

**DETERMINANTS OF NEWSPAPER READERSHIP AMONG OLABISI ONABANJO  
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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**Abstract**

*Newspaper is one of the most popular and reliable media of information among students. Newspaper reading is an intellectual activity for students of all ages as it enhances knowledge and information of the readers. This study investigates the determinants of newspaper readership among Olabisi Onabanjo University students; the frequency of their readership, the type of stories they mostly read and how they obtain the newspapers they read. The study uses quantitative research technique. It adopts a sample size of 387 students, drawn from three Faculties in the University; Social and Management Sciences, Arts and Law using the Taro Yamane formula for determining sample size. The study is anchored on the Uses and Gratification theory and media dependency theory. The paper employs the simple percentage method and frequency tables as analytical tools. Findings show that newspapers are important sources of information for Olabisi Onabanjo University students. Findings further reveal that majority of the students do not read newspapers and those who read sometimes do so for general information and awareness about socio-political and educational events. The students access newspapers online because it saves time and cost. The paper concludes that most students in Olabisi Onabanjo University do not buy newspapers they read and that they read newspapers for education, information and entertainment. Therefore, the paper recommends that the University Library should provide both online and offline newspapers to encourage more students to read newspapers; newspaper readership programs should be designed in the universities and all concerned parties should ensure its implementation. Further research should also be carried out on the dispositions of newspaper readership of Olabisi Onabanjo University community at large.*

**Key words:** Determinants, Newspaper, Readership, Olabisi Onabanjo University.

**Introduction**

Newspaper industry can survive based on the strength of its readership. Newspaper is serial publication containing news about current events, informative articles about sport, fashion, art, and so on. The permanency attributed to print media, most especially the newspaper has made information recall possible and recall capability free content from becoming transient ephemeral, since audience of the media such as students remember them and use them for other academic purposes (Ezeh, Chuckuma, & Enwereuzo, 2015).

The world of newspaper has undergone considerable transformation from linotype to offset printing and now online publication. As of 2017, most newspapers in the world vis-a-vis Nigeria, is no longer only in print but also published online which are known as online versions or online websites. Newspapers cater for the interest of vast majority of readers of all ages and works of life. The newspapers are vital tools for the

students who are regarded as the most active information-seeking in any society for the obvious reason of academics and other pursuits.

The practice of reading newspaper has been associated with improvement in students' attitudes toward reading. According to McFarlin students must feel that they are part of a "reading club," and newspaper material must relate to something they have already known about. Newspaper is one of the most widely spread media sources among students as it publishes numerous subjects in the form of print media in dissimilar languages (Hayati et.al, 2012). It is a media source that increases readership among students to develop good communication skills and creative abilities; newspapers are considered important for university students (Meamin, Akanda & Haque 2013).

Newspaper is a wonder of modern science, as it transfers news and views of the home front and the world to us. Newspaper creates reading habits and easily differentiates people who read and who do not. Reading is the art of learning something. Newspaper is the store house of knowledge and provides knowledge of different tests and kinds of different segments of the society. It is equally important for the entire people from student to government officials. Reading builds vocabulary skills and background knowledge that strengthens reading skills and increases the enjoyment of reading (Majumder & Hasan, 2013).

The most current analysis and criticism of politics, economics, health, religion, sports, psychological and emotional issues, music, theatre, television, the fine arts, and even comics are covered by newspapers. Ola and Ojo (2007) reiterate that, "newspapers are important because they carry current information and they keep the readers informed of events and happenings within and outside their immediate environments. They are useful for education, recreation, entertainment and relaxation." News is written as a way of disseminating information to a large group of people. Reporters and editors are usually conscious of the language they use in news reportage to attract popular readership. Newspapers are the medium for improving reading habits, gain knowledge and create awareness on what is obtainable around us. They can be fraction of students' good study habits in any area of specialization.

Newspapers today are blending into what is now considered as a single system of interrelated systems (internet). The influence of the internet on readership could be readily noticed in the online newspaper phenomenon that has greatly increased the accessibility of people to information services (Patel, 2010). There is also the speculation that the contents of online edition of newspapers satisfy readers'; most especially the students' need for information and slows down the drive for the print version (Okoro & Diri, 2012:9).Newspaper employs mechanics of communication which include pictures, cartoons, and other news and information which serves as a powerful factor in creating a favourable education to the cross section of the society. The introduction of on-line newspaper has indeed brought about a new approach to seeking information and by extension the use of social media has attracted much attention to the use of internet enabled gadgets.

In Nigeria, the story has not been different as virtually all national and local newspapers have found their way online. With the advancement in modern technology, the new trend of online publication came also because of the need for information storage as archival materials for reference purposes in the future. In the digital age, newspapers are increasingly delivered to a person; thanks to the availability of wireless connections to the internet and the increasing popularity of various handheld information devices such as smartphones, laptops and so on.

The level of exposure of students to the elements of literary appreciation is fundamental to newspaper readership and the proper understanding of contents.

Reading newspaper is a fruitful means of students acquiring vital information on various subjects such as socio-political, business issues, sports, entertainment, art, music, culture, education (Elmadwi, 2014). This study is being carried out to examine the determinants of newspaper readership among Olabisi Onabanjo University students. The research is being conducted to ascertain the factors that compel the students to read newspapers, the frequency of readership of the newspapers, the type of stories mostly read, and the ways through which the newspapers are accessed and to ascertain the affordability of newspapers.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It has become an academic debate that students do not read newspapers. It has been attested that newspaper readership, either hardcopy or online is on a continuous decline among students. Determinants of newspaper readership among university students have been given little attention. Hence, this research is focused on obtaining findings of factors that determines newspapers readership among students. The Olabisi Onabanjo university students have been chosen to provide answers to the problem. Fairbian and Fairbian (2011) asserted that despite the presence of newspapers everywhere, that is, the hard copies and their online versions, readership among students is generally low. It seems that from the time many students get admitted to the university, the institution becomes a place where books and other types of reading materials can be found in large quantity. It is a concern that many students pay little attention to the mountains of materials they have to read or required to read.

Bankole & Babalola (2011) carried out a study on “the use of newspaper by students of Olabisi Onabanjo university”. The study assessed the extent of the use of Olabisi Onabanjo library resources by students and their perception of the library services rendered with regard to newspaper provision. They observed that majority of the students of Olabisi Onabanjo University prefer libraries as a place to read and their main aim was to obtain information on public affairs, politics/ government, sporting events, entertainment, health, world affairs and their academic works. The result shows that majority of students read newspapers to obtain information and as recreation, thus serving as a way of taking their minds off negative activities on campus.

Hence, this study is another survey which involves Olabisi Onabanjo university students. The study will focus on the different aspect of this phenomenon. This study explores the determinants of newspaper readership. What factors determine the reading of newspapers among Olabisi Onabanjo university students? This question represents the gap in knowledge of the aforementioned research in which this study is to fill.

### **Objectives of Study**

The main objective of the study is to investigate the determinants of newspaper readership of Olabisi Onabanjo University students. Specific objectives are to:

- 1) Determine the factors of newspaper readership among Olabisi Onabanjo University students.
- 2) Establish the frequency of reading newspapers by Olabisi Onabanjo University students.
- 3) Identify the type of stories in the newspapers Olabisi Onabanjo University students’ access and read.
- 4) Find out the ways through which Olabisi Onabanjo University students obtain the newspapers they read.
- 5) To ascertain the affordability of newspapers by the students of Olabisi Onabanjo University.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions are posed for investigation:

1. What factors determine newspaper readership among Olabisi Onabanjo University students?
2. What is the frequency of newspaper readership among Olabisi Onabanjo University students?
3. What types of stories do the students of Olabisi Onabanjo University mostly read?
4. What are the ways through which they obtain the newspapers they read?
5. Are the students able to afford the prices of newspapers?

### **Literature Review**

Amodu (2012, p.52) cited in Edegoh, Eze and Samson (2015), opines that “good theories enable the researcher to put in perspectives and to hypothesise what will happen, even before it happens”. Folarin (2005) states that, “theories help researchers to manage reality”. Clearly, communication theories are sets of ideas, which provide explanations for communication phenomena (Daramola, 2003). Cheney (1992) cited in Babalola and Bankole (2011), said that, “they are textbooks that provide up to date information of the world, the most current analysis and criticism on the various arms of government, the latest in music, theatre, television, fine arts and even column and comics to make readers laugh. Just as the name suggests, ‘news’ and ‘paper’, the newspaper is primarily a medium for spreading information, knowledge, ideas and so on. It has the ability to bring relevant and recent information to its audience. It also makes available the news or

happenings around such audience – in a town, state, country and globally. Newspapers endeavour to explain and interpret events, ideas, information in order to make informed and rational decisions.

According to Onu (2005), most students read newspapers to broaden their knowledge and keep abreast of recent developments and to enhance their academic performance. Brown (2010) opined that old newspapers articles serves as a great source of information for research purposes for staff and students, for certain requirements and even for specific requirement of different professionals. Nwabueze, Okonkwo and Nweke (2012) maintain that “newspapers provide excellent memories of a country’s historical events and landmarks”. Newspapers perform the functions of supplying facts, opinions, statistics, pictures, as well as illustrations to the public. They have great functions in the life of people such as students, administrators, scholars and every literate in the society who uses newspaper through acquisition, libraries, borrowing from relatives and friends, a means of exchange or accessing the online print.

Newspapers can also be said to motivate, inspire, conserve, establish, persuade, gratify and sometimes disappoint its audience. It provides a data of man’s activities and occurring events in the society thereby educating the masses beyond the facts to in-depth analysis. With diverse sections dedicated to opinions, feature stories, editorials and so many more, the society is handed information that affects that daily lives and activities, shape their opinions and feelings of such issues. Hynds (1972) cited in Aneato, Onabanjo, and Osifeso (2008) states “Newspapers stimulate, interpret, build, preserves, excites, satisfies and sometimes disappoints. It archives yesterday, chronicles today and periscopes the possibility of a brighter tomorrow.

Chakraborty (2009) observed that newspapers help students write and express their ideas in a corporate way by assisting them in public speaking. Newspapers, whether special interest or general interest provides useful information and are sources of vital information that mankind relies on for daily reports of activities around them.

### **The Concept of Newspaper Readership**

Newspapers are made up of diverse contents which contain international, national, and local news. Other contents include; letters to the editor, movie listings, entertainment gist and so many more. These are periodicals with educative, informative, entertaining, cultural promoting messages and other important information that are beneficial to a specific locality. Dominick {2009} defines some features that determine a true newspaper. He first itemizes that a newspaper should be made up of diverse contents which may contain local, national and international news. Second, newspapers are conveniently packaged according to content. There are sections devoted to general news, sports, and entertainments and so on. Third, the newspaper serves a historical record. According to a writer, he described newspaper journalism as “the first draft of history”. Fourth, perform the watchdog role in our society. And lastly, newspapers are timely because the news is not useful if it is stale. The concept of readership is germane to newspaper. The concept of readership may be abstruse to define, but it is mostly associated with newspapers, magazines and all kinds of periodicals.

Readership is “all the readers of a certain publication, authors, and so on” (Webster Reference Library, Concise Edition Dictionary, 2008). Readership is also the number of people or type of people who read a particular newspaper, magazine, and so on (Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary, 2010). The world of newspaper has undergone considerable transformation. Also, On-line newspaper readership has made the literate audience custodians of information that is timely and up-to-date. The introduction of online newspaper has indeed brought a new approach to the seeking of information and by extension the use of some social media to access newspaper.

According to the 2010 report of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) cited in (Ukonu, Ani and Ndubisi 2013) revealed that internet penetration has witnessed 43.9 million Nigerians now have access to the internet, surpassing even south Africa, the country with the largest economy.

### **Changes in Newspaper Readership**

Newspaper has always been a source of information and news for all ages. The new media has expanded the horizons for news and information gathering but the focus of this study remains newspaper, both on print and online.

Reading is dying down with most people preferring to while away time on frivolity than reading to widen intelligence. Today's reading culture is gradually dying down with its consequences showing clearly in the failing standard of education. In a study carried out, it was revealed that 40% of students never read a non-fiction book from cover to cover after they finish school (People's Daily, 2014).

From the foregoing, it has been an Academic debate that students do not read newspaper. There are also strong research-based evidences of declining newspaper among young people, most especially the students. Students no longer read newspapers despite their online presence that has improved the access to newspaper anytime and anywhere. Dominick (2002, p.14) attested that newspaper readership has been declining over the past years. Warren Buffet cited in Baran (2010) is of the notion that, "Newspaper readers are heading into the cemetery, while newspaper non-readers are just getting out of college". According to Mark Choate cited in (Singh & Arya, 2012), "newspaper circulation is in decline, but if you combine readership between print and online version of a newspaper you will find that net readership has increased. Despite this, there is a widespread perception that the decline in print newspaper circulation represents a shrinking market for local news". However, many publishers have developed ways to combat with this trend in the newspaper industry by keeping abreast with the changing preferences and interests of readers.

Publishers and editors have developed tactics for reaching large proportions of their target areas due to the perceived downturn in readership trends, most especially among the youths. As a result, then, many newspapers are pursuing two types of approaches to build readership. The first approach is called **Analog** strategies which involve the physical paper. The other approach is termed digital strategies, which involve the website and other digital-convergent ways that newspaper can interest its reader.

According to Turow (2014), one question is basic: what does a physical newspaper have to look like to attract more people, now and in the future? The approaches used include making newspapers more attractive with colourful layout aimed at stopping readers in their tracks and getting them to want to read every issue. Other features are designed to be readers-friendly having fewer news stories on the front page, quick news summaries and notes about 'what's inside', and more use of charts and pictures to convey information. Newspaper sections or pages are designed to attract crucial audiences with the aim of creating a collection of articles that are relevant to the audiences that newspaper organisations care about. The idea is to concentrate on news that people can 'use', that is, news clearly relevant to their lives.

Many newspapers also emphasize localism, which is, reporting on the communities or environments in which their readers live. George Hayes put it bluntly, "one should never underestimate the importance of being local! Newspapers own that". Newspapers use this and other techniques to encourage people in their areas to see them as related to their lives on daily basis and presenting contents that is useful and relevant to their existence.

Newspaper also involve in building digital readership by making and keeping their sites attractive to readers. They continually update the print and audio-visual materials.

### **Review of Empirical Studies**

Quite a lot of research has been conducted on the newspaper reading habits of different group of people in the world. Here are few researches conducted by other scholars in some universities.

Kumar, Singh & Siddiqui (2011) did a study on "Newspaper Reading Habit of Chaudhary Charan Singh university". The major objective of the study was to include all primary populations defined as post-graduate students, Masters Students and Research scholars on which 350 questionnaires were administered. The motive of the majority of the students is to read newspapers for information, while more than one-third is to improve general knowledge and 5 percent said it is their hobby. The survey shows that individual subscriptions are the most common source of newspaper for students. It confirms that nearly 60% of the students spend one to two hours daily reading newspapers and 96.61% reads Hindi newspaper, whereas 67.57% and 32.5% reads English and Urdu newspapers respectively. Students prefer to read the Editorial sections, followed by sports and politics.

Bankole and Babalola (2011) Conducted a study on the use of newspaper by students of Olabisi Onabanjo university found out that when asked on the specific information sought from the newspaper or the newspaper contents that brings about usage to obtain specific information, the highest percentage (84.8%) of the students read newspapers to obtain information on politics/ governments, followed by those

who consult to obtain information on sporting events (76.4%), information on entertainment (63.8%) ranked third, while health information placed fourth on the list. Half of the respondents (48.8%) consulted newspapers to obtain information on happenings around the world. Approximately one-third of the respondents indicated they use newspapers to obtain information on their academic works, while about 30% mentioned that they use the newspapers to gain knowledge on the fastest discoveries in science and technology. Others includes, 18.8% responded on obtaining information on Business/Economics/Finance, 11.0% on Religion/Spirituality, 17.4% on Family/Marital issues, 5.4% on obituaries and lastly, 20.5% responded to obtaining information on Fashion/Beauty.

Nwabueze, Okonkwo & Nweke (2012), conducted a study titled, “An analysis of Radio newspaper headlines review: influence on readership pattern” which aimed at determining whether newspaper headlines review on radio influences respondents’ exposure to newspapers, and whether there is a significant relationship between newspaper headlines review on radio and readership pattern. The scholar adopted multi-choice, close ended questionnaire to collect data on 399 respondents. Findings revealed that 73.6% of the respondents both agreed and strongly disagreed that newspaper headlines review on radio can stimulate and influence buying and reading decisions of respondents (49.1% & 76.2%) respectively. The study concluded that newspaper headlines review on radio has positive influence on readers buying and reading newspapers.

Njeze (2013) studied the “use of Newspapers and Magazines in the academic pursuits of Covenant university students”. The study examined the newspaper and magazine as essential sources of information for the students of Covenant University. The findings revealed that male and female in Covenant University consult both newspapers and magazines and are interested in sports, popular science, fashion, current affairs and politics. Results also show that most students spend their time in more creative stuff that would benefit them academically.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Theories are significant in order to clarify, explain and predict occurrences. This study is anchored on some theories in communication studies. Such theories include uses and gratification theory, media dependency theory.

### **Uses and Gratification Theory**

Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1979), assert that the theory takes a more humanistic approach to looking at media use. Blumler and Katz believed that there is no merely one way that the populace uses the media. Instead, they believed that there are many reasons for using the media, as there are media users. The members of the audience are viewed as actively utilizing media contents, rather than being passively acted upon by the media. To wit, readers do not just pick a newspaper to read without some relative derivative benefits

The uses and gratification theory claims that people are aware of their motives and choices and are able to verbally explain them. They believe that media consumers can choose the influence media has on them as well as the idea that users choose media alternatives merely as a means to an end.

Folarin (2002) state that, *the Uses and Gratification theory perceives the recipient as actively influencing the effect process, since, he is selectively chooses, retains the media messages on the basis of his/her needs, beliefs etc.* The focus was thus shifted from the media production and transmission functions to the media consumption. Instead of asking, “what kinds of effects occur under what condition?” the question became “who uses which content from which media what conditions and for what reasons?”. The question of effect was now rather tangential to the analysts concerned.

Wimmer and Dominick (cited in Layefa, Johnson, Taiwo, 2016) notes that the uses and gratification try to find out the motivating factors which underline audience use of media contents. They further explained that the theory examined how people use the mass media and the gratification and the gratification they derived from media. The assumption of the theory is that people are not just passive receivers of the messages, but active influences of the message effect. Media audience who are the recipient actively influence the effect process, since they selectively choose, attend to, perceive and retain the media messages

on the basis of their needs, beliefs et cetera. Thus, “there are many reasons for using the media as there are media users” (Anaeto, Onabanjo & Osifeso, 2008 p.73).

### **Media Dependency Theory**

One other theory relevant to this study is Media Dependency Theory. This study is anchored on the Media System Dependency Theory. The theory was propounded in 1976 by the duo of Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin De Fleur (Uwakwe, 2010; Anaeto, Onabajo and Osifeso, 2008).

According to Baran and Davies (2003) the core notion of the Media System Dependency Theory is that the more a person depends on having his/her information needs met by media use, the more important the media's role will be in his/her life and the more information needs met by media use, the more important the media's role will be in his/her life and the more influence the media will ultimately have on him/her

Uwakwe (2010) extends the scope of the theory to include the assumption that the audience depends on media information to meet set goals. Consequently, the degree of audience dependency on information from the mass media varies and the more dependent members of the audience are on the media, the more influence the media will have on them.

The theory predicts that you depend on media information to meet certain needs and achieve certain goals. It also states that one's needs are not always strictly personal but may be shaped by culture or by various social conditions.

The theory assumes that the more a person depends on having his or her needs gratified by media use, the more important that will be the role that media plays in the person's life.

Defleur and Ball-Rokeach have provided a fuller explanation in several assertions (1975). The basis of the media influence lies in the relationship between the larger social system, the media role in that system, and audience relationships to the media in which effects occur, not just because the media operate in a given way to meet given social wants.

Media dependency theory can be applied to newspaper readership to point out that the information needs of individual readers that ultimately determine their dependencies are not absolutely personal. These individual readers' needs may be shaped by social conditions such as income, interests, education, and gender. As a result, the theory postulates that the greater the needs of newspaper reader, consequently the stronger their dependencies on the medium and the greater chances of being influenced by the contents or information.

The basic assumptions of the media dependency theory indicate that the newspapers, as part of the mass media, influence readers as a result of the relationship among social realities. The theory suggests that people in modern societies, including Nigeria as well as students, are becoming increasingly dependent on media information from the mass medium, most especially the newspaper to understand their world, gain greater control of their environments, make right decisions and act meaningfully and effectively.

### **Gap in Literature**

As simple as newspaper readership studies may appear, their centrality constitutes a solid foundation upon which further researches can be carried out. The review of relevant newspaper readership literatures by other scholars in other tertiary institutions cannot be generalised.

Therefore, by under taking a survey- based empirical study focusing on the “Determinants of newspaper readership among Olabisi Onabanjo University students, this study aims at providing important information and insights into the reading habits of students.

Consequently, this derives the need for this study to examine the factors that predicts newspaper readership among Olabisi Onabanjo University students.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted the survey method of research described as the best method available to social researchers interested in collecting data to investigate phenomena in a population too large to observe directly (Ojebode, Onekutu & Adegbola, 2010).

The survey research method focuses on people, the vital facts of their behaviour, beliefs, opinion, attitude and innovation. Although, conducting survey is a bit tedious, but the results can be obtained instantly and easy to analyze. Surveys give a lot of data from verifiable sources which provide the knowledge of people's opinion for analysis.

Rubin et al (2010) opined that survey research seeks to describe or explain people's current attitudes, opinions, thoughts and perhaps, reports of behaviour surrounding an issue or event. It is the most widely used method of communication research which is an efficient means of gathering data

### **Population of Study**

Hanlon & Larget (2011) describe population "as all the individuals or units of interest available as data for a particular study. The population of study refers to those person or things that fall under the umbrella of the topic or that can be examined to address the research problem or meet the research objectives.

The population for this study is the students of Olabisi Onabanjo University.

### **Sample Size**

Olabisi Onabanjo University total population break down for 2019/2020 session.

<b>College/faculty</b>	<b>Total number of students</b>
Agricultural science	1644
Arts	2417
Basic medical science	3063
clinical sciences	359
Education	3017
Engineering	2272
Law	1046
Pharmacy	422
Science	4835
Social& Management sciences	8346
Total	27,421

Considering the entire population of Olabisi Onabanjo University students estimated at 27,421students will make the research strenuous and embedded with errors.

For the purpose of this study, out of the population, a sample of 394 respondents is drawn with the use of Taro Yamane formula for sample size determination. This formula is commonly used for sample size calculation. The sample size is calculated with margin error of approximately 5% at a confidence level of 95%.The sample of this research employs the Taro Yamane (1973) formula cited in Matthews and Ross (2010) guarantees 95% confidence level.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} \quad \text{Where } n = \text{sample size required}$$



N=number of people in the population under study  
 e=allowable error (%) which is 5% (0.05)

By substituting this value into the formula in which the following was obtained.

$$\text{Therefore, } n = \frac{11809}{1+11809(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{27421}{1+29.5525}$$

$$n = \frac{27421}{30.5525}$$

$$\mathbf{N=387}$$

**Sampling Technique**

The sample size for the study was selected using the probability sampling technique. Under this, simple random technique was used for the study. Simple Random sampling is a method of sample selection which allows each possible sample combination an equal probability of being picked and each item in the population to have an equal Chance of being selected.

The simple random sampling technique was used to select 387 undergraduate respondents who made up the study units for this research. Olabisi Onabanjo University comprises various faculty/college; however, the sample was drawn from three faculties. The faculties selected include; the largest faculty in the university, Social and management sciences (SMS), Law and Arts.

**Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation**

Data are presented and analysed thus:

**Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

**Table 1: Demographic of the Respondents**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	146	41.0
Female	210	59.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Age</b>		
15-20 years	131	36.8
21-25 years	168	47.2
26-30 years	41	11.5
31 and above	16	4.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Level</b>		
100	86	25.2
200	77	21.6
300	121	34.0
400	68	19.1
500	4	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Faculty</b>		
ARTS	77	21.7
LAW	50	14.0
SMS	229	64.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Field Survey, 2017

The sex distribution of the respondents shows that 41% were male while 59% were female. This shows that majority of the respondents were female.

Data on age distribution of the respondents as shown in the table shows that 131(36.8%) of the respondents were within the age group of 15-20 years, majority of the respondents 168(47.2%) were within the age bracket of 21-25 years. Also, 41(11.5%) of the respondents fell within age ranges of 26-30, while 16(4.5) % of the respondents were fell within 31 years and above.

Data on level status reveals that 86(25.2%) of the respondents were in 100level, 77(21.6%) were in 200level, 121(34%) were in 300level and 68(19.1%) of the respondents were in 400level, lastly 4(1.1%) were in 500level. Hence the majority of the respondents were 300level.

Faculty of the respondents, the data shows that 77(21.7%) of the respondents were in Arts, 50(14.0%) were in Law and 229(64.3%) of the respondents were in Faculty of Social and management Science which is the majority.

### Presentation of Data

**Table 4.2: Determining factors of newspaper readership among Olabisi Onabanjo University**

	Statement	Frequency	Percentage(%)
1.	How important are newspaper to you as a student?		
	Very important	132	37.1
	Important	161	44.9
	Somewhat important	53	14.9
	Not important	10	2.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>
2.	Does gender, finances, sources of accessed information, contents, radio, newspaper headline review and academic determine your reading of newspapers?		
	Yes	203	57.0
	No	97	27.2
	Undecided	39	11
	Not sure	17	4.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>
3.	Which of the factors influence you the most to read newspapers?		
	Gender	13	3.7
	Finances	48	13.5
	Sources of accessed information	100	28.1
	Contents	64	18
	Radio newspaper headlines review	70	19.7
	Academic purposes	56	15.7
	Others	5	1.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>

4.	To what extent do the above-mentioned factors influence your newspapers reading?		
	Very High	164	46.1
	Average	160	44.9
	Low	26	7.3
	None	6	1.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017

For question one, 132 respondents representing 37.1% said newspaper is very important to student, 161 respondents representing 44.9% said newspaper is important to student, 53 respondents representing 14.9% said newspaper is somewhat important to student said newspaper is very important to student and 10 respondents representing 2.8% said newspaper is not important to student. The majority of the respondents said newspaper is important to student.

For question two, 203 respondents representing 57% said that gender, finances, sources of accessed information, contents, radio, newspaper headline review and academic determine your reading of newspapers, 97 respondents representing 27.2% said no, 39(11%) were undecided and 17(4.8%) are not sure.

For question three, 13(3.7%) said gender is the factors influence them the most to read newspapers, 48(13.5) said their own factor is finances, 100(28.1%) said their own is the sources of accessed information, 64(18.0%) said the content of the newspapers, 70(19.7%) said is radio newspaper headlines review, 56(15.7%) said their own factors is academic purpose and the remaining respondents 5(1.4%) said their factors are for job requirements, social economic factors.

For question four, 164 respondents representing 46.1% said the extent to which the above-mentioned factors influence the newspapers reading stress is very high, 160 respondents representing 44.9% said it is partial, 26 respondents representing 7.3% said it is low and 6 respondents representing 1.7% said none.

**Table 3: The frequency of reading newspaper by Olabisi Onabanjo University students**

	Statement	Frequency	Percentage(%)
1.	Do you read newspapers regularly?		
	Yes	144	40.4
	No	168	47.2
	Undecided	29	8.1
	Not sure	15	4.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>
2.	How regularly do you read the newspapers?		
	Very often	56	15.7
	Always	58	16.3
	Sometimes	157	44.1
	Rarely	74	20.8
	Never	11	3.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>

3.	What is the number of days you read newspapers in a week?		
	Daily	42	11.8
	Once in a week	92	25.8
	Twice a week	79	22.2
	Occasionally	111	31.2
	Never	32	9.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>
4.	How much time do you spend in reading newspapers?		
	15 minutes	139	39.0
	30 minutes	116	32.6
	30 minutes to 1 hour	61	17.1
	More than one hour	40	11.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Table 4.3 reveals the frequency of reading newspaper by Olabisi Onabanjo University students.

For question one, 144(40.4%) of the respondents said read newspapers regularly, 168(47.2%) said they don't read newspapers regularly student, 29(8.1%) said undecided, 15(4.2%) said they are not sure.

For question two, 56(15.7%) said very often, 58(16.3%) said always, 157(44.1%) said sometimes, 74(20.8%) said rarely and 11(3.1%) said never.

For question three, 42(11.8%) said daily, 92(25.8%) said once in a week, 79(22.2%) said twice in a week, 111(31.2%) said occasionally and 70 (19.7%) said never

For question four, 139(39.0%) said they read newspaper for 15minutes, 116(32.6%) said 30minutes, 61(17.1%) said 30minutes to I hour, 40(11.2%) said more than one hour.

**Table 4: The types of stories in the newspapers accessed and read by Olabisi Onabanjo University students**

	Statement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	How much of the newspaper contents do you usually read?		
	All	93	26.1
	Most	166	46.7
	Some	64	18.0
	None	33	9.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>
2.	What segments of the newspaper do you prefer the most?		
	News	76	21.3
	Features	35	9.8
	Editorials/opinion	35	9.8
	Sports	54	15.2
	Business/economy	27	7.6

	Cartoons	14	3.9
	Columns	13	3.7
	Entertainments	102	28.7
	Others	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>
3.	What is the reason for reading those stories in the newspaper?		
	For knowledge	106	29.8
	For general awareness	165	46.3
	For entertainment	66	18.5
	For classroom work	10	2.8
	Nothing in particular	9	2.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Table 4.4 reveals the types of stories in the newspapers accessed and read by Olabisi Onabanjo University students. For question one, 93 respondents representing 26.1% said they read all the contents in the newspaper, 166 respondents representing 44.7% said they read most of the contents in the newspaper, 64 respondents representing 18% said they read some of the content in the newspaper and 33 respondents representing 9.3% said they don't read any contents in the newspaper.

For question two, 76 respondents representing 21.3% said that the segments they preferred is news, 35 respondents representing 9.8% said their segments is features in the newspaper, 35(9.8%) said their own segments editorial/opinions in the newspaper, 54(15.2%) said the sport segments, 27(7.6%) said their own segments business/economy in the newspaper, 14(3.9%) said the cartoons segments, 13(3.7%) said their own segments columns in the newspaper and 102(28.7%) said it is entertainments segments.

For question three, 106(29.8%) said the reason for reading those stories in the newspaper for knowledge, 165(46.3%) said for general awareness, 66(18.5%) said for entertainment, 10(2.8%) said for classroom work, 9(2.5%) said nothing in particular.

**Table 5: The ways through which the students obtain the newspapers they read**

	Statement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	How do you access/ obtain the newspapers you read?		
	Library	65	18.3
	Internet/browsing	137	38.5
	Buying/personal subscription	96	27
	Newspaper stand as free readers	14	3.9
	Radio reviews	42	11.8
	Others	2	0.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>
2.	Why do you prefer the ways you obtain newspapers?		

	For time saver	70	19.7
	To save money	178	50.0
	Easy availability	108	30.3
	Others	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>
3.	Does the ways through which newspapers are obtained encourage you to read newspapers?		
	Yes	180	50.6
	No	94	26.4
	Undecided	54	15.2
	I don't know	28	7.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Table 4.5 reveals the ways through which the students obtain the newspapers they read. For question one, 65(18.3%) said they access the newspaper through library, 137(38.5%) said they access the newspaper through internet/browsing, 96(27%) said they access the newspaper through buying/ personal subscription, 14(3.9%) said they access the newspaper through newspaper stand as free readers, 42(11.8%) said they access the newspaper through radio reviews and others are 2(0.6%)

For question two, 70(19.7%) said you prefer the way they obtain newspapers because its save time, 178(50.0%) said because it saves money, 108(30.3%) said because of easy availability.

For question three, 180(50.6%) said the ways through which newspapers are obtained encourage them to read newspapers, 94(26.4%) said no, 54(15.2%) said undecided, 28(7.9%) they don't know.

**Table 6: Affordability of newspapers by students in Olabisi Onabanjo University**

	Statement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Is price a barrier in purchasing newspaper as a student?		
	Yes	114	32.0
	No	131	36.8
	Undecided	41	11.5
	Not sure	70	19.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>
2.	How often do you buy a newspaper?		
	Never	165	46.3
	2-3 times a week	129	36.2
	Everyday	19	5.3
	Weekly	33	9.3
	Others	10	2.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>

3.	Which of the following factor is a barrier to you in reading newspapers?		
	Newspapers are not available on time	60	16.9
	High price of newspapers	150	42.1
	Few copies of newspapers	100	28.1
	Indifferent attitude	40	11.2
	Others	6	1.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Table 4.6 reveals the affordability of newspapers by students in Olabisi Onabanjo University. For question one, 114(32.0%) said price is a barrier in purchasing newspaper as a student, 131(36.8%) said price is not a barrier in purchasing newspaper as a student, 41(11.5%) of the respondents are undecided, and 42(11.8%) are not sure.

For question twenty-one, 165(46.3%) said they never buy a newspaper, 129(36.2%) said 2-3 times in a week, 19(5.3%) said every day, 33(9.3%) said weekly and the remaining 10(2.8%) said through on-line, once in a month, once in a week, once in a while and not at all time.

For question twenty-two, 165(46.3%) said they never buy a newspaper, 129(36.2%) said 2-3 times in a week, 19(5.3%) said every day, 33(9.3%) said weekly and the remaining 10(2.8%) said once in a month, once in a week, once in a while and not at all time.

For question three, 60(16.9%) said that newspapers are not available on time, 150(42.1%) said high price of newspapers, 100(28.1%) said few copies of newspapers, 40(11.2%) said that indifferent attitude and the remaining 6(1.7%) said on-line newspaper.

### Discussion of Findings

The focal point of this study was to investigate the determinants of newspaper readership among Olabisi Onabanjo University students as a study. From the analysis of the data gathered the following findings were discovered.

The study recorded that both male and female students of Olabisi Onabanjo University were respondents of the study, however majority (59%) of the respondents were female. Majority (36.8%) of the respondents of the study falls between the ages 15-20 years. The study also recorded that majority of the students were 300 levels respectively and the majority of the respondents are from the faculty of Social and Management Sciences.

The first objective was to examine the determining factors of newspaper readership among Olabisi Onabanjo University. Data collected were analysed and rated, majority of the respondents said that newspaper is important because it stands as source of information. This finding can be related to the claim by Njeze (2013) that newspapers are essential sources of information for students in Covenant University.

The second objective of the study was to determine the frequency of reading newspaper by Olabisi Onabanjo University students. It was found out based on the analysis of the data collected from the respondents that majority of the respondents said they read newspaper most often and it create awareness.

For the question 2, majority also agreed that they spend 15 minutes in reading newspapers. This outcome strongly agrees with the claim by McDougall and Chartrey (2008, p.10), that "young generation, the future adult market and readers dedicate only a little time to newspaper".

For question 3, Majority of the students agreed that they read newspapers occasionally. This finding supports earlier study by Layefa, Johnson & Taiwo (2016) that 45 (26.31%) the residents of Ekiti reads newspapers daily, 27 (15.78%) read newspapers once a week, same percent read newspaper twice a week, while 72, constituting (42.10%), read newspaper occasionally. From these responses, it could be taken that 99 (57.87)

of the respondents came under those who read newspaper daily, once a week or twice a week. Those who read occasionally were not too few in number. The occasional readers might probably be disposed to reading newspaper when the occasion calls for such. Perhaps, a likely line of thinking of occasional readers may be “when there is an occasion for me to read newspaper and perchance, I come across a newspaper, I read”.

The third objective of the study was to examine the types of stories in the newspapers accessed and read by Olabisi Onabanjo University students. It was found out based on the analysis of the data collected from the respondents that majority of the respondents said they read newspaper mostly for entertainments, the reason being that the stories in the newspaper help to acquire knowledge.

The fourth objective of the study was to examine the ways through which the students obtain the newspapers they read. It was found out based on the analysis of the data collected, majority of the respondents said they access it online/browsing because it saves money.

The fifth objective of the study was to examine the affordability of newspapers by students in Olabisi Onabanjo University. It was found out based on the analysis of the data collected from the respondents that majority said purchasing newspaper is not a barrier, but is not affordable for students. On the affordability of newspapers among Olabisi Onabanjo University Students, it was found that an overwhelming majority do not afford the cover price of newspapers in Nigeria. Majority of the students do not buy newspapers as they cannot afford the money to do so. This situation may not be unconnected with the economic hardship in Nigeria at the moment. However, these findings shed light on the submission Ezeokoli cited in Edegoh, Aniebo & Samson (2015:71) that "newspaper readership is not the same as newspaper subscription". This means that a lot of people may be newspaper readers but only a few may be subscribing for newspapers.

### **Summary**

This study validates that quite numerous researches have been conducted on the newspaper readership habits of different groups of people in the world. Newspaper sections or pages are designed to attract crucial audiences with the aim of creating a collection of articles that are relevant to the audiences that newspaper organisations care about. The idea is to concentrate on news that people can ‘use’, that is clearly relevant to their lives.

Many newspapers also emphasize localism, which is, reporting on the communities or environments in which their readers live. George Hayes put it bluntly, “one should never underestimate the importance of being local! Newspapers own that”. Newspapers use this and other techniques to encourage people in their areas to see them as related to their lives on daily basis and presenting contents that are useful and relevant to their existence. Newspaper also involve in building digital readership by making and keeping their sites attractive to readers. They continually update the print and audio-visual materials.

The results gathered are self-explanatory. It can be seen from the data gathered that majority of the respondents (44.9%) said that newspaper is important because it stands as a source of information. It was found out based on the analysis of the data collected from the respondents that majority of the respondents (18.9%) read newspaper often and that it creates awareness and entertainments. Majority of the respondents access and read stories online/browsing because it saves money. Majority of the respondents said that majority said purchasing newspaper is not a barrier, but is not affordable for students.

### **Conclusion**

The objective of the research was to find out the determinants of newspaper readership, the frequency of reading newspapers, the type of stories in the newspapers accessed and read, the ways through which the students obtain the newspapers and to ascertain the affordability of newspapers among Olabisi Onabanjo University.

Conclusively, this study has shown that newspapers continue to be useful source for the academic, recreational, information and entertainment needs of Nigerian students. This is known that newspapers are tools used by researchers in education in Nigeria, and that it is important for libraries to emphasize the collection and organization of newspaper information.

The world of newspaper has undergone considerable transformation from linotype to offset printing and now online publication. As of 2017, most newspapers in the world and even in Nigeria are no longer



only in print but as well as being published online which are known as online versions or online websites. Newspapers cater for the interest of vast majority of readers of all ages and works of life. The newspapers are vital tools for the students who are regarded as the most active information-seeking in any society for the obvious reason of academics and other pursuits.

Newspaper employs mechanics of communication which include pictures, cartoons, and other news and information which serves as a powerful factor in creating a favourable education to the cross section of the society.

The introduction of on-line newspaper has indeed brought about a new approach to seeking information and by extension the use of social media has attracted much attention to the use of internet enabled gadgets. Therefore, the study concludes that Olabisi Onabanjo University students read newspaper often and do so through online /browsing on their cell phones or the use of the internet.

### **Recommendations**

Students are the future of a nation and newspaper reading can make them a good citizen who can contribute for themselves as well as for their county whenever the necessity is. Newspapers are relevant and beneficial to students in Nigerian universities. To make newspaper reading easy and affordable to the respondents, the study likes to recommend in the following way;

1. University library should provide adequate number of newspaper and facilitate the service properly to encourage students to read newspapers as many as they can. Libraries should consider the acquisition, organisation, and preservation of newspaper information, including making it available electronically.
2. All the concerned parties should influence students to read and also provide the opportunities to read newspapers always.
3. The university should ensure that in its premises, internet facilities should be widened enough to meet the need of the students.
4. Parents should provide a supporting environment that should encourage children reading habit at a tender age.
5. In addition, publishers should take note of students' newspaper information needs in order to enhance their publications to suit their taste.
6. Government should endeavour to make publishing materials accessible and affordable to the publishers to enable them publish at cheaper rate to encourage newspaper reading among students.
7. Newspaper readership programs should be designed in universities across the nation to enhance readership research studies and implementing such programs.
8. Newspaper reading in classrooms should be encouraged. By this way non-readers will also adopt the readership habits.

### **Suggestion for Further Studies**

For as much as studies (this present study inclusive) have been carried out on newspaper readership in Olabisi Onabanjo University, the researcher therefore recommend that further studies should be carried out on the readership dispositions of the Olabisi Onabanjo University community at large (online readership inclusive).

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