

MALMÖ UNIVERSITY

NEWS AND THE 'ON-DEMAND' GENERATION

- **Spanish University Undergraduates: Consumption of and Engagement with News Content** -



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1. ABSTRACT

Trustworthy and accessible news content is fundamental to democracy and demanded by groups within social spaces of varying structures. News outlets have always, and continue to be in a state of development, adapting to social changes and accommodating the advances new technologies afford the structure of the industry of news.

The aim of this thesis is to research the news consumption habits of Spanish undergraduate students at a time when the print newspaper industry, for many years the key disseminator of news relied upon by the general public, is in a state of financial crisis and its future, in its current form, is in jeopardy.

Using a quantitative survey of 144 students and supported by a linked theoretical framework of News Consumption, Social Space and Uses & Gratifications, the study illustrates a generation of news consumers with a healthy appetite for news, whose cultural, economic and social capital are manifested via the diverse portfolio of news media they elect to consume from. Adopting a gratifications approach reveals that the efficiency and comfort mobile devices provide users for news consumption is one of the determining factors when deciding upon which forms of news disseminators respondents wish to engage with; user agency takes precedence over the notions of trust felt for the integrity of journalistic publications.

The study provides a unique insight into the news consumption habits of Spanish undergraduate students enrolled in private university education, which although not representative of the wider population, is a study of an increasingly significant social group in Spain, their news consumption choices and the relation to the social space they inhabit.

KEYWORDS:

News Consumption - Habitus - Online Journalism - Social Groups

Uses & Gratifications - Agency

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4. INTRODUCTION

Journalism as an industry is, and always has been, an industry which is affected by changes in social structures, therefore having to adapt accordingly; from both an editorial and business perspective. The original and most globally widespread medium for news dissemination is the print newspaper, which currently finds itself in a precarious state, with falling sales and of less interest to advertisers; threatening both its business model and future sustainability.

Demand for news, unlike print newspaper sales, is not on the decrease and media convergence has enabled the creation of new outlets for journalism to not only flourish but dominate within certain age groups. Young news consumers, whose consumption habits are shaped by a culture of on-demand content and not limited to timeframes stipulated by others, are influencing the journalism industry, and I posit, defining how the industry will operate in the future.

It is this upheaval, in one of the oldest industries to boast such a global presence, which is the focus of this thesis, in relation to young people and news consumption habits. The principal research question to be explored is:

How are the current challenges facing journalism, with emphasis on the newspaper industry, reflected in the news consumption habits of Spanish undergraduate students in private education?

Additionally, the study explores how Spanish undergraduate students perceive news media, addressing the question:

What news content is important to Spanish undergraduate students in private education?

To better understand how this social group prioritises news content is to provide news outlets with the tools to develop a deeper connection with this audience.

The respondents that comprise the study sample are, as the research questions suggest, undergraduate students studying in the Spanish private university system. Spain has a long tradition of private education, and where in some countries a private education is experienced by a very niche group, and low number of people, in Spain that

is simply not the case. In Spain there are currently 76 universities across the country, 50 of which are state universities and the remaining 26 are private. In the capital city of Madrid private university establishments outnumber state universities with 8 private institutions compared the state's 6. Private universities obviously carry an elevated financial cost (discussed later at length in relation to the sample) that state universities do not, which obviously has an impact on the number of students enrolled in courses in the private system. That said, the number of students enrolled in the private system in Madrid alone, during the academic year 2015-2016 was 57,656 which is a figure that has seen an increase year-on-year (Stegmann & Miranda, 2017). The respondents who form the sample of this study are students of a Catholic private university in Spain, which should also be pointed out is 1 of 14 catholic universities in the entire country, illustrating that the social group is larger than might be initially perceived, if one is unfamiliar with Spanish society and the structures that exist in the education system.

It is important to understand the significance of the social group that the respondents of the sample form when distinguishing this study from any other study of news consumption habits amongst young people/undergraduates/the Spanish etc. The private university at the heart of this study is a university which prides itself on person-centred education and creating a family environment amongst all members of the campus community. One cannot compare the environment offered by this university to a state university, where class sizes can reach 120 students and opportunities to have one-on-one contact with professors and tutors are limited. The university where the respondents in the sample study have class sizes which average at around 40 students and is one where close relationships between students and professors are encouraged so as to foster an environment of trust, critical thinking, serving the community and values related to the common good. Students can be said to be members of a privileged space with regards to the personal attention they are afforded by education professionals. This institutional approach is met more fluidly as the student's academic journey is closely accompanied by their professors at all stages (students are also assigned academic mentors upon embarking on their academic life at the university in question). These are key points in the research aim of this study which attempts to identify if such a social space bears any influence on the way the respondents in the sample engage with news.

The ubiquity of the internet favours interaction, in addition to consumption of news. Today's news audience, more specifically the demographic of the sample, are what Pavlik (2001) describes as being active news consumers, as opposed to passive

consumers, which was a more accurate description before interactivity became so commonplace. It is therefore pertinent to explore *how* the respondents in the sample engage with news media, served by the question:

Do traditional news media channels serve the needs of Spanish undergraduate students in private education?

The study for this thesis has been accomplished by carrying out a quantitative survey of 144 undergraduate students from four different degree courses (Business Management & Marketing, Nursing, Journalism and Fine Arts & Design). As a researcher, I have a personal motivation for exploring the topic of news consumption amongst this demographic as I am a Technical English Language professor at the university in question. As I frequently use news content for specific content in many classes, this study additionally carries a personal objective of gaining a more nuanced understanding of the sample's habits, which will enable me to cater more specifically to their preferences and fostering stronger engagement with class content.

5. BACKGROUND

Newspapers fold as readers defect and economy sours

(CNN, Chen, 2009)

More Wretched News for Newspapers as Advertising Woes Drive Anxiety

(The New York Times, Ember, 2016)

Newspaper industry faces existential crises

(The Times of India, Kumari, 2014)

Read all about it! Read all about it! Newspaper journalism is in crisis, it's all doom and gloom and there is no hope for this once, prosperous industry. The print media is all but over, and the next casualty could be journalism in general, it's just not financially sustainable anymore.

Admittedly, a very negative and exaggerated claim to make, and if we are to believe what we (ironically) read in the newspapers, this is the opinion that one may legitimately form. Numerous headlines (such as those featured above) around the world adorn newspapers and magazines with such stories whereas radio and television broadcasters equally document the current state of the industry, leading the public to conclude that journalism, a craft based on meticulous investigation, fact-checking and editorial integrity, may be a thing of the past. But to what extent is this true? Is it truly imaginable a world without newspapers, or at least one without printed newspapers that, once read from cover to cover, leave you with nothing but ink-blackened fingers, yet a warm feeling of satisfaction of having digested the news at your own pace (and hopefully without distractions)? I certainly wish it was not. Sadly though, there is some truth in the headlines and they are not the result of tabloid scaremongering or salacious gossip. The print media, especially newspapers (the glossy magazine market is less affected by the downturn and will be discussed later) do not garner the demand they once did. As a result, journalism as an industry-whole really is at a turning point in the way it manifests itself.

One must be realistic about this section of the journalism industry that is struggling enormously, from a financial perspective, and has been doing so for many years. To illustrate the extent of the struggles, one can look to the circulation of U.S daily newspapers, which declined to 35 million in 2016 and Sunday circulation to 38 million, the lowest recorded figures since 1945 (Barthel, 2017). These data demonstrate

that U.S citizens are now less likely to buy daily newspapers but retain a little more loyalty to their favoured newspapers on Sundays, when one could assume that they have more free time to devour their contents. Similar figures can be found in the U.K where the circulation for daily mid-week newspaper titles amounted to 10.2 million copies per day in April 2010, a figure which has gradually been falling ever since. By April 2017 the daily circulation sat at 7.7 million copies; an incredible drop of 23.8% (Mediatel 2010 & 2017). In Spain, where the news consumption survey amongst university students was conducted for this thesis, the situation is just as concerning, with Spanish titles specifically losing 14.2% of newspaper sales between 2007 and 2010, a decline which continues to occur (Casero-Ripollés & Cullell-March, 2013).

Therefore, as a society, we are faced with a situation whereby the print newspaper industry is increasingly catering for less and less people than before, begging the question of how sustainable is the print media and what does that mean for the future generations of news consumers?

This is the situation that forms the foundation of my study; to obtain a more precise understanding of how young people (or at least the young people that my sample comprises of) consume news, what choices they make with regards to the type of news that interests them and how they choose to interact with it. The current trends being played out now by the younger generation are setting the scene for how journalistic outlets are not only adapting to the pace of change within the industry (which has always been the case), but also how they will structure their activity in the future from both an editorial and business perspective.

6. LITERATURE REVIEW

6.1 Journalism and Current Industry Challenges

To better understand the industry that presents itself to the young participants of my survey, it is crucial to take a look at journalism and the current challenges that are faced by the industry as a whole, keeping in mind the research question '*How are the current challenges facing journalism, with emphasis on the newspaper industry, reflected in the news consumption habits of Spanish undergraduate students in private education?*'

Prior to the mid-twentieth century the newspaper industry was a thriving business concern and subject to little disruption in its dominance of the industry of news. However, the mid-twentieth century was a key moment in the industry when competition for news dissemination in the form of radio and television broadcasts caused an industry shake-up. These media, with their real-time formats and dynamic presentations of news, not only removed the monopoly newspapers once held, but also significantly threatened the business model of newspapers. As audiences for radio and television grew, so did the interest in these media by advertisers who recognised the potential for reaching mass audiences at a level that newspapers could not compete with, therefore reducing the advertising revenue stream that was so important to the sustainability of the print media (Collis et al. 2009).

Close examination of the news media does suggest that we are currently in a period where history is beginning to repeat itself, at least in the sense that we have seen and continue to see patterns of disruption in the way in which news media operate. Where television and radio were the media that would have a devastating impact on the print media as news disseminators, challenging their market dominance and the financial benefits that accompany such domination, it is the all-conquering presence of the internet that has insisted the so-called traditional news media stand back and take stock of how they function. Continuing audience decline of print media is unsustainable financially and new methods of monetising journalism need to be found if the problem is to be haemorrhaged and the industry is to become auspicious once again. Interestingly, certain sections of the glossy magazine market are seeing a revival in interest in their publications of late. The U.K society and celebrity magazine *Hello!* recently recorded the biggest circulation rise across women's lifestyle magazines and boasts an average weekly print circulation of 226,128 copies (ABC, 2018), indicating an

upturn in consumer demand for the title compared to previous years' figures. *Hello!* U.K editor Rosie Nixon suggests a combination of positive reporting in the current political climate and the strategically designed reader experience are key ingredients to the renewed success of the magazine:

"I am really proud and protective of that philosophy of positive reporting. And I think we are bombarded now, with social media, a lot of bad news, politically unstable times, that Hello! provides some escapism and just takes you away from that.... and out of that digital world as well, you know, the print is still doing very well for us because I think it's a luxury experience now to take that time to read a magazine". (Media Masters Podcast Interview, 2018)

Such data suggest that the experience that a well-curated magazine offers with its long-form journalism and carefully crafted photography provides the reader with a product they are prepared to invest in, both financially and with their time. This presents a difficult challenge for the current news media, both print and digital, who do not have the luxury of producing just one publication per week, and who feel the pressure to update websites continually during the day, whilst also aiming to provide an alternative product and experience for their daily print consumers.

Therefore, with the emergence of the internet, how have newspapers responded to the challenges this ubiquitous technology offers? To answer this, it is important to recognise the media convergence that is evident amongst technological devices in the pre-internet era which would pave the way for digital news media as we now know it; available through multiple devices and in myriad formats.

Towards the end of the 1990's, legacy news media embarked upon the use of pagers to disseminate news (Westlund, 2013); recognising that the hand-held device that was steadily becoming commonplace amongst career-driven individuals could serve as a novel way of publishing news. The emergence and development of the mobile telephone was a boon for communication, offering the user not only the ability to make and receive calls, but also send and receive text messages (SMS), and later multi-media messages (MMS). Incorporating the pager's feature of receiving text messages into the mobile phone meant that news publishers could push news alerts utilising the SMS and MMS available at the time directly to their audience, a practice carried out by "numerous news publishers in the developed world, such as the BBC and *El País*" (Fidalgo, 2009 in Westlund, 2013, p.9). Such dynamic changes in communication and a healthy consumer uptake of technological devices encouraged the

technology sector to advance in their efforts to find the next new solutions to satisfy demand for mobile communication. Portable digital assistants (PDA's) were used by news publishers who could publish news content, combining both text and images. Although not widely used enough to attract significant advertising revenue (Westlund, 2013), the combination of visual and textual content provided by PDA's set the tone for the appetite for mobile news consumption, as has become the norm today. By late 2007, mobile phone technology had developed greatly to the extent that it had become possible to access traditional websites using mobile web browsers, thanks to the incorporation of XHTML, giving a whole new perspective to news dissemination and consumption.

Of course, during this period of the mid-2000's, consumption of news via news websites (especially legacy news websites) was increasingly popular, and with more and more people using PC's both at work and in the home, traffic to websites offering journalistic content was strong. In July 2005 the U.K's *The Guardian* reported 1.3 million unique browsers to its website per day (Plunkett, 2005), a huge figure for the time, although rather dwarfed by the current figure of 150 million unique browsers who use the website per month for its content (GNM Press Office, 2018).

With this media and technology convergence in mind, it is clear to see that one of the most pressing challenges for legacy media, if they want to survive as businesses in their current incarnation, is how do they adapt to the changes in news consumption habits and what are the implications in addition to the opportunities that are presented by these challenges?

An examination of the business model of journalism, both print and digital, reveals a fundamental challenge that any type of business needs to negotiate if they are to be sustainable. As previously stated, on the whole, newspaper circulation is down in many territories and advertising revenue is not comparable to the golden age of the newspaper in the mid-1940's. Less circulation signifies less advertising revenue as Casero-Ripollés & Cullell-March detail in relation to the Spanish newspaper market: "advertising revenue fell by 42.9% between 2007 and 2010, a figure translating into a total advertising income going from €1.461bn to €34.5m" (2013, p.684). Figures of this extreme in such a short space of time are shocking, and many other businesses would undoubtedly terminate operations before their debt rose any more. However, as newspapers are fundamental for democracy, they are trying to stave off the decline as much as possible, although as Blumler (2010, p.243) argues, democracy is clearly at

threat; “a crisis of financial viability” is intrinsically connected to a “crisis of civic adequacy”. If the money is not available for journalistic operations, then governments and the political class simply cannot be held to account.

The failing business model of journalism has got the better of many news publishers, many long-standing, and there are many examples of publications that simply could not survive and were forced to make their final print runs, with local newspapers being especially susceptible to financial ruin. Since 2005 in the U.K alone, “some 198 local newspapers have closed” and even though there are cases of new publications being launched, the closures significantly outweigh the new titles (Cox, 2016). Other publications have conceded that their print versions were no longer sustainable and have had to reduce to an exclusively online presence; a high-profile case in Spain is *El Público*, which terminated print editions in 2012. In the U.K, *The Independent*, which in 2009 had a daily circulation of 204,429 copies (*The Guardian*, 2010) was forced into ceasing print editions in early 2016 and become an exclusively online publication, after seeing daily circulation drop to just 55,200 copies (Mediatel, 2016). In a recent interview, *The Independent* editor, Christian Broughton claims that going digital has been an incredible feat for the publication, taking them to new heights of audience reach, that they simply did not manage to achieve when they competed in the print market;

“It’s been exhilarating, partly because of the growth of the readership within that time. Readership statistics, online particularly, don’t stand still...we’ve gone from a newspaper that was selling in the kind of low tens of thousands to a news website that has more than 100 million monthly unique users, and we have as well more paying subscribers than the paper did, with our Daily Edition app. That’s been really exciting to bring the Independent, which is something that I care about and believe in deeply, to a whole new group of people”. (Media Masters Podcast Interview, 2018).

Finding the ideal business model for journalism is a subject that is under continuous debate within the industry, and no perfect solution has yet been found as an alternative to the advertiser model, which is now an insufficient revenue source. Although I do not wish to elaborate much further on the business model, as that would be to deviate too greatly from the focus of my study, it is worth noting that the use of paywalls to safeguard content for paying customers has only been moderately

successful. In August 2013 the U. K's largest selling daily newspaper, *The Sun*, decided to put all their content behind a paywall. The decision at the time was seen to be a controversial one and the faith that News UK, the owners of the publication, had in their customer loyalty to pay for content was unfounded. The operation was ultimately unsuccessful, and content was released from behind the paywall again a little more than two years later (Sweeney, 2015).

News publishers have collated data that informs them that in addition to the number of users who consume their content via mobile apps or mobile sites, an increasing amount of traffic to their traditional websites sites comes from users accessing the websites with mobile devices (Westlund, 2012), highlighting the importance of catering for that market.

The way in which people consume media via mobile devices is largely incomparable to how print media is consumed, a theme that will be discussed later in relation to uses and gratifications theory. Mobile devices promote consumption that is interactive and instant; the structures of mobile devices influence the agency afforded to the user to a far greater extent than if one were to compare news consumption via content in print format. The ability to swiftly switch screens from sports to fashion content is a reality for mobile device users; what once would have taken approximately 30 seconds to locate the specific section of the newspaper you were interested in, can now be done in a tenth of that time, or less if you are directed to content based on a websites' or APP's suggestions. It is this change in behaviour towards technology use and news consumption that has put news publishers in a position of forced change; failure to respond to the challenge of this significant behavioural change in society is tantamount to pushing your product into obsolescence. One can therefore argue that the job of news publishers has experienced something of an overhaul, in an effort to retain readers and tap into the digital market. News publishers increasingly expand their cross-media portfolios with mobile news apps to serve the digital audience, although the management of such an array of platforms is "a daunting task about which media managers have expressed their concern" (Westlund, 2012, p.13). So daunting is the task, that it can be argued that responding to the challenges presented by the demand for digital content that can be accessed on mobile devices has resulted in a slip in journalism standards. Katharine Viner, editor-in-chief at *The Guardian* argues in a long-form editorial she wrote for her newspaper to address the mission journalism faces in a "time of crisis", that many news organisations are producing digital journalism which

has “become less and less meaningful” as a direct result of the mighty power of Facebook and Google and their ability to “swallow digital advertising”. Viner continues to explain in her editorial that digital news publishers that are funded by algorithmic ads are caught up in a race to chase for the largest audience possible. In order to achieve this target, journalism standards which once were systematically adopted are now compromised by “binge-publishing without checking facts, pushing out the most shrill and most extreme stories to boost clicks” (2016). It truly is a sad state of affairs when an industry which is entrusted to hold politicians and corporate powers to account appears to be disintegrating into one which compromises its core values. *The Ethical Journalism Network* defines the core values of journalism as being “Truth and Accuracy, Independence, Fairness and Impartiality, Humanity and Accountability” (2018), all of which are at risk according to Viner’s observations.

6.2 News Consumption: Previous Research

The study of individuals’ news consumption habits is an often-visited area of study by scholars, the world over. As previously argued, news media is in a constant state of development and media convergence presents new ways for news users to access and consume news. It for this reason that new news media opportunities provide the motivation for continual academic research into news disseminators, their audiences and crucially, the behaviour the consumers of news display.

When embarking on research of this nature, it is important to take into consideration the importance of cultural factors which may influence the results of one’s study; no two countries are the same and demographics within different territories will more often than not demonstrate differing attitudes and behavioural patterns in relation to how they consume news content. Research therefore tends to be extremely localised to account for specific groups. Recent studies embracing news consumption in relation to the influence of mobile technology include Van Damme et al. (2015) who focus on “how mobile device owners position their mobile news consumption in relation to other types of news media outlets” using a sample of Belgian participants. The results of the study showed that the majority of the sample relied on “traditional media outlets to stay informed, only to supplement with online mobile services in specific circumstances” (2015, p.1). Although fascinating a study, the sample is representative of “gender, age and location in Flanders” (2015, p.6), and therefore takes a general perspective of a wide demographic in a given place. Zeller et al. (2014) approach news consumption

from the perspective of exclusively online consumption amongst Canadian users, using a survey sample balanced in terms of gender and educational background. Whilst arriving at the conclusion that users have a typology of media for certain content, the study does not allow the authors to “draw conclusions on demographic factors” (2014, p.226), something my research does address.

My own study builds upon previous research into Spanish university undergraduates’ news consumption habits, which have been attended to by two separate studies conducted in state universities. Neither study is very recent, nor do they consider the habits of undergraduate students in the private university sector, key factors that set my study apart from existing research.

Parratt Fernández (2010) carried out a study of 400 undergraduates at Madrid’s Complutense University to try to understand that section of the population’s attitude towards the paid-for press and to determine if internet was used by the students for news consumption or merely for entertainment purposes. The timing of the study is of importance when drawing comparisons with my own study just as much as the clear difference the social spaces of private and state universities offer, is. In 2010 the use of the smartphone was not as commonplace as it is currently, a factor which is reflected in Parratt Fernández’s results, which, amongst others, conclude that “regardless of the growth of the internet in recent years amongst the young generation, the television continues to be the preferred medium for students for news content” (2010, p.139, translation: Foley-Ryan). The influence of the ubiquity of the mobile phone on news consumption is therefore measured at a time of the device’s infancy for this type of activity and naturally unrepresentative of the contribution it would later make in the field of mobile news consumption amongst this particular age-group.

Túñez’s (2009) study of 1,050 undergraduates studying at the three state universities in Spain’s north-western region of Galicia (Universidade da Coruña, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela & Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo), carried the aims of analysing the relationship between the student population and the printed press, news values and the harmony identified between newspaper content and the demands of the population. The study garnered very interesting results, which again are quite indicative of the time of the study. One clear identification made by the researcher was that based on the respondents’ responses, he could deduce that the newspaper of the future should ideally be “more participative, and most certainly online

to allow for multimedia and interactive possibilities” (2009, p.522, translation: Foley-Ryan).

One can therefore see that news consumption is a diverse area of study and lends itself efficiently to the study of specific social groups in diverse territories around the world. Notwithstanding, the study of news consumption habits amongst Spanish undergraduates in the private university system appears to be a neglected area of research, until now.

7. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

From a theoretical perspective, the study of news consumption by undergraduate students is not supported by one single theoretical framework. There are distinct areas of focus within my study; the *categories* of news consumed by the respondents in the sample, the *ways* in which they consume news from those categories and what gratification this collective consumption affords the sample. Being mindful of this, the theories that provide frameworks to my thesis are an amalgamation of the theories behind News Consumption, Social Space and Uses and Gratifications.

7.1 News Consumption

At the core of this study is the research aim to understand the news consumption habits of the respondents in the sample. When considering what consumption is, it is important that one does not erroneously understand consumption to merely be the reading, watching or listening of a news media text; the consumption of news has deeper connotations than that. Peters (2013) argues that “news consumption is not just something we do, it is something we do in a particular place” (2013, p. 697). This theory that news consumption is intrinsically linked to spatial considerations rings true for the group of people at the centre of this study. The sample is a young group of individuals who are physically mobile for most of the week; their time is spent moving between their homes to university. Once there, the students in question move from classroom to classroom to canteen to library; they are constantly on the move within a shared space. When one spends a frequent amount of time in a particular place or becomes accustomed to a certain timetable or the sharing of space with certain individuals, habits and rituals are formed with regards to interaction and behaviour; news consumption is no exception to this. Early morning news consumption in the 1980s was bolstered by the presence of breakfast news on the television, making it a staple part of breakfast for many households (Peters, 2013). The current generation has access to news literally at their fingertips and I hypothesise that the respondents in this sample make use of their “downtime” between classes (waiting for a class to begin, waiting in a queue at the canteen or at the photocopy department etc) to consume news on mobile devices.

However, it is important to point out that where habits and rituals form an important aspect of news consumption, they are not necessarily rigid nor closed to

modification. As previously stated, news consumption can be influenced by particular times of the day and locations you find yourself in at any given moment. Where this is true, one must also appreciate that news consumption may also be influenced by the emergence of new news media presenting new ways of exhibiting a social reality, or when the emergence of new technology provides a new platform for news consumption, capturing the imagination of its audience (Schrøder & Kobbernagel, 2010). The respondents in the study sample are particularly susceptible to change when it comes to new and exciting ways to experience something that has traditionally had established structures, possibly due their ages and being embedded in a society of media development and convergence.

An additional element that influences the active consumption of news is the perceived “worthwhileness” that individuals subjectively afford to news media. If an individual considers certain news media worthwhile of their time and intellectual investment, it will serve as a motivator to engage with that medium and therefore have a direct influence on their consumption habits (Couldry et al., 2007). Schrøder & Kobbernagel (2010, p. 119-120) devise a framework in which they present the seven interrelated dimensions that constitute the worthwhileness of news media. I have developed this framework (*figure 7.1*) to illustrate how the concept of worthwhileness of news media manifests itself through the respondents in the sample. The relationships identified are personal statements of mine, based on personal observations of the sample which can be afforded to my insider knowledge of the group as a professor at the university in question.

	Dimension Description	Relation to Respondents in the Sample
Temporality	Individual's available time for news consumption.	Long-read journalism may not appeal to the sample because of the short breaks they have during the day, conversely an infographic with news content or snappy headlines may do so.
Spatiality	The likelihood for news consumption due to the location one is in at a given time.	Use of mobile devices make it possible for the sample to consume news easily, both on and off campus.
Materiality	Technological affordances offered by devices for news consumption.	On-campus Wi-Fi and access to smartphones, tablets and PC's support the notion of materiality.
Textuality	The verbal and visual content dimension of worthwhileness. What relevance do individuals afford that content?	The sample are part of the social media generation; if news content does not engage them from the offset, maintaining their attention is challenging.
Economics	Affordability of the news medium.	People, regardless of their social status appreciate free content and access to material. Student budgets are generally tight, the cheaper/freer the better.
Normativity	The effort and personal strength to engage in content and the encouragement received from others.	Social networks are used enormously by the sample's generation and peer pressure ensures most individuals engage in them (most classes have a WhatsApp group where all class members are included).
Participation	Varying modes of participation that can be explored, if the individual desires.	Some news consumers are active in their participation of news consumption and online news content favours interaction tangibly.

Figure 7.1: The seven Dimensions of News Worthwhileness (Adapted from Schröder & Kobbernagel, 2010)

7.2 Social Space

Bourdieu posits that “the social world can be represented as a space” (1985, p.723), and that this space is inhabited by agents who are defined by their positions within that space. The pertinence of social space within the realms of this study is intrinsically connected by the place where the study was carried out and by the people who inhabit that space (discussed at length in the Methodology chapter).

Bourdieu identifies that human behaviour has a dispositional nature and that when people inhabit a similar social space, they can experience “identical histories”

(1990, p.59). Bourdieu's research demonstrates that when such similarities occur, the social space can act as a factor in fostering patterned behaviours, perspectives and tastes (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992).

Connected to the active properties of social space are the embodiments of capital demonstrated by the inhabitants of space. In his work in *Distinction* (1984), Bourdieu explores the distribution of cultural and economic capital in France, based on data gathered from his survey in the 1960's (figure 7.2). Bourdieu places individuals within scales of capital volume, highlighting the *habitus* of individuals, which links their practices to their positions (what they do and how this determines where they fit within a given structure).

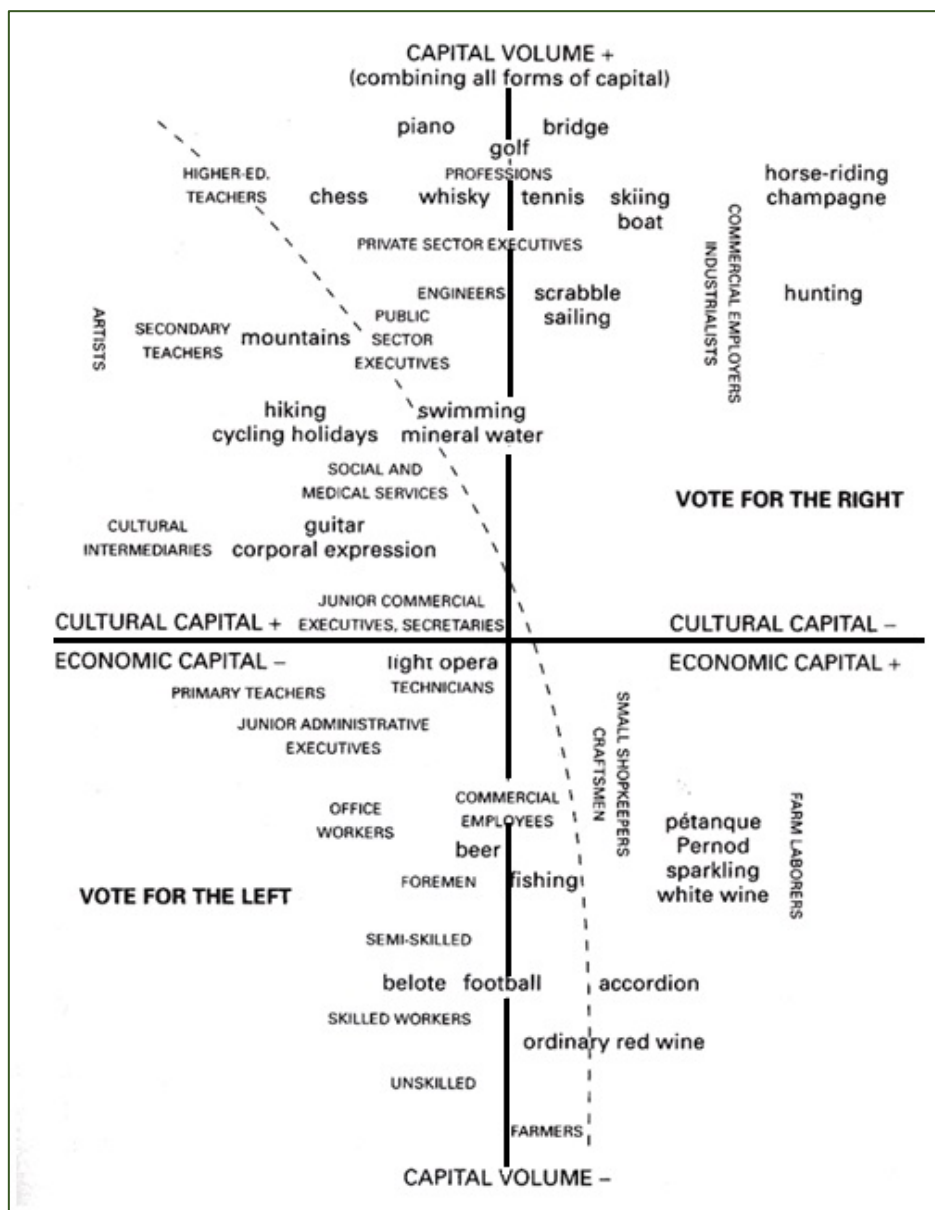


Figure 7.2: Cultural and Economic Capital Distribution in France (Bourdieu, 1984)

Operationalising this theory within my own study is to analyse the theoretical perspectives made by Bourdieu to guide the analysis of the survey results, determining whether the privileged social space (which in this case is the physical space of the university in question and the technological environment that their generation share) inhabited by the respondents in the study sample influences habits of news consumption (and the behaviours, perspectives and tastes contained within that) .

Complimenting the work of Bourdieu in this area of social space is the “duality of structure” as defined by Giddens (1976). Social spaces are by and large, structures and Giddens argues that structures need not be conceptualised “as simply placing constraints upon human agency, but as enabling” (1976, p.169). Within my study this is a fundamental point to bear in mind; it is the agency demonstrated by the news consumers in the sample that is a direct result of the structures made available to them by the content they consume and the technology at their disposal to consume it.

7.3 Uses and Gratifications

The uses and gratifications approach is a theoretical approach which attempts to explain the way in which individuals “use communications, among other resources in their environment, to satisfy their needs and to achieve their goals” (Katz et al., 1973). Although earlier research by numerous scholars had taken place into various areas of mass communication, it was in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s that the uses and gratifications approach gained most prominence (Blumler, 1979), at a time when the measurement of the short-term effects of exposure to mass media campaigns on people was considered disappointing. Since then, much research has been conducted to develop the framework and to apply it to new forms of media so as to understand the gratifications obtained by emergent groups in society resulting from media convergence. The respondents in my study sample are one such emergent group for analysis, therefore indicating the suitability of this approach for this study.

At the core of a uses and gratifications approach is identifying the audience member as an active member (Katz et al., 1973). This is one of the most important elements of the approach to apply to the study at the centre of my thesis; observing the activity of the respondents in the study sample as news consumers and how that activity manifests itself to satisfy the needs of the individual. Recent research by Quan-Haase & Young (2010), which echoes the emphasis of the audience as active members in relation to social media, postulates that as active members the audience seek out distinct forms

of social media for distinct forms of communication, creating a portfolio of communicating tools where gratifications enjoyed from each form are determinable on the structure of the platform in question.

My own study reveals similar patterns with regards to ways news consumption is managed by the respondents in my sample. The uses and gratifications approach has been operationalised in the results analysis in an attempt to understand user behaviour, drawing conclusions from the perceptions of news and the user activity the respondents express.

The three approaches that form the theoretical framework for this study relate to one another in a manner that allows for deeper understanding of the respondents in the study sample. Where the approach of social spaces allows one to understand how people operate within a given space, it does not fully explain *why* they operate in that manner. A similar argument can be made for the uses and gratifications which although places emphasis on the rewards accrued by users for decision they take, it does not take into account taste and social structure, which is the domain of social groups and tells us what influences the content choices made by the respondents in question. The theoretical understanding of news consumption links to the other two approaches to provide the nuances of how space and reward are directly related to consumption behaviour and motivation demonstrated by the social group at the heart of the study. Therefore, and taking into consideration the three theoretical approaches, the interconnected nature of the theoretical framework for the study can be visualised as per *figure 7.3*

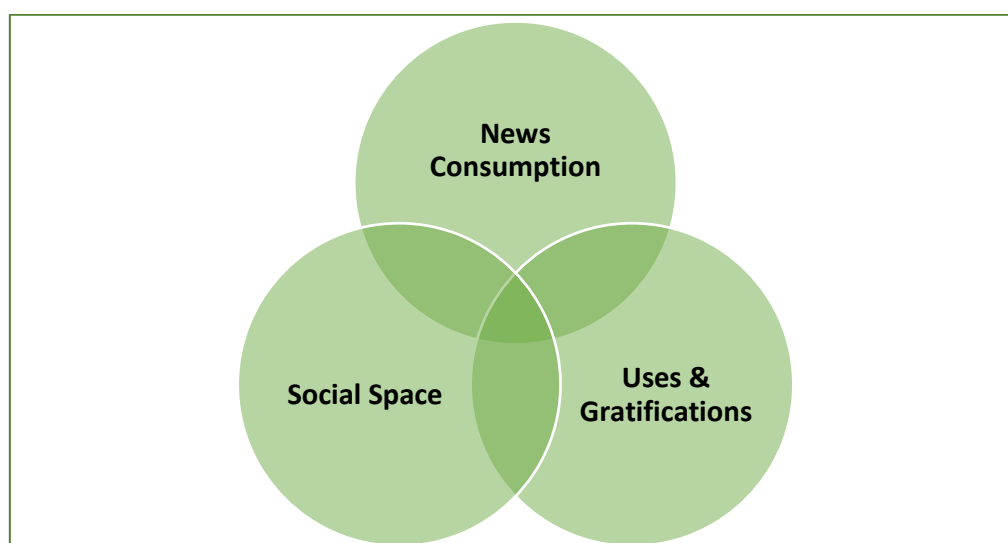


Figure 7.3: Interconnected Theoretical Framework of News Consumption, Social Spaces and Uses & Gratifications

8. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The principal research question and two secondary research questions, accompanied by corresponding hypotheses (which have been generated based on an insider understanding of the sample) are reflected in *figure 8.1*.

	Research Question	Hypotheses
RQ1	How are the current challenges facing journalism, with emphasis on the newspaper industry, reflected in the news consumption habits of Spanish undergraduate students in private education?	H1: The print newspaper industry is kept afloat by older generations and non-digital natives. The respondents in the sample will largely reject the print media in favour of digital.
RQ2	What news content is important to Spanish undergraduate students in private education?	<p>H2: The gender of the respondents will influence the importance they give to certain news categories such as Sport and Gender Equality.</p> <p>H3: The degree course that the respondents are enrolled on, along with the social space they inhabit will be demonstrated in the importance they give to ‘hard’ news categories such as International News and Politics.</p> <p>H4: The respondents will separate their academic lives from their personal lives, which will be reflected in the importance they give to ‘soft’ news categories such as Cinema and Celebrity News.</p>
RQ3	Do traditional news media channels serve the needs of Spanish undergraduate students in private education?	<p>H5: The respondents will favour the use of mobile devices for news consumption because of the opportunities available to them to interact with content and on their terms (location, time of day etc.)</p> <p>H6: The respondents will largely rely on digital content for their news ‘diet’. Content from TV and radio is incompatible with their lifestyles and ‘on-demand’ preferences for news media.</p>

Figure 8.1: Research Questions and Corresponding Hypotheses

9. METHODOLOGY

9.1 *The Survey*

To carry out this study into how undergraduate students engage with news content, a quantitative survey was designed and conducted. The decision to conduct this study using a survey was not down to economic reasons, which can be a key motivator for researchers aiming to collate data efficiently on a large scale, but due to the logistics of the time period I would be conducting my survey in. As the study focusses on university undergraduates, therefore the sample was made up of university students, it was important that I was sensitive of the time I could ethically take from them, given the time of the year in the academic calendar. At the time of data collection, the students in the sample had only three weeks of classes remaining in the academic year 2017-2018. It was therefore essential that my data collection was efficient and did not distract them greatly from their studies at such a crucial time (I originally wanted to also conduct a focus group to take place during a session out-of-class-hours but decided against it for the reasons indicated). Of course, one should acknowledge that one of the weaknesses of surveys is that they do not always offer the depth a study may require (Denscombe, 2010), and if a survey is not well-written then there is further risk a researcher may not obtain accurate data. The wording of the questions in a survey must be as transparent as possible so that maximum clarity is offered to the respondent; this detail is paramount (Layder, 2012). Clear advice from my thesis tutor, who has a wealth of experience in this area of empirical research, and independent research aided me in designing a survey I was content with and confident would garner the data I was seeking.

An almost exclusively structured online survey (*Appendix 14.1*) was written containing 25 closed questions where respondents were asked to select from given answers or rate statements according to a scale, and 3 open questions. The scope of the questions was wide and although the survey appeared to be rather exhaustive, it was designed in a way that would allow students to complete it comfortably in around 25 minutes (piloting the survey beforehand confirmed the approximate time requirements respondents would need).

The decision to limit the survey to only 3 written responses with the remaining 25 questions containing pre-coded answers, was taken largely due to the time

constraints of conducting the survey and for analysing the results. As the intention was to have a sample of 160 respondents (approximately 40 respondents from each degree course), this decision lent itself greatly to efficient data collection and analysis as the use of pre-coded answers means that the “value of the data is likely to be greatest where respondents provide answers that fit into a range of options offered by the researcher” (Denscombe, 2010, p.169). The use of pre-coded answers in a survey is similarly advantageous for the respondent as it requires them to think less about their answers and simply select the most appropriate response from the selection provided.

The questions in the survey were written to directly relate to the research questions in the study. Questions 4 and 10 specifically address the research question ‘*What news content is important to Spanish undergraduate students in private education?*’, whereas the remaining questions are more closely connected to the other key research question of ‘*Do traditional news media channels serve the needs of Spanish undergraduate students in private education?*’ which aims to generate a more nuanced understanding of consumption habits currently in an era of multiple news media convergence.

Within the survey there were numerous questions using Likert scales to gather data to determine how respondents’ news consumption is influenced by the frequency of specific types of media, how they interact with media, their opinions on concrete statements about news, and how they express the levels of trust they have towards specific media outlets and devices. There are 5 questions using a Likert scale that contained only 4 options, breaking slightly from the norm of Likert scales which traditionally contain an odd number (and greater number) of options. The aim of researchers is to obtain responses from their respondents that indicate a definite choice having been made, a state that cannot be achieved should an odd number of options be available to the respondent, giving them the option of a “neutral or intermediate point on a scale”, which may run the risk of affecting the “validity or reliability of the responses” (Garland, 1991, p.66). With this argument in mind, careful consideration was taken as to whether an odd number should have been used for the 5 questions with a Likert scale of 4. As Garland’s (1991) own study has demonstrated, responses to a balanced Likert scale survey tend to be content-specific, and the omission of an intermediate point on the scale does not necessarily mean that respondents will gravitate towards the positive end of the scale as hypothesised by Worcester and Burns (1975).

This research was the determining factor in choosing a 4-point scale for five of the survey questions. To put into context, the questions at discussion here were:

Q.4 How important are the following categories for you when consuming news?

Q.7 How important are the following media in society for news dissemination, in your opinion?

Q.22 How trustworthy is the news via the following media in your opinion?

Q.23 How trustworthy do you consider the following social media as sources of news?

Q.25 Below are some statements on news. How well do they agree with your personal opinions?

To provide respondents with an intermediate point on the scale, in my opinion may have resulted in indefinite answers to the above questions, something I specifically wanted to avoid. As a key focus of my survey is on the types of news and media that are important to the sample and what level of trust they have towards certain sections of the industry, determining definite answers from respondents was fundamental. It is true that these five questions would have required deeper thought and analysis from the sample to properly respond, however I felt that that was preferable to other options available to combat this obstacle. A common technique employed by researchers when designing surveys with Likert scales is to increase the number of scale steps, which has been demonstrated to reduce the number of responses utilising the intermediate point on the scale. A study carried out by Matell and Jacoby (1972) highlighted that when respondents were given a three or five-point scale, there was an average of 20% responses situated at the intermediate point. When the steps in the scale were increased to seven, nine or even nineteen category formats, the number of responses decreased to an average of just 7%. One can learn from this that the removal of the intermediate point has little effect on responses when the category scales are wider, however the amount of time required by respondents to consider questions with wide scales may prove to be off-putting and effect enthusiasm for the completion of the survey if excessive deliberation is required (Denscombe, 2010), again something I was keen to avoid. Admittedly, there is an element of risk involved in taking such measures in a survey and there is a valid argument to be made in suggesting that a scale of few options “is obviously a coarse one, and we lose much of the discriminative powers of which the

raters are capable” (Komorita and Graham, 1965 in Matell & Jacoby, 1971, p.657), therefore limiting the nuanced response a respondent may wish to provide.

9.2 The Research Paradigm

The research paradigm used in this study is positivism. Positivism takes a problem oriented to understand an area of society and centred on “providing explanations of the status quo, social order, consensus, social integration, solidarity, need satisfaction and actuality” (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.26). As the study aim is to observe news consumption and engagement by a specific group of people to identify the reality of that group, which is derived from experience, the study is therefore placed within this paradigm (Blaikie, 2010).

Although surveys as data collection are largely regarded to lend themselves to positivist research paradigm, one should be open to the notion that this does not always have to be the case. Many factors influence the choice of a paradigm as illustrated by Kawulich, 2012) in *figure 9.1*. Researchers should carefully consider each factor to reach a decision on the compatibility of paradigms and the influence one’s research.

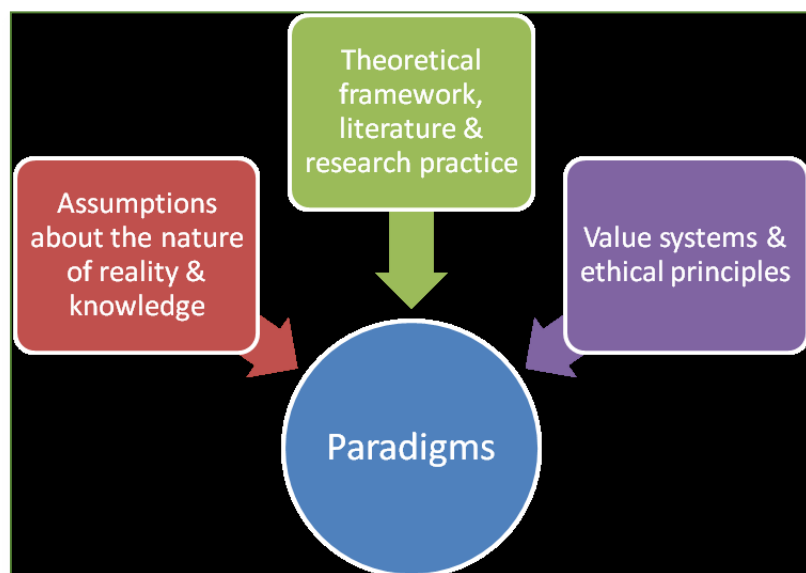


Figure 9.1: Factors influencing the choice of a paradigm (Kawulich, 2012)

Kawulich states that “in the positivism/post-positivism paradigm, the purpose of research is to predict results, test a theory, or find the strength of relationships between variables or a cause and effect relationship” (2012, p.9).

Figure 9.2 illustrates an overview of the positivist paradigm (Chilisa, 2011). Chilisa maps out characteristics of the paradigm such as how the research objective is to discover laws to create generalisations from the data, to be used in a wider context, or that the paradigm encompasses the notion that truth can be measured based on the observations obtained from the study. Such characteristics are clear examples of the suitability of this paradigm for the study of news consumption habits amongst a specific demographic using a quantitative survey.

	Positivist/ Post-Positivist Paradigm
Reason for doing the research	To discover laws that can be generalised and govern the universe
Ontological assumptions	One reality, knowable within probability
Place of values in the research process	Science is value free, and values have no place except when choosing a topic
What counts as truth	Based on precise observation and measurement that is verifiable
Methodology	Quantitative; correlational; quasi-experimental; experimental; causal comparative; survey
Techniques of gathering data	Mainly questionnaires, observations, tests and experiments

Figure 9.2: Positivist/Post-Positivist Paradigm (Adapted from: Chilisa, 2011)

9.3 The Sample

The sample total was 144 students from 4 different degree subjects at a private Catholic university in Spain. The identity of the university is not revealed here for reasons explained in the ethical considerations chapter of this thesis. Although the aim was to have an equal number of students from each degree subject, circumstances beyond my control (numerous student absences on the day of survey completion), meant that there was a discrepancy in sample distribution. The final totals for the respondents, grouped by their area of study is illustrated in *figure 9.3*.

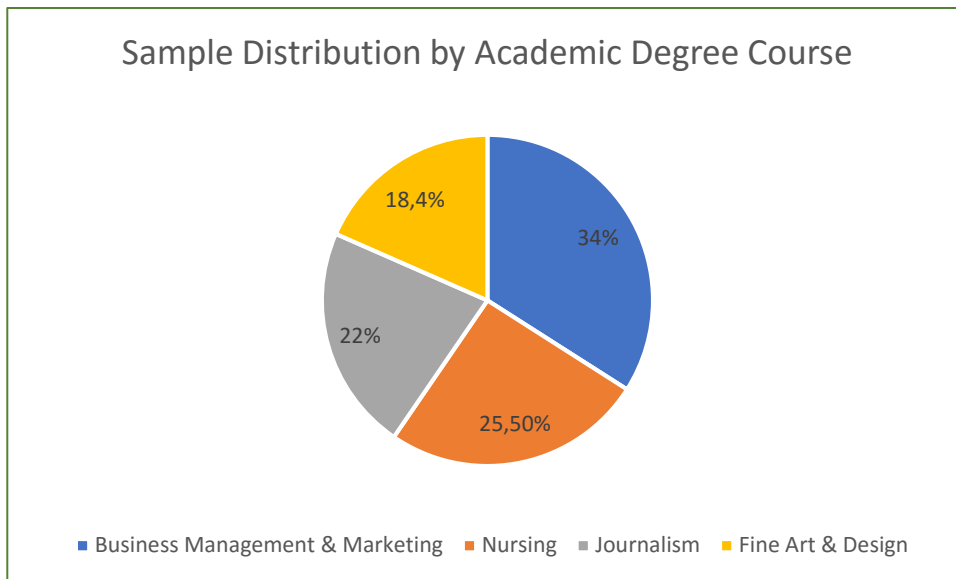


Figure 9.3: Sample Distribution of Survey Respondents According to Academic Degree Course

A further discrepancy in gender is noticeable in the sample, where we can see that female respondents outweigh male respondents by 36 (Figure 9.4). There are justifiable reasons for this discrepancy though. In the degree courses of Nursing and Fine Art & Design, there are traditionally more female than male students, the opposite trend is evident in degree courses such as Business Management & Marketing, which although does not have such a gender imbalance, traditionally attracts more male than female students to the course. We can therefore observe a gender distribution in the survey of 63% female to 37% male, which although is not a hugely balanced sample according to gender, it is a true representation of the gender balance of students at the university in question, which boasts approximately 60% female undergraduate students to 40% male undergraduate students.

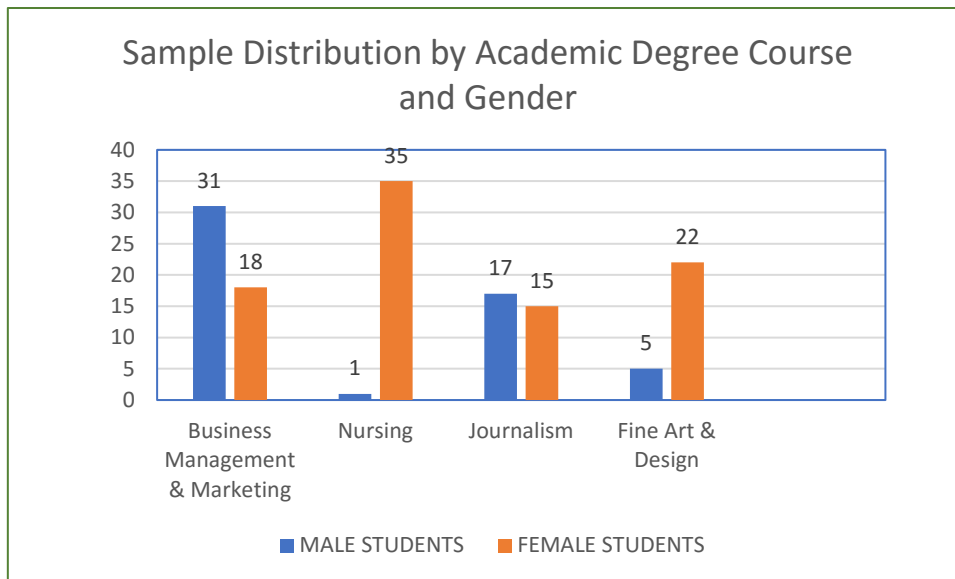


Figure 9.4: Sample Distribution of Survey Respondents According to Academic Degree Course and Gender

As previously mentioned, the university where the survey was carried out is a private university. This is an important factor to take into consideration when analysing the results of the data. The sample cannot strictly be called a representative sample of the population (in this case, the young population of Spanish undergraduate students), as that would be to exclude undergraduate students from state universities in the same city, and of course in Spain, where results may be rather different. The average annual cost of the degree courses that the respondents in the survey study is €3,350 therefore demonstrating that many students in the sample could arguably be said to benefit from having significant economic capital which as Bourdieu posits, “there are some goods and services to which economic capital gives immediate access, without secondary costs” (1986, p.250). Such wealth could clearly influence the choices made by an individual with regards to interests in news and modes of consumption (most students in my own experience at the university come to class equipped with the latest iPhones and Mac PC’s and some are the offspring of individuals occupying professional positions at the highest echelons of society, this may influence the social outlook one may adopt which may be reflected in their news content of choice). I have no experience of working with students in a state university and so cannot hypothesise on how unrepresentative my sample is of the rest of the population within the same age group (80% of the sample were between 18 to 21 years old, with only 20% claiming to be aged 22 years old or more). In relation to the private status of the institution, it should be pointed out that there are some students who receive some sort of financial

sponsorship to facilitate their studies, which is mentioned in greater detail in the ethical considerations chapter. The numbers (*Figure 9.5*) reveal that the large majority do not receive any form of sponsorship, reinforcing the notion of economic capital amongst the sample.

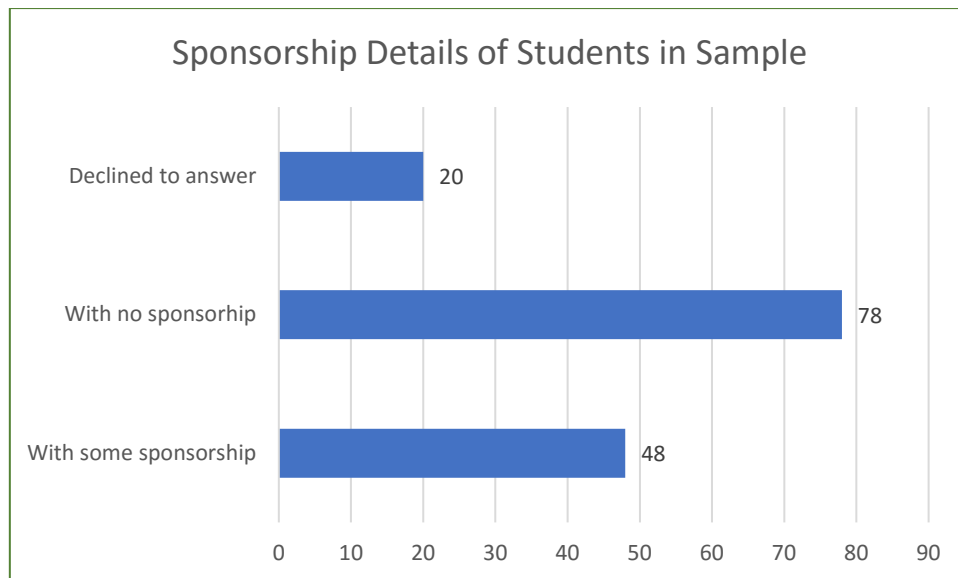


Figure 9.5: Sponsorship Details of Students in the Survey Sample

On a cultural level, it can be argued that the sample demonstrates an equally significant level of cultural capital. Bourdieu states that cultural capital exists in three distinct forms; in an *embodied* state, which refers to the “long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body” (1986, p.242), an *objectified* state, referring to the possession of cultural goods, and in an *institutionalized* state, which is of valid importance for my study and in understanding the sample. Within the *institutionalized* state, Bourdieu posits that one can see an

“objectification of cultural capital in the form of academic qualifications... with the academic qualification, a certificate of cultural competence which confers on its holder a conventional, constant, legally guaranteed value with respect to culture, social alchemy produces a form of cultural capital which has a relative autonomy vis-à-vis its bearer” (1986, p.245).

The respondents in the survey, in the large part have borne witness to Bourdieu’s cultural capital at first hand, with most respondents having parents who are university graduates at undergraduate level or higher (*Figure 9.6*), arguably instilling a sense of academic ambition which could influence engagement with news content. Bourdieu

postulates that a space can be derived from the social world which is “constructed on the basis of principles of differentiation or distribution constituted by the set of properties active within the social universe in question” (1985, p.723), suggesting that the space in which an individual inhabits directly influences the strength and power they hold in that universe. A correlation can be made with some of the sample in this respect and where Bourdieu claims that “agents and groups of agents are thus defined by their relative positions within that space” (p.723), one could suggest that the social status of an individual, or status in which they place themselves, will ultimately influence the choices they make; in this case how they consume and engage with news content.

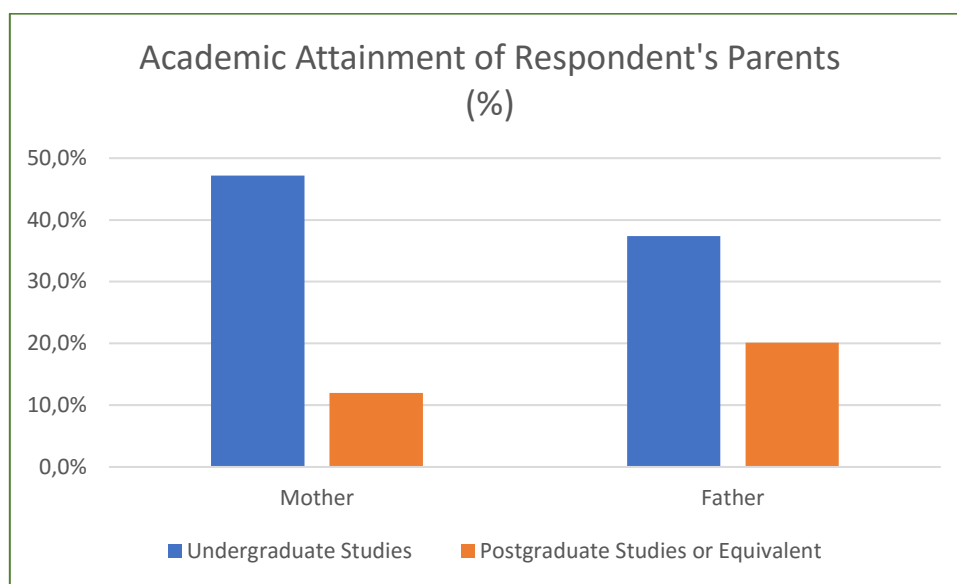


Figure 9.6: Academic Attainment Levels of Sample Respondent's Parents

An additional, yet important note to be made is that there is a degree of non-probability sampling evident in my survey sample. As a researcher, I took discretionary choices in the selection process of the sample by specifically choosing students from degree courses at the opposite ends of the academic spectrum. Denscombe (2010, p.25) states that non-probability sampling can be “used where the aim is to produce an exploratory sample rather than a representative cross-section of the population”. This is a suitable exploratory objective for the study as the sample clearly has limitations; it is only representative of a specific group of people in society, given the factors previously detailed. The results therefore could never be used to lay claim to how young Spanish people consume and interact with news content, which could be seen as one of the limitations of my study. My study does however paint a clear picture of habits adopted

by the group of people who comprise my study, which is an interesting and important area of research nonetheless.

By being strategically selective of the sample's area of study, I could observe any correlations or differences between how distinct types of undergraduate students consume and interact with news and whether my hypotheses on their consumption, based on my own knowledge of the student profiles present in the groups, were correct.

9.4 The Data Collection Process

The survey was conducted online using *Google Forms* and as the sample were university students, the link for the survey was made available to them on the virtual learning platform they have for their Technical English classes, the class in which the surveys took place. Although all respondents in the sample have English classes as part of their degree course, the survey was written completely in Spanish, so as to make comprehension fair for everyone, given that some students have a higher level of English than others. All respondents were Spanish native-speakers and there were no Erasmus students in any of the groups, again, a strategic move to ensure each respondent had an opportunity to complete the survey under the same conditions.

The decision was taken to conduct the survey as a group administered survey, taking advantage of naturally occurring groups, which is often the case with this type of survey. I personally carried out the task of completion by introducing the survey, providing background and context to the research and explaining any questions that may have proved to be ambiguous for some respondents. An example is in question 5 which asks "*How often do you use the following media for news?*" In this question, respondents were asked to justify how often they used certain media for news consumption. I took the opportunity to explain that news consumption referred to myriad types of content and that if they had watched a documentary on Spain's *La 2* TV Channel or *El Intermedio*, a satirical nightly TV programme on *La Sexta*, then they counted as news content, insisting they should not only consider traditional news bulletins as news content. The survey was conducted in four separate sessions, divided by degree course for class scheduling reasons, and respondents could complete the survey using either a laptop PC, smartphone or tablet, as the survey was exclusively online. All classrooms are naturally equipped with Wi-Fi connections and all students come to university with at least a smartphone in their possession, therefore no conflict arose from students not being able to complete the survey if they so desired (I made it

clear that completion of the survey was absolutely voluntary and of course, anonymous).

One of the key elements of success to the data gathering in my opinion, was that I made it clear to the respondents that I would be present for the duration of the survey, and should they wish to clarify anything with me, or indeed give me feedback after completing the survey, then they were free to do so. As Denscombe (2010) argues, the presence of the researcher during the survey completion process results in a tendency for higher response rates than other types of surveys like email or postal surveys, and this is directly related to the personal contact of the researcher, made available to respondents. Additionally, the presence of the researcher is advantageous in that “face-to-face contact offers some immediate means of validating the data”, also giving the researcher an indication of whether the data they are being given is false (Denscombe, 2010, p.16).

Once completion of the survey took place in the four sessions (over a period of three days), the results were downloaded from *Google Forms* into an *Excel* spreadsheet for analysis. Because of time constraints for the whole process of gathering data and conducting research in addition to other personal factors that encroached on my time, no analytical software was employed for the analysis of the results. Admittedly, tools such as IBM’s SPSS analytical software tool would have provided a far more nuanced analysis of the results, which is possibly more complicated to achieve by merely using *Excel*, but financial restrictions and time to explore new programming were the factors that hindered the adoption of this method.

10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The quantitative survey I designed was designed specifically with the sample I knew I was going to use in mind. As the undergraduate students who participated in the survey were students at the university in which I work as a Technical English Language professor, and the survey was conducted on site, it was important that I considered the importance of anonymity for those participants. Before introducing the survey to the students, I ensured them that participation in the survey was completely voluntary and answers would be anonymous.

Spain is a country which has suffered significant political upheaval in its history, and as a people, the Spanish are very politically engaged. My own experience of living as a foreigner in Spain (15 years) has allowed me to observe that political engagement is far greater than I am used to seeing in my home country (U.K), especially amongst the younger generations, who passionately discuss politics at any given opportunity. The Spanish news media reflects this underlying political thread that is ever-present in society and it is a true statement to make in saying that the media has a strong political bias, which is evident across content, whether it be television, radio, newspapers or online publications.

It should also be noted that the university where I conduct my professional life is a private Catholic university and Catholics in Spain are generally considered in society to be conservative-leaning politically, although of course this is not an exact science. It was therefore important that I was mindful of societal attitudes and that within my sample my survey could have been seen to be seeking to further understand political attitudes based on news media selection by the respondents, which was not the case. I designed my survey in a way that would aim to divert those conclusions from being made by respondents, providing balance in response options and keeping personal information (outside of their news consumption) about the respondent, to a minimum. It was crucial to ensure there was no sensitive information related to the university to protect its identity and avoid potential complications for my own professional position there.

As the university in question offers some form of financial sponsorship to more than 25% of its students (which they publish on their own website) I took the opportunity to ask students in the survey if they received any form of sponsorship, and the level of education achieved by their parents. This was done to identify any

correlations between privately-funded and sponsored students and their news consumption practices, observing where possible, the respondents' economic and cultural capital. Again, it was reiterated to the students that they could choose not to answer these questions, given their personal nature.

11. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

11.1 News Categories and Their Importance to the Sample

One of the key research questions for this study is ‘*What news content is important to Spanish undergraduate students in private education?*’ As previously discussed in relation to the sample, a unique group of people was selected to partake in this study, therefore factors such as the respondent’s cultural, economic and social capital (as the sample are university students immersed in specific programmes of study) can lead one to hypothesise that how the respondents attribute importance to news categories will be heavily influenced by those factors; this is served by hypothesis number 3 (H3).

One of the most exhaustive questions (*Q.4 - How important are the following categories for you when consuming news?*) the sample were asked in the survey was to rate 24 different categories of news, situating each category on a scale from 1 to 4 (4 being the most important). The results (limited here to the ten most important news categories by number of respondents; *figure 11.1*) demonstrate a healthy interest in so-called ‘hard news’, generally considered to be news related to politics, the economy and world events, as opposed to ‘soft news’ which is contained under the umbrella term of lifestyle-oriented news (Melin, 2008), confirming the original hypothesis (H3). Travel was the only category that featured in the top ten that would fall under what some may consider to be ‘soft news’.

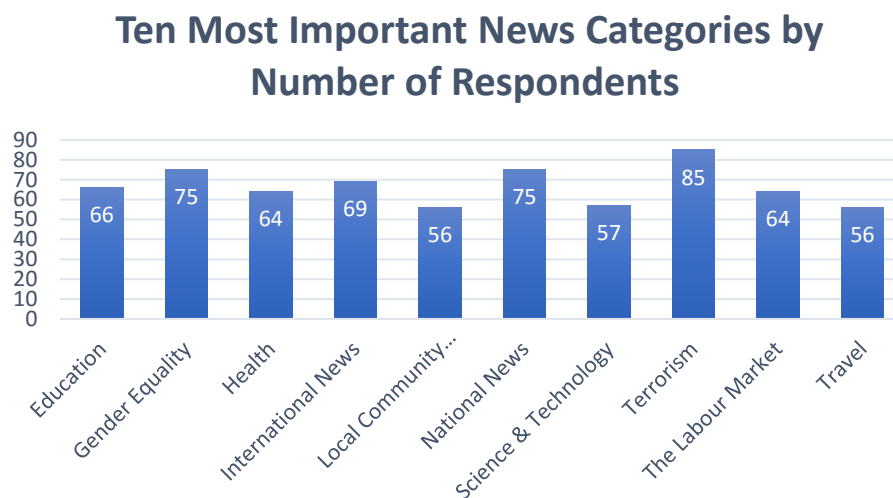


Figure 11.1: The Ten Most Important News Categories by Total Number (144) of Respondents

Considering the age range of the sample, as previously stated, it is somewhat surprising that the categories that score the highest do not feature any leisure-based categories such as Music, Art or Cinema. Hypothesis number 4 (H4) suggested that this would not be the case and a clear division of personal and academic lives would be palpable in the results. As this transpired to not be the case, I attempt to put this into context and provide an explanation for the results by positing that the financial commitment made by the families of the students who study at the university (all students have some financial responsibility, sponsorships are not 100%) implies a certain amount of pressure on the students to remain focussed on their studies, as leisure news content appears to take less prominence in their news consumption habits.

As surveys were anonymous and answered autonomously by respondents, the results are deemed to be accurate and not the fruit of students aiming to impress a teacher (some students were my students, others were not) with the level of intellect they demonstrate with their news choices. There is a stronger sense of the respondents' social capital in the choice of news they express, with manifestations of cultural capital being less disclosed.

Close analysis of the importance given to news categories reveals that in some cases there is a clear division of choices made by students according to their gender (*figure 11.2*).

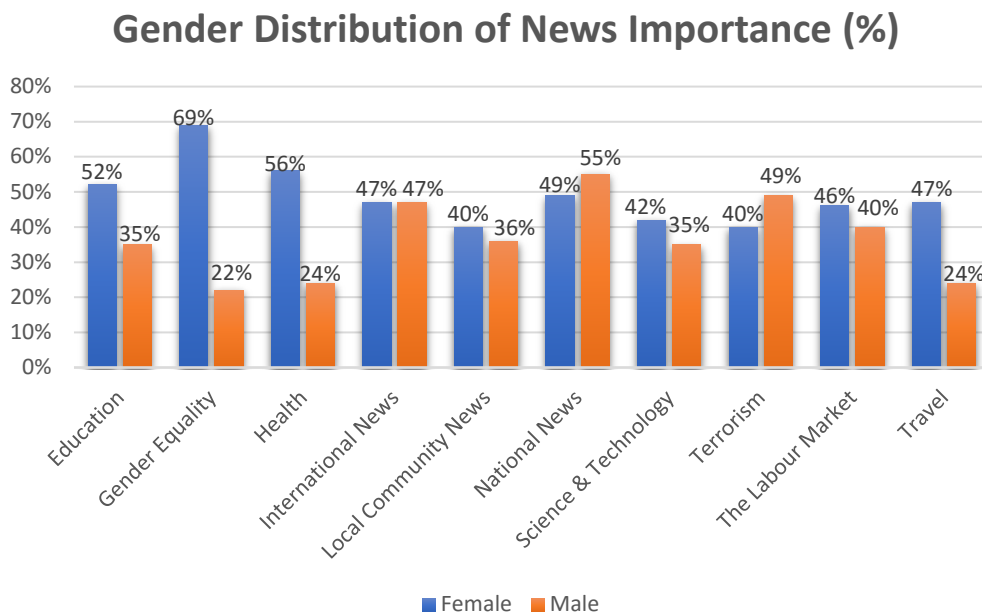


Figure 11.2: The Gender Distribution (%) of News categories by Importance

Although reporting a keen interest in the news categories of Gender Equality, Science & Technology and Terrorism (and an almost even percentage split across degree courses), this interest was not necessarily reflected in the gender balance of the respondents who rated those categories, as hypothesised in hypothesis 2 (H2). Gender Equality as a news category (the second most important on the whole) has a disappointing level of male interest; just 22%, compared to 69% female. It could be argued that the reason for this is that Spain, which has made huge progress in attitudes towards gender equality since the transition into a democratic state in 1975, is seen by some to continue to be very much entrenched in the stereotypical identity of a misogynistic society. The gender pay gap in Spain for 2017 reported that women earned 23% (Gómez, 2018) less than men, supporting the pressing importance female respondents would give to news of that nature. It is however rather disappointing that their male counterparts do not share the same concerns for this area of society still in need of progress. Strong parallels can be drawn with Bourdieu's theory of social space with this important finding. The economic and cultural capital that women possess categorises them within a specific space in society with news of such gender inequality; furthermore, this capital is attributed to all women regardless of where they are situated within a given structure, such as that theorised in *figure 7.2*.

Of least importance was news content concerning cars and celebrity news, followed by Design, Food, Fashion and Theatre. Although scoring low overall results of importance, Design and Fashion news were more popular amongst Fine Art & Design students who rated the news categories of being prime importance, awarding them a maximum score of 4 on the scale of importance by 56% and 30% respectively. Students from the remaining two degree courses had significantly less interest in these two news categories; only 16% of Journalism students showed a passionate interest in Fashion news and 3% of Nursing students expressing a strong affiliation with Design news.

Although Sports news did not appear in the top ten most important news categories (only 28% of respondents placed Sport at the most important end of the scale), all the respondents were male. Interestingly, 25% of respondents placed Sports at the lowest end of the importance scale, all were also male.

Where the news category of Health is dominated by interest from female respondents (56% compared to 24% male), it is important to highlight that almost half (29 out of 64 respondents) were Nursing students. This finding is to be expected, that

being their area of study and indicative of a trend for attributing more importance to certain news categories than others due to the chosen degree programme of the respondent (H3). Similar correlation can be seen within the news categories of International, Local Community and National News (*figure 11.3*), whereby the respondents who demonstrate the most interest are students of Business Management & Marketing and Journalism; all students who have a vested interest in acquiring further knowledge to support information learnt as part of their degree courses.

	International News	Local Community News	National News
Business Mgt. & Marketing	47%	33%	45%
Nursing	33%	39%	36%
Journalism	69%	59%	78%
Fine Arts & Design	37%	22%	40%

Figure 11.3: % Values of Importance Awarded to International, Local Community and National News Categories According to Degree Courses of Respondents

A direct relation can be made between the dimension of ‘textuality’ and ‘normativity’ as theorised in Schröder & Kobbernagel’s (2010) news worthwhileness framework. With regards to ‘textuality’, one imagines that a student will make an informed decision about the end-result of investing time (and possibly money) into a certain news text. If the reward is academic improvement, then more worthwhile the text can be deemed. ‘Normativity’ would manifest itself amongst this group of individuals if they see that their peers are similarly engaged in a particular text, or if they receive encouragement from a professor.

It can therefore be deduced from the results that the types of news which are of prime interest to the group in the sample are partly connected to the areas of study of the respondents, and the respondents’ gender also occasionally influences category interest. However, some areas of news do generate interest across the board, reiterating the notion of worthwhileness of news consumption, which is subjective. The results suggest that respondents have a profound social conscious and their choices are not exclusively defined by their academic study choices, illustrating the separation of the student from the citizen, which is partially hypothesised in H4.

11.2 Forms of News Consumption

Developing a greater understanding of how the young people in the sample consume news content is central to the study and supported by the research question *‘Do traditional news media channels serve the needs of Spanish undergraduate students in private education?’* Respondents were asked to rate the type of media they use for news consumption (*figure 11.4*) to gauge whether so-called traditional news media such as newspapers, TV and radio were relevant to them, in comparison to digital media such as social media networks, online news and blogs.

More than half of respondents (82 out of 144) claimed to consume news via linear television at least once per day, in some cases more, supporting the findings of earlier studies of news consumption amongst Spanish (state university) undergraduates (Parratt Fernández, 2010). Where this demonstrates the short-sightedness of my hypothesis (H6) which suggests that news content from TV and radio is incompatible with the sample, it is nonetheless an encouraging result for a generation which is oft-seen as the ‘on-demand generation’ (Kramer, 2017) who watch television strictly on their terms. However, comprehension of how Spanish social spaces operate, and the habitus contained within those spaces goes some way to explaining the trend of linear television being a significant medium for news consumption (conversely, online television was used with the same frequency by only 35 respondents). The Spanish as a people are very sociable and an important part of daily life is mealtimes, and the sharing of such. Workers, school children and university students all over the country routinely return home for lunch or dine out in local bars or restaurants and a common feature to be found in many of the homes or eating establishments is the presence of a television, often tuned into the lunchtime news bulletins. Similar practices are to be witnessed at dinner time, therefore making the figures for news content consumption via linear television unsurprising.

Where there is cause for concern, and in line with evidence presented in the earlier literature review, is the number of respondents who count on physical newspapers as a means for news consumption; a staggering 71 respondents claimed to never pick up a newspaper, with a further 34 respondents stating that they looked at a newspaper less than once a week. These data correlate with the falling newspaper circulations mirroring the newspaper industry, as previously reported and present a clear contrast to the studies of Túñez (2009) and Parratt Fernández (2010) whose studies demonstrate a time when newspapers, although were waning in popularity, were still a

staple of the news diet of that generation (emphasis on social spaces, aside). It would appear that young people, or certainly the young people in the sample, have little interest in non-digital media for news consumption, with the exception of television. Although non-digital radio fared better than online radio, I would attribute this evidence to radio consumption by respondents in the car on the way to university, which is located in a non-urban area outside of the city (most students drive to the campus each day).

One can observe from the results, and in response to RQ3, that traditional news media channels largely do not serve the needs of the sample. There is almost total rejection of print newspapers and magazines by this group in society who clearly feel that these media are not relevant to them. Greater confidence is shown towards online newspapers or newspaper apps (online magazines do not reveal significant data), with 74 out of 144 respondents using them at least once per day, in most cases more.

Respondents therefore largely use news media on their own terms; they demand content at times suitable to them and fitting of their roles as active audience members, as postulated by Katz et al. (1973). The gratifications of such practice are the control one has over consumption. An online newspaper or app affords the user with the ability to customise content and alerts, which cannot be achieved via a print model, demonstrating that this is of great appeal to this generation of news consumer.

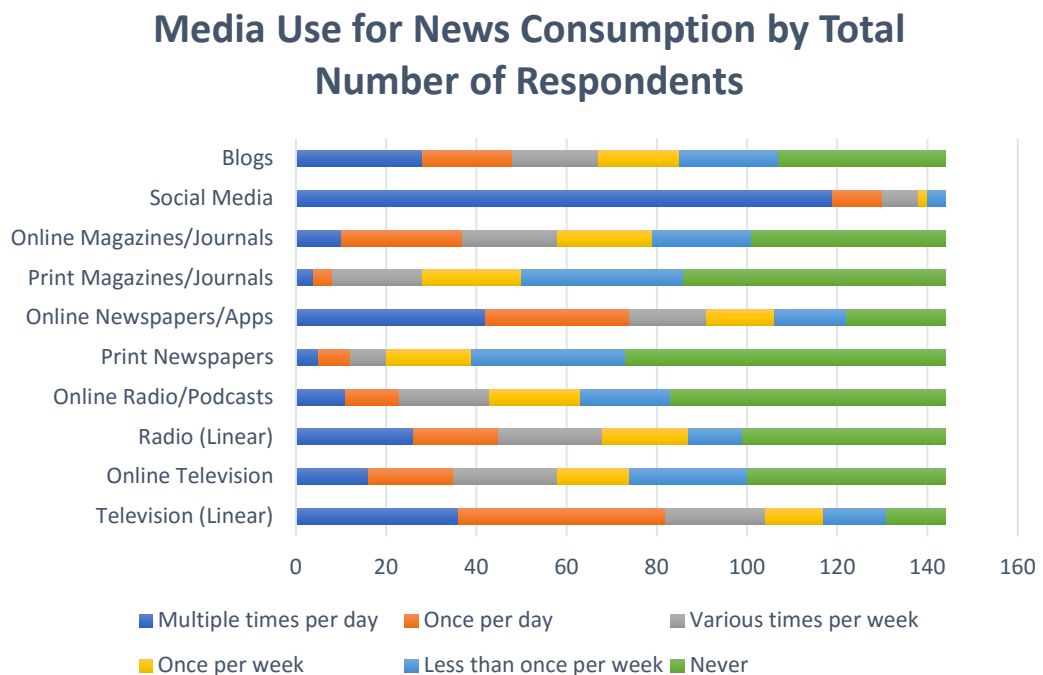


Figure 11.4: Media Use for News Consumption by Total Number (144) of Respondents

Such data then begs the question, which media *is* relevant to this group? The answer is, social media. All respondents in the sample claimed to use social media as a means of consuming news content, more than any other media in the survey. *Figure 11.5* demonstrates the frequency reaches far beyond a daily glance, going much further than that; 84% of respondents state that they use these media at various intervals during the day. I posit that we clearly see evidence of the on-demand generation expressing the power of the agency they have which is afforded to them by the structure of social media, which allows for consumption and active interaction at the disposal of the user (only 6% of the sample claim to have not shared a news report via social media in the previous seven days and 88% of the sample stated that they had commented on news reports via social media during the same timeframe).

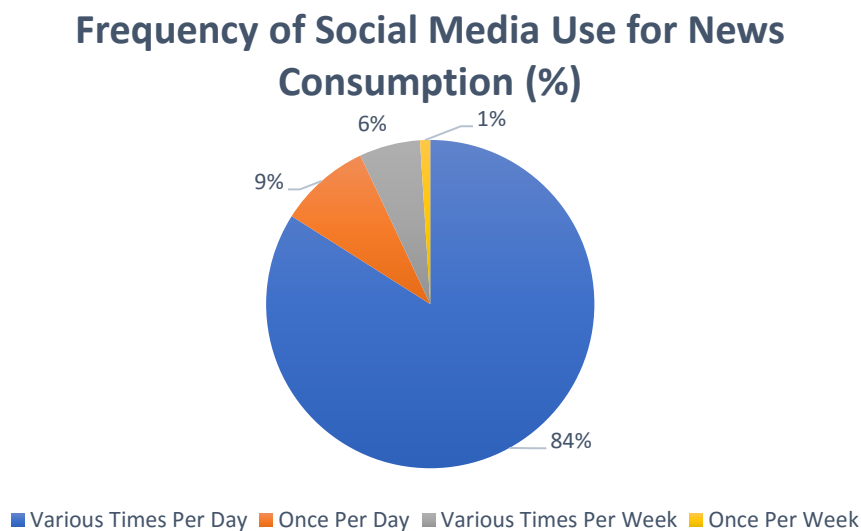


Figure 11.5: Frequency of Social Media Use for News Consumption by % of Total Number of Respondents

The gratification to be had from sharing content goes some way to boosting ones social or cultural capital also. Individuals use news content, which they publish on their social media, as a way of constructing their online profiles, creating identities of who they want to be seen as, or who they want to be. This allows taste to govern status within a social (online) space, much like Bourdieu’s study of the French and their cultural and economic capital (*figure 7.1*). Additionally it can be identified that the ‘economics’ dimension of Schröder & Kobbernagel’s (2010) worthwhileness framework sits comfortably with this significant support towards social media use for

news consumption, the economic investment required merely being access to a smartphone and Wi-Fi or data.

Social media networks naturally lend themselves to consumption via mobile devices, such is their structure; on-the-go media that users dip in and out of at their convenience without requiring the user to sit at a computer to engage and interact with its content. It should therefore not go unnoticed that the respondents in the sample affirmed to using mobile phones as their preferred choice of mobile device for news consumption (*figure 11.6*), reinforcing the notion that this generation of active news consumers desires complete control over their news consumption and traditional media channels simply do not cater for this demographic in their current form.

Preferred Mobile Devices for Online News Consumption (%)

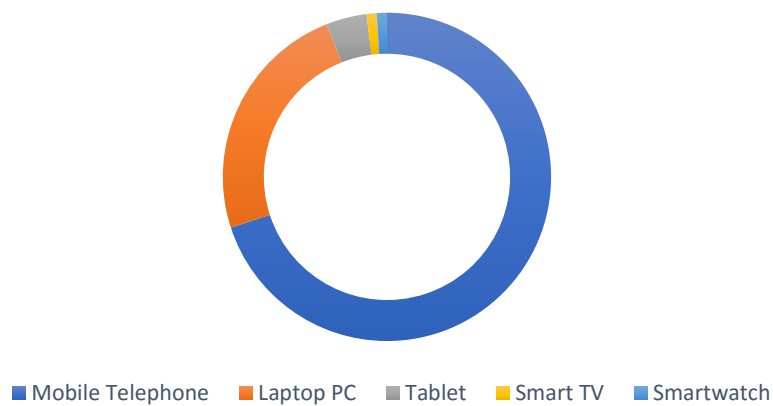


Figure 11.6: Preferred Mobile Devices Used for Online News Consumption by %

11.3 News and Considerations of Trust

A combination of media convergence and economic viability, from a production perspective, has enabled the news consumer to build individual portfolios of news content for personal consumption (Couldry et al., 2007), from multiple providers and in varying forms. Consumer engagement in any industry is reliant upon a notion of trust felt for the product or service to instil consumer loyalty which will determine the success or failure of said product or service.

Within the survey, the respondents in the sample was asked a question regarding the levels of trust they place in distinct news media (Q.22) in the anticipation that clear explanations for their news consumption habits could be detected. The results in this

section (*figure 11.7*), when analysed in direct comparison to the types of media used by respondents in the sample, as detailed in *figure 11.4*, provide some of the most interesting results of the study and are summarised thus:

- Public television and radio are trusted more than their commercial counterparts. This trust correlates with consumption rates.
- Print and online newspapers and apps are deemed to be trustworthy on equal levels. However, the trust placed in print newspapers is not reflected in the consumption of this medium, this is only the case with online newspapers/apps.
- Social media is overwhelmingly deemed to be untrustworthy as a medium for news dissemination, with 71% of respondents placing the medium at the lower end of the scale of trust. This figure does not tally with the number of users though; 90% of respondents claim to use the medium at least once a day and many respondents more so.
- The only medium to generate a balanced use-to-trust ratio is blogs. Blogs appear to be a medium which is increasingly used for news consumption, although as a medium it clearly has its doubters. In Q.25 the sample was asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement: *A person doesn't have to be a journalist working for a well-known publication or channel to be considered a reliable source of news information.* 59% of the sample demonstrated a strong level of agreement with the statement, illustrating a generation of news consumers open to content originating from less traditional disseminators of news that may or may not adhere to the core values of journalism set out by *The Ethical Journalism Network*, as previously detailed.

Perception of Trust of Specific Media for News Consumption by Total Number of Respondents

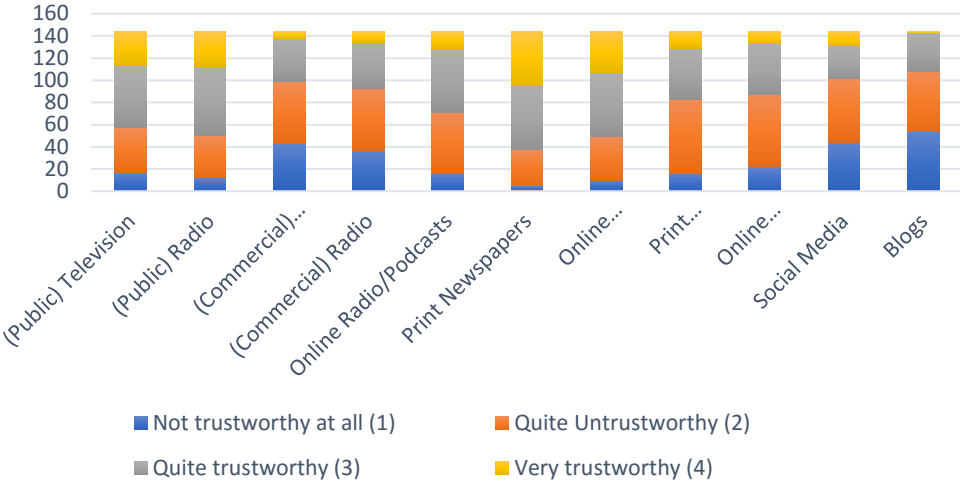


Figure 11.7: Perception of Trust of Specific Media for News Consumption by Total Number (144) of Respondents

12. CONCLUSION

This study of 144 undergraduate students at a private Spanish university set out to understand the news consumption of the group in terms of the types of news they consumed, the frequency and the modes of consumption. Examining the challenges of falling sales and advertising revenue currently faced by the print newspaper industry as a point of departure, the study presents examples of how advances in technology have enabled media convergence to flourish, resulting in the emergence of new dimensions to the ever-evolving news industry which in turn, provides news consumers with an increasingly diverse and exciting portfolio of news outlets to choose from for consumption.

One of the main aims of the study was to track how this emergence of novel news media connected with the respondents in the study sample. The increasing dominance of social media and interactive technologies have afforded the news industry with the opportunity to structure their media which permits news consumers to become more actively involved in news consumption than ever before, with the study revealing that respondents in the study sample actively shared or commented on news via social media with exceptional frequency and passionate interest. The appetite for social media is directly linked to the devices employed by respondents for news consumption. The mobile phone is revealed in the study to be the preferred mobile device for online news consumption, indicating to news producers the importance of recognising the agency online news structures and devices provide news consumers with. Frequent interaction with news content is a clear manifestation of the gratification this media provides, the study demonstrating how audience loyalty to news disseminators has been cemented because of the technology and not necessarily the publication. This finding directly responds to RQ3 in that it would appear that traditional news media channels do not serve the needs of this group of individuals, much like the findings of Túnuez's (2009) study which found that undergraduate news consumers were not completely satisfied with the news dissemination available to them at the time and delineated a vision for the newspaper of the future. The continual convergence evident in news media indicates that news disseminators have to work at a relentless pace to cater for their audiences. Attempting to foresee audience demands in line with new technological advances means that often, developments in certain areas of the news media embody a sense of 'catch-

up', more than they do innovation, which a young demographic clearly demands from those who provide them with news content.

The types of news of interest to the students who participated in the study was of equal importance to the study, with the research aiming to discover if one of the reasons for low engagement with print media with this social group is related to the editorial content, which does not appeal to the group. This hypothesis has not proven to be true within this group and news choices are illustrated to be as intrinsically linked to the areas of study (and/or) of the individual as they are to society at large, demonstrating that the individuals have a clear social conscious regarding their news choices. One could relate news choices within this group to the positions the students hold within the social group they inhabit; at the university the students study at, all students participate in a social programme requiring them to carry out voluntary work at local centres for social support (working with the disabled, economically disadvantaged children or the elderly). Such participation undoubtedly bolsters social capital and can be linked to their news consumption choices.

Of particular interest in the study is the amount of trust individuals place in specific publications or media for news dissemination. As the study reveals that there are not always correlations between what is deemed to have editorial integrity, and what is favoured as a means of consumption, further research in this area could aim to understand why this is the fact, beyond the conclusion that mobile devices are the most comfortable devices to use for individuals who are physically mobile for most of the day. Such research could serve to help areas of the news industry who are deemed to be trustworthy, but do not attract active interest from this group, adapting their production to capture the attention of this audience and engage with them.

The study presented here as it stands has limited relevance on society as a whole but serves to better understand the choices made by Spanish undergraduate students in the private university system, a significant group nonetheless. The findings of the study are of relevance to teachers not only at the university in question, but also to educational professionals at educational establishments of similar characteristics. The findings provide solid data that could be drawn upon for curricular content planning and for class activities and the study is of interest to better understand the students of each of the degree courses featured. All the 76 universities in Spain are members of a non-profit association called CRUE, which work together to provide a singular and collective dialogue to the government with regards to political decisions taken in relation to higher

education. There is therefore an established network of communication between all the universities in the country where the findings of the study could be distributed and built upon, with more extensive research via collaboration with other universities. Future research of interest would be to carry out a country-wide study, incorporating data collated from state universities to deepen analysis of the effects of social space on habitus and expressions of capital as prescribed by Bourdieu.

Considering the broader relevance of this study would be to carry out a study with young people who were not university students. This would provide a strong comparative analysis of the news interests of the age group in question that would enable producers in the industry of news with useful data to cater their content to specific groups, and ultimately strategize ways of monetising that content, for the future safeguarding of the industry.

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14. APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: YOUNG PEOPLE AND NEWS SURVEY (An English Translation of the Spanish Survey Used by the Sample)

1. **Gender:** Male ___ Female ___
2. **Age:** 18 ___ 19 ___ 20 ___ 21 ___ 22 ___ 23 ___ 24 ___ 25+ ___
3. **Degree Subject:** Business Management & Marketing ___
Nursing ___
Journalism ___
Fine Art & Design ___

NEWS CONTENT & MEDIA

4. **How important are the following categories for you when consuming news?**
Circle your answer and answer all questions.

	Not important at all		Very important	
Art	1	2	3	4
Business & Economy	1	2	3	4
Cars	1	2	3	4
Celebrity News	1	2	3	4
Design	1	2	3	4
Education	1	2	3	4
Fashion	1	2	3	4
Film	1	2	3	4
Food	1	2	3	4
Gender Equality	1	2	3	4
Health	1	2	3	4
Immigration	1	2	3	4
International News	1	2	3	4
Local Community News	1	2	3	4
Music	1	2	3	4
National News	1	2	3	4
Nature	1	2	3	4
Politics	1	2	3	4
Science & Technology	1	2	3	4
Sport	1	2	3	4
Terrorism	1	2	3	4
The Labour Market	1	2	3	4
Theatre	1	2	3	4
Travel	1	2	3	4

5. How often do you use the following media for news? Answer all options.

	Multiple times per day	Once per day	Various times per week	Once per week	Less than once per week	Never
Television (Linear)						
Online Television						
Radio (Linear)						
Online Radio/Podcasts						
Print Newspapers						
Online Newspapers/Apps						
Print Magazines/Journals						
Online Magazines/Journals						
Social Media						
Blogs						

6. How often do you use these platforms for news content consumption? Answer all options.

	Multiple times per day	Once per day	Various times per week	Once per week	Less than once per week	Never
Facebook						
Facebook Messenger						
Instagram						
LinkedIn						
Pinterest						
Snapchat						
Twitter						
WhatsApp						
YouTube						
Other						

7. How important are the following media in society for news dissemination, in your opinion? Circle your answer and answer all questions.

	Not important at all important		Very	
	1	2	3	4
Television	1	2	3	4
Radio	1	2	3	4
Online News Platforms	1	2	3	4
Social Media Platforms	1	2	3	4
Print	1	2	3	4
Magazines/Journals				
Print Newspapers	1	2	3	4
Books	1	2	3	4

ONLINE NEWS

8. When accessing online news content, which devices do you use? Select as many options as appropriate.

- Mobile telephone ___ - Computer ___ - Tablet ___ - Smart TV ___ - Smartwatch ___

9. Which mobile device do you use mostly for accessing online news content? Select only one option.

- Mobile telephone ___ - Laptop PC ___ - Tablet ___ - Smart TV ___ - Smartwatch ___

10. In the last week, how often have you consumed and interacted with online news content? Answer all options.

	Multiple times per day	Once per day	Various times per week	Once per week	Less than once per week	Never
Read news reports						
Read headlines						
Watched videos (live or clips)						
Looked at photo galleries						
Read blogs						
Listened to radio (live or podcasts)						
Read live updates on breaking news						
Read news based on 'the most read' within a publication						
Shared news (via a link) on social media (Twitter, Facebook etc.)						

Commented on news on social media (Twitter, Facebook etc.)						
Shared news via instant message (WhatsApp, FB Messenger etc.)						
Commented on news via instant message (WhatsApp, FB Messenger etc.)						
Indicated a “like” on a piece of news						
Voted in a news-related survey on a news or social media platform						
Other						

SPANISH NEWS SOURCES

11. Which of the following online and offline newspapers have you used for news content in the last week? *Select as appropriate.*

	ABC	AS	Cinco Días	El Economista	El Mundo	El País	El Periódico	La Razón	20 Minutos	Other
Online										
Offline										
Neither										

12. Which of the following exclusively online newspapers have you used for news content in the last week? *Select as appropriate.*

	El Confidencial	Eldiario.es	Cinco Días	Huffington Post	MSN Noticias	OK! Diario	Público	Yahoo! noticias	Other
Yes									
No									

13. Which of the following online and offline TV channels have you used for news content in the last week? *Select as appropriate.*

	Antenna 3	Cuatro	La Sexta	Telecinco	Telemadrid	TVE	Other
Online							
Offline							
Neither							

14. Which of the following online and offline Radio Stations have you used for news content in the last week? *Select as appropriate.*

	Cadena SER	COPE	Local Radio	RTE	Other
Online					
Offline					
Neither					

15. Which online newspaper do you prefer? *Choose only one option.*

- ABC ___
- AS ___
- Cinco Días ___
- El Confidencial ___
- Eldiario.es ___
- El Economista ___
- El Mundo ___
- El Pais ___
- El Periódico ___
- Huffington Post ___
- La Razón ___
- MSN Noticias ___
- OK! Diario ___
- Público ___
- Yahoo! Noticias ___
- 20 Minutos ___
- Other ___

16. Which online TV channel do you prefer? *Choose only one option.*

- Antena 3 ___
- Cuatro ___
- La Sexta ___
- Telecinco ___
- Telemadrid ___
- TVE ___
- Other ___

17. Which online Radio station do you prefer? *Choose only one option.*

- Cadena SER ___
- COPE ___
- Local Radio ___
- RTE ___
- Other ___

18. Do you use any English-language sources for news content?

Yes ___

No ___

19. If you have marked 'yes' in question 18, what is your preferred newspaper in English?

20. If you have marked 'yes' in question 18, what is your preferred programme or TV Channel for news content in English?

21. If you have marked 'yes' in question 18, what is your preferred Radio station or podcast for news content in English?

NEWS RELIABILITY

22. How trustworthy is the news via the following media in your opinion?

Circle your answer and answer all questions.

	Not trustworthy at all		Very	
	trustworthy			
(Public) Television	1	2	3	4
(Public) Radio	1	2	3	4
(Commercial) Television	1	2	3	4
(Commercial) Radio	1	2	3	4
Online Radio/Podcasts	1	2	3	4
Print Newspapers	1	2	3	4
Online	1	2	3	4
Newspapers/Apps				
Print Magazines/Journals	1	2	3	4
Online	1	2	3	4
Magazines/Journals				
Social Media	1	2	3	4
Blogs	1	2	3	4

23. How trustworthy do you consider the following social media as sources of news? Circle your answer and answer all questions.

	Not trustworthy at all		Very trustworthy	
Facebook	1	2	3	4
Instagram	1	2	3	4
Pinterest	1	2	3	4
Snapchat	1	2	3	4
Twitter	1	2	3	4
YouTube	1	2	3	4

24. According to the *Digital News Report Spain 2017* (University of Navarra), the following are the 10 most popular online news sources in Spain. How trustworthy do you consider each source? Circle your answer and answer all questions.

	Not trustworthy at all			Very trustworthy		I don't know
- El Pais	1	2	3	4	5	*
- El Mundo	1	2	3	4	5	*
- Antena 3	1	2	3	4	5	*
- Local Online Newspapers	1	2	3	4	5	*
- 20 Minutos	1	2	3	4	5	*
- El Confidencial	1	2	3	4	5	*
- Eldiario.es	1	2	3	4	5	*
- Marca	1	2	3	4	5	*
- Yahoo! Noticias	1	2	3	4	5	*
- La Sexta	1	2	3	4	5	*

NEWS STATEMENTS

25. Below are some statements on news. How well do they agree with your personal opinions? Circle your answer and answer all questions.

	Strongly disagree				Strongly agree			
Print newspapers are too slow for the speed of current society. They are an outdated source of news.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Print newspapers offer quality journalism that the reader can trust.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Online versions of newspapers have the same standards of journalism as the print versions.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
I consume news online because it is convenient to do so with my mobile phone/tablet.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
If I didn't have a mobile phone/tablet I wouldn't actively consult news by	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

non-digital sources (print newspapers, TV, radio etc.)				
I do not read news online if I feel the source is untrustworthy.	1	2	3	4
I only share news with others if I feel comfortable that the source is trustworthy.	1	2	3	4
A person doesn't have to be a journalist working for a well-known publication or channel to be considered a reliable source of news information.	1	2	3	4
Bloggers, vloggers and influencers understand my generation's news-content needs.	1	2	3	4
TV Journalists understand my generation's news-content needs.	1	2	3	4
Radio Journalists understand my generation's news-content needs.	1	2	3	4
Newspaper (print or online) journalists understand my generation's news-content needs.	1	2	3	4

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

26. I am a student...

- Without sponsorship ___
- With sponsorship ___
- With partial sponsorship ___

27. What is your mother's highest completed level of education?

- Compulsory school or equivalent ___
- Qualified vocational training ___
- University (not completed) ___
- University (graduated) ___
- Postgraduate studies or equivalent ___
- Other or N/A ___

28. What is your father's highest completed level of education?

- Compulsory school or equivalent ___
- Qualified vocational training ___
- University (not completed) ___
- University (graduated) ___
- Postgraduate studies or equivalent ___
- Other or N/A ___

