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Autores Fuentes Cuiñas, Ana Alejandra & Arko, Boris Andres

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ANA ALEJANDRA FUENTES CUIÑAS AND BORIS ANDRÉS ARKO

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Ways of Reading News: Are Printed Newspapers Going to Disappear?

Ana Alejandra Fuentes Cuiñas,¹ Universidad Argentina de la Empresa (UADE), Argentina
Boris Andrés Arko,² Universidad Argentina de la Empresa (UADE), Argentina

Abstract: The aim of this research, conducted by researchers from Instituto de Ciencias Sociales y Disciplinas Projectuales (INSOD), was to reveal the characteristics of current newspaper reading habits in Buenos Aires. This quantitative research, carried out by Fundación UADE Argentina, aimed to compare the differences between printed and digital formats. In order to collect the data, a structured online questionnaire was answered by the sample, which included 503 people who live, work, or study in Buenos Aires. The quantitative results showed that almost 80 percent of all respondents read news at least once a month (either in printed or digital formats), which is associated with having a university degree. In addition, the same percentage of people read traditional newspapers at least once a week. Another relevant finding is that 50 percent of people claim to enjoy reading the printed format. Regarding printed formats, broadsheets are associated with the image of elder people, while tabloids are considered to be a format for younger ones. Overall, the results of the research show that both formats complement each other for readers in Buenos Aires, and the paper edition still remains a valid format.

Keywords: Reading Habits, Printed Newspapers, Digital Newspapers, News, Broadsheet, Tabloid

Introduction

Advances in technology lead to changes in the habits of people, especially when it comes to the consumption of information. It is estimated that 93 percent of the information produced worldwide is published in electronic formats (Morales and Espinoza 2003). Today, the major preference when searching for information lies in access to digital platforms in all their forms (social networks, electronic editions, and so on) (Macgregor 2008). Even though there are few academic studies on newspaper reading in printed and digital formats, the use of electronic media as a way to get informed is constantly growing (Kaur and Verma 2009). These digital formats include social media platforms, where the newspapers themselves share the information of their printed editions. In this context of deep social transformations, the general objective of the research was to detect the most relevant characteristics of the current habits involving news consumption, which implied a comparison between use of printed and digital formats.

Objectives

Given the lack of academic studies specifically related to newspaper reading in both traditional and digital formats, the general objective was to detect the most relevant characteristics of current habits involving news consumption, comparing both printed and digital formats. The specific objectives proposed by the researchers to accomplish this study were:

- Analyze the reasons for reading news and the link between one's level of studies and their reading of newspapers.

¹ Corresponding Author: Ana Alejandra Fuentes Cuiñas, Lima 775, C1073 AAO, Instituto de Ciencias Sociales y Disciplinas Projectuales (INSOD), Universidad Argentina de la Empresa (UADE), Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, C1073, Argentina. email: afuentescuiñas@uade.edu.ar

² Corresponding Author: Boris Andrés Arko, Lima 775, C1073 AAO, Instituto de Ciencias Sociales y Disciplinas Projectuales (INSOD), Universidad Argentina de la Empresa (UADE), Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, C1073, Argentina. email: barko@uade.edu.ar