

HABIT OF READING NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES OF KHULNA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY

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KUS-03/15-070403

Manuscript received: April 07, 2003

accepted: June 29, 2004

Abstract: In the age of information, it is difficult to find an educated person who does not read newspapers and magazines. The university students are not out of them. They are familiar as conscious citizen of a country. This consciousness is a result of their reading habits. Reading habit of newspapers and magazines helps them to acquire knowledge side by side prescribed syllabus, which necessary to build up their career also. Generally university students get opportunity of reading newspapers and magazines at the library and residential halls. This paper attempts to know the habit of reading newspapers and magazines of Khulna University students.

Key Terms: Reading habit, Newspaper, Magazine

Introduction:

Information is the most valuable resource in the present world (Jogajog, 2001). And mass media is regarded as the fourth estate (Majumdar, 2003). Newspaper is one of the important mass media to disseminate information. It is considered to be an integral part of human and social life (Uddin, 1980). It plays an important role to know the society, history, culture and what not of a country. So, it is an influential factor to the educated and conscious people of a country.

There are now as many as 218 daily newspapers and about 251 journals, magazines and periodicals in the country representing various shades of opinion and views of a wide spectrum of the society (Khan, 1998). We know that university students are conscious citizens of the country. They are almost invariably more responsive to political trends and social change than any other group in the population. (Zaman, 1981). They need a long process reaching this stage of their life. This consciousness is a result of their education and reading habits. Initially, the reading habit of a student starts from the family, school and college life. Then he gets the opportunity to exercise the habit more precisely when he comes to the higher educational institution like university. Here they have to read more books, journals, magazines, periodicals, and newspapers side by side prescribed syllabus. Newspapers and magazines help them acquire knowledge. The present study has been conducted to assess the habit of reading newspapers and magazines of the Khulna University students.

Materials and methods

Method: In the present study social survey method has been used. For the selection of the respondents two students have been selected from each class of honours and masters level available in the concerned discipline. Again, random sampling procedure has been used to identify the above mentioned two students of each class. Through this process, total 124 students from different disciplines have been selected for the study. To collect the relevant data for the study, structured questionnaire has been prepared. And collected data have been analyzed and interpreted in the form of simple table and statistics. It should be mentioned here that this is a primary data based study. And relevant data have been collected from the students during November -December, 2002.

Study locale: Khulna University is one of the important higher educational institutions in the southwestern region of the country. It is situated in the north side of Khulna-Satkhira road, 3 km from the city of Khulna. The University was established on 4 January 1987(KU Diary, 2002). There are 16 disciplines under 5 schools at Khulna University. None has been graduated from 5 disciplines as yet. Sociology, the latest discipline launched its academic activities in 2003. Classes of the first batch of the discipline will be started soon. So, at this moment the students of the discipline are not available in the university. Of the rest of the disciplines, majority has not yet opened master's course.

At present the total number of the students is 3173 including 47 foreign students in 16 disciplines under five schools (KU Diary, 2002). Besides, 238 teachers and 305 officials are working in different disciplines and in the administrative jobs of the university (KU Diary, 2002). By this time, three residential halls have been built including one for female students. The medium of instruction in this university is English. Here the students get opportunity of reading both Bangla and English newspapers. The university central library subscribes to two English, five Bangla Newspapers as well as few magazines. Both the English newspapers are national, whereas among Bangla newspapers two are national and the rest three are local. Different types of newspapers and magazines have also been kept in three residential halls.

Results and Discussion

Sex and Religion: There are 84 male students and 40 female students among the 124 students under the study. Of them, 96 students are Muslims and 28 students are Hindus. Table-1 shows the distribution of the students by their sex and religion:

Table 1. Sex and Religion of the Students

Sex	Religion		Total	%
	Muslim	Hindu		
Male	66	18	84	67.74
Female	30	10	40	32.26
Total	96	28	124	100.00

Reading Habit: The pattern of reading newspaper and magazine of all the students is not the same. Of the 124 students, 96 read newspaper regularly while 28 students read irregularly. Therefore it may be said that majority of the students under the present study read newspaper and magazine regularly.

Accommodation System: To conduct the study at first the emphasis was given on the accommodation facility of the students. The accommodation is a great problem for the students of the university and is more acute here than other universities of the country. It has been previously mentioned that there are only three residential halls for the students Khulna university among which two are for male students and one for female students. Insufficient accommodation capacity in the halls compels many students to reside outside the university campus. The students as distributed by their accommodation system are given below:

Table 2. Accommodation System of the Students

Type of Residence	Student		Total	%
	Male	Female		
Hall	56	30	86	69.35
Mess	12	00	12	09.65
Own/ Relative's House	16	10	26	21.00
Total	84	40	124	100.00

The study reveals that among the 124 students majority i. e. 69.35% live in the residential halls, 21% students in their own or at relative's house, while the rest 9.7% students reside in different messes. The students who live at their own house are mostly local people of Khulna. It is noted that Majority of the students (80%) of Khulna University are the inhabitants of Khulna division. The majority of the female students live in the university hall. The female students do not want to reside outside of university campus for security problems. They who live outside the campus live either at their own home or at relative's houses.

Place of Reading: Newspapers and magazines can be read at anywhere at any time. The study indicates that the students read newspapers and magazines at the university central library, halls, messes, bookshops, medicine shops etc. They also read newspaper sitting in different places such as, tea stalls, photostat's shops, grocery shops and at home. Table-3 shows the distribution of the students by the place of reading newspapers and magazines.

Table 3. Place of Reading Newspapers and Magazines

Place	Sex		Total	%
	Male	Female		
Hall	14	28	42	33.87
Library	34	00	34	27.42
House	06	06	12	09.68
Mess	10	00	10	08.70
House + Library	10	00	10	08.70
Mess + Library	06	04	10	08.70
Hall + Library	06	00	06	04.83
Total	84	38	134	100.00

Types of Newspapers and Magazines: Generally, two types of newspapers, namely national and local, published in our country. Both national and local newspapers are preserved in the central library and different halls of the university. It is revealed from the study that 42% students read only national newspapers while 58% students read both national and local newspapers. So, it may be said that majority of

the students read national newspapers. The main reason behind it is that usually local newspaper emphasis more on local issues than national ones. But the national newspapers cover both national and local issues with better treatment. Another major reason behind preferring national newspaper is its editorial and sub-editorial comments by eminent writers on national and international issues. Following is the distribution of the students by the type of newspapers they read.

Table 4. Type of newspaper they read

Type of Newspaper	Male	Female	Total	%
National	08	44	52	42.00
Local + National	32	40	72	58.00
Total	40	84	124	100.00

Medium of Newspaper: All the students under the study do not read of the same language newspapers. Some students read both Bangla and English newspapers. On the other hand, many students do not read English newspaper at all. It has been mentioned earlier that the medium of instruction at the khulna university is English. But the study reveals that 54.76% students read Bangla newspapers and the rest 45.28% students read both Bangla and English newspapers. Majority of the students shows their interest in reading Bangla newspaper because they feel it easy to read the newspaper in their mother language.

Name of the Newspapers: Because of socio-politico-economic factors and individual choice different students read different types of newspapers. The present study reveals the trend of reading daily newspapers in the students of Khulna University. The *Prothom Alo* is the daily that majority of the students read. It means that the *Prothom Alo* is their first choice. Their second choice is the *Janakantha* followed by the *Jugantar*. It is mentioned earlier that a small section of the students under the study read English newspapers along with Bangla newspapers. The English newspaper readers prefer the *Daily Star*, the *Bangladesh Observer* and the *Independent* respectively.

Magazines: At present there are 500 or more newspapers and magazines published in a country where the readership is still very limited (Khan, 1998). Many students of Khulna University read different types of magazines besides daily newspapers. The study shows that the students who read magazines regularly are the residential students of hall. It also reveals that among 80 magazine readers, 40 students read weekly *Jaijaidin*. And 20 students read weekly *Jaijaidin* and weekly 2000. Only two female students read fortnightly *Sananda* (Indian fortnightly in Bangla published from Kolkata). The rest 16 students read both *Jaijaidin* and Computer Tomorrow. It is said that majority of the students under the survey read weekly *Jaijaidin* regularly. Following is the distribution of the students by the name of magazines they read.

Table 5. Name of the magazines

Response	Name of the Magazine	No. of Students	%
Yes	<i>Sananda</i>	04	03.22
	<i>Jaijaidin</i> + Computer Tomorrow	16	12.90
	<i>Jaijaidin</i>	40	32.23
	<i>Jaijaidin</i> + Weekly 2000	20	16.13
No	—	44	35.48
	Total	124	100.00

Preferred Topics in Newspaper: Different types of news are published in daily newspapers. And all topics of a newspaper are not equally popular to all. In the present study it has been attempted to know what type of news the students of Khulna University like to read. It is found that majority of the students read sports news. Moreover, they read editorial, different columns, political and cultural news respectively.

Duration of Reading Newspapers: The majority students under the study spend a part of their time in reading newspapers and magazines beside their prescribed courses regularly. But they do not spend much time on it. The table below shows the distribution of the students by their spending time on the newspaper reading.

Table 6. Spending of time in reading newspapers and magazines

Spending Time (in hour)	No. of Students	%
00-01	82	66.13
01-02	30	24.19
02-03	12	09.68
Total	124	100.00

The study reveals that majority of the students read newspapers and magazines for one hour per day. Only 23.80% students read one to two hours and 09.52% students read two to three hours per day.

Conclusion

The main focus of the study was to assess the habit of reading newspapers and magazines. The study reveals that most of the students read both national and local newspapers regularly. They like to read Bangla newspapers most. Though a few of the students read English newspapers also. Besides, they like sports news most. The *Prothom Alo* and weekly *Jaijaidin* occupy first place in regard to the students' choice. But their spending time on newspaper and magazine reading is inadequate. This time should be adequate for interest of the students.

Acknowledgement

The authors wish to thank Mr. Amirul Alam Khan, Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board, Jessore for his cordial cooperation.

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