

An Analytical Study of Lifestyle as a Popular Theme in Two Different Media: Print and Electronic

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A Content Analysis & Survey Based Descriptive Study

Abstract

The objective of the research is to analyze whether media is responsible for promoting the concept of lifestyle in the minds of the masses. Comparative analysis of news related stories, business, sports and other types of contents of media with lifestyle contents are analysed. Various newspapers, magazines, websites and television channel's in-depth content analysis was done. Audience survey was done through questionnaires. It was found that people prefer lifestyle contents both in print and electronic media.

The hypothesis that media is responsible for promoting lifestyle contents is partially true. The masses get influenced by media as they are exposed to lifestyle contents. Lifestyle is considered to be an inseparable aspect of journalism as it helps to break the monotony of life. It also serves the purpose of entertainment too. It is found out from the research that the future of lifestyle is very bright. There will be lot of avenues opening up in this aspect. Masses will get the requisite information and media in return will earn good revenue. The various avenues of lifestyle are fashion, food, health, travel, gadgets, relationships, pets, parenting, etc.

It is found out from the survey that the young adults from the age group of 18 to 35 years are much interested in the contents of lifestyle that media provides. They feel it enhances their standard of living and helps in developing their confidence. Masses want entertainment along with information.

Keywords: Psychographic, lifestyle

Introduction

Lifestyle refers to the pattern in which people live, spend time and money. These patterns reflected by demographical factors like habits, attitudes, tastes, moral standards, economic levels and so on together constitute the mode of living of an individual group. It includes individual's activities in addition to their interests. As a construct it helps consumers to interact with their world. Lifestyles are subjected to change every time. Consumer behavior research uses lifestyle data to determine which consumers buy what kind of products.

Lifestyle is a broader concept. Fashion, travel, food, gadgets, health, pet, parenting, personal grooming are some of the aspects that come under the concept of lifestyle. This concept is gaining importance via mass media. Both print and electronic media are taken into consideration. A content analysis of lifestyle has been done in print and electronic media.

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Major national dailies like- The Times of India, Hindustan Times, The Telegraph has allotted large space on everyday basis to lifestyle contents. On some specific days of the week like Friday, Saturday and Sunday special subscriptions are provided along with the main paper specifically on lifestyle. It includes beauty, health, spas, food, fashion (wherein comes clothes, shoes, bags, accessories, etc.), electronic gadgets, marriage, parenting, pets and each day a new name is added to it.

Channels aim lifestyle programming. Feeding off a booming economy, India's "Dil Mange More" generation is growing in leaps and bounds. A growing consumerist culture and two income families mean that the urban upscale Indian is not afraid to work hard and party harder (to use a cliché). With "Young and Happening" being the buzzword, along with the money to buy lifestyle they want. Indians are becoming increasingly savvy to leading a way of life that enhances his/her experience at any given point, be it entertainment, lifestyle or shopping. Globetrotting Indians want to live it up with style, as they plan vacation to virgin beaches across the world, shop for hi-tech gizmos and designer wear and aspire for the latest cool car that has been launched in the market.

As market experts put it, with lifestyle taking centre-stage in the lifestyle economy, it's all about aspiration across industry segments. In psychographic terms, it is this segment that television channels as well as the print medium are targeting for niche viewing and reading, by creating and customizing lifestyle contents. It is the younger generation with active interests in "funk and style", craving a peek into their favorite celebrity's wardrobe and Page3 gossip which various forms of media are chasing after and providing space for it.

Lifestyle programming could span across adventure sports, or it could be normal cricket on streets or about wild destinations across the world. Watching a lifestyle show has to be an experience for the viewer, who should feel a part of the show at the end of the day. There is a very niche audience, young upwardly mobile, with a different mindset for this kind of programming.

Research Question

The research is trying to analyze whether media (print and electronic) is responsible for promoting the concept of lifestyle in the minds of people.

Following are the objectives of the study to:

- Find lifestyle influence both consumption patterns and the possesses different forms of marketing communication. Therefore, the lifestyle concept has become the core of a special kind of segmentation research called 'psychographics'.
- Study the new approaches of constructing lifestyle typologies which are developed by using more general and stable concepts of values, aesthetic styles and life visions. Their applicability, both in isolation and in combination, to for meaningful lifestyle typologies is compared to traditional demographic segmentation criteria such as gender, age, social class and stage of life.
- Analyze four different markets: goods (example-cars), services (example- tourism), not-for-profit (example-

political parties) and media (example- television programmes, films and magazines)

- Compare different segmentation systems in terms of most wanted product attributes or benefits as found in the survey using sample of the adult population.

Hypothesis

1. Media (Electronic & Print) try to hype the concept of lifestyle for higher TRPs (Television Rating Points) and circulation.
2. Attractive presentation by Media influence people of almost all age group irrespective of gender, religion, education, income, etc.

Scope and limitations

Both electronic and print media was taken into consideration (English). But the study and research was limited to specific lifestyle based programmes on channels, specific lifestyle channels and also newspapers which devote considerable space to lifestyle-based contents.

Newspaper- The Times of India, The Telegraph (Kolkata based) and Hindustan Times

Television Channels- NDTV GoodTimes, Star One, MTV

Utility

In the recent times, many have taken a conscious decision to spruce up lifestyle programming. A fresh look at the lifestyle genre, newer concepts, good packaging has resulted in compelled viewing. A look at the various shows across the channels reveals that channels are trying to evolve the genre as per their target audience in the Indian context.

As Indian market is maturing both in terms of content as well as viewer's choices, therefore there is variety in terms of content. Due to success of lifestyle programmes, channels like NDTV opened lifestyle channels. There is a good market for lifestyle programmes on various Indian television channels. The lifestyle concept has become the core of a special kind of segmentation research called 'psychographics'.

Review of literature:

Keeping an eye on lifestyle trends

"The Age of Autonomy", "The Global Village" and "The Revenge of the Brands" are just a few, of the 15 lifestyle and marketing trends that will shape the future. According to Roger Starch worldwide, the public opinion organizations, Americans are finding new ways to solve old problems.

Some seemingly contradictory trends appear to be developing at the same time. For instance, there apparently is a renewed sense of self-reliance, a reversal of a trend toward dependence on government or business to solve problems.

Creative Comfort: The top four status symbols Americans would like are having a vacation home, staying in luxury hotels, traveling abroad frequently for pleasure and eating at expensive restaurants. Relatively few would like to live in an exclusive neighborhood, know people who are prominent or famous, or have a position and power in government.

Lifestyle magazines: These are more about layout and graphic designers and photographers than writers. Readers does not require intro for a subject. The contents in lifestyle magazines are about pampering body and soul. Gizmos and glamour are the matters of discussion.

As far the market of the contemporary world is concerned, it's no longer a women's world. Men has equal share in the glamour world. This can be seen in lifestyle based magazines, television channels, television programmes, web portals and lifestyle advertisements. These mediums of mass communication not only focus on fashion but also on trends in lifestyle products as well.

Market experts predict that earlier the fight was restricted to other genres will now slowly move on to lifestyle genre. With the launch of Zoom TV from Times Group banner, positioned as an entertainment and lifestyle channel and the launching of Discovery Networks' Travel and Living seems to be the flavor of the season.

Contemporary lifestyle is creating a new breed of teenagers

Internet has replaced outdoor games, pubs have replaced evening strolls with friends and holding hands is totally a passé, intimate display of affection are 'kewl' (Cool) for teenagers today, it's all about flaunting, casual dating, downloading and MMSing.

Contemporary lifestyle, which provides assessable technology, is creating a new breed of teenagers. Flushing with new found wily quest, their undisciplined and in some cases, dangerously wild lives is a secret to their parents.

Research Methodology

Content analysis is a specific research approach used in all specific area of media. This method is popular among mass media researchers because it is often an efficient way to investigate the content of media such as the number and types of commercials or advertisements in broadcast or print media. The researchers find content analysis as a valuable tool in answering mass media questions.

Content analysis is a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables.

While doing content analysis of print and electronic media for the concept of "Lifestyle", I went through the websites of NDTV, Star One, Star Plus, Zee TV, Times of India and Hindustan Times. Content analysis of the newspapers- The Times of India, Hindustan Times and The Telegraph were done. Magazines specifically related to lifestyle are also analyzed.

While doing the content analysis, it is observed that the content has to be crisp. It is more about layouts and graphic designs and photographs than writings. Generally, viewers and readers expect attractive visuals along with the write-ups. And at times it becomes difficult to do justice to a story in fewer words.

It was observed that one of the advantages of content analysis is its potential to identify trends over long period of time. The

descriptive studies can be used to study societal change. After analyzing the content, the hypothesis that was made is neutral. It is neither wholly true nor totally false. It was noted that whatever is portrayed by media is highly attractive which greatly influence the masses.

Content analysis is done by media for agenda setting. These contents of lifestyle in both print and electronic media are agendas made by the media to make people aware of the various aspects of the concept under study. And at the same time it also helps media to earn revenue.

Questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions which aims in gathering information from respondents. Based on the information collected through questionnaires, statistical analyses were made.

Research Pattern

To get an opinion on the issue from the public, a questionnaire was designed to test the hypothesis that lifestyle is a concept which media is imposing on the masses.

Primary Research

Research was conducted on the basis of a questionnaire prepared that includes 10 questions related to the concept of lifestyle in both print and electronic media.

Objective of the questionnaire is to evaluate people's preference of lifestyle content in media.

The questions were objective and multiple-choice based (closed format)

Questionnaires were distributed among the people who are under the age group – 18 to 35 years of age. The questionnaire helped to filter out certain people's opinion on the research.

Sample Size

Number of questionnaires used 50

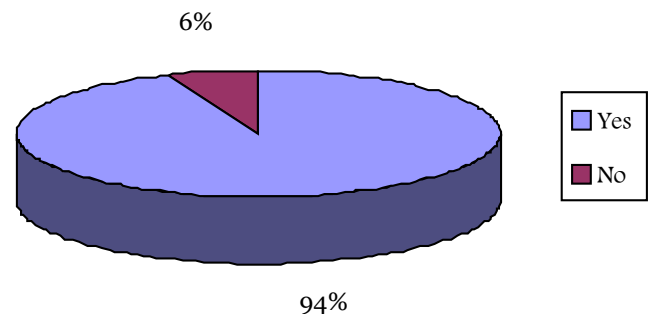
Number of respondents 50

Findings Of The Research Based Upon The Questionnaire Response And Analysis

Results And Observations

Tabular and graphical representation

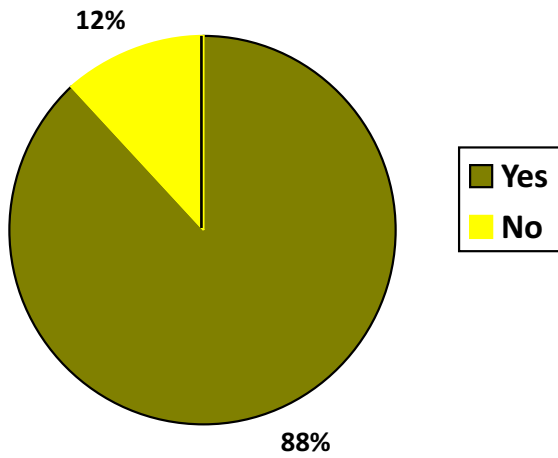
Respondents Interested In Viewing Television



<u>Response</u>	<u>No. of Respondents</u>	<u>Percentage (%)</u>
Yes	47	94%
No	3	6%

Inference: 94% of the respondents watch Television and interested in electronic media.

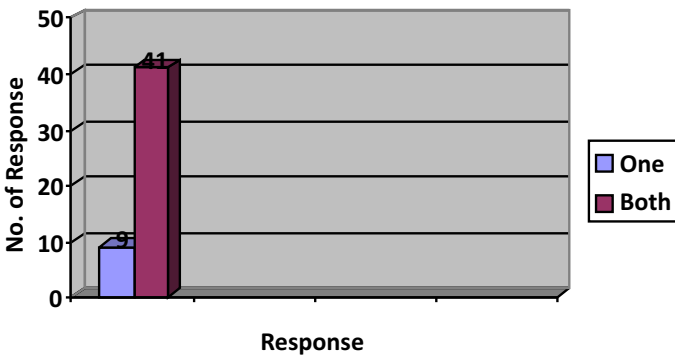
Respondents Interested In Reading Newspapers



<u>Response</u>	<u>No. of Respondents</u>	<u>Percentage (%)</u>
Yes	44	88%
No	6	12%

Inference: According to the responses 12% people are not interested in reading Newspapers.

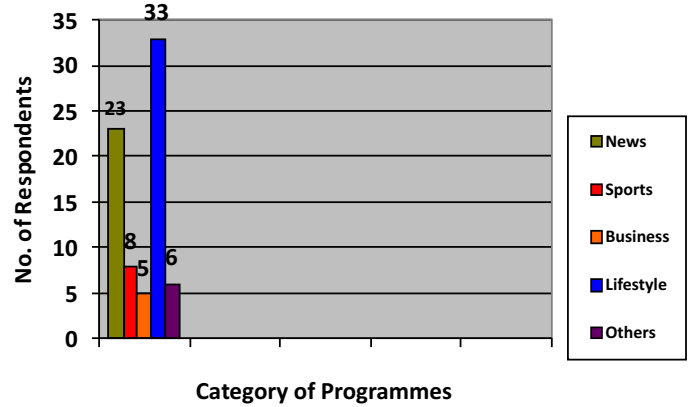
Respondents Preference of Both the Forms of Media (Print & Electronic) or Either one of them.



<u>Response</u>	<u>No. of Respondents</u>	<u>Percentage (%)</u>
Prefer Both the Media	41	82%
One of Them	9	18%

Inference: 82% of the respondents are interested in both the forms of media, that is, Print and Electronic. They are interested in reading newspapers as well as watching television.

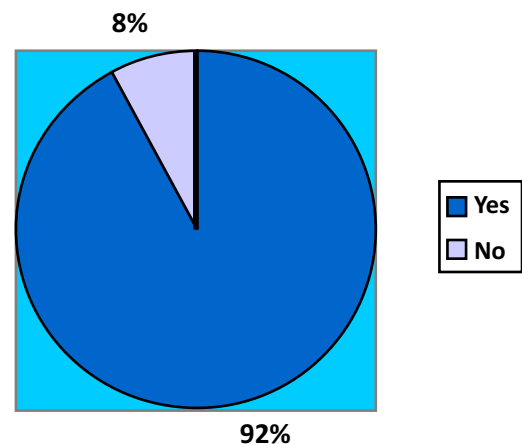
Preference of the kind of Programmes on Television



<u>Category of Programmes</u>	<u>No. of Respondents</u>	<u>Percentage (%)</u>
News	23	46%
Sports	8	16%
Business	5	1%
Lifestyle	33	66%
Others	6	12%

Inference: The respondents prefer more than one category of programmes. A high percentage of viewers prefer both news and lifestyle based programmes.

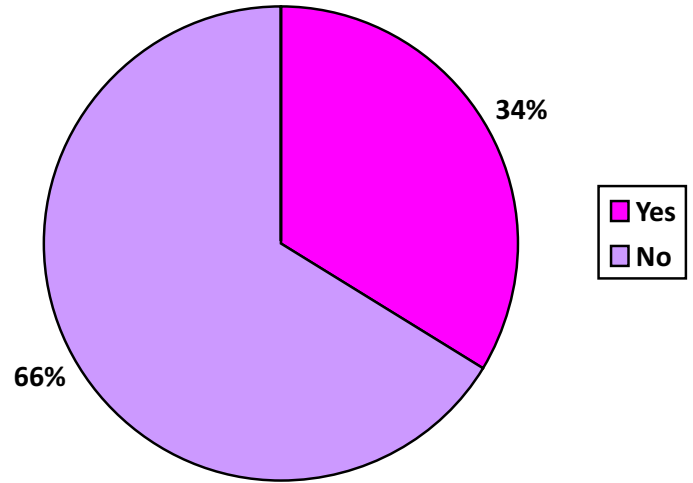
Importance of Lifestyle aspect in Print Journalism besides News



Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	46	92%
No	4	8%

Inference: According to the survey 92% of the respondents feel besides news lifestyle is also an important aspect of Print Journalism.

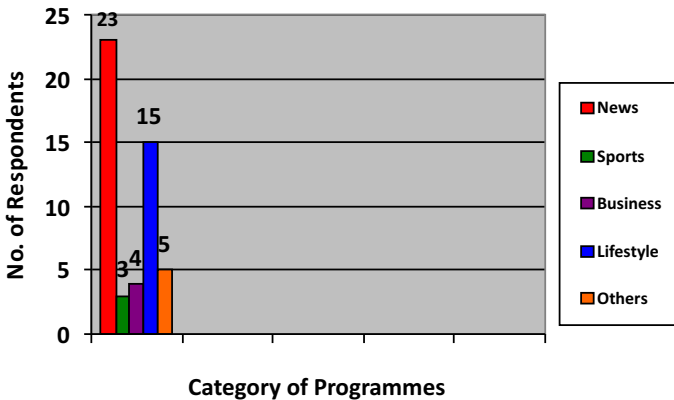
Negative Impact of lifestyle based contents on the youngsters



Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	17	34%
No	33	66%

Inference: According to the survey 34% of the respondents feel that lifestyle has a negative impact on youngsters.

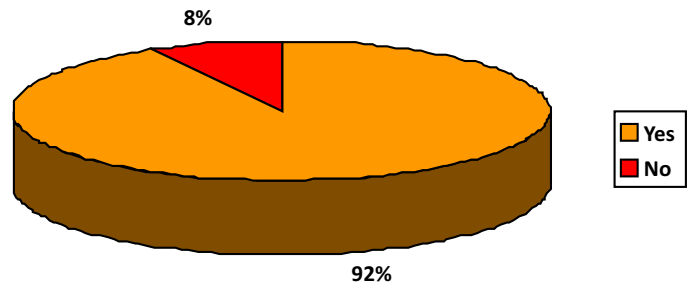
Ratings done by the Respondents according to their preference in both the forms of Media (Print and Electronic)



Category of Programmes	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
News	23	46%
Sports	3	6%
Business	4	8%
Lifestyle	15	30%
Others	5	10%

Inference: News was rated highest and lifestyle comes next amongst all the categories of programmes by the respondents.

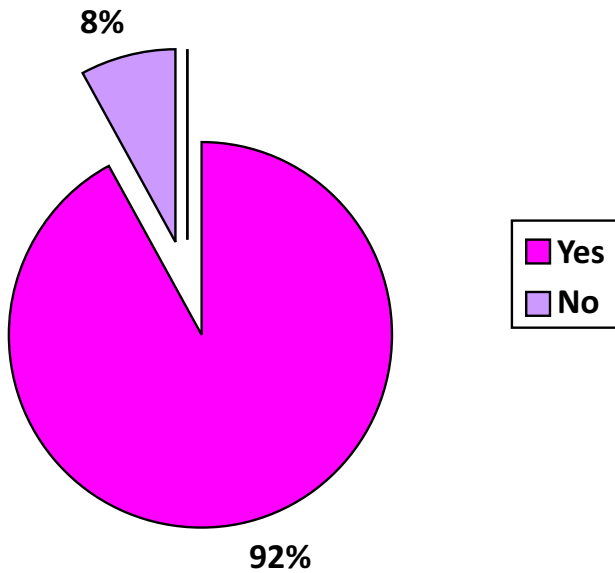
Amongst various types of contents, lifestyle-based contents are important in both Print and Electronic Journalism



Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	46	92%
No	4	8%

Inference: 92% of the respondents consider that lifestyle-based contents are important than other contents (news, sports, business and others) in both print and electronic journalism.

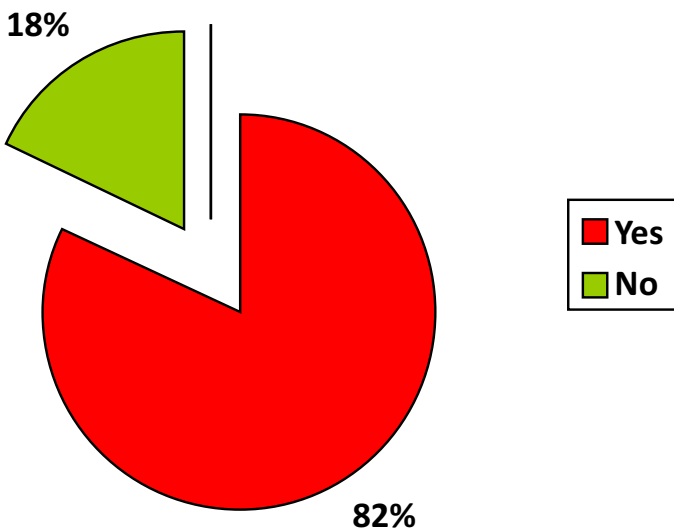
Lifestyle is upcoming and inseparable section of journalism



Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	46	92%
No	4	8%

Inference: Majority of the respondents agree that lifestyle is an upcoming and inseparable section of journalism. It has a bright future.

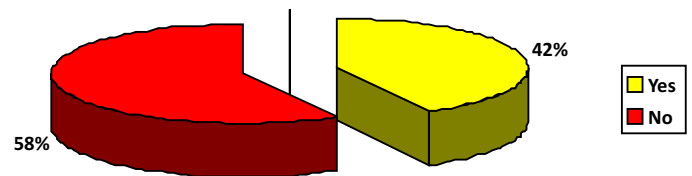
Life would be boring and monotonous only with news contents and no lifestyle contents



Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	41	82%
No	9	18%

Inference: 82% respondents agree that without lifestyle-based contents and only news in both print and electronic media there will be no variety in life. It will be boring and monotonous.

Lifestyle-Based Contents would take the place of News-Based Contents in Print and Electronic Media



Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	21	42%
No	29	58%

Inference: 42% of the respondents consider that lifestyle-based contents are important amongst other contents (news, sports, business and others) in both print and electronic journalism.

Conclusion

To make both print and electronic media attractive and sellable – Lifestyle is a must segment. Advertisements of various products from toothpaste to luxury cars, portrays that people do have interests on the lifestyle prospects, directly or indirectly.

During the survey opinion of people from various income groups and strata were taken. It is found out that lifestyle is such a section in media which makes newspapers, magazines, television channels, websites more attractive, interesting and lively. To bring the so called element of entertainment, it has become necessary, for the people related to media to think about various avenues of lifestyle.

In-depth analysis reveals that media fraternity is engaged in research and development of various lifestyle related events across the globe to gather information and enlighten the masses.

Fashion shows, beauty contests, launching of various products, opening of stores and exhibitions are covered by various forms of media to break the monotony of imposing only news-related contents.

Future prospects

The audience survey result shows that the future prospects of lifestyle are very bright. Large number of advertiser, media houses and people in general would be benefited.

Consumption habits of people are changing. In fact, young children are becoming tech savvy. Children play with electronic toys which are like human beings. High definition computer games, robotic toys are in demand.

The lifestyle of people are taking such a turn that the affluent class can think of holidaying on Moon, celebrating birthdays, weddings and other functions on space. Even people are trying to change the lifestyle of pets also. Taking animals to parlours for grooming, giving them specialized food available in market.

There is breakthrough in every aspect. The electronic gadgets like cell phones, ipods, laptops, computers, etc. are becoming sleeker and sleeker. It has become affordable for people who fall in the strata of low income category.

Malls and multiplexes show that the lifestyle is going to be highly advanced. There would be demand for goods which will enhance one's standard of living.

There have been enormous changes in the media landscape since the early 1980s (and particularly in the late 1990s) many of which have brought potential threats to the magazine industry. Most newspapers nowadays have multiple sections with supplements on lifestyle and lifestyle oriented magazine's publications and popularity are increasing. On television there has been a rise (increase) in available number of channels as a result of digital and cable access.

The more people are enlightened and made aware of the various lifestyle avenues their will be more demand for it. The media analyst confirms that the future prospect of lifestyle is very bright and significant.

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