

Comparing Media Preferences: Internet Vs. Traditional News Media Among University Students In Mizoram

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Abstract:

Nowadays one of the most popular vehicles for fast and instant communication is internet. Easy availability and convenient accessibility are the prominent features of internet. People are getting updates on news very fast from internet and also have facilitated information sharing activities very quickly. Internet as well as traditional news media has been playing a prominent role in our changing society. The changing scenario of news media and the emergence of new technologies have resulted changes in the consumption pattern of traditional news media too. The main purpose of this paper is to understand the media preferences of internet and traditional news media (newspaper, television, radio for the study) by the University students in Mizoram. For the study survey method was adopted and the structured questionnaire was distributed among the respondents of 451 University students in Mizoram access internet and spent hours for many purposes. From the study, it is found that majority of the respondents preferred internet for accessing news than the traditional news media and also the time spent on internet news is more than the time spent on traditional news media (newspaper, television, radio).

Key Words: Media Preferences, Internet, Traditional News Media, Time Spent, University Students, Mizoram

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I. Introduction

The fast development of the new media technology has changed the scenario of news world. The rapid growths of on-line news sources raise many questions about the idea of future of traditional news media such as television, radio and print (Althaus and Tewksbury, 2000). There are many choices for the news consumers for news media either they prefer internet or traditional news medium. Among the people who consumed news media also prefer both traditional and internet news sources. Media has played a prominent role in the lives of people with the advancement of new technology. Apart from traditional media, internet has become one of the most influential sources of news (Chu and Chu, 2010). News becomes an important part in people's life. Most of the people access national and local news as well as international news from different news sources. Many of the young adults also get news from news websites, apps and social networking sites too. Now-a-days one can access the news very quickly and conveniently from the online sources. Though more attention is necessary on how various news media platforms have been used by the individuals in order to gratify their needs. Moreover, we can affirm that every news medium has its own unique characteristics to serve the society; also people have different choices in terms of news selections and so each medium may complement each other in order to satisfy their needs. The study area Mizoram state lies in the southernmost tip of north east India. Also known as land of highlanders (Mizo), flanked by two countries of Myanmar and Bangladesh, and surrounded by Manipur, Assam and Tripura, the higher educational institutes have a variety of students from various part of the country along with the majority students from the state. Altogether three higher educational institutions viz., Mizoram University, ICFAI University and Central Agricultural University offer various disciplines of study to the students. Due to the hilly terrain and poor connection, printed news takes longer than the average delivery period. Although, the infrastructure development is weak, the study area's literacy rate is 91.58% as per 2011 Census which is one of the highest in India. The study is an effort to examine the media consumption and pattern of consumption by young adults who are studying in these select higher educational institutions.

II. Review Of Literature

Mairaru et.al, (2019) also revealed that the time spent in watching television was more as compared to print media by the respondents. It also suggested that in India television and print are less consumed as people preferred more in web media. From the findings, it was found that respondents consumed internet for the news and entertainment purpose while television was mainly for escape from their daily routine work. Overall, the study suggested that among the respondents the web media became the most emerging preferred media. It was also found that most of the respondents favoured to use multiple media sources in order to get the information to satisfy their needs. Another study by Thilaka et al., (2019) examined that respondents' pattern of trying to get the news every few hours. It was also suggested that there was a changing pattern in the news consumption scenario. From the study, it was also revealed that news organizations' official websites became the reliable news sources for the respondents. The study also found that most of the respondents used Facebook for news. Dhriti and Smeet (2018) found that college students preferred internet for news. It was also revealed that respondents preferred internet because of easily accessible and consumed according to their convenient time. A study done by Casero-Ripollés (2012) examined that there was a declination of traditional media mainly newspaper with the development of social networking sites as a news medium. The study also emphasized that the news consumption pattern and the idea of news are changing among the young people. Sahoo (2018) finds that the students access news according to their convenient time from various sources like television, newspapers etc. From the survey it was revealed that the students spend less time in watching online television news.

Cauwenberge et al., (2010) examined that the traditional media platforms would not be replaced by the use of online news platforms. The study found that consumption of online news was enhanced by the television news consumption and vice versa. From the findings, it was confirmed that both traditional and online news platforms were used by the young people complementarily. Prasad (2009) also suggested the role of news presentation and nature of news with the development of new media technologies. Meenu (2008) highlighted the prominent role played by the news media in a changing society. She revealed that the information given by the news media is essential in the changing society. The people used mass media for various activities like seeking information, education and entertainment. Chan and Fang (2007) also studied the usage of internet and traditional media among the young people in Hong Kong. For the study, survey method was adopted by using self-administered questionnaire. The respondents were the 405 Chinese undergraduate students with age range from 15 to 24 in Hong Kong. From the study, it was found that among the young people internet played an important role in Hong Kong. The main purpose of using internet was for fun, music and also for information seeking activities. Magazines were mainly for shopping and entertainment activities. It was also suggested that respondents consumed television for the purposes of news and current affairs. Ahlers (2006) suggested that the shifting of offline news consumption to online news consumption happened in a very less number. It also found that there was no complete substitution of offline news consumption to online rather online news media works as a complementary to traditional news.

Nguyen and Western (2006) also suggested that the coexistence of traditional and new media would continue in the internet age. The study also found that the new media and traditional media were complementary each other. It also suggested that there would be no replacement (absolute displacement) of traditional media in the internet age. Another study by Dutta-Bergman (2004) found that the people search news information in a specific area from the different media sources which have the information in that particular area. The study suggested that there was complementarity between new media and conventional media in the areas like entertainment, sports, local news, politics, science and health, international, business and finance.

Objectives

To examine the media preferences among the internet and traditional news media in Mizoram

2. To study the time spent between the internet and traditional news media among the university students in Mizoram.

Hypotheses

For this study, the researcher set the following hypotheses:

H₁: The time spent on internet news is significantly different from the time spent on newspaper news.

H₂: The time spent on internet news is significantly different from the time spent on television news.

H₃: The time spent on internet news is significantly different from the time spent on radio news.

III. Methodology

A survey method was adopted for the present study. Data was collected by using structured questionnaire. Samples of 451 students were selected from the three Universities in Mizoram namely Mizoram University (MZU), Central Agricultural University (CAU), Mizoram and ICFAI University, Mizoram. A five

point Likert scale is adopted to measure the media preference and interest level of media and usage of news. Out of 451 students 247 were male respondents whereas 204 were female respondents and the collected primary data were analyzed using percentage, mean, rank and pair sample t test.

IV. Data Analysis And Interpretation

In terms of gender distribution in table 1, the study finds that the majority of respondents across all three universities are male. The MZU has the highest number of male respondents, followed by ICFAI and CAU. Female respondents are comparatively fewer, with CAU having the highest proportion of female respondents. Regarding age group distribution, it is found that a significant portion of respondents across all universities belong to the age group up to 24. ICFAI University has the highest proportion of respondents (79 respondents out of 88) up to 24 years old, followed by MZU and CAU. The proportion of respondents above 24 years old is notably lower in all universities, with MZU having the highest proportion. In terms of level of education, it is found that the majority of respondents are currently doing their postgraduate (PG) education. MZU has the highest number of respondents doing PG degree (155 out of 274), followed by CAU and ICFAI. There is a smaller proportion of respondents with undergraduate (UG) degrees (33.26%), and very few doing MPhil or PhD qualifications. Regarding household incomes, the majority of respondents belong to households with incomes between Rs. 10001/- to 15000/- per month. MZU has the highest proportion of respondents in this income bracket, followed by ICFAI and CAU. There is a relatively smaller proportion of respondents in the lower income brackets (less than Rs. 10000/- per month) compared to higher income brackets. A significant majority of respondents are from Mizoram (62.31%). MZU has a disproportionately high number of respondents from Mizoram compared to other states. In conclusion, the data suggests that there are variations in demographic characteristics such as gender, age, education level, household income, and state of origin among respondents across the three universities. These findings provide insights into the composition of the student population in each university and can be valuable for understanding and addressing the needs and preferences of different demographic groups within the university community.

Table no 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

University		MZU	CAU	ICFAI	Total
Gender	Male	161 (58.76)	39 (43.82)	47 (53.41)	247 (54.77)
	Female	113 (41.24)	50 (56.18)	41 (46.59)	204 (45.23)
Total		274 (100)	89 (100)	88 (100)	451 (100)
Age Group	Up to 24	208 (75.91)	54 (60.67)	79 (89.77)	341 (75.61)
	Above 24	66 (24.09)	35 (39.33)	9 (10.23)	110 (24.39)
Total		274 (100)	89 (100)	88 (100)	451 (100)
Education Level	UG	76 (27.74)	32 (35.96)	42 (47.73)	150 (33.26)
	PG	155 (56.57)	57 (64.04)	46 (52.27)	258 (57.21)
	MPhil	24 (8.76)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	24 (5.32)
	PhD	19 (6.93)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	19 (4.21)
Total		274 (100)	89 (100)	88 (100)	451 (100)
Household Income	Less than Rs. 5000	14 (5.11)	5 (5.62)	1 (1.14)	20 (4.43)
	Rs. 5001 to 10000	60 (21.90)	26 (29.21)	19 (21.59)	105 (23.28)
	Rs. 10001 to 15000	95 (34.67)	41 (46.07)	41 (46.59)	177 (39.25)
	Above Rs. 15000	105 (38.32)	17 (19.10)	27 (30.68)	149 (33.04)
Total		274 (100)	89 (100)	88 (100)	451 (100)
States	Mizoram	172 (62.77)	24 (26.97)	85 (96.59)	281 (62.31)
	Other States	102 (37.23)	65 (73.03)	3 (3.41)	170 (37.69)
Total		274 (100)	89 (100)	88 (100)	451 (100)

Source: Primary survey (figures in parenthesis represents percentage)

News Media Preferences

From table 2 to table 4 shows the media preferences, the interest level and the actual usage of various media forms for news by the university students in Mizoram. The table 2 indicates that majority of the respondents prefer internet sources for updating the latest information while news from television become the second preferred sources by the respondents. The least preferred news sources are the radio among the respondents.

Table no 2. Media Preferences for Latest Information

Media Forms	Mean Score	Rank
Newspapers	2.58	3
Television	2.70	2
Radio	1.41	4
Internet (News websites, Social Media sites)	3.31	1

Source: Primary survey

The interest level of media and an actual usage of news from various media were shown in table 3. Here, the majority of the respondents 81.6% used internet as news sources and the interest level is highest among the students while 41% respondents used television as news sources and also represents the second highest interest level for news. 37% respondents used newspaper as sources of news as the third highest interest level of news. Radio becomes the least interest level among the students representing 23.7% used for news sources. Internet news may have become the highest as the accessibility to news is most as most of the young adults own a smart phone with internet accessibility. So, convenience and connectivity along with ownership of a device may be the factors for the high responses.

Table no 3. Interest Level of Media and Usage for News

Media Consumed		Newspaper	TV	Radio	Internet
Interest Level Usage (Read/Watch/Listen/Access)	Mean	5.91	6.06	3.86	7.75
	%	37	41	23.7	81.6

Source: Primary survey

Further, questions regarding the replacement of traditional news media by the internet news sources among the respondents were probed. Table 4 indicates that majority of the respondents 57.6% feels about the replacement of traditional news media by the internet in the near future whereas 42.4% respondents don't feel about the replacement at all. The responses seem to direct that there are more chances of switching over to internet sources from the traditional media of news.

Table no 4. Replacement of traditional news media by internet news sources

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	260	57.6	57.6	57.6
No	191	42.4	42.4	100.0
Total	451	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary survey

Time spent on News Media

In order to examine the time spent on the news media consumption, table 5 displays the time spent on news by the respondents. From table 5, it is found that majority of the respondents (77.6%) spent more time on internet for accessing news than traditional sources while 22.4% of respondents disagree on spend more time on internet for news.

Table no 5. Time Spent on Internet and Traditional News Media Sources

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	350	77.6	77.6	77.6
No	101	22.4	22.4	100.0
Total	451	100.0	100.0	

Table 6 shows the pair t test between time spent on internet news and others three traditional media news and their statistical test results. From the tables below, *Pair 1* reveals that *pairttest* between the university students' time spent on internet news and the time spent on newspaper news. Here, the *p* value is less than 0.05, hence, the study accepts the research hypothesis H_1 . Therefore, it shows there was a significant difference in spending time on internet news versus newspapers news ($t_{450}=17.185$, $p<0.05$). It indicates that on average, the university students' spending time on internet news were 1.155 points higher than the student time spent on newspaper news (95% confidence interval [1.023, 1.287]).

To evaluate the university students' time spent on internet news and television news, the test was exposed in *Pair 2*. The test resulted *p* value is 0.000 ($p<0.05$) and the research hypothesis H_{22} is accepted. So,

there was a significant difference in time spent on internet news to news on television by the selected university students in Mizoram ($t_{450} = 11.826$, $p < 0.05$). It concludes that time spent on internet news were 0.798 points little higher than the time spent on television news by university students in Mizoram (95% confidence interval [1.273, 1.565]).

Table no 6. Paired Samples Test –Internet versus Traditional Sources

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the				
					Interval of the				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	TimeSpentINT - TimeSpentTV	1.155	1.428	.067	1.023	1.287	17.185	450	.000
Pair 2	TimeSpentINT - TimeSpentRadio	.798	1.433	.067	.666	.931	11.826	450	.000
Pair 3	TimeSpentINT - TimeSpentNewspaper	1.419	1.576	.074	1.273	1.565	19.121	450	.000

Furthermore, the test for the time spent on internet news and radio news by the university students were examined using paired t test. *Pair 3* test exposed that there is a difference in the time spent on news between internet and radio ($t_{450} = 19.121$, $p < 0.05$) and the spending time on internet news was 1.419 points higher than radio news by the student.

V. Findings

From the above examination of the empirical study, it was found that internet became the most preferred news sources among the respondents and the interest level was 81.6%. Television became the second preferred news sources and the interest level was 41%. The third preferred news sources were newspapers and the interest level was 37%. The least preferred news source was radio and the interest level was 23.7%. The study also found that majority of the respondents 57.6% felt that internet might replaced the traditional media whereas 42.4% respondents did not agree about the replacement of traditional media by internet. Regarding the time spent the study also figure out that majority of the respondents 77.6% spent more time on internet.

VI. Conclusion

Nowadays most of the people consumed internet for fast and instant news updates. With the coming of advanced technology, the usage pattern of the news media has been changed especially among younger people. Most of the students access internet and spent hours for many purposes. For this study, the researcher tries to find out the media preferences and time spent on internet and traditional news media by the university students. From the above study, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents preferred internet for accessing news than the traditional news media and also the time spent on internet news was more than the time spent on traditional news media (newspaper, television, radio). The study also finds that majority of the respondents feel that internet might replace the traditional news media in the near future and also their interest level in internet is highest for news as compare to the traditional news media. As the findings of the three research hypotheses were accepted, it also indicates towards a significant difference existing between the time spending behavior on internet news against the newspaper news, television news and radio news. However, the outcomes of the study were limited as the selection of respondents was from the university students in Mizoram only for the present study. The study may be further explored by including the respondents both the school and college students.

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