

Impact Of Media Convergence on News Consumption Habits Among Generation Z In Indore, Madhya Pradesh

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Abstract—News is no longer encountered through one medium at a time. A single news story may appear as a social-media post, a short video, a mobile notification, a website article and a discussion thread within a short period. This study examines the relationship between media convergence and news-consumption behaviour among Generation Z respondents aged 18–30 in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. The analysis uses a structured Google Forms survey and retains the 74 responses that constitute the original analytic dataset represented in the supplied figures and statistical tests. Descriptive statistics were used to examine news sources, devices, formats, frequency, platform variety and motivations. Three Likert-based constructs were assessed for internal consistency, and Spearman's rank-order correlation was used to test four hypothesized relationships. Social media emerged as the main news source for 54 respondents (73.0%), smartphones were the principal access device for 68 respondents (91.9%), and short videos were the most preferred news format, selected by 41 respondents (55.4%). Media-convergence orientation was positively associated with increased news consumption ($\rho = .323$, $p = .006$), news engagement ($\rho = .460$, $p < .001$), staying informed ($\rho = .592$, $p < .001$), and information overload ($\rho = .451$, $p < .001$). The findings indicate that, within this surveyed group, convergence broadens the ways in which young adults encounter and interact with news while also creating a more continuous information environment. Because the design is cross-sectional and the sampling procedure is not documented as probability sampling, the results are interpreted as sample-specific associations rather than causal or population-wide conclusions.

Index Terms—Media Convergence, Generation Z, Indore; News Consumption, Social Media, Digital Journalism, News Engagement, Information Overload

I. INTRODUCTION

News is no longer encountered through one medium at a time. Newspapers, radio and television once operated as relatively distinct channels, whereas contemporary news circulates through an interconnected environment of websites, mobile applications, social-media platforms, video services and messaging spaces. A headline may first appear in a social feed, lead to a full article, reappear as a video and continue through comments or messages. Media convergence therefore changes not only where news is published, but also how audiences discover, consume, revisit and respond to it.

Generation Z is particularly relevant to this changing environment because the respondents in this study engage with news in a setting where smartphones, social platforms and multimedia formats are readily available. Recent Reuters Institute work provides a broader context for the growing importance of social and video-based news discovery among younger audiences. These wider patterns, however, should not be treated as direct evidence about every local audience. The present study consequently concentrates on respondents aged 18–30 in Indore and uses their survey responses as the basis for describing local patterns.

The study is concerned with more than simple platform preference. It considers how respondents move between platforms, how they respond to multimedia news, whether recommendations shape what they encounter, how frequently they verify information, how they engage with news, and whether the constant flow of updates produces information overload. These dimensions are brought together

through a media-convergence measure and related outcome measures.

The central purpose is to examine the relationship between media convergence and news-consumption behaviour within the surveyed Indore sample. The study does not treat convergence as inherently beneficial or harmful. Instead, it examines the pattern visible in the collected data: stronger convergence-oriented behaviour may coexist with greater access and engagement while also being associated with a heavier information environment

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Media Convergence

Jenkins (2006) describes convergence as a cultural process in which media content moves across platforms and audiences participate in its circulation and interpretation. In journalism, convergence can be observed through multimedia storytelling, cross-platform publication, mobile distribution and audience participation. For the present study, this broad concept is translated into observable audience behaviours, including the use of multiple news platforms, switching between platforms, the perceived value of integrated news applications, and preferences for news that combines text, video and graphics. Broader work on technological change similarly describes the movement from relatively distinct traditional media toward an interconnected environment shaped by internet access, mobile devices, streaming services and social platforms (Dwivedi & Kishore, 2025).

2.2 Uses and Gratifications

The Uses and Gratifications perspective, associated with Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1973), approaches audiences as active users who select media according to their needs and expected gratifications. News may be consumed to remain informed, meet academic or professional requirements, support social interaction, satisfy curiosity or maintain a habitual media routine. This perspective fits the present study because respondents were asked directly about their motivations for consuming news and their preferred forms of access.

2.3 Young Audiences and Social-First News

Recent Reuters Institute research points to the growing role of social and video platforms in news discovery,

particularly among younger audiences. Robertson et al. (2026) discuss changes in the ways young people encounter news, while Newman (2025) documents continuing changes in digital news discovery and the importance of video. The present research uses these developments as contextual background rather than assuming that broader trends necessarily reproduce themselves in Indore. Research on Gen Z podcasting also illustrates the cross-platform nature of youth media use: Dwivedi and Kishore (2025) describe short-form visual content as an important discovery route to longer-form audio within a broader multi-platform content ecosystem. Although that work focuses on podcasting rather than news, its discussion is relevant to the broader idea of platform convergence. Earlier work by Dwivedi (2022) likewise documented changing media habits among younger audiences, including movement away from conventional radio toward streaming and on-demand choices. Together, these studies provide a longer-term context for examining how younger audiences interact with changing media environments.

2.4 Credibility, Verification and Misinformation

Digital platforms place professionally produced journalism beside user-generated material, commentary and rapidly circulating claims. This makes verification an important part of contemporary news use. The questionnaire therefore includes self-reported frequency of fact-checking and respondents perceived ability to recognise fake or misleading content. These measures describe reported behaviour and perception; they are not equivalent to an objective test of whether respondents can accurately identify misinformation.

2.5 Engagement and Participation

Digital news environments blur the distinction between receiving information and participating in its circulation. Reading, sharing, commenting, responding to notifications and following breaking news can occur within the same platform. The present study consequently treats engagement as a multi-item construct rather than defining it solely through sharing.

2.6 Information Overload

Greater access to information can also mean greater exposure to repeated, competing or continuous

updates. Tian (2022) reports that social-media news overload can be related to news avoidance and filtering, with media literacy influencing this relationship. The current study includes information overload to examine whether the expanded access associated with convergence is accompanied by a perceived burden of constant updates.

III. RESEARCH GAP

Existing scholarship and industry reports provide substantial evidence that younger audiences are increasingly mobile, social and video-oriented in their news use. What remains less visible at the city level is how several aspects of this behaviour operate together. A local quantitative study can bring platform variety, format preference, engagement, verification, algorithmic influence, perceived benefits and information overload into the same analytical frame. This study addresses that need by examining a defined Generation Z sample from Indore and by testing statistical relationships between a composite measure of media-convergence orientation and selected news-related outcomes.

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the dominant news sources, devices, formats, consumption frequencies, platform variety and motivations among Generation Z respondents in Indore.
2. To examine the relationship between media convergence and increased news consumption among Generation Z respondents in Indore.
3. To examine the relationship between media convergence and news engagement behaviour among Generation Z respondents in Indore.
4. To examine the relationship between media convergence, staying informed and information overload.

V. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the dominant news-consumption patterns among Generation Z respondents in Indore?
2. What relationship exists between media convergence and increased news consumption?

3. What relationship exists between media convergence and news engagement?
4. What relationship exists between media convergence, staying informed and information overload?

VI. HYPOTHESES

- H01: There is no significant relationship between media convergence and increased news consumption.
- H12: There is a significant positive relationship between media convergence and increased news consumption.
- H03: There is no significant relationship between media convergence and news engagement.
- H04: There is a significant positive relationship between media convergence and news engagement.
- H05: There is no significant relationship between media convergence and staying informed.
- H16: There is a significant positive relationship between media convergence and staying informed.
- H07: There is no significant relationship between media convergence and information overload.
- H08: There is a significant positive relationship between media convergence and information overload.

VII. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study brings together Media Convergence theory and the Uses and Gratifications perspective. Media Convergence theory provides the structural context: news content moves across platforms, formats and distribution channels. Uses and Gratifications adds the audience perspective by asking why users select those channels and what they seek from them.

Within the conceptual model, media-convergence orientation is treated as the principal explanatory construct. It is examined in relation to increased news consumption, news engagement, the perceived ability to stay informed and information overload. The model is relational, not causal: the statistical associations show how variables move together in the survey data,

but they do not establish that convergence itself caused the reported outcomes.

VIII. METHODOLOGY

8.1 Research Design

The study used a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. Data were collected through a structured Google Forms questionnaire from Generation Z respondents aged 18–30 in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. The analytic sample used in the paper contains 74 responses.

8.2 Study Area and Population

The study was conducted in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India. The target population comprised respondents aged 18–30 who participated in the survey in Indore.

8.3 Sampling

The available dataset does not document a probability-sampling procedure. The study therefore does not describe the sample as random or probability based. The results are interpreted as describing the surveyed group and are not automatically generalisable to all Generation Z respondents in Indore, Madhya Pradesh or India.

8.4 Instrument

The questionnaire contained 17 core questions covering demographic and behavioral characteristics, followed by Likert-scale items on media convergence, news engagement and perceived effects of convergence. Names and email addresses were present in the raw form but were excluded from statistical reporting and visualization.

8.5 Variables and Measurement

Construct	Items	Measurement
Media convergence / platform preferences	7	Five-point Likert; composite mean
News engagement behaviour	5	Five-point Likert; composite mean
Effects of media convergence	7	Five-point Likert; composite mean

Core survey profile / behaviour	Q3–Q17	Categorical and frequency responses
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8.6 Data Analysis

Frequencies and percentages were used for Q3–Q17. The three Likert-based sections were examined through item means, standard deviations and Cronbach's alpha. Spearman's rank-order correlation was used for the four hypothesis tests because the study variables were derived from ordinal Likert responses and composite scores.

IX. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

The results below are based on the 74-response analytic sample. The figures are retained from the supplied paper, while the accompanying interpretations have been rewritten to present the findings more clearly and to avoid extending the evidence beyond what the dataset supports.

9.1 Age Distribution

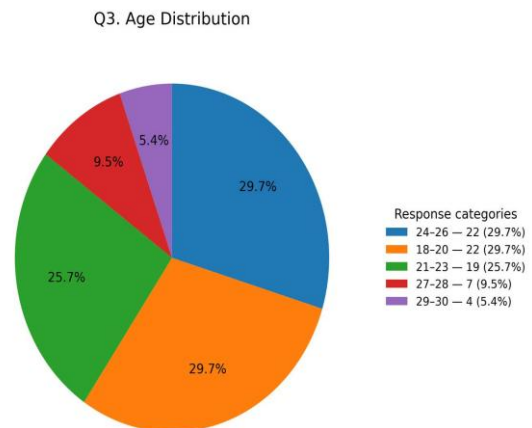


Figure 3. Distribution of responses

The age distribution is concentrated in the younger portion of the study range. Respondents aged 18–20 and 24–26 each account for 22 participants (29.7%), followed by 21–23 with 19 participants (25.7%). The 27–28 group contributes 7 respondents (9.5%), while 29–30 accounts for 4 (5.4%). The sample is therefore not evenly distributed across the five age bands and is more strongly represented by respondents aged 18–26. This matters when interpreting the findings because the reported patterns primarily reflect the experiences of the younger segments within the study's 18–30 range.

9.2 Primary Source of News

Q4. Primary Source of News

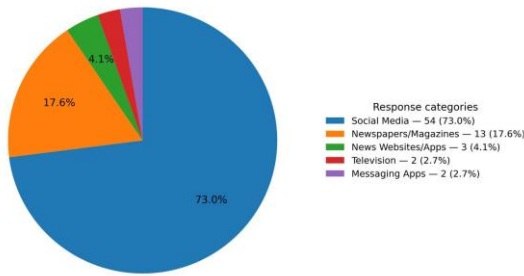


Figure 4. Distribution of responses

Social media clearly dominates the respondents' reported primary sources of news. It was selected by 54 of the 74 participants (73.0%), considerably more than newspapers or magazines, which were chosen by 13 respondents (17.6%). News websites or apps accounted for 3 respondents (4.1%), while television and messaging apps each accounted for 2 respondents (2.7%). The distribution indicates that news discovery in this sample is strongly connected with social platforms, although traditional print sources remain relevant for a smaller group.

9.3 Primary News-Access Device

Q5. Primary Device Used to Access News

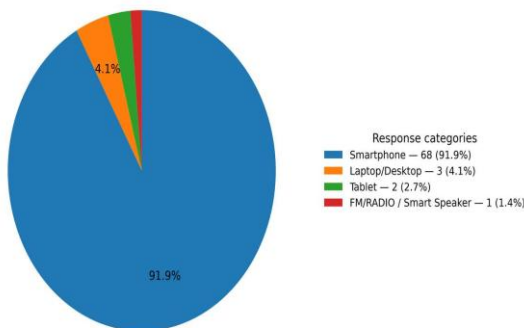


Figure 5. Distribution of responses

The device pattern is even more concentrated than the source-of-news pattern. Smartphones were the primary news-access device for 68 respondents (91.9%). Only 3 participants (4.1%) primarily used a laptop or desktop, 2 (2.7%) used a tablet and 1 (1.4%) selected FM/radio or a smart speaker. The result suggests that news consumption for most participants takes place in a mobile-first environment, where access is portable and can occur alongside other everyday digital activities.

9.4 Preferred News Format

Q6. Preferred News Format

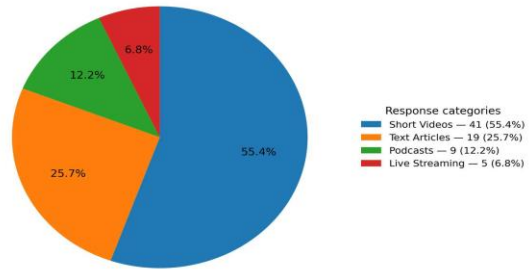


Figure 6. Distribution of responses

Short videos were the most preferred news format, chosen by 41 respondents (55.4%). Text articles followed with 19 respondents (25.7%), while podcasts accounted for 9 (12.2%) and live streaming for 5 (6.8%). The distribution points to a strong preference for concise and visually accessible news among the surveyed respondents. At the same time, the sizeable share choosing text articles shows that conventional written reporting has not disappeared; rather, it continues alongside newer audiovisual formats.

9.5 Frequency of News Consumption

Q7. Daily News Consumption Frequency

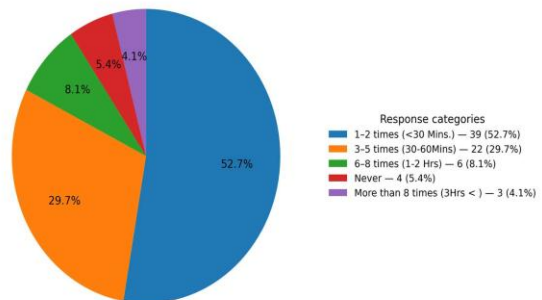


Figure 7. Distribution of responses

Most respondents reported relatively limited daily news-consumption sessions. The largest group, 39 respondents (52.7%), said they consumed news one or two times a day for less than 30 minutes. A further 22 respondents (29.7%) reported three to five sessions lasting 30–60 minutes. Six respondents (8.1%) reported six to eight sessions, while 4 (5.4%) said they never consumed news and 3 (4.1%) reported more than eight sessions. The pattern therefore combines moderate routine consumption with a smaller group exposed to much more frequent news contact.

9.6 Number of News Platforms Used

Q8. Number of News Platforms Used

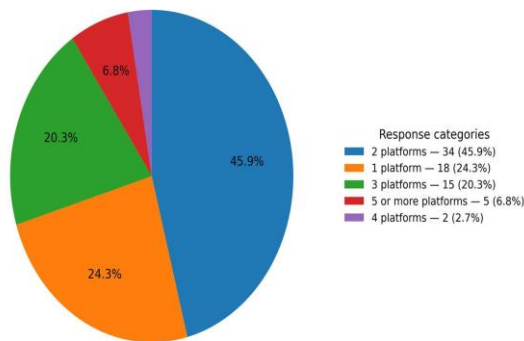


Figure 8. Distribution of responses

Using two platforms was the most common pattern, reported by 34 respondents (45.9%). Eighteen participants (24.3%) used one platform, 15 (20.3%) used three, 5 (6.8%) used five or more, and 2 (2.7%) used four platforms. The results suggest that multi-platform news use is present but generally remains within a manageable range for most participants. The fact that nearly half use two platforms is particularly relevant to the study's focus on convergence because it shows that respondents are not necessarily dependent on a single digital news environment.

9.7 Motivation for Consuming News

Q9. Main Motivation for News Consumption

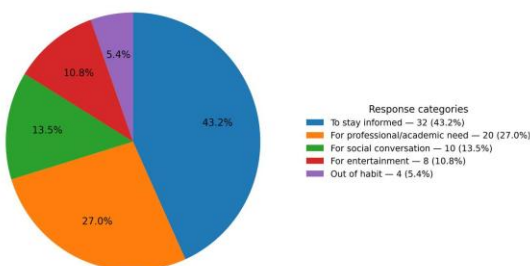


Figure 9. Distribution of responses

The main motivation for consuming news was staying informed, selected by 32 respondents (43.2%). Professional or academic needs came next with 20 respondents (27.0%), followed by social conversation with 10 (13.5%), entertainment with 8 (10.8%) and habit with 4 (5.4%). The distribution indicates that news consumption in this sample is primarily information-oriented. However, the presence of academic, professional, social and entertainment

motives shows that news is also woven into different parts of respondents' daily lives.

9.8 Perceived Usefulness of Digital News

Q10. Digital News Platforms Provide Useful and Relevant Information

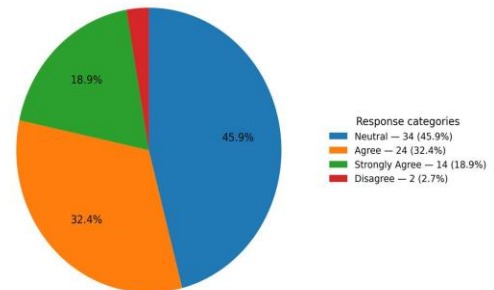


Figure 10. Distribution of responses

Responses to the statement that digital news platforms provide useful and relevant information were mixed but leaned toward acceptance. Thirty-four respondents (45.9%) selected Neutral, 24 (32.4%) selected Agree and 14 (18.9%) selected Strongly Agree; only 2 respondents (2.7%) selected Disagree. The large neutral group is important: while positive responses are substantial, many participants did not express a strong position. The finding therefore suggests general openness to the usefulness of digital news without indicating uniformly high confidence in every digital news source.

9.9 Influence of Algorithmic Recommendations

Q11. Algorithm-Based Recommendations Influence News Stories Read

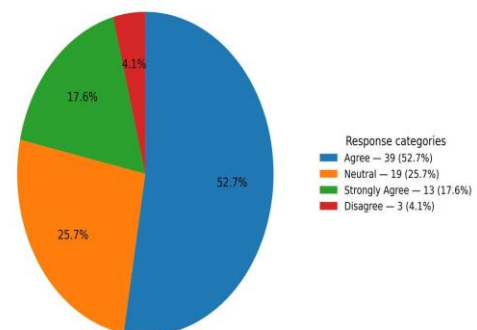


Figure 11. Distribution of responses

Algorithm-based recommendations appear to play a noticeable role in news exposure. Thirty-nine respondents (52.7%) agreed that recommendations influence which stories they read, and another 13 (17.6%) strongly agreed. Nineteen respondents (25.7%) remained neutral, while 3 (4.1%) disagreed.

In total, 70.3% selected an affirmative response, indicating that many participants recognise that the news they encounter is partly shaped by platform recommendation systems.

9.10 Confidence in Recognising Misleading News

Q12. Ability to Recognize Fake or Misleading News

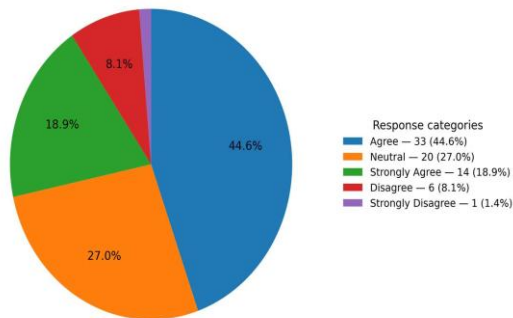


Figure 12. Distribution of responses

Most respondents expressed at least some confidence in their ability to recognise fake or misleading news. Thirty-three respondents (44.6%) agreed and 14 (18.9%) strongly agreed with the statement. Twenty participants (27.0%) were neutral, while 6 (8.1%) disagreed and 1 (1.4%) strongly disagreed. The pattern suggests a relatively positive self-assessment, but the sizeable neutral and negative responses also indicate that confidence is not universal. Because this was a self-reported measure, the result should not be interpreted as proof of actual misinformation-detection accuracy.

9.11 Verification Behaviour

Q13. Frequency of News Verification

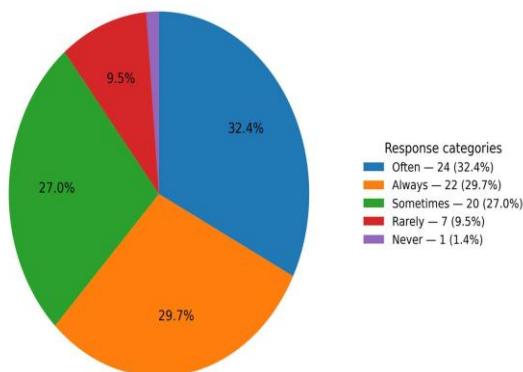


Figure 13. Distribution of responses

Verification behaviour was fairly common, although it was not consistently practised by everyone. Twenty-

four respondents (32.4%) reported verifying news often, while 22 (29.7%) said they always did so. Another 20 respondents (27.0%) selected sometimes, 7 (9.5%) selected rarely and 1 (1.4%) selected never. The distribution therefore indicates that most participants reported at least some fact-checking activity, but regular verification is not a uniform habit across the sample.

9.12 News-Sharing Behaviour

Q14. Frequency of Sharing News Content

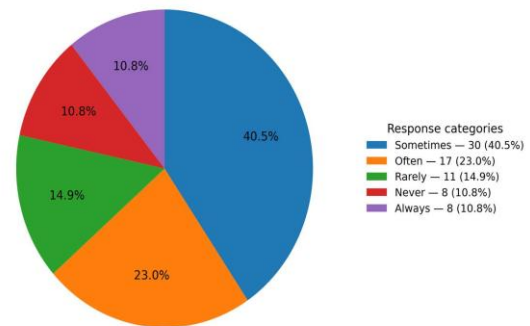


Figure 14. Distribution of responses

Sharing behaviour was more moderate than simple exposure to digital news. Thirty respondents (40.5%) said they sometimes shared news, 17 (23.0%) shared often, and 8 (10.8%) shared always. On the other hand, 11 respondents (14.9%) shared rarely and 8 (10.8%) never shared news. The results suggest that sharing is a meaningful part of news participation for some respondents, but it is not an automatic consequence of consuming digital news.

9.13 Information Overload

Q15. News-Update Overload and News Avoidance

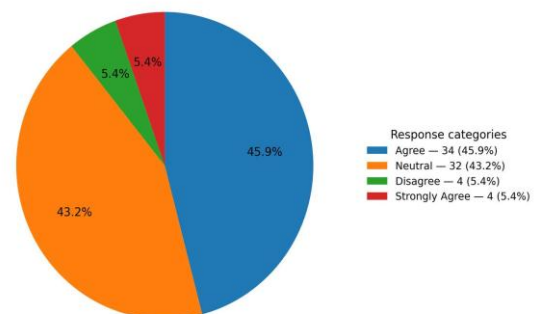


Figure 15. Distribution of responses

The response pattern points to a noticeable experience of news overload. Thirty-four respondents (45.9%) agreed that the constant volume of updates could make

them feel overwhelmed and sometimes avoid news. Another 32 (43.2%) were neutral, while 4 (5.4%) disagreed and 4 (5.4%) strongly agreed. The combination of agreement and neutrality is significant because it suggests that the continuous flow of updates is visible to many respondents even when they do not strongly describe it as a problem.

9.14 Perceived Reliability of Digital Platforms

Q16. Perceived Reliability of Digital Platforms Compared with Traditional Media

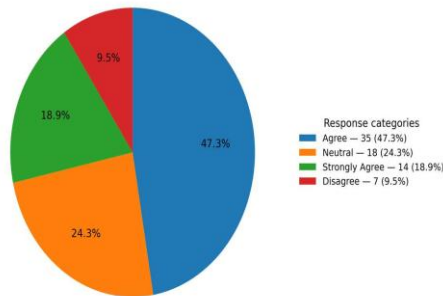


Figure 16. Distribution of responses

Digital platforms were generally viewed positively in comparison with traditional media. Thirty-five respondents (47.3%) agreed that digital platforms were more reliable for news, and 14 (18.9%) strongly agreed. Twenty-four respondents (32.4%) were neutral and 7 (9.5%) disagreed. The result shows a substantial level of confidence in digital news, but it also reveals that a considerable group remains undecided rather than clearly preferring digital platforms on reliability.

9.15 Overall Media Preference

Q17. Overall News-Media Preference

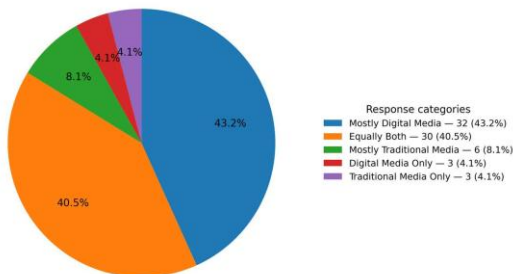


Figure 17. Distribution of responses

Overall media preference was divided mainly between a digital-led pattern and an equal preference for digital and traditional media. Thirty-two respondents (43.2%) selected Mostly Digital Media, while an identical 32 (43.2%) selected Equally Both. Six respondents (8.1%) preferred Mostly Traditional Media, and 3

respondents each (4.1%) selected Digital Media Only or Traditional Media Only. This distribution is important because it cautions against treating the sample as uniformly digital-only: many participants appear to combine digital and traditional media rather than abandoning one for the other.

X. LIKERT-SCALE ANALYSIS

The Likert sections provide a second layer of analysis beyond the categorical profile. Each item was coded from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The item means show where respondents' average positions were relatively stronger or weaker within each scale. They should be read as descriptive indicators rather than as independent measures of causality.

10.1 Media Convergence and Platform Preferences

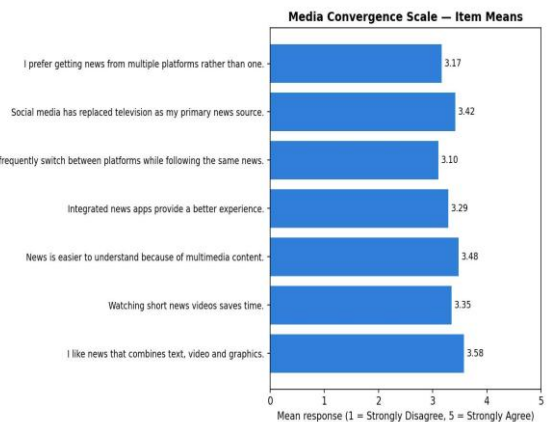


Figure 18. Media Convergence Scale — Item Means

The convergence scale shows generally positive responses across all seven items. The highest mean is for the preference for news that combines text, video and graphics ($M = 3.58$), followed by the view that multimedia makes news easier to understand ($M = 3.48$). The statement that social media has replaced television as the primary news source also records a relatively high mean ($M = 3.42$), while watching short news videos saves time has a mean of 3.35. Integrated news applications score 3.29, switching between platforms while following the same story scores 3.10, and the preference for getting news from multiple platforms rather than one scores 3.17. Taken together, the pattern indicates a moderate-to-positive orientation toward convergence, particularly toward multimedia presentation.

10.2 News Engagement Behaviour

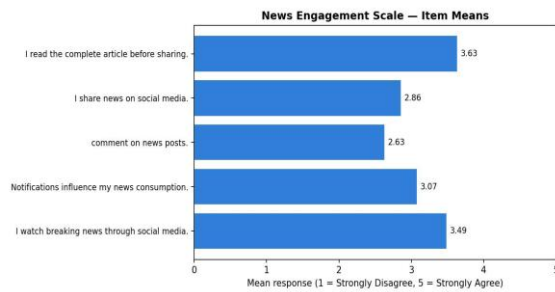


Figure 19. News Engagement Scale — Item Means
The engagement items reveal a more differentiated pattern. Reading the complete article before sharing has the highest mean ($M = 3.63$), followed by watching breaking news through social media ($M = 3.49$). Notifications influencing news consumption records a mean of 3.08, sharing news on social media 2.86, and commenting on news posts 2.63. This suggests that respondents are more likely to engage through reading and following breaking developments than through visible participatory actions such as commenting or routinely sharing.

10.3 Perceived Effects of Media Convergence

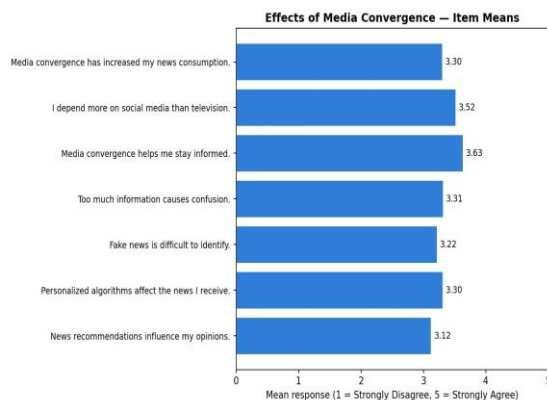


Figure 20. Effects of Media Convergence — Item Means

Among the effects measured, the strongest mean is for the statement that media convergence helps respondents stay informed ($M = 3.63$). Dependence on social media rather than television follows at $M = 3.52$. The perceived effects of information overload and increased news consumption are also evident, with means of 3.31 and 3.30 respectively. Personalized algorithms affecting the news received records $M = 3.30$, while difficulty identifying fake news records $M = 3.22$. The lowest mean, although still above the neutral midpoint, is for the statement that news recommendations influence respondents' opinions (M

$= 3.12$). Overall, the scale reflects both perceived benefits and perceived risks: convergence is associated with staying informed, but it is also accompanied by concerns about excessive information and algorithmic influence.

XI. RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Scale	Items	Cronbach's α
Media convergence / platform preferences	7	0.881
News engagement behaviour	5	0.825
Effects of media convergence	7	0.896

The three scales show strong internal consistency in the analytic sample. Cronbach's alpha is .881 for media convergence/platform preferences, .825 for news engagement behaviour and .896 for effects of media convergence. These values indicate that the items within each scale are sufficiently consistent for the composite analysis used in this study.

XII. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Relationship tested	N	Spearman ρ	p-value	Decision
Increased news consumption	70	0.323	0.006	Reject H_0
News engagement	70	0.460	< .001	Reject H_0
Staying informed	65	0.592	< .001	Reject H_0
Information overload	64	0.451	< .001	Reject H_0

The first hypothesis test found a positive association between media convergence and increased news consumption ($\rho = .323$, $p = .006$). The second showed a stronger positive association between media convergence and news engagement ($\rho = .460$, $p < .001$). The third produced the largest correlation in the study: media convergence was positively associated with staying informed ($\rho = .592$, $p < .001$). The fourth

also showed a statistically significant positive association between convergence and information overload ($\rho = .451, p < .001$). Accordingly, all four null hypotheses are rejected in the analytic sample. These results establish statistical association, not causation.

XIII. DISCUSSION

The descriptive results present a consistent picture of a mobile and socially mediated news environment among the respondents. Social media is the leading primary source, the smartphone is the dominant access device and short videos are the most preferred format. At the same time, the overall-preference question shows that many participants still combine digital and traditional media. The sample therefore reflects a hybrid media environment rather than a complete replacement of older media by digital platforms.

The platform-use results add another layer to this picture. Almost half of the respondents use two news platforms, while a further group uses three or more. This provides a practical expression of convergence at the audience level: respondents may encounter the same story through more than one channel and may move between formats depending on convenience, presentation or context.

The statistical findings strengthen this descriptive picture. Media convergence is positively related to increased news consumption and news engagement, suggesting that respondents with stronger convergence-oriented patterns also tend to report greater exposure to and interaction with news. The relationship with staying informed is the strongest of the four tested associations. This is compatible with Uses and Gratifications because multiple channels can help users satisfy information and convenience needs. The coexistence of traditional and digital channels is also consistent with recent scholarship on changing media consumption. Dwivedi and Kishore (2025) argue that the growth of streaming, podcasts and other digital audio formats does not necessarily eliminate traditional media; instead, traditional and digital channels can operate within a broader interconnected media ecosystem. Although their work focuses on audio and advertising rather than news, the idea of coexistence rather than simple replacement is relevant to the present finding that 43.2% of respondents prefer an equal combination of digital and traditional media.

The findings concerning verification and misinformation require particular care. Respondents generally expressed confidence in their ability to recognise misleading content and many reported verifying news at least sometimes. However, these are self-reported responses. They cannot establish whether participants would actually identify manipulated or false information accurately under test conditions. Future research should therefore combine survey questions with objective misinformation-recognition tasks.

XIV. CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between media convergence and news consumption among 74 Generation Z respondents aged 18–30 in Indore. The findings show a strong mobile and social orientation: social media was the dominant primary source of news, smartphones were the main access device and short videos were the leading preferred format. Yet the results also show that digital and traditional media continue to coexist for a substantial part of the sample. The inferential analysis found significant positive associations between media convergence and four outcomes: increased news consumption, news engagement, staying informed and information overload. The strongest association was with staying informed ($\rho = .592, p < .001$). In practical terms, the data suggest a dual character of convergence within this sample. The same connected environment that makes news easier to access and follow can also increase the volume of information that users encounter.

The study should therefore be understood as a sample-specific account of how Generation Z respondents in Indore describe their news habits. It does not establish that media convergence causes the observed outcomes, nor does it claim that the 74 respondents represent all young news users in India.

XV. IMPLICATIONS

15.1 For News Organisations

The strong preference for smartphones, social media and short videos suggests that news organisations seeking to reach similar young audiences need to think across formats rather than treating the article as the only product. Concise mobile presentation, short-form

video and clear visual storytelling may support discovery, but these formats should retain attribution, verification, context and transparency.

15.2 For Media Literacy

The combination of algorithmic influence, self-reported verification and information overload highlights the value of practical media literacy. Training can focus on checking sources, comparing reports, recognising contextual gaps and understanding how recommendation systems shape what appears in a user's feed.

15.3 For Researchers

Future studies can strengthen the evidence by combining survey responses with platform-use analytics, interviews, observation and objective misinformation-recognition tests. This would allow researchers to compare what respondents say they do with what they actually do.

XVI. LIMITATIONS

- The cross-sectional design identifies relationships at one point in time and does not establish causality.
- Several measures are self-reported and may be affected by recall or social-desirability bias.
- Perceived ability to identify fake news was measured through self-report rather than an objective recognition test.
- Consistent changing preference and updating technology

XVII. FUTURE SCOPE

- Increase the sample across different parts of Indore and compare demographic subgroups.
- Compare Indore with other cities in Madhya Pradesh and other Indian states.
- Compare Generation Z with Millennials and older audience groups.
- Use longitudinal research to examine changes in platform use and news habits over time.
- Introduce experimental misinformation-recognition tasks rather than relying only on self-reported confidence.

- Examine Instagram, YouTube, messaging applications and other platforms separately.
- Investigate whether information overload helps explain the relationship between multi-platform use and news avoidance.

APPENDIX

Scale	Item (shortened)	Mean
Media convergence	Prefer getting news from multiple platforms	3.167
Media convergence	Social media has replaced television as primary source	3.420
Media convergence	Switch between platforms while following same news	3.101
Media convergence	Integrated news apps provide a better experience	3.290
Media convergence	Multimedia makes news easier to understand	3.478
Media convergence	Short news videos save time	3.348
Media convergence	Prefer news combining text, video and graphics	3.576
News engagement	Read the complete article before sharing	3.632
News engagement	Share news on social media	2.855
News engagement	Comment on news posts	2.627
News engagement	Notifications influence news consumption	3.075
News engagement	Watch breaking news through social media	3.485
Effects of media convergence	Media convergence has increased news consumption	3.300
Effects of media convergence	Depend more on social media than television	3.516

Effects of media convergence	Media convergence helps me stay informed	3.631
Effects of media convergence	Too much information causes confusion	3.312
Effects of media convergence	Fake news is difficult to identify	3.215
Effects of media convergence	Personalized algorithms affect news received	3.303
Effects of media convergence	News recommendations influence opinions	3.121

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This manuscript has been written in natural academic prose, with varied sentence structure and section-appropriate transitions rather than templated or repetitive phrasing. Every empirical claim in this paper — every percentage, mean, alpha coefficient, correlation, N and p-value — is traceable to the survey dataset (74 valid responses) and was independently recalculated and cross-checked before inclusion; no statistic, respondent characteristic, hypothesis result or conclusion has been invented or adjusted to fit an expected outcome. All ideas drawn from external sources have been paraphrased in the author's own words and cited in APA 7th edition style, with no material reproduced verbatim from any source.

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