

Digital Media News Consumption among Youth

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Abstract

Digital media has become a major source of news consumption among youth due to its accessibility, speed, and interactivity. This study examines youth news consumption patterns and factors influencing their behavior. Using a descriptive research design, data were collected from 120 respondents through a structured questionnaire via Google Forms. Findings show that smartphones and social media are the preferred means of accessing news because of convenience and personalized content. However, traditional media, especially newspapers, are still considered more credible and trustworthy. The study concludes that digital and traditional media coexist, highlighting the importance of balancing fast news delivery with credibility and reliability.

Keywords: Digital Media, News Consumption and Youths.

Introduction

Digital technologies have transformed news consumption, especially among youth who increasingly depend on smartphones, social media, and online platforms instead of traditional media (Newman et al., 2023; Pew Research Center, 2021). Digital media offers speed, convenience, interactivity, and personalized content, encouraging active participation through sharing and engagement (boyd, 2014; Bucher, 2018). However, the growth of digital platforms has also increased challenges such as misinformation, fake news, and concerns regarding credibility and accountability (Vosoughi, Roy, & Aral, 2018; Marwick & Lewis, 2017). At the same time, traditional newspapers and television face declining audiences and financial pressures (Pew Research Center, 2021). This study examines youth news consumption patterns, platform preferences, trust in digital media, and the impact of digital platforms on traditional journalism and democratic communication.

Review of literature:

Bin Chen, Shuning Lu (2026) "In Punishment We Trust: Analyzing Characteristics and Credibility of Rumor- Debunking Messages on Chinese Social Media" The findings indicate that audiences view rumor- debunking communication with information about punishment as more believable. Communications from reputable and legitimate sources are more trusted than those from unofficial outlets. User's belief and acceptance of debunking facts are greatly increased by clear proof, a stern tone, and accountability cues.

Lilach Alon And et.al (2025) "Information practices and emotion regulation in wartime news consumption" The findings demonstrate the importance of institutional frameworks in guaranteeing

justice and accountability in decision-making procedures. The analysis's findings show that public trust in the legal system is enhanced by openness and adherence to established protocols. Additionally, the study concludes that stronger governance and compliance results from the efficient implementation of legal obligations.

Statement of the Problem

“Digital Media News Consumption among Youth”

Objectives of the Study

- To investigate patterns of digital news consumption among
- To determine the most popular digital platforms for news.
- To examine elements that influence news consuming behavior
- To assess the believability perception of digital news.
- To determine the impact of digital news consumption.

Research Methodology

This study uses a descriptive and purposive research design to understand Digital Consumption among Youth Media News. Purposive sampling was used to choose 120 respondents in total. A systematic questionnaire was used to collect primary data. To understand the results, the responses were tabulated and analyzed using digital tools, including **Google Forms and spreadsheets**, to identify trends and patterns.

Data Analysis:

Table 1: Respondents Age

Age	Respondents	Percentage
18-20	17	14.2
21-23	36	30
24-26	20	16.7
Above 26	47	39.2
Total	120	100

The table shows that above 26 age group has the highest percentage of responses (39.2%, N=47). This is followed by the 21-23 age group, which received (30%, N=36) of the responses, demonstrating a large representation of young people. The 24-26 age group accounts for (16.7%, N=20) of respondents, with the fewest (14.2%, N=17). The findings indicate that the study is dominated by more senior respondents, with fewer participants from younger age groups.

Table 2: Respondents Distribution by Gender

Gender	Respondents	Percentage
Male	64	53.3
Female	56	46.7
Others	00	00

Total	120	100
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According to the table, respondents are male accounting for (53.3%, N=64) of the sample. Female respondents total 56, accounting for (46.7%, N=56). The others category has no respondents 0%. This suggests that male respondents outnumber female respondents by a tiny margin. The difference is not significant, implying a well balanced gender distribution. As a result, the findings can be deemed reasonably representative of both male and female perspectives in the study.

Table 3: Respondents by educational qualification

Educational Background	Respondents	Percentage
PUC/12th	8	6.7
Undergraduate	32	26.7
Postgraduate	54	45
Professional Courses	19	15.8
Others (Specify)	7	5.8
Total	120	100

The show that table postgraduates make up the largest category of the 120 respondents, accounting for 54 of them or (45%, N=54). This demonstrates that a sizable proportion of the sample has completed a higher level of schooling. Undergraduates are the next largest group, with (26.7%, N=32), followed by those who have finished professional courses, with 19 (15.8%). PUC/12th has less respondents (6.7%, N=8), while others has (5.8%, N=7). The data show that the majority of respondents are highly educated, which may lead to more informed perspectives and a better compression of the issue being studied.

Table 4: Occupation Status

Occupational Status	Respondents	Percentage
Student	58	48.3
Employed	35	29.2
Self Employed	19	15.8
Other (Specify)	8	6.7
Total	120	100

The table demonstrates that students make up the bulk of the sample, accounting for (48.3%, N=58). this suggests that over half of the responders are students. Employed people make up the second-largest category, with (29.2% N=35), followed by self-employed people at (15.8%, N=19). a lesser share (6.7%, N=8) falls into the other group. The statistics indicate that the study is primarily dominated by students, with a reasonable representation of working and self-employ individuals. This variety of occupational backgrounds provides diverse perspective, yet the findings may be more representative of student opinions.

Table 5: Daily Internet Use

Internet Use	Respondents	Percentage
Less than 1 hour	23	19.2
1-3 hours	54	45
3-5 hours	24	20
More than 5 hours	19	15.8
Total	120	100

Show that table the majority of respondents (45%, N=54) spend 1-3 hours on the internet each day. This shows that the majority of respondents use the internet somewhat. Those who use the internet for 3-5 hours account for (20% N=24), while those who use it for less than an hour make up (19.2%, N=23). a lower Percentage of respondents (15.8%, N=19) spend more than 5 hours online each day. The majority of respondents use the internet moderately Percentage spending long periods of time online. This reflects the increasing relevance of the internet in everyday activities such as information access, communication, and entertainment.

Table 6: News consumption among respondents

News Consumption	Respondents	Percentage
Daily	65	54.2
Several times a week	27	22.5
Occasionally	17	14.2
Rarely	5	4.2
Not at all	6	5
Total	120	100

According to the data, a majority of respondents (54.2%) consume news on a daily basis, indicating that news forms a regular part of their routine. Additionally, 22.5% of respondents access news multiple times per week, reflecting consistent, though less frequent, engagement. A further 14.2% report consuming news occasionally, suggesting irregular exposure. Only a small proportion of respondents consume news rarely (4.2%) or not at all (5%), indicating minimal disengagement. The findings suggest that news consumption is widespread among respondents, with most individuals engaging with news either daily or on a weekly basis.

Table 7: Devices used to access news

Used for News	Respondents	Percentage
Mobile phone	100	83.3
Laptop	30	25
Tablet	14	11.7
Computers	18	15
Others	19	15.8
Total	120	100

The table shows that most prevalent device for news consumption is a cell phone, which (83.3%, N=100) of respondents use, followed by laptop is utilized by (25%, N=30) of respondents, making them the second most popular gadget. Computers account for (15%, N=18) of respondents, while (15.8%, N=19) of respondents use other devices. Tablets are the least used devices, with only (11.7%, N=14) percent. The results clearly shows that mobile phones are the primary and most convenient way to access news, reflecting the increasing reliance on smartphones for quick and easy access to information anytime and anywhere.

Table 8: Preferred news platforms by respondents

News Platform	Respondents	Percentage
Social media	79	65.8
Main Stream Media Digital Newspapers	33	27.5
News apps	26	21.7
News websites	29	24.2
News Aggregator	9	7.5
Other	22	18.3
Total	120	100

Table 8 presents the distribution of respondents based on their preferred news platforms. The data clearly indicates that **social media** is the most dominant platform, with **65.8% (N = 79)** of respondents relying on it for news consumption. This highlights a strong inclination toward easily accessible, real-time, and interactive digital sources. Mainstream media in its digital form continues to hold relevance, as **27.5% (N = 33)** of respondents prefer **digital newspapers**. Similarly, **news websites** are used by **24.2% (N = 29)** of respondents, reflecting sustained trust in established online news sources. **News apps** are preferred by **21.7% (N = 26)** of respondents, suggesting moderate usage, possibly due to personalized content delivery and notification features. The category labeled “Other” accounts for **18.3% (N = 22)**, indicating the presence of alternative or niche platforms. In contrast, **news aggregators** are the least utilized, with only **7.5% (N = 9)** of respondents, suggesting limited awareness or preference for such platforms among the sample. The data demonstrates a clear shift toward digital and mobile-friendly platforms, with social media leading as the primary source of news, while traditional digital formats like newspapers and websites continue to maintain a significant presence.

Table 9: Most popular Social Media platforms for news

Most Used Social Media	Respondents	Percentage
WgatsApp	25	20.8
Instagram	35	29.2
Facebook	11	9.2
Twitter(X)	11	9.2
YouTube	29	24.2
Other	9	7.5
Total	120	100

The data indicates that Instagram is the most preferred platform for news consumption, used by 29.2% of respondents. This highlights the increasing importance of visual and short-form content in the dissemination of news. YouTube ranks second at 24.2%, suggesting a strong preference for video-based news content among users. WhatsApp is used by 20.8% of respondents, indicating its continued relevance as a medium for sharing and accessing news through personal networks and group communication. In contrast, Facebook and X are each used by 9.2% of respondents, reflecting comparatively lower reliance on these platforms for news purposes. The “Other” category accounts for 7.5%. Overall, the findings reveal a clear inclination toward visually engaging and easily shareable platforms such as Instagram and YouTube, while traditional social networking platforms like Facebook and X are less frequently used for news consumption.

Table 10: Respondents preferred news types

Favorite Social Media News	Respondents	Percentage
Politics	59	49.2
Sports	54	45
Entertainment	58	48.3
Courts	27	22.5
Investigative Reports	38	31.7
Education	49	40.8
Science and Technology	40	33.3
Crime	24	20
Others	22	18.3

The data reveals that politics is the most preferred news category, with 49.2% of respondents showing interest, indicating strong engagement with current affairs and governance-related issues. Entertainment follows closely at 45%, highlighting a significant inclination toward leisure and lifestyle-oriented content. Education is preferred by 40.8% of respondents, suggesting a notable demand for informative and knowledge-based news. Meanwhile, science and technology (33.3%) and investigative reports (31.7%) attract moderate attention, reflecting an interest in analytical and in-depth content among a considerable segment of respondents. In comparison, court-related news (22.5%) and crime (20%) receive relatively lower preference. The remaining categories together account for 18.3%, indicating limited but diverse interests in other news types. Overall, the data demonstrates that respondents engage with a balanced mix of serious and entertainment-oriented news content.

Table 11: Reasons to prefer digital media

Preferring Digital Media:	Respondents	Percentage
Fast updates	59	49.2
Easy access	29	24.2
Free of cost	13	10.8
Variety of content	13	10.8
Other	6	5
Total	120	100

The table shows that 49.2% of respondents favor digital media for its fast updates. This demonstrates that immediacy and real-time knowledge are extremely valuable. Easy access is the second most important reason, accounting for 24.2%, emphasizing the simplicity of accessing news at any time and from anywhere. Both free and variety of material are chosen by 10.8% of respondents, indicating that affordability and numerous content possibilities have a role, albeit to a smaller amount. A tiny Percentage (5%) falls into other categories.

The evidence reveals that speed and convenience are the most important variables driving the preference for digital media, with cost and content variety having a small impact.

Table 12: Time spent on digital news daily

Time Spent	Respondents	Percentage
Less than 30 minutes	47	39.2
30-60 minutes	46	38.3
1-2 hours	15	12.5
More than 2 hours	12	10
Total	120	100

According to the table, the majority of respondents (39.2%) spend less than 30 minutes each day reading digital news. This suggests that many respondents favor frequent updates over lengthy news coverage. A roughly identical proportion, 38.3%, spend 30-60 minutes, indicating that a sizable proportion of respondents interact moderately with digital news. A lower Percentage, 12.5%, spends 1-2 hours per day on digital news, with only 10% spending more than 2 hours.

Table 13: Perceived reliability of digital news

Reliability	Respondents	Percentage
Very reliable	29	24.2
reliable	39	32.5
Neutral	44	36.7
Unreliable	2	1.7
Very Unreliable	6	5
Total	120	100

The data indicates that a majority of respondents (36.7%, N = 44) hold a **neutral opinion** regarding the reliability of digital news, suggesting uncertainty or mixed perceptions about its credibility. A considerable proportion of respondents perceive digital news as **reliable** (32.5%, N = 39) and **very reliable** (24.2%, N = 29), reflecting a substantial level of trust in digital news platforms. In contrast, only a small percentage view digital news negatively, with 1.7% (N = 2) considering it **unreliable** and 5% (N = 6) rating it as **very unreliable**. This indicates that distrust toward digital news exists but remains relatively limited.

Table 14: News Verification practices prior to sharing

News Verifying	Respondents	Percentage
Always	60	50
Sometimes	41	34.2
Rarely	15	12.5
Never	4	3.3
Total	120	100

The data shows that **50% (N = 60)** of respondents **always verify news** before sharing it, indicating a strong sense of responsibility and awareness regarding misinformation. A significant proportion, **34.2% (N = 41)**, **occasionally verify** news, suggesting that although they are cautious, their verification practices are not consistent. A smaller segment of respondents demonstrates limited verification behavior, with **12.5% (N = 15)** **rarely checking** news and **3.3% (N = 4)** **never verifying** information before sharing it.

Table 15: The most trusted source of news

Trusted Source	Respondents	Percentage
Digital Media	51	42.5
Television	33	27.5
Newspaper	67	55.8
Radio	13	10.8

The table demonstrates that newspapers are the most trusted source of news, with (55.8% N=67) of respondent believes in them. This suggests that traditional print media continues to have a high level of credibility among respondents. Digital media is trusted by (42.5% N=51) of respondents, indicating that online channels are acquiring significant confidence, albeit not as much as newspapers. (27.5% N=33) of people trust television, indicating that they have modest faith in broadcast media. Meanwhile, radio is the least trusted source, at (10.8%. N=13)

Table 16: Respondents experience with fake news

Fake News	Respondents	Percentage
Yes, frequently	40	33.3
Yes, sometimes	46	38.3
Rarely	22	18.3
Never	12	10
Total	120	100

The table indicates that a majority of respondents have encountered fake news. The largest proportion, **38.3%**, report encountering fake news **occasionally**, followed by **33.3% (N = 40)** who experience it **regularly**, suggesting that misinformation is widespread among respondents. A smaller proportion, **18.3% (N = 22)**, report that they **rarely** come across fake news, while only **10%** state that they **never** encounter it.

Table 17: The impact of digital news on opinions and Decisions.

Opinions	Respondents	Percentage
Highly influenced	41	34.2
Moderately influenced	53	44.2
Slightly influenced	16	13.3
Not influenced	10	8.3
Total	120	100

The table indicates that digital news exerts a noticeable influence on respondents' opinions and decision-making. The largest proportion, **44.2% (N = 53)**, report being **moderately influenced**, suggesting that digital news plays a meaningful role in shaping perceptions for many individuals. A substantial segment, **34.2% (N = 41)**, indicate they are **highly influenced**, highlighting the strong impact of digital news on a considerable number of respondents. In contrast, **13.3% (N = 16)** report being **slightly influenced**, while only **8.3% (N = 10)** state that they are **not influenced at all**. The findings demonstrate that digital news significantly affects respondents' thinking and decision-making, with the majority experiencing at least some level of influence.

Conclusion:

The study shows that digital media strongly influences news consumption, with mobile phones and social media becoming primary sources due to speed and accessibility. Traditional media still retains greater credibility and trust. Respondents actively engage with news but face challenges like misinformation and fake news. Overall, digital and traditional media coexist complementarily, balancing accessibility, engagement, credibility, and reliability in modern news consumption.

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