



Local News as Public Communication: The Importance of Small Hindi Newspapers in India

Dr. Mukesh Kumar*

*Assistant Professor, PG Department of Journalism and Mass Communication Maulana Mazharul Haque Arabic and Persian University, Patna (India) mukesh29kumar@gmail.com 9356856328

Citation: Dr. Mukesh Kumar, et.al (2024). Local News as Public Communication: The Importance of Small Hindi Newspapers in India, *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(5) 16084-16098
Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i5.11439

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

This study examines how small Hindi newspapers in India function as sites of local public communication by assessing the prominence and “place orientation” of their journalistic content. The paper conceptualizes small newspapers as localized communicative arenas where everyday civic concerns local governance, neighbourhood issues and accountability become visible and discussable for ordinary citizens. Using a mixed qualitative and quantitative content analysis design the research analyzes three key newspaper forms: news stories, editorials and letters to the editor across a large multi-state sample. Two Hindi dailies were selected from 19 states/union territories and a monthly stratified sample of 12 issues per newspaper (one year) was constructed following Stempel’s technique. Findings show that local news occupies a primary position in news stories: 55.80% of stories and 58.30% of total space are local, while national stories form 38.40% with international and regional content. Trade area analysis further indicates that a substantial share of local items originates from the newspaper’s own publication zone, supporting the claim that small Hindi newspapers intensify place based civic narration. The study argues that small Hindi newspapers sustain a locally rooted public sphere through news reporting.

Keywords: Small Hindi newspapers; Local public sphere; Content analysis; Localization.

Introduction

If the news is our window to the world, then local news is our window to the part of the world we actually inhabit. Local news tells us what is happening in our own backyards and streets. Local journalism is part of the social cement which binds communities together and, is widely and rightly, viewed as an essential element in the construction of a viable local identity. Local news and local journalism are important for communities and the broader information ecosystem. Local newspapers are the main media sources of information about local news and politics.

Local newspapers scrutinize local democracy intensively and also demonstrate the distinctive position of a newspaper in a community. Localization provides media access to everyone without restrictions. The local press writes about issues of the common man and is very influential. Local newspapers are primarily utilized to communicate with the public. People are more interested and, even more, affected by the news from their neighbourhood. Local media plays an efficient role in addressing important issues. Moreover, the local press has more credibility and is accountable to a region as these newspapers do the ground research effectively. Local newspapers are able to report and go beyond the propagated news criteria. These newspapers provide much better information about the consumption of locals. The local press works as a pivotal information source for mediators of culture and identity and as an arena for public discourse. People trust the local press more than the national press. The extent of the local press has widened because of the support of locals and interest shown by people.

Having established the indispensable importance of regional and local newspaper, we will now see its place in a globalized and digitized age of the Internet. The Internet has become phenomenal in the world and it has involved people in great numbers to build an easy and effective network of communication. It has also posed challenges for the print media and has forced them to expand the level and saturation of news among the public. Yet, the local press has benefited from it. The local press has overcome boundaries of regions and countries

through online editions. These newspapers also get to know about the taste of other consumers by evaluating feedback and online readership. Local press these days is also developing discussion forums and communities of bloggers to raise local issues. Although Print media hold its prestigious position, online media, newspapers and other medium are gaining momentum in today's on-your-finger tips-news era.

The voice of the local alternative newspaper is an important counterweight. It may be small but nowhere insignificant or dispensable. Alternative media, sometimes, uncovers scandals and raises broad issues which are subsequently pursued by mainstream media later on (Harcup, 1998). Local news now documents street-level civic problems, panchayat politics more copiously than ever before (Ninan, *Headlines from the Heartland*, 2007). If the local press is to continue to call itself 'local' in any meaningful way, it probably needs to work a bit harder to present and more genuinely reflect the views and interests of the local communities (Ross, 1998). Some people belonging to the press council believe that the local press is less important, but now local authorities are becoming more strategic, more focused, and more professional in the developing their relations with the local media (Harrison, 1998). A local newspaper has a positive role to play at the very least as it can bring to the fore the misgivings that have been allowed to happen by default (Hadwin, 1998). Local media is highly trusted and is considered better at understanding local concerns and lifestyles. Their ability to attract advertising revenue is boosted by their role as a key source for obtaining and distributing information and services; job searches; and product purchases. Moreover, in contrast to the proliferation of competing for news services, the local media have few competitors. Local press is intense scrutiny of the local democracy (Thomas, 1998).

Review of Literature

Local news is our window to the part of the world we actually inhabit. Local news tells us what's happening in our own backyards and streets (McNair, 1998). Local news and local journalism are important for communities and the wider information ecosystem (Waldman, 2011). Local newspapers are the main media sources of information about local news and politics (Hanssen, 2007; Host 1999; Johansson 1998; Karlsen 2009; McLeod 1999, Skogebo 2000). Local journalism is about local issues, local politics, and local people (Cole, 1998). Local newspapers are 'the main source of information about a local community and they view it as both their responsibility and strength to be able to disseminate such information (Wahl-Jorgensen, 1998). Local newspapers should offer independent and critical commentary on local issues, make local elites accountable, provide a forum for the expression of local views on issues concerning the community as well as 'holding the ring' in debates on significant issues arising within and beyond the community (Franklin, *Attacking the devil? local journalism and local newspapers in UK*, 1998). A regional newspaper is in a formidable and strong position to expose wrongdoings, underlying failures or an impending crisis. Furthermore, having highlighted a problem, it can also seek ways to become part of the solution (Hadwin, 1998). Mass communication is an important element in the process of civic and social development but such communication should be based on the local needs and must take care of the prevailing situation (Sinha A. K., *Communication and rural development: the Indian scene*, 1986).

Local press 'also demonstrates the unique positions of a newspaper within a community' (Hadwin, 1998). Everybody wants the news of and from where they live (Ninan, *Headlines from the Heartland*, 2007). This is because local stories sell newspapers and not national news (Bagdikian, 2014). The local newspapers often focus on solutions rather than limit themselves to identifying the problems. These characteristics are increasingly reflected through the lens of 'solutions journalism' (Wenzel, 2016). Newspapers manifest the ability to be a 'good neighbour' rather than an attack dog (McCombs Maxwell; Heider Don; Poindexter Paula M., 2005). Newspapers remain an integral part of the local media ecosystem and the only voice that informs and educates in a community (Abernathy, 2014). Local newspapers are 'the local content king' (Pilling R., 1998). In this scenario 'regional papers should exploit their unique selling proposition: 'Localness' (Aldridge, 2007) Local newspapers have tremendous brand strength and connections with their communities (Pilling R., 1998). The local press in the UK earned the title of being a local watchdog, because 'local journalism is about local issues and local politics and local people (Cole, 1998). The objective for local newspapers is to provide a forum for local debate (Franklin, *Local journalism and local media: making the local news*, 1998). The local press really does serve its local community and not only represents their interests but also represents that community for it' (Ross, 1998). Local issues need a local public sphere for which today local communication media are essential' (Aldridge, 2007), because 'The local press was providing an adequate forum for political debate and acting as an active independent player in the local polity (Jackson, 1971).

Local media content often explicitly emphasizes the significance of place, with outlets presenting themselves as champions of local opinion (Vilanilam, 2005). Barnett discusses that the existing economic conditions will mean many local newspapers will close (Barnett, 2010). Laurence and Gilbert in their paper 'Local Newspaper as a Diagnostic Aid for Psittacosis: A Case Report' notes that information through small newspapers helped diagnosed Psittacosis in Switzerland (Senn, Laurence ; Greub Gilbert, 2008).

Detailed coverage of the regional and local news is a significant factor that enabled the newspaper revolution in India (Jeffrey R., *India's Newspaper Revolution*, 2000). Local newspapers have been the most

important sites of the local public sphere (**Karlsen, 2009**). Local press encourages participation in communities (**Morrell, 2005**). Localisation, a phenomenon where newspapers have multiple editions with editorial content that is exclusively aimed at a district with some pages common to all editions (**Ninan, Headlines from the Heartland, 2007**). Local news exposure presents more positive community images and increases socio-political integration at the local level (**Zimmer, 1983**).

Regional and local newspapers were still conceived of as mediators of identity and belongingness to the place of the audiences (**Skogerbo Eli & Winsvold Marte, 2011**). Skogerbo and Winsvold explain that the local newspaper coverage of presidents is more positive than the national coverage (**Eshbaugh-Soha, Matthew & Peake, Jeffrey, S., 2006**). More local exposure can be found in Punjab Kesari which 'enmeshed itself with its locality and its readers' (**Jeffrey, Punjabi: the subliminal charge, 1997**). According to the owner of newspaper "Enadu" Ramoji Rao 'the local news was the real news' (**Jeffrey R., India's Newspaper Revolution, 2000**). Mondak highlighted that Local newspapers may not exert a unique influence with its information but it also does not suggest that local media is irrelevant (**Mondak, 1995**). The localization democratized media access and abolished gatekeepers (**Ninan, Headlines from the Heartland, 2007**). The strength of the local press in northern Europe has been explained by its role in small self-governed municipalities and this medium is the core communication channel in this region (**Host, 1999**). Dan establishes that 'local newspaper fills the gap' (**Dan, 1986**). Neyazi stressed that the process of localization has greatly helped Indian language newspapers to achieve success and retain their advertisement revenue in the face of competition from television news channels and also localization (**Neyazi T. A., 2010**). In this rapidly changing world, there is still a place for localism: local issues become more important in a globalized world, making local newspapers all the more important (**Scase, 2005**). Localization of consumption involves talking news to the grassroots by including local happenings (**Neyazi, 2011**). Localization has played a very important role in the growth and expansion of Hindi Newspapers (**Ninan, Headlines from the Heartland, 2007**), but corruption and biased reporting always existed in the media and they are not byproducts of localization (**Neyazi, 2011**). Local press is influential as the local press talks about issues which affect people of a locality day in, day out (**Harrison, Local government public relations and the local press, 1998**). The local press provides to 'ordinary people' the news and information that is directly useful to them in their daily lives (**Atton, 1998**). The local press or the alternative media is of great importance for the process of change in social values to continue (**Mathes, Rainer & Pfetsch, Barbara, 1991**). 'The public' trusts its local press more than any other media because these newspapers are both more accountable to the readers and also closer to their interests (**Ross, 1998**). As the local newspapers have their central social and cultural roles to fulfil, they are the main media information sources about events and issues in a locality (**Johansson, 1998**).

Local media may act as watchdogs (**Murphy D., 1976**), the local press has earned the title of the 'local watchdog'. The prospects for local newspapers to provide a forum for local debate, for the journalist to inform of that debate and provide a stimulus for a healthy local democracy (**Franklin, Local journalism and local media: making the local news, 1998**). The role that local news media plays in a variety of communities across the country can also be highlighted with the emergence of news deserts – communities devoid of fresh local news and information (**Abernathy P. 2017**).

Localization has democratized media access and abolished conventional gatekeepers (**Ninan, Headlines from the Heartland, 2007**). 'Local papers write about what people are talking about, they make it newsworthy. Local papers regard normal things that happen to a lot of ordinary people as a news' (**Fry, 2004**). The purpose of a provincial paper is not only to present and project the news objectively and imaginatively, but to empower its readers so that they can express themselves more effectively, canalizing their aspirations, articulating their demands, and helping them to improve their community (**Hadwin, 1998**). The local press 'traditional values which focus on the ultra-local' (**Pilling, Local journalist and the local press: waking up to change?, 1998**).

Local journalism does not have a monopoly on providing local information. People have other sources, but thus far local newspapers, in many places, still represent the most widely used sources and is the most important source for independently produced information about local public affairs (**Nielsen, 2015**).

Research suggests that people expect local media to do seven things:

- i. Supply relatively diverse, reliable, timely, and unbiased background information on community affairs
- ii. Foster social integration by helping people navigate their local community
- iii. Provide inspiration by helping people navigate their local community
- iv. Ensure the representation of different groups in a community
- v. Increase local intra-community understanding between different groups
- vi. Maintain a form of local memory or chronicle of local affairs and
- vii. Contribute to social cohesion as well as a sense of belonging to the locale (**Costera, 2010**).

The local news has multiple functions including conveying information, giving voice to the community, campaigning, and investigating along with fostering civic and democratic engagement (**Barnett, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2009**). The crucial functions of local news are a sense of 'community identity' (**McLeod, J. M.; Daily, Guo. M.; I Eveland, W. P.; Bayer, J.; Yang, S.; Wang, H., 1996**), 'solidifying community norms and standards' (Meijer I. C., 2010), communicating global event (**Hess, Kristy; Waller, Lisa, 2014**), fostering an attachment to a place (Buchanan, 2014) and performing an important integration role for newcomers (**Cheng, 2005**).

There are no replacements for the local media. Local media can be champions of their own localities; drawing the attention of national governments. Local media are in quite a precarious position because they can rarely rely on news agencies or national news institutions to provide them with stories of immediate relevance to their local communities. **(Barnett, Journalism, Democracy and the Public Interest: Rethinking Media Pluralism for the Digital Age, 2009).**

Local journalism is also seen as indispensably important. It provides information about the local public affairs **(Nielsen, 2015).**

Local media to provide accurate and unbiased regular local news coverage on a timely basis and to serve as a watchdog holding local elites to account **(Poindexter, Paula M.; Don, Heider and Maxwell, McCombs, 2006).** They expect 'local journalism to emphasize solutions as well as problems' **(Heider, Don; Maxwell, McCombs and Poindexter, Paula M., 2005).** Local journalism is genuinely informative **(Shakar, 2009).** Local journalism significantly increases people's civic and political engagement **(Scheufele, Dietram A.; Shanahan, James and Kim, Sei-Hill, 2002).** Local news has been found to influence civic engagement more broadly **(Shah, Dhavan V.; McLeod, Jack M.; Yoon, So-Hyang, 2001).** A local newspaper can be termed as a 'the printed dairy of the home town' **(Nielsen, 2015).**

Local community papers help people define and maintain neighbourhood identities in large metropolitan areas **(Janowitz, 1952)** and connect and identify with each other in sparsely populated rural areas **(Kirkpatrick, 1995).** Local news helps cultivate consensus, coherence, and stability within a community **(Janowitz, 1952);** Local news media helps create 'communicatively integrated communities' **(Friedland, 2001).** Local journalism helps generate higher levels of civic and political engagement. Local journalism is an important source of information, a part of civic and political engagement and is something that ties communities together **(Nielsen, 2015).** Local journalism is essential to the well-being and functioning of local democracies **(Firmstone, J.; Coleman, S., 2014).**

Theoretical perspective

Habermas's Public Sphere Theory

Habermas's Public Sphere Theory explains how democratic life depends on communicative spaces where citizens exchange views, debate public problems and form public opinion through reasoned discussion **(Habermas, 1989).** In the context of small Hindi newspapers, the theory helps conceptualize local journalism as a local public sphere a communicative arena where every day civic concerns (local governance, panchayat politics, neighbourhood issues and accountability) are made visible, discussable and politically actionable for ordinary citizens. Public Sphere Theory allows us to read this as a functional differentiation within the communicative ecology of newspapers: news stories circulate immediate civic information rooted in place, while editorials and letters may operate as higher level opinion and agenda spaces where national frames more often structure debate.

Research Methodology

Objective of the Research

1. To study News Stories, Editorials, Letter to the Editor originating from the trade area of publication in number and space(cm²)
2. To determine whether local issues are raised in Small Hindi Newspapers as compared to International, National, Regional and Local in News stories, Editorials, Letter to the Editor

Sampling

Considering the objectives of this study, two Hindi newspapers each from 19 States (including 3 union territories) were selected for the study, amounting to a total of 38 newspapers. The selected 19 states are the only states which show a significant presence of small newspapers in the Hindi language. The sampling of newspaper issues (edition dates) was undertaken based on the sampling technique devised by Stempel (1952): a monthly stratified sample of 12 issues (one issue per month) for a single newspaper for one entire year was taken **(Stempel, 1952).**

Procedure for selection of sample: -

For selection purposes and to rule out the element of bias, the states were first arranged in an alphabetical order as shown in column one. Thereafter, two daily newspapers each with the largest circulation in respective states were chosen. These newspapers were arranged in a chronological order according to the unique numbers assigned to each one of them, as shown in column two and three of the chart.

Andhra Pradesh	1.SWATANTRAVAARTHA(Nizamavad)	2.SWATANTRA VAARTHA(Vishakhapatnam)
Assam	3.DAINIK PURVODAY(Guwahati)	4. DAINIK PURVODAY (Jorhat)
Bihar	5.BIHAR KI HAKIKAT(Muzaffarpur)	6.MONA TIMES(Muzaffarpur)
Chandigarh	7.PAHALI KHABAR(Chandigarh)	8.JANSATTA(Chandigarh)

Chhattisgarh	9.SAMACHARKHOJ(Raipur)	10.CHHATTISGARH SWAR(Raipur)
Daman and Diu	11. SAVERA INDIA TIMES (daman)	12. ASALI AZADI(Daman)
Delhi	13.RASHTRAWADI TIMES(Delhi)	14. ISHAN TIMES(Delhi)
Gujarat	15.JANABHUMI HERALD(Surat)	16.JAN HITAISHI(Baroda)
Haryana	17.BABYYIAN TIMES (Rohtak)	18.TYAGI TIMES(Sonipat)
Himachal Pradesh	19.DAINIK BHASKAR(Shimla)	20.JAGRAN DAINIK (kangra)
Jharkhand	21.CHAMAKTHA AIYNA(Jamshedpur)	22.APNA INDIA (Ranchi)
Jammu and Kashmir	23.DAINIK JAGRAN (Jammu)	24.NORTHEN TIMES(Jammu)
Maharashtra	25.DOPA HAR KA SAMANA(Mumbai)	26.TARUN MITRA(Thane)
Madhya Pradesh	27.DAINIK ALOK(Bhopal)	28.KRITI KRANTI(Bhopal)
Punjab	29.DAINIK JAGRAN(Patiala)	30.DAINIK JAGRAN(Bathinda)
Rajasthan	31.ASIAN STANDARD(Jaipur)	32.HELLO TIMES(Jodhpur)
Uttar Pradesh	33.CITY TIMES(Lucknow)	34.NEWS READER(Lucknow)
Uttarakhand	35.RUDRA TIMES(Haridwar)	36.KUMAON TIMES(Haldwani)
West Bengal	37.HIND SAMWAD(Asansol)	38.RAJASTHAN PATRIKA(Kolkata)

Table 1: Newspapers sample arranges chronologically and state-wise

Content Analysis

Content analysis is a “popular research method in social sciences, primarily used in analyzing written, verbal, or visual messages in any channel of communication”(Cole, 1988). It is generally defined as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use” (Krippendorff K. , 2013). As a research method, it is a “systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying phenomena”(Krippendorff K. , 1980).

In this present research paper, study content is available in the following forms for content analysis.

- A. News stories (Two top stories from each newspaper selected for the sample will be selected)
- B. Editorials (First two editorials from each newspaper selected for the sample will be selected of the sample)
- C. Letters to the editor (First two Letters to the editor from each newspaper selected for the sample will be selected).

For this research following categories were studied for the content of the selected newspapers:

- A. International
- B. National
- C. Regional
- D. Local

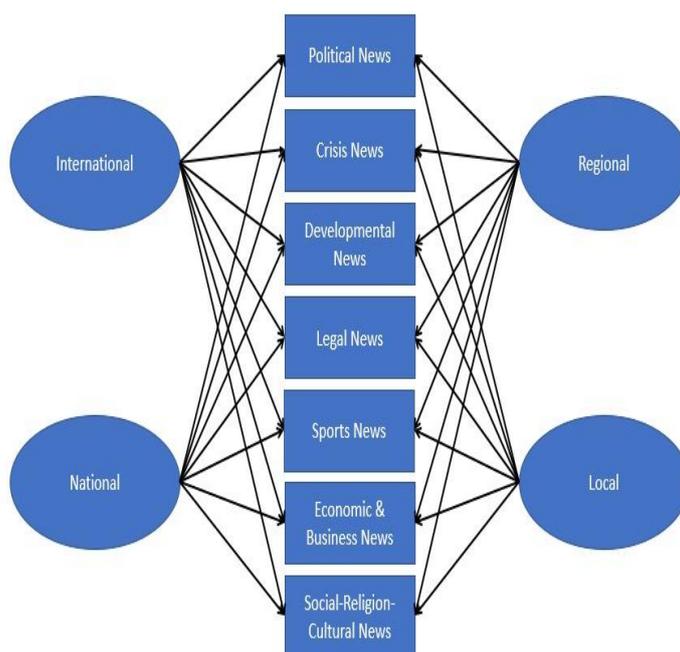


Figure 1: Design of Content Analysis Plan: Geographical Region and News Area

Scheme of Analysis

Qualitative and Quantitative content Analysis of all forms of content were conducted as per the scheme enumerated henceforth: News stories, Editorials and letters to the editor were analyzed as under.

For the qualitative content analysis, the following factors were taken into consideration depending upon the nature of the content of the sample News. For example, in case of news stories the sample was analyzed on the basis of nine ingredients properties as listed below. Similarly, the Editorials were analyzed based on five ingredient properties and in case of Letters to the Editor, they were analyzed based on three ingredients properties. All the properties are presented in a tabular form below as shown below.

NEWS STORIES	EDITORIALS	LETTER TO THE EDITOR
Who	What	What
What	How	Clarity
Where	Why	Continuity
When	Clarity	
How	Continuity	
Why		
Source		
Clarity		
Continuity		

Table2: Qualitative analysis unit

For the quantitative content analysis, the following factors were taken into consideration: The three major Samples are to be analyzed on the basis of under mention as contents in the sample.

- I.Measuring the data text in cm square.
- II.Measure the picture images in cm square.
- III.Determining the style of Headline.
- IV.To Analysis of news stories on following basis:
 - i.With/ or without picture.
 - ii.Whether or not the Inverted Pyramid style of writing was used or not.
 - iii.Whether or not the story is carried the byline of the reporter.

Since the three types of content are vastly distinctive forms of journalistic writings, the parameters for studying them were determined as per their unique style of writing as given listed below:

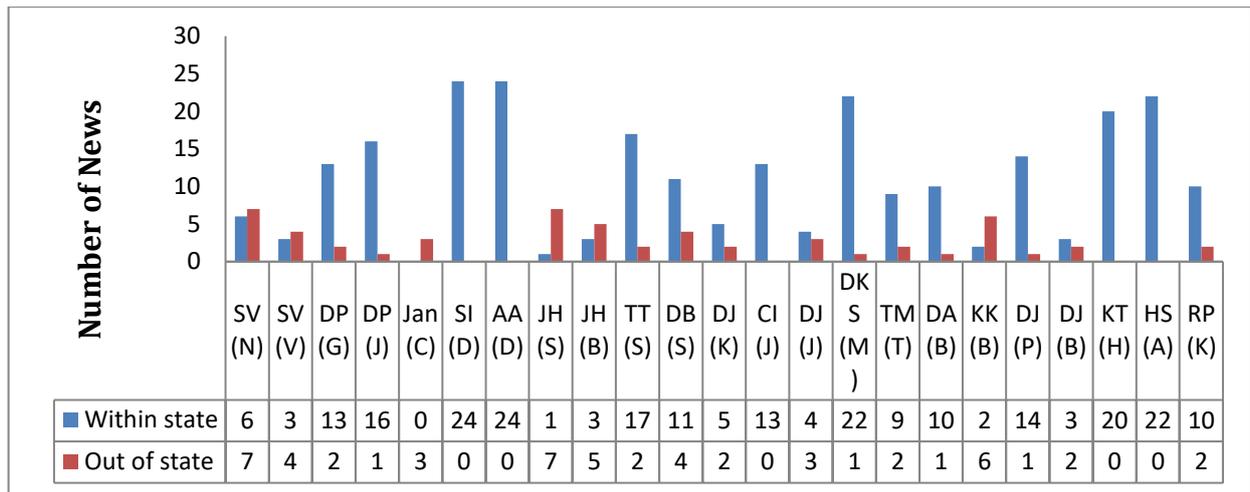
NEWS STORIES	EDITORIALS	LETTER TO THE EDITOR
Space (cm ²)	Space (cm ²)	Space (cm ²)
With or without Picture	Font Size of Headline	Font Size of Headline
Picture & News Space (cm ²)	Style of Headline	Style of Headline
News with or without by Line		
Inverted Pyramid style		
Style of Headline		

Table3: Quantitative Analysis Unit Finding

TO STUDY NEWS STORIES ORIGINATING FROM THE TRADE AREA OF PUBLICATION IN NUMBER

In this section researcher analyzed the number of news stories of Local geographical region. They are originating from the trade area of publication of the newspaper or out of the trade area of publication. 308 news stories are related to local area with 252 news stories originating from the trade area of publication and other 56 are related to local region but not published from the trade area of the newspaper.

Savera India Times (Daman) and Asali Azadi (Daman) have published 24 Local news stories originating from the trade area of publication of the newspaper. Dopahar ka Samana (Mumbai) and Hind Samwad (Asansol) published 22 news stories originating from the trade area of publication. Followed by 20 news stories Kumaon Times (Haldwani), 17 news stories Tyagi Times (Sonipat), 16 news stories Dainik Purvoday (Jorhat).

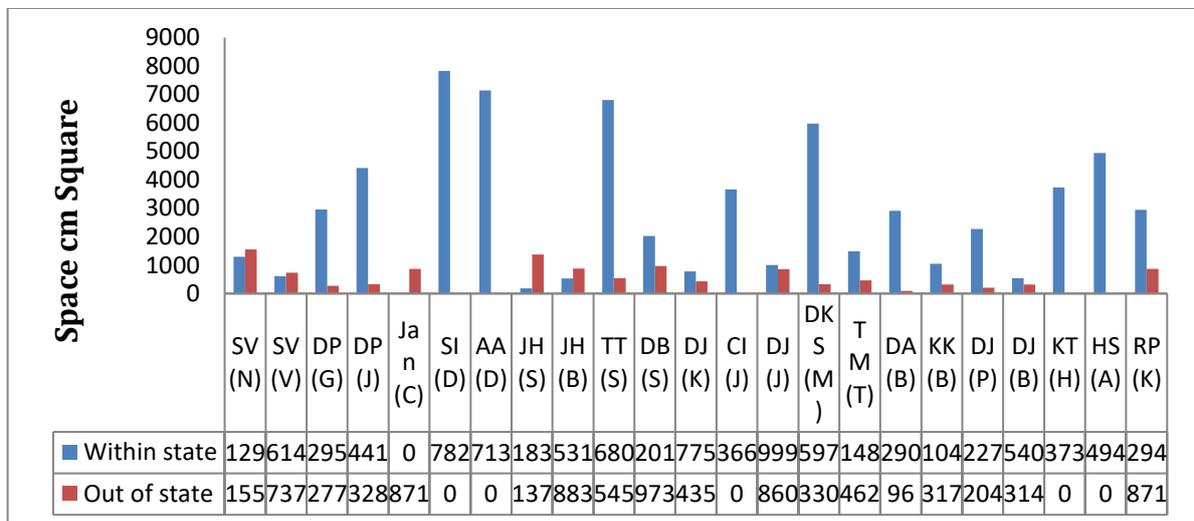


Graph 1: Local news stories and originating from the trade area of Newspaper

TO STUDY NEWS STORIES ORIGINATING FROM THE TRADE AREA OF PUBLICATION IN SPACE (cm²)

In this section researcher analyzed the space given of news stories of Local geographical region. They are originating from the trade area of publication of the newspaper or out of the trade area of publication. 76493 cm² space given in news stories are related to local area with 65064 cm² space given to news stories originating from the trade area of publication and other 11429 cm² space given to local region but not published from the trade area of the newspaper.

Maximum 7820 cm² space given in Saveria India Times (Daman) for local region news stories with originating from the trade area of publication of newspaper. Followed by Asli Azadi (7137 cm²), Tyagi Times (6805 cm²), Dopahar Ka samana (5973 cm²), Hind Samwad (4945 cm²), Dainik Purvodday, Jorhat (4414 cm²), Kumaon Times (3734 cm²), Chamaktha Aiyana (3661 cm²), Dainik Purvodday (2959 cm²) and Dainik Alok (2908 cm²).



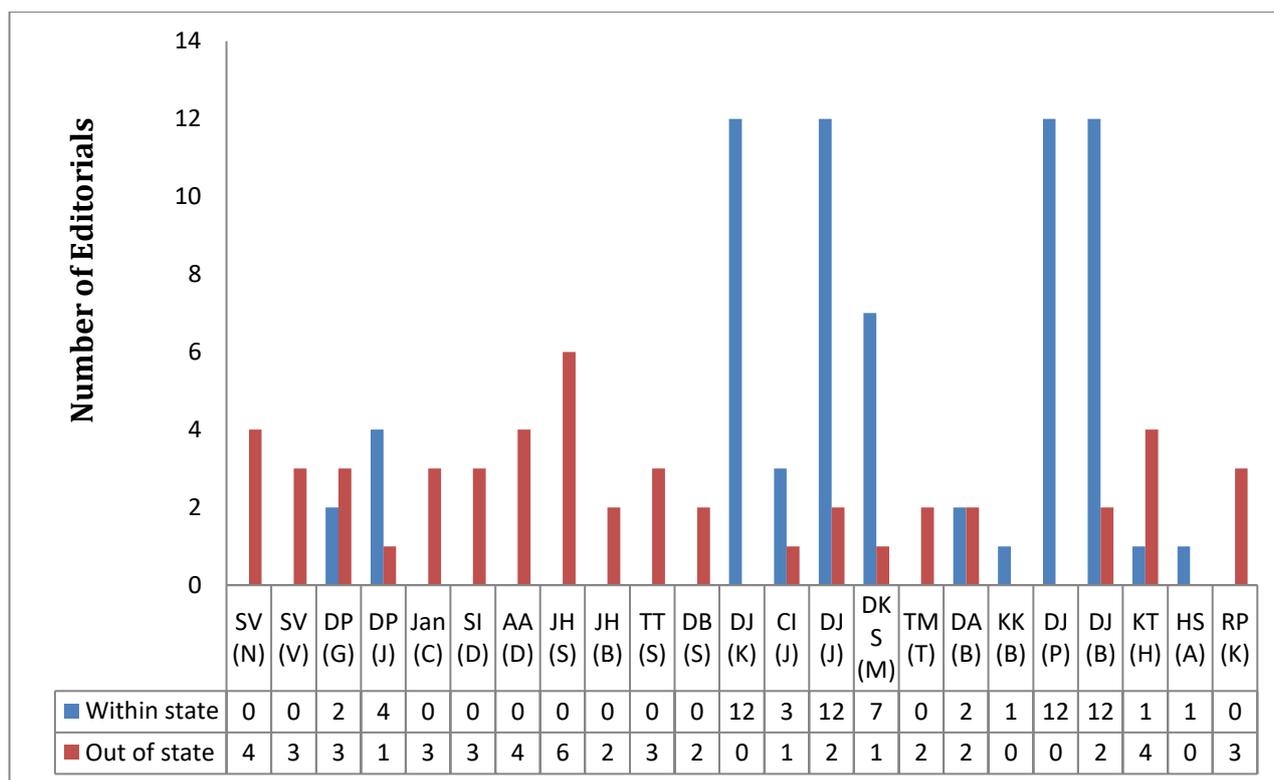
Graph 2: Local news stories space and originating from the trade area of newspaper

TO STUDY EDITORIALS ORIGINATING FROM THE TRADE AREA OF PUBLICATION IN NUMBER

In this section researcher analyzed the number of editorials of Local geographical region. They are originating from the trade area of publication of the newspaper or out of the trade area of publication. 120 editorials are related to local area with 69 editorials originating from the trade area of publication and other 51 are related to local region but not published from the trade area of the newspaper.

Dainik Jagran (Kangra), Dainik Jagran (Jammu), Dainik Jagran (Patiala), Dainik Jagran (Bathinda) published 12 Local editorials originating from the trade area of publication of the newspaper. Followed by 7 editorials Dopahar ka Samna (Mumbai), 4 editorials Dainik Purvodday (Jorhat) and 3 editorials Chamaktha Aiyana (Jamshedpur).

11 newspapers have not published editorials related to originating from the trade area of publication of newspaper.

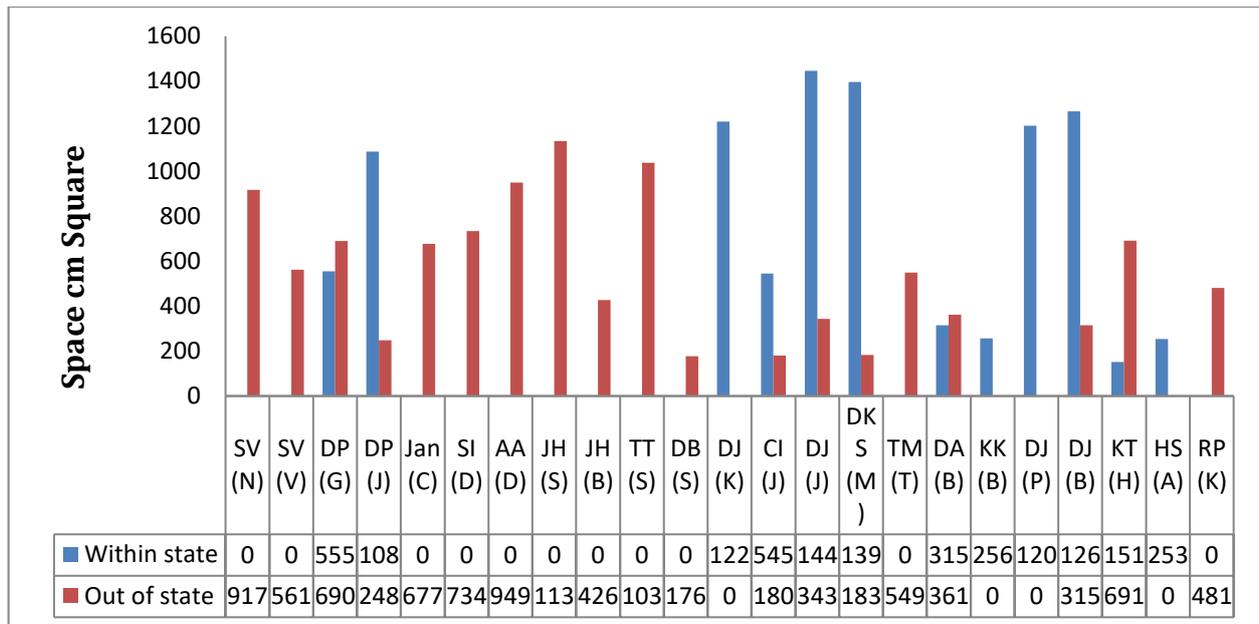


Graph 3: Local editorials number and originating from the trade area of newspaper

TO STUDY EDITORIALS ORIGINATING FROM THE TRADE AREA OF PUBLICATION IN SPACE (cm²)

In this section researcher analyzed the space of editorials of Local geographical region. They are originating from the trade area of publication of the newspaper or out of the trade area of publication. 20356 cm² space given to editorials related to local area with 9694 cm² editorials originating from the trade area of publication and other 10662 cm² space and related editorials of local region but not published from the trade area of the newspaper.

Maximum space 1446 cm² given by Dainik Jagran (Jammu) in editorials are originating from the trade area of publication of newspaper. Followed by Dopahar ka Samna (1397 cm²), Dainik Jagran (Bathinda), Dainik Jagran (Kangra), Dainik Purvoday (Jorhat).

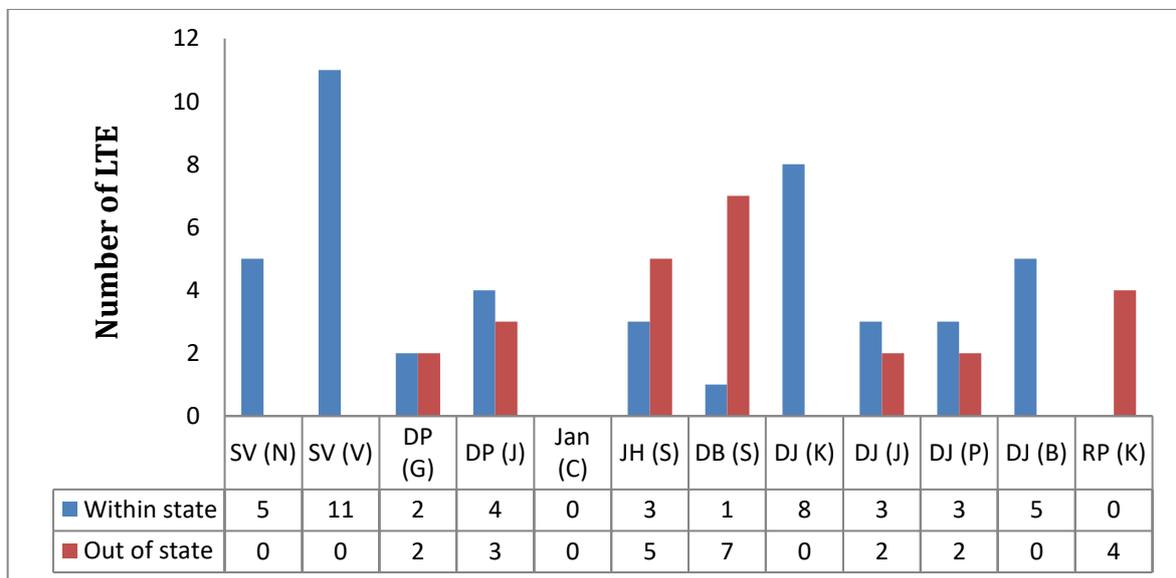


Graph 4: Local editorials space and originating from the trade area of newspaper

TO STUDY LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ORIGINATING FROM THE TRADE AREA OF PUBLICATION IN NUMBER

In this section researcher analyzed the number of letters to the editor of Local geographical region. They are originating from the trade area of publication of the newspaper or out of the trade area of publication. 70 LTE are related to local area with 45 LTE originating from the trade area of publication and other 25 LTE are related to local region but not published from the trade area of the newspaper.

Maximum number of LTE (11) originating from the trade area of publication of newspaper in Swatantra Vaartha (Vishakhapatnam) followed by Dainik Jagran, Kangra (8), Swatantra Vaartha, Nizamavad (5) and Dainik Purvoday, Jorhat (4).

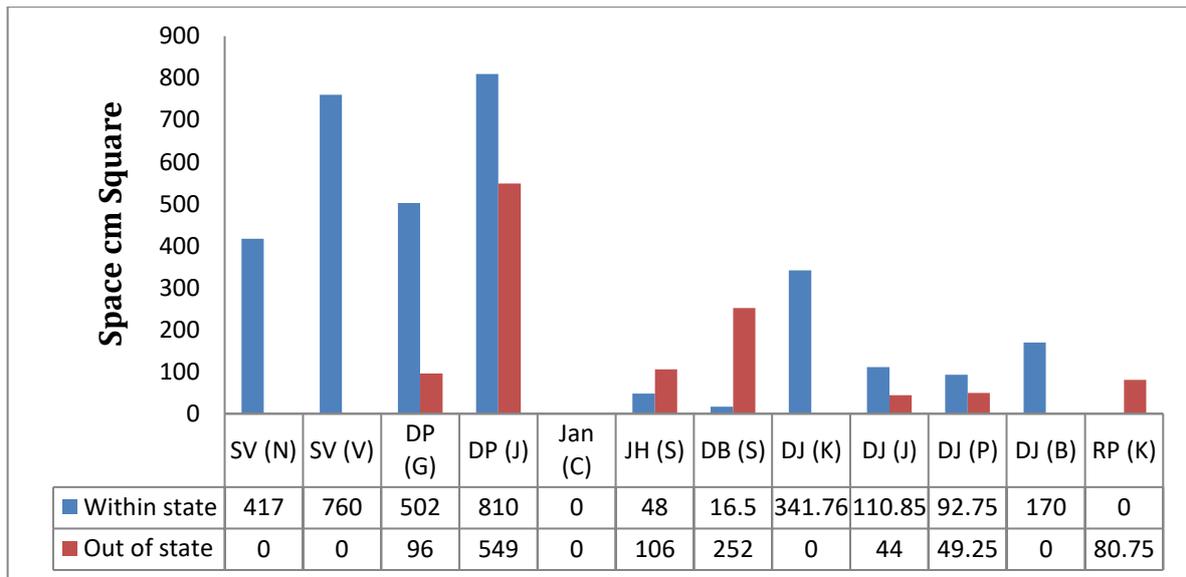


Graph 5: Local LTE number and Originating from the trade area of newspaper

TO STUDYLETTERS TO THE EDITOR ORIGINATING FROM THE TRADE AREA OF PUBLICATION IN SPACE (cm²)

In this section researcher analyzed the space of LTE of Local geographical region. They are originating from the trade area of publication of the newspaper or out of the trade area of publication. 4446 cm² are related to local area with 3269 cm² space given LTE originating from the trade area of publication and other 1177cm² spaces are related to local region but not published from the trade area of the newspaper.

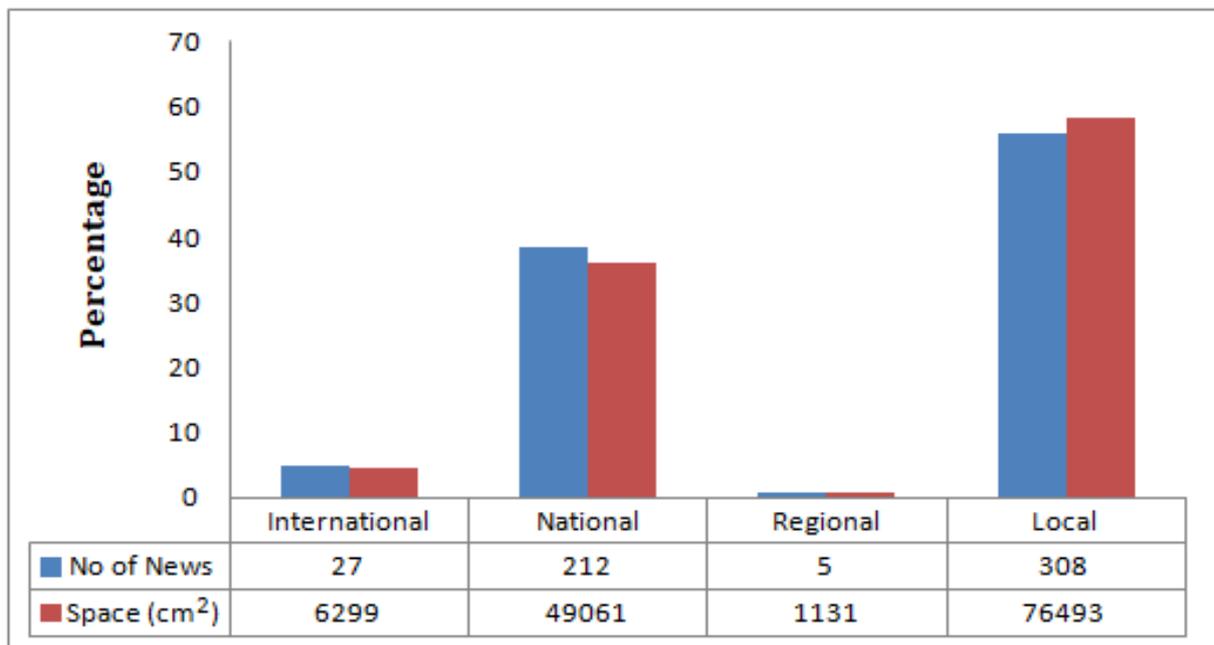
Maximum space 810cm² given by Dainik Purvoday (Jorhat) in letter to the editor is originating from the trade area of publication of newspaper. Followed by Swatantra Vaartha (760 cm²), Dainik Purvoday, Guwahati (502 cm²) and Swatantra Vaarta, Nizamavad (417 cm²).



Graph 6: Local LTE space and Originating from the trade area of newspaper

TO DETERMINE WHETHER LOCAL ISSUES ARE RAISED IN SMALL HINDI NEWSPAPERS AS COMPARED TO INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL IN NEWS STORIES.

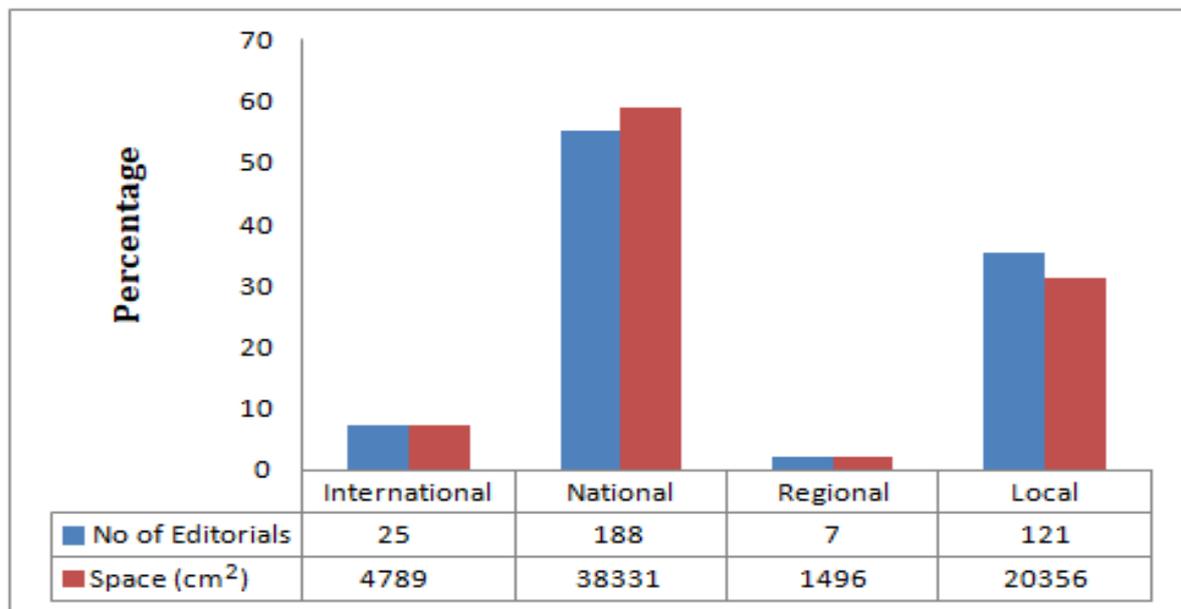
55.80% of the News stories were related to local news stories with 58.30% space. 38.40% of the news stories were related to National news with 36.20% space. This is followed by International (4.70%) and Regional (0.80%). This graph shows that Regional and International news stories given less importance in small Hindi Newspapers.



Graph 7: News stories and Geographical region

TO DETERMINE WHETHER LOCAL ISSUES ARE RAISED IN SMALL HINDI NEWSPAPERS AS COMPARED TO INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL IN EDITORIALS.

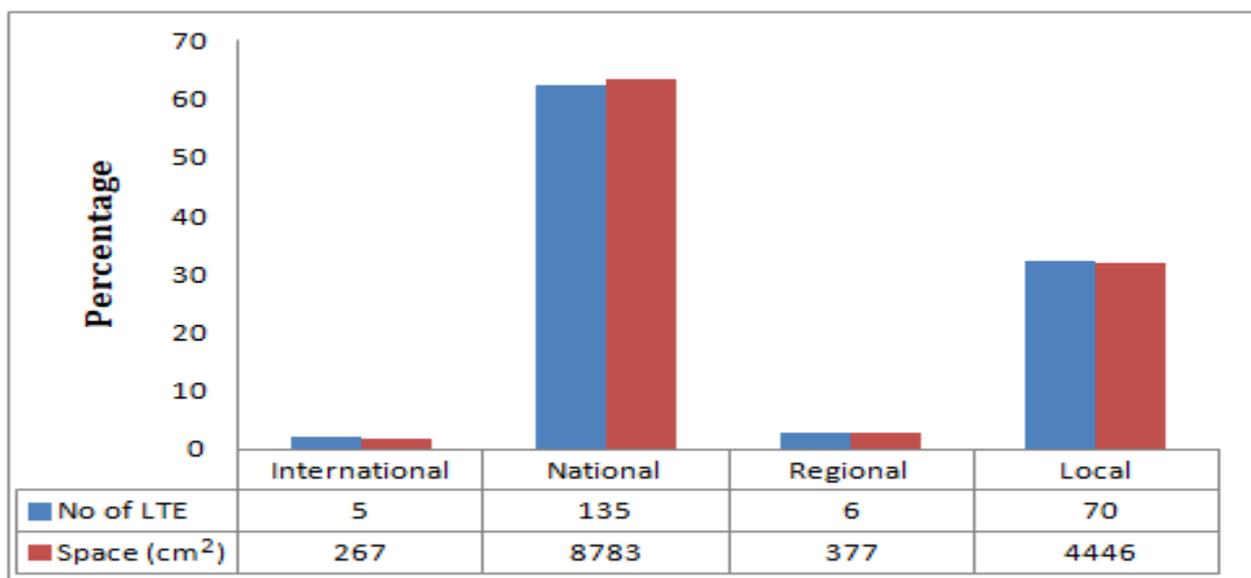
55.12% of the Editorials were related to National region with 59% space. 35.50% of the editorials were related to Local region with 31.30% space. This is followed by International (7.38%) and Regional (2.32%). This graph shows that Regional and International region editorials given less importance in small Hindi newspapers.



Graph 8: Editorials and Geographical region

TO DETERMINE WHETHER LOCAL ISSUES ARE RAISED IN SMALL HINDI NEWSPAPERS AS COMPARED TO INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL IN LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

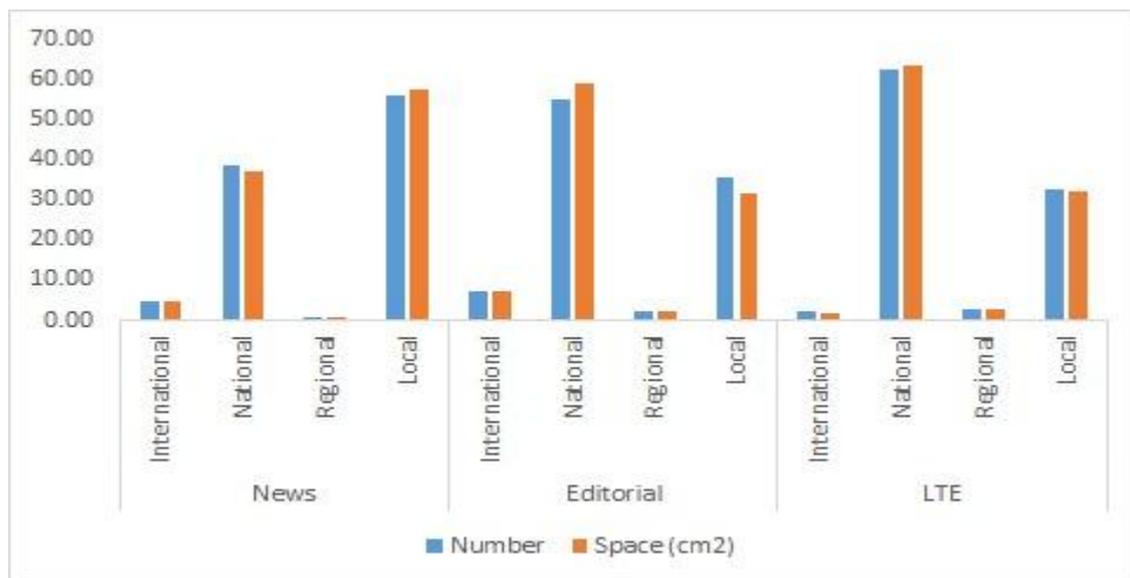
62.50% of the LTE were related to National area with 63.30% space. 32.40 % of the LTE were related to Local area with 32.06% space. This is followed by Regional (6%) and International (5%). This graph show that Regional and International LTE given less importance in small Hindi newspapers.



Graph 9: LTE and Geographical region

Discussion

The printed newspapers have a high status among local media. Newspapers are the most important media in the local public sphere. The printed newspapers definitely have the highest status, everybody can relate or establish connections with newsprint that the readers of the paper version are automatically privileged with a higher status than the readers of the online version, the printed newspaper is the carrier of the local public sphere (Skogerbo, Eli. & Winsvold, Marte., 2011). "Local newspapers have and are able to establish tremendous connections with their communities" (Pilling, 1998).



Graph 10: Representation of Geographical region in small Hindi Newspapers

In this research about the small Hindi newspapers in India, it was found that 55.80% of the News stories were local or regional; occupying 58.30% space. Whilst, 38.40 % of the news stories pertaining to National occurrences which occupied 36.20% space. This trend was followed by news stories from International (4.70%) and (overall) Regional (0.80%) spheres.

55.12% of the Editorials were about the National occurrences that occupied 59% of the editorial space. 35.50 % of the editorials were about the Local region occupying 31.30% space. This arrangement was followed by International (7.38%) and Regional (2.32%) news stories respectively.

62.50% of the LTE were related to the National area covering 63.30% space. 32.40 % of the LTE was about the Local area with 32.06% space. This plan was by Regional (6%) and International (5%) respectively.

Looking at this trend, we can surmise that local content in small Hindi newspapers occupies a primary status whereas, in Editorials and Letters to the Editors, it occupies a secondary status.

On the basis of this research, we can also infer that the regional content is on the verge of disappearance as it is presented in highly disguised formats in news, editorials, and letters to the editors. The American Playwright, Arthur Miller, once remarked, that, 'A good newspaper, I suppose, is a nation talking to itself'. However, in contemporary times, the sea of multi-editions is rendering the regional news and regional newspapers as worthless and not significant enough. It has also been observed that the reader can still receive news from the place where a version is published from but is not able to receive the news from nearby districts or regions. This shows how regional content is gradually disappearing from multi-edition newspapers. The following examples also throw light on the way small Hindi newspapers render information about the public sphere and its discourse.

Localization has given a voice to those who, until recently, were unable to effectively raise concerns in the public arena and remained at the margin of the mainstream discourse. It has also helped marginalized groups to creatively mediate with the institutions of democracy that have been created at the local level (Neyazi, 2011). The expansion and reinvention of the public sphere in the Hindi belt make it both inclusive and more commercially driven. Newspaper penetration has increased, and marketers have quickly embraced the transition. The print has transitioned from being an elite medium to a mass medium and ordinary people living in small towns and villages have become both consumers as well as newsmakers as the newspapers have localized. This has expanded the public sphere which has further catalyzed in significant ways, the explosion of local news (Ninan, 2007). Tanabe argues that "what may be happening in contemporary India in the creation of a 'Vernacular Democracy' is due to people's creative mediation of embodied cultural resources and ideas and institutions of democracy" (Tanabe, 2007).

The localization of news coverage by print media has "expanded the existing public sphere at the district level, and has reinvented it unconsciously through its segmentation of editions. It has reshaped the reader's sense and added a new dimension to his identity" (Ninan, 2007). The expansion of Hindi newspapers and the vernacularisation of the public sphere have significantly influenced politics and society at the local level. Growing newspaper circulation in north India has been accompanied by increasing mobilization of the marginalized groups.

Local news pages reflected the vibrancy of grassroots politics as well as the percolation of party politics. As the urban and rural local self-governance took root in India, the local communities became more vocal and more conscious of their rights. Similarly, as "local commercial interests come forward to make publications viable that could engender such a space, the emergence of a local public sphere has become inevitable" (Ninan,

2007). This is primarily being done by small newspapers by including the issues and concerns of a locality.

Reference

1. Abernathy, P. M. (2014). *Saving community journalism: the path to profitability*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press.
2. Aldridge, M. (2007). *Understanding the Local media*. Berkshire: Open University Press.
3. Atton, C. (1998). Football fanzines and local news. In B. Franklin, *Local media and local journalism: making the local news* (pp. 280-289). London: Routledge.
4. Barnett, S. (2009, September). *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*. Retrieved January 12, 2019, from Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism web site: <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2017-11/Journalism%20Democracy%20%26%20Public%20Interest.pdf>
5. Barnett, S. (2010). Minding the regional news gap. *British journalism review Vol.- 21*, 13-18.
6. Cheng, L. H. (2005). Constructing a transitional, multilocal sense of belonging: an analysis of Ming Pao. *Journal of communication inquiry, No-2*, 141-159.
7. Cole, F. L. (1988). Content analysis: process and application. *Clinical Nurse Specialist, 2(1)*, 53-57.
8. Cole, P. (1998). Educating and training local journalists. In B. Franklin, *Local Journalism and local media: Making the local news* (pp. 73-82). London: Routledge.
9. Costera, M. I. (2010). Democratizing journalism? realizing the citizen's agenda for local news media. *Journalism Studies, 327-342*.
10. Dan, C. (1986). *Media decentralization: the case of Israel's local newspapers*. New Brunswick: Oxford University Press.
11. Ekstrom, Mats; Johansson, Bengt and Larsson, Larsake. (2006). Journalism and local politics. *Journalism Studies 7 (2)*, 292-311.
12. Eshbaugh-Soha, Matthew; Peake, Jeffrey S. (2006). The contemporary presidency: Going local to reform social security. *Presidential Studies Quarterly, Vol-36, No-04*, 689-704.
13. Firmstone, J.; Coleman, S. (2014). The changing role of the local news media in enabling citizens to engage in local democracies. *Journalism Practice 8(5)*, 152-168.
14. Franklin, B. (1998). *Local Journalism and local media: Making the local news*. London: Routledge.
15. Friedland, L. A. (2001). Communication, community and democracy toward a theory of the communicatively integrated community. *Communication Research, 358-391*.
16. Fry, D. (2004, June 22). www.poynter.org. Retrieved May 11, 2019, from poynter.org: <https://www.poynter.org/archive/2004/what-makes-local-news-really-local/>
17. Jackson, I. (1971). *The Provincial Press and the Community*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
18. Janowitz, M. (1952). *The community press in an urban setting*. Glencoe: Free press.
19. Jeffrey, R. (2000). *India's newspaper revolution*. London: Hurst & Company.
20. Jeffrey, R. (1997, March 1-14). Punjabi: the subliminal charge. *Economic and political weekly Vol-32, No-9/10*, pp. 443-445.
21. Habermas, J. (1989). *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society* (T. Burger & F. Lawrence, Trans.). MIT Press. (Original work published 1962)
22. Hadwin, S. (1998). Real readers, real news: the work of a local newspaper editor. In B. Franklin, *Local journalism and local media: making the local news* (pp. 140-149). London: Routledge.
23. Harcup, T. (1998). The alternative local press. In B. Franklin, *Local Journalism and local media: Making the local news* (pp. 129-139). London: Routledge.
24. Harrison, S. (1998). Local government public relations and the local press. In B. Franklin, *Local journalism and local media: making the local news* (pp. 175- 188). London: Routledge.
25. Hess, Kristy; Waller, Lisa. (2014). Geo-social journalism. *Journalism Practice, 121-136*.
26. Heider, Don; Maxwell, McCombs and Poindexter, Paula M. (2005). What public expects of local news: views on public and traditional journalism. *Journalism and mass communication quarterly, 952-967*.
27. Host, S. (1999). Newspaper growth in the television era. *The Norwegian experience, Nordicom Review 20(1)*, 107-128.
28. Mathes, Rainer & Pfetsch, Barbara. (1991). The role of the alternative press in the agenda-building process: spill-over effects and media opinion leaders. *European journal of communication Vol.-6*, 33-62.
29. McCombs Maxwell; Heider Don; Poindexter Paula M. (2005). What the public expects of local news: views on public and traditional journalism. *Journalism and mass communication quarterly, 952-967*.
30. Mcleod, J. M.; Daily, Guo. M.; I Eveland, W. P.; Bayer, J.; Yang, S.; Wang, H. (1996). Community integration, local media use and democratic processes. *Communication Research No-2*, 179-209.
31. McNair, B. (1998). News from a small country: the media in Scotland. In B. Franklin, *Local Journalism and local media: Making the local news* (pp. 37-48). London: Routledge.
32. Mondak, J. J. (1995). Newspapers and political awareness . *American journal of political science vol-39, No-2 , Midwest political science association* , 513-527.
33. Morrell, E. (2005). What is the news? Criticism, debate and community in Indonesia's Local press. *Asian Journal of social science, Vol-33, No-01*, 129-144.
34. Murphy, D. (1976). *The Silent Watchdog: The Press in Local Politics*. London: Constable.

35. Neyazi, T. A. (2010). Cultural Imperialism or Vernacular Modernity? Hindi Newspapers in a Globalizing India. *Media, culture and society*, 907-924.
36. Neyazi, T. A. (2011). Politics after vernacularisation: Hindi media and Indian democracy. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 75-82.
37. Nielsen, R. K. (2015). The uncertain future of local journalism. In R. K. Nielsen, *The decline of newspapers and the rise of digital media* (pp. 1-25). London: I.B. Tauris.
38. Ninan, S. (2007). *Headlines from the Heartland: Reinventing the Hindi public sphere*. New Delhi: Sage Publication.
39. Pilling, R. (1998). Local journalist and the local press: waking up to change? In B. Franklin, *Local journalism and local media: making the local news* (pp. 104-114). London: Routledge.
40. Karlsen, R. (2009). Nasjonalt fokus i lokalvalgkamp? Om velgernes lokalpolitiske mediemiks. In S. J., *Det nære demokratiet – lokalvalg og lokal deltakelse* (pp. 117-135). Oslo: Abstrakt Forlag.
41. Kirkpatrick, R. (1995). The mirror of local life: country newspapers, country values and country content. *Communication and culture in rural areas*, 219-238.
42. Krippendorff, K. (2013). *Content Analysis: An introduction to its methodology (3rd ed.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
43. Scase, R. (2005, October 17). speech delivered to the Society of Editors. *Wake up to a New World*. Routledge.
44. Scheufele, Dietram A.; Shanahan, James and Kim, Sei-Hill. (2002). Who cares about local politics? media influences on local political involvement, issue awareness and attitude strength. *Journalism and mass communication*, 427-444.
45. Senn, Laurence; Greub Gilbert. (2008). Local newspapers as a diagnostic aid for psittacosis: a case report. *Clinical Infectious Diseases Vol-46, No-12*, 1931-32.
46. Shah, Dhavan V.; McLeod, Jack M.; Yoon, So-Hyang. (2001). Communication, context and community: an exploration of print, broadcast and internet influences. *Communication Research 28 (4)* , 464-506.
47. Shakar, L. (2009). Citizens local political knowledge and the role of media access. *Journalism and mass communication 86 (4)*, 809-826.
48. Sinha, A. K. (1986). Communication and rural development: the Indian scene. *International communication gazette Vol.- 38* , 59-70.
49. Skogerbo, Eli. & Winsvold, Marte. (2011). Audiences on the move? Use and assessment of local print and online newspapers. *European journal of communication vol.-26*, 214-229.
50. Stempel, G. H. (1952). Sample size for classifying subject matter in dailies. *Journalism Quarterly. 29 (2)* , 333-334.
51. Tanabe, A. (2007). Toward vernacular democracy: moral society and. *American Ethnologist 34(3)*, 558-574.
52. Thomas, J. (1998). The regional and local media in Wales. In B. Franklin, *Local journalism and local media: making local news* (pp. 49-59). London.
53. Vilanilam, J. V. (2005). *Mass Communication in India: A Sociological Perspective*. New Delhi : Sage Publication.
54. Wahl-Jorgensen, K. (1998). Letters to the editor in local and regional newspapers: giving voice to the readers. In B. Franklin, *Local Journalism and local media: Making the local news* (pp. 219-231). London: Routledge.
55. Waldman, S. (2011). *The information needs of communities: the changing media landscape in a broadband age*. Washington D.C: Federal communication commission.
56. Wenzel, A. (2016). *Tow center.org*. Retrieved January 20, 2018, from Tow center.org web site: <https://towcenter.org/new-report-engage-communities-through-solutions-journalism-2/>
57. Zimmer, T. A. (1983). Local news exposure and local government alienation. *social science quarterly vol. 64, No-3*, 634-640.