

Preference of Newspaper among Indian Population

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Abstract: For many people, it is a matter of habit to read a newspaper in the morning. It is surprising how a single copy of newspaper serves the entire population of the country irrespective of age, reading abilities, physical disabilities etc. The purpose of the study is to investigate newspaper reading pattern and preferences of Indian population and determine inconvenience faced while reading newspaper. Google Analysis Online Survey forms' link was circulated on various social portals. Over 450 responses were received, which were curtailed to 200 after excluding the incomplete and inappropriate responses. 200 sample size has been finalised which encompass 50 responses from each of the four age groups i.e. 15-30 years, 31-45 years, 46-60 years and above 60 years. The generalisations were also made on the basis of gender, location and profession (teacher, engineer, student, doctor, business and others). It was found that 76% of the population prefer traditional newspaper with more inclination towards broadsheet (72%), due to routine habit, organized news, less dependency on gadgets, better comprehension and satisfaction derived from reading paper while only 14.5% of the 15-30 years respondents derive pleasure reading e-newspaper. On comparing broadsheet and tabloid format, broadsheet was found to be most preferred by 72% of the respondents and mostly supported by 60+ age group. On the other hand problems encountered while going through the newspaper were inconvenience while holding (48%) and difficulty reading the text of newspaper (32%). Strikingly 69% of the readers have supported an idea of bigger font in the newspaper.

1..Introduction

Reading newspaper on a daily basis is considered as an essential activity in our day to day practice. Newspaper reading is something that people do with pleasure in any possible situation which could be: comfortably sitting on a couch at home, along with lunch, in a coffee break or travelling in a train, tram or bus. It is a relaxing activity to traverse through the folds and it usually takes quite a long time. According to Neilson and Co. (2014) India has 281.7 million newspaper readers, which includes children, youth, adults, old age person with various professional backgrounds, educational status and many a times with physical and reading disabilities (for example: Dyslexic population etc.). In last two decades, with rise of internet and various handy gadgets, (like palmtops, multifunctional mobile phones and ever-shrinking laptops) printing industry is facing its worst nightmare. It is fascinating, how people consume news, has changed faster and radically than ever. With this advancement in the technology reading preference has witnessed change from traditional newspaper to e-newspaper for the customized and comfortable reading.

However, when it come to the traditional newspaper, the same copy of newspaper serves the entire reader population irrespective of their age and reading abilities/capabilities provoking the matter of suitability of newspaper among different age groups in terms



of fonts and its size. Technological advancement and wide use of electronic gadgets has shifted the interest of youth from traditional to e-newspaper. Besides, adults, old age group, children and dyslexic population of the country are forced to choose the standard newspaper which is being circulated. Reading habits may vary from person to person according to age, profession and personal preferences.

Newspaper readers experience number of variations in terms of physical environment, layout and other specifications of newspaper. In India, two layouts of traditional newspaper are common i.e. broadsheet and tabloid. Broadsheet is the largest format and is widely used. Tabloid, on the other hand, is used for weekly magazines. The approximate size of broadsheet is 29.5x23.5 inches and tabloid is 17x11 inches. The layout and font size of traditional newspaper affects the readability of the person scanning through it. Legibility of a reader is also influenced by the conditions in which the newspaper is being read. Typography (font type and size characteristics) plays significant role in understanding the complexities of visual information in man-newspaper interface.

Numerous studies across the globe have been carried out to investigate the preference of newspapers (traditional or e-paper) and results revealed that the readership towards print newspapers is shrinking and the preference of the young population has shifted towards digital news whereas older population still prefer to read from printed papers [4, 7]. Preference towards the "e-newspaper" is being accepted by users quickly because it incorporates many advantages such as flexibility of what and when to read and comfort and is more customized than newspaper [6, 11]. However most preferred locations to read printed newspaper as well as e-paper among student were isolated places such as library or computer centre of the university [1].

According to a laboratory study that compared reading from paper to reading on-line analysed critical differences have to do with the major advantages paper offers in supporting annotation while reading, quick navigation, and flexibility of spatial layout. These, in turn, allow readers to deepen their understanding of the text, extract a sense of its structure, create a plan for writing, cross-refer to other documents, and interleave reading and writing [8]. Coming to the preferred traditional newspaper based on geometric characteristics was Tabloid determined in spacious and cramped condition [9] on contrary when preference of e-newspaper indicates liking for larger screens [5].

Several studies regarding text size and typeface legibility have been conducted to enquire various factors such as pupil diameter, fixation duration, gaze duration, ease of reading, font sharpness, perceptions of font attractiveness, fun/personality, and general preference design and it was found that 14-point size was more legible and preferable font size however no significant effects were found for font typeface [2, 3, 10].

The study has undertaken with the following objectives:

- To inquire newspaper reading habits of Indian Population
- To determine the preferences of newspaper among Indian Population.
- To discover the inconveniences faced in reading traditional newspaper among readers.

2. Methodology

2.1 Participants

Researchers circulated the Google Analysis Online Survey forms' link on various social portals using internet resulting in sample of diverse location ranging from metropolitan cities to small town districts. Response rate has been fair enough considering the extent to which the link has been circulated. Total number of response received was 467. However 26 subjects were excluded because they were not of Indian origin or not living in India, 52 forms were excluded because they were incomplete. After exclusion total number of forms left was 389. On basis of response sample has been divided in four age groups. Age Group I comprises 15-30 years, Age Group II of 31-45 years, Age Group III of 46-60 years and Age Group IV of 60+ years. The highest number of responses received was 167 from 15-30 years age group because large number of technology users lie among this age group, while 31-45 years age group's response received were 77, total number of response derived from 46-60 years age group was 95 and the least response was received from 60+ years age group i.e. 50 due to less use of technology among this age group people. Thus to maintain the symmetry in the sample 50 respondents from each group have been considered for the study.

Table.01: Demographic information of sample.

	Characteristics	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Age (years)	15-30	50	25
	31-45	50	25
	46-60	50	25
	60+	50	25
Sex	Male	110	55
	Female	90	45
Profession	Teacher	20	10
	Engineer	58	29
	Student	56	28
	Business	10	5
	Doctor	06	03
	Others	50	25
Location	Metropolitan	95	47.5
	Urban	61	30.5
	Semi Urban	34	17
	Rural	10	5

2.2 Tools and Techniques:

A questionnaire containing the information on demographic and contextual variables, reading habits, preference of newspaper in term of size and inconvenience faced while reading newspaper was circulated on various social portals among people of



different age groups. Questionnaire measures the reading habits of the sample in terms of how often they read newspaper along with when and where did they like to read the newspaper. Preferences of readers was gauged by asking them which newspaper they prefer to read (traditional or e-newspaper) followed by an open ended question for justifying their preferences. Furthermore, problems associated with traditional newspaper were enquired by posing questions such as any inconvenience faced while holding newspaper and difficulty experienced in reading the text of newspaper. The questionnaire was supported by a question that if given an option would they prefer bigger font in newspaper.

3. Results

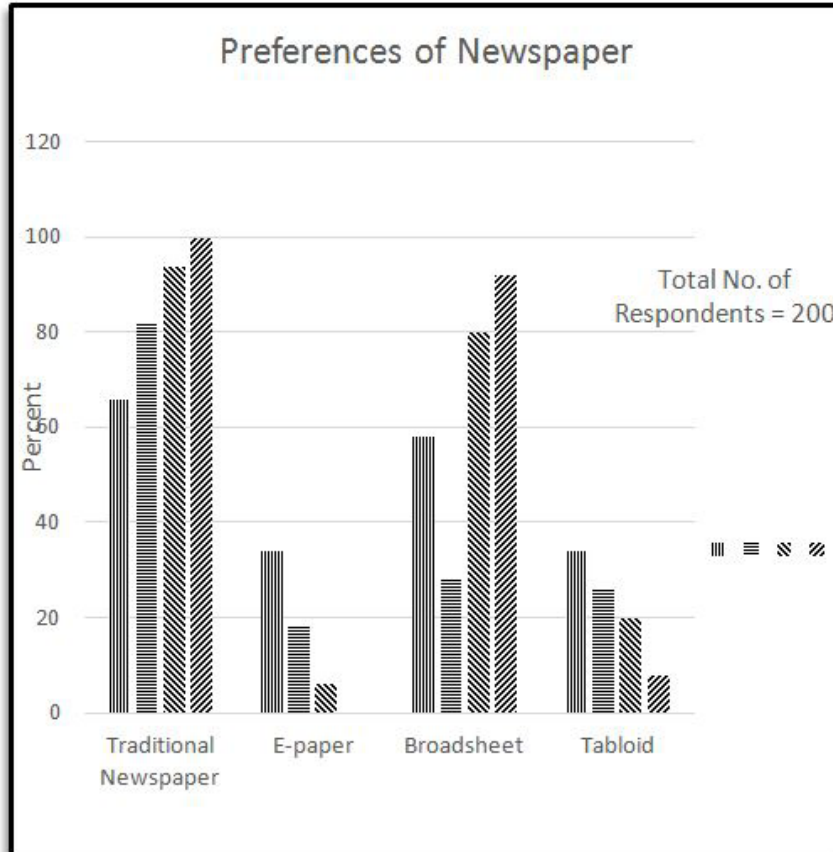
Results reveal that Indian population is fond of getting in touch with the news and the entire sample derives news from some or the other means.

3.1 Reading Habits

It has been found that 76% of the respondents read newspaper daily and prevalence of reading newspaper found to be amplified as the age enhances i.e. in Age group I, II and III responses were 50%, 74% and 100% respectively, however it declined in Age group IV as only 92% of the readers were able to read newspaper daily.

On enquiring the conditions in which respondents like to read newspaper; 71.5% of the sample prefers reading in solace, while 14% prefer to read while travelling whereas 12% prefer to read simultaneously while doing some work.

Figure 1. Preference of Newspaper among Indian Population



3.2 Preference of Newspaper

When asked about preference of newspaper (traditional or e-newspaper) 85.5% of the of the total population fancy traditional newspaper as depicted from Figure 01.and all the Age Groups I, II, III, IV showed more inclination towards it with whooping 66%, 82%, 94% and 100% respectively. Whereas only 14.5% of the sample take pleasure in e-newspaper of which 34% readers are from Age Group I, 8% from II Age Group, 6% from Age Group III while none from Age Group IV.

On posing the question regarding type of traditional newspaper (Broadsheet and Tabloid) readers yearn to read it was found that 72% of all the respondents prefer reading Broadsheet. Surprisingly, 58% of Age Group I sample reported Broadsheet followed by Age Group III and IV with 80% and 92% respectively. While only 28% of all the respondents choose Tabloid over Broadsheet with highest number of readers in Age Group I with 31% and then after declining from 26% to 20% to 8% in Age Group II, III and IV correspondingly.

3.2 Problems associated with newspaper

When readers were asked about the problems encountered while reading the newspaper, 48% of the reader population reported inconvenience while holding newspaper of which all the age groups experience more or less at same echelon. At the same time other intricacy faced by the 32% of the newspaper readers was while reading the text of newspaper in the particular font. Surprisingly 69% of the readers have supported an idea of bigger font in the newspaper.

4. Discussion

The findings of the research indicates that habit of reading newspaper improves as age advances till the 60 years of life but thereafter 8% of the 60+ population accounts decline in the habit of going through newspaper every day. Probably due to old age problems such as weak eyesight, strain and eye fatigue while reading the newspaper (in particular font), declined ability to concentrate, poor health etc. Also 71.5% of the sample prefers to read newspaper in isolated places such as home, office, library (78.5%) where full attention can be paid which showed consistency with past studies [1].

Unavoidably 85.5% of the entire population has a preference of traditional newspaper over e-newspaper due to various reasons such as habit, less dependency on technology, organized & easy to comprehend along with satisfaction & feel good factor with 31%, 25%, 17% and 16% respectively. However maximum number of respondents who selected traditional newspaper due to habit or less dependency on technology or satisfaction belonged to Age Group IV i.e. 60 years, because they have spent numerous years of their life with hard copy of newspaper and thus they derive more comfort out of it. On the other hand, only 14.5% derive pleasure in reading e-newspaper due to easy and personalized accessibility, economic and rapid retrieval of national and international news. Surprisingly none of the subject from Age Group IV favor going through e-newspaper on regular basis,



but preference elevates as the age declines and about 85% of the e-newspaper enthusiasts are from 15-30 age bracket thus illustrating the dependency of youth on internet.

Reasons underneath selection of 72% Broadsheet newspaper were routine satisfaction derived while reading wide sized newspaper, availability of all genre of news under one covering (comprising local, national, international news with sports, entertainment, obituary, editorial section etc.), reading comfortability in wide sized newspaper and unavailability of tabloid with 42.5%, 28%, 22.4% and 9.3% correspondingly. On contrary the grounds on which the tabloid has been selected by 28% of the total population were categorized under convenience in holding newspaper and larger fonts with 92% and 18% of sample support.

5. Conclusion

India's leading newspaper in Hindi and English language print their articles in font size ranging from 8-12 which are being circulated in the entire country of 1.30 billion inhabitants embracing population of diverse age groups, different level of literacy, varied physical problems which declines the reading ability such as partial or feeble eyesight, dyslexia etc. are forced to read same copy of newspaper due to unavailability of other options. However, reading through the newspaper with small font size aggravates the problem of stress and strain on eyes as well as posture. Thus in order to combat the fatigue laid on eyes large number of population read broadsheet because it gives better panoramic view which helps in better concentration and comprehension of the information followed by psychological factor that small size paper i.e. tabloid consists small fonts and vice versa. Therefore the efforts should be laid in making the newspapers more ergonomic by enlarging the font size to 14 in any font type which can serve to the huge number of population in the country and will also reduce the shift of massive number of readers to e-newspaper only because of the customized comfort they derive while reading e-copies.

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