

Online Survey

Community Experiencing of free flow of information during Corona Pandemic

End March - End of April, 2020

Conducted BY



South Asia Center for Media in Development
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Background:

'COVID-19' virus has created a pandemic situation making world to act differently. People are staying at home for a long time maintaining social distance and depending on information providing by government and health related advisors. But this is also expected that people are consuming more information than they did in normal life. As, people are experiencing a new lifestyle which is also containing fear of getting infected by virus, they also intend to follow whatever they are finding in internet as cure or medication of COVID-19.

Objective of Survey:

To understand the consumption attitude of Dhaka City internet users in 'General Leave' days. (General Leave: leave declared by Bangladesh government to close every private& public sector to maintain social distancing)

Survey Method:

It's a quantitative method applied with 11 close ended questions and one open ended question collected through internet (Google form) by keeping respondent's identity anonymous.

Research Tool: Online Questionnaire.

Sampling: Dhaka city dwellers who uses internet and at least 18 years old.

Sample Size: 100 respondents

Time: End March - End of April, 2020

Findings

Age Distribution: According to 'Figure 1' it is visible that more than half of the respondents were youth (18-30) is 56% of the total respondents and only 2% respondents were above 50 years old.

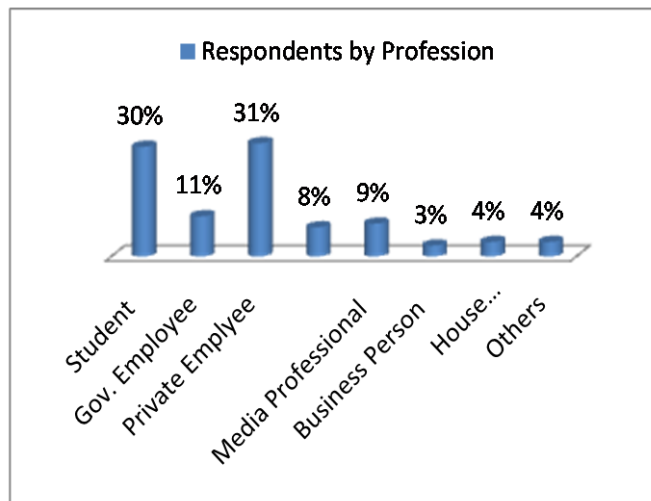


Figure 1: Age Distribution

Profession: People who are engaged in private job are the highest as respondent comparing to others (31%) though number of students is very close to it with 30% response. Meanwhile government employee and media professionals composed 11% & 9% of the total respondents respectively.

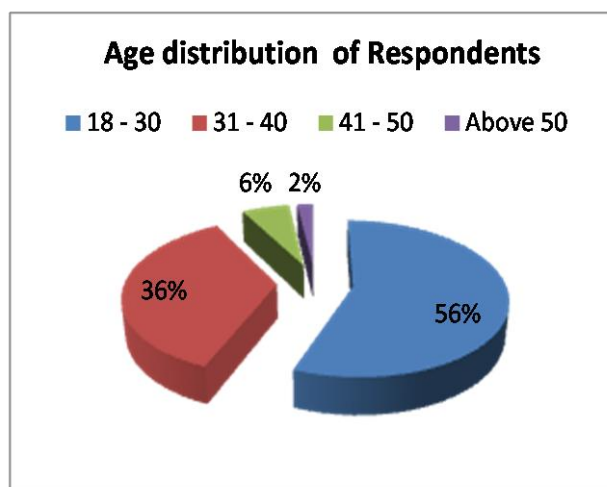


Figure 2: Respondent's Profession

News Consumptions Time: Figure 3 shows the time consumption of the respondents to get news from any media like Television, radio, Newspaper or internet during General Leave period (from 26th of March, 2020). 35% respondents spend 3-4 hours of their daily time to consume news from different medium. Less number of respondents (15%) spends 1-2 hours.

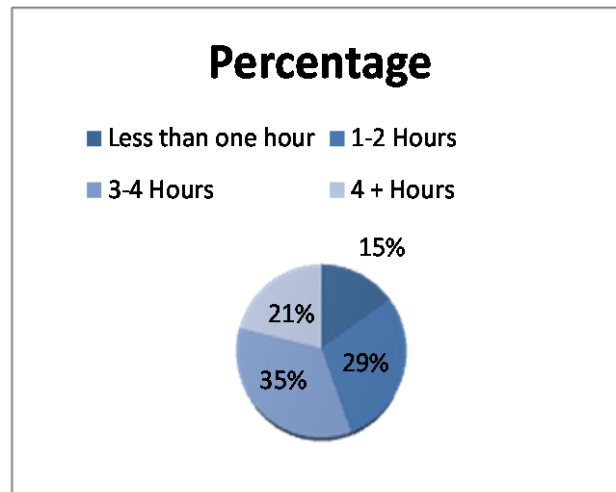


Figure 3: News Consumption Time

Topic of Interest: Respondents were asked to select their topic of interest while they consume news. The question was checkbox format which allowed the respondents to select multiple options. 94.9 % respondents stated that their priority area while seeking news was ‘Corona Situation’ which is quite obvious. Economics and Politics received majority number after corona situation with 29.60% and 21.40% respectively.

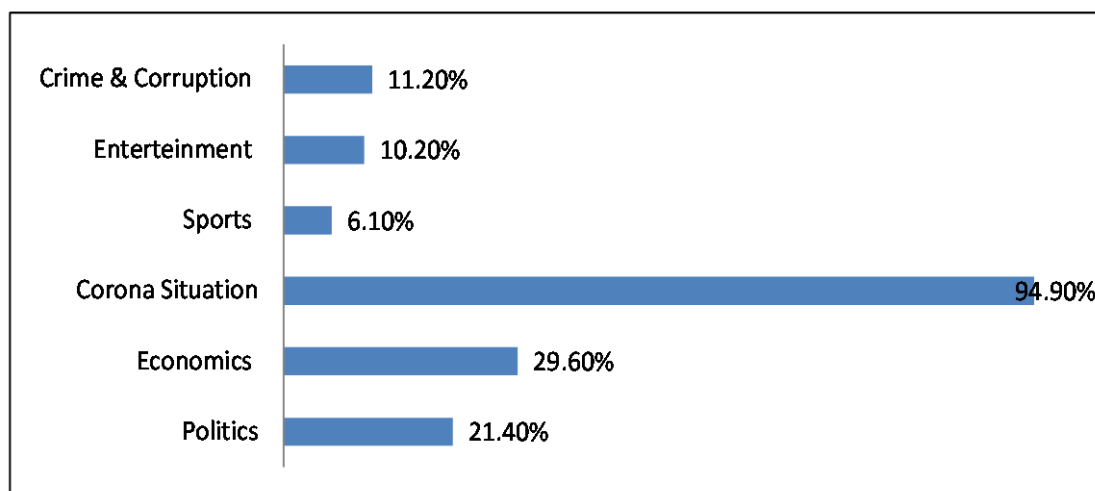


Figure 4: Topic of interest while seeking news (more than one answer)

Adequacy of Information: Figure 5 states that 54% respondents think the information they are getting from sources during general leave time are not adequate. 46% respondents find the information enough for them.

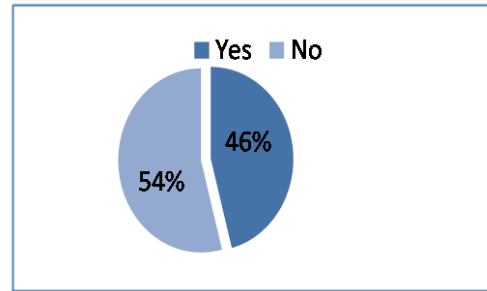


Figure 5: Adequacy of Information

Reliability of Information: 65% respondents found that, the information they are getting everyday are not reliable enough, however 35% thinks information are reliable.

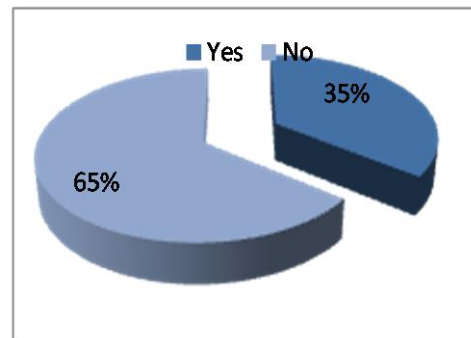


Figure 6: Reliability of Information

Evaluation of different media in terms of reliability: Respondents were asked to evaluate mentioned media in Figure 7 with Likert scale of four level; Not Reliable, Somewhat Reliable, Sometimes Reliable and Absolutely Reliable. Given media were Television, radio, Newspaper, Online news portal, Social Media and SMS through phone. Television has evaluated as much reliable source of news with 36% response and Newspaper got the next highest response (35%). Interestingly, the level 'Somewhat' reliable got the most responses for almost every media ; 41%, 44%, 45%, 39% and 41% for Television, Radio, Newspaper, Online News Portal and SMS respectively. Social media ranked highest in 'Not reliable' level of Likert scale.

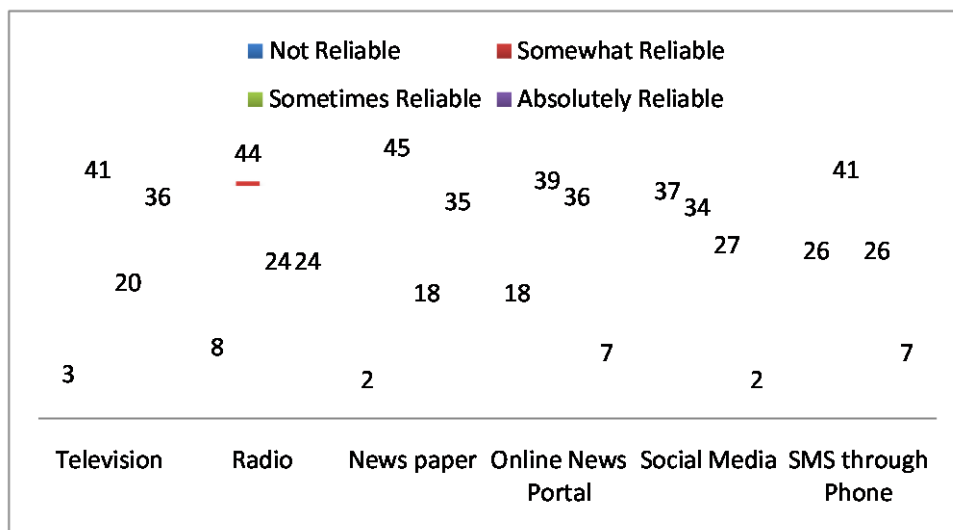


Figure 7: Evaluation of Different Media in terms of Reliability

Disinformation and Fake News related to COVID- 19: With Question number '8' it was asked to respondents, that if they have seen any fake news/ disinformation regarding COVID-19 in last four months. 84% respondents said, they have seen mentioned content in social media. 69.3% of those fake news/rumor/disinformation were related to local issues, 40.9% were related to national issue, 38.6% were on international issues and 40.9% issues were related to individual.

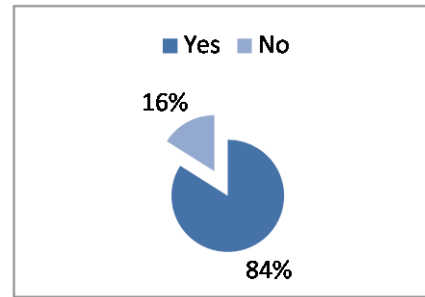


Figure 8 : Fake news and Disinformation

Effect of Fake news/ Rumors/ Disinformation: 32% respondents said that they have been deceived by fake news and rumors either in personal or professional level directly or indirectly. If we see the effect of fake news, rumors and disinformation according to different profession; we can see (Figure 10), Development professional and Media professional were affected high than other professionals with 75% and 40% positive response respectively. Students have been affected the lowest (10%)among all.

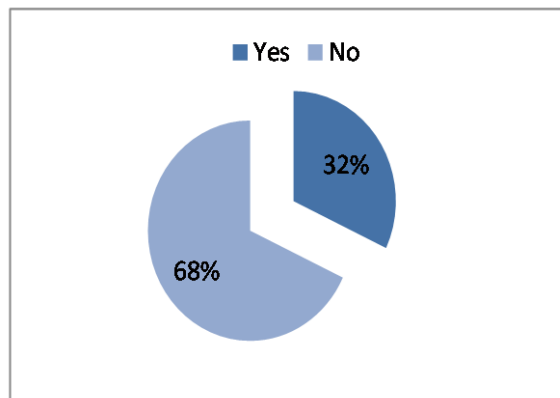


Figure 9: Being affected by Fake news/rumors/Disinformation

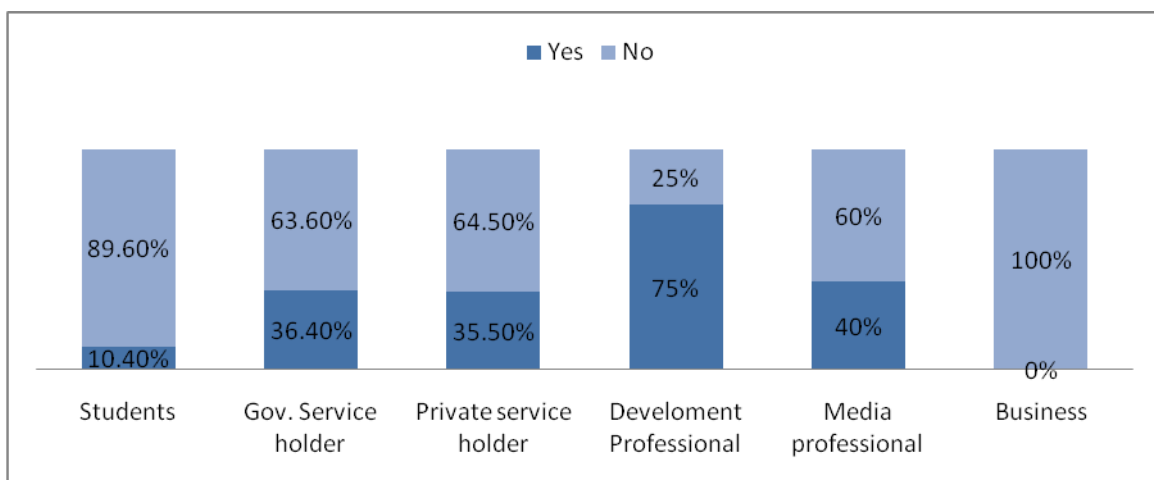


Figure 10: Being deceived by different profession

Reliability of information provided by government agency: Respondents were asked if they think, the information government agencies are providing, are enough and reliable. 31% respondents said the information are reliable and 69% stated are not. Cross analysis with different professionals with this opinion gave significant findings. While 100% Development professionals and Business persons think that govt. provided information are not enough and reliable, 63.6% govt. officials think the opposite. Most importantly, 70% Media professionals find the mentioned information not enough.

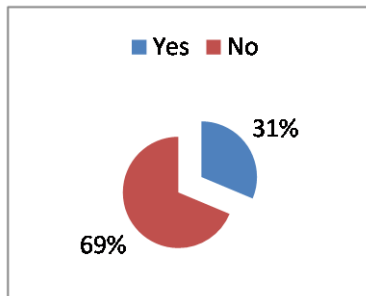


Figure 11: Reliability of Govt. provided Information

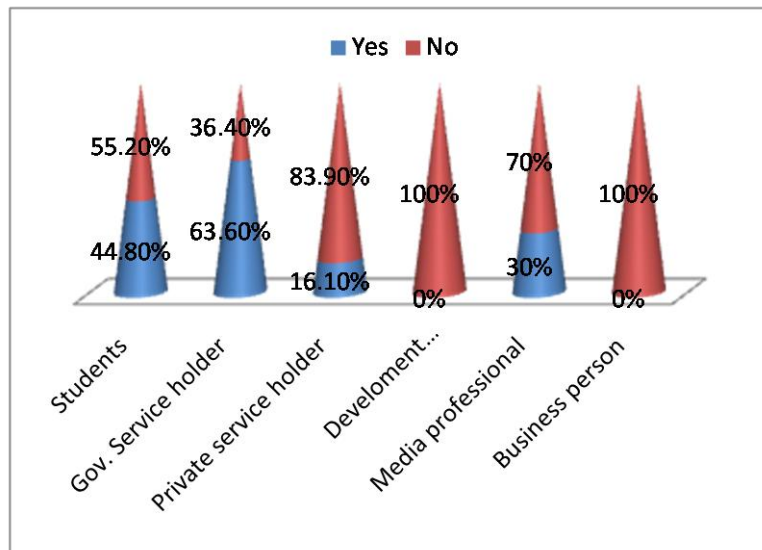


Figure 12: Reliability of Govt. information by different professionals

Conclusion and Discussion : It is quite evident that Dhaka city dwellers are spending significant amount of time to get information during COVID-19 period, and most of them are interested in COVID-19 topics. While seeking information, 84% of people experienced fake news, rumors and disinformation around the corona topic and a significant number of people are not satisfied with the information provided by the government agency.