

# An Analysis of Mass Media Consumption and Internet Usage Among Women in Karnataka

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## **Abstract**

In contemporary era media is considered as one of the significant tools in society. Mass media are the technological instruments i.e print, radio, cinema, televisions and the internet reaches to the mass audience by providing infotainment and edutainment. Mass media materials speak to the most personal parts of individual's lives and connect the user to the world. As a result, mass media industries are a major force in society. Mass communication's power allows media consumers to share the materials they are reading and listening to with millions of people.

Media literacy is defined as “the ability to apply critical thinking skills to the mass media, thereby becoming a more aware and responsible citizen—parent, voter, worker—in our media-driven society”. The National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy stated media literacy is “the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and communicate messages in a variety of forms”.

The mass media's social responsibility in society includes its ability to inform, educate, motivate, and mobilize the masses with regard to the political, social, economic and rural development issues. The objective of the study is to analyse the media literacy among women in Karnataka. The Survey method was adopted for the study. A questionnaire was prepared and the data was collected from 114 respondents. This study seeks to analyse the media habits and usage, programs, participation and impact of mass media.

**Key words:** Media Consumption, Media literacy, Media habits, Impact of Mass media

## **Introduction:**

In contemporary era media is considered as one of the significant tools in society. Mass media are the technological instruments i.e. print, radio, cinema, televisions and the new media reaches to the mass audience by providing infotainment and edutainment. Mass media materials speak to the most personal parts of individual's lives, and connect the user to the world. As a result, mass media industries are a major force in society. Mass communication's power allows media consumers to share the materials they are reading and listening to with millions of people.

In today's world mass media is playing an outstanding role in strengthening society. Mass media is a tremendous source of information for individuals as well as society. The mass media like newspapers, radio and television act as a bridge between the government and the people. Media is recognized as a powerful instrument to mould public opinion. Mass media is called the 'fourth estate' of democracy. Innovations of new communication technologies have

immense power in the mass media. The mass media shapes viewers perceptions and views of social reality by presenting only some aspects of reality.

The role of media is very crucial in an integral part of human life. The Modern media world is regarded as “Window to the world”. It is well accepted that mass media has a definite role in the process of social change. The amount of the mass media’s involvement in welfare activities is enormous. Media literacy is defined as “the ability to apply critical thinking skills to the mass media, thereby becoming a more aware and responsible citizen parent, voter, worker in our media driven society”. The National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy stated media literacy is “the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and communicate messages in a variety of forms”. The mass media’s social responsibility in society includes its ability to inform, educate, motivate, and mobilize the masses with regard to the political, social, economic and rural development issues.

### **Review of Literature**

**Westoff & Rodriguez, (1995)** investigated the study focusing on married women through a survey method. The Kenya Demographic and Health Survey was initiated to spread the family planning messages through various media in 1989. The study indicated that 65.9 percent respondent heard about this through radio, 67.1 percent through interpersonal communication with friends and relatives, 20.9 per cent by newspapers and magazine and only a small number i.e. 7.8 by television. The study highlighted the contraceptive knowledge and usage through media messages.

**Croucher, Oommen, & Steele, (2009)** emphasised on a study by using in-depth interviews of 15 men and 27 women between the age group of 18 to 57. All the participants were a first or second-generation of North African descent. The study highlighted the usage of Arabic language, Algerian based and Islamic media and not French television. The Algerians, Tunisians, Moroccans and Libyans and all Muslims communities have media in France. The respondents highlighted that all these media help Islam in France and it was important for the future. The study indicates that the Muslims of France are not interested in watching French media because the media focus more on the French government and their culture. Most of them do not read the French media.

**Hasan & Sharma, (2011)** conducted a study at Uttarakhand. The data was collected through an interview schedule and observation method. The study indicated that Hindi and English newspapers are subscribed. Majority of homemakers i.e. 75 percent regularly read newspapers to avail information and news. Most of the respondents i.e. 97 percent read newspaper for health content followed 85 per cent for cookery information.

**Sharma, (2012)** study on mass media utilization pattern of farm women’ of Rajasthan and data was collected through a personal interview method from five villages. The study indicates that 60 percent of respondents have a radio set and only 25 percent subscribe to the Danik Bhaskar Hindi language newspaper. It was observed that 89 percent of women use mass media for entertainment and 26 per cent for obtaining new information. The study concluded that 53 per cent of respondents used media to avail agriculture information.

**Nirmala, (2015)** identified as the community radio in India serves as a vital platform for empowering women, particularly in marginalized communities. By providing a medium managed and operated by the community, it addresses local needs and aspirations, offering women a voice often absent in mainstream media. Engagement in community radio fosters

awareness, education, and skill development among women, contributing to their social, cultural, political, and economic empowerment. Studies have demonstrated that community radio acts as a powerful tool in transforming women's lives, enabling them to express their views, share experiences, and participate actively in community development.

**Perrin, (2015)** examines the significant growth in social media adoption among American adults over a decade. The study reveals that usage surged from 7% in 2005 to 65% in 2015, indicating a nearly tenfold increase. Young adults aged 18 to 29 consistently lead in adoption rates, with 90% using social media in 2015, up from 12% in 2005. While older adults show lower usage rates, their adoption has also grown substantially. The report highlights that social media usage transcends various demographic factors, including gender, race, and community type, with notable increases across all groups. However, disparities persist based on household income and education levels; individuals in higher-income households and those with college education are more likely to use social media. Overall, the study underscores the pervasive integration of social media into the daily lives of a diverse American population.

**Twenge & et al, (2019)**, analyzed the U.S. adolescents' media consumption from 1976 to 2016 reveals significant shifts in their habits. The research indicates a marked decline in traditional media engagement, with daily television viewing decreasing from 60% to 40%, monthly movie attendance dropping from 70% to just over 50%, and weekly magazine readership plummeting from over 60% to 10%. Conversely, the advent of digital media has led to its dominance among teens, effectively displacing legacy media formats. This transition underscores the profound impact of digital platforms on the media landscape and highlights the evolving preferences of younger audiences.

**Daigle & Heiss, (2021)** explore how women farmers in the United States utilize social media within their agricultural practices. Employing Uses and Gratifications Theory, the researchers conducted interviews to understand the motivations and perceptions surrounding social media use among this demographic. The findings reveal that women farmers view social media as a valuable tool for connecting with customers, sharing knowledge, and building supportive networks. These platforms enable them to market their products effectively, engage with the farming community, and access information pertinent to sustainable agriculture. The study highlights the role of social media in enhancing the resilience and viability of small farms operated by women, suggesting that these digital tools are integral to modern agricultural practices.

### **Significance of the Study**

In the international context, especially in developed countries, the habit of reading newspaper numbers is fluctuating. But in the Indian scenario it is totally diverse. As per the Indian Readership Survey (IRS) 2017 newspapers total readership has grown by 40% and 20% of all newspaper readers in 50 lakh plus population towns read newspapers online. This study mainly focuses on the media usage among women of Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka state.

### **Profile of Dakshina Kannada**

Dakshina Kannada district is located in the southern part of Karnataka in India. Mangalore, the district headquarter is called as the gateway to Karnataka due to the presence of New Mangalore Port Trust which is an all-weather port. The district consists of five taluks. The district is emerging in the field of education, medicare, tourism, rural development,

agricultural development, cultural promotion and so on. This district is known as Cradle of Indian banking and one of the most industrialized districts. The Ministry of Urban Development (MOUD), Government of India's Smart City Mission, has selected Mangaluru as one of the Smart cities of Karnataka.

### Objectives:

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To analyze the media consumption habits of women.
- To examine the duration and frequency of newspaper reading among women.
- To assess the types of information women prefer to read in newspapers.
- To explore women's interest in reading supplementary pages in newspapers.
- To know the usage of new media

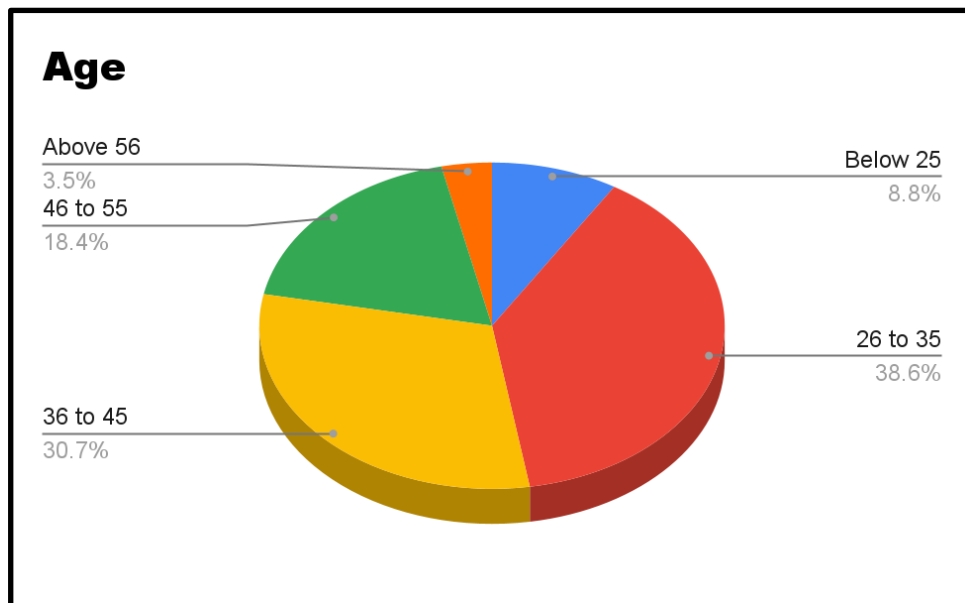
### Research Design and Methodology

As part of the research design a survey was conducted among the women of Dakshina Kannada. A questionnaire related to the topic was prepared and distributed among the respondents. A sample of 114 women responded to this study. SPSS software was used for tabulation and the data was analysed by using percentages.

### Results and Discussion

The data collected for the study 'An Analysis of Mass Media Consumption and Internet Usage Among Women in Karnataka reveals the following results. The demographic profile of the respondents includes variables like, age, education and occupation.

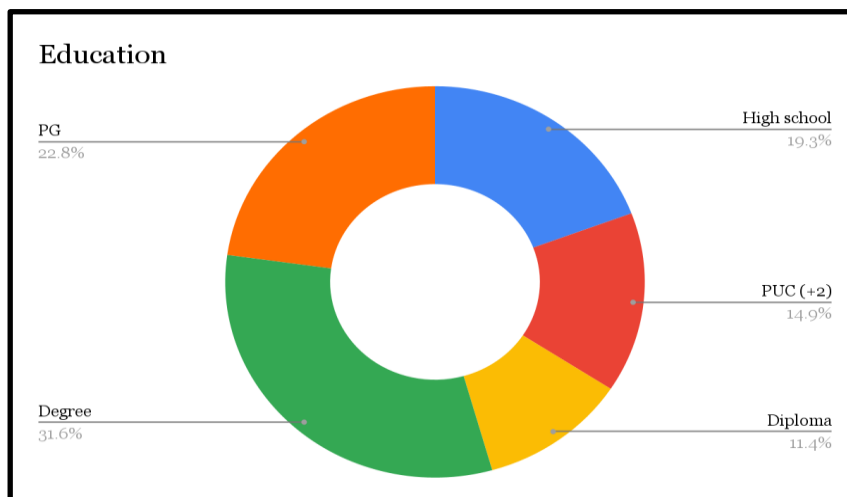
Age :



**Graph No. 1: Age wise distribution of the respondents**

The graph shows the classification of respondents on the basis of age. Out of 114 respondent's 38.6 percent are between the age group of 26 to 35 years, 30.7 percent are between the age group of 36 to 45 years, while 18.4 percent are in 46 to 45 group, 8.8 percent are below 25 and only 3.5 per cent are in the age group of above 56 years.

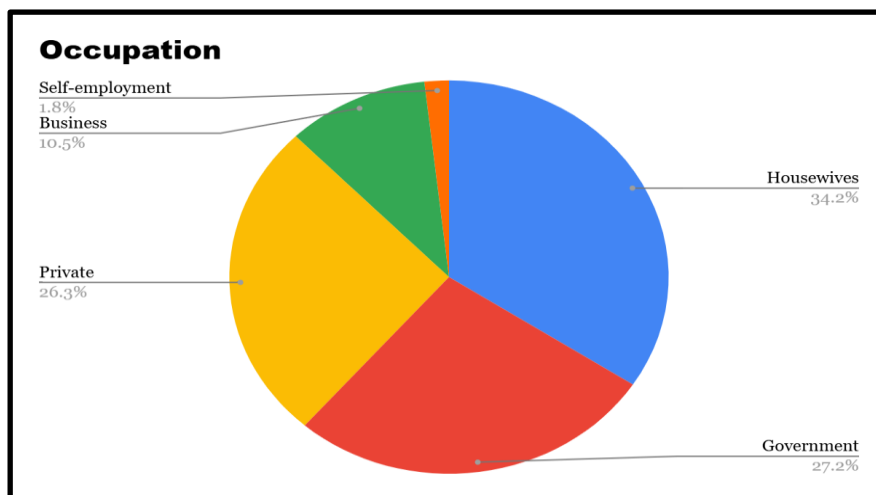
**Education :**



**Graph No. 2: Education wise distribution of the respondents**

Table No. 2 shows the sample consisted of 31.6 percent cent are degree educated, 22.8 percent are post graduated,19.3 percent are high school education, 14.9 percent were PUC qualified and only 11.4 percent are diploma holders.

**Occupation :**



**Graph No. 3: Occupation wise distribution of the respondents**

Graph shows that among the total respondents 34.2 percent are housewives, 27.2 per cent are government employees, 26.3 percent are working in private firms, 10.5 per cent are into business and only 1.8 per cent are self-employed.

**Medium preferred for obtaining information**

No.	Types of Media	Numbers	Percentage
1	Newspaper	54	47.36
2	Radio	15	13.15
3	Television	96	84.21
4	New Media	26	22.8

**Multiple responses. Percentage is calculated to the total respondents (N=114)**

**Table No. 1: Medium preferred for obtaining information**

Mass media such as newspapers, radio, television and new media play a very important role in providing information to the people from across the globe. Table No.1 also indicates that 84.21 per cent of the respondent's prefer television for obtaining general information. This is possible because most households have television sets and are exposed to International, National, State and local channels which are providing them information and entertainment programmes. About 47.36 per cent read newspapers, 22.8 percent access web journalism and only 13.15 per cent listen to radio.

### Accessibility of Newspaper

No.	Particulars	Numbers	Percentage
1	Subscription	77	67.5
2	Library	17	14.9
3	Neighbour's House	15	13.2
4	Office	17	14.9
<b>Multiple responses. Percentage is calculated to the total respondents (N=114)</b>			

**Table No. 2: Accessibility of Newspaper**

As reflected in Table No. 2, a vast majority of the respondents i.e. 67.5 percent subscribe to newspapers. A group of 14.9 percent of respondents read the newspaper from the library and their office. Only 13.2 percent borrow the papers from their neighbour's house.

### Years spent on newspaper reading

S. No	Number of years	Numbers	Percentage
1	Last one years	10	8.8
2	One to Five years	20	17.5
3	Six to Ten years	18	15.8
4	Above 10 years	66	57.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table No. 3: Years spent on newspaper reading**

Table No.3 denotes that more than fifty per cent of the women's are reading newspapers for more than ten years. About 17.5 per of the respondents have been reading newspapers between one year to five years. But surprisingly it is evident from the study that 15.8 percent have been reading newspaper from six to ten years and only 8.8 per cent have been reading the newspaper from last six months

### Time spent on newspaper reading

S. No	Time spent	Numbers	Percentage
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1	Less than half an hour	50	43.9
2	Half an hour to One Hour	52	45.6
3	More than One Hour	12	10.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table No. 4: Time spent on newspaper reading**

Reading a newspaper is also a hobby. Table No. 7 shows that the majority of the respondents i.e. 45.6 percent spend half an hour to one hour and 43.9 percent spend less than half an hour to read the newspaper. Only 10.5 per cent dedicated more than one hour to reading the newspaper.

### Contents of the newspaper

No	Particulars	Numbers	Percentage
1	News	96	84.2
2	Editorial Page	16	14.0
3	Article	38	33.3
4	Advertisement	17	14.9
<b>Multiple responses. Percentage is calculated to the total respondents (N=114)</b>			

**Table No. 5: Contents of the newspaper**

The purpose of the newspaper is to give edutainment to its reader. Table No. 5 shows that a vast majority i.e. 84.2 percent of respondents interested in news, 33.3 percent in articles, 14.9 per cent observe advertisement and only 14 per cent look into editorial pages.

### Supplementary pages preferred by the respondents

No	Category	Yes	No	Total
1	<b>Women's</b>	56 (49.1)	58 (50.9)	<b>114</b>
2	<b>Fashion</b>	20 (17.5)	94 (82.5)	<b>114</b>
3	<b>Films</b>	23 (20.2)	91 (79.8)	<b>114</b>
4	<b>Health</b>	72 (63.2)	42 (36.8)	<b>114</b>
5	<b>Business</b>	14 (12.3)	100 (87.7)	<b>114</b>
6	<b>Technology</b>	15 (13.2)	99 (86.8)	<b>114</b>
7	<b>Literature</b>	18 (15.8)	96 (84.2)	<b>114</b>
8	<b>Spiritual</b>	21 (18.4)	93 (81.6)	<b>114</b>
9	<b>Agriculture</b>	22 (19.3)	92 (80.7)	<b>114</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Education</b>	53 (46.5)	61 (53.5)	<b>114</b>
		38(10.6)	322(89.4)	<b>114</b>

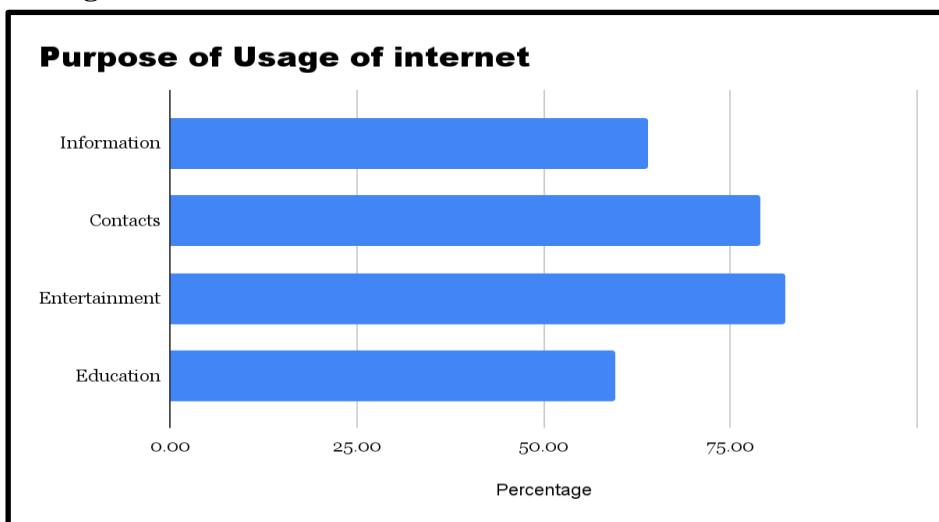
**Table No. 6 Supplementary page preferred by the respondents**

Each supplementary page is giving edutainment and infotainment for the readers. Table No. 6, shows that the majority of the respondents 63.2 percent are interested in the health supplementary page.

This followed by 49.1 percent who are interested in women’s supplementary page, 46.5 per cent are interested in education, 20.2 per cent in film, 19.3 percent in agriculture, 18.4 per cent in spiritual, 17.5 per cent in fashion, 15.8 per cent in literature, 13.2 per cent in technology and 12.3 per cent are interested in business supplementary page which is the least.

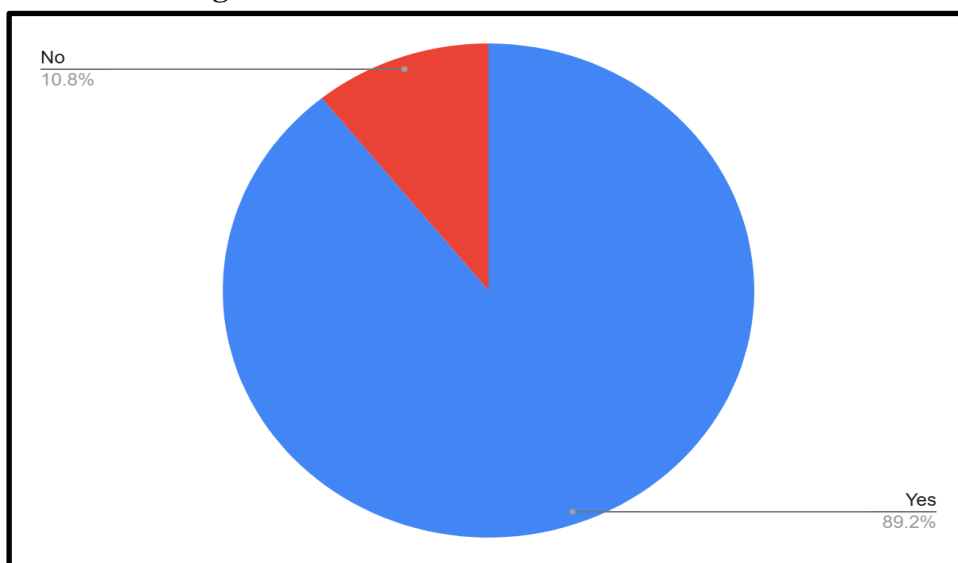
It is evident from the study that most of the respondents are interested in health, women’s, education supplementary page compared to agriculture, spiritual fashion and other types of supplementary pages.

**Purpose of Usage of Internet**



Around 82.46 percent use the internet for entertainment and 78.95 percent of respondents using for networking and keeping in touch with nearest and dearest. More than half of the respondents prefer using the internet for information i.e. 68.42 and for Education 61.40 percent.

**Is Social Media Misusing?**



- Majority of the respondents said social media is misusing i.e. 89.2 per cent

**Conclusion :**

The study on print media usage among women in Karnataka provides valuable insights into their reading habits, preferences, and the evolving role of print media in an increasingly digital world. The findings indicate that print media continues to be a relevant and influential source of information for women, particularly in urban and semi-urban areas, despite the growing dominance of digital platforms. Newspapers and magazines remain a trusted medium for news, education, entertainment, and personal development, with women displaying distinct preferences for content related to current affairs, health, fashion, and social issues.

The study highlights that the frequency and duration of newspaper reading vary based on factors such as age, education, and occupation. While older women and homemakers tend to spend more time on print media, younger women and working professionals often balance print reading with digital consumption. Supplementary pages, lifestyle sections, and editorial columns are found to attract significant readership among women, suggesting that print media continues to engage audiences through diverse and relevant content.

However, challenges such as declining newspaper circulation, the accessibility of online news, and the preference for quick, real-time information pose a threat to traditional print media. The study underscores the need for newspapers and magazines to innovate and integrate with digital platforms to sustain their readership. Hybrid models, where print and digital media coexist, may help in retaining women readers who value both credibility and convenience in news consumption.

In conclusion, while print media remains an integral part of women's daily lives in Karnataka, its sustainability depends on adaptability to changing consumer preferences. Media organizations must focus on quality content, gender-inclusive reporting, and interactive formats to ensure that print media continues to be a vital source of information and empowerment for women in the state.

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