



Irrespective of age, gender, and region increasing number of people are able to make use of the new media technology

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Abstract:

Newspaper circulation trend in western countries shows decline of print newspapers whereas India defies this trend. In India, we see a beautifully emerging co-existence of the old comfort of the daily dose of print newspapers and the new age technology of e-newspapers. It is interesting to see this combination of two different mediums serving the same purpose of news distribution among diverse readers. The practice of newspaper reading is deeply rooted in Indian households. Newspapers have been the daily source of information for Indians. People read newspaper to make themselves aware of the surroundings. This knowledge makes them feel empowered to form and voice their opinions on important issues. Newspaper reading enhances confidence of readers. Over a long period of time people developed habit of reading newspaper with their morning routine. This familiarity with print newspaper has grown into comfort.

Keywords: e-newspapers; young users; newsletter; print newspaper; communication technology

Introduction:

The increasing penetration of the internet and online news raises question why and how individuals adopt and use the new media (Kang, 2009). Since the emergence of the Internet, both the Internet and online news use have consistently increased (Fox, 2006). People from different occupations and lifestyles are able to inculcate and practice the new media technology due to the development in communication technology. A variety of people, across different age groups, genders, economic status can explore the potential of communication-based practices, through the internet, only if they do not face challenges like internet connectivity and ease of access, where they can also participate, because of the enhancement of technology.

It is extremely necessary to discover and understand opinions related to the online news consumption with reference to the rising consumption of the online news and new media technology. According to a study by Pew research center, the internet and online news are widely adopted and used by various users, particularly those who are young, aged 18-35 (Fox, 2006).

In addition to the rapid growth of Internet and online news among young users, France (1999) stated that journalism is constructed upon credibility. The public tend to have more attention to media when the press is reliable (Gaziano, 1988).

Among the vast variety content offered by different media sources and the internet, news consumers may search for the superior type for trustworthy media source. In order to assess whether information sources are reliable and verifiable, media credibility should be examined (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000). It is vital to scrutinize the features motivate news readers to approve the usage of a news site, and consider it reliable also; reason being the inclination of the persistent implementation of the e-newspapers among younger age group users.

New media in the form of e-newspapers is growing in India at a very fast pace. People want to be updated with a news story as soon as it occurs; moreover e-newspapers provide a platform to share opinions about the same. Print newspaper has underwent deterioration in its circulation since the e-newspapers started gaining popularity, mostly in developed countries. It is however impossible to entirely replace them in fear future. Print newspaper has introduced many new features to retain the audience attention, as a result of these modifications the content of news has also changed (Thurman & Fletcher, 2019). Print newspapers strive to find interactive factors which would attract and sustain readers' attention. Now recognizing that technology is becoming the way of the future, newspapers are adapting and reaping many of the consequential benefits (Everett, 2011).

The Internet provides the technical capability for a user to read an article, examine its sources, and interact through a natural conduct that other media do not provide (Berners-Lee, Hendler, & Lassila, 2008). A newspaper's site can include dynamic conversation platforms that make journalists/ reports approachable while moderating open dialogues. A news site may also provide audio/video clips from interviews, scripts of important records, and interactive mind maps that offer an entirely new manner in which a reader gets to know a story.

Journey of Newspaper from Print to E-newspaper

The earliest form of newspaper was a daily sheet published in Rome; it was known as, Acta Diurina meaning Daily Event (Joad Raymond, 1999). According to various studies, the first known print newspaper was found in Beijing. Research evidences point out that Johannes Gutenberg was the first to make use of a printing press. In 1700s it thrived with promoting components. Though the oldest forms of mass media is print newspapers yet, it was never known to be old-styled during the period of its almost 400-years of existence.

Most of the historians have diverse answers on the actual date of publication of the first newspaper in the world, but it is usually accepted that the first structured attempt to offer a similar work happened in ancient Rome. The newsletters were hand written, and not printed. It informed the usual happenings in and around the capital to the widespread areas of the Roman Empire.

The earliest written news bulletins in all probability appeared in China, with a court gazette issued throughout the T'ang family (618-906 BC) and skim primarily by administration. A later important development usually cited by historians was the issuance of newsletters by the Fugger family of Federal Republic of Germany, a strong tribe of merchants and bankers within the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Modern journalistic practices in Britain initiated during the nineteenth century witnessing the growth of The London Times, which was released in 1785 as The Daily Universal Register but in 1788, its title was changed (International Encyclopedia of Communications, The Oxford University Press, 1989, pages 179-186). Instead, the print newspaper has over the years proven itself exceptionally flexible and adaptable throughout the centuries.

Among print media, Indian print newspaper is one of the excelling print media in the world. The year 1780 marked an important event in the history of newspaper industry when the Bengal Gazette was published from Calcutta. James Augustus Hickey has acclaimed a special spot in the account Indian press because he started the first print newspaper in India from Calcutta.

The Bombay Herald came into existence in 1789, as the first print newspaper published from Bombay. The Bombay Courier was published in the following year. An important proverb gained popularity, which said 'one can do without a cup of tea in the morning, but not without a morning newspaper'. There are some amount of challenges that people face while trying to access information. The World Wide Web has opened new dimensions for the information flow with the advent of web resources which have become a rivulet crossing all the borders (Gul, n.d.) (Gul 2007).

The magnitude of e-newspapers is increasing on the internet, as it is becoming a favourable channel for diffusion of information. In the western countries, the capabilities of the world wide web are becoming to be accepted by the print media market. In the developed economies, the shift from print newspapers to World Wide Web took place due to decreasing market shares of the traditional print newspapers. Realising the dynamic distribution system, it was considered important to have internet-based counterparts of print newspapers.

The newspapers available via the Web are making a mainstream medium that play as important a role as their printed counterparts in delivering information and informing the public (Eveland et al 2004). This growth of e-newspapers showcases one of the most impressive accomplishment of the web. Some researchers assert online newspapers as a more well organized platform that delivers information in more sophisticated manner.

The e-newspapers on the web had lower presence but not far from the foresight of media experts. Not as many as great expectations were placed on them compared to other new media derived from technological innovations, online newspapers not only survived, but also expanded exponentially. E-newspaper is a phenomenon, which is growing along with the growth of Internet.

The growth of e-newspapers traces back to 1992 when for the first time American newspapers were published on the internet. Newspaper content was text based and was delivered through or web based services like Prodigy and America Online.

Netscape, on September 12, 1994, came up with its navigator's beta variant, as a graphic enabled web browser. Newspapers were quick to follow this and made their appearance on the internet. There were almost sixty North American newspapers which had developed news sites on the web towards the end of the year 1994. The leaders among these e-newspapers were Raleigh News and Observer, San Francisco Observer/ Chronicle, and San Jose Mercury News.

In 1996, about five hundred American newspapers created news sites on the web, but only about fifty percent of them, two hundred forty eight daily newspapers were published on the web towards September 1996. By September 1997, 745 U.S newspapers, about half of the U.S dailies were published on the Internet as witnessed by Meyer (cited by Li 2006) (Gul, n.d.).

The internet presence newspapers picked up in the year 1997. There were almost one thousand twelve hundred American newspapers online by the month of March in the year 1998. The number reached 2,059 (as of September 27, 1998), a growth of 60percent in six months and 176percent in one year (Peng et al 1999:52-63). More than 3,400 U.S papers were online by June 2001. Most of the American newspapers were published on the Internet in 2001 as witnessed by Poynter (cited by Li 2006: 2).

The unprecedented magnitude of e-newspapers is expanding gradually. Many factors are responsible for their popularity. On many occasions, audiences rely more on newspapers on Internet for information because of ease in access, updated more often, and richer in content than print newspapers (Chyi and Lasorsa 1999: 2). Publishers can use the web like a marketing tool to reach more likely prospective readers who do not read print newspapers.

Opening dynamic conversations with readers, providing latest options to discover breaking news or relate to other news stories of readers' choice, e-newspapers may make use of the web to reinforce the connections with present readers. Online editions help in making the content available in real-time, and text would be sewed up with moving images and sound (Boczkowski, 2002; & Massey & Levy, (1999) (cited by Wurff and Lauf 2005:15) which is the choice of today's world.

E-newspapers are becoming the present trend in the virtual world with extraordinary intensity. Till the time radio and television came into existence, print newspapers enjoyed the status of being the sole news providers. The

advent of world wide web assisted the print newspaper sector to flourish (Peng et al 1999:52-63). It was expected that soon there would be a time when e-newspapers would be preferred all over the world.

While USA and Europe had more access to the internet, India was yet to catch up. Only financially comfortable people could afford personal computers. With the liberalisation of economy in 1991, this scenario began to change. To make personal computers more affordable and within the reach of more and more middle class people, educational institutions and industries, the custom and excise duty on hardware and software were gradually brought down every year. The numbers of computer uses were increasing but could not be compared with the number of computer users in the USA or Europe.

By the year 2000, PC penetration in India was expected to reach about 13 per thousand from three per thousand in 1997 (PC Quest, December 1997). A rise in the number of internet users among the metropolitan cities was seen. However, many people could not afford internet services owing to reasons like high fees for connectivity and poor telecommunication setup. Public sector Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd., the sole Internet Service Provider (ISP) present at that time in India, had very few internet subscribers, only about 150,000, in November 1998 from the time when services started in August 1996.

A variety of reasons made the internet subscribers in the capital city of Delhi, very upset. These reasons consisted of issues like poor connectivity because of faulty telephone lines and expensive plan. A subscriber had to pay an average of Rs. 2,200 for VSNL fees and local telephone charges if he were to access for only two hours a day. (India Today, November 16, 1998, pages 62-63)

The Hindu was the first newspaper in India to launch a website in 1995. After one hundred and thirty years of its existence, the newspaper came up with the beta version of its redesigned website at beta.thehindu.com, in August 2009. The new website continued its basic values of independence, authenticity, and credibility along with the recent web design principles, tools, and features.

Conclusion:

The transition from printed to e-newspaper represents a huge leap in terms of quality. The style of text, positioning of graphics have a major impact on the reading habits. This also may provide a variation in choice of topics among the online readers as compared to the print readers. As e-newspapers have an upper hand because of the internet, the choices for the online readers are wider and not bounded because of the medium. However, it is yet to be determined that e-newspapers are complimentary or a competition for the newspapers.

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