

## Newspaper Reading Habits among Post-Graduate Students of Karnatak University, Dharwad

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### ABSTRACT

Reading is a way to get better knowledge of one's own experiences and it can be an exciting journey to self-discovery. Reading transfers experiences to the individual so that the reader may expand one's horizons, identify, extend and intensify his or her interest and gain deeper understanding of the world. News paper is also an important source of information for all and brings news of daily happenings of the world. In this study an attempt has been made to study the newspaper reading habits among post-graduate students of Karnatak University, Dharwad.

**Keywords:** Newspaper reading habits, news seeking, newspapers, information seeking

### 1. INTRODUCTION

When we think of newspapers, we think of them as bringing us news, when we think of news we think of what's happening currently around us. This is a totally inadequate description of news as well as newspapers. A newspaper is not only a source of information, it's a storehouse of information. Reading newspaper daily is one of the best ways to keep up to date with the ever advancing world. All the important news and events of the world are brought to our doorstep by the newspapers. Newspapers bring us a selection of the news from around the world. There is news from the parliament which provides information with regard to decisions affecting the country. News from the world comes through reporters for local newspapers stations abroad or through news agencies in different countries. Newspapers can also act as a forum for the readers and writers to express their ideas and views on various aspects. Thus reading newspapers is essential for young learners to be more responsive and enlightened citizens. But unfortunately, many students of our country do not have easy access to newspapers. Modern societies rely on the media of which newspapers are an important component to disseminate current and vital information.

### 2. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The study explores the newspaper reading habits among post-graduate (P.G.) students of Karnatak University, Dharwad which covers students

from social science, science, humanities, and arts streams for the academic year 2013-2014. Further, the study focuses on leading Kannada dailies such as *Prajavani*, *Samyukta Karnataka*, *Vijayavani*, *Vijay Karnataka*, *Udayavani*, *Kannadaprabha* and some of the English dailies include *The Hindu*, *Deccan Herald*, *Times of India* and *Indian Express* which are being subscribed in central library of Karnatak University, Dharwad.

Some of the objectives of this study are to:

- Find out the purpose of reading newspapers by P.G. students
- Know the time being devoted by P.G. students for reading newspapers
- Know the different areas of interests of P.G. students in newspapers
- Assess the extent of P.G. students depending on print newspapers other than internet, radio, television, and other mass media for news
- Find out the opinions of students towards reading newspapers
- Suggestions to promote newspapers reading habits among P.G. students

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The work employs systematic, objective and quantitative research techniques using a well-structured questionnaire. This is a survey in which

the sample was selected by means of random sampling to collect the data. Total 120 questionnaires were distributed among the P.G. students of all the disciplines of the university, out of which 98 were returned with a response rate of 81.66 %.

#### 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The information given by the P.G. students is analysed and presented.

##### 4.1 Languages Known by Students

Students were asked about the languages they know. It is observed that Kannada being regional language dominates with 94 (95.16 %) students. 80 (81.63 %) students know English language being medium of instruction. Hindi About 68 (69.39 %) know Hindi and 36 (36.73 %) students know other languages.

##### 4.2 Newspaper Reading Place

The students read newspapers in different places. Majority of the students i.e., 67 (65.51 %) read newspapers at hostels and 25 (24.49 %) of the students read newspapers at home and only 11 (10 %) read in the library.

##### 4.3 Preference of Language for Reading Newspapers

96 (97.95 %) students read Kannada newspapers, while 36 (36.73 %) read English newspapers and 8 (8.16 %) students read Hindi newspapers.

##### 4.4 Time Devoted for Reading Newspaper

Study was done to know how much time students devote for reading newspapers every day. 64 (65.31 %) students read newspapers for less than an hour while 28 (28.57 %) respondents spend 1 and ½ an hour. Followed by around 4 (4.08 %) devote two hours and only very few around 2 (2.04 %) spend more than two hours per day.

##### 4.5 Source of Newspaper

Majority of the students, i.e., 44 (44.90 %) depend on self subscription, while 36 (36.73 %) read at mess or hostel. Followed by 18 (18.37 %) students rely on libraries to read newspapers.

##### 4.6 Format/Version of Newspapers Reading

Table 1 reveals that the format/version of the newspaper preferred by the students. Most of the students i.e., 92 (93.88 %) prefer to read print version of newspapers and only 6 (6.12 %) prefer to read on internet.

##### 4.7 Choice of News in the Newspapers

Table 2 shows that the students choice of news for their reading in the newspapers. The highest

**Table 1. Format/version of newspapers reading**

Format/version	No. of respondents (%)
Internet version	6 (6.12)
Print version	92 (93.88)
Total	98 (100)

**Table 2. Choice of news in the newspapers**

Choice of section	No. of respondents (%)
Sensational news	44 (44.89)
Advertisement	34 (34.69)
Editorial page	42 (42.85)
International	50 (51.02)
Politics	52 (53.06)
Sports	64 (65.30)
Entertainment	38 (38.77)
Business	34 (34.69)
Education	78 (79.59)
Agriculture	32 (32.65)
Health	48 (48.97)
Letters	16 (16.32)

number 78 (79.59 %) of students prefer educational news, followed by 64 (65.30 %) of the students prefer sports news, political news 52 (53.06 %), international news 50 (51.02 %), health related news 48 (48.97 %), sensational news 44 (44.89 %), editorial 42 (42.85 %), entertainment 38 (38.77 %), advertisement and business purpose 34 (34.69 %). Moreover, agriculture related news is preferred by only 32 (32.65 %) of respondents respectively. The least preferred part of news is letters by the readers' portion, i.e., 16 (16.32 %).

Newspapers bring variety of news for its readers with wide coverage. 56 (57.14 %) discuss political matters, 52 (53.06 %) discuss about sports, 50 (51.02 %) discuss about job news, 44 (44.89 %) discuss about socio-economic factors, 28 (28.57 %) discuss about entertainment/sensational news and only 22 (22.45 %) discuss business and agricultural aspects respectively.

##### 4.8 Purpose of Reading Newspaper

Newspapers are a vital source of information in enlightened societies, providing most recent information to readers. Newspapers serve various purposes for different categories of users. Students were asked about the various purposes of reading newspapers and they have given different reasons for reading newspapers. Table 3 expresses that majority of the respondents, i.e., 78 (79.59 %) read newspaper to obtain information while 56 (57.14 %) of the respondents read newspaper for general knowledge and 50 (51.02 %) of the respondents

**Table 3. Purpose of reading newspaper**

Purpose	No. of respondents (%)
Get information	78 (79.59)
Broaden the horizon of general knowledge	56 (57.14)
Searching new jobs	40 (40.81)
Educational purpose	50 (51.02)
Entertainment	22 (22.44)
Sports news	32 (32.65)
Usual task of the day	10 (10.20)
Leisure activity	10 (10.20)
Improve self status in the society	22 (22.44)
Keep abreast with the present happenings of all over the world	32 (32.65)
Getting scholarship information	10 (10.20)
Read health-related news	12 (12.24)

read for educational purpose. The least number of respondents, i.e., 10 (10.20 %) read newspaper as it is their as usual task of the day, as a leisure activity and also for getting various scholarship information respectively.

#### 4.9 Preferred Time for Reading Newspapers

Most of the respondents i.e., 66 (67.35 %) read newspapers in the morning, while 26 (26.53 %) of respondents read during any time of the day, 4 (4.08 %) of the students read in the evening and only 2 (2.04 %) read in the afternoon.

#### 4.10 Constraints in Reading Newspapers

Majority of the respondents, i.e., 76 (77.55 %) feel that time is a major constraint as they don't get time to read the newspapers, while 22 (22.45 %) feel non-availability of newspapers at the right time and place.

#### 4.11 Use of Internet for Reading Online Newspaper

The rapid growth of information and communication technology (ICT) has led to the wide spread use of internet in almost all the daily affairs of human life. Using internet people can access to the newspapers everywhere. In the study, it was noticed that 30 (30.61 %) students access internet for reading online newspapers, while 68 (69.39 %) respondents don't read newspapers online.

#### 4.12 Newspapers Role in Improving the Language and Communication Skills

The role of newspapers in improving the language and communication skills was analysed. 62 (63.27 %) are of the opinion that they agree newspaper reading plays an important role in improving their language

and communication skills, while 36 (36.73 %) of the students strongly agree with the same.

#### 4.13 Effective Sources of News

With the advantage of ICT, there are varieties of source of news. Here an attempt has been made to know which source of news students feel more effective. Table 4 reveals that majority of the students i.e., 66 (67.34 %) believe newspapers are effective source of news, 58 (59.18 %) of the respondents believe television, 22 (22.44 %) believe news magazines, and 16 (16.32 %) with the opinion that radio is the effective source of news.

#### 4.14 Purpose of using Internet on Mobile

The study found that very less number of students, i.e., 22 (22.45 %) are accessing internet to read newspapers on their mobile, while majority of the students, i.e., 77.55 % don't read newspapers on their mobile. Table 5 shows that the different purposes of using internet on their mobile. The majority of respondents using internet for the purpose of general information, i.e., 30 (30.61 %), while 26 (26.53 %) of the respondents use internet for the purpose of social networks, 22.44 % of the respondents use internet for entertainment, followed by 10.20 % of the respondents use for news channels.

#### 4.10 Role of Newspapers in Student's Career

Table 6 reveals that role of newspaper reading in student's career. 69.38 % respondents agree that newspapers help in improving the language,

**Table 4. Effective sources of news**

Source of news	No. of respondents (%)
Television	58 (59.18)
Online news	8 (8.16)
Newspapers	66 (67.34)
News magazines	22 (22.44)
Radio	16 (16.32)

**Table 5. Purpose of using internet on mobile**

Purpose of using internet on mobile	No. of respondents (%)
Entertainment	22 (22.44)
Social networks	26 (26.53)
General Information	30 (30.61)
News Channels	10 (10.20)

**Table 6. Role of newspapers in student's career**

Statements	No. of respondents (%)
Keep abreast with latest developments	52 (53.06)
Improve skills in life	68 (69.38)
Know current affairs of the society.	48 (48.97)

communication skills and vocabulary etc. while 53.06 % respondents agree that newspapers play vital role in keeping abreast with the latest developments in their respective field and 48.97 % of respondents feel that through newspapers they come to know about current affairs of the society and socio-economic issues at national as well as international level.

## 5. FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

It is found that majority of the students i.e., 97.95 % read Kannada newspapers and most of them (65.51 %) read newspapers at hostels. 65.31 % students spend less than an hour a day for reading newspaper and only 2 students spend more than 2 hours. 44.90 % of students are self subscribers of the newspapers and the number of students who access to the newspapers in library is marginal i.e., 18.37 %. In this digital environment, almost all the students seem to be tech savvy, but 93.88 % of the students prefer print news papers and only 6 student read newspaper on internet.

The study shows that 79.59 % of students prefer education-related news other than entertainment, sports, etc., while at the same time it is found that 79.59 % read newspaper to obtain information for their career development. With regard to the contents of different parts of the paper, 53.06 % feel that editorial is more informative. Most of the users i.e., 67.35 % find morning is convenient time for reading newspapers and 77.55 % of the students feel that time is major constraint for reading newspapers. Majority of the respondents (63.27 %) agree that newspapers reading improve the language and communication skills. Further, 67.34 % and 59.18 % respondents feel that news papers and television are effective source of news, respectively.

On data analysis and opinion given by the respondents, some important suggestions have been made, which will help in promoting the newspaper reading habits among P.G. students of Karnatak University Dharwad.

- (a) University library should increase subscription of the newspapers and inspire the students to make use of newspapers in the library through user education programmes.
- (b) The awareness about the importance of newspaper reading and about sections of newspapers must be created among P.G. students which will help them to keep update with current happenings around the world.
- (c) Awareness has to be created on the use of online newspapers, which may ultimately helps for the cause of environmental protection.
- (d) With so many news portals available online, students must be encouraged to prefer news portals for getting instant news of their interest.

- (e) Majority of the students are not aware of news portals. Therefore libraries should promote the use of different news portals among library users by creating awareness through orientation programmes.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

As it is well known that, reading is an important activity in the process of learning, which can shape good personality, ideas, right thinking and brings change in attitude of individuals. News papers particularly are the prime conveyors of current information to the people. In spite of the availability of several other sources of news like books, magazines (Print media), radio, television channels, telephone, electronic media, etc. yet newspapers continued to dominate as the main channel of current information. Newspapers not only provide current news, they also contain thought-provoking and informative articles, features, editorial and sub-editorials, analysis and observations. In today's highly competitive world, newspapers can equip students with necessary information, knowledge and insights which will give them the much needed edge for being successful not only for competitive examinations or job interviews, but also in their professional and social life. Therefore, newspapers are essential for university students.

This study reveals that most of the P.G. students are in the habit of reading newspapers but still they are not aware of the advantage of online newspapers and news portals which can spontaneously update their knowledge by providing latest and nascent information. Therefore, the library professionals must create more awareness of such news sources and libraries must ensure that the students have access to wide variety of newspapers, so as to enable the students to read their preferred newspapers and enhance their knowledge base which can help them to be more productive in their academics and lead a responsible life in the society.

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