

**A STUDY ON READERS' PREFERENCE TOWARDS ONLINE NEWSPAPER
IN COIMBATORE CITY**

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ABSTRACT

The digital revolution has brought in a plethora of changes in the way people live, and one of them is how people access their daily news now. People are now shifting to online news portals to access information for various benefits. The objectives of the study were to examine readers awareness level, preference, to analyze the factors influencing, measure the readers' satisfaction level towards online newspapers and to identify the problems faced by the newspaper readers online. The study identified various factors like their source of awareness, time duration spent everyday on online newspaper, benefits, satisfaction level of different newspapers, whether they would recommend online news to someone else. The samples were drawn from the city of Coimbatore. A survey was conducted to gather primary data and secondary data was mainly from websites, journals, books, magazines, newspapers etc.

Keywords: *newspaper, online, satisfaction, readers*

I. INTRODUCTION

An online newspaper is created digitally and published in online platforms. It is published periodically and keep the information's up to date before publishing in the online websites/ apps/ blogs. The progressing online newspapers caused new reach in producing breaking news in advance of the scheduled news. The consistency of the newspaper stands behind the trustworthiness of the readers and the clients who approaches them for the truth behind the news. This trust makes the newspaper agencies to have a powerful brand recognition among the public who is surrounded in this world.

When comparing the printed newspapers & online newspapers, the cost of the online newspapers were very less when compared to printed newspaper. In most of the countries online newspapers come across legal restrictions regarding libel, privacy and copyright. And

also many countries have passed ruling regulations to formulate and control the online newspapers.

For reporting online news, a special training and knowledge are required about the techniques using behind the publication of the news. For this purpose, the news reporters should have the awareness about how to shoot video and how to write in the concise manner mandatory for internet news pages. Few newspapers have made effort to combine internet in their operations. The writing of article for both print and online and the categorized advertisement show up in both media, while other newspaper websites may be vary considerably from the corresponding printed newspaper.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Newspapers are treasure house of knowledge. They are an important component in being aware of one's surrounding. The digital revolution has brought in a plethora of changes in the way people live and one of them is how people access their daily news. People are now shifting to the online news portals to access news for the various benefits it provides and now there is a growing fear that online news media would displace the traditional print media which has already faced the storms of radio and television. However considering the fact that more number of people are going online to access news it becomes relevant to study one's preference while selecting online news. And thus this study is primarily focused on understanding readers' preference towards online newspapers in Coimbatore.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine awareness level of online newspaper in Coimbatore city.
- To know the preference of online newspaper readers among the various online newspapers.
- To analyze the factors influencing the choice of online newspaper.
- To measure the readers satisfaction level towards online newspapers.
- To identify the problems faced by the newspaper readers online.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Collection of Data:** Data are collected from primary and secondary sources.

➤ **Source of Data:**

1. Primary Data- The primary data has been collected through structured questionnaire.

2. Secondary Data- Secondary data has been collected through various sources like Websites, Journals, books, magazines, newspapers, etc.,

➤ **Sampling Method:** Non-Probability Sampling.

➤ **Sampling Technique:** Convenient Sampling Technique.

➤ **Sample size:** The sample size for the study is 120 respondents.

➤ **Tools applied:**

1. Percentage analysis.

2. Garrett ranking.

3. Weighted average.

V. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- The focus of this study is mainly based on the selected online newspaper.
- The geographical area is confined to Coimbatore city of Tamil Nadu State in India.
- Under the study only literate people are included.

VI. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

CHRISTOP et.al. (1998), he conducted a study about the future online newspapers in Germany. Reading online newspaper gives a positive exercise because the students are able to access through internet. As they, get some information from online newspapers and magazines, as it provides students with a large variety of formal and colloquial English. It is very motivating, as the students practice reading and at the same time they are informed. Therefore, it is a refreshing change of routine.

Mc NAMARA (2000) examines that about 20% of US people read their daily news through internet. This may slow down the revenue of printed newspaper and therefore capable of putting newspaper. He states that newspapers face greater competition from online for news and information than they did in earlier time like TV networks, radio and printed newspapers. As a results media covers visual technologies and have emerged important force in the visual media.

As per the study conducted by **DELLI CARPINI, MICHAEL X & SCOTT KEETER (2002)**, it is found that, “particular age group of people choose offline over online news and belonging to another age group of people choose vice versa. Age has been found to be driven for one of the most important determinants in use of online news media.”

In the study of **WESTLUND AND FARDIGH (2011)**, online news has placed a stronger position among the users. Gender has the effect of strongest complement, as men are distinguished the users of both the traditional newspaper and online news.

CHERIAN & JOLLY (2012), in this study has examined the consumer’s choice in print and online news media with respect to preference in format and demographics. He adopted a primary quantitative data approach, where the survey based on 150 post graduate students in university carried out. The researcher used a random sampling method for selecting the sample population among the respondents at the college. The study analysis has concluded that, the print media edition accordance with readership and preference has generated more profit in the field of advertising.

PATRICK (2015), made a study on Assessment of patterns of readership of online newspapers in selected Nigerian universities. He adopted the questionnaire survey method for collecting data and investigating the sample collection. The sample been collected by 40 respondents from three college each, and total sample size was 120 respondents been selected for the research analysis. The conclusion of the study was that 40% of the respondents spend time to read the news through online mode. Therefore, the online newspapers had a significant impact of students of selected universities has enriched their knowledge on important issue and enabling to enlighten others on important issue and correcting impression on that issue.

VII. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Table No:1 PERSONAL PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Personal Factor	Constructs	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Gender	Male	53	44
	Female	67	56
Age	Below 20 years	48	40
	20-30 years	63	52

	30-40 years	4	3
	40-50 years	3	3
	Above 50 years	2	2
Educational qualification	School level	12	10
	Undergraduate Level	94	78
	Postgraduate Level	12	10
	Diploma	1	1
	Ph.D	1	1
Occupation	Student	101	84
	Business	6	5
	Employed	7	6
	Professional	5	4
	House wife	1	1
Place of Residence	Urban	50	42
	Semi-urban	37	31
	Rural	33	27

Out of 120 respondents, 56% of the respondents are female, 56% of the respondents belong to the age group of 20-30 years, 78% of the respondents are undergraduates, 84% of the respondents are students and 42% of the respondents live in urban area.

Table No: 2 TABLE SHOWING THE AWARENESS LEVEL OF DIFFERENT ONLINE NEWSPAPERS

Newspaper	Aware		Not aware	
	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Times of India	106	88	14	12
Ndtv	57	47	63	53

Indian express	103	86	17	14
The Hindu	115	96	5	4
Hindustan Times	64	53	56	47
Daily Thanthi	88	73	32	27
Dinamalar	92	77	28	23
Live mint	96	80	24	20

Out of 120 respondents, 96% of the respondents are aware of The Hindu e-newspaper followed by times of India, Indian Express and so on.

Table No: 3 TABLE SHOWING THE PREFERENCE OF ONLINE NEWSPAPERS BY USING GARRETT RANKING

Newspaper	Rank	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	Total	Avg	Rank
	Value(x)	80	67	60	53	47	40	33	20			
Times of India	No (f1)	45	20	11	11	3	6	8	16	120	59.56	1
	Score	3600	1340	660	583	141	240	264	320	7148		
Ndtv	No (f2)	11	35	14	10	13	12	17	8	120	53.39	4
	Score	880	2345	840	530	611	480	561	160	6407		
Indian Express	No (f3)	1	13	46	23	12	19	6	0	120	53.76	3
	Score	80	871	2760	1219	564	760	198	0	6452		
The Hindu	No (f4)	24	16	12	38	16	4	6	4	120	57.63	2
	Score	1920	1072	720	2014	752	160	198	80	6916		
Hindustan Times	No (f5)	6	2	10	20	52	13	11	6	120	47.67	5
	Score	480	134	600	1060	244 4	520	363	120	5721		

Daily Thanthi	No (f6)	7	13	12	11	10	49	15	3	120	47.65	6
	Score	560	871	720	583	470	1960	495	60	5719		
Dinamalar	No (f7)	10	17	12	5	10	7	50	9	120	45.86	7
	Score	800	1139	720	265	470	280	1650	180	5504		
Live mint	No (f8)	16	4	3	2	4	10	7	74	120	34.44	8
	Score	1280	268	180	106	188	400	231	1480	4133		

The above table shows the preference of different online newspapers. Times of India have been ranked first followed by The Hindu, the Indian express on the third and followed by Ndtv, Hindustan Times, Daily Thanthi, Dinamalar and lastly by Live Mint.

**Table No: 4 TABLE SHOWING FACTORS INFLUENCING READERS TO READ
ONLINE NEWS**

Factor	Constructs	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Time spent	Less than 30 min	97	81
	30 min to 1 hour	20	17
	More than 1 hour	3	2
Device used	Mobile phone	113	94
	Laptop	5	4
	Tablet	2	2
Content Preferred	Headline	67	56
	Political	15	12
	National	5	4
	International	8	7
	Sports	18	15
	Business	5	4
	Local	2	2
Language preferred	English	52	43
	Tamil	17	15

	Both	51	42
Factors influencing readers to read online news	Easily Accessible	26	22
	Constant update	15	12
	Time saving	16	13
	Ease of searching previous news	3	2.50
	More mediums available	3	2.50
	Organized content	2	2
	Trustworthy information	55	46

From the table it is found that 81% of the respondents read online newspaper for less than 30 minutes a day. 94% of the respondents use mobile phone to read online news. 56% of the respondents prefer to read only headlines. 43% of the respondents prefer to read online news only in English. Among the various factors trustworthy information was selected by 46% of the respondents.

**Table No: 5 WEIGHTED AVERAGE ANALYSIS
ON THE BENEFITS OF ONLINE NEWSPAPER**

Agreeability	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Points	Weighted Average
Value	5	4	3	2	1		
Easily Accessible	84	31	3	1	1	120	4.633
	420	124	9	2	1	556	
Constant update	42	57	19	2	0	120	4.158
	210	228	57	4	0	499	
Time saving	37	34	46	3	0	120	3.875
	185	136	138	6	0	465	
Ease of searching previous news	22	36	29	24	9	120	3.317
	110	144	87	48	9	398	
More	23	31	30	12	24	120	

mediums available	115	124	90	24	24	377	3.142
Organized content	22	33	43	14	8	120	3.392
	110	132	129	28	8	407	
Trustworthy information	14	32	43	18	13	120	3.133
	70	128	129	36	13	376	

The above table shows the weighted average analysis on the various benefits of online newspaper. Easy accessibility has got the highest weightage followed by constant update, time saving, organized content, ease of searching previous news, more mediums available and trustworthy information.

Table No: 6 WEIGHTED AVERAGE ANALYSIS ON THE SATISFACTION LEVEL OF DIFFERENT CONTENT IN ONLINE NEWSPAPER

Satisfaction Level	Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	Points	Weighted Average
Value	5	4	3	2	1		
Headline	77	32	10	0	1	120	4.533
	385	128	30	0	1	544	
Political	15	56	38	7	4	120	3.592
	75	224	114	14	4	431	
National	26	48	42	4	0	120	3.800
	130	192	126	8	0	456	
International	23	45	33	16	3	120	3.575
	115	180	99	32	3	429	
Sports	41	39	24	5	11	120	3.783
	205	156	72	10	11	454	
	24	54	22	14	6	120	

Business	120	216	66	28	6	436	3.633
Local	31	37	36	10	6	120	3.642
	155	148	108	20	6	437	

The above table shows the weighted average analysis on the satisfaction level of different news contents. Headline has got the highest weight followed by national news, sports news, local news, business, political news, and lastly by International news.

Table No: 7 TABLE SHOWING READERS SATISFACTION LEVEL TOWARDS ONLINE NEWSPAPERS

Factor	Construct	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Overall satisfaction towards online news	Highly satisfied	25	21
	Satisfied	75	62
	Neutral	20	17
	Dissatisfied	-	-
	Highly dissatisfied	-	-
Pay for online news	Yes	18	15
	No	102	85
Readers faced any problem while accessing online news	Yes	83	69
	No	37	31
Different problems faced by readers	Slow internet connection	14	17
	Heavy content	3	4
	Advertisement	11	13
	Pop up ads	55	66

62% of the respondents are satisfied with online newspapers. 85% of the respondents do not pay for online news. 69% of the respondents faced problems while accessing online news. 66% of the respondents face the problem of pop up ads.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS

- Online news in the present situation is used majorly only by the young generation improvement should be made in order to make it more accessible to other generations as well.
- The presence of online as a medium to gather news is still very limited in rural areas steps must be taken to improve connectivity.
- Though online newspapers exist most people still spend less than 30 minutes on an average thus there should be effort put in to make news applications interesting.
- Uniform notifications should be put to an end and instead notifications should be tailored to an individual according to their preferred time.
- Majority of the public only reads headlines so focus should be on improving the headlines in order to make the news interesting.
- Advertisements is still the biggest hindrance stopping people from reading online news therefore the news companies should rethink their business model so more people come on their platform to read news.
- The respondents of the study also suggested to include local news more so that they can be aware about the local issues

IX. CONCLUSION

Newspapers is always been looked as a medium to connect with the outside world and being more aware of one's surrounding. Newspaper reading is no more classified as being a physical activity thanks to the growth of online news mediums. Now-a-days the mode of reading newspapers is changed from print media to online newspapers in mobile apps and thus has had an impact on the way people consume news as well. In this study conducted among Coimbatore respondents, it is found that they trust online news as a medium as much as offline newspapers mainly due to the convenience with which it come. Today's generation is wide open to digital

news than others. The most preferred language is English when it comes to online news. The readers faces certain problems that need to be addressed in case of the online medium are pop up ads, excessive advertisements, lack of local news, heavy content etc. and this also reflects in the number of subscribers to online news channels. Even though the readers are satisfied with online newspaper, simplification of the vocabulary, increase in distribution in rural areas and improvement of the online platform are some other suggestions.

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