



Pocket FM

ENTERTAINMENT  
INSIGHTS '25



# Decoding India's new entertainment behaviour

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## Introduction:

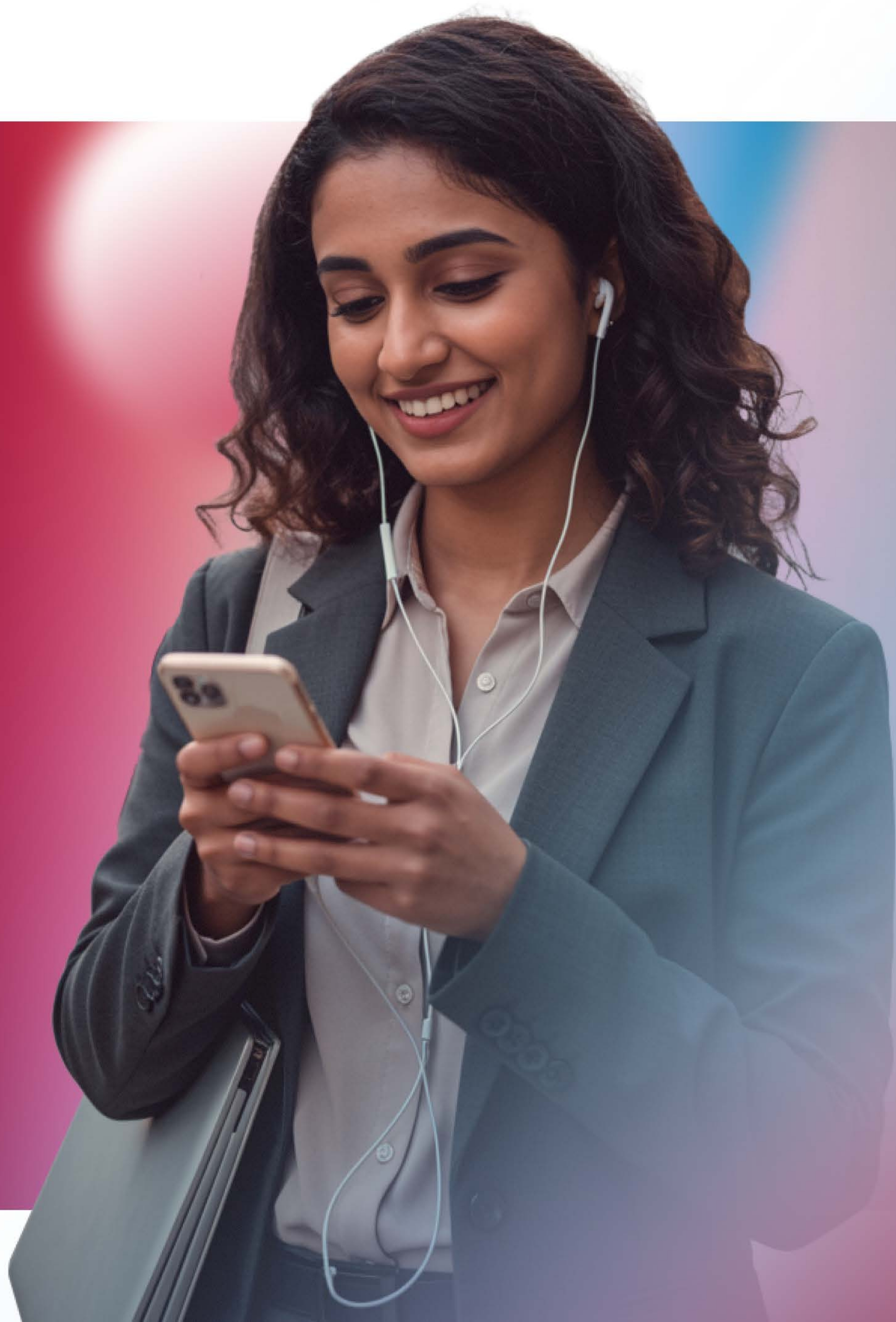
# From screens to stories in your ears

The Indian entertainment landscape is undergoing a quiet revolution, one that isn't dominated by flashy screens or binge-worthy web series, but by immersive stories experienced purely through sound.

In an era where screen fatigue is real and attention spans are splintered, Indians are increasingly seeking more meaningful, immersive ways to engage with content. Audio storytelling, once considered niche, is now emerging as a mainstream phenomenon, blending imagination with convenience, and personal moments with deeply emotional narratives.

To understand this shift, Pocket FM undertook one of the largest studies in the Indian audio space, capturing the voices, preferences, and habits of 20,538 listeners.

What emerged is a compelling story of how a young, mobile-first India is rewriting the rules of content consumption.



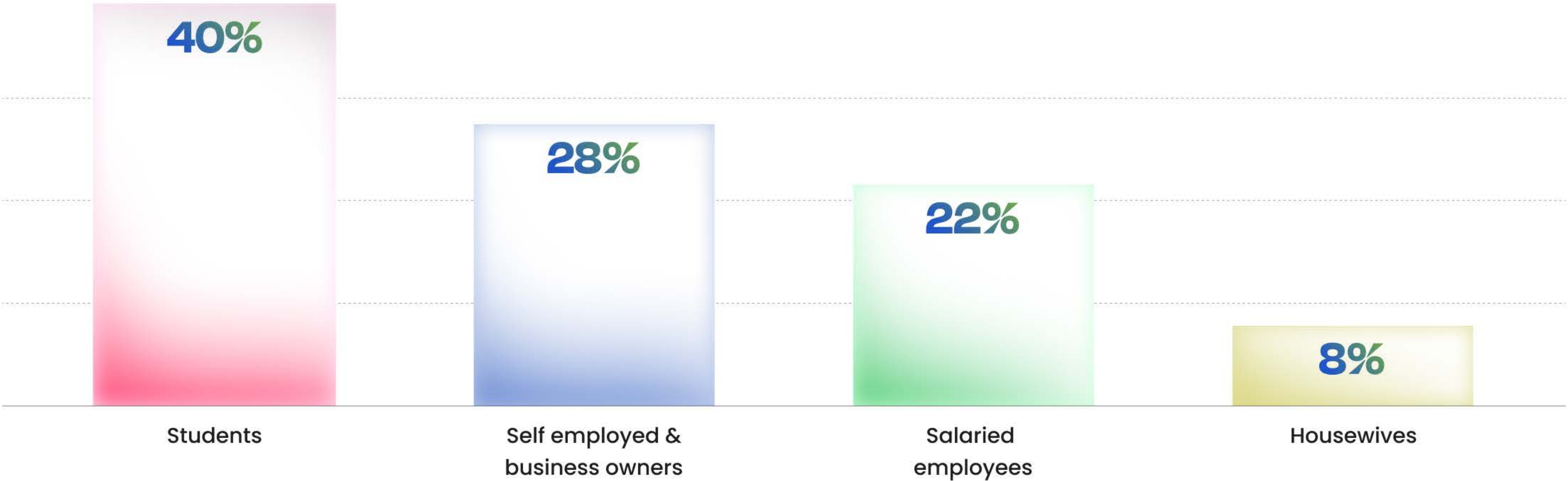
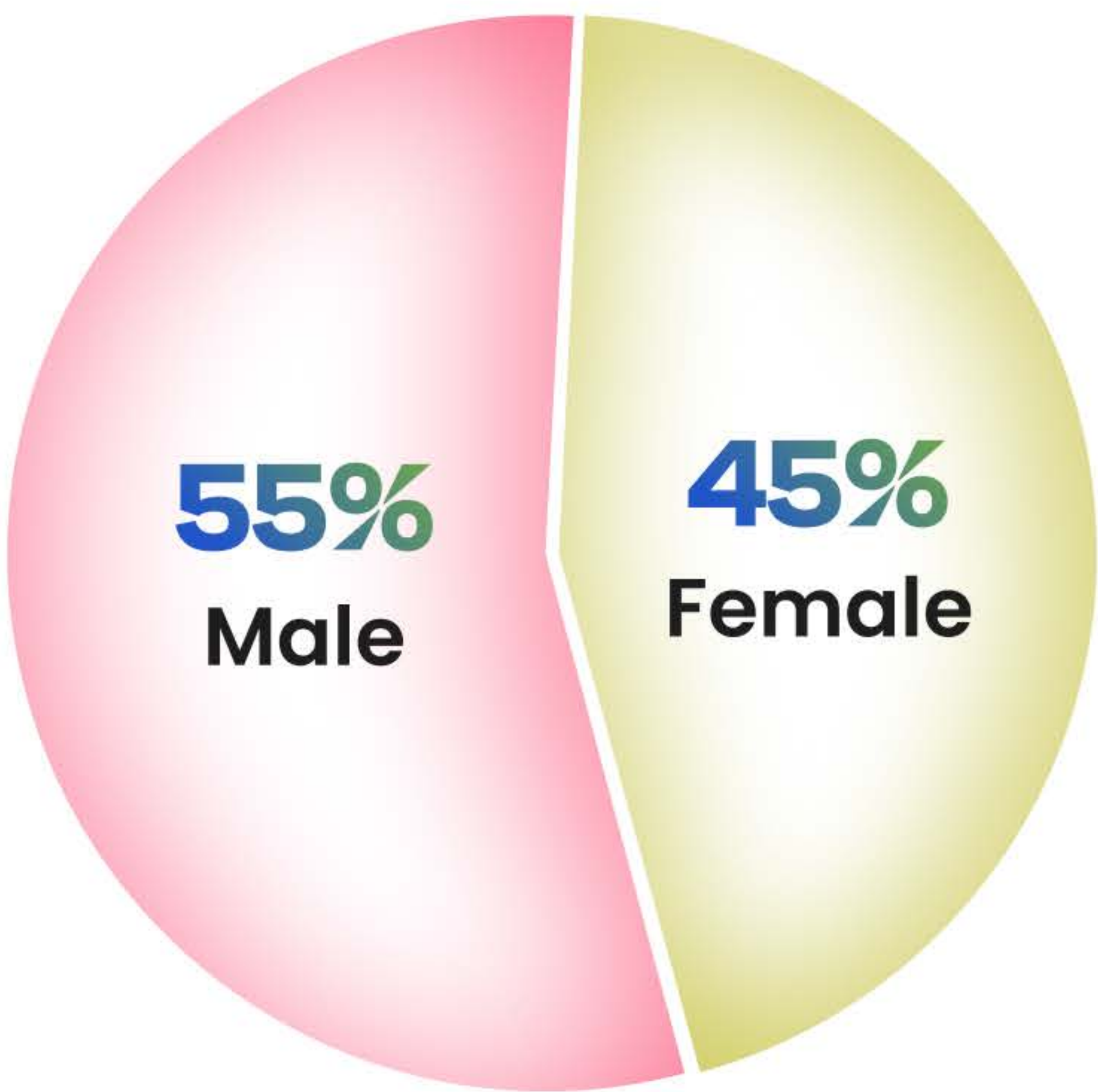


# Methodology

This survey represents one of the most comprehensive and rigorous attempts to decode India’s evolving entertainment behaviours through the lens of audio storytelling. Conducted online between June 5 and July 20, 2025, it engaged a diverse cross-section of active digital entertainment consumers, cutting across age groups, occupations, and geographies. In total, 20,533 valid responses were collected and analysed, making this one of the largest data sets in India’s entertainment category. The scale and depth of the study offers a credible lens into how different audience segments are adopting audio, providing clear evidence of a cultural shift in entertainment consumption.

**84%** respondents aged 18–35

The audience profile was intentionally broad, yet the findings reveal strong and consistent patterns. The shift is youth-driven and mobile-first, with 84% of respondents aged 18–35. Gender representation was relatively balanced, with 55% identifying as male and 45% as female. In terms of occupation, the audience was led by students (40%), followed by self-employed professionals and business owners (28%), salaried employees (22%), and homemakers (8%).





# Inside the audio shift:

## An editor's note

In a world saturated with visuals, **India has begun listening**, and not just passively. From small-town buses to midnight study breaks, the rise of audio storytelling marks a powerful cultural shift. It's not just entertainment, it's intimacy, imagination, and identity in motion.

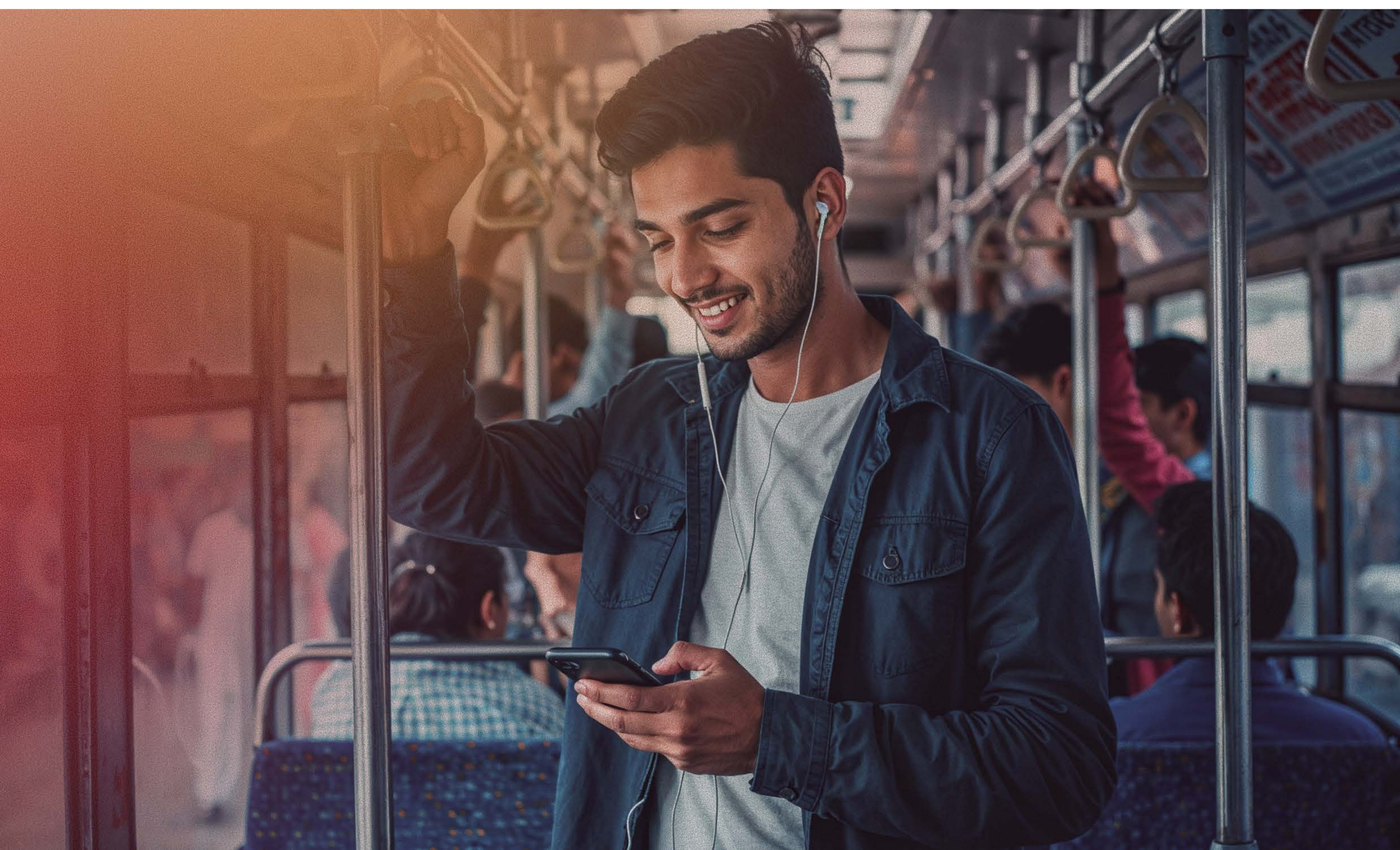
20,538 respondents across India, young, diverse, and deeply engaged, spoke to us. They shared not just what they listen to, but how it fits into their lives, what it replaces, and why it matters. The result is a portrait of a country where digital audio isn't just growing, it's becoming a daily habit, a new normal, and for many, the preferred way to experience fiction.

This report is a pulse check on India's evolving content culture. One that shows how storytelling is getting sharper, deeper, and more inclusive, thanks to the humble power of audio.

We hope this sparks as many ideas for you as it did for us.

### Editorial Desk

Pocket FM Communications Team  
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A note on India's storytelling evolution:

# Message from our CEO

At Pocket FM, we have always believed that stories have the power to travel beyond screens, and this report reaffirms that belief in ways we couldn't have imagined.

When we started our journey, audio storytelling felt like an underdog format. But today, it's at the heart of a new entertainment movement, one that's driven by young audiences, rural listeners, regional voices, and a deep craving for immersive, emotional content in India

This study reflects a cultural shift. A move towards formats that fit into life, not around it. A willingness to embrace innovation, whether it's episodic formats, micro-payments, or even AI-assisted creativity.

We are proud to be building this ecosystem with millions of storytellers, listeners, and creators. And we're just getting started.

## Rohan Nayak

Co-founder & CEO,  
Pocket Entertainment





## How India listens:

# Executive summary

India's love for storytelling remains as strong as ever, but the way stories are consumed is undergoing a remarkable transformation. Audio series have emerged as the format of choice, weaving themselves into the daily lives of millions. Insights from Pocket FM's nationwide survey reveal a compelling new entertainment landscape shaped by younger audiences, changing habits, and evolving preferences.



The most active listener segment falls in the 18–24 age group, with students forming the core audience.



Nearly 50% binge over 10 episodes a day.



Audio content is a companion throughout the day – while commuting, working, relaxing, or before sleep.



Most tune in for over an hour daily.

While Hindi continues to dominate as the most preferred language, regional languages like Telugu, Kannada, Marathi, Tamil, Malayalam, Bengali and others are quickly gaining traction, signalling the rise of vernacular-first storytelling. More strikingly, the shift away from traditional formats like OTT videos, music apps, and audiobooks points to a deeper behavioural change. Listeners are choosing audio not just for convenience, but for its immersive storytelling and flexibility.

Genres like Drama, Romance, Sci-Fi, Fantasy and Thriller top the charts, reflecting a taste for emotionally rich episodic narratives. Social media plays the biggest role in content discovery, although word-of-mouth and platform recommendations also contribute meaningfully. When it comes to payments, most listeners prefer micro-payments, paying only for episodes they consume, over traditional subscription models.

In a surprising but telling trend, a majority of users are open to AI-generated content, as long as the story resonates with them. Together, these findings reflect not just a growing category, but a cultural shift in how India listens, engages, and escapes.



Who is listening?

# Echoes of a New India

**84%**

are aged 18–34

**60%**

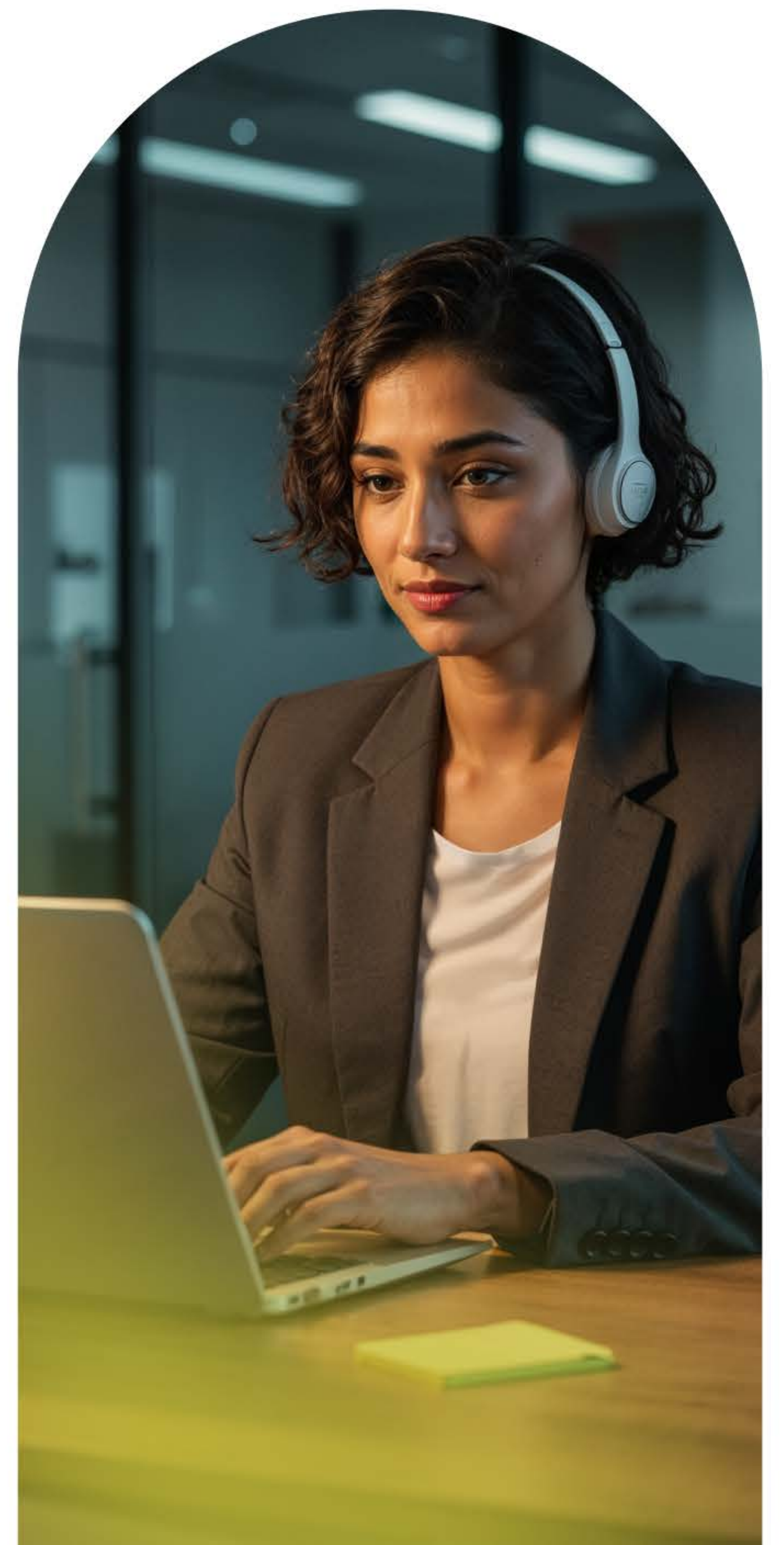
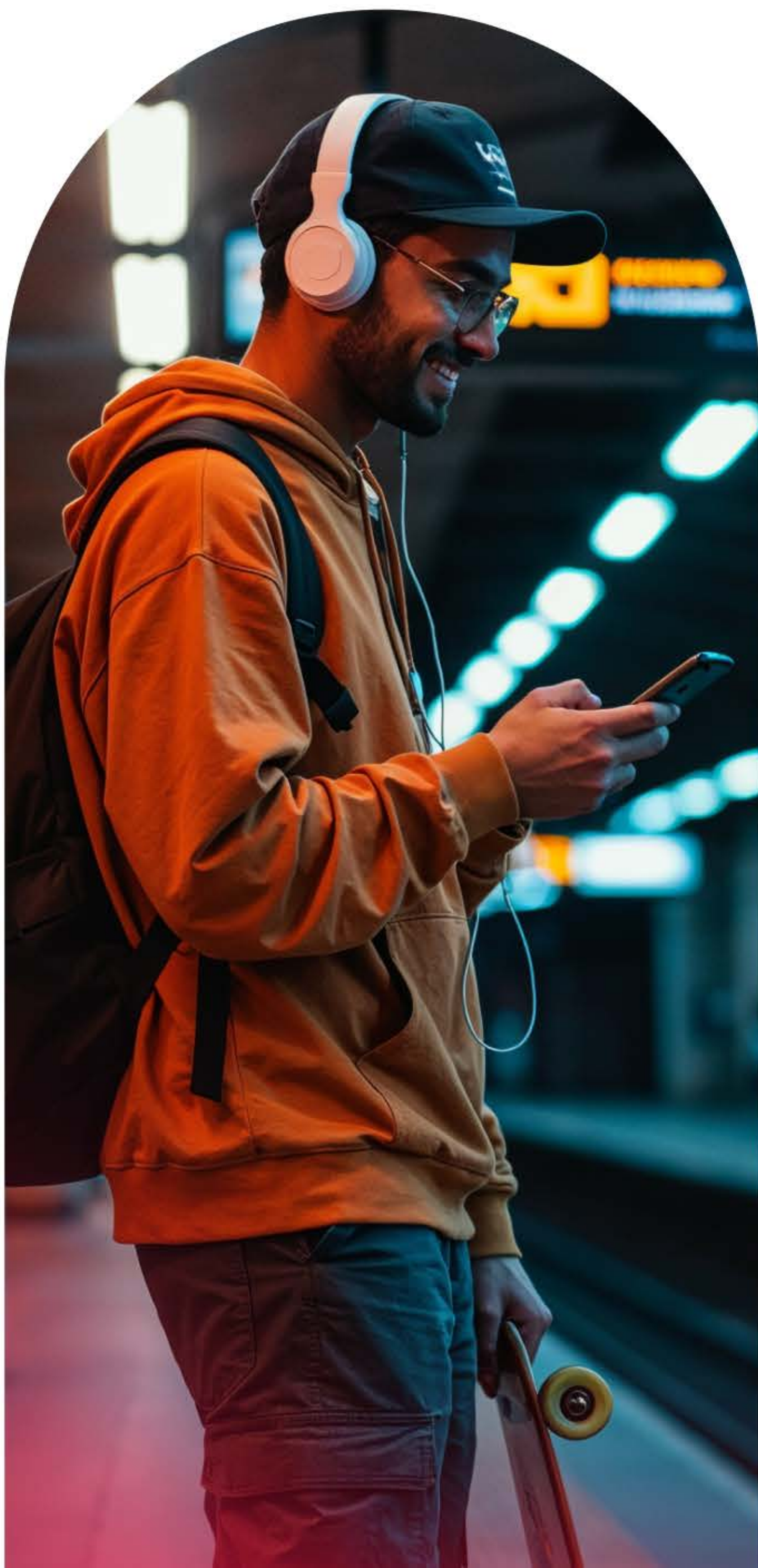
prefer listening  
during leisure hours

**86%**

prefer episodic  
audio dramas over  
audiobooks, music,  
or podcasts

**80%**

are open to AI-powered storytelling

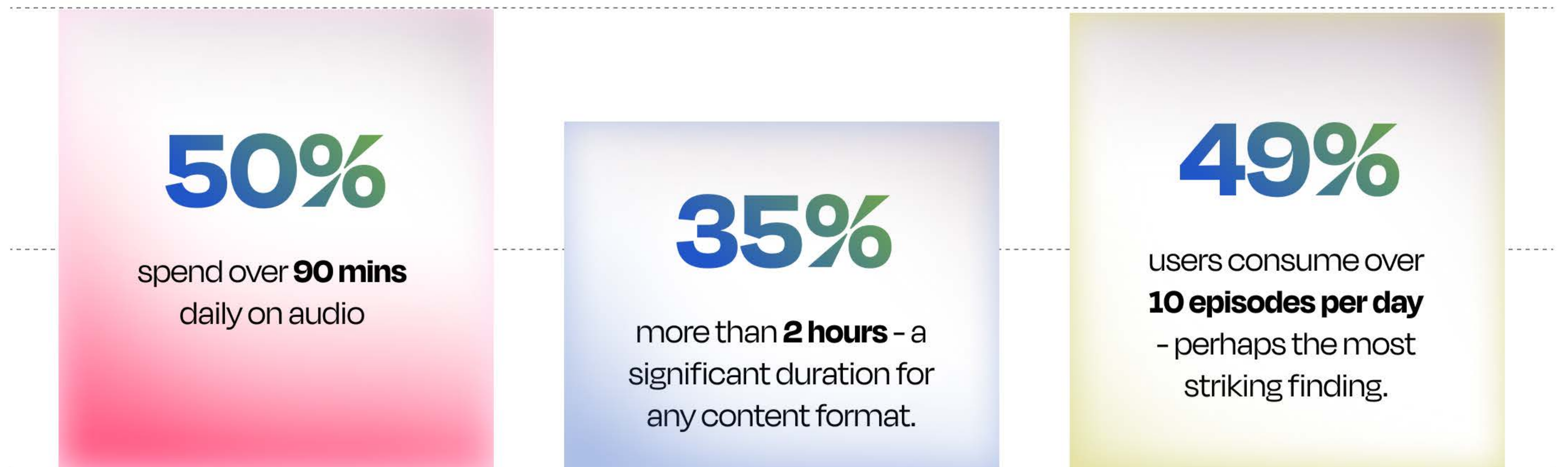




## How long and how often?

# From habit to binge

Audio listening is no longer occasional.  
It's habitual and often obsessive.



These numbers reveal a deep shift in engagement—audio series are no longer used to “fill the silence,” but to actively replace visual content as the preferred entertainment.

Moreover, over **70% consume at least two audio series a day**, with 32% juggling five or more. This demonstrates both the appetite for variety and the loyalty to storytelling formats.

## The geography of listening:

# Survey goes beyond metros

**58%**  
**respondents**  
**came from**  
**tier-2 cities.**

That means the audio wave isn't just a metro phenomenon, it's a grassroots movement. In regions where bandwidth constraints limit video consumption and literacy barriers prevent reading, audio storytelling offers an inclusive, accessible entertainment experience.

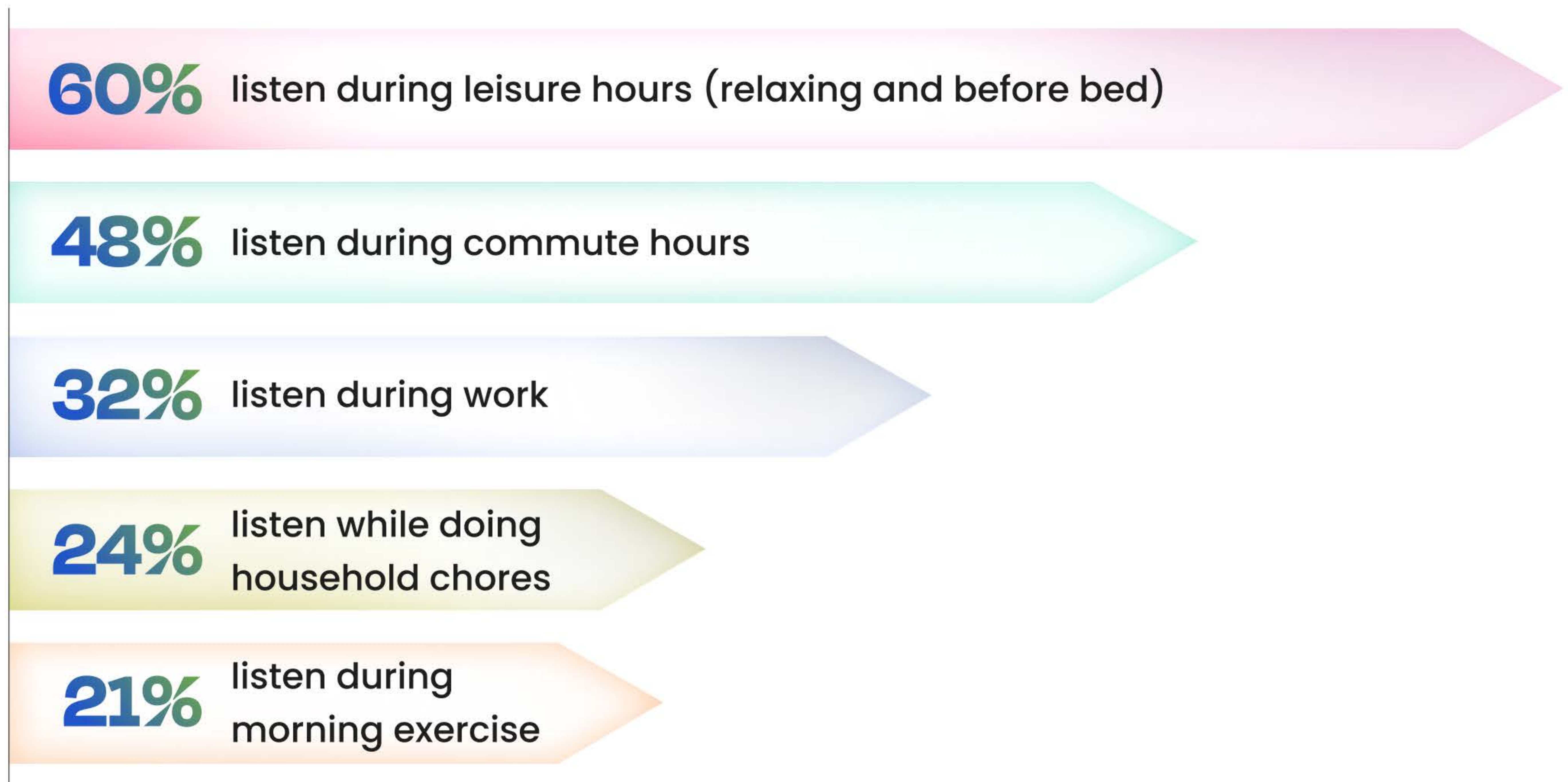
While metros and Tier-1 cities account for 42% of respondents, and Tier-2 cities represents 58% respondents.



## When do people listen?

# Making mundane magical!

The Indian listener is not bound to a couch or a screen. Audio fits into their everyday life, making the mundane magical by turning routines into moments of joy, escape, and imagination.



What's powerful is that these aren't one-off behaviours. They are deeply integrated rituals, where everyday moments are made magical through storytelling moments.

## The content shift:

# Towards serialised audio dramas aka audio series

86% of respondents prefer audio series over audiobooks, music, or podcasts. Why?



They find it more engaging and emotionally gripping.



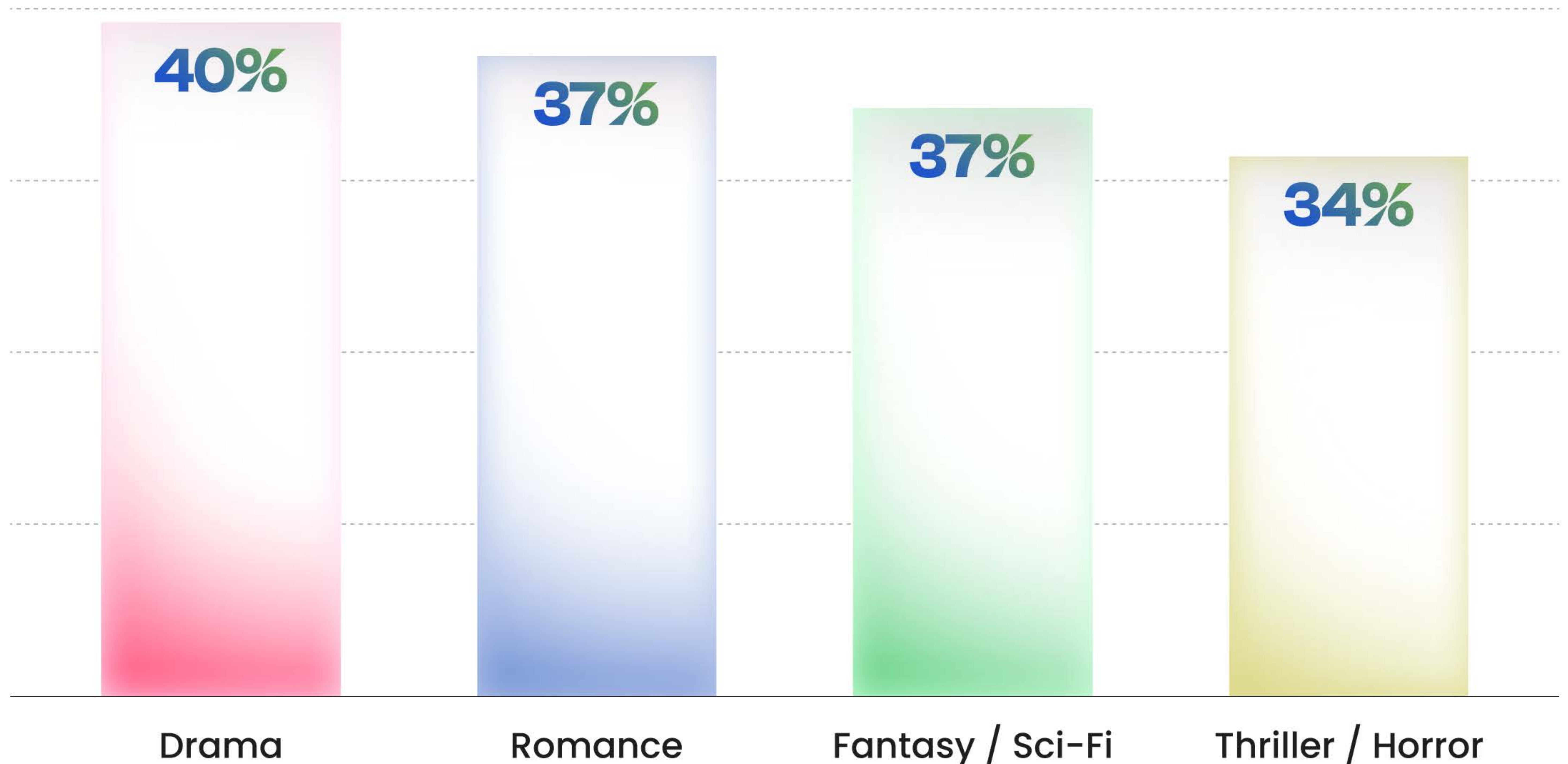
The episodic format mirrors the best of OTT binge culture.



Without visuals, the mind fills the gaps – making each story personal.

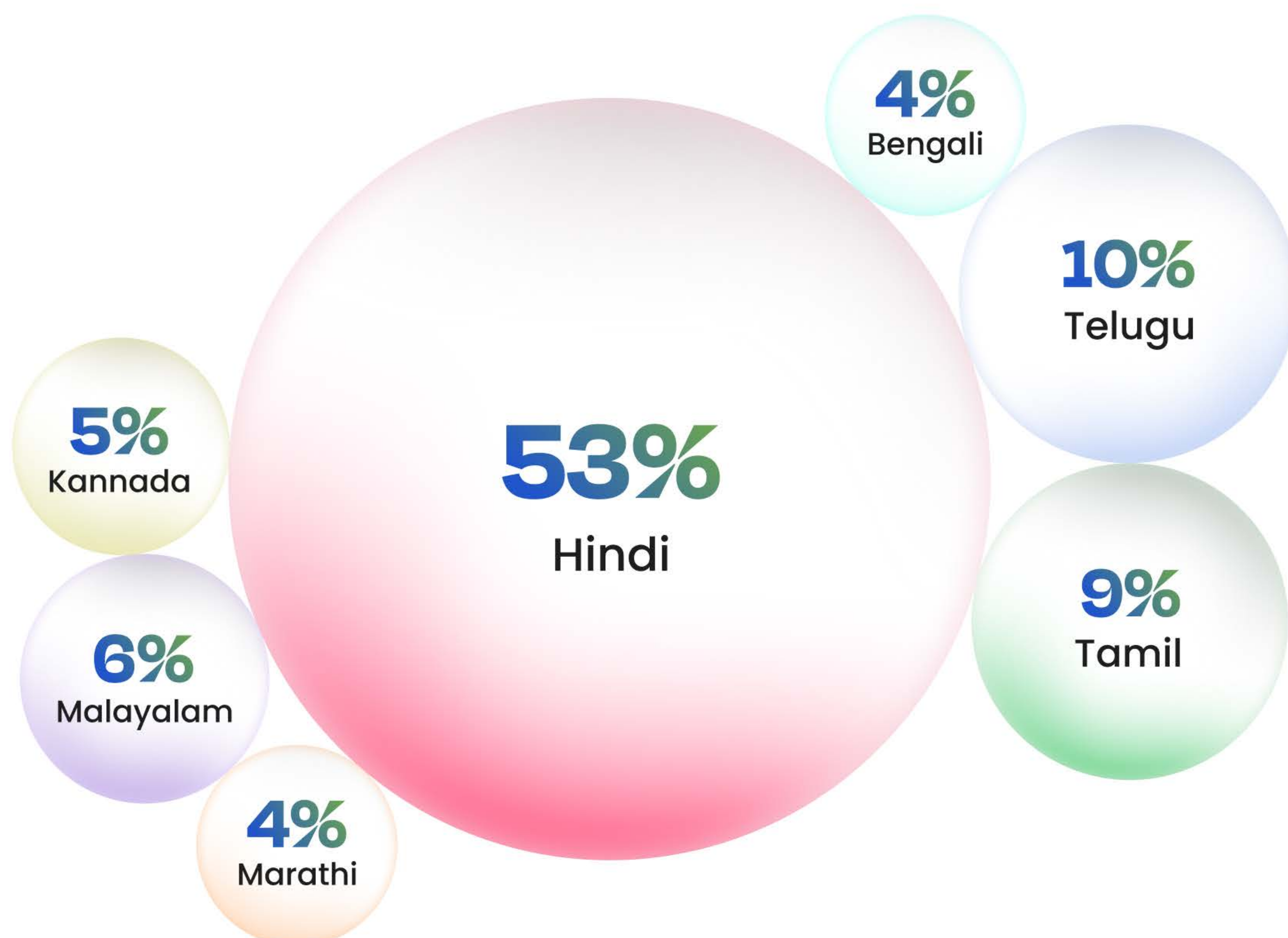


## Preferred genres reinforce this trend:



## Languages of listening:

# Hindi leads, vernaculars rise



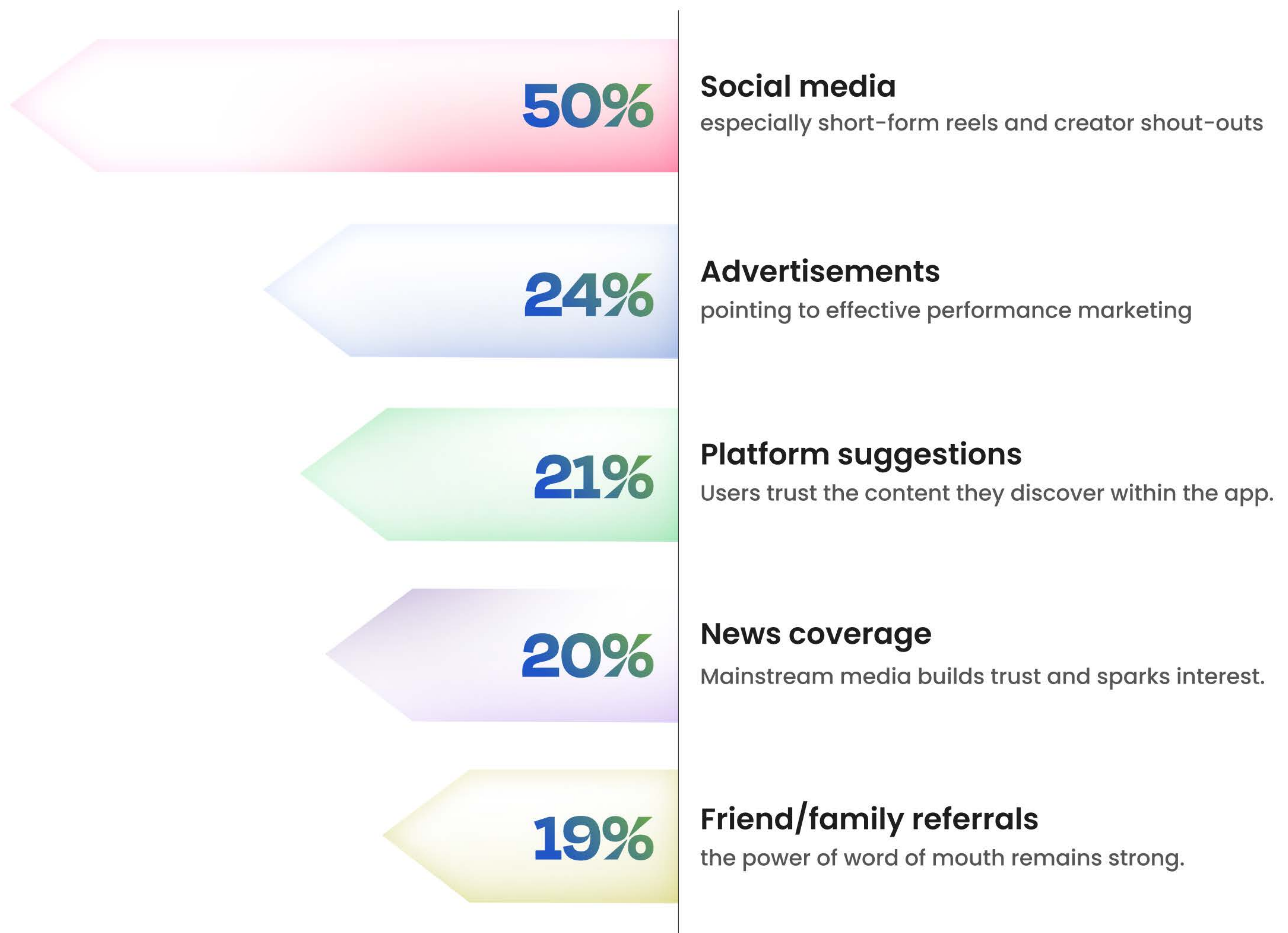
The growing regional footprint points to a democratisation of storytelling—with language no longer a barrier to high-quality entertainment.



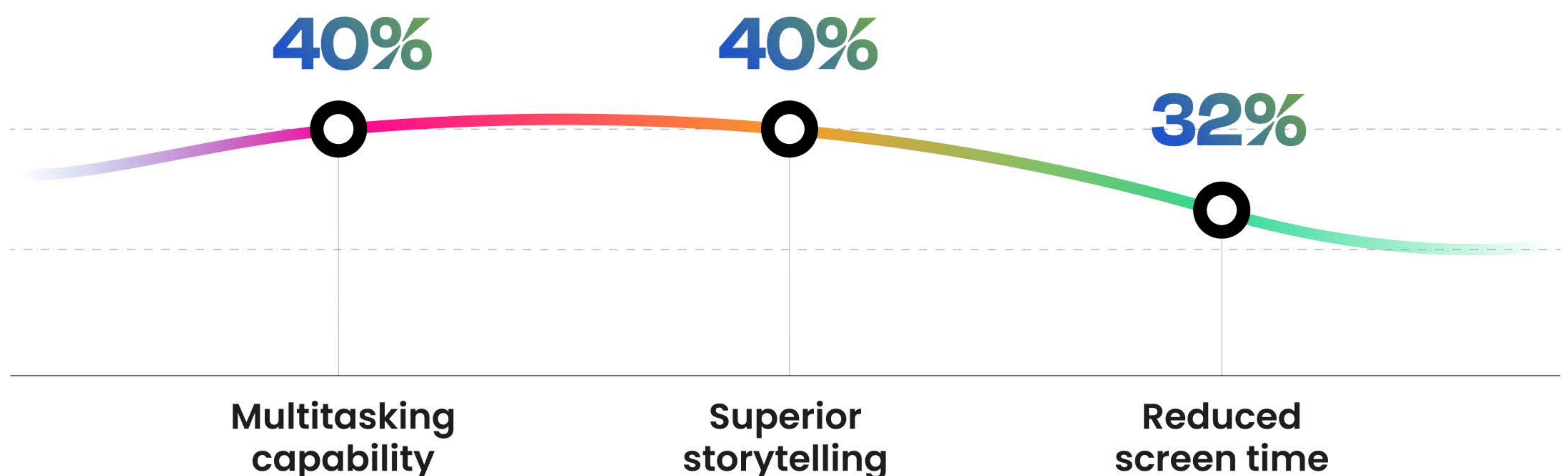
## Discovery & motivation:

# How listeners find their next favourite show

The journey to discovering content is driven by:



## Why audio? The top three reasons say it all:





## Payment preferences:

# Micro Before Macro

Indian audiences continue to favour **transactional over commitment-based models**.

**77%**

prefer paying only  
for episodes they  
consume.

**23%**

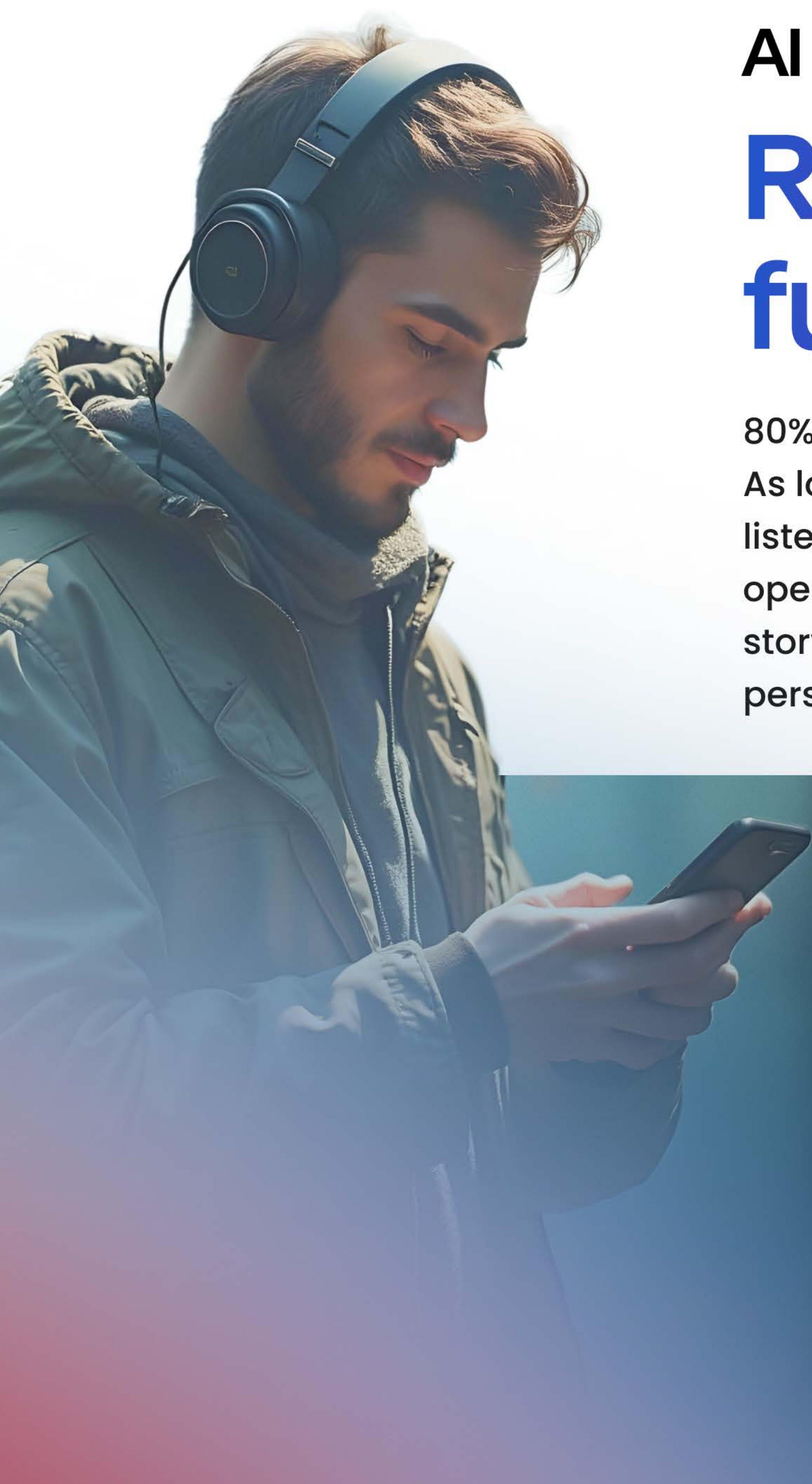
favour all-access  
subscriptions.

This aligns with  
broader digital  
payment  
behaviours –  
people like control,  
not lock-ins.

## AI and Storytelling:

# Ready for the future!

80% of listeners are open to AI-generated content. As long as the story connects emotionally, listeners don't mind how it was created. This opens up massive opportunities for scaling storytelling, without compromising personalisation or quality.

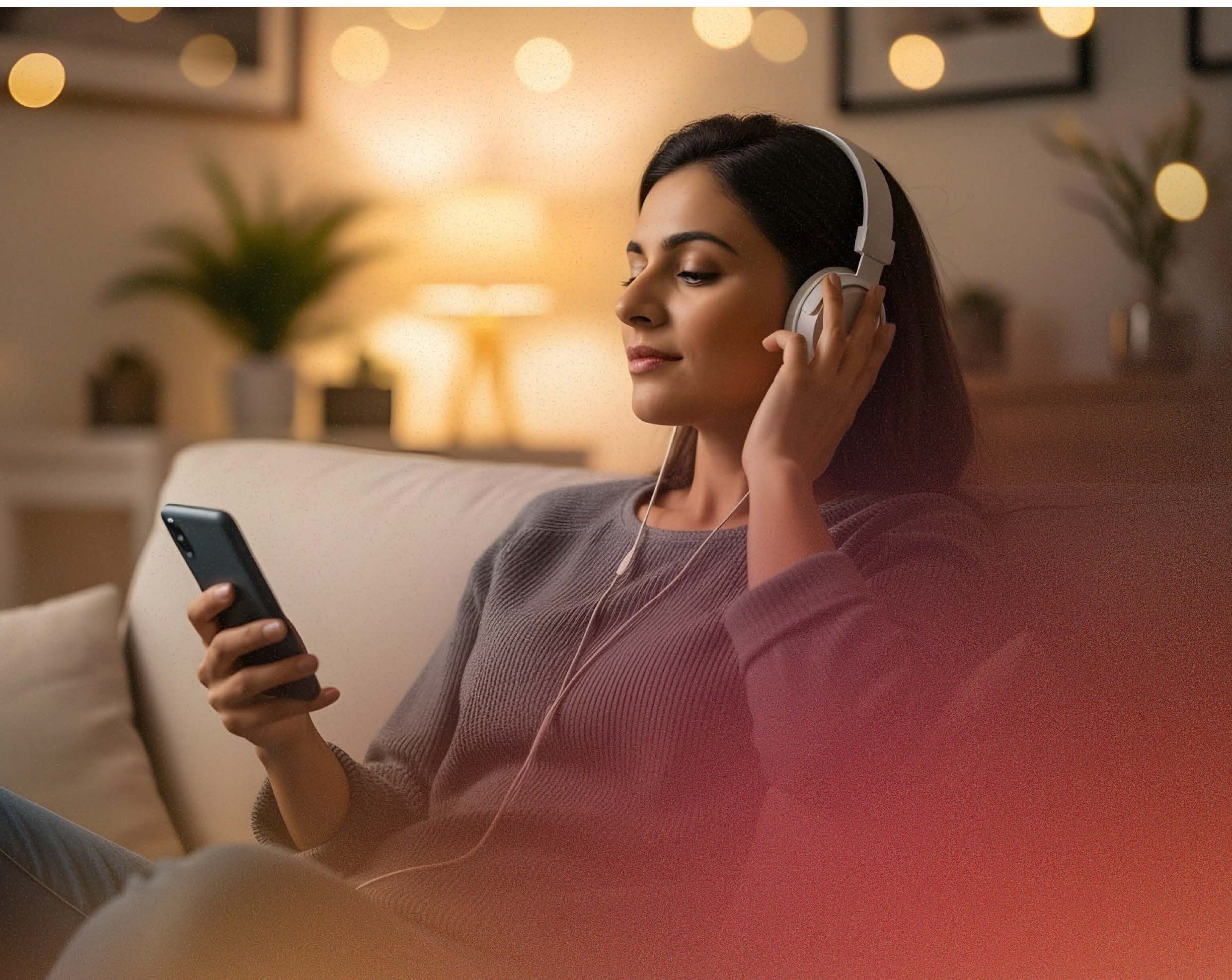




# Audio has found it's voice: And India is listening

This isn't just about content, it's about culture. The survey paints a picture of an India that's rapidly reshaping its entertainment habits around voice, imagination, and emotion. It's not a temporary detour from video. It's a parallel, powerful new path where audio isn't the alternative, it's preferred.

This shift is driven by convenience, emotional storytelling, and screen fatigue. From metros to villages, English and Hindi to regional languages, India's audio landscape is growing deeper and more diverse. Listeners aren't just consuming more, they are choosing formats that give them freedom, flexibility, and immersive experiences without screens.





This is just the beginning.

**India's audio story is  
only getting louder.**