



A STUDY ON CONSUMER PREFERENCE TOWARDS “THE HINDU” NEWSPAPER

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Abstract

This paper seeks to develop our indulgent of consumer preference towards “The Hindu” newspaper. In a competitive market place where business competes for customers, it is very essential to identify the consumer behavior and to frame the business strategies to increase their level of satisfaction of the customers. The main objective of this study is to enhance the understanding about consumer preference towards the newspaper. For this, the samples of 150 have been taken from the total population based on simple random sampling method. The data collection is based on the primary data source and secondary data source. The primary data were collected through questionnaire and personal interview of the readers. The secondary data were collected through official records and company brochures, magazines and websites. The data were collected and analyzed with the help of the statistical tools. Findings and conclusions were given based on the analysis and the suggestions.

Key Words: *Consumer Preference, Customer's Satisfaction And Newspaper.*

Introduction

The newspaper is defined as “Any printed periodical work, containing public news or comments on public events” Press and Registration Book Act 1987.

Media in India, experience newspaper media, are undergoing significant changes in the current liberalized environment. Newspaper a publication that appears regularly and frequently carries news about a wide variety of current events. The newspaper publishes have an overall control by its business and news operations.

“The press is the Guardian Angel of Democracy”. A forceful and prosperous press is the guarantor of popular rights. The press flight by itself alone, but not for itself by alone. To most people “The press” means the daily newspaper, but although re-eminent in influence and importance, daily newspapers are only a small part of the press the farm “newspaper” is usually applied to the publications devoted mainly for recording current events and the term “periodicals” to magazines, reviews to journals.

In reality the press is a private industry and a public service. No other force in public life operates so persistently and so extensively in its range of appeal. The scope of this subject of appeal and matter as so does the press. Newspapers have a unique dimension of social responsibility, which means the newspaper industry different from every other industry. But business success is as vital to this industry as to any other.

According to the recorded facts the first newspaper of the world was published in China around 1000 years ago. It meant “News of the Capital”. The second newspaper of the world was the “Acto Divra” which meant, “Daily happening” in Greek. There are the oldest two newspapers in the pre-recorded history.

The first newspaper of the world was the “Morning Post” which was started in London in the year 1772 followed by this another newspaper “The London Times” started in publications.

Company profile

The Hindu is a leading English language newspaper in India with its largest base of circulation of South India. It is over 125 years old founded in 1878 by Subramanian Ayer, it was headed by a co-founder Veera Raghavachariar, Kasturi Iyengar, the legal adviser of the newspaper from 1895, bought it in 1905. Since then his family has retained ownership of the paper. The two basic principles on which the founders flagged the newspaper were fairness and justice. The Hindu was published weekly since 1878 and daily since 1889. Its current net paid circulation exceeds 1 million copies. It is said to enjoy a consumership of 3 million in India and abroad and an annual turnover of around 4 billion rupees (\$ 80 million). In 1995 The Hindu became the first Indian newspaper to offer an online edition.

“The Hindu” user modern facilities for news gathering, page composition and printing. It is printed in twelve centre including the Main Edition at Chennai (Madras) where the co-operate office is based. The printing centre at Coimbatore, Bangalore, Madurai, Hyderabad, New Delhi, Vizag, Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram, Vijayawada, Mangalore and Tiruchirapalli



are connected with high speed data lines for news transmission across the country. The Hindu is the only newspaper which brings our supplement on are days of the week.

Supplements

1. **On Mondays:** Metro Plus, Business Review
2. **On Tuesdays:** Young World, an exclusive children's supplement ,Education, Book Review, Improve Young English
3. **On Wednesdays:** Job Opportunities
4. **On Thursdays**
 - a. Metro Plus
 - b. Science, Engineering, Technology & Agriculture
 - c. NXg, a weekly tabloid, started to share the view of "next generation".
5. **On Fridays:** Friday Features cinema, arts, music and entertainment
6. **On Saturdays:** Metro plus Weekend
7. **On Sundays**
 - a. Weekly Magazine covering social issues, art, literature, gardening, travel health, cuisine, hobbies etc.
 - b. Open Page, Literary Review, Property plus, every first Sunday Popular Columns include this day that age, The Hindu Crossword and Religion. There is a Sudoku every day.

Metro Plus

Metro plus throws the spotlight on what happening in the city, events Music Heritage, Life style, people, fashion, Dining out and sport are the broad categories finding expression on this supplement's pages. Capturing the pulse of the city and its changing lifestyle, it's later for the information and entertainment needs of cross section of consumers.

Education Plus

A plus is always welcome. It is that extra value that makes good thing better. Education plus comes to you every Monday with the promise of that bonus, whether you are a student just entering higher secondary schooling or a college graduate hoping to get the first break after leaving campus or simply someone who is keen to keep pace with what is happening in education. Education plus will present and analyze trends in education, provide pointers, and above all, inform. It will report on all that is current and important in the formal and the non-formal streams as well as in the emerging areas. It will look closely at the local opportunities and international avenues.

Property plus

India's property sector is a vibrant and growing area with new initiatives being taken by government the construction industry, architects and developers to transform the landscape.

Property plus features each week articles, reviews and special columns on the many facts that more these dramatic changes.

History of the Hindu Newspaper

The first issue of the Hindu was published on September 20 1878, by a group of six young men, led by G. Subramanian Ayer, a radical social reformer and school teacher from Thiruvaiyyar near Thanjavur. Initially printing 80 copies a week at the Srinidhi Press in Mint Street, Black Town, "The Hindu" was published every Wednesday as on eight page paper, each a quarter of today page size for four anaas. After a month with the Srinidhi Press, the newspaper has in printing shifted to the Scottish press, also in Black Town. The earliest available issue of the paper is dated June 21, 1881. In 1881 the Hindu moved to Ragoonada Row's The Hindu press of Mylapore, planning to make the paper tri-weekly appearing every Monday, Wednesday and Friday evening but maintaining the same size as before. The paper moved to rented premises at 100 Mount Road on December 3, 1883. The newspaper started printing at its own press there, Christened "The National Press" established on borrowed capital as public subscriptions were not forth coming. The building itself became the Hindu in 1892 after the Maharaja of Vizianagaram, Ananda Gajapathi Raja, gave the national press a loan both for the building and to carry out needed expansion. Its assertive editorials earned the Hindu the nickname, the new address 100 Mount Road, which to remained. The Hindu Home till 1939, there issued a guard - size paper with a front page full of advertisements - a practice that came to an end only in 1958 when it followed the lead by its idol, the pre-Thomson Times - and three back paper also at he service of the advertiser. In between, there were more views than news. After 1887, when the annual session of Indian National Congress was held in Madras, the paper's coverage of national news increased significantly and led to the paper becoming an evening daily stating April 1, 1889.



‘The Hindu’, like many other Indian publishing houses is family – run. It was headed by G.Kasturi from 1965 to 1991. N. Ravi from 1991 to 2003, and by his brother N. Ram since June 27th 2003. Other family member including Nirmala Lakshman, Malini Parthasarathy, Nalini Krishnan, N.Murali, K.Balaji, K. Venugopal, Ramesh Rangarajan and Publisher S.Rangarajan as direction of The Hindu and its Parent Company, Kasturi and sons. The present era is that of information which is available as right time to the right person. It has been rightly said that soon the power center of the world would not be those who have the financial muscle or greater resources but those who have power of information breeds knowledge and knowledge power. This saying has strongly maintaining is foothold over the acquire and shall continue doing so.

The Hindu

The Hindu India’s national newspaper since 1878 published by certain and sons limited, Chennai India. The English languages daily with a net paid circulation of 1.18 million (ABC July Dec 2008 and a consumership of 4.06, million (NRs 2006) is the best described as classic yet contemporary. It is known for the high quality of its journalism and excellent presentation. The newspaper is printed at 12 cities in India. The Hindu’s Independent editorial stand and it’s reliable and balance presentation of the News. The Hindu user modern facilities for news gathering page composition and printing. It is printed in twelve centers including the main edition at Chennai where the corporate office is bored. The printing centers are at Chennai, Coimbatore, Bangalore, Madurai, Hyderabad, New Delhi, Vizag, Thiruvananthapuram, Cochi, Vijayavada, Mangalore and Tiruchirapalli are connected with high-speed data lines for new transmission across the country. The digital edition of the Hindu e-paper offers itself nothing less delivery online. It is interesting to see each page as it appear in the print edition. This means all the reports, articles photographs and other graphics have been organized land our and presented. According to their importance with the appropriate hypsography and design elements. The readers also see the advertisement as they appear on the page. Three edition of the newspaper Chennai, Hyderabad and Delhi are available in digital form at this first stage. They are available for viewing at 6.00 am Indian Standard Time (1st) every day. Access is free for new but well required registering online. The e-paper has been developed for the Hindu by Nine Stars Information Technology Limited and IBM issuing stage of the act technology and offering high resolution and versatile features. Whole pages articles, photographs and other images can be viewed in ply and SPG format and articles can also be read as text. You can make use of the internet’s powerful feature search. The e-paper offer the reader search in several forms you can look for something specific using the search engine.

The reader can also track stories in their areas of internet by setting their preference for “My News” news tracking feature reader can clip articles and photos for future reference and can E-mail them to a friend.

The Origin of the Indian Newspaper

The first newspaper in Indian appeared on 29th January 1780, which James Augustus Hicky started the “Bengal Gazette” or “Calcutta General Advertisers” This was a weekly political and commercial paper open to all parties but influenced by none. Journalism started in India as a mission to expose the malpractices of East India Company Rule and Administration for his criticisms Hicky was fined a large amount and later on imprisoned. Simultaneously a number of Journals emerged under the sponsorship of company officials for defending themselves against the criticism made by Hicky and his followers.

The second one came up in November 1780. The third one up in February 1784. The Calcutta Gazette this was followed by “Bengal Chronicle” in 1785 from them onwards the news and newspaper have flooded throughout India, Indian press the present Scenario.

The Indian press consists of more than 20000 newspaper magazines and periodicals published in 20 different languages with a combined circulation of more than 55 million. The number of the major newspaper, ‘magazines with membership in Indian Newspaper Society (INS) is given 53.4per cent. It has a combined circulation of 34 million out of these there and 150 English with circulation of 7 million and there are 38 in Indian languages with a circulation of 27 million.

News Agencies

There are 4 main news agencies in India.

1. Press Trust of India (PTI).
2. United News of India (UNI).
3. Samachar Bharathi (SB).
4. Hindustan Sam char (HS).

While the Press Trust of India is supplying news in English, the other two are operating through the medium of Hindi and other Indian languages. Since May 1982, the United News of India has also launched a new service in Hindi and the credit



line of “UNIVARTA”. Similarly Press Trust of India has started in 1986 a Hindi language news service called Press Trust of India BHASHA.

Role of Newspapers to the Consumers

The power of the press is felt on our activities. It controls the rise and face of casings, cabinets and presidents. Once an editor said “I care not who governs the country so long as I can govern the press”. The press has rightly been called the “Fourth Estate”. Such an influential organ has to shoulder great responsibilities the power, unless used with great care will cause server damage.

The first and foremost duty of the press is to furnish uncolored news, but at the same time, it should furnish news on all fields such as science, economic, politics etc. The news should not suppressed undue emphasis be laid. Some sensational newspaper now a day’s print unimportant and trivial news in the front pages, while worldwide important news are not given place in the first page. Another great responsibility of the press is to represent public opinion without fear or favors. As the press is called the eyes and ear of the world, it has to keep an eye on what happens and reflects views of the people on those happenings. The press is a medium not only to give news to the public but also to express the public opinion.

The letters of the consumers published under “Letters to the Editors” “Yours Views” etc. Initiate debates on controversial issues. It will help definitely to bring out the best of it. Thus the press is not only a mirror of what the people thinks, but it is also a school of Instruction, a source of guidance to the common people.

Consumers Satisfaction

“Satisfaction is a person’s feelings of Pleasure of disappointment resulting from comparing products perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectations”. At this definition makes clear, satisfaction is a function of perceived performance and expectations. If the performance falls short of expectations, the consumers are dissatisfied. If the performance matches the expectations, the consumers are satisfied. If the performance exceeds expectations, the consumers are highly satisfied or delighted.

Many companies are aiming for high satisfaction because consumers who are just satisfied still find it easy to switch when a better offer comes along. Those who are highly satisfied are much less to switch. High satisfaction or delight creates an emotional bond with the brand, not just, a rational preference. The result is high consumer’s loyalty. From past buying experience, friend’s and associate’s advice, and marketer’s and competitor’s information and promises. The key to generating high consumer’s loyalty is to deliver high consumers value According to Michael Lanning, in hi delivering profitable value; a company must develop a competitively superior value proposition and a superior value delivery system.

A company’s value proposition is much more than it’s positioning on a single attribute; it is a statement about the resulting experience consumers will have from the offering and their relationship with the supplier. The brand must represent a promise about the total resulting experience that consumers can expect. Whether the promise is kept depends upon the company’s ability to manage its value - delivery system includes all the communications and channel experiences the consumers will have on the way to obtaining the offering.

Review of Literature

Mahmood, Malik Tariq (2009) in their study investigated the different patterns of academicians' of print media. Information obtained by using a wide variety of both informal and formal sources; i.e. human sources, internet and Mass Media. Keeping in view its nature and requirement to explore and examine news-seeking patters of academicians of AIOU by newspapers.

Levy, D. and Nielsen, R. (2010) this study indeed the only global survey of its kind is The Changing Business of Journalism and its Implications for Democracy. This groundbreaking book from the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism is the first major overview of how the news industry is dealing with several unprecedented challenges, in particular the rise of the internet and the draining of advertising revenue from traditional media platforms.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the consumer preference towards The Hindu Newspaper.
2. To know the consumer preference towards supplement issued by The Hindu News paper.
3. To study the preference of the reader with the present distribution system of newspaper with special reference to agent newspaper vendors.
4. To offer suitable suggestions for enrich the consumer preference of The Hindu news paper.



Scope of the study

The study is conducted to know the consumer preference of The Hindu newspaper. This may help the company to decide upon their new ventured.

The research focuses on the several features of the Hindu and in awareness, suggestion in the market, which may help the company in further development of the newspaper.

The research provides a complete feedback on The Hindu which may sincere a backup for their future plans with respect to design area.

Limitations of the study

1. The sample size is only 150.
2. The period of study is limited.
3. There is no comparative study made.
4. Under the study illiterate people excluded.
5. The result of analysis made in the study depends fully on the accuracy; reliability of information's given by respondents.

Research Methodology

Research Design

Research Design is descriptive as well as analytical, because the researcher has used facts or information already available and analyzed these to make an evaluation of the material.

Primary Data Collection

Primary data was collected with the help of a structured questionnaire. The questionnaires were administered to the selected 150 respondents of The Hindu news paper.

Technique of Data Collection: The questionnaire has been designed and used to collect the needed primary data. Both open ended and close ended questions were used.

Area of the study: The study on consumer preference towards has been limited to consumers located in Salem City.

Period of the study: The period of the study covers one month during Feb 2018

Sources of Data

The validity of any research is based on the data collected for the study. The present research is based on both primary as well as secondary data. The primary data were collected from the selected sample respondents in the study area. Simple satisfied random sampling method was used to selecting the respondents.

Questionnaire was the main tool used for collecting the first hand information from the respondents. Hence, great attention was given to construct the questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared with the help of the research guide and experts. The questions were framed in a sample manner, capable of being answered easily and quickly by the respondents.

The possible answer to every question and to put a tick mark by the respondent whenever was applicable.

The study also consists of secondary data, which are collected from magazines, newspapers and journals and also website.

Sample Size: The sample size selected for the study is 150 respondents. The respondents are selected by simple random sampling method.

Sampling Techniques

Data on the various aspects directly and indirectly related to the investigation were gathered through questionnaires to the respondents.

The questions were necessary to ensure the reliability of the information. The questions were simple to understand and to contain the choice of questions means simple alternative choice, etc., so that information should be collected from various respondents. It should be seen that parties are not biased or prejudiced and are mentally sound.

Tools Used For Analysis

For the analysis of data and its interpretation, various tools are employed without which the analysis and interpretation of the data, will be difficult to identify the problems and also suffer from many errors. This may be solving through the analysis and give suitable results. Major tools used to the purpose are,

1. Simple Percentage Analysis.
2. Chi – Square Test.

Simple Percentage Analysis

In this study of the percentage analysis is used.

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{no.of Percentage}}{\text{Total No.of Respondent}} \times 100$$

Chi- Square

The Chi – Square test is one of the simplest and most widely used non – parametric tests in statistical work. The symbol χ^2 is the Greek letter chi. The chi – square test was first used by Karl Pearson in the year 1900. The quantity chi-square describes the magnitude of the discrepancy between theory and observation.

It is defined as,

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \left[\frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i} \right] \approx \chi^2_{(r-1)(c-1) d.f}$$

Where,

O_i = Refers to the Observed frequencies.

E_i = Refer to the expected frequencies.

Table: 1.1 Gender Wise Classification of The Respondents

S. No	Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	120	80
2	Female	30	20
	Total	150	100

Source: Primary data

Inference

It is identified from the above table shows that out of 150 respondents' 80per cent of the respondents belong to male category and 20per cent of the respondents belong to female category. From the analysis, it is concluded that maximum of the respondents are prefer belong to male category.

Chart: 1.1 Gender Wise Classification of the Respondents

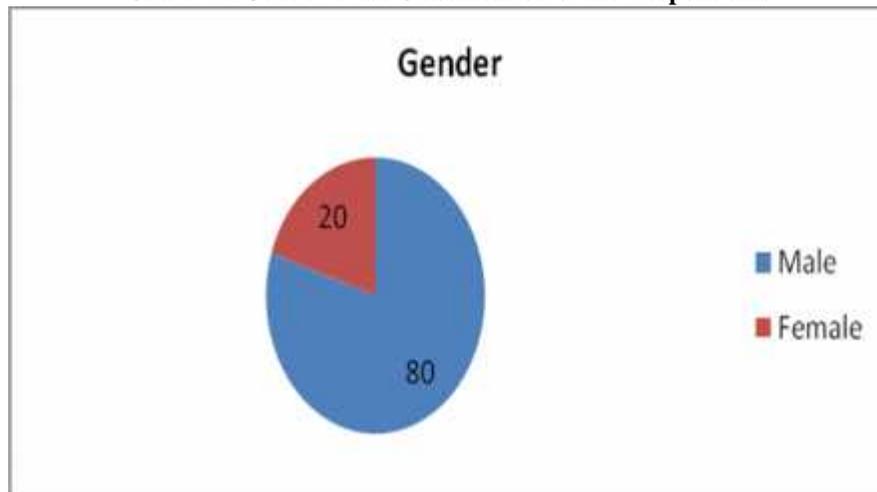


Table 1.2 Age Wise Classification of The Respondents

S. No	Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below 20 years	49	32
2	21 to 30 years	30	21
3	31 to 40 years	51	34
4	Above 40 years	20	13
	Total	150	100

Source: Primary data

Inference

It is observed from the above table shows that 32per cent of the respondents are Below 20 years, 21per cent of the respondents belong to 21-30 years, 34per cent of the respondents belong to 31-40 years, and 13per cent of the respondents belong to above 40 years of the age. From the analysis, it is concluded that maximum of the respondents are 31-40 years to read the Hindu news paper.

Chart: 1.2 Age wise Classification of the Respondents

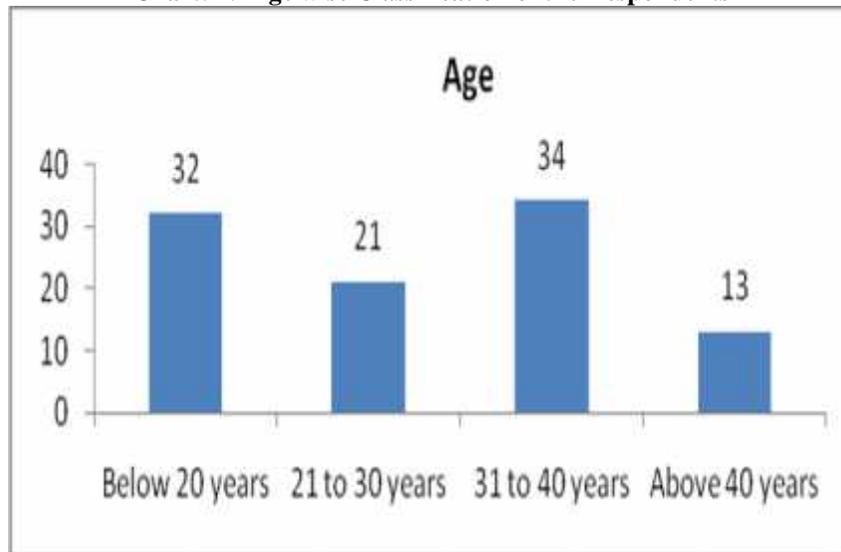


Table: 1.3 Statement of Educational Qualification of the Respondents

S. No	Educational Qualification	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Higher Secondary	45	30
2	Under Graduate	39	26
3	Post Graduate	53	35
4	Others	12	17
	Total	150	100

Source: Primary data

Inference

The above table infers that 30per cent of the respondents belong to the Higher secondary, 26per cent of the respondents belong to the Under graduate and 35per cent of the respondents belong to Post graduate, 7per cent of the respondents are belong to other. It is concluded from the above analysis, the maximum (35per cent) of the respondents who prefer to the Hindu news paper, are at the Post graduate level.

Chart: 1.3 Statement Of Educational Qualification of The Respondents

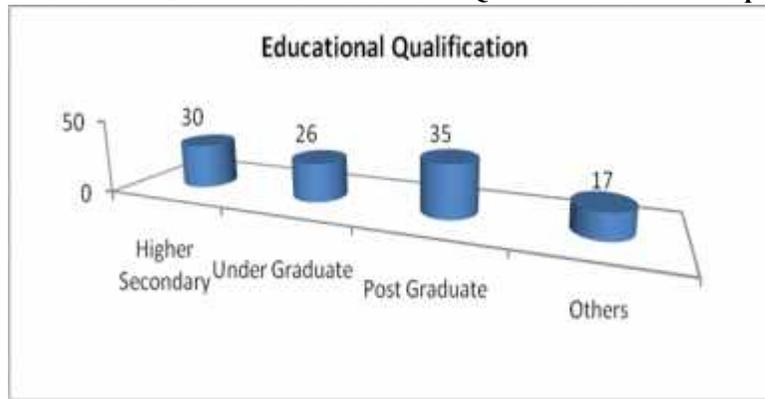


Table: 1.4 Occupation Levels of the Respondents

S. No	Occupation	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Students	46	31
2	Employee	51	34
3	Business man	32	20
5	Others	22	15
	Total	150	100

Source: Primary data

Inference

It is evident from the above table shows that 34per cent of the respondent’s occupation belongs to the employee category, 31per cent of the respondents occupation belong to the student category, 20per cent of the respondents occupation belong to business man category and 15per cent of the respondents belong to others. It is concluded from the above analysis, that maximum (34per cent) of the respondents are employees.

Chart: 1.4 Occupation Level of the Respondents

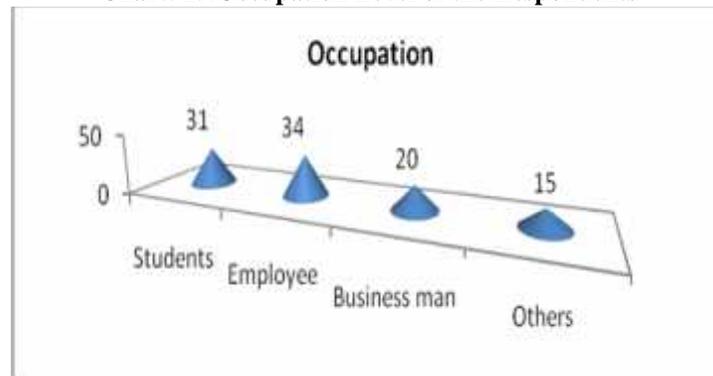


Table 1.5 Problem Faced To Use The Hindu News Paper

S. No	Factors	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly Agree	7	5
2	Agree	90	60
3	Uncertain	53	35
	Total	150	100

Source: Primary data

Inference

It is identified from the above table shows that 5per cent of the respondents prefer to Hindu news paper faced to problems are agree, 60per cent of them agree to face the problems, 35per cent of the respondents are face the problem in the Hindu news paper in uncertain.

Chart No: 1.5 Problem Faced To Use the Hindu News Paper

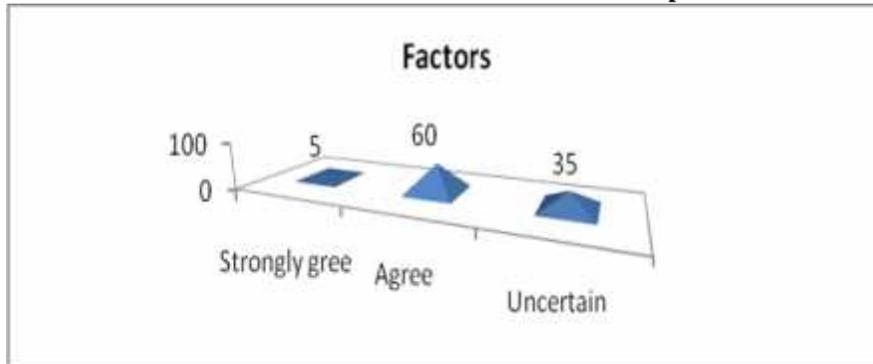


Table: 1.6 Cross Tabulation between Occupation and Problem Faced To Use the Hindu News Paper

Occupation	Problem Faced To Use The Hindu News Paper			Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	
Student	2	33	11	46
Employee	2	18	31	51
Business man	1	24	7	32
Others	2	15	4	21
Total	7	90	53	150

Source: Primary data

(H₀): There is no significant relationship between occupation and problem faced to use the Hindu news paper.

(H₁): There is significant relationship occupation and problem faced to use the Hindu news paper.

Calculation Of Chi-Square Test

O _i	E _i	O _i - E _i	(O _i - E _i) ²	$\frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$
2	3.22	-1.22	1.4884	0.462236
2	3.57	-1.57	2.4649	0.6904482
1	2.24	-1.24	1.5376	0.6864286
2	1.47	0.53	0.2809	0.1910884
33	41.4	-8.4	70.56	1.7043478
18	45.9	-27.9	778.41	16.958824
24	28.8	-4.8	23.04	0.8
15	18.9	-3.9	15.21	0.8047619
11	24.38	-13.38	179.0244	7.3430845
31	27.03	-3.97	15.7609	0.5830892
7	16.96	-9.96	99.2016	5.8491509
4	11.13	-7.13	50.8369	4.5675562
Calculated Value				40.641016

Test of Significance

Factors	X ² value at 5% significant level with 6 degrees of freedom	Calculated Value	Result
Occupation	12.592	40.641016	Rejected Ho

Source: Computed from primary data



Inference

It is observed from the above table that the calculated value of chi-square is greater than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that there is significant relationship between relationship occupation and problem faced to use the Hindu news paper.

Findings

1. Maximum of the respondents are 31-40 years to read the Hindu news paper.
2. Maximum of the respondents are prefer belong to male category.
3. Maximum (35per cent) of the respondents who prefer to the Hindu news paper, are at the Post graduate level.
4. Maximum (34per cent) of the respondents are employees.
5. Most of the respondents prefer the Newspaper of Hindu.
6. The most of the respondents would like to recommend of their news paper to others.
7. The Majority of the respondents are satisfied with their Newspaper.
8. The Maximum respondents are satisfied regarding the information.

Suggestions

The following are the suggestion offered to increase the satisfaction level of The Hindu news paper based on the reader's opinion and analysis of the data.

1. Most of the consumers expressed dissatisfaction over the number of advertisement both commercial and cinema should be taken by the publishers to reduce the advertisement coverage and add more sports news, IT news, job opportunities etc.
2. As regards availability of newspapers the highest number of respondents is satisfied, but a few respondents in rural areas dissatisfied because of non-availability of English newspapers like the Hindu and the Indian Express. Hence newspapers should reach rural areas also.
3. A few respondents are dissatisfied about reliability of news. So reporters must verify the news before they are published.

Conclusion

Newspapers play an important role in our day-to-day life. They have contributed not only for the growth of democracy in a country but also for development of the economy. Indian newspapers enjoy large circulations. It is an influential organ shouldering great responsibilities and should furnish uncolored news without suppressing the facts and also care should be taken to satisfy the needs of consumers.

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