

# The Role of Newspaper Reading on Awareness about Current Affairs and Academics of Undergraduate Students

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Received Feb 20, 2015

Accepted April 15, 2015

## ABSTRACT

The mass medium is a means whereby mass produced messages are transmitted to a large anonymous and heterogeneous masses of receivers. In a country like India media plays a vital role in creating people's awareness about national policies and programmes by providing information and education besides healthy entertainment. Print media which are regulated by Press Council of India, particularly newspapers are seen as an affordable means of informing public. The present paper deals with its important role of creating awareness about current affairs and academics of undergraduate students.

**Key words :** Awareness, Current Affairs and Academics.

The mass media of communication play a vital role in contemporary society, fact that is true for developed as well as developing countries. They illuminate the social, economic and political fabric of the nation and influence the shape or its pattern. In essence, the mass media are the tools or technologies that facilitate dissemination of information and entertainment to a vast number of consumers. "A mass medium" says Wilber Schramm, "is essentially a working group organized round some device for circulating the same message at about the same time to large numbers of people." Hence the mass medium is a means whereby mass produced messages are transmitted to a large

anonymous and heterogeneous masses of receivers.

In a country like India media plays a vital role in creating people's awareness about national policies and programmes by providing information and education besides healthy entertainment. Media has always played and is playing quite an important part in the life of an individual, especially newspaper. Due to the development in the field of media, it is so easy to know any of the happenings of any area in a few hours no matter wherever you are.

The mass media has four primary functions:- Information, Entertainment, Persuasion and Transmission of Culture. These functions are

seldom performed in ranging combinations. As we all know that in the present era media is one of the most important medium through which we get any kind of information about our surroundings. It helps people to be active partners in the nation building, information sector which includes Print media which is regulated by Press Council of India. Unlike television and radio which requires much more capital and licensing, establishment and registration of print media is fairly straightforward. As a result, newspapers are seen as an affordable means of informing public.

### DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

**Awareness:-** The term awareness means to make people conscious about a particular thing or to make people informed about a particular situation.

In this study the term awareness consists of the awareness about following dimensions:-

**Current affairs:-** Knowledge about important happenings of national and international importance across the world.

**Academics:-** Knowledge about studies and other things related to education.

**Undergraduate:-** According to Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Education, undergraduate means a student in higher education who is enrolled in degree-credit course work below the level of the bachelor's degree and who has normally not yet received a bachelor's degree.

### OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study and compare the general awareness of undergraduate students gained through newspaper reading in relation to their stream and gender.
- 2) To know and compare the status of undergraduate students regarding newspaper reading in relation to their stream and gender.
- 3) To study and compare the awareness about current affairs of undergraduate students gained through newspaper reading in relation to their stream and gender.
- 4) To study and compare the awareness about academics of undergraduate students gained through newspaper reading in relation to their stream and gender.

### HYPOTHESES

#### Hypotheses related to Objective No. 01

**Ho1.1** There is no significant difference in the general awareness of undergraduate Arts and Science students gained through newspaper reading.

**Ho1.2** There is no significant difference in the general awareness of undergraduate Science and Commerce students gained through newspaper reading.

**Ho1.3** There is no significant difference in the general awareness of undergraduate Commerce and Arts students gained through newspaper reading.

**Ho1.4** There is no significant difference in the general awareness of undergraduate boys and girls gained through newspaper reading.

#### **Hypotheses related to Objective No. 02**

**Ho2.1** There is no significant difference in the status of newspaper reading of undergraduate Arts and Science Students.

**Ho2.2** There is no significant difference in the status of newspaper reading of undergraduate Science and Commerce students.

**Ho2.3** There is no significant difference in the status of newspaper reading of undergraduate Commerce and Arts students.

**Ho2.4** There is no significant difference in the status of newspaper reading of undergraduate boys and girls.

#### **Hypotheses related to Objective No. 03**

**Ho3.1** There is no significant difference in the awareness about current affairs gained through newspaper reading of undergraduate Arts and Science students.

**Ho3.2** There is no significant difference in the awareness about current affairs gained through newspaper reading of undergraduate Science and Commerce students.

**Ho3.3** There is no significant difference in the awareness about current affairs gained through newspaper reading of undergraduate Commerce and Arts students.

**Ho3.4** There is no significant difference in the awareness about current affairs gained through newspaper reading of undergraduate boys and girls.

#### **Hypotheses related to Objective No. 04**

**Ho4.1** There is no significant difference in the awareness about academics gained through newspaper reading of undergraduate Arts and Science students.

**Ho4.2** There is no significant difference in the awareness about academics gained through newspaper reading of undergraduate Science and Commerce students.

**Ho4.3** There is no significant difference in the awareness about academics gained through newspaper reading of undergraduate Commerce and Arts students.

**Ho4.4** There is no significant difference in the awareness about academics gained through newspaper reading of undergraduate boys and girls.

#### **DELIMITATIONS**

- 1) The geographical area of this study is Lucknow city.
- 2) The present study deals with the undergraduate students of Lucknow University.
- 3) The present study deals with the undergraduate students of only three faculties- Arts, Science and Commerce.
- 4) No variable in the study has been controlled.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

The present research study focussed on the following variable. Independent variable of the study is newspaper reading while dependent variable of the study is General Awareness.

The sample of the present study consists of 20 boys and 20 girls each from the three streams Arts, Science and Commerce

respectively. Thus the total sample consists of 120 students of Lucknow University.

**INTERPRETATION, ANALYSIS AND DISUSSION**

**Objective No. 1:-** To study and compare the general awareness of undergraduate students gained through newspaper reading in relation to their stream and gender.

**Table 1.1**  
**Number of students from different streams**

	STREAM	No. OF STUDENT		TOTAL
		MALE	FEMALE	
1	Arts	20	20	40
2	Science	20	20	40
3	Commerce	20	20	40
TOTAL		60	60	120

According to the objective of the study a questionnaire was self constructed to check the general awareness among

undergraduate students of University of Lucknow gained through newspaper reading.

**Table No. 1.2**

**Significance of Difference in General Awareness Gained through Newspaper Reading of Undergraduate Students of Arts and Science Stream**

Sr. No.	Stream	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level of Significance
1	ARTS	40	26.5	1.8	2.5	Significant
2	SCIENCE	40	27.6	2.6		

The table shows that the Mean of Arts and Science student is 26.5 and 27.6 respectively. The SD of Arts and Science student is 1.8 and 2.6 respectively. After applying t-test, t-

critical ratio came out to be 2.5 for df 78 which is significant at 0.05 level. This means that general awareness of Science students is more than the students of Arts stream.

**Table No. 1.3****Significance of Difference in General Awareness Gained through Newspaper Reading of Undergraduate Students of Science and Commerce Stream**

Sr. No.	STREAM	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level of Significance
1	Science	40	27.6	2.6	3.02	Significant
2	Commerce	40	26.0	2.1		

The table shows that the Mean of Science and Commerce stream student is 27.6 and 26 respectively. The SD of Science and Commerce student is 2.6 and 2.1 respectively. After applying *t*-test, *t*-critical ratio came out

to be 3.02 for df 78 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. This means that the general awareness of Science stream students is more than that of Commerce stream students.

**Table No. 1.4****Significance of Difference in General Awareness Gained through Newspaper Reading of Undergraduate Students of Commerce and Arts Stream**

S.No.	STREAM	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level of Significance
1	COMMERCE	40	26.0	2.1	1.0	Not Significant
2	ARTS	40	26.5	1.8		

The table shows that Mean of Commerce and Arts stream student is 26 and 26.5 respectively. SD of Commerce and Arts stream student is 2.1 and 1.8 respectively. After applying *t*-test, *t*-critical ratio came out

to be 1.0 for df 78 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This means that there is no significant difference in the general awareness of Commerce and Arts stream students.

**Table No. 1.5****Significance of Difference in General Awareness Gained through Newspaper Reading of Undergraduate Students in relation to their Gender**

S.No.	GENDER	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level of Significance
1	BOYS	60	28.1	2.5	6.83	Significant
2	GIRLS	60	25.3	1.9		

The table shows that the Mean of boys and girls is 28.1 and 25.3 respectively. SD of boys and girls is 2.5 and 1.9 respectively. After applying *t*-test, *t*-critical

ratio came out to be 6.83 for df 118 which is significant at 0.05 level. This means that the general awareness of undergraduate boys is more than that of undergraduate girls.

**Objective No. 2:-** To know and compare the status of undergraduate students regarding newspaper reading in relation to their stream and gender.

**Table No. 1.6**

**Significance of Difference in Status of Newspaper Reading of Undergraduate Students of Arts and Science Stream.**

S. No.	STREAM	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level Of Significance
1	ARTS	40	4.8	1.2	1.15	Not Significant
2	SCIENCE	40	4.5	1.1		

The table shows that Mean of Arts and Science stream student is 4.8 and 4.5 respectively. SD of Arts and Science stream student is 1.2 and 1.1 respectively. After applying t-test, t-critical ratio came out to be 1.15 for df 78 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This means that there is no significant difference in the reading habit of Arts and Science stream students.

**Table No. 1.7**

**Significance of Difference in Status of Newspaper Reading of Undergraduate Students of Science and Commerce Stream.**

S. No.	STREAM	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level Of Significance
1	SCIENCE	40	4.5	1.1	0.77	Not Significant
2	COMMERCE	40	4.3	1.8		

The table shows that Mean of Science and Commerce stream student is 4.5 and 4.3 respectively. SD of Science and Commerce stream student is 1.1 and 1.8 respectively. After applying t-test, t-critical ratio came out to be 0.77 for df 78 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This means that there is no significant difference in the reading habit of Science and Commerce stream student.

**Table No. 1.8**

**Significance of Difference in Status of Newspaper Reading of Undergraduate Students of Commerce and Arts Stream.**

S. No.	Stream	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level Of Significance
1	Comm-erce	40	4.3	1.8	1.47	Not Significant
2	Arts	40	4.8	1.2		

The table shows that Mean of Commerce and Arts stream student is 4.3 and 4.8 respectively. SD of Commerce and Arts stream student is 1.8 and 1.2 respectively.

After applying *t*-test, *t*-critical ratio came out to be 1.47 for df 78 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This means that there is no

significant difference in newspaper reading habits of undergraduate students of Commerce and Arts stream.

**Table No. 1.9**

**Significance of Difference in Status of Newspaper Reading of Undergraduate Students in relation to their Gender.**

S. No.	Gender	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i> -test	Level Of Significance
1	BOYS	60	4.8	1.1	2.5	Significant
2	GIRLS	60	4.3	1.1		

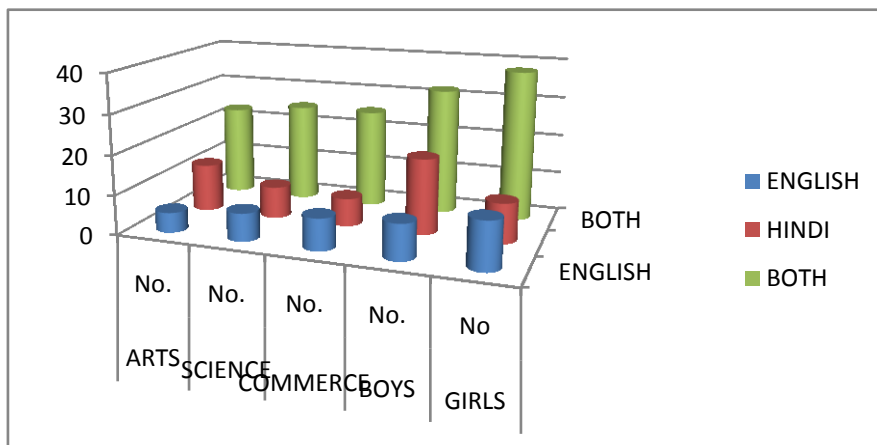
The table shows that Mean of boys and girls is 4.8 and 4.3 respectively. SD of boys and girls is 1.1 and 1.1 respectively. After applying *t*-test, *t*-critical ratio came out to be

2.5 for df 118 which is significant at 0.05 level. This means that the newspaper reading habit of undergraduate boys is better than that of undergraduate girls.

**Table No. 1.10**

**Language preference in reading newspaper among undergraduate students in relation to their stream and gender**

LANGUAGE	ARTS		SCIENCE		COMMERCE		BOYS		GIRLS	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
ENGLISH	5	12.5	7	17.5	8	20	9	15	12	20
HINDI	12	30	8	20	7	17.5	19	31.7	10	16.7
BOTH	23	57.5	25	62.5	25	62.5	32	53.3	38	63.3



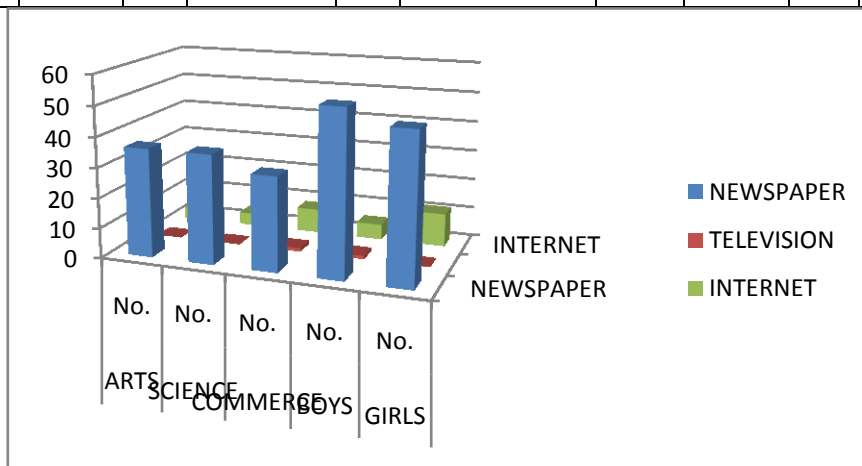
**Graph No. 1.1**

**Language preference in reading newspaper among undergraduate students in relation to their stream and gender**

**Table No. 1.11**

**Source of information about vacancies among undergraduate students in relation to their stream and gender**

SOURCE	ARTS		SCIENCE		COMMERCE		BOYS		GIRLS	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
NEWSPAPER	36	90	36	90	31	77.5	54	90	49	81.7
TELEVISION	0	0	0	0	1	2.5	1	1.7	0	0
INTERNET	4	10	4	10	8	20	5	8.3	11	18.3



**Graph No. 1.2**

**Source of information about vacancies among undergraduate students in relation to their stream and gender**

**Objective No. 3:-** To study and compare the awareness about current affairs of undergraduate students gained through newspaper reading in relation to their stream and gender.

**Table No. 1.12**

**Significance of Difference in Awareness about Current Affairs through Newspaper reading of Undergraduate Students of Arts and Science Stream**

S.No.	STREAM	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level of Significance
1	ARTS	40	6.4	3.0	0.16	Not Significant
2	SCIENCE	40	6.3	2.5		

The table shows that Mean of Arts and Science stream student is 6.4 and 6.3 respectively. SD of Arts and Science stream student is 3 and 2.5 respectively. After applying t-test, t-critical ratio came out to be

0.16 for df 78 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This means that there is no significant difference in the awareness about current affairs gained through newspaper reading in Arts and Science stream students.

**Table No. 1.13****Significance of Difference in Awareness about Current Affairs through Newspaper reading of Undergraduate Students of Science and Commerce Stream**

S.No.	STREAM	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level of Significance
1	SCIENCE	40	6.3	2.5	0.21	Not Significant
2	COMMERCE	40	6.2	1.6		

The table shows that Mean of Science and Commerce stream student is 6.3 and 6.2 respectively. SD of Science and Commerce stream student is 2.5 and 1.6 respectively. After applying *t*-test, *t*-critical ratio came out to be 0.21 for df 78 which is not significant at

0.05 level. This means that there is no significant difference in the awareness about current affairs gained through newspaper reading in undergraduate Science and Commerce stream students

**Table No. 1.14****Significance of Difference in Awareness about Current Affairs through Newspaper reading of Undergraduate Students of Commerce and Arts Stream**

S.No.	STREAM	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level of Significance
1	COMMERCE	40	6.2	1.6	0.37	Not Significant
2	ARTS	40	6.4	3.0		

The table shows that Mean of Commerce and Arts stream student is 6.2 and 6.4 respectively. SD of Commerce and Arts stream student is 1.6 and 3 respectively. After applying *t*-test, *t*-critical ratio came out to be 0.37 for df 78 which is not significant at 0.05

level. This means that there is no significant difference in the awareness about current affairs gained through newspaper reading in undergraduate Commerce and Arts stream students.

**Table No. 1.15****Significance of Difference in Awareness about Current Affairs through Newspaper reading of Undergraduate Students in relation to their Gender**

S.No.	GENDER	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level of Significance
1	BOYS	60	6.9	2.2	1.16	Not Significant
2	GIRLS	60	5.8	2.5		

The table shows that Mean of boys and girls is 6.9 and 5.8 respectively. SD of boys and girls is 2.2 and 2.5 respectively. After applying *t*-test, *t*-critical ratio came out to be 1.16 for df 118 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This

means that there is no significant difference in the awareness about current affairs gained through newspaper reading in undergraduate boys and girls.

**Objective No. 4:-** To study and compare the awareness about academics of undergraduate students gained through newspaper reading in relation to their stream and gender.

**Table No. 1.16**

**Significance of Difference in Awareness about Academics through Newspaper reading of Undergraduate Students of Arts and Science Stream**

S.No.	STREAM	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level of Significance
1	ARTS	40	6.0	2.6	1.07	Not Significant
2	SCIENCE	40	6.6	2.4		

The table shows that Mean of Arts and Science stream student is 6 and 6.6 respectively. SD of Arts and Commerce stream student is 2.6 and 2.4 respectively. After applying *t*-test, *t*-critical ratio came out to be 1.07 for df 78 which is not significant at

0.05 level. This means that there is no significant difference in the awareness about academics gained through newspaper reading in undergraduate Arts and Science stream students.

**Table No. 1.17**

**Significance of Difference in Awareness about Academics through Newspaper reading of Undergraduate Students of Science and Commerce Stream**

S.No.	STREAM	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level of Significance
1	SCIENCE	40	6.6	2.4	0.89	Not Significant
2	COMMERCE	40	6.1	2.6		

The table shows that Mean of Science and Commerce stream student is 6.6 and 6.1 respectively. SD of Science and Commerce stream student is 2.4 and 2.6 respectively. After applying *t*-test, *t*-critical ratio came out

to be 0.89 for df 78 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This means that there is no significant difference in awareness about academics in undergraduate students of Science and Commerce stream.

**Table No. 1.18**

**Significance of Difference in Awareness about Academics through Newspaper reading of Undergraduate Students of Commerce and Arts Stream**

S.No.	STREAM	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level of Significance
1	COMMERCE	40	6.1	2.6	0.17	Not Significant
2	ARTS	40	6.0	2.6		

The table shows that Mean of Commerce and Arts stream student is 6.1 and 6.0

respectively. SD of Commerce and Arts stream student is 2.6. After applying *t*-test, *t*-

critical ratio came out to be 0.17 for df 78 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This means that there is no significant difference

in the awareness about academics gained through newspaper reading in undergraduate Commerce and Arts stream students.

**Table No. 1.19**

**Significance of Difference in Awareness about Academics through Newspaper reading of Undergraduate Students in relation to their Gender**

S.No.	SEX	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Level of Significance
1	BOYS	60	6.8	2.6	2.79	Significant
2	GIRLS	60	5.6	2.1		

The table shows that Mean of boys and girls is 6.8 and 5.6 respectively. SD of boys and girls is 2.6 and 2.1 respectively. After applying *t*-test, *t*-critical ratio came out to be 2.79 for df 118 which is significant at 0.05 level. This means that the awareness about academics gained through newspaper reading is more in undergraduate boys than in undergraduate girl.

**CONCLUSION**

Through the findings following conclusions are reached:-

- 1) The general awareness of Science students is more than the students of Arts and Commerce stream whereas there is no significant difference in the general awareness of Commerce and Arts stream students. Also general awareness of boys is much more than that of girls in respect to newspaper reading.
- 2) General awareness of undergraduate Science stream students is good because they are more academically oriented. They have to keep themselves updated with latest development in the field of science and

technology and newspaper is an important medium which gives them information about latest trends.

- 3) There is no significant difference in the newspaper reading habits of Arts, Science and Commerce stream students. But there is significant difference in the newspaper reading habits of boys and girls as boys outperform more than girls.
- 4) There is no significant difference in the awareness about current affairs gained through newspaper reading among undergraduate Arts, Science and Commerce stream students and also between boys and girls.
- 5) Boys generally have more awareness about general issues as compared to girls because their temperament is different from girls. They prefer reading newspaper and knowing about what is happening around him.
- 6) Since undergraduate boys have good general awareness so their reading habit of newspaper is also very good as compared to undergraduate girls.

- 7) There is no significant difference in the awareness about academics gained through newspaper reading among undergraduate students of Arts, Science and Commerce stream. However awareness about academics of undergraduate boys is much more than the undergraduate girls.
- 8) Boys have more awareness about academics as compared to girls because boys are more career oriented and serious about future from young age. Thus they read newspaper column related to academics, guidance, vacancies etc.

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**When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us.**

**- Alexander Graham Bell.**