



Newspaper Readership - On Campus

November 1998

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Purpose

The purpose of this survey was to monitor the impact of the newspaper readership program implemented last year in all residence halls.

Highlights

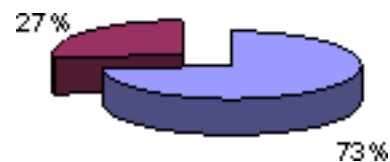
Two thirds of students reported their newspaper readership had increased since beginning college.

Nearly half (47%) indicated that reading newspapers added positively to their overall education.

Almost all students (95%) living on campus stated they get the 'news' through printed newspapers, while 62% also report using on-line web sites.

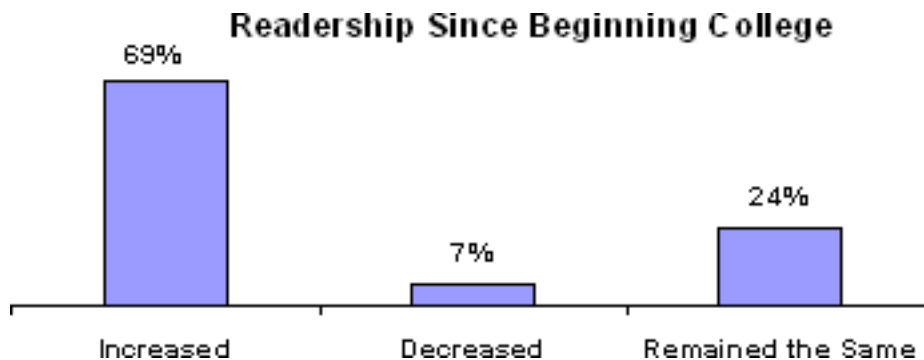
Participation Rate

- N = 846 (73%) agreed to participate
- N = 311 (27%) did not agree to participate



Findings

● Most students (69%) report their newspaper readership increased since coming to college.



● The same percentage of students living on campus (47%) and those living off campus (47%) indicated that reading newspapers added to their Penn State education.

Added to Penn State Education

	<u>On Campus</u>	<u>Off Campus</u> ^
Yes	47%	47%
No	19%	27%
Undecided	34%	25%

(^ October 98 Pulse #49 Newspaper Readership-Off Campus)

● Students were asked how they currently accessed the 'news.' The most common source of news for students living on campus was printed newspapers (95%), followed by television (82%) and on-line Web sites (62%.) This profile differed from students living off campus.

Media Used to Access News

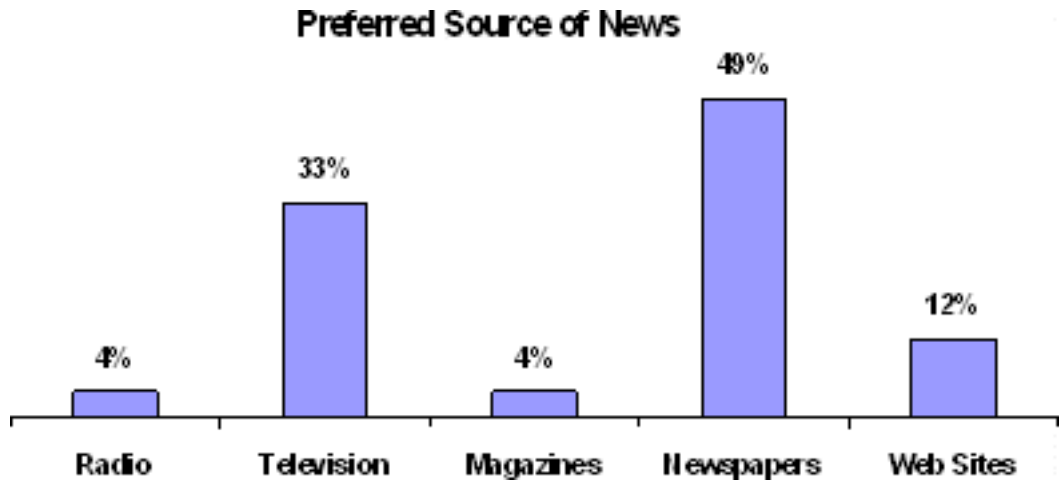
	<u>On Campus</u>	<u>Off Campus</u> ^
Printed Newspapers	95%	89%
Television	82%	93%
Web Sites	62%	52%
Magazines	59%	67%
Radio	28%	48%

(^ October 98 Pulse #49 Newspaper Readership-Off Campus)

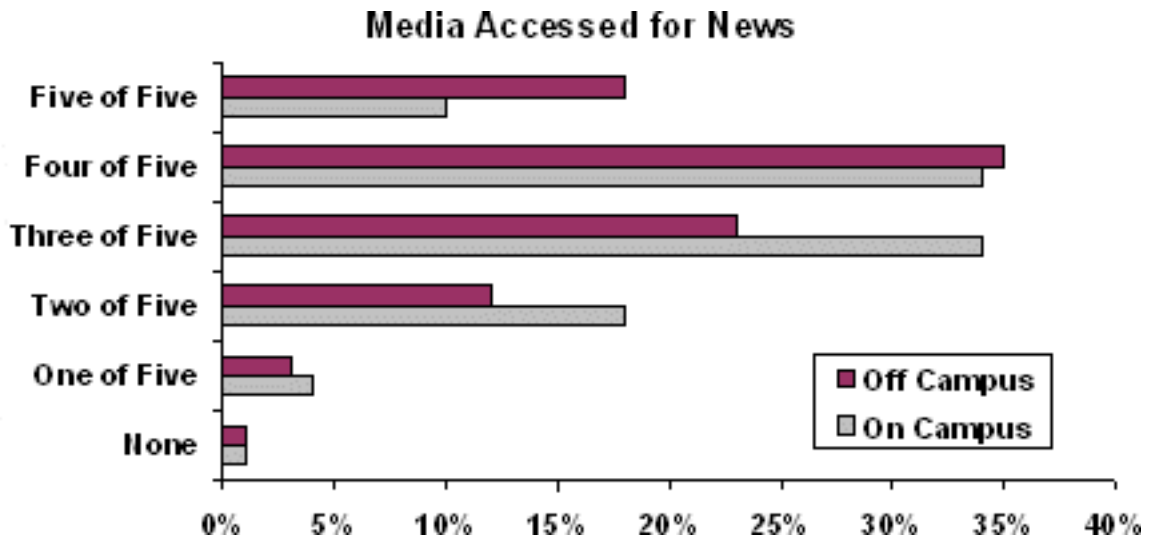
● Seniors were significantly less likely to choose magazines;* female students were more likely to choose radio; *** male students were more likely to choose Web sites *** and television. *

(Statistically significant at the .05*, .01** or .001*** level)

● When asked which one source of 'news' was their preferred choice, almost half (49%) indicated newspapers.

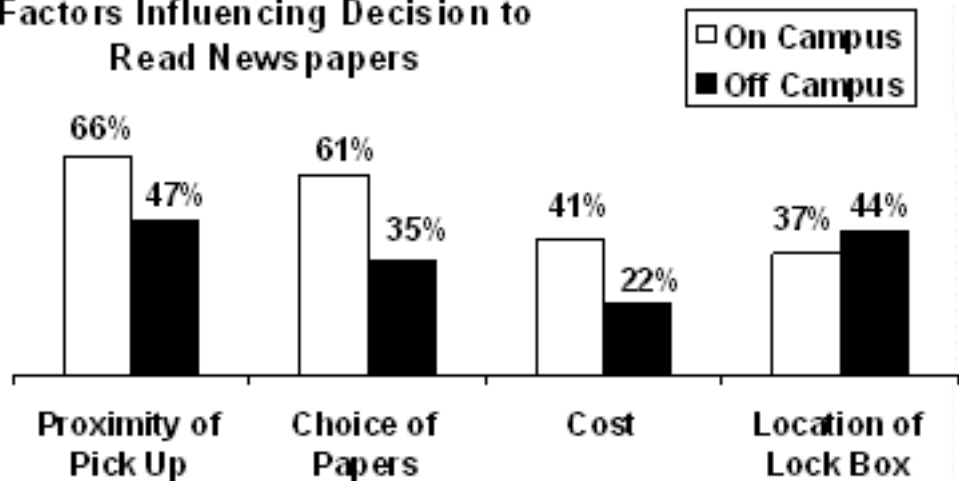


● Of on campus students, fewer than 1% failed to access 'news' through any of these media and 10% used all five media.



● When asked to what extent various factors influenced their decision to read newspapers regularly, the on campus students differed from off campus students.

Factors Influencing Decision to Read Newspapers



● About the same percentage of on campus students this Fall as last Spring felt the availability of newspapers contributed to the habit of reading a paper on a regular basis.

Availability Contributed to Regular Readership

	On Campus		Off Campus
	Spring '98	Fall '98	Fall '98
Yes	73%	75%	57%
No	14%	10%	20%
Undecided	14%	15%	23%

● When asked how many days each week they usually read specific newspaper sections, students indicated they most often read the headlines and local/national/international news articles.

Times/Week Usually Read Specific Newspaper Sections

Section	Mean (Times/Week)
Sports	3.63
Entertainment	3.24
Headlines	4.63
Editorials	3.45
Finance/Business	2.70
Classified/Ads	2.67
General Interest	3.23
News	4.28

- There were significant differences between female and male students. Males were more likely to read the sports and finance/ business sections while females were more likely to read the entertainment, editorials, and classified/advertisement sections.

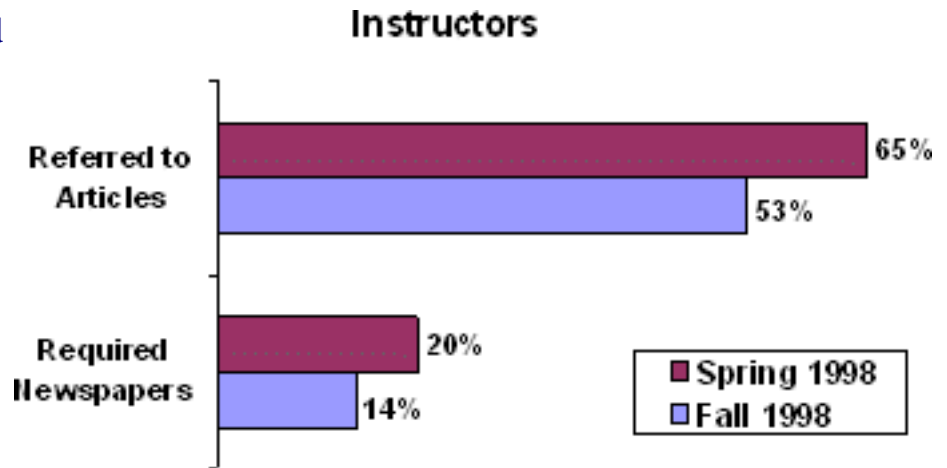
Specific Newspaper Sections - Gender Differences

Section	Males	Females
Sports	***	
Entertainment		***
Headlines		
Editorials		***
Finance/Business	***	
Classified/Ads		***
General Interest		
News		

(*** Statistically significant at the .001level)

- Almost all (95%) of on campus students said they picked up the newspapers themselves; 5% obtained them from another student.

- Students this Fall reported that fewer of their instructors required they read a newspaper on a regular basis than last Spring (14% vs. 20%) and fewer of their other instructors referred to news articles as part of class discussions or presentations (53% vs. 65%).



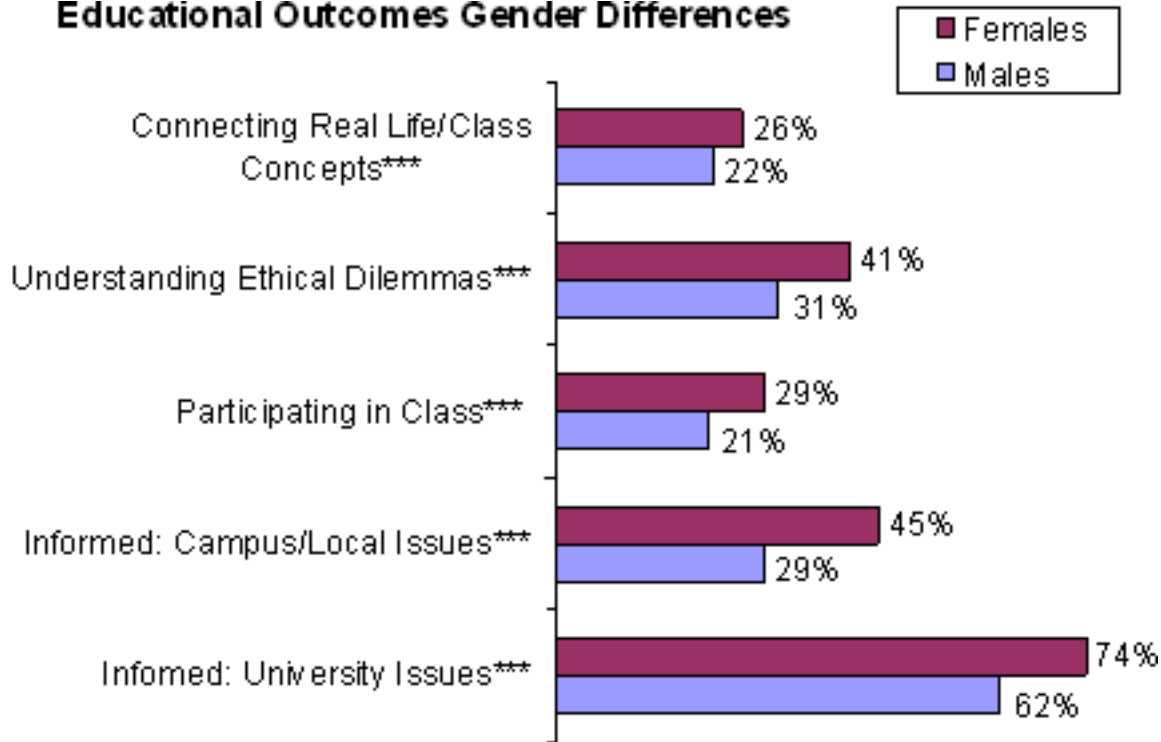
- On campus students were asked about the impact of reading newspapers on educational outcomes.

Educational Outcomes (1998)

	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Fall</u>
- having opinions about national issues	50%	56%
- feeling informed about University issues	51%	69%
- being informed about campus/local issues	40%	37%
- understanding politics/law	25%	32%
- ability to discuss current issues	55%	64%
- participating in class discussions	45%	26%
- connecting real life and class concepts	30%	24%
- developing strategies to pursue own goals	25%	25%
- gaining historical insight	22%	18%
- evaluating use of language/arguments/statistics	27%	25%
- understanding ethical dilemmas	31%	37%

● Minority students were significantly more likely than non minority students (67% vs. 54%) to say reading a newspaper on a regular basis added to their having opinions about national or international concerns.** There also were differences between male and female students.

Educational Outcomes Gender Differences



(Statistically significant at the .05*, .01** or .001*** level)

Revised on 07/17/00
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