



Readership and Women: A Study to Analyze Newspaper Reading of Haryana's Women

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ABSTRACT

Print media is widely used and accepted in every section of society having the advantage of cheap cost and vast readership with availability in multiple languages. The present study was aimed to analyze the newspaper readership of adult women of Hisar city of Haryana state. Moreover, this study also aimed to measure the dependence of personal profile variables on newspaper readership of respondents. The findings revealed that a large number of respondents were of 40-50 yr (29.0%) in age had school high school/intermediate (28.0%) level of education. Equal numbers of respondents were employed and unemployed. Family occupation of majority of respondents was business (39.0%) had family monthly income more than 75,000/- (29.0%). Education (0.6) of the respondents was positively correlated with time spent on newspaper readership. Monthly income (0.72) and education (0.60) of the respondents were positively dependent on perceived importance of newspaper readership.

Key Words: Behaviour, Media, Newspaper, Print media, Readership, Women.

INTRODUCTION

Mass media is versatile tool which disseminates information, reveals facts, inform, persuades and influences the behaviour of its audience, readers and general public towards any sensitive issue. The worth of print media especially newspaper can be calculated from the fact that information printed on pages of newspapers is read and utilized by millions of its subscribers and readers spread all over the country. To update people about latest news regarding politics, sports, economics, entertainment, education, society and international affairs is main benefaction of newspaper. Newspapers also make sure that reader is interested and is well aware about the progress in critical fields of society like development, employment, education and economics. Along with important information viewpoints of experts as well as general people is printed in its pages and columns like editorial and

letter to editor in order to have general public's perspective about a happening in country or abroad.

It is important to assess the readership behaviour of women in the issues which are for women and about women. Such study will enable us to measure the behaviour as well as attitude of women towards such issues projected in media. Portray women should be proper and importance should be given on to publish the realistic problems faced by them, without which some wrong pictures of women will be portrayed. The companies busy with competition are using the faces and bodies of beautiful women to popularize their products. These producers always producing lots of products everyday and there is competition everywhere to become the best seller. For this they are using women in a cheap manner whether necessary or not (Roy, 2012). Media's role towards women is becoming the growing concern of the feminist writers, basically regarding

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participation, performance and portrayal of women. Because different circumstances relating to the media's role towards portraying the fair sex have opened a new angle by leaps and bounds to think precisely about it (Patowary, 2014).

Newspapers publish most of the women related articles on entertainment column as gossips. Even magazines have focused on sections of reading some personal gynecological problems of married women or personal love hick-ups of young girls not focusing on other aspects of women development like education, career development, gender sensitivity, women rights (Sharma, 2005). Different crimes against women covered by both 'The Times of India' and 'The Hindustan Times' revealed that the highest numbers of crimes reported were of sexual violations against women such as rape and molestation (54.90) followed by murders and missing bodies (16.60) and lastly other forms of assault (14.70) (Charles, 2019). According to Bathran and Govindaraju (2016) even though regional local media covers the cases of violence against women, they lack gender sensitivity and in-depth analysis of the causes of such crimes as they are often neglected in their editorials.

Without the welfare of the women the development of the society is not possible because distance between the media and women not only derives the women of their right to information but keeps them in the dark (Prasad, 2005). It was suggested the managements as well as the work force in the mass media should be sensitized about the women's issues and their coverage and can also prefer advocacy to create awareness among the public (Anita and Mohan, 2017). Time has come where shifting of focus from women for development to women in development is to be done, by removal of marginalization. By analyzing newspaper readership we can provide the information about the extent of information being given to the public (Singh, 2016). The study was undertaken to outline the respondents according personal profile, analyze the newspaper readership

of respondents according to time spent and perceived importance and dependence of personal profile variables on newspaper readership.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study had 100 randomly selected women as respondents from Hisar city of Haryana state. The data were collected with help of interview schedule and analyzed by statistical tools; Correlation was calculated to check the dependence of personal variables on newspaper readership of respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Personal Profile of Respondents

A large number of respondents were of 40-50 yr (29%) in age followed by 30-40 yr (26%), up-to 30 years (25%) and above 50 years (20%). Majority of respondents had school high school/intermediate (28%) level of education followed by graduate (27%), primary (25%) and post graduate (20%). Equal numbers of respondents were employed and unemployed. Family occupation of majority of respondents was business (39%) followed by farming (35%) and service (26%). Maximum number of respondents have family monthly income more than 75,000/- (29%) followed by 50,001-75,000/- (26%), 25,001-50,000/- (24%) and less than 25,000/- (21%).

Time spent in reading newspaper and its importance

Majority of respondents read for 46 min or above (31%) followed by 1-15min (30%) then 16-30 min (20%) and least is 30-45 min (19%). It was found that working women (8%) read for 46 min or more whereas this figure for non working women was 23 per cent indicating that working women remained busy in performing their official duties and thus got less time for newspaper reading compared to non working women. Newspapers are important source of information for majority of respondents closely followed by very important by most of the respondents. Majority of respondents (41%) perceive newspapers as important followed

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Table 1. Time spent by respondents for reading newspaper. (N= 100)

Category	Working women (%)	Non-working women (%)
Time spent		
1-15min	19	11
16-30min	13	7
30-45min	10	9
46min Or Above	8	23
Perceived Importance		
Very Important(3)	21	17
Important(2)	19	22
Not Important(1)	10	11

by very important (38%) and not important (21%). Similar finding were observed by Bhavya (2008) in the study of newspaper readership regarding issues of agricultural information which revealed that maximum number of respondents (52.22%) spent more time (>40 min).

Table 2. Correlation between socio-economic profile and time spent.

Independent variable	r- values
Age	-0.04
Education	0.80
Employment status	-0.10
Family occupation	0.05
Monthly income	0.08

Education (0.80) of the respondents was positively significantly dependent on time spent on newspaper readership. Age (-0.04) and employment status (-0.10) of the respondents were negatively co-related with the time spent on the newspaper readership. Likewise, monthly income (0.72) and education (0.60) of the respondents were positively significantly dependent on perceived importance of newspaper readership. Age (-0.27) of the respondents was negatively co-related with the time spent on the newspaper readership.

Majority of respondents (41%) perceive newspapers as important while nearly one fourth respondents (21%) perceived newspapers as not

important. Education was positively significantly dependent on time spent on newspaper readership. Age and employment status of the respondents were negatively co-related with the time spent on the newspaper readership.

Table 3. Correlation between socio-economic profile and perceived importance.

Independent variable	r- values
Age	-0.27
Education	0.60
Employment status	0.18
Family occupation	0.16
Monthly income	0.72

CONCLUSION

Time spent on newspaper readership was significantly dependent on education and negatively dependent on age of the respondents. It can be concluded that more educated respondents spend more time on reading and more the age lesser is the time spent on newspaper reading. Perceived importance of newspaper readership was positively significantly dependent on monthly income and education while negatively dependent on age and employment status of the respondents. It can be concluded that higher the income higher the readership behaviour. Higher the age lower is the time spent on newspaper reading and employment status.

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