

AUDIENCE OPINION ABOUT THE PROGRAMS OF RADIO SIRSA

Dr. Sewa Singh Bajwa*

*Professor,
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication,
Ch. Devi Lal University,
Sirsa, INDIA
Email id: nachizbajwa@gmail.com

DOI: 10.5958/2249-7315.2022.00368.9

ABSTRACT

One may indulge in endless debate about the popularity of Radio among people in this era of digitalization. But one cannot disagree with numerous advantages that this medium of sound enjoys over other media of mass communication. Listening to radio has been an enthralling experience ever since its invention about a century ago. Its transmission has witnessed several changes from Medium Wave and Short Wave of forgone days to environment friendly and weather proof Frequency Modulation and Amplitude Modulation. People may have been captivated by the advent of internet driven Social Media where user generated content reigns supreme but there is no denying the fact that radio transmission is still hassle free in the sense that there are no transmission disturbances owing to internet connectivity and electrical failures as in the case of Print Media, Television, Cinema and Digital Media. Diehard fans of Radio still listen to it even while travelling on motor bike or in a car. Radio still garners great support and popularity in rural pockets. That is precisely the reason of the inception of the setting up of Community Radio Stations. This research paper studies the opinion of Community Radio Station of Sirsa with regard to its popularity amongst the audience.

KEYWORDS: *Community Radio, Digitalization, Audience, Transmission, Popularity.*

INTRODUCTION:

Radio has been very close to the hearts of audience ever since its very first transmission. Just like any other medium it also witnessed certain ups and downs. It has undergone start-stop-start type of experiences in its early days in India in the 2nd decade of 20th century. But there was no looking back once its transmission was put on the track. It has been instrumental in educating, informing and entertaining the masses. Even during the turbulent times during Indian freedom struggle, Radio enjoyed public trust in terms of authenticity of information and healthy entertainment. At the time of partition of India, there were as many as nine radio stations in India. When India became independent in 1947, there were six radio stations. They were located at Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Lucknow and Tiruchirappalli. The other three radio stations remained in what became Pakistan after the division. They were located at Lahore, Peshawar and Dhaka.

The saga of the development and growth of Radio after independence is to feel proud of. There was dearth of food grains in India. Government of India introduced new agricultural equipments, means of irrigation, fertilizers and new varieties of seeds. At that time radio emerged as most dependable mass media for providing information to the farmers and educating them about the advantages of innovative methods of irrigation and agriculture. Radio became so popular in those days that new seeds came to be popularly regarded as 'Radio Seeds'. In fact, its role in revolutionizing agriculture, particularly in North India, has been immense and unfathomable. That is why it is credited with the major player in bringing about Green Revolution in India in 6th and 7th

decade of 20th century. It is certainly a great feather in its cap. It almost single handily enabled India to achieve self reliance in food grains. Its role has been immense even in White and Blue Revolutions. Hence there is no denying to the fact that radio has been at the fore front in combating with poverty and other socio-economic problems of the country. Along with that it has been authentic source of information and healthy entertainment. Though Chanda committee went on to state that 'All India Radio dances to the tunes of the whims and fancies of whosoever are the Prime Minister of India', but its reliability and trust ability has never been questioned. Its slow-speed news bulletin used to be broadcasted for newspapers when the sources of news were rather few. There used to be writer employed in newspapers exclusively to listen and write whatever is said in that news bulletin. Even till the turn of the century people would cross check the authenticity of the information with BBC news bulletins.

People always complained about loss of voice or noise disturbances during inclement weather conditions. In order to combat with this problem and ensure hassle free transmission of signals, FM radio service was introduced. It was introduced in India on 23 July 1977 in Madras nearly 50 years after it mushroomed in the United States. Private FM broadcasting was started in India first in the tourist hub of Goa and then it was allowed in all the metropolitans. In 2006, the Government of India allowed agriculture universities, educational institutions and NGOs etc. to set up their own community radio stations. They could apply for community radio broadcasting license under FM band 88-108 MHz. Sangham Radio in Andhra Pradesh was the first community radio set up by an NGO in India. It was launched on 15th October 2008. But before that on 1st February 2004, Anna University in Chennai became the first educational institution in India to start community radio station. The credit of first educational institute to start its community radio goes to Chaudhary Devi Lal University Sirsa. Its Community Radio Station was inaugurated on 2nd August 2009 by the then Chief Minister of the state Dr. Bhupinder Singh Hooda. Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agriculture University, Hisar followed it on 29th November 2009.

Radio Sirsa:

Community Radio Station of Ch. Devi Lal University Sirsa, popularly known as Radio Sirsa, was an instant hit with the audience. From day one it attracted the audience belonging to each strata of the society. The youth, old-age people, farmers, students, shop-keepers, educationists, labourers and merchants etc. all became its regular listeners. Its programs became instantaneous hits with people. Virender Singh Chauhan was its founder-Director. His interview based program 'Hello Sirsa' equalled the popularity of Vividh Bharti in the area. At about the same time 'SatrangiPeengh' and 'Phulkari' of Preet Bajwa made him the most favourite programme presenter and a house-hold hero of this Community Radio Station. One must say that Virender Singh Chouhan, Preet Bajwa, Madan Lal Nokhwal, Ayushman and Uma Choudhary were the pioneers of Community Radio Station Sirsa. Later Dinesh Sharma, Sooraj Parkash, Parveen Insan, Shally, Sandeep Sharma, ParbhatIndora, Ram Nath, BhagwanDass Sethi, Gurshad Garry, Chhinder Pal Kaur, Krishan Kumar Saini, Avtar Singh, Rajeev Sachdeva, Ashok Verma, Darshan Singh, Maninder Mani, Sheyashi, Suresh Mehta, Meet Maan, Gurmeet Kaur, Jaswinder Jassi, Beant Singh, Shamsheer Singh, Ram Kumar, Aprajita and Manisha etc. became famous anchors and program presenters in last one decade.

Significance of the Study:

Radio Sirsa has been airing a vast variety of programs since then. Though the listeners have been giving informal feedback in phone-in programs but no formal study has ever been conducted to know the opinion of most active listeners. This study is the first one of its kind which is aimed at getting the audience opinion about the programs of Radio Sirsa

Research Methodology:

The study is based on sampling survey method. Though the universe is not very big yet it is not feasible to contact each and every listener. Moreover the radio station has no record of the contact numbers of its active listeners. Somehow contact numbers of 40 respondents belonging to Sirsa city and its adjoining villages were managed. For the purpose of Telephonic Survey a questionnaire was prepared. All the listeners whose contact numbers could be procured were contacted, out of which 30 respondents responded. Their responses have been recorded and put in the form of tables for the purpose of data interpretation.

1. Most Favourite Presenter of Bhagti Sangeet:

Presenters	Darshan Singh	BhagwanDass Sethi	Avtar Singh	Shamsher Singh	Total
Respondents	4	19	5	2	30
Percentage	13.33	63.33	16.66	6.66	100

Table-I

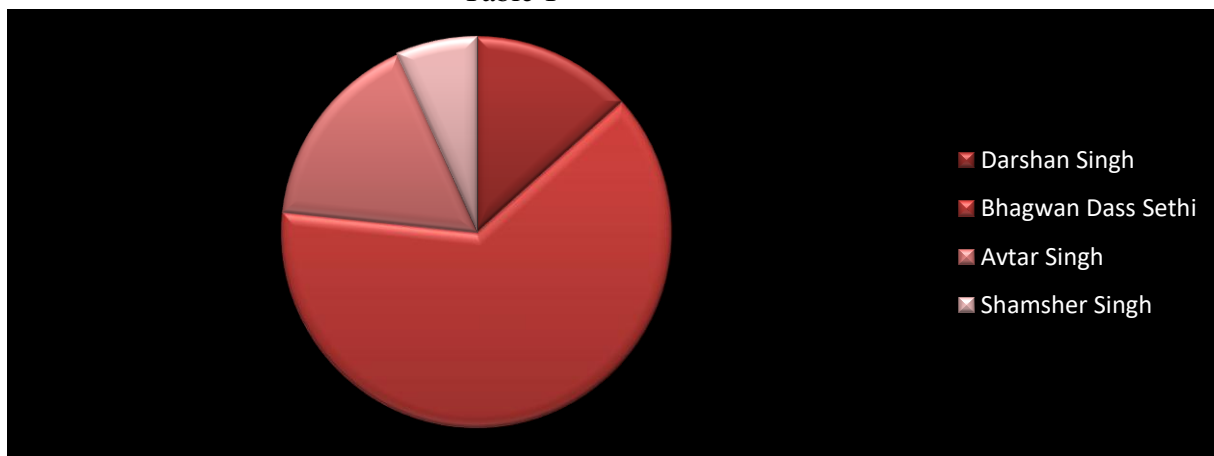


Diagram-I

It is quite evident from above table and amicable explicit from the diagram that BhagwanDass Sethi is regarded as the most endeared Bhagti Sangeet program presenter of CRS, Sirsa. A whopping 63.33% respondents like his program presentation style while 16.66% respondents like Avtar Singh and 13.33% respondents like Darshan Singh.

2. Most Favourite Presenter of Cultural Magazine Phulkari:

Presenters	Chhinder Pal	Preet Bajwa	Beant Singh	Maninder Mani	Total
Respondents	16	12	00	02	30
Percentage	53.33	40	0.00	6.66	100

Table-II

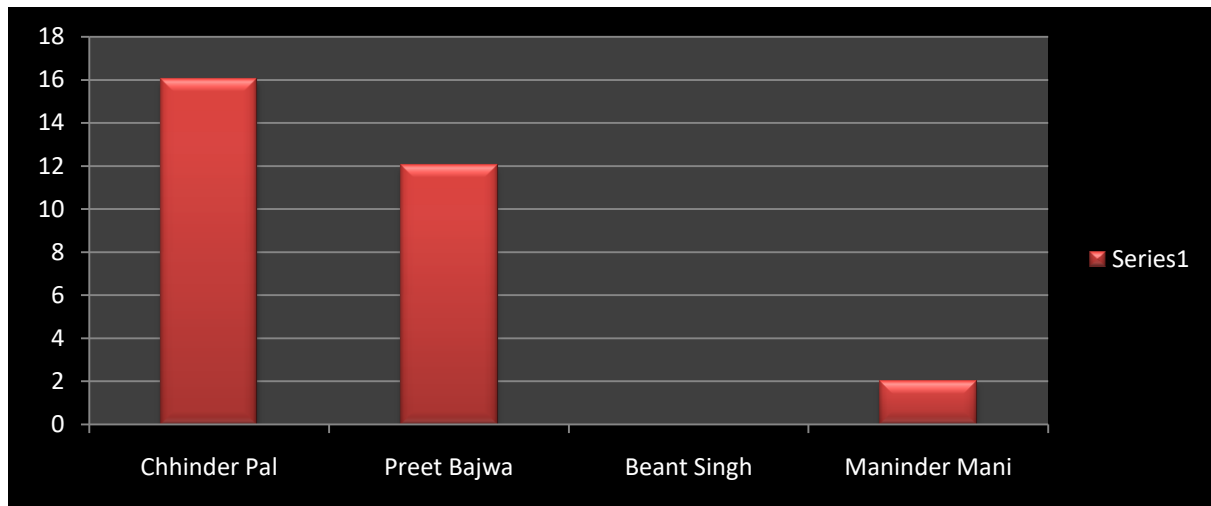


Diagram-II

It is crystal clear from above table and the diagram that the respondents are diehard fans of Chhinder Pal Kaur and Preet Bajwa so far as the presenters of cultural magazine Phulkari are concerned. Beant Singh has failed to get any takers. 53.33% respondents like the voice, program content and presentation skills of Chhinder Pal Kaur while another 40% respondents like the voice, program content and presentation skills of Preet Bajwa. Presentation skills of Maninder Mani are liked by 6.66% respondents.

3. Most Favourite Hindi Presenter:

Presenters	Ayushman	Rajeev Sachdeva	Avtar Singh	Ashok Verma	Total
Respondents	12	8	4	6	30
Percentage	40	26.66	13.33	20	100

Table-III

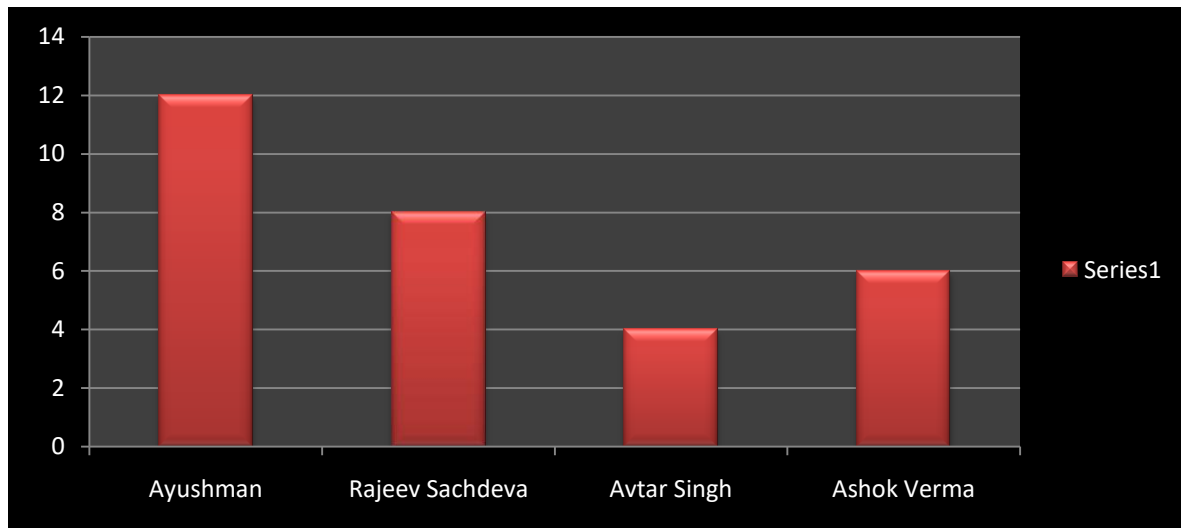


Diagram-III

CRS, Sirsa does present programs in Hindi language also. One announcer presents more than one programs. When the respondents were asked to name their most favourite program presenter in Hindi language, a majority of 40% respondents revealed that they are the fans of the program presentation skills of Ayushman. While 26.66% respondents like Rajeev Sachdeva, 20% respondents like the voice, content and presentation skills of Ashok Verma. Avtar Singh has also chipped in with 13.33% of respondents' choice.

4. Most Favourite Presenter of Mhara Haryana:

Presenters	Darshan Singh	Krishan Saini	Dinesh Sharma	Sandeep Ramayan	Total
Respondents	1	16	8	5	30
Percentage	3.33	53.33	26.66	16.66	100

Table-IV

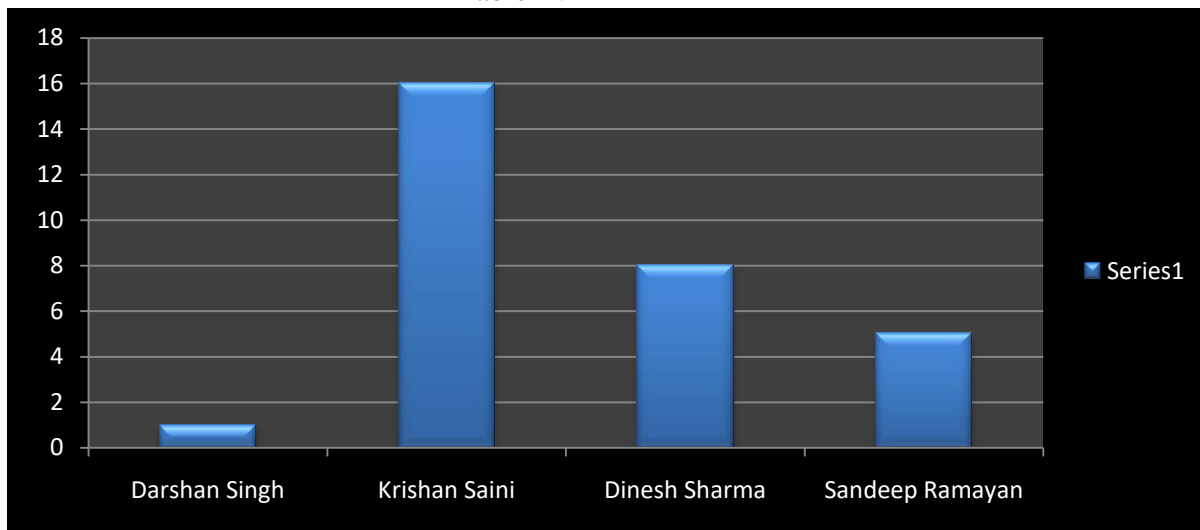


Diagram-IV

Sirsa district of Haryana shares its boundaries with Punjab and Rajasthan. That is why inhabitants of Hindi, Punjabi, Multani, Bagri and Haryanvi background are found in plenty here. CRS, Sirsa caters to the entertainment needs of rich diversity of population in its catchment area. As shown in Table No. IV respondents clearly like the voice, style and language/dialect command of Haryanvi program presenter Krishan Kumar Saini. As many as 53.33% respondents like his style of presentation while there are 26.66% admirers of Dinesh Sharma and still 16.66% fans of SnadeepRamayan.

5. Most Favourite Presenter of Bagri program Apno Des:

Presenters	Darshan Singh	Madan Lal Nokhwal	ParbhatIndora	Ram Nath	Total
Respondents	5	25	0	0	30
Percentage	16.66	83.33	0.00	0.00	100

Table-V

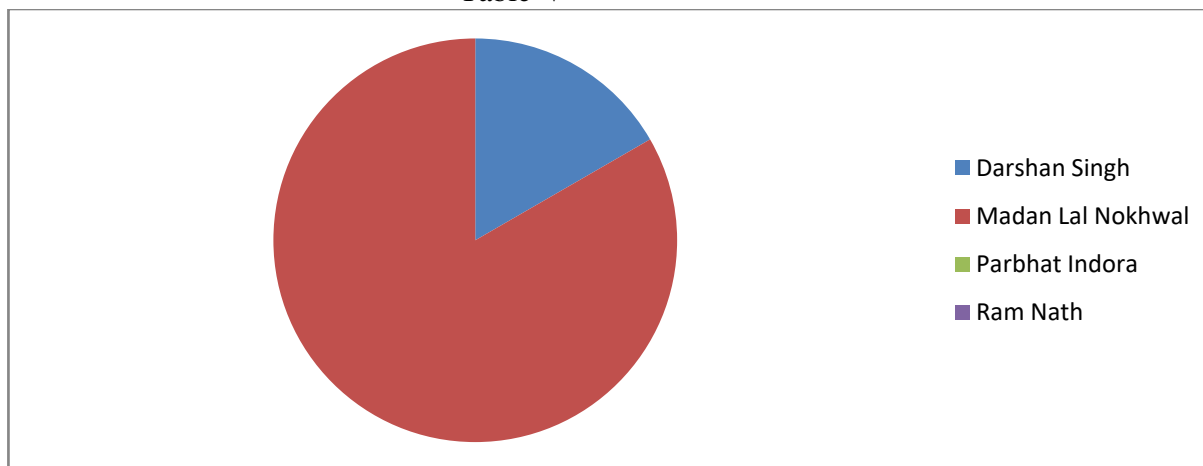


Diagram-V

People with Rajasthani background speak Bagri dialect. Bagri program of CRS, Sirsa has been quite favourite among the audience. There have been a number of program presenters but the above diagram stands as witness that the major chunk of respondents likes the program content, presentation style and voice of Madan Lal Nokhwal in Apno Des. As many as 83.33% respondents like him while 16.66% respondents also like the skills of Darshan Singh. There are no takers for ParbhatIndora and Ram Nath who were once amongst the top presenters of this Bagri program.

6. Most Favourite Interviewer:

Presenters	Chhinder Pal	Preet Bajwa	Virender Chauhan	Ayushman	Total
Respondents	5	16	6	3	30
Percentage	16.66	53.33	20.00	10	100

Table-VI

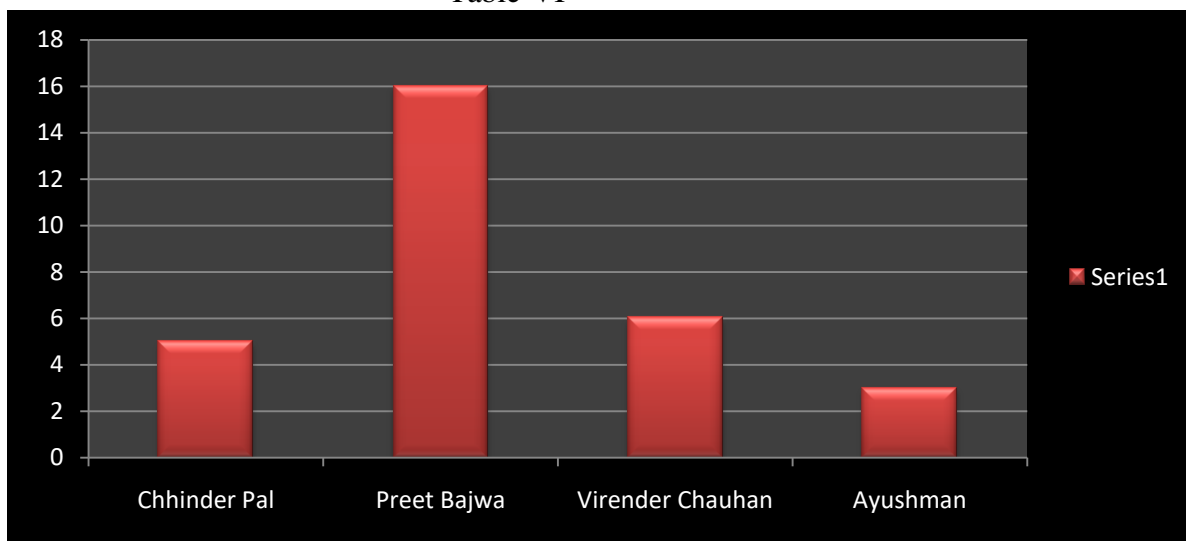


Diagram-VI

Interviewing is an art. It has to be mastered. It is not everybody’s cup of tea. Asking adequate and relevant questions glued with supplementary queries reveals mastery in this craft. There are many programs on CRS Sirsa in which famous personalities of the area are interviewed. It is quite evident from Table No. VI, that a vast majority of respondents like the interviewing skills of Preet Bajwa. As many as 53.33% respondents like his mastery in this skill while another star interviewer of CRS, Sirsa Virender Singh Chauhan is liked by 20% respondents.

7. Most Favourite Punjabi Program:

Programs	Phulkari	JhanjarChhanke	NaleGallanNaleGeet	Dil Diyan Gallan	Total
Respondents	20	1	8	1	30
Percentage	66.66	3.33	26.66	3.33	100

Table-VII

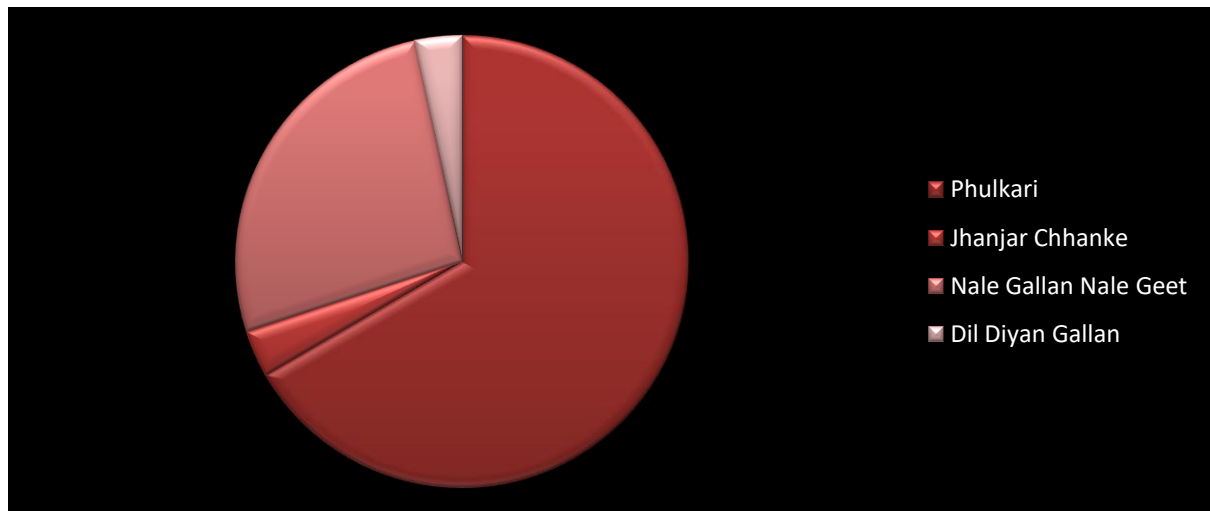


Diagram-VII

Keeping in view the sizeable chunk of Punjabi speaking people in Sirsa city and its adjoining areas, a number of Punjabi programs are and have been presented on CRS, Sirsa. It is evident from Table VII above that Phulkari program presented by Preet Bajwa and Chhinder Pal Kaur has been the most favourite Punjabi program of CRS, Sirsa. It has been rated as numero uno by 66.66% respondents. Nale Gallan Nale Geet of Bhagwan Dass Sethi is liked by 26.66% respondents. JhanjarChhanke of Shally and Dil Diyan Gallan of Bhagwan Dass Sethi has 3.33% admirers each.

8. Most Favourite Hindi program:

Programs	Hello Sirsa	Anand Ka Sagar	Darpan	Namaste Sirsa	Total
Respondents	9	5	10	6	30
Percentage	30.00	16.66	33.33	20.00	100

Table-VIII

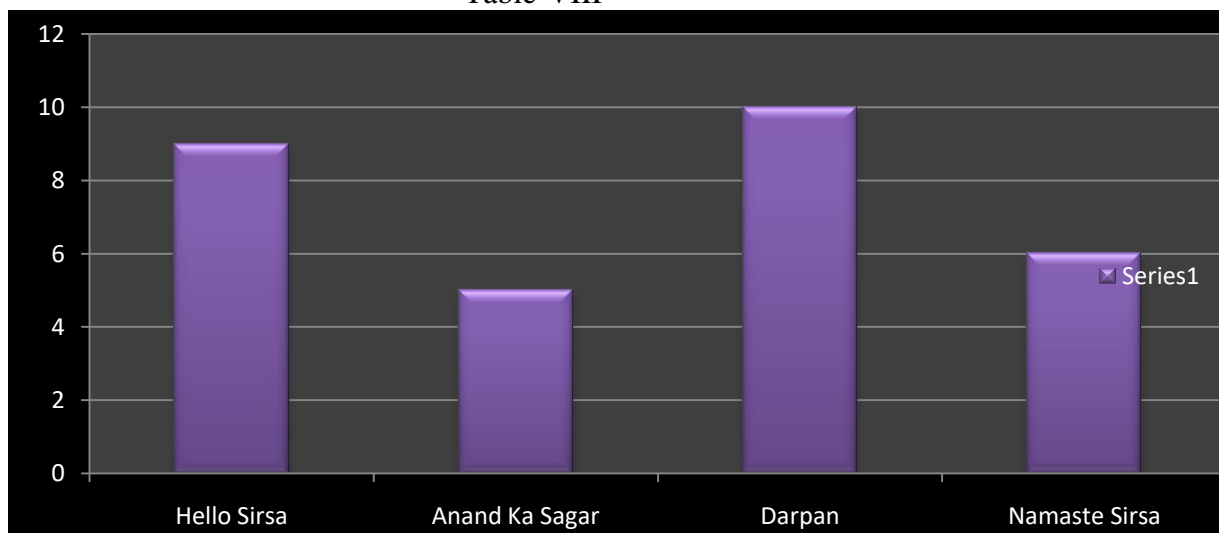


Diagram-VIII

Table No. VIII shows prominent Hindi Language programs of CRS, Sirsa. As per the data available Darpan program of Avtar Singh is liked by 33.33% respondents while Hello Sirsa program of Virender Singh Chauhan is liked by 30% respondents. Morning show Namaste Sirsa of Ashok Verma is liked by 20% respondents while weekly Anand Ka Sagar of Ram Kumar is liked by 16.66% respondents. It is pertinent to mention that in its early days Hello Sirsa was among the most trending programs of CRS Sirsa.

9. Most Favourite Punjabi Program Presenter:

Presenters	Chhinder Pal	Preet Bajwa	BhagwanDass Sethi	Shally	Total
Respondents	8	14	5	3	30
Percentage	26.66	46.66	16.66	10	100

Table-IX

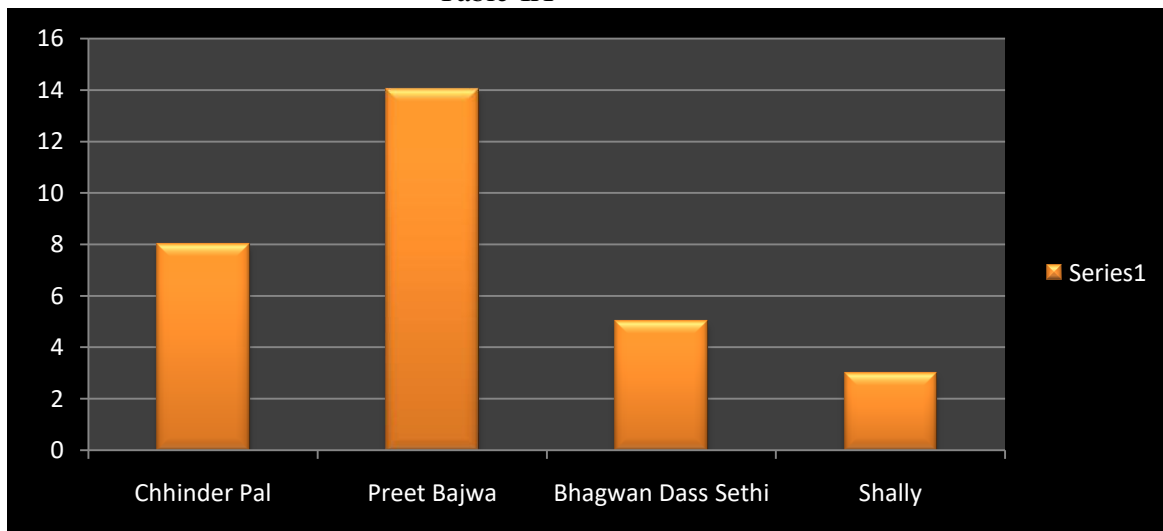


Diagram-IX

When the respondents were asked to name their most favourite program presenter of CRS Sirsa across all formats in Punjabi language, Preet Bajwa has emerged as most favourite program presenter garnering the support of 46.66% respondents. With a fan following of 26.66% respondents, Chhinder Pal Kaur gets the second place. The presentation skills of Bhagwan Dass Sethi are liked by 16.66% respondents who appear to be diehard fans of Preet Bajwa and Chhinder Pal Kaur. Shally has got the support of 10% respondents and she is ranked at number four.

10. Most Favourite Special Audience Program:

Programs	Sun Ri Sakhi	Aap Ki Pasand	Bal Sabha	Campus Times	Total
Respondents	4	14	8	4	30
Percentage	13.33	46.66	26.66	13.33	100

Table-X

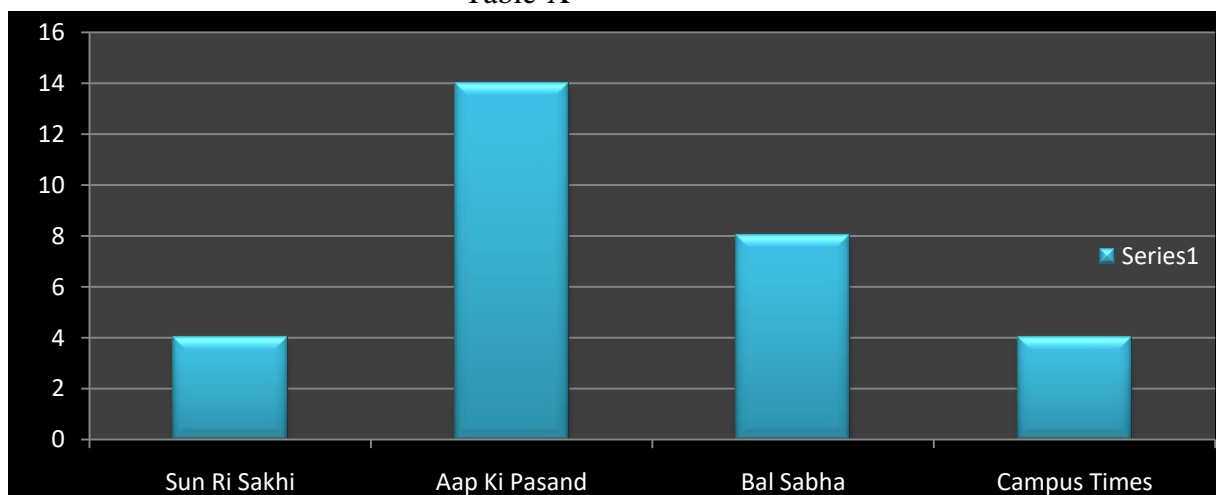


Diagram-X

CRS Sirsa also presents programs for specialized audience. It is quite evident from Table No. X that youth oriented Aap Ki Pasand is the most favourite special audience program of CRS Sirsa. This music based program presented by Preet Bajwa, Darshan Singh and Avtar Singh on week days has garnered the support of 46.66% respondents. Bal Sabha of Krishan Kumar Saini and Darshan Singh stands second with the support of 26.66% respondents while women oriented program Sun Ri Sakhi and program for collegiate Campus Times are liked by 13.33% respondents each.

11. Most Favourite Female Program Presenter:

Presenter	Chhinder Pal	Uma Choudhary	Shally	Aprajita	Total
Respondents					
Percentage	33	66	33	6	0

Table-XII

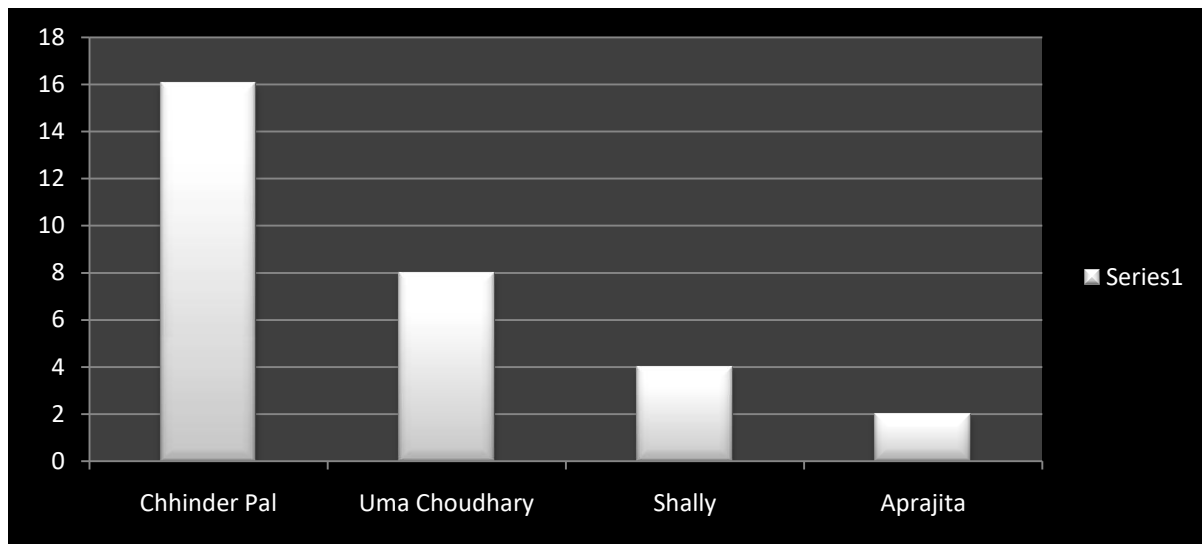


Diagram-XI

Female presenters have always been at the forefront of popularity graph of Radio Sirsa. As shown in above table, 26.66% listeners still remember the program presenting skills of Uma Choudhary who was one amongst the pioneers of this radio station. Shally, also a presenter in early days, has been revered by 13.33% respondents. As many as 53.33% respondents regard Chhinder Pal as their favourite female program presenter in the history of Radio Sirsa.

CONCLUSION:

There are three community radio stations in Sirsa district and two in Sirsa city itself but the audience response to content oriented programs of Radio Sirsa has been astounding by local standards. People do complain about frequent technical failures that have resulted in closing down of its transmission. They also lament that the transmission that used to be spread over 13 hours at one point of time has been curtailed to just three hours. But they still remember the good old days of Radio Sirsa when, they say, they stopped listening to AIR Suratgarh, AIR Bathinda and even Vividh Bharti. The audience feels regret at the untimely loss of its star presenter Madan Lal Nokhwal and regard him as the best presenter of Bagri program Apno Des. Chhinder Pal and Preet Bajwa starrer Phulkari is regarded as the best overall program of Radio Sirsa. It is by far the most listened Punjabi program. The style and program presentation skills of BhagwanDass Sethi have been liked the most so far as Bhagti Sangeet program is concerned. His narration and storytelling

techniques are liked most by the audience. Chhinder Pal Kaur has been termed as the best program presenter of Phulkari program. She has also been regarded as the all time best Female program presenter of Radio Sirsa. People fondly remember the highest level presentation skills of the pioneers, Shally and Uma Choudhary.

In the local dialect, Mhara Haryana presenter Krishan Kumar Saini is liked the most by the audience. Hindi programs like Hello Sirsa, Darpan and Aap Ki Pasand are liked the most by the audience. So far as Hindi program presenters are concerned people still remember professional program presentation skills of Ayushman. A majority of respondents believe that content and treatment wise Ayushman is heads and shoulders above others so far as Hindi programs are concerned. However presentation skills of Rajeev Sachdeva and Ashok Verma are regarded in very high esteem. Preet Bajwa has been regarded as the best interviewer by the audience. His voice, presentation skills and content matter in Phulkari have also been revered by the audience. He is also regarded as the most prolific Punjabi presenter of Radio Sirsa. Succinctly speaking present day presenters Preet Bajwa, Chhinder Pal Kaur, Bhagwan Dass Sethi and Krishan Kumar Saini are liked the most by the audience. Phulkar, Mhara Haryana and Bhagti Sangeet are their favourite programs. The void created by the sudden demise of Madan Lal Nokhwal is deeply felt with remorse. Audience rue the fact that there is no specific program for the farmers on Radio Sirsa. While the audience remembers the contribution of Virender Singh Chouhan to Radio Sirsa, they impatiently long for someone who would run it on professional lines.

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