

Media Exposure of Journalism Students from Kerala & Karnataka: A Comparative Study

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masscomhod@uoc.ac.in

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Meljo Thomas

Research Scholar, Journalism & Mass Communication, University of Calicut, Kerala, India

Sam S.

Research Scholar, Journalism & Mass Communication, University of Calicut, Kerala, India

Muhammadali Nellyullathil

Dean, Journalism & Mass Communication, University of Calicut, Kerala, India

Abstract

Media exposure is always a matter of research especially the effect of media like TV on children and other specialized audience. How the future journalists or journalism students exposure to media, which medium they depend the most, what are their guiding principles, and has their media exposure influenced by their state identity? Examining these questions the researcher observed that there is notable difference between media students from Karnataka and Kerala in terms of their media exposure, news value preference and media reliability.

Keywords

journalism education, media students, media habits, media credibility

Introduction

Journalism field is getting professionalized all over the world as well as in India. Professional education in the field is offered by almost all the major Central and State universities in the country as UG and PG courses. Professional education is an essential factor in the professionalization process of the field since it accomplishes 'socialization into the profession' (Mensing, 2011). But professional education alone cannot predict the level of professionalization in journalism. Still, more students who are interested in journalism tend to do their graduation or post graduation in the same since the specialized courses in the country increase these days.

How the students of journalism treat the role of different mass media such as Newspaper, Television and Internet is a question of relevance. Which medium is most reliable and to which journalism student exposure the most are also matters of concern. Journalism students' opinion regarding this is supposed to be grounded on their own evaluation shaped in classrooms with the additional knowledge of their teachers.

This paper is an attempt to evaluate the media exposure of media students enrolled in the universities in Kerala and Karnataka, two neighboring states. Culture and literacy rate of these states are different to a great extent. Kerala holds the prime position in India in terms of literacy whereas Karnataka stands at eleventh in the literacy rate table of states in the country.

Literature review

Studies seeking media exposure of media students are difficult to find and there is no such study in the collection of the researcher so far. Literatures reviewed below are studies on journalism students other than their media exposure in different parts of the world.

The Pre-Socialization of Future Journalists by Claudia Mellado, FolkerHanusch, María Luisa Humanes, Sergio Roses, Fábio Pereira, LyubaYez, Salvador De León, Mireya Márquez, Federico Subervi & Vinzenz Wyss (2013) was an initiation to compare and analyse pre-professional cultures in journalism in different countries by surveying journalism students from Australia, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States. Generally, the students rejected a royal approach and favor a citizen-oriented role though there were minute variations at the country level. "Brazilian and Chilean students believe in the citizen-oriented and watchdog roles, whereas their counterparts in Australia, Switzerland, and the United States favor the consumer-oriented approach to a greater extent. Mexican and Spanish students, on the other hand, while supporting the citizen-oriented role, reject the loyal role comparatively less than the rest of the countries" (Claudia Mellado, 2013).

Deb Wenger and Lynn C. Owens surveyed business editors at the U. S daily newspapers to know their stand on the progression in the training of journalism students for the business news coverage and reported the findings under the title *Most Business Editors Find Journalism Graduates Still Unprepared*. As the title indicates, the researchers found that most of the editors at the national dailies held the view that the journalism students were not prepared enough to cover business news. They observed that specialized skills required for business journalism were often not taught at universities (Mary Jane Pardue, 2013).

The Formation of a Professional Identity by Gunnar Nygren & Karin Stigbrand is a result of a survey done among journalism students from Poland, Russia, Sweden, Estonia and Finland. The study analyzed the similarities and differences

of journalism students on the basis of their motives to become journalists, competences and character traits, ideals and values, and relations to other professional areas such as PR and politics. The researchers concluded that it is not possible to talk about a single and similar professional identity even in the wake of globalization. Still, there are hybrid forms of professional identities that combine some universal journalistic values with cultural heritage and social/political conditions of different countries (Gunnar Nygren & Karin Stigbrand , 2013).

An Examination of Job Skills Required by Top U.S. Broadcast News Companies and Potential Impact on Journalism Curricula by Deb Wenger and Lynn C. Owens observed that multimedia skills like the ability to post content to the web, to write for the web, to shoot video and still photos and to work within the mobile and social media spaces are essential for journalism students of the day who seek job in multimedia industry. Hence, the educators must be skilled enough to cope with the situation and should simulate deadline pressure in assignments given to the students aiming at the media industry (Deb Wenger & Lynn C. Owens, 2013).

Benjamin H. Detenber, Mark Cenite, Shelly Malik and Rachel L. Neo in their study titled *Examining Education and Newsroom Work Experience as Predictors of Communication Students' Perceptions of Journalism Ethics* sought the education and work experience in newsrooms as predictors of ethical perceptions among 826 communication undergraduates at a university in Singapore. They reached at the conclusion that education was not a significant predictor in relation with the participants' ethical principles but ethical ideologies were. On the other hand, work experience in newsrooms was associated with perceived justifiability of using contentious news-gathering methods. It threw light on journalism in the way it is perceived and practiced in the country (Benjamin H. Detenber, Mark Cenite, Shelly Malik & Rachel L. Neo, 2012).

Gunn BjØrnsen, Jan Fredrik Hovden & Rune Ottosen examined Norwegian journalism students' views about their profession and education at different phases in their career between 2000 and 2004 and summarized the findings under the title *Journalists in the Making*. It was to recognize attitudinal difference in professional values before and after their graduation in journalism. They found that there is no significant change in the attitude and reported a decline in classical journalistic professional idealism after entering the newsroom (Gunn BjØrnsen , Jan Fredrik Hovden & Rune Ottosen, 2007).

Research questions

This study sought answers to the following questions:

Research question 1: How the journalism students' exposure to Newspaper, Radio, TV and Internet in Kerala and Karnataka are related?

Research question 2: How the news value preference of journalism students from Kerala and Karnataka are related?

Research question 3: How the perceived media reliability of journalism students on Newspaper, Radio, TV and Internet are related?

Method

Exposure to media by journalism students plays an important role in their 'professional socialization'. It helps the future journalists to analyze the field and to choose a medium that suits their skills and attitude (Deb Wenger & Lynn C. Owens, 2013).

A survey was conducted among journalism students enrolled for graduation and post graduation in ten universities spread over Kerala and Karnataka. Using a questionnaire consisting 12 questions as a tool, the study surveyed 187 graduate and post graduate media students.

Students from five Universities located at different geographical area of Karnataka state are included in the sample. Mysore University from south, Karnatak University from north, Gulburga University from east, Manglore University from West and Women's University. Karnataka State Women's University is selected for its unique nature for nurturing women journalists. Out of one hundred questionnaires distributed among the students 91 were collected duly filled.

Media students from five Universities, namely Kerala, Calicut, MG, Kannur and Malayalam Universities from Kerala were selected for the study. PG Students and Research Scholars from University Departments and UG students from affiliated colleges were taken as sample. Hundred Questionnaires were distributed and 96 were collected duly filled.

Results

The researcher analysed 187 questionnaires duly filled by University students from Kerala and Karnataka and the results shed light on the media exposure pattern of media students.

Media exposure

Approximately, one fourth of the students (27%) preferred to read more than two news papers while 41 % preferred to watch television daily for one to two hours. At the same time, 74% listened radio but the exposure is restricted to below one hour a day. On the other hand, 33% of students use internet for one to two hours a day.

Table 1: Number of newspaper read daily by the students

Name of State	Number of newspaper read daily				Total
	Do not Read	One Newspaper	Two Newspapers	More than 3	
Karnataka	22 (11.8)	38 (20.3)	12 (6.4)	19 (10.2)	91 (48.7)
Kerala	37 (19.8)	38 (20.3)	20 (10.7)	1 (0.5)	96 (51.3)
Total	59 (31.6)	76 (40.6)	32 (17.1)	20 (10.7)	187 (100)

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

The first ever mass medium, the news paper is losing its readers with the emergence of new media. The present study reveals that about 31.6% of the journalism students in Karnataka and Kerala not reading even a newspaper a day. It is the second majority of the population after those who read one paper daily. It is also noticeable that students from Kerala, the most literate state in India lead the trend. Still, 10.7% of the journalism students spend time to read 3 or more newspapers daily, in which Kanataka students take vast majority in the category with 10.2%.

Table 2: Time spend for watching TV by the students

Name of State	Time spend for watching TV				Total
	Do not Watch	Less than One hour	1-2 hrs	3 hrs and more	
Karnataka	3 (1.6)	27 (14.4)	43 (23)	18 (9.6)	91 (48.7)
Kerala	0	36 (19.3)	35 (18.7)	25 (13.4)	96 (51.3)
Total	3 (1.6)	63(33.7)	78 (41.7)	43 (23)	187 (100)

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Television is the mass medium to which media student exposures the second most (98.4%). All the students from Kerala exposure to the medium whereas a small group (1.6%) of the Karnataka students stay away from the medium, for unknown reason as far as the survey is concerned. A simple majority of the journalism students (64.7%) exposure to the media for more than an hour.

Table 3: Time spend for listening Radio by the students

Name of State	Time spend for listening Radio				Total
	Do not Listen	Less than One hour	1-2 hrs	3 hrs and more	
Karnataka	5 (2.7)	63 (33.7)	15 (8)	8 (4.3)	91 (48.7)
Kerala	5 (2.7)	76 (40.6)	10 (5.3)	5 (2.7)	96 (51.3)
Total	10 (5.3)	139 (74.3)	25 (13.4)	13 (7)	187 (100)

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Radio remains as one of the popular media and most of the journalism students (94.7%) exposure to the medium today. Its listeners constitute even bigger population than the newspaper readers (68.4%) in size. At the same time most of the radio listeners (74.3%) exposure to the medium less than an hour a day. Radio listeners from Karnataka who listen to the medium more than one hour outnumber their counterparts in Kerala.

Table 4: Time spend for surfing Internet by the students

Name of State	Time spend for surfing Internet				Total
	Do not Surf	Less than One hour	1-2 hrs	3 hrs and more	
Karnataka	1 (0.5)	29 (15.5)	30 (16)	31 (16.6)	91 (48.7)
Kerala	0	43 (23)	32 (17.1)	21 (11.2)	96 (51.3)
Total	1 (0.5)	72 (38.5)	62 (33.2)	52 (27.8)	187 (100)

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

It is to internet that journalism student exposure the most (99.5%). Majority (61%) of the students use the internet more than one hour a day. It is noticeable that Karnataka students who use the internet more than 3 hour outnumber their counterparts in Kerala. Yet, Kerala students hold Zen percent internet exposure, where Karnataka students report an exception.

Medium reliability

Table 5: Medium reliability by the students

Name of State	Reliability of Medium				Total
	Newspaper	Radio	Television	Internet	
Karnataka	20 (10.7)	12 (6.4)	30 (16)	29 (15.5)	91 (48.7)
Kerala	56 (29.9)	2 (1.1)	24 (12.8)	14 (7.5)	96 (51.3)
Total	76 (40.6)	14 (7.5)	54 (28.9)	43 (23)	187 (100)

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

One third of the Karnataka students opined that Television is the most reliable medium whereas more than half of Kerala students recognize News Paper as the most reliable medium. Students from both states also differ in terms of their selection of most reliable medium. Second majority of Karnataka students backed internet as the most reliable medium whereas their counterparts in Kerala backed Television. In general, News paper got majority votes for becoming the most reliable medium.

Guiding principles

Table 5: Preferred News Value by the students

Name of State	News Values				Total
	Objectivity	Credibility	Accuracy	Interpretation	
Karnataka	21 (11.2)	21 (11.2)	35 (18.7)	14 (7.5)	91 (48.7)
Kerala	16 (8.6)	34 (18.2)	37 (19.8)	9 (4.8)	96 (51.3)
Total	37 (19.8)	55 (29.4)	72 (38.5)	23 (12.3)	187 (100)

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Majority of journalism students (38.5%) found 'Accuracy' as the most demanding news value which is followed by 'Credibility' (29.4%). 'Interpretation' is the least preferred news value (12.3%). Though both groups found 'accuracy' as most preferred news value, Karnataka students placed credibility and objectivity at the same level when Kerala students preferred credibility over objectivity.

Discussion and conclusion

The present study lights at an area where research is rare. Some of the interesting findings of the study are discussed. The first ever mass medium, the news paper is losing its readers with the emergence of new media. It is shocking to find that one third of the journalism students in Karnataka and Kerala not reading even a newspaper a day.

It is not surprising to know that Television is the mass medium to which media students exposure the second most. All the students from Kerala exposure to the medium whereas a small group of Karnataka students ignored the medium, for unknown reason as far as the survey is concerned.

Radio might have suffered a major setback in the last decades of 20th century. The study revealed that Radio regained its popularity and most of the journalism students exposure to the medium today. Its listeners constitute even bigger population than the newspaper readers in size.

The advent of new media made a drastic change in the field of journalism as a whole. Today, it is to internet that journalism student exposure the most. Majority of the students use the internet more than one hour a day.

In terms of reliability existing notions are questioned. Though News paper got majority votes for becoming the most reliable medium, Karnataka students in particular consider TV as the most reliable one. Second majority of Karnataka students backed internet as the most reliable medium whereas their counterparts in Kerala backed Television.

News value preferences by both Kerala and Karnataka are not much different. Majority of journalism students found 'Accuracy' as the most recommended news value among journalism student which is followed by 'Credibility'. 'Interpretation' is least preferred.

This study revealed that there is notable difference between media students from Karnataka and Kerala in terms of media exposure. The reasons are not analysed. Yet, it points at the disparity in literacy rate and cultural and historical differences. Future research may explore the grounds on which media exposure of students from both states are developed. Since this study identified some similarities and dissimilarities held by Karnataka and Kerala journalism students, it helps to place directions for further comparative studies in the area in a wide context.

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