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### **Mass media uses among undergraduate students in Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh**

**Ananya Singh**

*ICSSR-PDF, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India*

#### **Abstract:**

*Exposure of female and male towards mass media is an important factor for any development of program or scheme, which make them familiar with those new ideas. The present study used data from the primary data conducted between 2021-2022 from undergraduate students of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. This includes data on the various aspects of students like demographic – socioeconomic characteristics, and use of different type of mass media exposure among undergraduate students. Percentage distribution and Chi square test was performed to examine the mass media uses among undergraduate students. The study presented the significant differences among male and female students in media use. Result indicated that male students reported significantly higher ratio in use of all categories of mass media compared to their counterpart female students. Those students who were having more friends were using significantly more mass media including all the three types, compared to those having less number of friends.*

**Key words: mass media, print media, broadcast media, social media, undergraduates**

**Introduction:** Mass media is an instrument to work for awareness, learning and entertainment for the betterment of community (Asp et al., 2014; Igbino et al., 2020; Meulemann et al., 2009). Mass media should be accessible easily for each and every group of society regardless of their gender, caste, economy or religion. Mass media exposure must be more or equally distributed in all strata of students but previous studies suggested that men are more likely mass media exposed while women are lacking in media exposure (González et al., 2014). Mass media is generally used to transfer the information from the one area of the nation to the rest of the areas. In recent time, mass media have a strong influence on teenage lifestyles. Mass media has both positive and negative impact on society development. Most of the young population likes watching television and video and they are indirectly affected by antagonist character in the shows. Mass media is also considered to have a significant impact on students' attitudinal or behavioral habits, as well as their academic success (Treapăt, 2017; UNICEF, 2013).

The mass media has a significant impact on the lives of people and it has the capacity to transform the pattern of human thought and behavior. Petty et al., (2009) reported that mass media has the capacity to alter how people think, feel, and act. Recent studies also revealed that mass media have major role in bringing women empowerment (Seidu et al., 2020), to educate them and to make aware about their society outside their home. Media exposure is known as a source of “Empowerment” for women just as education is (Dasgupta, 2019). Mass media exposure bring women empowerment, including their capacity to take household decisions (Jensen and Oster, 2009; Ting et al., 2014). Use of mass media is very much important for any developmental programme for both the gender in society (Ghosh et al., 2021; Asp et al., 2014; Fatema and Lariscy., 2020). Use of mass media varies extensively within developing countries, especially when examine the exposure to broadcast and newspaper between city and village areas, the rich and the poor, and people with different education levels. Very limited studies have been done till now which give the detail picture of mass media uses among undergraduate students of Varanasi city. To fill the research gap by highlighting the differences in mass media exposure, the present study aims to explore the predictor for exposure to regular mass media among undergraduate students.

**Data and Method:** The present study used the primary data conducted between 2021-2022 from the undergraduate students of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. This data includes the various aspects of students like demographic – socioeconomic characteristics, and use of different type of mass media among undergraduate students. In order to collect this data, 520 undergraduate students were surveyed through purposive sample technique. Fieldwork was conducted just after Covid -19 pandemic and covering students from different faculty, who were coming to the university and attending the classes. This study used primary data in which consent from each respondent was obtained. Data for the present study is available under the ICSSR domain without any specific identifier.

The analysis in the study is based on the framework adopted from existing literature towards mass media exposure that which mass media exposure have differential distribution among both the gender of undergraduate students. Various socio-economic and demographic variables in relation to the gender differences towards mass media exposure were also analyzed. It was hypothesized that the exposure to mass media is equally distributed in male and female and all the predictor variables have equal contribution towards mass media exposure in reference to gender differences.

**Independent Variables:** Several relevant socioeconomic and demographic predictors (including respondent’s current age, current marital status, religion, respondent’s education, caste, place of residence and wealth index) were considered for the analysis.

**Statistical Analysis:** Initially, the sample distribution of the respondent’s background characteristics was calculated. Cross tabulation and Chi square test were used to analyze the outcomes related to the regular mass media exposure.

**Result:** Table 1 revealed that male students (97%) had significantly higher level of ratio in utilizing of print media compared to female students (87%). If considered short period of

time (1-119 minutes), female students (58.6%) used print media significantly higher compared to their male partner (29.7%). Male students were two times more likely to use print media compared to female students, if considered use of print media more than 2 hours. So, majority (58.6 %) of female respondents are using nearly 1-119 minute of print media but in its contrary, 43.6 % of male respondents are using 120 -300 minutes of print media. Those students who had higher number of real friends were significantly less utilizing print media but in contrary, those students who had higher number of friends in WhatsApp and social media had reported higher percentage of print media use. 59.7 % of the respondents having 0 or 1 active social media platforms are using print media for 1-119 minutes. Whereas, distribution of the respondents having active social media platforms for 2 or more are not very much distinguished. Majority of the respondents using broadcast media for 1-119 minute are also using print media for 1-119 minutes whereas majority of the respondents using social media for more than 300 minutes are using print media for 1- 119 minutes. Majority of the Arts/social sciences respondents (94.8 %) were using print media. 62.2% of the respondents belonging from the science background are using print media for 1-119 minutes whereas distribution of the students belonging from the social science group are not very much distinguish in all the three groups of the print media uses.

Table also suggested that half of the respondents from the OBC caste are using 1-119 minutes of print media but result was not significant. Mother’s education of the respondents was positively associated with the print media uses of 1-119 minutes as higher the education of the respondent’s mother, higher is their percentage of using print media (44.1 % of HSC/intermediate and 44.4% of Graduation / Post graduation) but in its contrary, two third of the respondents, whose father have no or only primary education are using print media for 120-300 minutes, which needs to further investigate. 46.6% of the respondents belonging from the above poverty line are using print media for 1-119 minutes. 44.4% of the respondents having agriculture as the main source of family income are using print media for 120-300 minutes whereas majority of the respondents having government and other main source of income are using print media for 1-119 minutes.

**Table 1- Percentage of respondent reported regarding use of print media according to socio-demographic characteristics**

Background characteristics	Not using	1-119 minute	120-300 minute	More than 300 minute	N	chi-2 test ( $\chi^2$ )
	%	%	%	%		
<b>Caste</b>						
General caste	5.0	38.0	35.3	21.7	337	Pearson chi2(6)=1 3.37 Pr=0.037
OBC	10.2	50.4	24.4	15.0	127	
SC/ST	8.9	41.1	28.6	21.4	57	

					6	
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	12.6	58.6	15.3	13.5	215	Pearson chi <sup>2</sup> (3)=8 4.21 Pr=0.000
Male	2.6	29.2	43.6	24.6	305	
<b>Mother's Education</b>						
No education/primary school	3.8	29.8	39.4	26.9	104	Pearson chi <sup>2</sup> (6)=2 3.93 Pr=0.001
HSC/intermediate	10.1	44.1	32.6	13.2	227	
Graduation/Post graduation	4.2	44.4	27.0	24.3	189	
<b>Father's Education</b>						
No education/primary school	14.8	11.1	74.1	0.0	27	Pearson chi <sup>2</sup> (6)=4 0.30 Pr=0.000
HSC/intermediate	4.9	52.8	29.3	13.0	123	
Graduation/Post graduation	6.8	39.7	29.7	23.8	370	
<b>Number of family member</b>						
1-4	6.3	37.0	30.7	26.0	127	Pearson chi <sup>2</sup> (6)=5 .50 Pr=0.482
5-6	7.1	43.4	32.9	16.6	295	
7-13	6.1	40.8	30.6	22.4	98	
<b>Decision</b>						

<b>maker in family</b>						
Father/other	9.6	46.1	26.9	17.4	219	Pearson chi <sup>2</sup> (3)=1 0.95 Pr=0.012
Mother/mutually	4.7	37.9	35.5	21.9	301	
<b>On average studies online</b>						
1-3 hours	8.2	49.2	24.6	18.0	122	Pearson chi <sup>2</sup> (6)=9 .45 Pr=0.150
4-5 hours	5.9	35.6	34.6	23.9	205	
6-12 hours	6.7	42.5	33.7	17.1	193	
<b>Household income</b>						
BPL	3.0	35.0	40.5	21.5	237	Pearson chi <sup>2</sup> (3)=2 4.00 Pr=0.000
APL	9.9	46.6	24.7	18.7	283	
<b>Main source of income of family</b>						
Agriculture	9.3	29.6	44.4	16.7	108	Pearson chi <sup>2</sup> (9)=3 1.37 Pr=0.000
Private	5.6	37.8	28.7	28.0	143	
Government	4.1	48.4	23.0	24.6	122	
Other	8.2	47.6	33.3	10.9	14	

					7	
<b>On average use of internet for study per day</b>						
not using	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	25	Pearson chi2(6)=4 1.00 Pr=0.000
120-300 minute	6.7	40.7	30.9	21.7	327	
more than 300	7.7	33.9	38.7	19.6	168	
<b>Subject Background</b>						
Arts/social science	5.2	35.2	35.2	24.4	401	Pearson chi2(3)=4 5.04 Pr=0.000
Science	11.8	62.2	21.0	5.0	119	
<b>No. of active social media platforms profile</b>						
0-1	26.0	59.7	14.3	0.0	77	Pearson chi2(9)=1 04.21 Pr=0.000
2	8.1	43.0	35.6	13.3	135	
3	2.8	34.0	37.6	25.5	141	
04	0.0	37.7	32.3	29.9	167	
<b>Number of friends in WhatsApp</b>						
0	47.8	52.2	0.0	0.0	23	Pearson chi2(6)=1 18.57
1-200	8.4	49.5	24.6	17.5	2	

					85	Pr=0.000
201-900	0.0	29.2	45.3	25.5	212	
<b>Number of friends in Facebook</b>						
0	15.1	38.8	30.2	15.9	232	Pearson chi <sup>2</sup> (6)=58.52 Pr=0.000
1-200	0.0	51.7	20.2	28.1	89	
201-1400	0.0	39.7	39.2	21.1	199	
<b>Number of real/best friends</b>						
0-1	3.3	45.8	33.3	17.6	153	Pearson chi <sup>2</sup> (6)=29.40 Pr=0.000
2	2.8	36.0	39.9	21.3	178	
3+	13.2	42.9	23.3	20.6	189	
<b>Broadcast Media (duration per day use)</b>						
not using	39.8	22.7	31.8	5.7	88	Pearson chi <sup>2</sup> (6)=196.80 Pr=0.000
1 minute-119 minute	0.0	45.2	33.2	21.6	389	
120-300 minute	0.0	44.2	20.9	34.9	43	
<b>Social Media (duration per</b>						

<b>day use)</b>						
1 minute-119 minute	12.5	52.5	22.5	12.5	40	Pearson chi2(6)=19.19 Pr=0.004
120-300 minute	3.7	55.6	25.0	15.7	108	
more than 300	7.0	36.0	34.9	22.0	372	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>41.3</b>	<b>31.9</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>520</b>	

Table 2 suggested that majority of the male (83%) and female (63.3 %) respondents are using broadcast media for 1-119 minutes. Respondents having primary or HSC/intermediate education their mother and HSC/intermediate education level of their father are significantly using broadcast media (76% and 83.7% respectively). 81.9% of the respondents belonging from the below poverty line are using broadcast media for 1-119 minutes. Percentage of the respondent’s family income source is not distinguishably distributed for broadcast media uses. Majority of the social sciences respondents (77 %) are using broadcast media out of all the respondents. 66.4% of the respondents belonging from the science background and 77.3% of the social sciences respondents are using broadcast media for 1-119 minutes. 94.6% of the respondents having 4 or more active social media platforms are using broadcast media for 1-119 minutes. Majority of the respondents (81.9 %) using print media for 1-119 minute are also using broadcast media for 1-119 minutes whereas majority of the respondents (76.3%) using social media for more than 300 minutes are using broadcast media for 1- 119 minutes. More than half (53.5 %) of the respondents from the OBC caste and 85.8 % of the respondents from the general caste are using 1-119 minutes of broadcast media.

**Table 2- Percentage of respondent reported regarding use of broadcast media according to socio-demographic characteristics**

<b>Background characteristics</b>	Not using	1-119 minute	120-300 minute	N	chi-2 test ( $\chi^2$ )
	%	%	%		
<b>Caste</b>					
General caste	8.9	85.8	5.3	337	Pearson chi2(4)=65.60 Pr=0.000
OBC	34.6	53.5	11.8	127	
SC/ST	25.0	57.1	17.9	56	
<b>Gender</b>					
Female	32.1	63.3	4.7	215	Pearson chi2(2)=62.19 Pr=0.000
Male	6.2	83.0	10.8	305	



<b>Mother's Education</b>					
No education/primary school	20.2	76.9	2.9	104	Pearson chi2(4)=11.51 Pr=0.021
HSC/intermediate	17.2	76.2	6.6	227	
Graduation/Post graduation	14.8	72.0	13.2	189	
<b>Father's Education</b>					
No education/primary school	55.6	33.3	11.1	27	Pearson chi2(4)=36.13 Pr=0.000
HSC/intermediate	11.4	83.7	4.9	123	
Graduation/Post graduation	15.9	74.9	9.2	370	
<b>Number of family member</b>					
1-4	17.3	73.2	9.4	127	Pearson chi2(4)=15.73 Pr=0.003
5-6	18.6	70.8	10.5	295	
7-13	11.2	88.8	0.0	98	
<b>Decision maker in family</b>					
Father/other	16.4	72.1	11.4	219	Pearson chi2(2)=4.94 Pr=0.085
Mother/mutually	17.3	76.7	6.0	301	
<b>On average studies online</b>					
1-3 hours	18.0	73.8	8.2	122	Pearson chi2(4)=4.28 Pr=0.370
4-5 hours	13.7	76.1	10.2	205	
6-12 hours	19.7	74.1	6.2	193	
<b>Household income</b>					
BPL	10.5	81.9	7.6	237	Pearson chi2(2)=13.59 Pr=0.001
APL	22.3	68.9	8.8	283	
<b>Main source</b>					

<b>of income of family</b>					
Agriculture	13.0	81.5	5.6	108	Pearson chi2(6)=20.78 Pr=0.002
Private	11.2	82.5	6.3	143	
Government	15.6	71.3	13.1	122	
Other	26.5	65.3	8.2	147	
<b>On average use of internet for study per day</b>					
not using	0.0	88.0	12.0	25	Pearson chi2(4)=11.45 Pr=0.022
120-300 minute	15.3	75.2	9.5	327	
more than 300	22.6	72.0	5.4	168	
<b>Subject Background</b>					
Arts/social science	14.2	77.3	8.5	401	Pearson chi2(2)=9.1525 Pr=0.010
Science	26.1	66.4	7.6	119	
<b>No. of active social media platforms profile</b>					
0-1	46.8	48.1	5.2	77	Pearson chi2(6)=93.30 Pr=0.000
2	19.3	67.4	13.3	135	
3	18.4	73.0	8.5	141	
04-Jun	0.0	94.6	5.4	167	
<b>Number of friends in WhatsApp</b>					
0	47.8	52.2	0.0	23	Pearson chi2(4)=81.78 Pr=0.000
1-200	27.0	64.2	8.8	285	
201-900	0.0	91.5	8.5	212	
<b>Number of friends in Facebook</b>					
0	32.8	57.8	9.5	232	Pearson chi2(4)=81.22 Pr=0.000
1-200	9.0	84.3	6.7	89	
201-1400	2.0	90.5	7.5	199	
<b>Number of</b>					

<b>real/best friends</b>					
0-1	22.9	67.3	9.8	153	Pearson chi2(4)=27.37 Pr=0.000
2	5.6	87.6	6.7	178	
3+	22.8	68.8	8.5	189	
<b>Print Media (duration per day use)</b>					
not using	100.0	0.0	0.0	35	Pearson chi2(6)=196.80 Pr=0.000
1 minute-119 minute	9.3	81.9	8.8	215	
120-300 minute	16.9	77.7	5.4	166	
more than 300	4.8	80.8	14.4	104	
<b>Social Media (duration per day use)</b>					
1 minute-119 minute	35.0	65.0	0.0	40	Pearson chi2(4)=17.21 Pr=0.002
120-300 minute	13.0	73.1	13.9	108	
more than 300	16.1	76.3	7.5	372	
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>520</b>	

Table 3 suggested that male students (99%) had significantly higher ratio of utilizing social media compared to female students (82.8%). Same pattern was seen for more than 300 minutes using social media and majority of the male (83.9 %) were using social media compared to female (54 %) respondents. Respondents having any level of education of their mother or father are prominently using social media for more than 300 minutes. 70.5% of the respondents belonging from the below poverty line and 72.4% are using social media for more than 300 minutes. Majority of the social sciences respondents (77 %) are using social media out of all the respondents. 65.5 % of the respondents belonging from the science background and 73.3 % of the social sciences respondents are using social media for more than 300 minutes. 80.9 % of the respondents having 3 active social media platforms are using social media for more than 300 minutes. Majority of the respondents using print media and broadcast media are prominently using social media for more 300 minutes.

**Table 3- Percentage of respondent reported regarding use of social media according to socio-demographic characteristics**

<b>Background characteristics</b>	1-119 minute	120-300 minute	More than 300 minute	N	chi-2 test ( $\chi^2$ )
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	%	%	%		
<b>Caste</b>					
General caste	6.2	19.9	73.9	337	Pearson $\chi^2(4)=11.24$ Pr=0.024
OBC	11.0	27.6	61.4	127	
SC/ST	8.9	10.7	80.4	56	
<b>Gender</b>					
Female	17.2	28.8	54.0	215	Pearson $\chi^2(2)=70.49$ Pr=0.000
Male	1.0	15.1	83.9	305	
<b>Mother's Education</b>					
No education/primary school	5.8	17.3	76.9	104	Pearson $\chi^2(4)=8.00$ Pr=0.093
HSC/intermediate	8.4	17.2	74.4	227	
Graduation/Post graduation	7.9	27.0	65.1	189	
<b>Father's Education</b>					
No education/primary school	22.2	14.8	63.0	27	Pearson $\chi^2(4)=11.58$ Pr=0.021
HSC/intermediate	4.9	17.1	78.0	123	
Graduation/Post graduation	7.6	22.4	70.0	370	
<b>Number of family member</b>					
1-4	7.9	20.5	71.7	127	Pearson $\chi^2(4)=3.45$ Pr=0.485
5-6	7.5	23.1	69.5	295	
7-13	8.2	14.3	77.6	98	
<b>Decision maker in family</b>					
Father/other	12.3	16.0	71.7	219	Pearson $\chi^2(2)=14.75$ Pr=0.001
Mother/mutually	4.3	24.3	71.4	301	
<b>On average studies online</b>					

1-3 hours	9.0	21.3	69.7	122	Pearson $\chi^2(4)=5.70$ Pr=0.223
4-5 hours	6.3	16.6	77.1	205	
6-12 hours	8.3	24.9	66.8	193	
<b>Household income</b>					
BPL	8.4	21.1	70.5	237	Pearson $\chi^2(2)=0.41$ Pr=0.815
APL	7.1	20.5	72.4	283	
<b>Main source of income of family</b>					
Agriculture	0.0	2.8	97.2	108	Pearson $\chi^2(6)=49.85$ Pr=0.000
Private	7.7	25.2	67.1	143	
Government	12.3	30.3	57.4	122	
Other	9.5	21.8	68.7	147	
<b>On average use of internet for study per day</b>					
not using	40.0	36.0	24.0	25	Pearson $\chi^2(4)=50.20$ Pr=0.000
120-300 minute	7.3	18.3	74.3	327	
more than 300	3.6	23.2	73.2	168	
<b>Subject Background</b>					
Arts/social science	6.0	20.7	73.3	401	Pearson $\chi^2(2)=7.42$ Pr=0.024
Science	13.4	21.0	65.5	119	
<b>No. of active social media platforms profile</b>					
0-1	24.7	29.9	45.5	77	Pearson $\chi^2(6)=53.74$ Pr=0.000
2	9.6	20.0	70.4	135	
3	2.1	17.0	80.9	141	
04-Jun	3.0	20.4	76.6	167	
<b>Number of friends in WhatsApp</b>					
0	21.7	26.1	52.2	23	Pearson $\chi^2(4)=39.62$ Pr=0.000
1-200	12.3	23.2	64.6	285	

201-900	0.0	17.0	83.0	212	
<b>Number of friends in Facebook</b>					
0	12.5	24.6	62.9	232	Pearson $\chi^2(4)=33.07$ Pr=0.000
1-200	12.4	15.7	71.9	89	
201-1400	0.0	18.6	81.4	199	
<b>Number of real/best friends</b>					
0-1	9.2	15.7	75.2	153	Pearson $\chi^2(4)=22.37$ Pr=0.000
2	8.4	13.5	78.1	178	
3+	5.8	31.7	62.4	189	
<b>Print Media (duration per day use)</b>					
not using	14.3	11.4	74.3	35	Pearson $\chi^2(6)=19.19$ Pr=0.004
1 minute-119 minute	9.8	27.9	62.3	215	
120-300 minute	5.4	16.3	78.3	166	
more than 300	4.8	16.3	78.8	104	
<b>Broadcast Media (duration per day use)</b>					
not using	15.9	15.9	68.2	88	Pearson $\chi^2(4)=17.21$ Pr=0.002
1 minute-119 minute	6.7	20.3	73.0	389	
120-300 minute	0.0	34.9	65.1	43	
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>71.5</b>	<b>520</b>	

**Discussion & conclusion:** The present study suggested that male undergraduate students were more likely than female undergraduate students to be exposed to any and all forms of media. Though mass media should be exposed similarly to both female student and male student but earlier studies have proved that male are more likely to be exposed towards mass media. Arisukwu et al. also reported similar finding. The possible reason of such disparity may be established that male have many alternative sources of information than female. Other study, among the students of University of Sharjah, reported that males were more addicted to social media than females (Alnjadat et al.). Print media is the most

common form of media exposure for both female and male students but broadcast had the highest gap in utilization and substantial proportion of women did not use the broadcast compared to their male counterparts.

The study presented the significant differences among male and female students in media use. Result indicated that male students reported significantly higher ratio in use of all categories of mass media compared to their counterpart female students. Those students who were using higher any type of social media platform or have more friends were using significantly less all type of mass media compared to less using any social media platform or have less number of friends.

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