

A study of media seeking habits and mass media reach for urban settings of Tripura

G.P. PANDEY¹ and SUPRATIM BISWAS²

¹Department of Mass Communication, School of Information Sciences,
Assam Central University, Silchar - 788 011 (India).

²State Health & Family Welfare Society (National Rural Health Mission),
Health Directorate Building, 3rd Floor, Pt. Nehru Complex,
Gurkhabasti, P.O Kunjaban, Agartala-799006 (India).

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ABSTRACT

Human development and well being of individual is the primary objective held by our country in the form of implementing monitorable plans and policies. In this age of Information Technology where our present world has shifted to a global village, the process of advancing developmental priorities has doubly reinforced. The development of the society is directly related to education. Mass Media enable the spread of education through conventional as well as unconventional methods. In Mass Communication, the channel is one or more of the following mass media, viz, TV, Radio, Print Media, etc. Mass Media can raise awareness of specific facts, because the mass media are assumed to carry a certain authority and reliability. Mass Media are used to add new information to human knowledge and keep on upgrading it. The paper aims of analyzing media seeking habits and mass media reach of common people in urban settings of Tripura.

Key words: Mass Media, Media Seeking Habit, Urban Setting, Tripura.

INTRODUCTION

The mass media and other communication channels have tremendous effect on every sphere of human life, but its impact is not uniform in all fields, nor can it be predicted universally. There is a need to consciously use the mass media to educate and aware a large number of people about different social issues. Mass Media have the advantage of reaching a relatively larger population in a shorter time than is possible with other means.

Mass Media is the way a message is disseminated. Mass Media are generally defined as those channels of communication which are capable of reaching heterogeneous audiences simultaneously with uniform messages. Television or Radio spots, films and newspapers are the most commonly used mass media channels. The messages can be delivered through mass media.

A mass media makes it possible for the message to reach far beyond the immediate proximity of the sender. A few hundred feet may be all the distance the human voice can project to a crowd without the aid of public address system. A mass media can take that same message around the world.

So in this regard it is also significant to find out the media seeking habits and mass media reach among the common people for identifying the effective mass media channels in urban settings of Tripura. The study was carried out in Agartala, the capital of Tripura and the respondents were chosen from different localities under Agartala Municipal Council area.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Objective of the Study

The specific objectives of the proposed study are as follows:

1. To understand the social background of the respondents.
2. To find out the media habits of the respondents.
3. To study the reach of mass media among the common people

Methodology

An exploratory study was designed to generate data on the subject with the above objectives in mind. A highly structured interview schedule was designed for collecting data. The base data was collected by administering a household schedule in the study area. The study was conducted on 225 respondents selected at random from the different locations under Agartala Municipal Council area. The social background of the respondents have been studied in terms of their age group, sex, religious, mother tongue, caste, marital status, income, language known, educational level & occupation of the respondent etc. Mass Media reach was measured in terms of their access to Television, Radio, Newspaper, Cinema and Video etc. The another method adopted for the study is collection of secondary data. The secondary data and informations have been collected through:-

- ' Data from newspapers, Magazines, Journals
- ' Review of Government documents, Reports
- ' Analysis of data from Government publication (booklet / brochure/ bulletin)
- ' Personal interaction with Medical Officer, IEC Officer, NGO Members, Health Workers

RESULTS

The findings of the Study can be divided into two parts viz. 1) Socio-Demographic Data, 2) The Media wise break-up of mass media reach & media seeking habits.

Socio-Demographic Profile

The sample consisted of 225 respondents from Agartala Municipal area. An attempt is made to analyze the socio profile of the respondents in Agartala. The variables used to analyze the data are age, gender, religion, caste, mother tongue, educational qualification, occupation, type of family, total monthly family income etc.

Age Group of the Respondents

On the basis of the age, the respondents are classified into five categories; these are i. 15-25 ii. 26-35 iii. 36-45 iv. 46-55 v. 55 above. The distribution of the respondents into these categories is shown in table 1. The data show that 28 percent of the respondents belong to the category of 26-35 years age; 27.55 percent of the respondents belong to age group of 15-25 years, 20.44 percent belong to category of 36-45 years age, 12.44 percent belong to age group of 46-55 years and rest 11.55 percent of the respondents belong to the category of above 55 years of age.

Sex Ratio

The sex ratio is considered as an important variable in sociological analysis. The sex wise distribution of the respondents is shown in table 2. The data reveal that 66.66 percent of the respondents are male and remaining 33.33 percent are female.

Educational Qualification

The level of education of the respondent is an important variable in order to understand one's social background. The level of education of the respondent is analysed by putting them into five categories: i) Primary ii) Upto High School iii) Higher Secondary iv) Graduate v) Post Graduate vi) Professional. The distribution of the respondents into these categories is shown in table 3. The data show that 34.22 percent of the respondents attained education upto High School followed by those who attained education upto Higher Secondary level (29.77 percent), while 9.77 percent of the respondents attained education upto Primary level only, but 17.33 percent of the respondents are Graduates and 7.11 percent respondents are Post Graduates and a few respondents (1.77 percent) have professional qualification. Thus, it indicates that there are only a few respondents who have only primary level education, but it shows that most of the respondents have Secondary (upto High School) level of education and few of respondents have higher level (Graduate, Post Graduate & Professional) education.

Occupation

The occupational status is very important variable to understand the social background of the

Table 1: Age group of the respondents

S. No	Age	Frequency	Percentage
1	15-25	62	27.55
2	26-35	63	28.0
3	36-45	46	20.44
4	46-55	28	12.44
5	55 above	26	11.55
Total		225	100

Table 2: Sex Ratio

S. No	Age	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	150	66.66
2	Female	75	33.33
Total		225	100

respondent. The occupational status of the respondent has been analyzed by classifying them into nine categories – i) Govt. Service ii) Professional iii) Business iv) Private Sector v) Agriculture vi) Retired Employee vii) Housewife viii) Student ix) Any other. The distribution of the respondents into these categories is shown in table 4. The data show that 21.77 percent of the respondents are Housewife followed by 19.11 percent of the respondent's occupation is business and again same 19.11 percent of respondents are Students and 13.77 of the respondents are in Govt. Service. Among the remaining, 9.33 percent of the respondents are Retired Employee, 4.0 percent respondents are in private Sector, 3.55 percent respondents are agriculturists, a very few (2.22 percent) are Professional and only 7.11 percent respondents have reported of other occupation. Thus, it indicates that most of the respondents are housewife followed by good numbers of respondent's occupation is

Table 3: Educational qualification

S. No	Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
1	Primary	22	9.77
2	Upto High School	77	34.22
3	Higher Secondary	67	29.77
4	Graduate	39	17.33
5	Post Graduate	16	7.11
6	Professional	4	1.77
Total		225	100

Table 4: Occupation

S. No	Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
1	Govt. Service	31	13.77
2	Professional	5	2.22
3	Business	43	19.11
4	Private Sector	9	4.0
5	Agriculture	8	3.55
6	Retired Employee	21	9.33
7	Housewife	49	21.77
8	Student	43	19.11
9	Any other	16	7.11
Total		225	100

business and good numbers are student also.

Monthly family income

On the basis of monthly family income, the respondents are divided into four categories – i) Up to Rs. 5000 (Low) ii) Rs. 5001 to Rs. 10000 (Medium) iii) Rs.10001 to Rs.20000 (Upper

Medium) iv) Rs.20001 & above (Upper) . The distribution of the respondents into these categories is shown in table 5. The data reveal that 40.44 percent of the respondent's family income is Low followed by 40.0 percent of respondent's family income is medium and 15.55 percent of respondents belong to upper medium income group

Table 5: Monthly family income

S. No	Monthly family income	Frequency	Percentage
1	Up to Rs. 5000 (Low)	91	40.44
2	Rs. 5001 to Rs. 10000 (Medium)	90	40.0
3	Rs.10001 to Rs.20000 (Upper Medium)	35	15.55
4	Rs.20001 & above (Upper)	9	4.0
Total		225	100

Table 6: Subscription/ own of media at home

S No.	Subscription/ own of media at home	Frequency	Percentage
1	Newspaper	185	82.22
2	Magazine	42	18.66
3	Radio	36	16.0
4	TV	218	96.88
5	Internet	22	9.77
6	Mobile	154	68.44

Table 7: The number of respondents read Newspaper

S. No	The number of respondents read Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	189	84.0
2	No	36	16.0
Total		225	100

Table 8: Frequency of newspaper reading

S. No	Frequency of Newspaper reading	Frequency	Percentage
1	Daily	138	73.01
2	Occasionally	51	26.98
Total		189	100

Table 9: Content of Newspaper Read

S. No	Content of Newspaper Read	Frequency	Percentage
1	News	117	61.90
2	Headlines	151	79.89
3	First page news	53	28.04
4	Supplementary	12	6.34
5	Sports	74	39.15
6	Feature	6	3.17
7	Advertisements	37	19.57
8	Editorial	6	3.17
9	Letters to the Editor	9	4.76
10	Horoscope	31	16.40
11	Health	13	6.87
12	Entertainment	4	2.11
13	Cartoons	7	3.70
14	Matrimonial	0	0
15	Any other	0	0

Table 10: The number of respondents read Magazine

S. No	The number of respondents read Magazine	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	52	23.11
2	No	173	76.88
Total		225	100

Table 11: Radio Listening

S. No	Radio Listening	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	36	16
2	No	189	84
Total		225	100

and only 4.0 percent of respondents belong to upper income group. Thus, the data indicates that majority of the respondent's family belong to low and medium income group.

Media Seeking Habits and Mass Media Reach Subscription/ own of media at home

The data at Table -6 shows that 96.88 percent of the respondents have TV at their home

Table 12: Time (Session) preferred on Radio Listening

S. No	Time (Session) preferred on Radio Listening	Frequency	Percentage
1	Morning	15	41.66
2	Afternoon	3	8.33
3	Evening (5 -8 pm)	18	50.0
4	Night 8 pm & above	11	30.55

followed by 82.22 percent of respondents subscribe Newspaper at home. Regarding other media, 68.44 percent respondents access Mobile; 18.66 percent subscribe Magazine, 16 percent of respondents are having Radio at home and only few respondents (9.77 percent) access internet at their home. So it indicates from the study that most of the respondents have TV at home, while only 16 percent of respondents have Radio and on other hand, majority of the respondents subscribe Newspaper, while representation of subscription of magazine at home is only 18.66 percent.

Print Media

The number of respondents read Newspaper:

To analyse the habit of reading newspapers by the respondents, they were asked whether they read newspapers or not. The distribution is shown in Table -7. The responses show that majority of the respondents (84 percent) read newspapers, while only 16 percent of the respondents don not read newspaper.

Frequency of Newspaper Reading

The frequency of newspaper reading is analyzed by putting them into 2 categories – i) Daily ii) Occasionally. The distribution is shown at Table-8. The data show that majority of the newspaper

readers (73.01 percent) read newspaper daily, while 26.98 percent readers read newspaper occasionally.

Content of Newspaper Read

The data at Table- 9 reveal that majority of the newspaper readers (79.89 percent) read Headlines followed by 61.90 percent of the readers read only News; Sports contents are read by 39.15 percent of the respondents while First Page News are read by 28.04 percent of respondents, Advertisements are read by 19.57 percent of respondents and Horoscope are read by 16.40 percent of respondents. Again, 6.87 percent of readers read Health contents while 6.34 percent respondents read Supplementary, only 4.76 percent of respondents read Letters to the Editor, Cartoons are read by 3.70 percent respondents, Feature & Editorial both are read by 3.17 percent of respondents and Entertainment contents are read by only 2.11 percent of readers.

The number of respondents read Magazine

The data as per Table – 10 reveal that only few respondents (23.11 percent) read Magazine, whereas majority of the respondents (76.88 percent) do not read magazine.

Radio Listening:

The distribution of the respondents into the category is shown at Table-11. The data show that the numbers of people listen to Radio is very low. Majority of the respondents (84 percent) do not listen to Radio, whereas only 16 percent of respondents listen to Radio.

Time (Session) preferred on Radio Listening

In order to analyze the frequency of radio listeners in various specific sessions in a day, the data at Table -12 show that majority of the

Table 13: Television Watching

S. No	Television Watching	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	221	98.22
2	No	4	1.77
Total		225	100

Table 14: Time (Session) preferred on Watching TV

S. No	When do you watch TV	Frequency	Percentage
1	Morning	97	43.89
2	Afternoon	64	28.95
3	Evening (5 -8 pm)	51	23.07
4	Night 8 pm & above	84	38.00

respondents (50.0 percent) have preferred Evening (5-8 pm) session for radio listening followed by 41.66 percent of respondents have preferred Morning session and 30.55 percent of radio listeners listen radio in Night 8 pm & above session. It is observed that only few listeners (8.33 percent) have preferred Afternoon session for radio listening. So it indicates that frequency of radio listeners in the Evening (5-8 pm) session is the highest.

Television Watching

Television is found to be the most popular mass media in today's world. In order to analyse the habit of TV watching of the respondents, they were asked whether they watch TV or not. The distribution of the respondents into these categories is shown at Table-13. The data show that almost all the respondents (98.22 percent) watch Television, while only 1.77 percent of respondents do not watch TV.

Time (Session) preferred on Watching TV

In order to analyze the frequency of TV viewers in various specific sessions in a day, the respondents were asked how much time they spend on watching TV in different session in a day. The frequency of respondents are classified into four categories, these are: i) Morning ii) Afternoon iii) Evening (5 -8 pm) iv) Night 8 pm & above. The distribution of the respondents into these categories is shown at Table 14. The Data show that majority of the respondents (43.89 percent) have preferred Morning session for watching TV followed by 38 percent of respondents have preferred Night 8 pm & above session. It is observed that 28.95 percent of respondents watch TV in Afternoon session and 23.07 percent respondents watch TV in Evening (5-8 pm) session. So it indicates that frequency of TV viewers in the Morning (5-8 pm) session is the highest.

DISCUSSION

The Socio-Economic Profile of the Respondents in Agartala Municipal Council area may now be summarized as follows:

1. Most of respondents belong to the age group of 15-25 years and 26 -35 years age.
2. Majority of the respondents (66.66 percent) are male and remaining 33.33 percent are

female.

3. Educational qualification of Most of the respondents (34.22 percent) is upto Secondary level (High School) followed by those who attained education upto Higher Secondary level (29.77 percent).
4. Most of the respondents (21.77 percent) are Housewife followed by 19.11 percent of the respondent's occupation is business.
5. Regarding monthly family income of the respondents, majority of the respondent's family belong to low and medium income group.

The Media Seeking Habits of the Respondents in Agartala Municipal Council area may now be summarized as follows:

1. Regarding access to mass media by the respondents at their home, it is revealed that most of the respondents (96.88 percent) have TV at home, while only 16 percent of respondents have Radio and on other hand, majority of the respondents (82.22 percent) subscribe Newspaper, while the percentage of magazine subscriber at home is only 18.66 percent. The representation of respondents who access Mobile is 68.44 percent and only few respondents (9.77 percent) access internet at their home.
2. The responses show that majority of the respondents (84 percent) read newspapers, while only 16 percent of the respondents do not read newspaper.
3. As far as the frequency of newspaper reading is concerned, majority of the newspaper readers (73.01 percent) read newspaper daily, while 26.98 percent readers read newspaper occasionally.
4. As far as the content of newspaper is concerned, majority of the newspaper readers (79.89 percent) read Headlines, while a good number of readers take interest on News (61.90 percent), Sports contents (39.15 percent) and First Page News (28.04 percent). The representation of readers read Health contents is very low (only 6.87 percent).
5. In case of reading magazine, only few respondents (23.11 percent) read Magazine, whereas majority of the respondents (76.88

- percent) do not read magazine.
6. Regarding habit of radio listening, it is observed that the numbers of people listen to Radio is very low. Majority of the respondents (84 percent) do not listen to Radio, whereas only 16 percent of respondents listen to Radio.
 7. Majority of the respondents (50.0 percent) have preferred Evening (5-8 pm) session for radio listening followed by 41.66 percent preferred Morning session; 30.55 percent of radio listeners listen radio in Night 8 pm & above session and only few listeners (8.33 percent) have preferred Afternoon session for radio listening.
 8. Regarding habit of watching TV, almost all the respondents (98.22 percent) watch Television, while only 1.77 percent of respondents do not watch TV.
 9. Most of the respondents (43.89 percent) have preferred Morning session for watching TV followed by 38 percent of respondents have preferred Night 8 pm & above session. It is observed that 28.95 percent of respondents watch TV in Afternoon session and 23.07 percent respondents watch TV in Evening (5-8 pm) session.

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