

MASS MEDIA EXPOSURE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN PHILIPPINES

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ABSTRACT

The study endeavored to look into the mass media exposure of College Students in the University of Northern Philippines.

Randomly selected students from the various academic units (Colleges/ Institutes), totalling to 1,287, which is 25% of the total student population of the University of Northern Philippines, were the respondents. These respondents had much access to newspapers and magazines in the same manner to television and radio. Typically, college students attempt to read although there has been an increased frequency exposure of these students to English newspapers. Such tendency has been the greatest weakness among UNP college students in general.

Findings revealed an insignificant relationship between sex and such dependent variables like frequency of exposure to Ilocano and English newspapers and choice of mass media channel. The respondents' year level and degree programs did not effect the exposure of students to Ilocano and English newspapers. The weighted average grades of the respondents which were affected by their grades were dependent on their choice of the subject or topic/program on the radio but were independent on the television programs.

INTRODUCTION

The delivery of news, ideas, and entertainment to thousands of millions of people simultaneously is a force with incalculable impact on today's world. It has been called the central nervous system of society. It has been regarded as a catalyst of social structure by offering constantly ever-changing, ever-multiplying views of both fantasy and reality, which by their diversity enrich one's life and bring him to the brink of truth.

College students are not spared from being encapsulated in the mass media environment. In our contemporary civilization, the media permeate every inch of our existence and their saturation is total. The college students spend an ample time watching the television and reading daily the newspaper. The ubiquitous radio follows them anywhere, from bedroom to jeepney to beaches.

The impact of mass media can be felt mostly by college students, who seem to be most exposed to these. The blame and praise for most of our social ills and advances are attributed to mass media. The printing press and the wonders of electronics, journalism has been praised for spreading enlightenment throughout the land, educating the citizenry so that representative government is possible, exposing wrongdoings, facilitating universal education, providing mass entertainment, and disseminating great works of arts and literature to people.

The media has played an important role in the evolution of our free public education system. They have also served a crucial function in the informal education of the citizenry - a high degree of continuing adult education. The media is considered as the prime means by which society transmits its culture and values from one generation to another.

Mass media play an extraordinary role in our lives. It dominated a great part of our daily existence by providing inexpensive entertainment, helping guarantee an honest government, spreading our culture, providing widespread information, facilitating participatory democracy and raising our standard of living.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study attempted to look into the mass media exposure of college students in all year levels at the University of Northern Philippines during the second semester, SY 1988-1989.

Specifically, it sought to determine:

1. the proportion of students exposed to the different forms of mass media (e.g., printed and broadcast media);
2. the frequency of exposure of the students to the forms of mass media;
3. the mass media channel that is most preferred and least preferred;
4. the subject or topic which the students like most and like least;
5. the relationship between sex, year level, degree program, and weighted average grade and frequency of exposure to mass media channels, choice of mass media channel and choice of subject or topic.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This section attempts to summarize the related literature and allied investigations that have been of considerable assistance to the researchers in the conduct of the study.

Mass communication can be defined as the spreading of a message to an extended, mixed audience through rapid means of reproduction and distribution and at

a low unit cost to the consumer. The spread of a message is done through various mass media channels.

Whitney (1975;18) states that mass media exposure serves several functions. It informs, it keeps one up-to-date. It also educates, broadens, and deepens one's perspectives. It persuades, it sells goods and services. It is also the avenue of candidates to express their opinions. It entertains, by creating laughter.

The first attempt to determine the role of mass media in our society was in 1948 when Harold Lasswell, a political scientist noted that communication specialists carry out three functions namely: 1) surveillance of the government, 2) correlation of the parts of society in responding to the environment, and 3) transmission of the social heritage from one generation to the next.

Conag (1971; 128) attempted to find out the popularity of comics magazine among the secondary school students in Bogo, Cebu, school year 1970-1971. He disclosed that this media form has invaded the school, the community, and government offices. He also found out that Filipino comics are of the greatest number read than any other magazine. A slight difference of 1.44% was found to be noticeable in favor of English as preferred by the students. Furthermore, he cited that comics sometimes disrupt school instruction.

A study on the audio-visual materials in the secondary schools of Cebu City was undertaken by Canete (1975; 149). She revealed that electro-operated media forms like projectors, tape recorder, TY, radio, filmstrips and transparencies, were hardly utilized due to lack of funs, space , knowledge in utilization, administrative support. and highly trained personnel.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research paradigm is shown below.

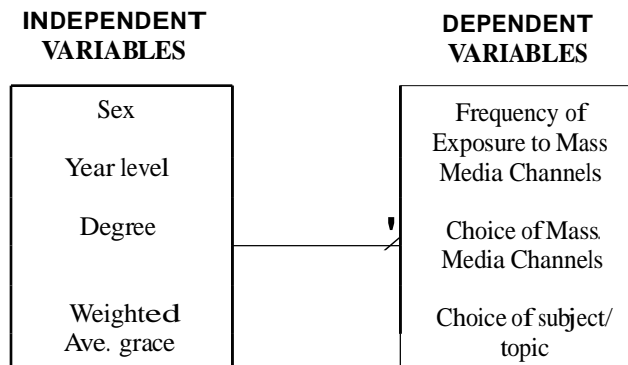


Figure 1
Conceptual Paradigm

METHODOLOGY

This investigation used the descriptive survey method of research coupled with documentary analysis. The survey was conducted among the college students of degree courses in all year levels.

This study utilized a questionnaire to gather information on the mass media exposure of college students. It contained four parts; a) background information, b) exposure to printed materials, c) exposure to radio/TV, and d) choice of mass media channels, e) choice of subject, and f) language preference.

The weighted average grades of the respondents were taken from the appraisal sheets of the respondents' adviser. They were also availed from the office of the Director of Admission.

POPULATION

This research work involved 1,287 out of the total population of 5,198 college randomly selected from the different academic units of UNP during the second semester of SY 1988-1989.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Proportion of Students Exposed to the Different Forms of Mass Media

Forms of mass media are basically grouped into two, namely print media and electronic media. Print media includes newspapers and magazine while electronic media includes radio and television.

1. Exposure to Print Media

The proportion of students exposed to the print media is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Percentage Distribution of College Students Exposed to Print Media by Academic Unit and Form of Mass Media.

Academic Unit	Newspaper				Magazine			
	Exposed N	%	Not Exposed N	%	Exposed N	%	Not Exposed N	%
CAS (n=77)	73	94.81	4	5.19	73	94.81	4	5.19
CTE (n=288)	266	92.36	22	7.64	269	93.40	19	6.60
CBA (n=37)	350	94.34	21	5.66	366	98.65	5	1.35
IN (n=112)	111	99.11	1	0.89	109	97.32	3	2.68
IC (n=46)	41	89.98	5	10.07	29	63.04	17	36.96
IA (n=78)	75	96.16	3	3.84	70	89.74	8	10.27
IE (n=171)	163	95.32	8	4.68	156	91.23	15	8.77
IFA (n=12)	12	100.00	0		12	100.00	0	
ISW (n=23)	22	95.65	1	4.35	23	100.00	0	
ITE (n=109)	101	92.66	8	7.34	100	91.74	9	8.26
Total	1214	94.33	73	5.67	1207	93.78	80	6.22

The table reflects that the college students in the different academic units of UNP were well exposed to print media particularly to newspapers and magazines.

It could be deduced that the college students in the different academic units of UNP are much exposed to print media particularly to newspapers and magazines.

2. *Exposure to Electronic Media*

Table 2 presents the distribution of students exposed to electronic media by college.

A small number of students of each college/institute were not exposed to radio and television as evidenced by the low percentages ranging from 0 to 4.35% for radio and 0 to 13.04% for television. There were more students (9.79%) not exposed to television than to the radio.

3. *Exposure to Mass Media Forms*

A preponderance of respondents were also well exposed to the newspaper, magazine and television as evidenced by the greater percentage of those exposed than those not exposed.

Table 2. Percentage Distribution of College Students Exposed to Electronic Media by Academic Unit

Academic Unit	Radio				Television			
	Exposed		Not Exposed		Exposed		Not Exposed	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
CAS	76	98.70	1	1.30	69	89.61	8	10.39
CTE	280	97.22	8	2.78	264	91.67	24	8.33
CBA	369	99.46	2	0.54	327	88.14	44	11.86
IN	112	100.00	0		106	97.64	6	5.36
IC	44	95.65	2	4.35	40	86.96	6	13.04
IA	76	97.44	2	2.56	69	88.46	9	11.54
IE	168	98.25	3	1.75	152	88.89	19	11.11
IFA	12	100.00	0		12	100.00	0	
ISW	22	95.65	1	4.35	21	91.30	2	8.70
ITE	108	99.08	1	0.92	101	92.66	8	7.34
Total	1267	98.45	20	1.55	1161	90.21	126	9.79

Frequency of Exposure to Mass Media Form

Table 3 presents the proportion of the totality of the respondents exposed to newspapers, radio and television within a week.

Among the three mass media channels, the radio had the greatest appeal to college students as proven by the highest percentage of 71.11% as daily exposure followed by television with 56.76% daily exposure.

It can be concluded that the college students' frequency of exposure to electronic media is on a daily basis. As to print media, most frequent exposure is once a week as shown by the percentage of 25.78%. They may not necessarily own a radio or television but it is highly possible that they listen or watch from their neighborhood. In this regard, electronic media affords a much cheaper channel than print media.

Table 3. Frequency of Exposure to Mass Media Forms Within a Week

Mass Media Form Frequency	Newspaper		Radio		Television	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Once	313	25.78	40	3.16	53	4.56
Twice	196	16.14	69	5.44	132	11.37
Thrice	208	17.13	70	5.52	163	14.04
Four Times	83	6.84	25	1.97	57	4.91
Five Times	40	3.29	19	1.66	47	4.05
Six Times	23	1.89	15	1.32	14	1.21
Daily	163	13.43	901	71.11	659	56.76

Preference to Mass Media Channels

The different mass media channels were subjected to ordering from the most preferred to the least preferred with numerical ranging from 5 to 1. The order of preference to media exposure is shown in Table 4.

It is obvious that almost half of the respondents of 49.73% preferred television and 17.72% showed preference for magazines.

Table 4. Mass Media Channel Most Preferred/Least Preferred by the Students.

Mass Media Channel	N	%	Rank
Newspaper (Ilocano)	106	8.24	4
(English)	186	14.45	3
Magazine	98	7.61	5
Radio	228	17.72	2
Television	640	49.73	1
Abstained	29	2.25	
Total	1287	100.00	

Choice of Subject/Topic

Table 5. Distribution of College Student by Forms of Electronic Mass Media by Choice of Subject/Topic Liked Most/Liked Least

Forms of Electronic Mass Media	N	%	Rank
Subject/Topic			
Radio			
Newscast	958	74.44	1 - Liked most
Commentaries	338	26.26	5
Drama	428	33.26	4
Dedication Prog.	457	35.26	3
Singing Contest	170	35.51	2
Other	183	14.22	6-Least preferred
TV			
Newscast	875	67.99	1 -Like most
Drama	675	52.45	2
Variety Show	635	49.34	3
Talk Show/Topic	281	21.83	4- Least preferred

Table 5 shows the choice of subject or topic liked by the respondents.

It is clear in Table 5 that the students selected newscast as the most liked/preferred by a great proportion of students with 74.44% and 67.99%, for radio and TV media respectively. Likewise, other programs aside from the other counterpart were the least preferred by the students with more preference for radio and television.

Relationship Between the Independent Variable (Sex, Year Level, Degree Program and Weighted Average) and the Dependent Variable

Profile of the College Students

Table 6 shows the profile of the college students as to sex, year level, degree program, and weighted average grade.

Table 6. Profile of the College Students

	N	%
A. Sex		
1. Male	569	44.21
2. Female	718	55.79
Total	1287	100
B. Year Level		
1. First year	565	43.9
2. Second year	308	23.93
3. Third year	167	12.98
4. Fourth year	179	13.9
5. Fifth year	56	3.89
Total	1269	98.6
C. Degree Program		
AB	67	5.21
BSMath	6	.47
BSPhysics	4	.31
BSE	63	4.9
BEED	177	13.75
BSBA	152	11.81
Med. Sec.	54	4.20
SecI	165	12.82
BSN	87	6.76
Midwifery	25	1.94
BSCrim.	46	3.57
BSArch.	48	3.73
AAD	30	2.33
BSCE	146	11.34
BSSE		3.23
AGE	22	1.71
BFA	8	.62
ACA	4	.31
BSSW	23	1.79
ITE	109	8.47
Total	1287	100.00
D. Weighted Average Grade		
1.26-1.5	15	1.16
1.51-1.75	23	1.78
1.76-2.00	89	6.97
2.01-2.25	199	15.46
2.26-2.5	277	21.52
2.51-2.75	322	25.01
2.76-3.0	145	11.27
below 3.0	145	11.27
Mean	2.51	Good

It is evident in Table 6 that female students outnumbered the males as shown by the greater proportion, 55.79%. As to year level, the greatest proportion of the respondents were freshmen with 43.9% of the total population.

Among the college students, the top four degree programs included were the BEED (13.75%), Secretarial (12.82%), BSBA (11.81%) and BSCE (11.34%).

It is also gleaned from Table 6 that the college students were more massed on the weighted average grade category 2.51-2.75 with the highest concentration of almost one fourth of the respondents. As a whole, their average was 2.51 which is described as "good".

The relationship between the independent and dependent variables is seen in Table 7.

The computed χ^2 value of 4.87, 23.51 and 30.99 for sex, year level, and weighted average, respectively and frequency of exposure to Ilocano newspapers although each fell short of the tabular χ^2 value. The three independent variables did not influence frequency of exposure.

Table 7 shows that an insignificant relationship existed between sex, degree program and weighted average and the frequency of exposure to English newspaper as supported by the computed χ^2 value of 8.79, 41.42 and 55.22, respectively not exceeding the critical value. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

The null hypothesis showing a significant relationship existing between the weighted average and the frequency of exposure to radio is accepted. This is indicative of an influence of weighted average on frequency exposure as supported by the computed χ^2 value of 40.97.

Hence, the null hypothesis stating dependence of sex, year, degree program and weighted average from the frequency of exposure as supported by the computed value of 4.6 and 24.76 respectively which are lesser than the tabular χ^2 value of 9.49 and 41.34, respectively.

The choice of subject/topic on electronic mass media channel (radio and television) was influenced by the four independent variables. It is also shown that the choice of subject/topic for television was affected by their weighted average grade as evidenced by the computed χ^2 value which was lesser than the tabular value. So, it was not surprising to note that the weighted average was independent upon the choice of topic in television.

Table 7. Weighted Average Degree Program Tabular x2 Value Weighted Average Degree Program Tabular x2 Value

Dependent Variables	Tabular x2 Value	Year Level		Degree Program		Weighted Average	
		Computed x2 Value	Tabular x2 Value	Computed x2 Value	Tabular x2 Value	Computed x2 Value	Tabular x2 Value
a) Ilocano newspaper	4.87*	23.51*	36.42	00.00	00	30.99*	38.88
b) English newspaper	8.79*	31.66	28.87	00.00	00	55.22*	58.88
c) Radio	28.16	40.29	36.42	00.00	00	40.97*	00.00
d) Television	31.79	69.05	35.42	00.00	00	71.56	00.00
Choice of Mass Media Channel							
Choice of Subject/Topic							
a) Radio							
b) Television							

* Accept Ho

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the aforesaid findings, the following conclusions are drawn.

A. On the Proportion of Students Exposed to the Different Mass Media forms.

The college students had much access to the different mass media forms such as: newspapers, magazines, radio and television. This implies that they were inclined to peruse such reading materials probably during their free time, for entertainment. Among the four media forms, they were most exposed to radio. This is suggestive of the ambiguity of radio in every household.

B. Frequency of Exposure to Mass Media Forms

Typical college students attempted to read newspapers "once a week" but were more frequently exposed to the radio and television daily. This reflects the popularity cheapness of the radio as a source of information **and as** an entertainment medium. Likewise, the students were militant in **keeping** themselves abreast with local, national and international happenings by reading newspapers. Likewise, it was also indicated that the charm of television captivated the respondents and the public in general.

C. Preference to Mass Media Channel

The television had the greatest desirability among the college students. This is suggestive of audible sound and fixed/moving objects over other mass media channels in conveying information, education and entertainment.

D. Choice of Subject/Topic

The respondents preferred newscast as subject/topic from electronic mass media forms. This is indicative of students' interest in reports about the recent and current events happening around.

E. Relationship Between the Independent Variables and the Dependent Variables.

1. Profile of the Students. A typical college student enrolled in UNP during the second semester, SY 1988-1989 is a female, freshmen, enrolled in CTE, CBA or ITE having a weighted average grade falling on the level "**good**".

2. Relationship Between Sex and the Dependent Variables.

a There existed an insignificant relationship between sex and frequency of **exposure** to English and Ilocano newspapers; significant relationship between sex and frequency of exposure to radio and television but independent upon frequency of exposure to Ilocano and English newspapers.

- b. Sex is also independent upon choice of mass media channels. Both sexes have more or less the same preference to mass media channels.
- c. The males have different choice of the radio or television programs from those of the females. This indicates that males and females have different fields of interest.

3. Relationship between year Level and the Dependent Variables.

- a. An insignificant relationship existed between year level and frequency of exposure to Ilocano newspaper. No matter what the students' year level was they had similar frequency of exposure to the local newspaper. On the contrary, there existed a significant relationship between frequency of exposure to English newspapers, radio and television. This implies a variety of frequency of exposure to these media forms relative to year level.
- b. A significant correlation also occurred between year level and choice of mass media channels. This means that respondents from different year levels had varied choices of media forms.
- c. Year level also affected choice of subject in all the media channels. This means that as year level changes, choice of topic in the different mass media channels also varies.

4. Relationship Between Degree Programs and the Dependent Variables.

- a. Degree programs did not influence frequency of exposure to Ilocano newspaper but influenced frequency of exposure to English newspaper, radio and television.
- b. Degree programs affected choice of mass media channels. This is reflective of having dissimilar mass media preferences among the different degree programs.
- c. There was a significant relationship between degree programs and choice of subject in newspaper, magazines, radio and television.

Relationship Between Weighted Average Grade and Dependent Variables.

- a. Weighted average grade did not influence frequency of exposure to Ilocano newspapers, English newspapers and the radio did not influence frequency of exposure to television.
- b. There was no significant relationship between weighted average grade and choice of mass media channel.
- c. An insignificant relationship existed between weighted average grade and choice of subject in newspapers and radio but the reverse happened to the television.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are forwarded:

- A. 1) Mandated organizations should initiate "Dap-ayan" centers in strategic areas to encourage their members to read newspapers and magazines. This project can kindle, students' militancy to get abreast with the happenings here and around the world.
- 2) The audio-visual (AV) room should be equipped with radio cassettes and colored television - VHS sets to be used by the college students for educational purposes.
- B. 1) Entrepreneurs should try publishing local news letters using Ilocano as a medium so that college students can have an alternative to the English newspaper to read.
- 2) The number of subscriptions to Ilocano newspapers, English dailies and weekly magazines should be increased.
- 3) Basing on the fact that frequency of exposure to the radio and television is on a daily basis, the National Telecommunication Commission (NTC) and the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkasters ng Pilipinas (KBP) should prescribe a great percentage of their broadcast for educational programs and news slots. These agencies are urged to conduct surveys on program preferences of college students and should try to suit their existing programs accordingly.
- C. The fact that the television has the greatest desirability among the mass media channels, the different television station on popularity of their current programs among the college students as their respondents to improve/enrich such programs accordingly. A local television station with Ilocano broadcasts should be established in Region I to cater the needs of the Ilocanos.
- D. Because Filipino is seldomly used in the various media forms, communication and publication stations/centers should encourage the government to formulate and enforce policies for the coming up of Filipino editions of newspapers and magazines nationwide. For those in the localities a balance should be established in station programs/communication centers on the use of the Filipino language.
- E. A follow-up study along the thrust of this research work should be conducted in other learning institutions and universities in Region I.

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