

Stepping from Conventional to Digital Media: Existing Patterns of News Consumption

Wijesundara, Tilak¹, Ranawaka, Nelum², Handunmali, Pulsie³

¹Department of Sociology, University of Ruhuna

²Department of Philosophy, University of Kelaniya

³Department of Social Studies, The Open University of Sri Lanka

wtilak@gmail.com

With the technological advancement of the existing conditions, number of sources carrying news has been rapidly increased, especially in the media-rich information society where we live today. Media, telecom and digital industries are converging everyone looking for 'killer apps.' The present enquiry deals with the transformation of media usage in the matter of news consumption. Thus, the study intends to find out how peoples' media priorities have been changed during the recent past. Objectives of the study are of three fold; to investigate the sources being used to receive day to day news, to disseminate the received information, and finally to identify the most trustworthy sources to receive news. This study was deployed in Bonavistawa Grama Niladari Division in Habaraduwa Divisional Secretariat area in Galle District. Data were collected by studying 100 respondents ranging from 15 to 55 of age. Research methodology in wider sense was the survey in which interviews and questionnaires were used to gather primary data. In addition, case studies were also conducted to gather more reliable data. Study found smart phone is the mostly used tool for news by the age group 15-25. Meanwhile, more than 40% of respondents used internet for news through their smart phones. The impact of newspaper in this respect was significantly less, while social media has become a tool changing the game. Use of radio has also been significantly decreased even though this is the main source of media used by people aged between 45-55. When looking at the dissemination of information, it is revealed that the mobile phone has become the most reliable device, particularly the smartphones. It was also revealed that the age group 35-45 was mostly interested in sharing the trending news, and most importantly, an overwhelming majority of respondents sought to analyze news when meeting friends. Notably, research revealed that the youngsters had sought to

utilize and process media content with a marked difference when compared with their elders representing the over grown generations.

Key words: *Digital Media, News Consumption, Social Media, Smart Phones, Online Culture.*