

Digital News Audiences in Mexico: Age Segment Analysis

María Elena Gutiérrez-Rentería¹
Edgar Abraham Ruiz-Sanchez²
Alfonso Vara-Miguel³

Received: 27/06/2023

Accepted by peers: 20/02/2024

Submitted to peers: 20/09/2023

Approved: 19/03/2024


DOI: 10.5294/pacla.2024.27.3.7

Para citar este artículo / to reference this article / para citar este artigo

Gutiérrez-Rentería, M. E., Ruiz-Sanchez, E. A., & Vara-Miguel, A. (2024). Digital News Audiences in Mexico: Age Segment Analysis. *Palabra Clave*, 27(3), e2737. <https://doi.org/10.5294/pacla.2024.27.3.7>

Abstract

This study aims to determine whether news consumption, media trust, interest in news, and political affinity are correlated with the generational segment of the market, measured by the age of the digital audience. Furthermore, this study seeks to verify whether age is associated with digital audiences' paying attention to journalists or news brands. This research is based on a survey of 2,005 people in Mexico by YouGov in 2022, commissioned by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford as part of its annual Digital News Report. The statistical method used was the chi-square test of independence between qualitative variables. The results showed that age correlates with consumption habits, media trust, interest in news, and citizens' political affinity for digital audiences in Mexico. Moreover, age relates to whether digital audiences focus on journalists or news brands in Latin America. This study delves into the characteristics of digital audiences in Mexico and contributes from a

1  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5431-8223>. Universidad Panamericana, Mexico. egutierr@up.edu.mx

2 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7356-2966>. Universidad Panamericana, Mexico. earuiz@up.edu.mx

3 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4271-1858>. Universidad de Navarra, Spain. avara@unav.es

media economics, media management, and media marketing perspective. It also helps media organizations assess their market strategy, market segmentation, and target markets based on the characteristics of digital news audiences in Mexico.

Keywords

Interest in news; digital audience; age; media industry; political affinity; media trust.

Las audiencias de las noticias digitales en México: análisis del segmento de edad

Resumen

Este estudio tiene como objetivo determinar si el consumo de noticias, la confianza en los medios, el interés por las noticias y la afinidad política están correlacionados con el segmento generacional del mercado, el cual se mide por la edad de la audiencia digital. Además, se busca verificar si la edad está asociada con la atención que las audiencias digitales prestan a los periodistas y a las marcas de noticias. La investigación se basa en una encuesta realizada por YouGov a 2005 personas en México en el año 2022 por encargo del Instituto Reuters para el Estudio del Periodismo de la Universidad de Oxford como parte de su Informe de Noticias Digitales anual. Para esto, el método estadístico utilizado fue la prueba de independencia chi-cuadrado entre variables cualitativas. Los resultados demostraron que la edad se correlaciona con los hábitos de consumo, la confianza en los medios, el interés por las noticias y la afinidad política de las audiencias digitales en México. Por otra parte, la edad se relaciona con el hecho de que las audiencias digitales se centren en los periodistas o en las marcas de noticias en América Latina. Este estudio profundiza en las características de las audiencias digitales de México y hace un aporte desde una perspectiva de economía, gestión y marketing de medios. También ayuda a las organizaciones de medios a evaluar la estrategia de mercado, la segmentación del mercado y los mercados objetivo en función de las características de las audiencias de noticias digitales en México.

Palabras clave

Interés por las noticias; audiencia digital; edad; sector de los medios; afinidad política; confianza en los medios.

Audiências de notícias digitais no México: análise por segmento de idade

Resumo

Este estudo tem como objetivo determinar se o consumo de notícias, a confiança na mídia, o interesse por notícias e a afinidade política estão correlacionados com o segmento geracional do mercado, que é medido pela idade do público digital. Além disso, busca verificar se a idade está associada à atenção que o público digital dá aos jornalistas e às marcas de notícias. A pesquisa se baseia em uma pesquisa realizada pela YouGov com 2.005 pessoas no México em 2022, encomendada pelo Instituto Reuters para o Estudo do Jornalismo da Universidade de Oxford como parte de seu Relatório de Notícias Digitais anual. Para isso, o método estatístico usado foi o teste qui-quadrado de independência entre variáveis qualitativas. Os resultados mostraram que a idade se correlaciona com os hábitos de consumo, com a confiança na mídia, com o interesse em notícias e com a afinidade política do público digital no México. Por sua vez, a idade está relacionada ao fato de as audiências digitais se concentrarem em jornalistas ou marcas de notícias na América Latina. Este estudo aprofunda nas características das audiências digitais no México e faz uma contribuição a partir de uma perspectiva de economia, gestão e marketing da mídia. Ele também ajuda as organizações de mídia a avaliar a estratégia de mercado, a segmentação de mercado e os mercados-alvo com base nas características das audiências de notícias digitais no México.

Palavras-chave

Interesse em notícias; público digital; idade; setor de mídia; afinidade política; confiança na mídia.

Introduction

The Mexican news industry faces macro- and micro-environment challenges similar to those of other countries. This encourages scholars and media outlets to delve into the profile of audiences accustomed to the consumption of digital news because of the possibilities offered by the Internet, such as various platforms, social media, and news content aggregators typical of the current media industry environment (Kaufhold, 2021; Newman et al., 2021; Powers & Zhao, 2018).

Based on the Digital News Report survey conducted annually by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford (Newman et al., 2021), this study compiles contributions from a media economics perspective, from which media management and media marketing emerge. It also helps media outlets assess their market strategy, market segmentation, and target market based on the characteristics of the audiences that consume digital news in an economy open to the global market (Albarran, 2017; Ha, 2021; Zheng et al., 2021).

The development of digital technologies in the media industry has led to significant changes in audiences' news and entertainment consumption habits (Arrese et al., 2019; Doyle, 2020; Ha, 2021). The removal of barriers to entry for new competitors has significantly increased the content supply, transforming how audiences consume news and entertainment (Doyle, 2020; Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009; Picard, 2014). The new media market is characterized by more fragmented audiences (Olsen et al., 2021), the emergence of new alternative channels (Andersen et al., 2023), and new formats, such as streaming and podcasts (Aufderheide et al., 2020). Currently, audiences influence the media's news supply because of their multiple ways of accessing information on digital platforms in a place and at a time most convenient for them (Bachmann et al., 2012; Bakshy et al., 2015; Barnidge, 2015; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2014). Paradoxically, the increase in the supply of content by both traditional and new media has been paralleled by a worrying loss of trust in news and an increase in information apathy or disinterest, especially in countries characterized by greater social and political polarization (Newman et al., 2023; Park et al., 2020).

From a business standpoint, some media outlets have seen a reduction in their traditional advertising revenue and have opted to diversify their revenue streams to achieve financial sustainability (Olsen et al., 2021). As readership continues to decline, media outlets are compelled to explore innovative revenue-generating strategies to ensure their survival (Kaye & Quinn, 2010; Nel, 2010). Traditional advertising revenue is insufficient to sustain news organizations in the digital age, and new business models have emerged (Berger et al., 2015; Casero-Ripollés & Izquierdo-Castillo, 2013; Medina et al., 2021). Mexico is no exception, and media outlets are trying to survive the decline in advertising revenue (Soto, 2020). They also seek to know, understand, and identify national audiences' profiles and digital information consumption habits due to the current environment in which the news industry participates.

In 2022, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated some of the problems faced by Mexican media outlets over several years. On the one hand, the media faced a further drop in advertising revenue because audiences now access news content for free on various digital platforms and because of the adverse economic environment. However, news legacy brands face the acceleration of an open digital economy, which forces some to be disruptive and innovative in their business models (Wirtz, 2019).

Mexican media outlets have also suffered from reduced consumer interest in news and decreased media trust for various reasons. Among these are information fatigue (Groot & Klein, 2022; Schumann, 2022), political polarization (Tong et al., 2021), audience fragmentation (Peng & Tang, 2022), and false news information distributed through social media (Fletcher & Nielsen, 2017; Fletcher & Park, 2017; Galarza Molina, 2021; Galarza-Molina & Muñiz, 2021; Newman et al., 2023).

Most news consumption in this domestic market is still in the hands of the leading media companies with a historical share in the industry (Gutiérrez-Rentería & López Hernández, 2021). Television, commercial radio, and the press are traditional media with the highest penetration rates in the information market, with audiences' offline and digital presence. However,

native digital media and social media on the Internet play a relevant role in the news market.

The adverse macroeconomic environment of the national news industry for many companies is also due to aggression against some news brands and prominent journalists who have been constantly exposed to attacks and discredit by Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (Abril & Reina, 2022).

The primary objective of this study is to identify whether age is related to the consumption habits of news content, interest in the news, trust in the news, and political affinity among audiences that consume digital news.

Literature

Numerous academic studies have shown a close relationship between media outlets and political parties (Albarran, 2017, 2019; Fletcher & Nielsen, 2017; Havens & Lotz, 2012; Holmes, 2021). Editorial information seems to reflect a close link between news companies and certain political parties. In other words, media owners seem more interested in showing political affinity in their editorial content than in presenting news objectively. Nonetheless, the target audience remains the primary objective (Albarran, 2017; Doyle, 2013a, 2013b; Gimpel, 2015; Ha, 2021; McDowell, 2006; Mierzejewska & Kolo, 2019; Picard, 2014; Rinsdorf, 2017; Sánchez-García, 2016; Sylvie, 2008).

Some authors point out that personal motivators may drive the level of trust and interest in the news because of the audience's social identity (Seifert et al., 2020), while Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2010) and Markov and Min (2020) affirm that they depend more on political affinity. Thus, audiences tend to select information that is consistent with their own beliefs, and they are exposed to content that influences their behavior regardless of the veracity of the facts presented through professional journalism (Di Domenico et al., 2021; Holmes, 2021; Park et al., 2020).

Scholars Gimpel (2015) and Picard (2014) agree with Albarran (2019) that news media outlets should address the target audience accord-

ing to the market for which they have been designed, primarily due to the current competitive environment of the industry. Audience fragmentation has also modified the types of interaction between supply and demand for information content. According to Doyle (2020), the consolidation of the competitive advantage of news organizations focuses on identifying the audience's characteristics according to market segmentation criteria and the profile of content consumer audiences.

In this regard, other authors, such as Goyanes (2020), Martínez-Torres and Gámez (2019), Park et al. (2020), and Vázquez (2002), point out that the various algorithms used to deliver news to citizens work according to the sociodemographic characteristics and information consumption habits of the population.

Some authors have devoted their efforts to understanding audience profiles according to age segment and region in various countries. Examples of this can be found in the works by De Coninck et al. (2019) and Fletcher and Nielsen (2017). Thus, demographics, socioeconomic segments, and attitudes regarding political affinity may influence audience trust and interest in news.

Few studies have been conducted in Mexico to reflect the profiles of digital news consumers (Gutiérrez-Rentería, 2020). Most studies address civic and political participation through social media, as well as the profile and involvement of audiences on various digital platforms (Benavides Almarza & García-Béjar, 2021; Cornelio-Marí, 2022; González Macías & García, 2019; Gutiérrez-Rentería et al., 2018; Rebolledo, 2018; Reguillo, 2012; Rivera-Pesquera et al., 2021; Sánchez-García, 2016; Sánchez-Nuevo et al., 2022; Sued, 2022). However, few scientific contributions deal with variables that correlate with audiences' interest in news offered by media outlets in the country.

Therefore, identifying news consumers' consumption habits and behavior according to the characteristics of audience segments by age group becomes a crucial task for those interested in this industry in Mexico.

This research aims to identify whether there is evidence on how different segments of digital audiences by age group influence interest in news, consumption habits, and political affinity regarding the people surveyed who access news content in digital format in the domestic market at least three times a week.

Methodology

Sample

This research is based on a survey of 2,005 people conducted in Mexico by YouGov. It was commissioned by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism of the University of Oxford for its annual research project, the Digital News Report (Newman et al., 2021). One of the authors of this study participated as an academic partner in the project, specifically in selecting the topics to be explored in the questionnaire design and the data analysis.

The survey was conducted during the last week of January and the first week of February 2022. The filter for conducting the surveys is that the people surveyed in this country state that they consume news on the Internet at least three times a week. The population used for statistical analysis consisted of a random, non-stratified sample of people aged >18 years.

The Mexican audiences surveyed comprised 48 % males and 52 % females; 45 % of this population belongs to the low-income segment, followed by 44 % with medium income and 11 % with high income.

The people surveyed stated that they had an affinity with the center's political parties in each age group. However, the percentage of political affinity varies among the left, center, and right wings. The rate of people who do not know how they identify politically also varies by age.

Variables

The independent variable considered in this study is age, represented by various segments of digital news consumer audiences. The dependent variables were media trust, interest in news, and frequency of news consump-

tion. Media trust and interest in the news were measured at low and high levels. The frequency of news consumption was measured using the following question: *Typically, how often do you access news? By news, we mean national, international, regional/local news, and other topical events accessed via any platform (radio, TV, newspaper, or online).* Possible answers were more than ten times a day, 6–10 times a day, 2–5 times a day, once a day, 4–6 days a week, 2–3 days a week, once a week, less often than once a week, less often than once a month, and never.

We have combined these variables to segment them into three different groups: news lovers—people who access the news several times a day and say they are highly interested in the news; daily briefer consumers—people who also access the news several times a day but are slightly less interested in the news; and casual or passive consumers—people who consume less frequently (between once a day and once a month) and they also tend to be less interested in the news.

Political affinity and trust in journalists and media outlets are dependent variables. The first one was measured through the question. *Some talk about 'left,' 'right,' and 'center' to describe parties and politicians. (Generally, socialist parties would be considered 'left-wing' while conservative parties would be considered 'right-wing'). With this in mind, where would you place yourself on the following scale?* The scale ranged from left to right wing. Finally, we measured trust in journalists or media outlets by asking, *Which of the following do you tend to pay the most attention to when looking for news online?* Possible answers were specific news brands, journalists, or commentators.

Data analysis

The statistical method used in this study was the chi-square test of independence between qualitative variables. Using this methodology, the observed frequencies (fo) and expected frequencies (fe) were compared for the two qualitative characteristics (De la Fuente-Fernández, 2016). The variables are more likely to be independent if the observed frequencies are similar to the expected frequencies. However, the more significant the difference between the observed and expected frequencies, the more likely the variables are independent.

The $X^2_{\hat{0}}$ is a free distribution test (non-parametric) that measures the discrepancy between the distribution of the observed and expected frequencies (Mendivelso & Rodríguez, 2018). This chi-square test is used to analyze research data for various studies in the social sciences.

$$X^2_0 = \sum \frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$$

H0 is rejected if $X^2_{\hat{0}} > X^2_{g, \alpha}$ or if p value $< \alpha$

Normality tests were not performed. Given its non-parametric nature, the chi-square test eliminates the need to assume a normal distribution, a typical prerequisite of parametric tests. This decision aligns with the study's objective of exploring how the different age groups that consume digital news correlate with other segments of the audience market in Mexico in 2022 without assuming a normal data distribution.

This study hypothesizes that the segmentation of digital news consumers by age group serves as a significant indicator for delineating distinct audience market segments, each with its own characteristics of news consumption and behaviors of the people surveyed via digital platforms in Mexico during 2022.

This study explored the following questions and hypotheses:

Question 1: Is the classification of news consumers (news lovers, daily consumers, and casual news consumers) independent of the age-based segmentation of the digital audience?

Hypothesis 1: There is a correlation between age and an increased propensity for news consumption, suggesting that older people are likelier to be news lovers.

Question 2: Do trust in and interest in the Mexican media industry vary independently across different age segments of the audience?

Hypothesis 2: A relationship exists between age and elevated levels of trust and interest in the Mexican media industry, with the expectation that older people are likelier to have high trust and interest.

Question 3: Is there independence between the political affinities of the audience and their age segments?

Hypothesis 3: No significant correlation exists between age and political affinities in Mexico.

Question 4: Is the audience's attention to journalists and news brands independent of their age segmentation?

Hypothesis 4: A correlation is anticipated between the age segment of the audience and their attention toward journalists and news brands, indicating that the age group relates to media outlets' engagement preferences.

Results

Result 1. Audience members were classified as news lovers, daily consumers, and casual or passive consumers according to the number of times they accessed the news during the day and their interest in it. These were related to the digital audience segment according to age (Table 1).

Table 1. News Consumption Habits by Age. Mexico, 2022

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
News lovers	11% (23%)	21% (23%)	27% (23%)	24% (23%)	28% (23%)
Daily users	40% (52%)	51% (52%)	52% (52%)	58% (52%)	58% (52%)
Casual consumers	49% (25%)	29% (25%)	21% (25%)	18% (25%)	14% (25%)

$\chi^2 = 160.9$; p -value = $1.03E-30$. The values in parentheses represent the expected frequencies.

Source: Own elaboration.

The chi-square test yielded a value of $\chi^2(160.9)$, $p < .001$, showing a statistically significant association between age group and the digital news consumption category. These results reject the null hypothesis of indepen-

dence between age and news consumption habits, which suggests that age is significantly related to news engagement.

According to the findings (Table 1), the percentage of news lovers increased with age, ranging from 11 % in the youngest group (18–24) to 28 % in the oldest group (55+). Conversely, casual consumers decreased from 49 % in the 18–24 age group to 14 % in the 55+ age group. Daily users consistently increased from 40 % among the youngest to 58 % among the oldest age cohorts.

Otherwise, evidence shows that the segment over 55 reflects a higher percentage (28 %) than expected (23 %). This audience represented a group in Mexico that considered themselves news lovers. The 45–54-year-old segment also reflects higher rates (24 %) than expected (23 %). Daily news content consumers were represented in both audience segments by age. Finally, casual or passive consumers are located at a higher percentage (49 %) than expected (25 %) in those segments belonging to 18–24-year-old respondents.

Result 2. Trust and interest in the media depend on the segment of the digital audience according to age.

Table 2. Interest in News and Media Trust by Age Group. Mexico, 2022

	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55+
High trust, high interest	10 % (25 %)	21 % (25 %)	26 % (25 %)	31 % (25 %)	32 % (25 %)
High trust, low interest	18 % (12 %)	13 % (12 %)	12 % (12 %)	9 % (12 %)	9 % (12 %)
Low trust, high interest	19 % (29 %)	25 % (29 %)	33 % (29 %)	29 % (29 %)	38 % (29 %)
Low trust, low interest	53 % (34 %)	40 % (34 %)	29 % (34 %)	30 % (34 %)	21 % (34 %)

$\chi^2 = 156.3$; p -value = 2.91E-27. The values in parentheses represent the expected frequencies.

Source: Own elaboration.

A chi-square test was conducted to examine the independence of these variables, resulting in $\chi^2(156.3)$ with a p -value $<.001$, indicating a statistically significant association between age groups and their patterns of trust

and interest in the news. This analysis challenges the null hypothesis of independence between variables, suggesting that age is significantly related to the level of trust and interest in news.

As shown in Table 2, the analysis of news consumption and media trust across different age groups in Mexico in 2022 revealed particularly notable findings among the youngest (18–24 years old) and oldest (55+ years) cohorts. The youngest group exhibited a lower (10%) than expected (25%) frequency in the high trust and interest category, aligning with their unique digital news consumption pattern. This group also tended toward low trust and high interest in news, deviating from the expected levels.

Conversely, the segment over 55 showed a 7% higher observed rate than anticipated for high trust and interest in news, suggesting a distinct contrast in news consumption behavior compared to younger audiences. Additionally, this older cohort recorded higher than expected percentages in the low-trust, high-interest category, indicating nuanced engagement with the news media.

Furthermore, the analysis identified that the 18–24 and 25–34 age groups are mainly characterized by low trust in the media and low interest in news, underscoring a significant challenge for news organizations in engaging younger audiences. In contrast, the audience segment of the 45–54 age group reflects a higher percentage observed (31%) than expected (25%) in the category of high trust in the industry and interest in the news.

Result 3. The political affinity of an audience depends on the segment of the digital audience by age.

Table 3. Political Affinity by Age. Mexico, 2022

	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55+
Left	24% (23%)	23% (23%)	27% (23%)	25% (23%)	18% (23%)
Center	69% (64%)	66% (64%)	62% (64%)	59% (64%)	64% (64%)
Right	7% (13%)	11% (13%)	12% (13%)	16% (13%)	18% (13%)

$\chi^2 = 28.7$; p -value = .0003. The values in parentheses represent the expected frequencies.

Source: Own elaboration.

The survey illustrated distinctive patterns in political orientation among the age segments of 18–24, 45–54, and over 55 years. According to Table 3, there is apparent variation in political preferences with age. The chi-square test resulted in $\chi^2(28.7)$ and $p < .001$, indicating a statistically significant association between age and political affinity. Young adults aged 18–24 preferred the left with 24 %, slightly above the expected 23 %. This age group showed a significantly high inclination toward the center, with 69 % identifying with centrist politics, notably higher than the expected 64 %. Conversely, only 7 % of this group aligned to the right, markedly lower than the expected 13 %.

The middle-aged group (45–54) and the older cohort (55+ years) demonstrated a gradual increase in right-leaning affinity, with percentages rising to 16 % and 18 %, respectively, more than expected in this age segment. These two groups exceeded the expected rate by 13 %. Interestingly, these age groups showed a decrease in center-aligned preferences compared to younger age groups, with 59 % more than expected, for the 45–54 age group more than expected, and 64 % for those aged 55 and over, indicating a divergent political engagement pattern compared to the youngest cohort.

Result 4. Audience attention toward journalists and news brands is associated with the digital audience segment by age.

Significant evidence shows that digital audiences in Mexico, according to their age segment, pay more attention to media outlets and journalists.

Table 4. Attention to Journalists or Journalistic Brands by Age. Mexico, 2022

	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55+
Specific journalistic brands	48 % (52 %)	53 % (52 %)	59 % (52 %)	50 % (52 %)	48 % (52 %)
Specific journalists or commentators	23 % (29 %)	23 % (29 %)	25 % (29 %)	32 % (29 %)	41 % (29 %)
Don't know	20 % (12 %)	17 % (12 %)	11 % (12 %)	10 % (12 %)	6 % (12 %)

$\chi^2 = 87.54$; p -value = 1.47E-13. The values in parentheses represent the expected frequencies.

Source: Own elaboration.

The findings (Table 4) indicate a nuanced pattern of media engagement across segments by age. A chi-square test analysis ($\chi^2 = 87.54$, $p = 1.47E-13$) confirmed the statistically significant differences between the observed and expected frequencies, strongly suggesting an association between age and media engagement patterns, contrary to the null hypothesis, positing independent variables.

Analysis of the data revealed distinct engagement patterns across age segments. Individuals in the 18–24 age group exhibited notably lower engagement with journalists, commentators, and journalistic brands. This trend is consistent with the broader disengagement observed within younger demographic groups in media consumption. For the 25–34 age, the data showed a deviation from expected patterns, with only 23 % displaying heightened attention to journalists, a figure below anticipated levels (29 %). Concurrently, an unexpected 17 % of this age group reported uncertainty in their media preferences, indicating a higher-than-predicted level of indecision (12 %). The 35–44 age group demonstrates a particular affinity toward specific news brands, surpassing expected engagement levels of 59 %. This suggests stronger brand loyalty or preference within this generational segment, highlighting a distinct trend in how middle-aged audiences interact with the media.

Conversely, the audience segment exceeding 55 years old is distinguished by its considerable attention to individual journalists and commentators, with 41 % reporting higher engagement than expected. This finding indicates a preference for established journalistic personalities over broader brands. Additionally, a smaller-than-expected portion of this group expressed uncertainty regarding their preferences, pointing to increased decisiveness in media consumption among older adults.

Conclusions

This investigation delineates the intricate relationship between various segments of the audience market by age that consume digital news content and their distinct behaviors concerning news consumption habits, trust within the news industry, interest levels in journalistic content, and political

leanings in Mexico. It seeks to understand how age relates to digital audiences' focus on journalists and media brands, with findings affirming that age is a pivotal factor in shaping perceptions and evaluations of the Mexican news industry.

This study underscores the significance of news media entities grasping generational nuances within market segments, aligning with insights from Albarran (2017, 2019), Fletcher and Nielsen (2017), Havens and Lotz (2012), and Holmes (2021). Furthermore, the study corroborates Havens and Lotz's (2012) observations on the connection between digital news consumers' age and their political affiliations, which in turn may be associated with their news interests based on the editorial slants of various outlets.

Seifert et al. (2020) outlined the motivational drivers behind news interest, which are linked to each audience segment's social identities and political affiliations. Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2010) suggest this, and Markov and Min (2020) further explore it.

Through the lens of segmentation by age, two distinct consumer profiles emerge: younger audiences (18~24 years) exhibit more casual consumption patterns than anticipated, demonstrate lower trust and interest in the news, and show an unexpected diminution in right-wing political affinity, alongside skepticism toward journalists or commentators. Conversely, those 55+ years old display a greater affinity for news, higher industry trust, and increased interest in journalistic content. This group also includes individuals with low industry trust, heightened content interest, and exceeding expectations. Their political leanings deviate from predictions, with fewer left-wing and more right-wing identifiers than foreseen and pronounced trust in specific journalists or commentators.

This study notes a decline in trust in the Mexican news industry, suggesting a comparative analysis with parallel markets, such as the Hispanic media industry. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2022 significantly impacted Mexico, influencing news consumption patterns and prioritizing pandemic-related content, possibly leading to information fatigue affecting news interest.

Understanding age-specific news consumption patterns is crucial for Mexican media companies to develop strategic approaches to market positioning, editorial design, marketing, and revenue generation (Albarran, 2017, 2019; Doyle, 2020; Gimpel, 2015; Picard, 2014).

Limitations and future lines of research

This pioneering study is the first comprehensive examination of digital news consumption patterns in Mexico. It focuses on variations in interest in news, journalists, and news brands across different age groups. By delineating audience profiles within diverse population segments, this research contributes significantly to our understanding of digital news consumer behaviors in Mexico's digital economy.

However, the scope of the study could have been expanded by exploring the qualitative aspects that elucidate the reasons behind news content interest or the factors influencing trust levels within the news industry. Thus, this study presents an opportunity for future research to delve into the qualitative attributes of news and entertainment audience profiles in Mexico's digital environment, further enriching our understanding of these dynamics.

An additional limitation of this study, as outlined in the methodology section, is its reliance on a panel survey conducted among internet users. Consequently, these findings may only partially represent a part of the Mexican population. Internet users typically exhibit profiles with slightly higher income levels, education, and interest in public affairs than the general population. This suggests that the results might overemphasize the perspectives and news consumption behaviors of a more affluent and educated segment of society, potentially overlooking the nuances and variations among broader and more diverse audience groups. This gap underscores the need for future research to adopt a more inclusive sample that captures the full spectrum of news consumption patterns across all societal strata, thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of digital news consumption in Mexico.

Additionally, this investigation highlights potential avenues for information entrepreneurs within the domestic market to leverage the opportu-

nities presented by the digital economy, particularly within the information industry's competitive landscape. This underscores the need to explore further how market structures and competitive strategies influence companies' engagement with audience segments, including the language and narratives employed to appeal to diverse groups.

Accordingly, future research should clarify the communication strategies of Mexican journalists and media outlets, aiming to decode the intricate relationship between market competition, audience segmentation, and the efficacy of various narrative approaches in capturing distinct audience demographics. Therefore, this study sheds light on current digital news consumption trends in Mexico and sets the stage for a deeper investigation into the qualitative nuances of audience engagement and strategic implications for media practitioners in the digital age.

Acknowledgments

The researchers express their gratitude to the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford and a myriad of institutions, companies, and partners for facilitating the annual production of the Digital News Report. They expressly acknowledge the support for this study, emphasizing its utility to academic and industrial stakeholders.

References

- Abril, G., & Reina, E. (2022, March 11). Los diputados del Parlamento Europeo, ante la insólita réplica de López Obrador: "Se descalifica por sí misma." *El País*. <https://elpais.com/mexico/2022-03-12/los-diputados-del-parlamento-europeo-ante-la-insolita-replica-de-lopez-obrador-se-descalifica-por-si-misma.html>
- Albarran, A. (2017). *The media economy* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315715094>
- Albarran, A. (2019). Media economics research: a history of the field. In A. Albarran (Ed.), *A research agenda for media eco-*

- nomics* (pp. 1–12). Elgar Research Agendas. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781788119061.00006>
- Andersen, K., Shehata, A., & Andersson, D. (2023). Alternative news orientation and trust in mainstream media: A longitudinal audience perspective. *Digital Journalism*, 11(5), 833–852. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2021.1986412>
- Arrese, A., Medina, M., & Sánchez-Taberner, A. (2019). Consumer demand and audience behavior. In A. Albarran (Ed.), *A research agenda for media economics* (pp. 59–76). Elgar Research Agendas. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781788119061.00010>
- Aufderheide, P., Lieberman, D., Alkhalouf, A., & Ugboma, J. (2020). Podcasting as Public Media: The Future of U.S. News, Public Affairs, and Educational Podcasts. *International Journal of Communication*, 14(22). <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/13548>
- Bachmann, I., Correa, T., & de Zúñiga, H. (2012). Profiling online political content Creators: Advancing the paths to democracy. *International Journal of E-Politics*, 3(4), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.4018/jep.2012100101>
- Bakshy, E., Messing, S., and Adamic, L. (2015). Exposure to ideologically diverse news and opinion on Facebook. *Science*, 348(6239), 1130–1132. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aaa1160>
- Barnidge, M. (2015). The role of news in promoting political disagreement on social media. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 52, 211–218. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2015.06.011>
- Benavides Almarza, C., & García-Béjar, L. (2021). Why do those who watch Netflix watch Netflix? Engagement experiences of young Mexicans facing the one who revolutionized audiovisual consumption. *Revista de Comunicacion*, 20(1), 29–47. <https://doi.org/10.26441/RC20.1-2021-A2>

- Berger, B., Matt, C., Steininger, D. M., & Hess, T. (2015). It Is Not Just About Competition with “Free”: Differences Between Content Formats in Consumer Preferences and Willingness to Pay. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 32(3), 105–128. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07421222.2015.1095038>
- 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. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16522354.2013.11073560>
- Cornelio-Marí, E. (2022). Watching dubbed television: Audiences in Italy and Mexico. *Television and New Media*, 23(3), 276–292. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476421989785>
- De Coninck, D., d’Haenens, L., & Joris, W. (2019). Investigating intergroup attitudes in Europe: Cross-national data on news media, attitudes towards newcomers, and socio-psychological indicators. *Data in brief*, 26, 104535. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dib.2019.104535>
- De la Fuente-Fernández, S. (2016). *Aplicaciones de la chi-cuadrado: tablas de contingencia, homogeneidad dependencia e independencia*. Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.
- Di Domenico, G., Sit, J., Ishizaka, A., & Nunan, D. (2021). Fake news, social media and marketing: A systematic review. *Journal of Business Research*, 124, 329–341. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.11.037>
- Doyle, G. (2013a). Re-Invention and Survival: Newspapers in the Era of Digital Multiplatform Delivery. *Journal of Media Business Studies*, 10(4), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16522354.2013.11073569>
- Doyle, G. (2013b). *Understanding media economics* (2nd ed.). Sage

- Doyle, G. (2020). Convergence. In B. von Rimscha (Ed.), *Management and economics of communication*. (pp. 151–168). De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110589542-008>
- Fletcher, R., & Nielsen, R. (2017). Are News audiences increasingly fragmented? A cross-national comparative analysis of cross-platform news audience fragmentation and duplication. *Journal of Communication*, 67(4), 476–498. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12315>
- Fletcher, R., & Park, S. (2017). The impact of trust in the news media on online news consumption and participation. *Digital Journalism*, 5(10), 1281–1299. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2017.1279979>
- Galarza Molina, R. (2021). ¿Quién cree las fake news? Análisis de la relación entre consumo de medios y la percepción de veracidad de noticias falsas sobre la enfermedad COVID-19 en Nuevo León, México. *adComunica*, 235–264. <https://doi.org/10.6035/2174-0992.2021.21.13>
- Galarza-Molina, R., & Muñiz, C. (2021). La creencia en fake news y su rol en el acatamiento de medidas contra COVID-19 en México. *Universitas-XXI*, 35, 19–38. <https://doi.org/10.17163/uni.n35.2021.01>
- Gil de Zúñiga, H., Molyneux, L., & Zheng, P. (2014). Social media, political expression, and political participation: Panel analysis of lagged and concurrent relationships. *Journal of Communication*, 64(4), 612–634. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12103>
- Gil de Zúñiga, H., Veenstra, A., Vraga, E., & Shah, D. (2010). Digital democracy: Reimagining pathways to political participation. *Journal of Information Technology and Politics*, 7(1), 36–51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19331680903316742>
- Gimpel, G. (2015). The future of video platforms: Key questions shaping the TV and video industry. *The International Journal on Media*

Management, 17(1), 25–46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14241277.2015.1014039>

González Macías, R., & García, R. (2019). They don't trust us; they don't care if we're attacked: Trust and risk perception in Mexican journalism. *Communication & Society*, 32(1), 147–160. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.32.1.147-160>

Goyanes, M. (2020). Antecedents of incidental news exposure: The role of media preference, use and trust. *Journalism Practice*, 14(6), 714–729. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2019.1631710>

Groot Kormelink, T., & Klein Gunnewiek, A. (2022). From “far away” to “shock” to “fatigue” to “back to normal”: How young people experienced news during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journalism Studies*, 23(5-6), 669–686. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2021.1932560>

Gutiérrez-Rentería, M. (2020). Latin America. In B. von Rimscha (Ed.), *Management and economics of communication* (pp. 365–375). De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110589542-019>

Gutiérrez-Rentería, M., & López-Hernández, C. (2021). Media Management in Latin America. In M. Mahoyey & T. Tang (Eds.), *Handbook of Media Management and Business* (pp. 227–243). The Rowman & Littlefield.

Gutiérrez-Rentería, M. E., Santana, J. C., López-Hernández, C., Pérez-Ayala-Madero, M., & Hellmueller, L. (2018). Perfil de un grupo de audiencia universitaria en México según su participación ciudadana, confianza en las instituciones e interacción cívica en los medios en 2017. *Revista de Comunicación*, 17(2), 125–141. <https://doi.org/10.26441/RC17.2-2018-A5>

- Ha, L. (2021). The changing audience. In M. Mahoney & T. Tang (Eds.), *Handbook of Media Management and Business* (pp. 21–38). Rowman and Littlefield.
- Havens, T., & Lotz, A. (2012). *Understanding media industries*. Oxford University Press.
- Holmes, T. (2021). Marketing and Branding. In M. Mahoney & T. Tang (Eds.), *Handbook of Media Management and Business* (pp. 117–156). Rowman and Littlefield.
- Kaufhold, K. (2021). News and information industry. In M. Mahoney & T. Tang (Eds.), *Handbook of Media Management and Business* (pp. 243–264). Rowman and Littlefield.
- Kaye, J., & Quinn, S. (2010). *Funding journalism in the digital age: Business models, strategies, issues and trends*. Peter Lang. <https://doi.org/10.3726/978-1-4539-0101-4>
- Markov, Č., & Min, Y. (2020). The origins of media trust in a young democracy. *Communication & Society*, 33(3), 67–84. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.33.3.67-84>
- Martínez-Torres, H., & Gámez, C. (2019). Is internet access bad news for media-capturing incumbents? *Journal of Applied Economics*, 22(1), 527–553. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15140326.2019.1673082>
- McDowell, W. (2006). Issues in marketing and branding. In A. Albarran, S. Chan-Olmsted, & M. Wirth (Eds.), *Handbook of Media Management and Economics* (pp. 229–250). Routledge.
- Medina-Laverón, M., Sánchez-Taberner, A., & Breiner, J. (2021). Some viable models for digital public-interest journalism. *Profesional de la información*, 30(1). <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2021.ene.18>

- Mendivelso, F., & Rodríguez, M. (2018). Prueba Chi-Cuadrado de independencia aplicada a tablas 2xN. *Revista Médica Sanitas*, 21(2), 92–95. <https://doi.org/10.26852/01234250.6>
- Mierzejewska, B., & Kolo, C. (2019). Economics of information and cultural goods. In A. Albarran (Ed.), *A research agenda for media economics* (pp. 77–102). Elgar Research Agendas. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781788119061.00011>
- Mitchelstein, E., & Boczkowski, P. (2009). Between tradition and change: A review of recent research on online news production. *Journalism*, 10(5), 562–586. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884909106533>
- Nel, F. (2010). Where else is the Money? A study of innovation in online business models at newspapers in Britain's 66 cities. *Journalism Practice*, 4(3), 360–372. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512781003642964>
- Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Eddy, K., Robertson, C. T., & Nielsen, R. K. (2023). *Digital News Report 2023*. https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2023-06/Digital_News_Report_2023.pdf
- Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Schulz, A., Andi, S., Robertson, C., & Kleis-Nielsen, R. (2021). *Institute Reuters Digital News Report 2021*. https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf
- Olsen, R. K., Kalsnes, B., & Barland, J. (2021). Do small streams make a big river? Detailing the diversification of revenue streams in newspapers' transition to digital journalism businesses. *Digital Journalism*, 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2021.1973905>
- Park, S., Fisher, C., Flew, T., & Dulleck, U. (2020). Global mistrust in news: The impact of social media on trust. *International Journal on Media Management*, 22(2), 83–96. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14241277.2020.1799794>

- Peng, Y., & Yang, T. (2022). Anatomy of audience duplication networks: How individual characteristics differentially contribute to fragmentation in news consumption and trust. *New Media and Society*, 24(10), 2270–2290. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444821991559>
- Picard, R. (2014). Las industrias informativas: ¿Tienen futuro? *Palabra Clave*, 17(4), 1069–1096. <https://doi.org/10.5294/pac-la.2014.17.4.4>
- Portes, A. (1998). Social capital: Its origins and applications in modern sociology. *American Review of Sociology*, 24(1), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.24.1.1>
- Powers, A., & Zhao, J. (2018). Changes in journalism in the digital age: The evolution of news. In A. Albarran, B. Mierzejewska, & J. Jung (Eds.), *Handbook of media management and economics* (2nd ed., pp. 347–360). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315189918-22>
- Rebolledo, M. (2018). A fourth estate? Markets, audiences, and contents of Mexico's local press. *Política y Gobierno*, 25(1), 125–152.
- Reguillo, R. (2012, May). Reflexiones iniciales en torno a #YoSoy 132. *Magis*. <http://www.magis.iteso.mx/redaccion/reflexiones-iniciales-en-torno-yosoy132>
- Rinsdorf, L. (2017). The role of trust in value networks for journalism in a convergent media environment. In K. Altmeppen, A. Hollifield, & J. van Loon. (Eds.). *Value-oriented media management: Decision making between profit and responsibility* (pp. 223–232). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-51008-8_18
- Rivera-Pesquera, M., Cacho-Elizondo, S., & Duran-Dergal, R. (2021). Forget-me-not? using immersive technologies in brand-building communication processes: An exploratory study in the Mexican context. *Journal of Creative Communications*, 16(3), 303–313. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09732586211036768>

- Sánchez-García, K. (2016). Sobre los derechos de las audiencias en México. *Comunicación y sociedad*, 27, 97–120. <https://doi.org/10.32870/cys.v0i27.1318>
- Sánchez-Nuevo, L., Guerrero-Martínez, M., & Carrasco, B. (2022). Benditas redes sociales: Análisis de la campaña en Twitter de los candidatos a la presidencia de México en el 2018. *Contratexto*, (37), 229–258. <https://doi.org/10.26439/contratexto2022.n037.5432>
- Schumann, C. (2022). When News Topics Annoy-Exploring Issue Fatigue and Subsequent Information Avoidance and Extended Coping Strategies. *Journalism and Media*, 3(3), 538–556. <https://doi.org/10.3390/journalmedia3030037>
- Seifert, R., Clement, M., & Otten, C. (2020). Designing marketing models for media products. In B. Rimscha (Ed.), *Management and economics of communication* (pp. 281–310). De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110589542-015>
- Soto, J. (2020, May 27). La pandemia acelera la transformación digital de los medios. *El Economista*. <https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/opinion/La-pandemia-acelera-la-transformacion-digital-de-los-medios-20200527-0029.html>
- Sued, G. E. (2022). A Netflix geography of Mexico: Automatized recommendations and content supplied diversity. *Anuario Electronico de Estudios en Comunicacion Social Disertaciones*, 15(2), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.12804/revistas.urosario.edu.co/disertaciones/a.10616>
- Sylvie, G. (2008). Market analysis. In G. Sylvie, J. Leblanc, A. Hollifield, S. Lacy, & A. Broadrick (Eds.), *Media management. A casebook approach* (4th ed., pp. 197–230). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Tong, C., Winckler, H., & Rojas, H. (2021). The connection between perceptions of media bias and influence and affective polarization. An

- examination in Brazil and Mexico and the United States. *Revista de Comunicación Política*, 3, e210301. <https://doi.org/10.29105/rcp3-1>
- Vázquez, F. (2002). ¿Son las relaciones sociales una fuente de recursos? Una definición del capital social. *Revista de sociología*, 129–148. <https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/papers/v67n0.1669>
- Wirtz, B. (2019). *Digital business models. Concepts, models, and the alphabet case study*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-13005-3>
- Zheng, N., Chyi, H., Ng, Y., & Kaufhold, K. (2021). Digital sustainability: Assessing US newspapers' online readership with the multidimensional attention model, *International Journal on Media Management*, 23(3-4), 149–175. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14241277.2022.2038606>