

An Empirical Study of Personality and Age as Determinants of Satisfaction of Online News Readers

Ms. Minal Rathi^{1*}, Dr. Upinder Dhar²

^{1*} Research Scholar, Shri Vaishnav Vidyapeeth Vishwavidyalaya, Indore.

² Chairman & Distinguished Professor, People Development Foundation India. Former Vice Chancellor, Shri Vaishnav Vidyapeeth Vishwavidyalaya, Indore. Former Vice Chancellor, JK Lakshmipat University, Jaipur.

Abstract

The consumption of online news is an increasingly significant part of modern life, shaping how individuals access, process, and respond to information. While extensive research has been conducted on general media consumption, the specific influence of personality and age on the satisfaction of online news readers remains underexplored. Moreover, the interaction between these demographic and psychological factors in shaping users' satisfaction has not been thoroughly examined. The present study focused on Personality (Introversion and Extraversion) and Age (Young Adults: 20–30 years, Middle Aged: 40–50 years) in relation to the Satisfaction of Online News Readers, specifically those using news websites and applications. A structured tool, the Satisfaction of Online News Readers Scale, comprising 35 items on a 5-point Likert scale, was administered to a total of 400 respondents. The findings indicate that personality significantly influences factors such as credibility, review, and sharing, while age affects review, choice, and evidence-based content. A significant interaction effect of personality and age was observed for credibility and preference for news websites.

Keywords: Online Media Consumption, User Engagement, Audience Behaviour, Content Credibility, Media Preferences

Introduction

Satisfaction of Online News Readers

The success of online news platforms increasingly depends on their ability to understand and respond to the preferences of readers. With the rapid growth of online news consumption, user satisfaction has become a key factor in understanding platform performance and loyalty. Personality and age play significant roles in shaping how readers perceive, engage with, and evaluate online news. Younger readers, are more comfortable with technology, so they prefer content that includes multimedia formats, interactive elements, and personalized recommendations (Casero-Ripollés & Izquierdo-Castillo, 2013). Older audiences, focus on credibility, reliability, and depth, preferring platforms that provide verified information and well-researched articles. Social media has transformed news consumption by promoting interactivity and user participation, but challenges such as misinformation and declining trust still exist. Platforms can enhance satisfaction by aligning content delivery with personality-driven preferences and age-specific expectations. Using fact-checking, clear reporting, and ethical content practices helps build trust and keep readers loyal (Baptista & Gradim, 2020). By focusing on these factors, online news organizations can maintain long-term engagement and growth in the growing online media landscape.

Satisfaction in online news consumption is shaped by content quality, platform usability, personalization, and demographic factors. Younger readers, familiar with digital interfaces, prioritize timely information and personalized feeds, including mobile-friendly formats and interactive videos, which enhance engagement. Older readers, emphasize credibility, depth, and reliability, favouring fact-checked, comprehensive articles over fast, highly visual updates (Makananise & Madima, 2021). Personality types further influence satisfaction: introverts prefer structured platforms with analytical content, while extraverts are drawn to interactive features that encourage social engagement. Algorithm-driven recommendations can improve personalization but may create “echo chambers” that limit exposure to diverse viewpoints. Satisfaction reflects both cognitive evaluation and emotional response, requiring platforms to balance credibility, interactivity, and personalization to maintain loyalty and long-term engagement in competitive online news environments.

Personality and Online News Satisfaction

Personality plays an important role in how readers engage with online news and how satisfied they feel while using it. Extraverts, characterized by sociability, enjoy interactive tools such as comment sections and social

sharing features, which validate their participatory nature (Seidman, 2013). Introverts, prefer structured platforms offering in-depth analyses and comprehensive articles, supporting serious attention without distractions. Types like openness and conscientiousness relate to tendency toward credible, different content and well-organized information (Barnes et al., 2018). Personality influence how people choose their news sources. Some readers prefer to stick with familiar platforms while others like to explore and use a variety of sources. Understanding these differences help platform to design features catering to psychological needs, offering dynamic, community-oriented experiences for extraverts and quality-focused, structured content for introverts, ultimately enhancing satisfaction across varied user profiles.

Age and Online News Satisfaction

Age influences preferences for content formats, credibility, and news engagement. Younger readers, typically in their twenties, choose fast, visually rich formats such as infographics, short videos, and algorithm-driven feeds that provide personalized and timely content (Casero-Ripollés, 2012). They actively engage with social features like comments, likes, and shares. Older readers, particularly above forty, prioritize depth, accuracy, and structured presentation, gaining satisfaction from investigative reporting and analytical coverage. Older audience mostly depends on print but now many of them are also using digital platforms because they find them easy to access and simple to use. To satisfy both groups, platforms must balance bite-sized, engaging content for younger users with credible, in-depth articles for older readers, ensuring cross-generational relevance and long-term satisfaction across diverse age segments.

The Interplay of Personality and Age

Personality and age both influences how readers engage with digital news. Younger extraverts (20–30 years) prefer interactive platforms offering real-time engagement, whereas older extraverts prefer curated spaces with structured discussions (Humprecht & Esser, 2017). Personality affects content choice, with younger groups seeking immediacy and stimulation, while older users prioritize comprehension and analytical depth. Platforms that align content strategies with both personality and age enhance satisfaction, engagement, and loyalty. Recognizing age-driven differences is crucial, particularly in regions with rapidly growing internet adoption, where younger audiences quickly embrace new platforms (Anderson, 2018). Personality and age together influence what kind of news readers prefer. This shows that news platforms should adjust their content by keeping it engaging as well as trustworthy, so that it stays relevant for different types of readers and keeps them coming back.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the effect of personality and age on the satisfaction of online news readers. The following objectives were formulated to carry out the study:

1. To assess the effect of Personality as an independent variable on the satisfaction of online news readers and its factors.
2. To assess the effect of Age as an independent variable on the satisfaction of online news readers and its factors.
3. To assess the interactive effect of Personality and Age as independent variables on the satisfaction of online news readers and its factors.

Review of literature

Digital revolution has immensely transformed news consumption worldwide, shifting the industry from traditional print formats to highly interactive and personalized digital platforms. Chyi and Lasorsa (1999) were among the first to report that how e-newspapers sought to adapt to the new media environment, emphasizing both the opportunities of innovation and the challenges to sustainability as readers moved online.

The growth of smartphones and high-speed internet accelerated this transformation, enabling real-time reporting and broader accessibility that fundamentally reshaped consumer habits. Digital platforms now facilitate user-driven discovery, where algorithms and recommendation systems personalize content to align with individual preferences, creating highly engaging and immersive experiences. While this personalization fosters loyalty, it

also raises concerns of echo chambers and fragmentation, as readers may be exposed primarily to stories that reinforce their existing perspectives.

Social media has supported this shift but has also increased the risks of misinformation. It has made it difficult to clearly separate content creators from consumers, as people now actively take part through comments, live updates, and sharing features. The spread of “fake news” underscores the need for digital literacy, editorial responsibility, and fact-checking, as misinformation can spread faster in a digital ecosystem that prioritizes speed and virality. Tandoc et al. (2017) pointed out that the rush to publish news quickly can sometimes reduce its accuracy.

News organizations often face a challenge in balancing speed with reliability. Globalization has changed online news by making information from different countries easily accessible. While this helps people see broader perspectives, it can also lead to similar types of content everywhere and more sensational reporting, which may weaken local stories. This tension between global visibility and regional authenticity challenges platforms to maintain diversity and depth while competing for audience attention in a crowded marketplace.

Trust has emerged as a cornerstone of sustainable engagement in the digital era, with Carlson (2018) emphasizing that credibility, transparency, and ethical reporting are essential for news organizations to differentiate themselves from alternative outlets and user-generated content. Trust not only strengthens reader loyalty but also reinforces the broader democratic role of journalism in ensuring informed participation in public life.

These changes show that digital technology has not just changed how news is delivered, but also how people interact with it. Readers are no longer passive, they actively engage with news, choose what they want to see, and expect more transparency from news organizations. This shift brings responsibility. The future of journalism depends on using technology wisely, maintaining a balance between speed and accuracy, and building trust while meeting the needs of a diverse and global audience.

Method

The Study

This research is an exploratory study aimed at identifying the factors of Satisfaction of Online News Readers. The independent variables in the study were Personality and age. The dependent variable was Satisfaction of Online News Readers (Users of News Websites and Applications).

Thus, the study aimed to investigate the main and the interactive effects of Personality, and Age as independent variables on the satisfaction and its factors as dependent variables.

The Design

A 2×2 factorial design was employed to examine the effects of Personality and Age on the Satisfaction of Online News Readers. Personality was studied in terms of Introversion and Extraversion. Age groups, namely Young Adults (20–30 years) and Middle Aged (40–50 years) were chosen for the study. Four sub groups for the study were as under:

- Introvert Young Adults (20–30 years)
- Introvert Middle Aged (40–50 years)
- Extravert Young Adults (20–30 years)
- Extravert Middle Aged (40–50 years)

The Sample

Sample size: Respondents of the specific personality and age groups were selected from various cities of India, namely Mumbai, Pune, Indore, and Gwalior. A sample of 400 respondents was equally distributed in Introvert Young Adults, Introvert Middle Aged, Extravert Young Adults and Extravert Middle Aged groups. Thus, each sub group having 100 respondents.

Sampling Procedure: The Online News Readers were approached for the collection of data through a structured questionnaire. After thorough examination for accuracy and adherence to research design specifications, valid responses were retained. Careless and inadequate responses were eliminated to ensure proper data purification. The study was conducted in a convenient and respondent-friendly manner, and through randomization and elimination, the influence of extraneous variables was controlled. The data were properly recorded for analysis.

The Tools

Tools for Data Collection - Two standardized instruments were used for data collection. The *Satisfaction of Online News Readers Scale* comprising 35 items on a 5-point Likert scale was administered to measure satisfaction levels. The tool demonstrated high reliability (Split-Half = 0.940, Cronbach Alpha = 0.918) and validity (0.969). The *Maudsley Personality Inventory (MPI)* by H. J. Eysenck (1959) was employed to assess personality types, consisting of 48 items in a dichotomous response format with established reliability (0.88) and validity (0.89). Both tools were self-administered with clear instructions, and respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity of their responses.

Tools for Data Analysis - The collected responses were coded, edited, and tabulated in MS-Excel to ensure accuracy. Item-total correlations were computed to establish internal consistency of the scale. Factor Analysis was conducted using the Principal Component Method with Varimax Rotation, resulting in nine distinct factors along with the overall satisfaction. To examine the effects of independent variables, Two-way ANOVA was applied to both the total score and the identified factors to determine the main and interactive effects of Personality and Age. A total of 30 null hypotheses were tested. 60 z-tests were computed to assess inter-group differences. The analysis was carried out using SPSS (Version 20) and Microsoft Excel.

Results

KMO and Bartlett's Test

The KMO value obtained was 0.917, indicating the adequacy of the sample size for Factor Analysis. Bartlett's test of sphericity yielded a Chi-square value of 4405.462 with 595 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.000, confirming that the variables were sufficiently correlated for Factor Analysis.

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was conducted using the Principal Component Method with Varimax Rotation. Nine factors of satisfaction being: Flexibility, Relevant Content, Credibility, Review, Choice, Sharing, Evidence-Based Content, Preference for News Websites, and Use of Devices.

ANOVA and Z test

The results of Two-way ANOVA and z-test analyses indicate that personality and age significantly affect the satisfaction of online news readers across different factors. The results highlight the significant role of personality and age in shaping the satisfaction of online news readers. The detailed findings are presented below:

Findings

Based on the analysis, the major findings derived from ANOVA and z-test results are presented as follows:

Personality affects the Credibility, Review, Choice, Sharing, and Use of Devices Factors of Satisfaction of Online News Readers. Age affects the Review, Choice, Sharing, and Evidence based Content Factors of Satisfaction of Online News Readers. Personality and Age interact to affect the Credibility and Preference for News Websites Factors of Satisfaction of Online News Readers. Introvert Young Adults, Introvert Middle Aged, and Extravert Young Adults are higher in the Flexibility Factor of Satisfaction of Online News Readers than Extravert Middle Aged.

Introvert Middle Aged and Extravert Young Adults are higher in the Relevant Content Factor of Satisfaction of Online News Readers than Introvert Young Adults and Extravert Middle Aged. Introvert Young Adults and Extravert Young Adults are higher in the Credibility Factor of Satisfaction of Online News Readers than Introvert Middle Aged and Extravert Middle Aged.

Introvert Young Adults are higher in the Review Factor of Satisfaction of Online News Readers than Introvert Middle Aged, whereas Introvert Middle Aged and Extravert Middle Aged are higher than Introvert Young Adults and Extravert Young Adults. Introvert Young Adults, Extravert Young Adults, and Extravert Middle Aged are higher in the Choice Factor of Satisfaction of Online News Readers than Introvert Middle Aged, with Extravert Middle Aged scoring the highest overall.

Introvert Middle Aged and Extravert Young Adults are higher in the Sharing Factor of Satisfaction of Online News Readers than Introvert Young Adults, whereas Extravert Middle Aged is higher than all other groups. Introvert Young Adults and Extravert Young Adults are higher in the Evidence-Based Content Factor of Satisfaction of Online News Readers than Introvert Middle Aged, whereas Extravert Middle Aged is higher than all other groups.

Introvert Young Adults and Introvert Middle Aged are higher in the Preference for News Websites Factor of Satisfaction of Online News Readers than Extravert Young Adults, whereas Extravert Middle Aged is higher than all other groups. Extravert Young Adults are higher in the Use of Devices Factor of Satisfaction of Online News Readers than Introvert Middle Aged.

Discussion

Personality and Credibility in Digital News Consumption

Personality types play a significant role in shaping how online news readers evaluate content and interact with digital platforms. Introvert individuals often prioritize credibility and well-researched articles, showing higher engagement with detailed news content, expert reviews, and fact-checked materials. This preference influences their satisfaction across factors such as Credibility, Review, Choice, Sharing, and Use of Devices. Extravert users prefer visually engaging and fast-paced news formats, enjoying platforms that offer multimedia content, notifications, and interactive features that allow them to explore diverse topics. These personality-driven differences manifest in how readers perceive the quality of information and the effectiveness of validation tools, such as comment sections, ratings, or peer reviews. User satisfaction depends a lot on how well the content matches individual preferences.

This means news platforms should offer detailed and thoughtful content for introverts, while also providing interactive and engaging features for extraverts to keep them interested. According to Otis (2024), introverts are more likely to trust detailed analyses and verified sources, while extraverts lean towards variety and rapid updates, demonstrating the need for platforms to cater to distinct personality-based expectations to sustain satisfaction levels.

Age and Review Behavior in Online News Engagement

Age is another critical factor influencing satisfaction with online news platforms, shaping reviewing habits, content preferences, and sharing behaviors. Younger adults usually like interactive features and content created by other users. They often trust information more when it is supported or shared by their peers. They feel more satisfied when news platforms offer engaging visuals and easy options to share, comment, and explore different topics. Older adults rely more on trusted sources, credible journalism, and clear summaries, showing a more careful and step by step way of understanding news.

These generational differences affect satisfaction in multiple factors, including Review, Choice, Sharing, and Evidence-Based Content, highlighting how cognitive maturity and media familiarity interact with news consumption patterns. The interaction of age with personality further shapes satisfaction, as introvert younger adults may prioritize detailed feedback sections, while extravert older adults prefer concise, easily accessible validation tools. Blassnig et al. (2024) emphasized that news tone and format significantly influence satisfaction, with informal and humorous styles appealing to younger audiences, and balanced, structured reporting favored by older readers. This shows why it is important to design platforms based on different age groups, keeping in mind how people of different ages think and use technology.

Flexibility and User Control in Platform Interaction

Flexibility in platform design and the ability to minimize distractions are critical determinants of user satisfaction in online news consumption. Personality and age influence the way users interact with content, adjust layouts, and select preferred topics or features. Introvert users show higher satisfaction when platforms provide structured navigation, options for revisiting content, and detailed sections that encourage focused engagement.

Extrovert users, enjoy dynamic interfaces with multimedia elements, rapid updates, and interactive content, allowing exploration and quick responses. Younger adults, regardless of personality, tend to respond positively to platforms that offer high flexibility and visual stimulation, while older adults prefer simple and stable designs that are easy to use and do not feel confusing. Satisfaction is maximized when platforms offer customizable layouts, topic filters, and content curation options that align with personality-driven preferences and age-related expectations.

Bhuiyan et al. (2021) noted that flexibility improves engagement when readers feel in control of their content flow, whether through toggles, dynamic tabs, or layered media, emphasizing that digital news platforms must adapt to both psychological and generational needs to ensure consistent satisfaction across diverse user groups.

Conclusion

Conclusions have been drawn keeping in mind the objectives which were framed for the study. Personality affects the Satisfaction of Online News Readers and its factors like Credibility, Review, Choice, Sharing, and Use of Devices. Age affects the Satisfaction of Online News Readers and its factors like Review, Choice, Sharing, and Evidence-Based Content. There is a significant interactive effect of Personality and Age on the Credibility and Preference for News Websites factors of Satisfaction of Online News Readers.

Limitation and Suggestions

The study had certain limitations which can be further explored and considered in future. The study is restricted to Personality and Age as determinants, excluding several demographic and psychographic variables such as gender, income, lifestyle, digital trust, and wider levels of age and personality for deeper insights.

The scope is confined to readers of news websites and applications. Similar studies could extend to informal digital platforms like YouTube, aggregators, and social media, including occasional or short-form content consumers, to capture a broader perspective. The sample size is limited to 400 respondents from four cities, larger cross-cultural sample of 1000 or more across multiple regions would enhance the validity and generalizability of findings.

Implications

Online media organizations can enhance reader satisfaction by targeting content based on personality and age. Interactive features like polls, quizzes, and feedback systems boost engagement, while multi-format storytelling such as videos and infographics ensures accessibility. Creating online communities and being open about sources helps build trust with readers. Adding accessibility features for audiences with visual, hearing, or thinking difficulties makes the platform easier for everyone to use, increases reach, and helps readers feel more connected and included.

Policymakers can improve online news quality by promoting credible, consistent content and digital literacy initiatives. Guidelines on algorithm transparency, data privacy, and inclusivity strengthen trust and fairness. Partnerships with media organizations and academic institutions can monitor satisfaction trends. Incentives for ethical reporting and accessible platforms encourage high-quality, reader-centric practices. Equitable access across regions ensures that satisfaction extends to diverse populations.

Content creators can increase satisfaction by aligning news delivery with readers' personality, age, and preferences. Flexible layouts, credible sources, and evidence-based content foster trust. Multi-format and shareable content like videos and infographics improve engagement, especially among extroverts. Optimizing for devices ensures smooth experiences. Understanding reader behaviour allows professionals to enhance comprehension, relevance, and loyalty across diverse demographics.

Researchers can expand on this study by exploring psychological types, engagement patterns, and platform types. Comparing social media users, traditional readers, and occasional browsers provides deeper insights. Cross-cultural studies with larger samples improve generalizability. Investigating demographics, literacy, and content formats helps understand reader needs. Studying personalized recommendations, interactive tools, and new content formats can inform strategies for better engagement and satisfaction in digital news.

References

1. Anderson, B. (2018). Influence of education, income and age on newspaper use and platform preference In Elon University. *Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications*, , 9(1),108-115. doi:https://eloncdn.blob.core.windows.net/eu3/sites/153/2018/05/10_Anderson_Education.pdf
2. Baptista, J. P., & Gradim, A. (2020). Understanding fake news consumption: A review. *Social Sciences*, 10, 1-22. doi:<https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci9100185>
3. Barnes, R. M. (2018). Personality and online news commenting behaviours: uncovering the characteristics of those below the line. *Media International Australia*, 169(1), 117-130. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878X1879869>
4. Bhuiyan, M. M., Whitley, H., Horning, M., Lee, S. W., & Mitra, T. (2021). Designing transparency cues in online news platforms to promote trust: Journalists' and consumers' perspectives. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, 5(CSCW2), 395. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1145/3479539>
5. Blassnig, S., Mitova, E., Strikovic, E., Urman, A., de Vreese, C., Hannák, A., & Esser, F. (2024). User Perceptions of News Recommender Systems and Trust in Media Outlets: A Five-Country Study. *Digital Journalism*, 25(10), 1182–1204. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2024.2364628>
6. Carlson, M. (2018). The Information Politics of Journalism in a Post-Truth Age. *Journalism Studies*, 19(13), 1879-1888. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2018.1494513>
7. Casero-Ripollés, A. (2012). Beyond Newspapers: News Consumption among Young People in the Digital Era. *Comunicar*, 20, 151-158. doi:<https://doi.org/10.3916/C39-2012-03-05>
8. Casero-Ripollés, A., & Izquierdo-Castillo, J. (2013). Between decline and a new online business model: The case of the Spanish newspaper industry. *Journal of Media Business Studies*, 10(1), 63-78. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/16522354.2013.11073560>
9. Chyi, H. I., & Lasorsa, D. (1999). Access, use and preferences for online newspapers. *Newspaper Research Journal*, 20(4), 2-13. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/073953299902000401>
10. Humprecht, E., & Esser, F. (2017). Diversity in Online News: On the importance of ownership types and media system types. *Journalism Studies*, 19(12), 1825–1847. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2017.1308229>
11. Makananise, F., & Madima, S. (2021). Exploring the Demographic Information on News Media Consumption Preferences among the Youth at a Rural-based University, South Africa. *Journal of African Films and Diaspora Studies*, 4(1), 77-101. doi:<https://doi.org/10.31920/2516-2713/2021/4n1a5>
12. Otis, A. (2024). The effects of transparency cues on news source credibility online: An investigation of 'opinion labels. *Journalism*, 25(1), 198-217. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884922112900>
13. Seidman, G. (2013). Self-presentation and belonging on Facebook: How personality influences social media use and motivations. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 54(3), 402-407. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2012.10.009>
14. Tandoc, E. C., Lim, Z. W., & Ling, R. (2017). Defining “Fake News”: A typology of scholarly definitions. *Digital Journalism*, 6(2), 137-153. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2017.1360143>