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# Marketing Strategies in The Daily Star English Newspaper in Bangladesh: An Overview Study

**Prashanta Kumar Shill[1*], Barsha Dey[2]**

[1]Department of Journalism and Media Studies, Port City International University, Bangladesh
[2]Department of Marketing, University of Chittagong, Bangladesh

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**ABSTRACT**

A newspaper is a powerful tool that disseminates news to the public sharply and is one of the most important consumer goods in their everyday lives. The newspaper industry requires particular marketing activities to sell highly to the reader community. Due to the limited readers of English newspapers, their competition is too hard in the market. The numerous marketing mix instruments, also known as the 4Ps (product, pricing, place, and promotion) of newspapers are important in marketing strategy. The goal of the present study is to describe the marketing strategies of The Daily Star newspaper since it was the most widely circulated English daily newspaper in Bangladesh. The study was conducted on issues like contemporary marketing concepts in their decision-making process, employing personnel with relevant backgrounds, using differentiated pricing, targeting various consumer segments to increase market share, and cutting costs associated with distribution, product quality, and marketing place. In this English newspaper, the structural composition, including editorial, international events, lifestyle, youth-oriented fashion, and travel were shown the best orientation, which increased the acceptance of consumers. The well-structured organization and promotional activities were the best for The Daily Star among the newspaper industries. From one of the survey data, it was demonstrated that 46.16% of readers were performed, which was the highest in The Daily Star. This study will be greatly helpful to the marketing sector of the newspaper industry.

**Keywords:** 4Ps, Consumer product, Marketing mix, Marketing concept, Newspaper, The Daily Star

*CORRESPONDENCE
vprashantcu@gmail.com
Department of Journalism and Media Studies, Port City International University, Bangladesh

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The most significant product in the life of a literate person is a newspaper. A person cannot imagine his or her everyday life routine in the present age without a newspaper. Because of the rapid changes in communication and the necessity to satisfy human demand and supply in order to keep current consumers and draw in new ones, newspaper marketing becomes necessary (Beam, 2003). A newspaper as a product can meet the need for information, which aids in decision-making in both personal and societal situations.

Even though Bangla is the mother tongue in Bangladesh, English is frequently spoken in the middle- and upper-class households. People read English newspapers to get information in English because English is an international language (Ali, 2004). The number of readers of English daily is increasing as Bangladeshis become more aware of the importance of English (SFN, 2003). In Bangladesh, many international organizations are now operated by foreign employers, where English newspapers have to communicate media the news to them. The number of people reading English newspapers is growing every day.

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Bangladesh's leading English newspaper is The Daily Star until now. The Daily Star made its debut in Bangladesh's media landscape on January 14, 1991. With a spirit of challenge and humility to serve our country, it began its career as a truly independent newspaper. The newspaper first appeared during a critical juncture in Bangladesh's history. With the fall of an autocratic ruler, the country was in a good position to begin its transition to a democratic government. The Daily Star is committed to strengthening public opinion on the democratic system and its effectiveness throughout time (Waldfogel & George, 2003).

A marketing intelligence system can assist in the development of a newspaper's marketing strategy (Magda, 2011). As a result, the study intends to examine how "The Daily Star" authority can strengthen its marketing strategy and meet the needs of readers at a time when not only print but also internet media are competing fiercely for both loyal and new customers. With the rapid changes in the global arena, a long-term vision is essential to survive the upcoming hard climate. The process of competition is never-ending. The Bangladesh Observer was the most widely circulated English newspaper until the publication of "The Daily Star." However, "The Bangladesh Observer" will not be able to maintain its position as the most widely circulated English daily. The authority of "The Daily Star" may employ a persistent marketing intelligence force to maintain its position as Bangladesh's number one English daily. In the above context, the present review was to conduct suitable marketing techniques for studying The Daily Star to maintain its position as the most widely circulated English daily newspaper.

## 2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DAILY STAR

Naturally The first issue of The Daily Star was published on January 14, 1991, and it is a leading English daily newspaper in Bangladesh (Roy, 2020; WARC, 2007). The first editor was Syed Mohammed Ali. The newspaper's executive editor from its inception has been Mr. Mahfuz Aanam. Mahfuz Anam took over as editor of the newspaper after SM Ali died in 1993. He is presently the newspaper's editor and publisher. The newspaper publishes different weekly sections practically every day, in addition to its daily 24-page main section, aimed at a wide spectrum of readers. The weekend magazine, weekly and biweekly issues of In Focus provide sections on literature, book reviews, health, science, law and order, broad angles, the environment, travel, and other topics. It also publishes supplements regularly at various times. The journal is mostly funded by Transcom Group, one of the country's largest businesses (Transcom, 2013).

## 3. ORGANOGRAM OF THE DAILY STAR

The conceptualization of organizational structure is the manifestation of systematic contemplation. The organization is composed of elements, relations between elements, and structure as a generality composing a unit. The structure is a great combination of the relations between organizational elements forming the existence philosophy of organizational activity (Ahmady et al., 2016).

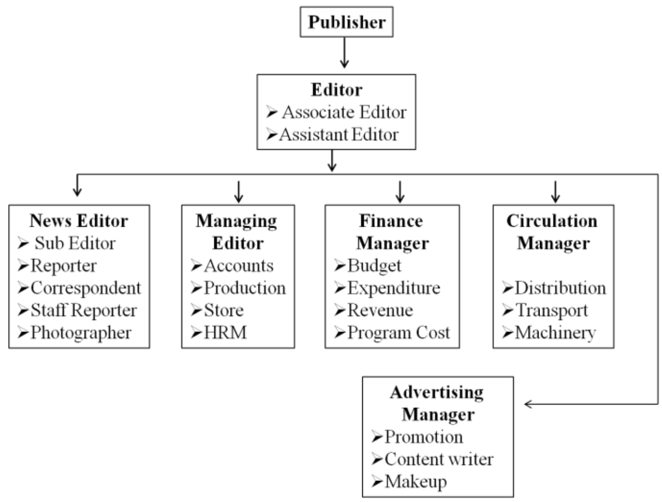


Fig. 1 The organogram of The Daily Newspaper (Source: on the basis of publication of The Daily Star).

The news, reporting, and editorial units are led by the editor who is also the publisher of The Daily Star newspaper. An editorial board comprising the associate editor and assistant editors is responsible for writing editorials under the supervision of the Editor. The associate editor and assistant editors also write and collect post-editorials from other writers and look after the editorial and post-editorial pages. It is also their responsibility to look after the features and articles and make-up on the pages. The management of the newspaper is headed by the Managing Editor. He is responsible for supervising the whole management including the accounts, production, store, and establishment units. The Finance Manager heads the finance and accounts sections. The Circulation Manager is responsible for all circulation of the newspaper across the country and for taking necessary steps to increase circulation. The chief reporter is responsible for supervising the whole reporting team, the key unit of the newspaper. The Chief News Editor heads the news section that comprises news editors and sub-editors. Besides two news editors and a joint news editor, there are several sub-editors. The News Editors are responsible for page make-up. They also write headlines for the reports. The sub-editors edit the reports and submit them to the news editors. The news editors later send the reports for revision to the Revision Editor. There is also a City Editor in The Daily Star who coordinates all the events that take place in the city. He also supervises reporters who cover special events and coordinates the staff who works with bringing out special pages on different occasions. Meantime, there are rewritten men and translators in the newspaper to develop copies.

The organogram of The Daily Newspaper is quite organized (Fig. 1). Organizational structure should facilitate decision-making, the proper reaction to the environment, and conflict resolution between units (Arabi, 2007).

## 4. MARKETING MIX OF THE DAILY STAR

The marketing mix is the set of variables that can be controlled in marketing (Grulach, 2007). The 4Ps (product, pricing, place, and promotion) are generally used to express it (Kotler, 2003). Evans & Berman (1982) reported that a strategy framing the manner in which marketing is used to achieve a firm's objectives and two or more possible alternative strategies must have a firm. The marketing mix of The Daily Star was described in the following heading.

Table1 Special pages on different days in The Daily Star

| Day | Contents of special pages |
|---|---|
| Sunday | ➢ Law Our Right-Page,<br>➢ Star-City: Health-Page |
| Monday | ➢ To The Editor-Page<br>➢ Star City: includes Star Heritage-Page |
| Tuesday | ➢ Lifestyle: includes horoscope, interior design, health problems, shop-talk, etc. |
| Wednesday | ➢ To The Editor-Page<br>➢ Star City: includes Star-tech, Star-Chittagong |
| Thursday | ➢ Rising Stars: includes stories, poems, travel, cartoons, etc. |
| Friday | ➢ Environment-page, To the Editor-page<br>➢ Star Magazine: includes the cover story, jokes, tourism, health, culture, etc. |
| Saturday | ➢ Star Literature – page |

(Source: On the basis of the publication of The Daily Star)

### 4.1. Product

A product is the collection of characteristics packaged in a recognizable package (Balmer, 2001). To stress that consumers are buying advantages that fit their criteria rather than a set of features, we need a more expansive definition of product in marketing. A broad definition of a product includes things like goods, services, places, people, and concepts (Stanton, 1994). A marketing offer is a collection of goods, services, knowledge, or experiences created to satisfy a certain need or want. Through a number of divisions, including news, opinion, and editorial for star business, star sports, arts, and entertainment in the national and metropolitan, the Daily Star provides news to its target audience (REDS, 2012). Metropolitan, points: counterpoint, business, international, sports, national, cultural, etc. are published on regular pages. Some special pages with various news are added on different days (Table 1).

Table 2 The details of the per-unit production cost of The Daily Star

| Sl. No. | Step 1: Determination of Per Unit Production Cost | |
|---|---|---|
| | Overhead | Amount |
| 1 | Newsprint | 7.90 |
| 2 | Printing | 2.43 |
| 3 | Factory overhead | 1.55 |
| | Total | 11.88 |
| 4 | Indirect overhead | 2.46 |
| | Total cost | 14.34 |
| | Step 2: Determination of Per Unit Sales Revenue | |
| 1 | Per unit sales price | 12 |
| 2 | Agent's Commission | 3.4 |
| 3 | Per unit sales revenue | 8.6 |
| | Step 3: Determination of Per Unit Marketing Cost (Annual) | |
| 1 | Annual promotion expenditure | |
| | a. Billboard | 0.75 crore |
| | b. Incentive to the hawker & agency | 0.40 crore |
| | c. Trade promotion | 0.91 crore |
| | d. Special promotion package | 1.00 crore |
| | Total | 3.06 crore |
| 2 | Annual distribution cost | 1.45 crore |
| 3 | Annual production cost | 89.83 crore |
| 4 | Total Annual Marketing Cost | 94.34 crore |
| 5 | Per Unit Marketing Cost | 13.98 tk |
| | Step 4: Determination of Per Unit Target for Advertisement Revenue | |
| 1 | Cost of marketing | 13.98 tk |
| 2 | Sales revenue | 8.06 |
| 3 | Advertising target | 5.92 |

(Source: Compiled on the basis of the collection of data)

### 4.2. Price

A commodity's cost reflects its worth as a trade medium. A product's price is the total amount of money that buyers are willing to part with in exchange for the utility they receive from using it. Both for-profit businesses and charitable groups can benefit from careful consideration of pricing. Pricing is the human activity of adding a price to buy and sales orders based on variables like a fixed amount, quantity break, promotion or sales campaign, specific vendor quote, price in effect at entry, shipment or invoicing date, and many more (Trivers, 1996). Pricing for new and old products appears to be straightforward. A marketer appears to have to estimate costs and add a margin for overhead and profit to determine the selling price of a product. The key revenue-generating element of the marketing mix is price. The newspaper industry has a distinct pricing approach from other consumer goods. A five-equation model of newspaper operations was specified and provides evidence useful for addressing several issues concerning media concentration

(Dertouzos & Trautman, 1990). On the cost side, the results indicate that there exist significant scale economies in the production of circulation and space. On the other hand, the evidence suggests that chain newspapers cannot produce output more efficiently than independents.

On the demand side, rival newspapers located in contiguous geographic markets appear to have an important competitive effect on the demand for circulation. Dillon (1993) observed that marketing research helps marketing managers to make better informed and less risky marketing decisions. Accordingly, the information obtained through marketing research must be objective, impartial, current, translatable, and relevant. Schultz (1993) describes a strategic approach which is one of the most pressing issues in the newspaper business. He describes a method for making decisions to ensure the long-term health and profitability of newspapers of all sizes. Trivers (1996) observed that the segmenting of business markets is a process of refining the business markets into usable components. He further commented that the marketing personnel should know the sales and profitability of the broad product markets of the target markets, and of the individual businesses. The details of the per-unit production cost of The Daily Star are presented in Table 2.

Table 3 Market share of three most circulated English newspapers

| Newspapers Name | Year of founded | Editor | Circulation | Market share | Price |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Daily Star | 1991 | MahfuzAnam | 44814 | 36.92% | 12tk |
| The Daily Observer | 2011 | Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury | 38750 | 31.92% | 10tk |
| The Independent | 1995 | M. Shamsur Rahman | 37800 | 31.14% | 10tk |

(Source: Compiled on the basis of the collection of data)

### 4.3. Place

There is no one set of distribution standards that can accommodate every company (Walker, 2000). Many businesses employ many channels of distribution to reach their intended audiences. When a product is manufactured, it must go through a series of intermediaries before it reaches the end user, who may be a consumer or another firm. In other words, a distribution channel is a network of companies that work together to make a product or service accessible to end users. Ultimately, what matters is that the products reach the consumer. O'Neill (1986) describes that busy potential clients are often unable to attend seminars, as many financial planners have found out the hard way. By teaching them and making the newspaper and the newspaper firm visible through the publication they are most likely to the read-the local newspaper.

Examples of judgments involving physical space include:

• inventory management
• warehousing
• distribution hubs
• order fulfillment
• transportation
• market exposure (inclusive, selective, or exclusive distribution).

### 4.4. Promotion

The reward is another name for promotions. It's the part of a company's marketing mix that informs, persuades, and reminds customers about a product (Agrawal, 2002). A firm can achieve its aim by utilizing the concept of promotion. The Daily Star engages in more extensive advertising than its competitors. Imam & Ali (2000) comment that database marketing involves the creation of updating, maintenance of a database and telemarketing operation, filed sales support system, customer services, and credit collection. Berkowtiz (2000) observed that the placement of products in many media alternatives available today is becoming an important part of marketing and promotion. Applications of the technique demonstrate the importance of creating in communicating with potential customers. In addition, to ensure that a consistent message is delivered through product placement and all promotional activities, a process that integrates marketing communications is necessary.

#### 4.4.1. Major Promotional Programs of The Daily Star

In this day and age, not all target customers have the same preferences. Consumers have a variety of needs, and to meet these needs, various promotional activities must be carefully designed and conducted. Advertising, sales promotion (such as sampling, discount coupons, sweepstakes, and others), and public relations activities are examples of promotional tactics (such as organizing programs, news conferences, donating money, and others). The following are some of the promotional activities:

**Bangladesh Business Award**

Since 2001, "The Daily Star" has sponsored this program, which honors Bangladesh's top businessmen and women for their remarkable achievements. On behalf of "The Daily Star," D.H.L. organized this event. This program takes place in March and April.

**Debate Competition**

Since 2001, "The Daily Star" has sponsored the Inter College and University English Debate Competition. This competition is organized by the Viqarunnisa Noon College Debating Committee on behalf of "The Daily Star".

**Award Presentation Program for O & A Level Students**

The Daily Star has been honoring excellent students in O and A level exam since 1999. On a specified Friday in September, October, or November, "The Daily Star" Award Presentation Program for O and A-Level students is held. This program involves students and teachers from English-medium schools.

**The Engineers' Award**

On May 9, 2003, "The Daily Star" honored Bangladeshi engineers for their remarkable achievements in their respective disciplines. This event was held in partnership with the Bangladesh Institute of Engineers.

**Round Table Discussion**

The "Daily Star" hosts a variety of round-table conversations. In 2003, for example, it hosted a round table debate with C.P.D. (Center for Policy Dialogue).

**News on Grameen Phone**

Grameen Phone receives daily news from "The Daily Star." Other mobile phone companies can also be accommodated. On different occasions, other programs are also held.

## 5. SITUATION ANALYSIS

An organization, service, or product's potential and threats can be better understood through situation analysis (Sheth & Sisodia, 2005). The scope of a problem can also be defined this way. Once these have been determined, an organization can utilize the information to map out a path from where it is now to where it wants to go (Dadler & Clark, 2011). For the situation analysis, the following analysis is required.

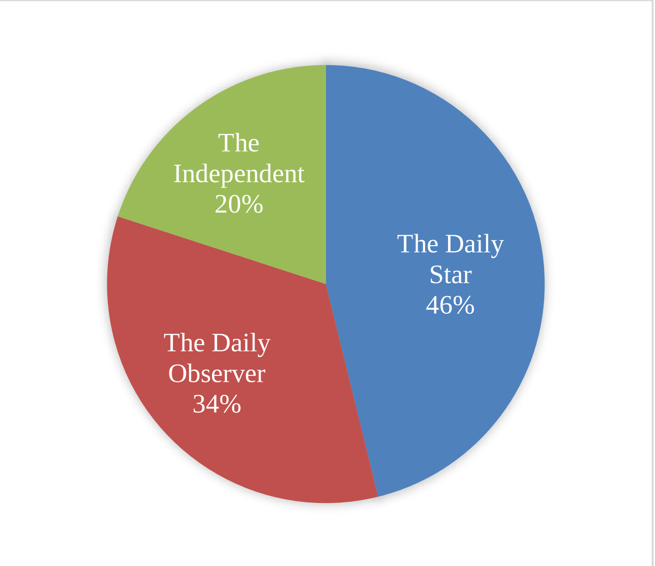


Fig. 2 Rate of English newspaper readers.

### 5.1. Market Analysis

The history of Bangladesh's English-language newspaper market is quite recent (Murray et al., 1995). In the years following the new country's 1981 inception, five further English-language dailies appeared on newsstands. This sector of the economy is still developing. The market share of the three most circulated English newspapers is presented in Table 3.

Gross (2000) argues that competition in the organizational marketplace is generally keen, whether the rivalry is across the street or across the ocean. Judging the nature of competition by looking at structure, conduct, and performance is a useful initial step. However, marketing managers must need go further and consider the intensity of rivalry among existing firms, possible entry into the market by new firms, substitutes, and forward or backward integration. Stines (2000) observes that building positive and constructive day-to-day working relationships with people can impact the last 3 ft. of the marketing process. Too often, marketers are isolated from ad sales, circulation, and customer service managers and employees who are responsible for creating and maintaining customer relationships. Without knowledge of the day-to-day challenges and opportunities these key areas face, marketers are handicapped in their ability to create the plans and budgets required to achieve business goals. Walker (2000) argues that the development of marketing information systems raises legal and ethical questions because of their potential to harm individuals. Agarwal (2002) describes the guiding philosophy that all firms, especially those with high customer turnover, must get a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) project that somehow will be tempered with new wisdom. There is no doubt that customer information is the lifeblood of any business and hence, CRM initiatives. However, CRM needs better implementation if it were to contribute to the corporate renaissance. Waldfogel & George (2003) argue that when consumers share similar preferences, additional consumers will bring forth products that confer positive "preference externalities" on others. However, if distinct groups of consumers have substantially different preferences, the groups bring forth products with more appeal to themselves and less appeal to others. According to SFN (2003), the newspaper industry is highly competitive, and threats are changing all the time. They are uniquely dependent on inter-related revenue streams provided by sales and advertising.

### 5.2. SWOT Analysis

**Strengths**

- "The Daily Star" provides accurate information.
- The most crucial aspect of social activities.
- The customer "The Daily Star" receives positive response for publishing the advertisement.
- The page makeup is lovely.
- Additional supplements.
- The paper is based on the internet and is appealing to executives.

**Weakness**

- The newspaper is an expensive printed copy.
- An expensive distribution channel.
- Sometimes it's impossible to reach the intended important customers.
- Lack of participation on social media networks regularly.
- There is a dearth of news focused on youth and digitally literate users.

**Opportunities**

- Social media networks are extremely active.
- Bangladesh has a large number of internet users.
- Youth with more awareness.

**Threat**

- Taking and copying news without being detected.
- Many newspapers portray news in an unethical manner.
- Negative reporting.

- ❖ The news has no authority.
- ❖ Portals for international news.
- ❖ Various Facebook pages.

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## 6. TARGET MARKETS

In today's world, a newspaper is one of the most useful things a literate person can produce. It has now become a necessary part of his or her everyday routine. The demand for newspaper promotion has emerged as a result of the rapid change in communication methods. Human resources demand and supply must be balanced to keep current customers happy and bring in as many new ones as possible. The newspaper is a great resource for learning new information that may be used in everyday life, including decisions about one's family and community (Edell & Staelin, 1983). Although Bangla is the first language of Bangladesh, English is commonly spoken among the country's elite households.

The potential readership for English-language newspapers is growing quickly as more individuals learn the value of learning English. Foreign organizations are currently establishing functioning offices in this country. As a result, the foreigners who work for these institutions read English newspapers. "The Daily Star" is now Bangladesh's most widely circulated English daily newspaper. The advertising system will make it easier for a newspaper's target market to promote its style. The credibility of "The Daily Star" will allow it to attract and retain readers through an effective marketing plan that caters to the specific interests of its audience.

To capture the newspaper market in the impending challenging environment in the worldwide world, a long-term vision is required. Psychographic, demographic, and behavioral segmentation are the core focuses of The Daily Star.

### 6.1. Psychographic

Market segmentation is the practice of dividing your target audience into subsets defined by their shared characteristics, such as values, interests, and behaviors. Readers of The Daily Star tend to be well-off professionals who are fluent in English and like a contemporary way of life.

Table 4 Structural comparison of English newspapers

| Sections | The Daily Star | The Daily Observer | The Independent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Editorial | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| International | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Lifestyle | 13% | 10% | 0% |
| Youth-oriented | 13% | 13% | 13% |
| Fashion | 10% | 7% | 0% |
| Travel | 0% | 8% | 0% |

(Source: Compiled on the basis of the collection of data)

### 6.2. Demographic

The young and the successful are the primary targets of the Daily Star. Also, they have a substantial clientele among businesses. The Daily Star is the primary source of news about Bangladesh for many foreign officials.

### 6.3. Behavioral

Behavioral segmentation is a method of marketing that divides customers into subgroups based on their real purchasing habits (user status, user rate, benefits sought). It separates the market into consumer groups based on their product knowledge, attitude toward, use, or response. Because of their high utilization rate, the target corporations, and business groups.

Before the launch of "The Daily Star," and the daily publication of "The Daily Observer," competition might be an endless process. However, "The Daily Observer" will not be able to maintain its position as the most widely circulated English newspaper. The editorial board of "The Daily Star" could benefit from an intelligence promotion team to ensure the continued success of the English-language newspaper in Bangladesh.

## 7. COMPARATIVE ACCEPTANCE IN THE MARKET

The best-selling price of a newspaper depends on some factors which help to plan a perfect marketing strategy. These factors can be different types for English newspapers. Based on the factors, responses from different people are different. It was seen that the rate of English newspaper readers is high for The Daily Star newspaper, as was presented in Fig. 2. Different factors like, news presentation, animation, formal and easy-to-read English, etc. made the paper highly rated.

Table 4 shows the structural comparison of three selected English newspapers based on some selected factors like educational news, international news, lifestyle, youth-oriented, fashion, and travel news. The most circulated English paper is The Daily Star which would be a good association of factors.

## 8. MARKETING PROBLEM

As a whole, The Daily Star's marketing strategies have the following flaws, as identified in this report:

- The Daily Star's management is unaware of contemporary marketing concepts. Despite being the industry leader, it is discovered that it lacks a separate marketing department. Meanwhile, there is no research section to perform a consumer satisfaction study. According to the research, they do not have a product manager position in their organization. It demonstrates that their organizational structure has to be overhauled.
- For a product like a newspaper, the distribution route is a critical component. The Daily Star's distribution channel is discovered to be extremely long. It has a significant cost, which reduces the marketing system's efficiency. Furthermore, there

is no reliable distribution network in Bangladesh's rural areas, limiting the product's entire market presence.

- The Daily Star is more expensive than the typical Bangladeshi household budget. At the same time, it isn't benefiting from price leadership. The Daily Star, as the market leader, uses the going rate pricing approach, according to the report.
- According to the survey, The Daily Star allocates an excessive amount of space for advertisements (42% of total subject space) in contrast to overall news space (58%). It shows that the company's management is profit-driven. The increased reliance on advertising fosters corporate journalism, which is fraught with ethical issues in professional journalism.

In our newspaper sector, there is a growing tendency toward price competitiveness. It might pose a significant challenge for The Daily Star.

## 9. CONCLUSION

In Bangladesh, the Daily Star has done reasonably well. It should place a greater emphasis on customer orientation. On the other hand, the personnel are extremely dedicated to the organization and work hard for it; they are valuable assets to it. The Daily Star can concentrate on its newspaper's market strengths while simultaneously addressing its deficiencies to improve the product and uncover fresh opportunities in the newspaper sector. They can also mitigate market threats by using their strengths. They have strength in their solid brand image, as well as in their expertise and talents, which enable them to satisfy clients with a wide range of products and services. Bangladesh is a developing market with new firms springing up all the time, and The Daily Star can effectively present its products and services to these new businesses. Institutional marketing has always been significant. The way finance and marketing operations, as well as other associated company functions, are conducted determines the profitability and stability of any business. Marketing strategies, marketing mix, the 4Ps, and marketing segmentation must all be improved.

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