39-42
CHAPTER- 9: CONCLUSION & LIMITATIONS.....	43-46
CHAPTER- 10: REFERENCES.....	47-48
ANNEXURE.....	49

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1.1(a) Age group

Fig. 1.1(b) Age group listening to radio

Fig. 1.2 Listening pattern of different age groups

Fig. 1.3 Educational or Working profession how often listen to Radio

Fig. 1.4 Listenership pattern of Radio vs Other Online streaming platforms

Fig. 1.5 Prominent Radio Stations

Fig. 1.6 Consumption of news through Radio and its Credibility

Fig. 1.7 Encountering Commercial ads and its impact on listenership

Fig. 1.8 Reasons for Traditional Radio to lose its relevance in today's scenario

Fig. 1.9 Relevance of Traditional Radio and its future positioning

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Age group and relevance of radio for youth today

ABSTRACT

This research paper investigates the future prospects of radio listenership in the context of evolving media behavior and the increasing prominence of digital platforms. The study examines the factors influencing the shift in audio consumption patterns, particularly among younger generations, and explores the challenges and opportunities facing traditional radio in the digital age.

The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. A survey was conducted across different generational cohorts (Generation Z, Millennials, Generation X, and Baby Boomers) to analyze radio listening habits, platform preferences, and content consumption patterns. In-depth interviews were also conducted to gain a deeper understanding of listeners' emotional connections to radio, their attitudes towards technological transitions, and their perceived relevance of radio in their daily lives.

The findings indicate that while traditional radio maintains a high level of historical dominance across all age groups, educational or working background, its current listenership is increasingly characterized by occasional engagement, especially among younger demographics. The 18-25 age group, which represents a significant portion of the respondents, demonstrates a preference for "Sometimes" listening, suggesting a shift away from radio as a primary medium.

Several factors are identified as contributing to this evolving landscape. The proliferation of smartphones and widespread internet access have empowered audiences with on-demand access to a vast array of audio and visual content, leading to a decline in reliance on linear broadcast mediums like traditional radio. The lack of streaming options, on-demand content, and personalized experiences offered by traditional linear medium, radio, also poses a challenge in attracting and retaining listeners, particularly in competition with digital platforms that provide more interactive and innovative features.

However, the preference for private radio stations suggests the importance of content that resonates with contemporary tastes and preferences. The study also reveals a need to enhance radio's credibility as a news source and to strategically manage commercial interruptions to minimize their negative impact on listenership.

The prevailing view among respondents is that radio is more likely to evolve than to disappear, indicating a belief in its potential to adapt to the changing media landscape. This evolution may involve a greater convergence with digital platforms, a focus on niche audiences, and the development of more interactive and engaging content formats.

Chapter- 1

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Radio, as a medium of mass communication, has had a profound impact on societies around the world since its inception in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As a wireless audio technology, radio operates by transmitting sound in the form of electromagnetic waves, which are then captured by receivers and converted into audible content. Unlike visual media that require focused attention, radio relies solely on sound, which makes it highly suitable for multitasking and accessible to a wide demographic. Whether people are driving, working, studying, doing household chores, or traveling, radio provides a continuous stream of entertainment, information, and engagement without demanding visual attention. This quality has historically made radio one of the most enduring and versatile media formats in human history.

Radio has played a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of communication, entertainment, and public discourse across generations. Long before the arrival of television and the internet, radio served as the dominant medium for disseminating news, broadcasting music, promoting cultural exchange, and delivering government messages. In many parts of the world, especially in developing countries, radio emerged as a unifying tool that transcended language barriers, geographical isolation, and socioeconomic divisions. The relatively low cost of radio receivers and the simplicity of radio technology made it accessible to even the most marginalized communities. Particularly in India, All India Radio (AIR), known as Akashvani, played a vital role in post-independence nation-building efforts by broadcasting educational content, regional programming, and national news in multiple languages.

Over the decades, two primary types of radio broadcasting formats came into use: **Amplitude Modulation (AM)** and **Frequency Modulation (FM)**. AM broadcasting, the older of the two, involves varying the amplitude of the signal and is known for its long-range transmission capabilities. It has traditionally been used for talk shows, news broadcasts, and public service programs, especially in rural or hard-to-reach areas. However, AM radio is more susceptible to interference and provides lower sound quality. FM broadcasting, which modulates frequency instead of amplitude, offers significantly better sound fidelity and resistance to signal disruptions. Due to its superior audio quality, FM became the preferred format for music and entertainment programs and gained popularity in urban areas.

Despite its early dominance, radio has faced stiff competition from newer media technologies over the past century. The advent of television in the mid-20th century marked the beginning of a gradual decline in radio listenership. Television's ability to combine audio with visual storytelling offered a more immersive experience, drawing audiences away from purely auditory formats. As visual media gained ground, radio was increasingly perceived as a background medium—suitable for passive engagement but unable to compete for attention in an image-centric era. However, this shift did not render radio obsolete. Its ease of access, portability, and utility in high-terrain, rural, or disaster-prone regions allowed it to remain relevant even when other media faltered.

The decline in radio listenership accelerated with the explosion of digital technologies in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The emergence of the internet, mobile phones, and streaming platforms fundamentally altered the way content is consumed. On-demand services such as Spotify, YouTube, and podcast platforms allow users to customize their listening experiences, a feature that traditional radio largely lacked. Younger generations, especially Gen Z and millennial, have shown a clear preference for personalized, interactive, and visual content. These behavioral changes have had a noticeable impact on traditional radio listenership, particularly in urban areas where alternative media are easily accessible.

Yet, amid this transformation, radio has not entirely lost its ground. In India, for instance, the privatization of the radio sector in the early 2000s brought new life to an aging medium. The liberalization policies allowed private players to enter the FM broadcasting market, resulting in a surge of vibrant, youth-oriented radio stations like Radio Mirchi (98.3 FM), Red FM (93.5 FM), BIG FM (92.7 FM), and Radio City (91.1 FM). These stations introduced localized content, music-driven programming, humor, celebrity interviews, interactive segments, and regional language broadcasting, which helped reclaim a significant share of the urban youth market. This wave of privatization not only democratized access to airwaves but also stimulated creative competition, diversified content, and enhanced listener engagement.

Furthermore, India has also seen a growth in community radio stations, which operate at a hyper-local level and cater to specific community needs. These stations have been instrumental in providing educational content, agricultural advice, healthcare awareness, and promoting local culture in areas underserved by mainstream media. Even during natural disasters and

emergencies, such as the Kerala floods or COVID-19 lockdowns, radio served as a vital communication tool to reach remote populations quickly and effectively. The medium's adaptability and resilience continue to be its strongest assets.

This research paper is grounded in the study of the future prospects of radio listenership in the context of an evolving digital media ecosystem. It aims to understand whether traditional radio, as we know it, can maintain its relevance in the face of rapidly changing listener behavior, especially among younger generations. With the increasing dominance of digital streaming platforms and social media, this paper investigates the psychological, social, and technological factors influencing the shift in audio consumption patterns.

The study pays particular attention to younger listeners, who represent both the most digitally native and the most media-saturated generation. It seeks to understand their motivations, habits, and attitudes toward traditional radio compared to newer formats like podcasts, YouTube radio channels, Spotify playlists, and short-form audio content on apps like Instagram and TikTok. While these platforms provide instant gratification, unlimited choice, and user control, traditional radio is often linear, scheduled, and less interactive. The research explores whether this lack of interactivity is seen as a limitation or whether elements such as nostalgia, voice intimacy, human connection, and curated programming still hold value for today's youth.

The study also examines the innovative adaptations being made by radio stations to bridge this gap—such as live streaming radio over apps, integrating radio content with social media, creating interactive online shows, and collaborating with influencers to stay culturally relevant. Several FM stations in India now offer mobile app versions that allow for time-shifted listening, notifications, and interactive polls—blurring the lines between traditional and digital formats. These hybrid models may hold the key to radio's sustained relevance in the digital age.

Another focus area of the research is the role of regional and linguistic diversity in shaping radio consumption in India. With a multilingual population and deep-rooted cultural traditions, regional radio content has a strong emotional resonance among listeners. This factor gives radio a unique advantage over globalized digital platforms, which often focus on content in dominant languages. The personalization of content at the regional level, when combined with modern formats, could unlock new growth avenues for radio listenership.

This paper further explores the economic and infrastructural factors that influence radio accessibility and usage in rural versus urban settings. In areas with limited internet connectivity and low smartphone penetration, traditional radio remains a primary source of information and entertainment. In such contexts, radio is not just a medium—it is a lifeline. Its affordability, resilience during power outages, and minimal dependency on advanced technology make it indispensable.

From a methodological standpoint, the research employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches to understand listener behavior. Surveys and focus group discussions with younger audiences are used to collect data on listening habits, preferences, and attitudes. Secondary data from industry reports, government policy documents, and previous academic studies provide additional context and support for analysis.

Ultimately, this paper argues that while traditional radio faces significant challenges, it is far from obsolete. Instead, it stands at a crossroads where adaptation and innovation can redefine its role in the 21st century. The medium's future lies not in resisting change, but in embracing hybridization, integrating digital tools, and aligning with the evolving expectations of a new generation of listeners. Through this study, we aim to contribute to a deeper understanding of how radio can transform from a legacy medium into a future-ready platform—still rooted in sound but no longer limited by its past.

Chapter- 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study of radio listenership within the context of rapidly evolving digital media landscapes has gained renewed academic interest. With the emergence of online streaming platforms, podcasts, and algorithm-driven content delivery, traditional radio faces new challenges in retaining audiences—especially among younger generations. While once considered the centerpiece of auditory communication and entertainment, radio has had to reinvent itself multiple times over the last century. This literature review aims to examine key scholarly contributions that explore the evolution of radio, its current positioning in the digital age, listener behavior across generations, the integration of traditional and digital formats, and its unique role in the Indian media ecosystem. By synthesizing findings from few already existing articles and studies, this review establishes a scholarly foundation for understanding the future trajectory of radio listenership.

Surrounding the theme of **evolution of radio in this digitally advanced world**, Kuyucu's research paper (Radio Broadcasting in the Digital Age: Adapting to the Challenges of the 21st Century, 2019) outlines how digital platforms have reshaped audience expectations, causing a fragmentation that traditional broadcasters struggle to address. The shift toward internet-based streaming and mobile access demands a content strategy rooted in interactivity and accessibility.

Later suggesting few surviving measures, Laor in his study (Digital Transition and the Future of Radio, 2022) argues that the radio industry must embrace "multi-platform presence" and "user-centric design" to maintain relevance in a saturated digital media environment. Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) and internet radio services represent two prominent technological advancements in modern radio. These developments offer superior sound quality, broader reach, and richer metadata. However, their implementation is contingent on a region's digital infrastructure and audience readiness (Laor, 2022).

These insights underscore the necessity for radio stations to reconfigure their operational models to accommodate emerging listening habits shaped by technology. Thus, it highlights the prominence of low-maintenance and relevance of traditional radio in digitally marginalized areas.

Moving towards the next theme affecting radio listenership is **generational differences of radio consumption**. Addressing the same Laor, in his research (Personality and On-Demand Radio Usage: A Cross-Generational Study, 2021), conducted a comparative study on Baby Boomers (1946-64), Gen X (1965-80), and Gen Y (1980s-96), revealing that Gen Y (popularly known as millennial) listeners, driven by a higher need for social validation, are more attracted to on-demand and interactive radio content. In contrast, Gen X showed declining interest, potentially due to a generational lag in adapting to digital listening formats.

Krause et al. (2020) focused on older adults and found that traditional radio continues to fulfill emotional and social needs, such as companionship, familiarity, and habit. His study, Radio Listening and Older Adults: Exploring Uses and Gratifications, emphasizes that while digital transformation is appealing to younger cohorts, traditional radio retains emotional value and routine-based appeal for older demographics, suggesting coexistence of old and new listening cultures.

However, the study doesn't accommodate the Generation Z or popularly known as Gen Z. Thus, the study established a generational divide in patterns of radio consumption.

The uses and gratifications theory provides a valuable lens to understand listener motivation. Menon (FM Radio Listenership During the Pandemic: A Uses and Gratifications Perspective, 2023), in his study on FM radio consumption in India during the COVID-19 lockdown, identified six core motivators: information seeking, relaxing entertainment, diversion, companionship, multitasking convenience, and passing time. All motivations except for passing time significantly predicted increased FM listenership, indicating the multifaceted role of radio in modern Indian households.

Furthermore, Bhat (FM Radio and Listening Habits of Younger Generation: A Study of Four Major Markets of Delhi, India, 2017) examined radio listenership among youth in Delhi, noting that while digital alternatives are gaining ground, FM radio remains relevant due to its ease of access, localized content, and cultural continuity. However, the study also noted drawbacks such as excessive advertising and repetitive content, which dissuade sustained engagement among youth.

Let's talk about the next theme that is integration of traditional radio and digital formats. The convergence of traditional broadcasting with digital media represents a critical survival strategy for radio stations. Laor (2022) points out that embracing streaming platforms, podcasting, and social media enhances radio's ability to attract and retain audiences. Real-time feedback mechanisms and content personalization are now integral to sustaining listenership in the digital era.

A model explored by Kuyucu (2019) involves the hybridization of FM and digital platforms, wherein users can switch between live radio and curated music streams. This approach helps maintain traditional radio's editorial strength while satisfying the modern listener's demand for control and choice. This dual-mode delivery is particularly effective in contexts like India, where both digital and analog infrastructures coexist.

Talking about the Indian context where both digital and analog infrastructures coexist, the study suggests that India offers a unique case study in the evolution of radio, especially post-privatization of FM in the early 2000s. Sen (The Indian FM Radio Revolution: Privatization and its Impact, 2014) highlights how private stations such as Radio Mirchi, Big FM, and Radio City localized their content to appeal to urban youth, blending entertainment with regional culture and language. The commercialization of radio made it both a profitable and culturally resonant medium.

Bhat (2017) and Menon (2023) reinforce that despite the digital influx, FM radio still commands a strong presence in Indian cities and semi-urban regions due to its accessibility and low data dependency. In rural areas and during national emergencies (e.g., natural disasters or the COVID-19 lockdown), FM remains a primary channel of mass communication, especially for those without reliable internet access.

Experts have also attempted to forecast the future of radio. Jauert et al. (The Future of Radio Revisited: Expert Perspectives and Future Scenarios for Radio Media in 2025, 2017), through scenario-based research involving European and Canadian experts, identified personalization, increased digitalization, and content integration across platforms as key trends shaping the future of radio by 2025. They stress the importance of government policies, technological investment, and adaptive content strategies in ensuring radio's survival and relevance.

This literature review reveals that while traditional radio faces undeniable challenges in the face of digital expansion, it also possesses enduring qualities that ensure its continued relevance. The evolution of radio is not a linear path toward obsolescence but rather a process of adaptation that reflects broader shifts in media consumption behavior. In particular, radio's emotional connection with older audiences, its cultural value in India, and its emerging hybrid formats provide a strong foundation for its future. Integrating radio with digital platforms, understanding generational preferences, and focusing on localized, interactive content are crucial strategies that will define the next phase of radio listenership. Consequently, as this research paper will explore, the future of radio lies not in resisting digital change, but in embracing it to reinvent its unique strengths.

Chapter- 3

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORKS

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research is structured around an integrated theoretical framework combining four complementary theories to study how traditional radio continues to function in the modern media ecosystem and to forecast its future. This section dealt with the theoretical framework shaping my research paper.

- **Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT)**

UGT forms the backbone of understanding why audiences consume radio and what needs are fulfilled through it. This includes:

1. Cognitive needs- information, learning,
2. Affective needs- emotional satisfaction through music or storytelling,
3. Social integrative needs- community, companionship,
4. Functional needs- ease of access, multitask.

In my research's context, this theory helps analyze how different generations derive gratification from FM, AM, and digital radio formats.

- **Media Evolution Theory**

This theory posits that no medium becomes obsolete; rather, it evolves by adapting to new technological, cultural, and economic contexts.

1. Traditional radio is not disappearing—it is morphing into online radio, mobile streaming, and podcasts.
2. This framework explains the shift from analog to digital while preserving core features like community-building and real-time updates.

It positions traditional radio as part of a continuum, adapting rather than vanishing.

- **Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Everett Rogers)**

This theory helps explore how and why new technologies (like digital radio platforms) are adopted by different user groups. Key factors include:

1. Relative advantage- ease, interactivity, personalization,
2. Compatibility with existing values and habits,
3. Complexity, trialability, and observability.

In India's context, this helps explain:

1. Why **urban youth** rapidly adopt streaming,
2. Why **rural or older populations** continue with FM/AM,
3. The **digital divide** across regions and classes.

- **Generational Cohort Theory (Supporting Lens)**

This sociological framework segments audiences based on shared historical and technological experiences:

1. Baby Boomers / Gen X – loyal to traditional radio due to familiarity and habit,
2. Millennials / Gen Z – favor on-demand, interactive, and algorithm-driven digital audio.

This lens helps interpret changing patterns of radio consumption across age groups and their implications for the future.

This theoretical framework allows your study to:

1. **Identify and categorize** listening behavior based on motivations and generation,
2. Assess how radio is **evolving technologically and culturally**,
3. Understand **adoption patterns** of digital platforms,
4. Forecast the **prospects and challenges** of radio listenership in India.

Chapter- 4

OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVES

- To find out the **future prospects of Traditional Radio** listenership.
- To find out the **factors supporting decline** of Traditional Radio listenership.
- To find the **shift of listenership** from Traditional Radio to other mediums.
- To find out the **alternatives affecting listenership** of Traditional Radio.
- To find the **generational differences** of Radio listenership.
- To find out the **measures for Radio to sustain**.

Chapter- 5

HYPOTHESIS

HYPOTHESIS

- Radio listenership will show a **visible incline** in the future.
- Radio listenership **may or may not show a visible incline** in the future.
- Radio listenership will **not show a visible incline** in the future.
- Radio listenership will show a **visible decline** in the future.

Chapter- 6

RESEARCH

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter delineates the methodological framework adopted for my study, which seeks to investigate the future prospects of radio listenership within the context of shifting media behaviors and technological advancements. Specifically, the research examines how younger generations interact with traditional radio and explores the evolving consumption patterns influenced by digital alternatives. The methodology has been developed in alignment with the research objectives and theoretical framework, aiming to provide both a macro and micro-level understanding of radio's role in the contemporary media landscape.

A mixed-methods research design was employed, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This design allows for the collection of comprehensive data to capture both statistical patterns and in-depth perspectives. Quantitative data were used to identify trends and preferences across different generational cohorts, while qualitative data provided insights into the psychological, cultural, and contextual factors influencing radio consumption. This methodological choice is particularly pertinent given the complex, generational, and transitional nature of the subject matter, wherein individual motivations, technological accessibility, and cultural contexts intersect to influence media behavior.

- **Sampling**

The population for this study comprises individuals from four generational cohorts within the Indian demographic context:

1. Generation Z (ages 13–27)
2. Millennials (ages 28–43)
3. Generation X (ages 44–59)
4. Baby Boomers (ages 60 and above)

A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure proportional representation of these cohorts. The sample includes respondents from both urban and rural settings and reflects a diverse range of socio-economic and educational backgrounds.

- **Data Collection**

Quantitative Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was developed and disseminated both online and offline. The questionnaire consisted of both closed and Likert-scale items and covered the following dimensions:

1. Frequency and duration of radio listenership
2. Platform preference (AM, FM, internet radio, podcasts)
3. Type of content consumed (news, music, educational programming, etc.)
4. Attitudes toward traditional and digital radio formats

The instrument was pre-tested with a pilot sample to assess its reliability and face validity. Necessary modifications were made prior to final deployment.

Qualitative Data Collection

In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather qualitative data. Interview guides were designed to explore:

1. Emotional and nostalgic associations with radio
2. Media consumption habits and multi-platform engagement
3. Attitudes toward technological transitions and innovation in radio
4. Perceived relevance of radio in current life contexts

All interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent and subsequently transcribed for thematic analysis.

• Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS and Microsoft Excel. The analysis involved:

1. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means)
2. Cross-tabulations to explore relationships between variables (e.g., age and platform preference)
3. Chi-square tests to assess statistical significance of associations
4. Regression analysis to identify predictors of radio listenership decline

Qualitative Analysis

Transcripts from interviews and focus groups were coded and analyzed using thematic analysis. A grounded approach was employed to identify recurring themes, such as “convenience,” “digitization,” “cultural value,” and “generational disconnect.”

The integration of qualitative and quantitative findings facilitated a robust triangulation of insights, supporting more nuanced interpretations.

Chapter- 7

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Going forward with data analysis let's talk about the fraction of respondents listening to radio, their listening pattern and psychological behavior with using demographic statistics. According to the survey, 80% of the respondents fall into the age group of 18-25 out of which 98% of the respondents indicated a positive response having ever listening to radio. 25-35 age group occupies 8.6% of the respondents, with a majority of 83% reacted with "yes". 35-45 (5.7%) and 45-55 (2.9%) age group indicated 100% "yes". Lastly below 18 and above 50 age group occupying 1.4% each of the total respondents reacted with a 100% yes (fig. 1.1(a) and 1.1 (b)).

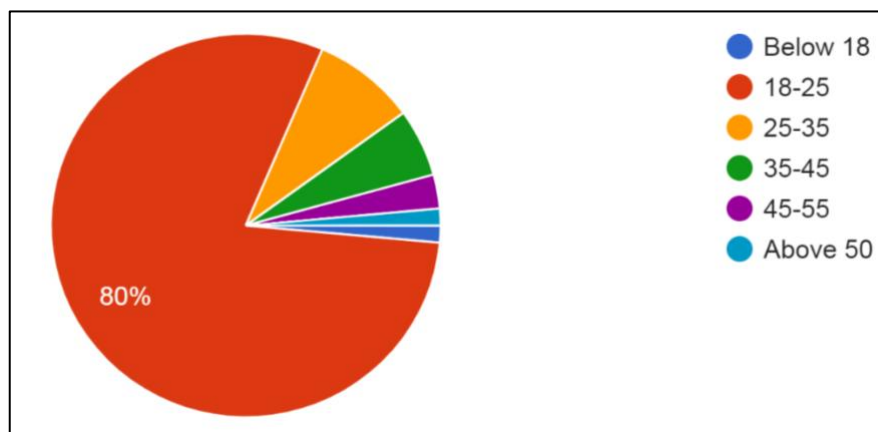


Fig. 1.1(a) Age group

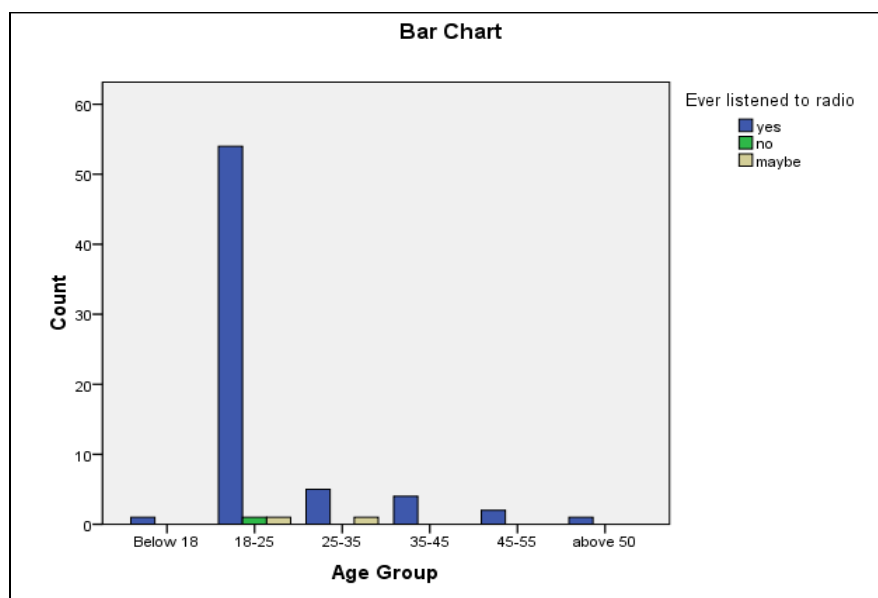


Fig. 1.1(b) Age group listening to radio

It not only shows how many people listen to radio but how people coming from different age groups listen to it. It indicates the popularity and significance of radio standing strong even in this rapidly evolving and technology-oriented society. But here the question that arises is how often they listen to radio? To answer this question let's look at this bar graph (fig. 1.2).

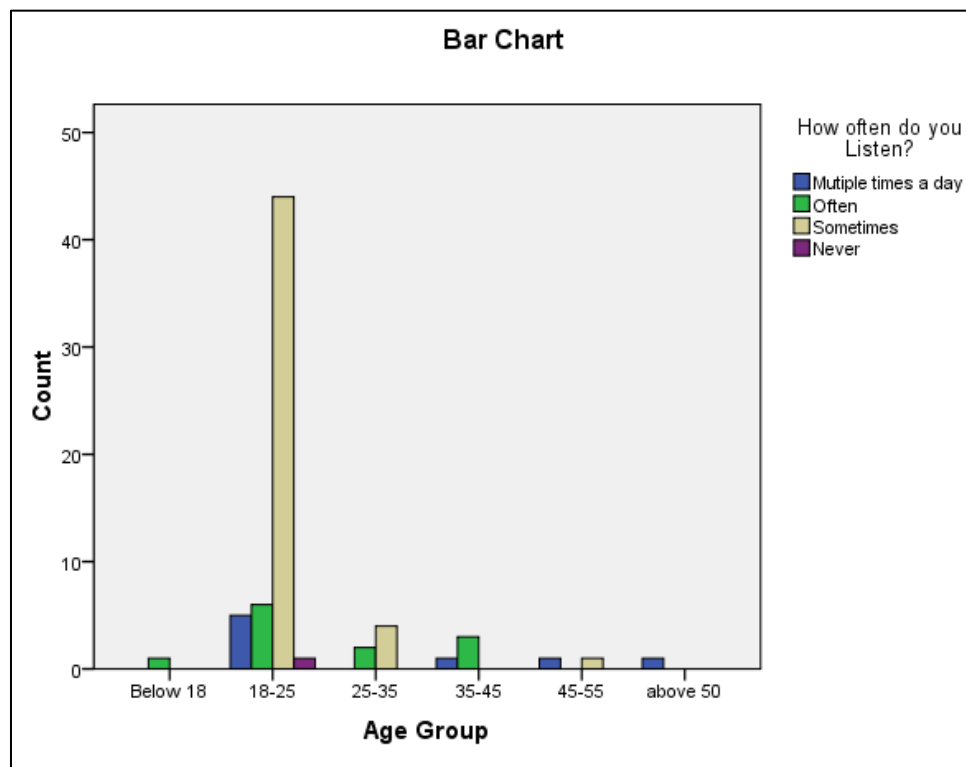


Fig. 1.2 Listening pattern of different age groups

This bar chart shows the frequency of radio listening across different age groups. The 18-25 age group comprises the largest number of respondents (55, or 78.6%). Within this group, a significant majority listen "Sometimes" (44, or 80% of this age group), followed by "Often" (6, or 10.9%), "Multiple times a day" (5, or 9.1%), and a small fraction "Never" (1, or 1.8%). Other age groups have considerably fewer respondents. Among them, the listening frequency varies, but the "Sometimes" category generally has the highest counts. Let's look at the consuming pattern of respondents coming from different educational and occupational backgrounds shown in fig.1.3.

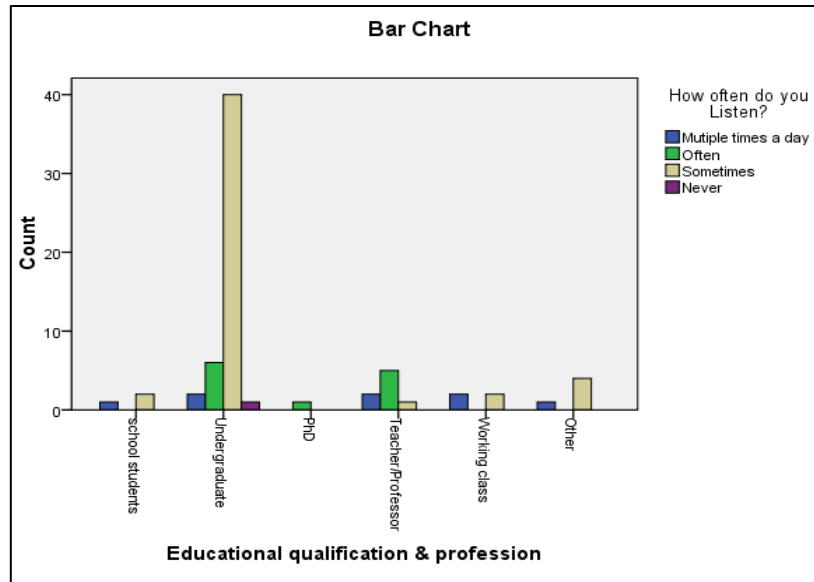


Fig. 1.3 Educational or Working profession how often listen to Radio

This bar chart displays radio listening frequency across different educational qualifications and professions. The "Undergraduate" group has the highest number of respondents (around 49), with most listening "Sometimes" (around 40). "Teacher/Professor" and "Working class" groups show different listening frequencies. "School students" and "PhD" respondents primarily listen "Sometimes" or "Never." The "Other" category, postgraduate and graduated, also shows some "Sometimes" listeners. Apparently "sometimes" time frame is prevalent, often and multiple times a day hold significant numbers. Now let's study the consuming pattern of the respondents with other streaming platforms.

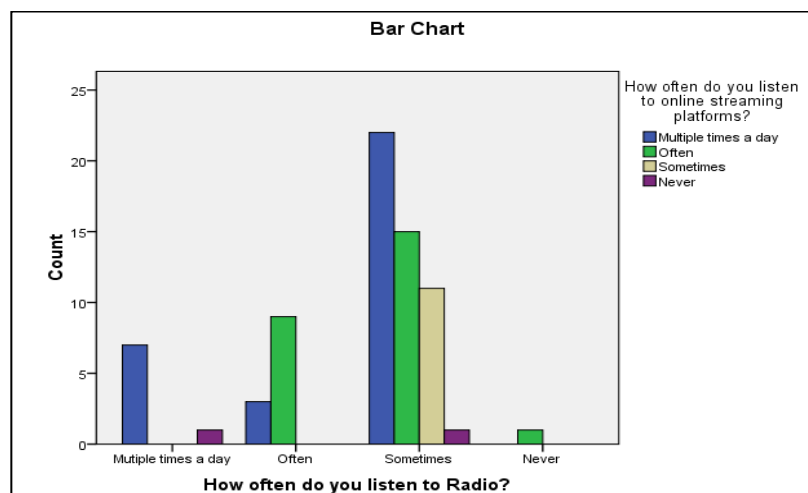


Fig. 1.4 Listenership pattern of Radio vs Other Online streaming platforms

This bar chart explores the relationship between the frequency of listening to traditional radio and the frequency of listening to online streaming platforms. The x-axis represents how often respondents listen to radio, categorized as "Multiple times a day," "Often," "Sometimes," and "Never." The y-axis shows the count of respondents. The bars are segmented based on how often respondents listen to online streaming platforms: "Multiple times a day" (blue), "Often" (green), "Sometimes" (yellow), and "Never" (purple).

Looking at those who listen to radio "Multiple times a day," a significant portion also listens to online streaming platforms "Multiple times a day." As radio listening frequency decreases, the frequency of listening to online streaming platforms also tends to decrease, with a notable increase in those who "Sometimes" use streaming platforms. Interestingly, a small number of individuals who listen to radio "Multiple times a day" or "Often" report never using online streaming platforms. Conversely, those who "Never" listen to radio predominantly fall into the "Sometimes" category for online streaming.

This suggests a complex relationship. While frequent radio listeners also tend to be frequent users of streaming platforms, there's also a segment that primarily uses one over the other. The "Sometimes" radio listeners show a greater inclination towards "Sometimes" using streaming platforms, indicating a potential overlap or substitution in listening habits for this group. The next variable we're going to study is the respondents listening to radio, which stations do they listen to? (fig. 1.5)

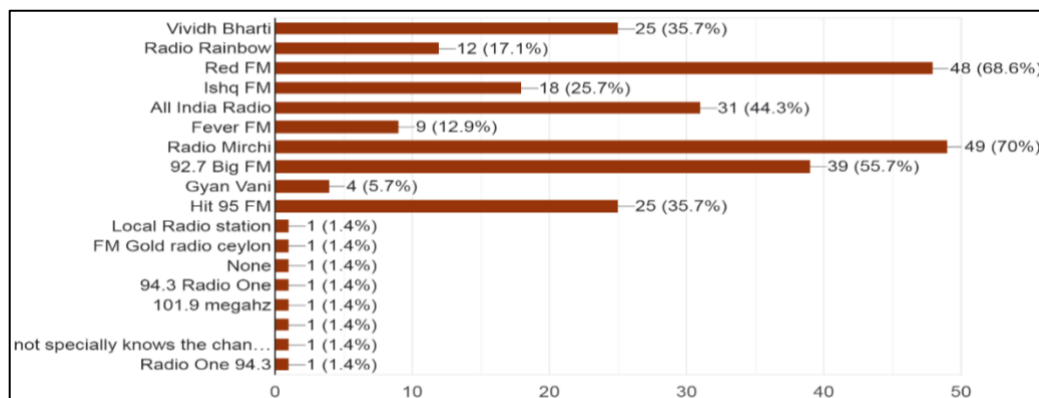


Fig. 1.5 Prominent Radio Stations

Looking at the statistics it is evident that the respondents prefer Private Radio Stations over Government Radio Stations where Radio Mirchi holds the highest number with 70% listenership closely followed by Red FM with 68.8% and 92.7 Big FM with 55.7%. However, All India Radio and Vividh Bharti are also in the competition with a significant share of 44.5 % and 35.7% respectively. When asked upon who delivers the content better, Private Radio Stations dominated the answer but not with a high margin. Another question was asked if Private Radio Stations can help Traditional Radio survive to which

The respondents consume different contents through Radio such as music, Rj specific content, educational content and news. However, there is a slight doubt of credibility seen while analyzing the answers of the respondents on consuming news through Radio (fig.1.6). A majority of 47.1% respondents seeks to stay neutral and doesn't clarify their stance on the credibility of Radio as a news aggregator. But 31.4% somewhat believes it to be a credible source and 14.3% strongly agrees. However, a small fraction of 1.4% doesn't consider it as much credible.

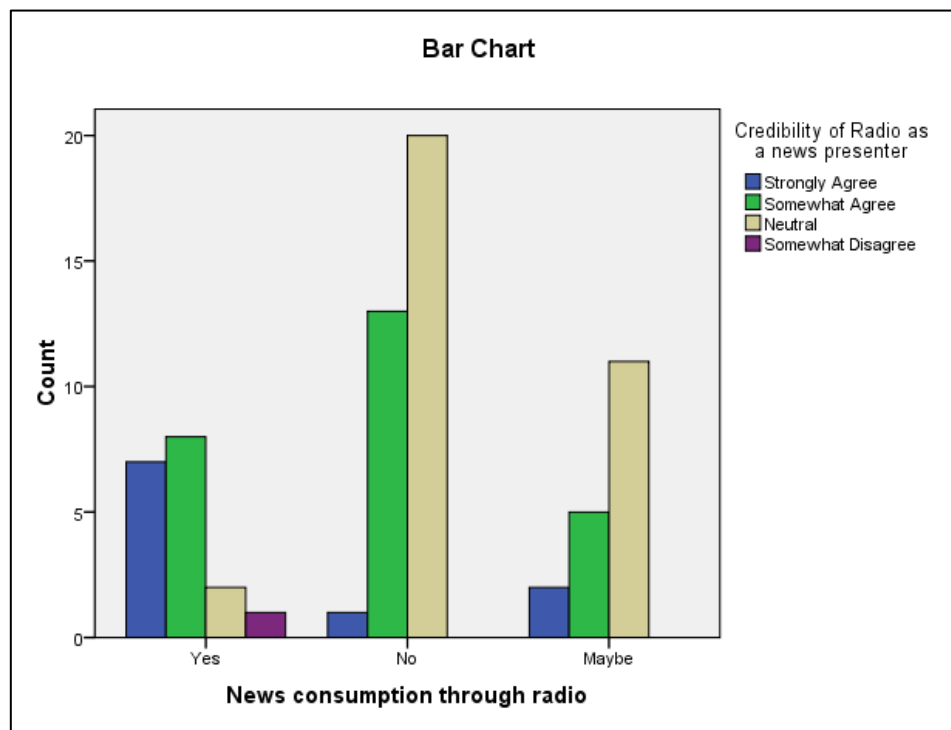


Fig. 1.6 Consumption of news through Radio and its Credibility

Overall, the chart suggests that while those who actively use radio for news tend to view it as credible, a significant portion of those who don't use it for news, or are unsure if they do, hold a neutral stance on its credibility. There's limited strong disagreement across all groups. Also, when asked if the enrollment of Private Radio Station as a news presenter can help Traditional Radio sustain longer, a glaring majority of 47.1% answered in favor. The 40% of the remaining responded with “maybe” again showing their uncertain stance. Meanwhile 12.9% believed that even Private Radio Stations cannot help Traditional Radio survive.

While the credibility affects the listenership of Radio, there is another factor affecting it i.e. commercial ads. Let's look at the next bar graph (fig. 1.7) to understand it.

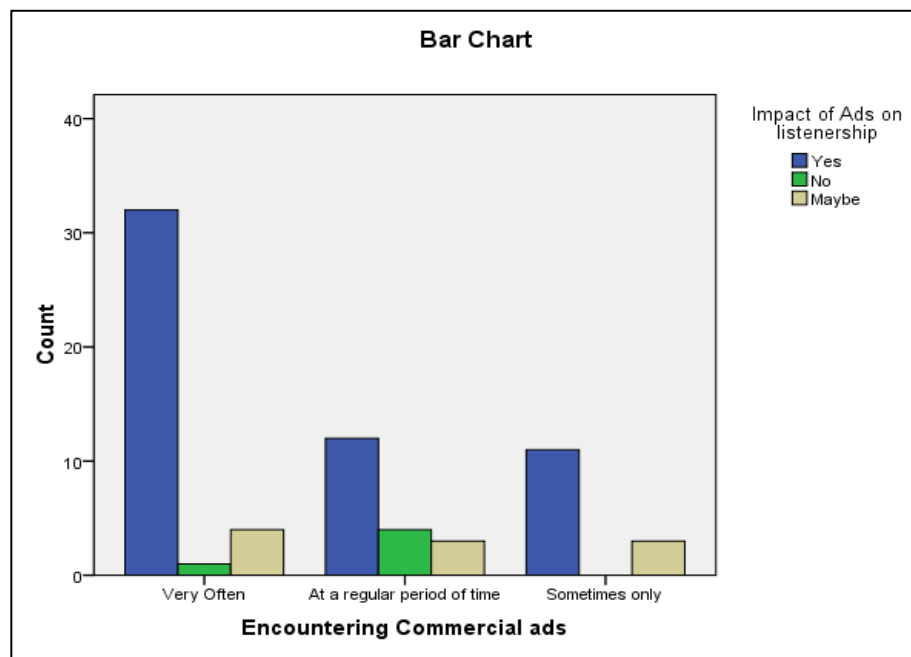


Fig. 1.7 Encountering Commercial ads and its impact on listenership

This bar chart illustrates the impact of encountering commercial ads on listenership. A significant number of respondents (around 32) who encounter ads "Very Often" feel it negatively impacts their listenership. This number drops considerably for those encountering ads "At a regular period of time" (around 12) and "Sometimes only" (around 11). Conversely, the number of respondents who feel ads do *not* negatively impact their listenership is low across all frequencies, with a slight increase for those encountering ads "At a regular period of time." The "Maybe" responses are also relatively low across all categories, suggesting a degree of certainty in the

perceived impact. In essence, the more frequently listeners encounter commercial ads, the more likely they are to perceive a negative impact on their listenership. Less frequent ad exposure appears to lessen this negative perception.

Now the next question is does radio still holds relevance in this technology dominated fast paced world? Let us look at the table 1.1.

		Does Radio holds relevance for youth today?			Total
		yes	no	Maybe	
Age Group	Below 18	1	0	0	1
	18-25	17	15	24	56
	25-35	0	2	4	6
	35-45	1	1	2	4
	45-55	0	1	1	2
	above 50	1	0	0	1
Total		20	19	31	70

Table 1.1 Age group and relevance of radio for youth today

Looking at the "Below 18" age group, the single respondent answered "yes," but with such a small sample size, we can't draw any firm conclusions for this demographic. The 19-25 age group presents a more nuanced picture. While a significant number (17 or 30.35%) believe radio is relevant, a nearly equal number (15 or 26.78%) disagree. The high number of "maybe" responses (24 or 42.85%) suggests uncertainty or perhaps a perception that radio's relevance is conditional for young people in this age range. This could be due to the rise of other media platforms competing for their attention.

For the 26-35 age group, the small sample size (6) shows that the responses are split, indicating differing views within this slightly older youth demographic. The older age groups (36-45, 45-55, and above 50) with very few respondents suggests a positive attitude towards the relevance of Radio for youth today. Another question that arises here is what could be the reason for once dominating medium to lose its relevance? Look at the next chart (fig. 1.8) to understand those reasons.

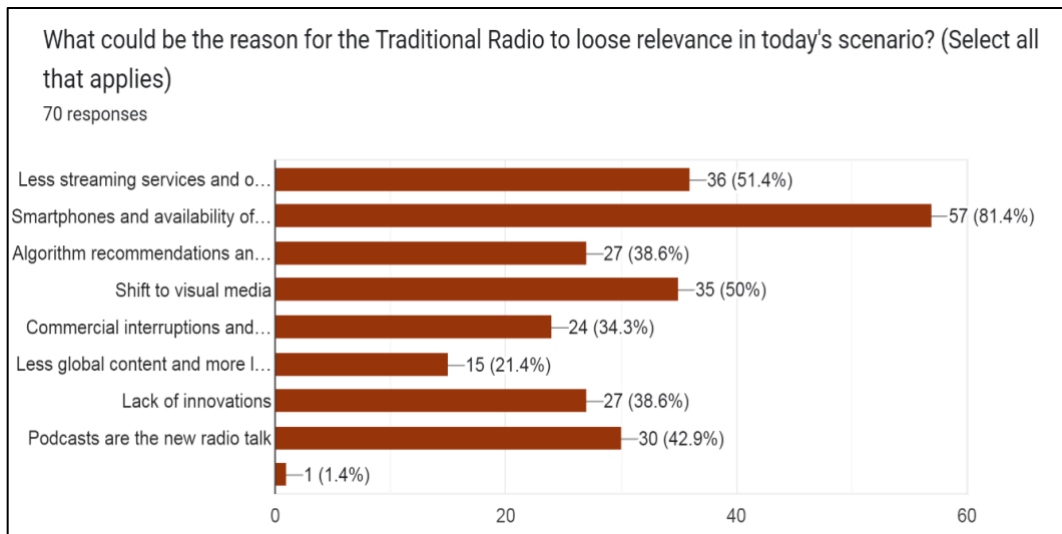


Fig. 1.8 Reasons for Traditional Radio to lose its relevance in today's scenario

Evidently technological advancements and the changed media consuming habits have reduced the relevance of Traditional Radio. Traditional Radio is a linear medium whereas, present day audience demands more interactive and innovative medium. The glaring 81.4% majority shows that the inception of smartphones and availability of Wi-Fi have impacted significantly. The lack of streaming options and on demand contents and shift to visual media is following closely with a share of 51.4% and 50% respectively. Other reasons include algorithm recommendations and personalized content, lack of innovations, commercial interruptions and repetitive playlists, podcasts and less global and more localized content impacting their listenership and reducing its relevance in present day.

However, it is also understood that digital inclusivity, innovation and more open-ended approach with private sectors can help Traditional Radio survive in this technically innovative, inclusive and advanced globe. The online presence of Traditional Radio stations has made it possible for traditional radio to find solutions for its survival and evolve while necessary. After understanding the potential of Traditional Radio to evolve what position will it be holding in the near future. Will it survive, evolve or lose its presence? To understand the perspective of our audience let's look at the next chart (fig.1.9).

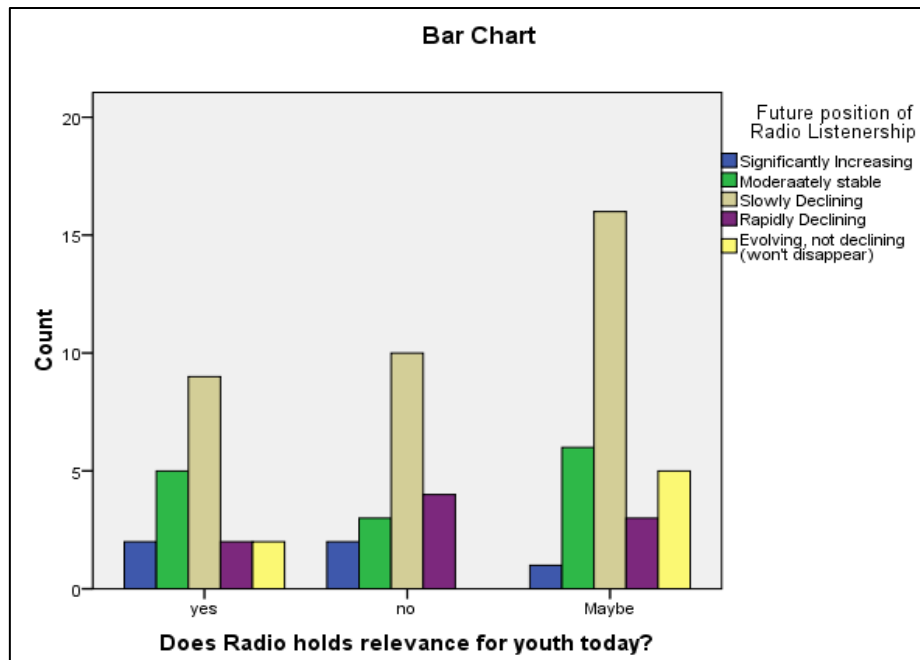


Fig. 1.9 Relevance of Traditional Radio and its future positioning

Among those who believe radio *is* relevant for youth, the largest group predicts it will be "Evolving, not declining." A smaller number foresee it as "Moderately Stable," with very few predicting significant increase or slow decline. For those who believe radio is *not* relevant for youth, the most frequent prediction is also "Evolving, not declining," followed by "Slowly Declining." Few anticipate a significant increase or moderate stability. Interestingly, even among those who are unsure ("maybe") about radio's current relevance for youth, the majority still believe it will be "Evolving, not declining." Overall, despite varying opinions on radio's current relevance for youth, there's a consensus that radio listenership is unlikely to disappear entirely. The prevailing view is that it will adapt and evolve in the future.

Chapter- 8

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

This analysis delves into the survey data to understand the current state and future prospects of traditional radio listenership, aligning with the stated objectives. The findings are presented based on demographic statistics, listening patterns, psychological behaviors, and perceptions of radio's relevance and future.

1. Generational Differences in Radio Listenership (Fig. 1.1(a) & 1.1(b), Fig. 1.2):

The survey reveals a high penetration of radio listening across all age groups, indicating its historical significance. Notably, the 18-25 age group constitutes the largest segment of respondents (80%), with an impressive 98% having listened to radio at some point. This suggests that even the younger generation, often associated with newer media, has had exposure to traditional radio.

Older age groups (25-35, 35-45, 45-55, Below 18, and Above 50), while representing smaller proportions of the total respondents, generally show a high percentage of having ever listened to radio (83% to 100%). However, the frequency of their current listening habits, as depicted in Fig. 1.2 (though with smaller sample sizes), also tends towards "Sometimes," with fewer individuals reporting frequent listening. This reinforces the trend of radio transitioning from a primary to a more occasional across generations.

Finding 1: While traditional radio boasts a high historical reach across all age groups, particularly the dominant 18-25 segment, the frequency of current listenership, especially among younger demographics, leans towards occasional ("Sometimes") rather than regular engagement.

- Consuming Pattern Based on Educational and Occupational Background (Fig. 1.3)

Finding 2: There is a discernible shift and overlap in listenership between traditional radio and online streaming platforms. Frequent radio listeners often also engage frequently with streaming, while less frequent radio listening correlates with increased "sometimes" usage of streaming, suggesting a substitution effect for a segment of the audience.

- Shift of Listenership to other Mediums and Formats (Fig. 1.4).

- Fig. 1.4 directly addresses the shift of listenership by comparing traditional radio listening frequency with online streaming platform usage. The data indicates a complex interplay between these two mediums.
- However, as traditional radio listening frequency decreases, it suggests a potential substitution or overlap where individuals who are not regular radio listeners might turn to streaming platforms for occasional audio consumption.
- The observation also highlights the existence of distinct user groups and a potential shift where streaming serves as the primary audio for those who have abandoned or never adopted traditional radio.

Finding 3: Technological advancements, particularly the ubiquity of smartphones and Wi-Fi, coupled with the limitations of traditional radio in offering streaming, on-demand content, and personalized experiences, are the primary factors contributing to its perceived declining relevance and impacting listenership.

- Fig. 1.8 provides crucial insights into the factors contributing to the perceived decline in traditional radio's relevance.
- Decline due to technological advancements and changed media consuming habits, widespread adoption of smartphones and Wi-Fi availability, on-demand access to a vast array of audio and visual content, reducing reliance on linear broadcast mediums like traditional radio.
- Other contributing factors include algorithm-driven recommendations and personalized content on digital platforms, the perceived lack of innovation in traditional radio, commercial interruptions and repetitive playlists, and the potentially limited scope of localized content compared to the global reach of online platforms.

Finding 4: Listeners exhibit a preference for private radio stations, suggesting content and presentation are key drivers. There is a significant neutral sentiment regarding radio's credibility as a news source, indicating a potential area for improvement. Furthermore, frequent commercial interruptions negatively impact listenership, highlighting the need for strategic ad placement and potentially alternative revenue models.

- Psychological Behavior and Content Preferences (Fig. 1.5, Fig. 1.6, Fig. 1.7)

- Station Preference (Fig. 1.5): Prefer Private Radio Stations (Radio Mirchi, Red FM, 92.7 Big FM) over Government Radio Stations (All India Radio, Vividh Bharti)
- Credibility of News (Fig. 1.6)
- Impact of Commercial Ads (Fig. 1.7)

Finding 5: The key to traditional radio's sustainability lies in embracing digital integration, innovating content, strategically managing advertising, building news credibility, learning from the engagement strategies of private radio, and potentially adopting more flexible regulatory frameworks.

- Measures for Radio to Sustain (Analysis of Fig. 1.9 and Implicit Suggestions)
- Embrace Digital Integration
- Focus on Content Innovation
- Strategic Advertising
- Build Trust and Credibility for News
- Leverage Private Radio Dynamism
- Explore Open-Ended Approaches

Finding 6: The prevailing outlook for traditional radio listenership is one of evolution rather than outright decline. This implies a need for the medium to adapt and integrate with digital platforms, innovate its content, and find new ways to engage audiences in the evolving media landscape.

- Future Prospects of Traditional Radio Listenership (Fig. 1.9)

Chapter- 9

CONCLUSION & LIMITATIONS

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

The research paper "Future Prospects of Radio Listenership: A Study on Evolving Media Behavior and The Relevance of Traditional Radio in Digital Age" culminates in a conclusion that underscores the transformative phase traditional radio is undergoing. It effectively summarizes the study's findings, highlighting the coexistence of traditional radio's enduring legacy with the undeniable impact of digital evolution.

The study acknowledges radio's historical significance and its continued reach across diverse age groups, and educational or working backgrounds, at some point, listened to radio. This finding emphasizes radio's deep-rooted presence in the media landscape. However, the conclusion doesn't dwell solely on this historical strength. It pivots to understand the different listening patterns, psychological behavior towards traditional radio and ever-changing media consumption of present-day globe.

Both quantitative and qualitative research methodology was applied for the comprehensive understanding of traditional radio's position in present world and related future prospects of its listenership. Sampling method was yet another method used to identify the target audience. However, the small sample size of 70 respondents from different age groups, dominated by 18-25 age group, resulted in a major setback of this research paper. Moving further, survey method was used to collect the data and SPSS software was used to analyze the same.

A key takeaway is the apparent trend of decreasing regular listenership, especially among younger demographics. The "Sometimes" listening pattern emerges as a dominant behavior, suggesting that while radio isn't obsolete, its role in daily media consumption is evolving. This transition from primary medium to a more occasional choice is a crucial point emphasized in the conclusion. It is also understood that even in older generations, radio is becoming less dominated and need to revise its content strategies and media presence.

The research delves into the reasons behind this shift, with technological advancements and the proliferation of online streaming platforms identified as major catalysts. The conclusion reiterates the challenge posed by on-demand content, personalized experiences, and the visual

appeal of alternative media, which traditional radio, with its linear format, struggles to deliver and, hence losing its relevance.

However, the research doesn't aim to portray a bleak outlook for traditional radio. Instead, it adopts a nuanced perspective, highlighting radio's potential for adaptation and continued relevance. The research identifies positive factors, such as the preference for private radio stations, the opportunity to enhance news credibility, and the importance of strategic advertising, as potential levers for radio's revitalization.

Ultimately, the conclusion advocates for a proactive approach. It posits that traditional radio's future hinges on its ability to embrace digital integration, innovate content, and strategically engage with audiences in the digital age. The call for "evolution rather than decline" encapsulates the paper's central argument: radio's survival depends on its capacity to transform and redefine its role in the contemporary media ecosystem.

- **Ethical Considerations**

All research activities adhered strictly to ethical research guidelines. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Participants were briefed on the study's purpose, assured of their anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses, and informed of their right to withdraw at any stage.

For participants below the age of 18 (from Gen Z), parental or guardian consent was obtained prior to participation. All data have been securely stored and will be used solely for academic purposes.

- **Limitations of the research**

Despite the methodological rigor, certain limitations were encountered:

1. The online mode of survey distribution may have inadvertently excluded individuals with limited internet access, particularly in rural areas.
2. Self-reported data may be subject to social desirability and recall biases.
3. The paper points out the potential for social desirability bias, where respondents might provide answers, they believe are more socially acceptable rather than their genuine opinions or behaviors.

4. Recall bias is also a concern, as respondents might have difficulty accurately remembering their past radio listening habits. These biases are inherent in survey research and can introduce inaccuracies in the data.
5. Language constraints necessitated translation in certain interviews, potentially affecting the nuance of responses.
6. The sample, though diverse, may not comprehensively capture all socio-cultural variances within India. Moreover, it was a very small sample group not inclusive of all demographic variable.
7. These limitations have been acknowledged and considered during the interpretation of results.
8. The older age groups (36-45, 45-55, and above 50) with very few respondents, making it challenging to discern any meaningful trends in those specific age group. The limited data here might suggest that the survey primarily targeted younger demographics.
9. Overall, the data highlights a lack of strong consensus on whether radio holds relevance for youth today. The 19-25 age group, being the largest, shows the most internal variation in opinion. The prevalence of "maybe" responses, particularly in the 19-25 group, warrants further investigation to understand the specific contexts or conditions under which young people perceive radio as relevant or irrelevant. It would be interesting to explore why so many in this age group are undecided.
10. In opinionated questions, majority chose "maybe" option reflecting the uncertainty of their opinion on that specific question making it difficult to draw a certain meaning.
11. Furthermore, the study design itself presents an inherent limitation. By focusing on generational cohorts, it risks oversimplifying the complex interplay of factors that influence radio listenership.
12. While generational differences are undoubtedly important, individual preferences, lifestyle choices, and specific contexts also play a significant role. Future research could explore these individual and contextual factors in greater depth to provide a more nuanced understanding of radio consumption.

Chapter- 10

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

- Bhat, R. (2017). FM Radio and Listening Habits of Younger Generation: A Study of Four Major Markets of Delhi, India. *International Journal of Current Research and Academic Review*.
- Epidemiology: self-reported surveys. (<https://epidemiology.blog/about/index/self-reported-surveys>)
- Jauert, P., et al. (2017). The Future of Radio Revisited: Expert Perspectives and Future Scenarios for Radio Media in 2025. *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*.
- Krause, A., North, A. C., & Heritage, B. (2020). Radio Listening and Older Adults: Exploring Uses and Gratifications. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 603446.
- Kuyucu, M. (2019). Radio Broadcasting in the Digital Age: Adapting to the Challenges of the 21st Century. *Journal of Media Critiques*.
- Laor, T. (2021). Personality and On-Demand Radio Usage: A Cross-Generational Study. *Technology in Society*, 65, 101580.
- Laor, T. (2022). Digital Transition and the Future of Radio. *Media and Communication Studies Journal*.
- Menon, S. (2023). FM Radio Listenership During the Pandemic: A Uses and Gratifications Perspective. *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*.
- Sen, B. (2014). The Indian FM Radio Revolution: Privatization and its Impact. *Media Asia Journal*.

ANNEXURE