

ROLE OF DIGITAL PLATFORM IN CREATION OF PUBLIC SPHERE FOR LOCAL POLITICAL NEWS CONSUMPTION: A CASE STUDY OF DIGITAL NEWS PORTAL IN KODAGU DISTRICT

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Abstract:

News Consumption through digital media brought disruption for consumption of news .No other media has reached many hands so far in such a Short Span. The political news consumption has become a core element of democratic engagement. 2020 saw demand pattern shift with acceleration in digital media adoption aided by the growth of digital media infrastructure. Digital and online gamings were the only segments which grew aggregate of INR 26 billion consequently their Contribution to the media and entertainment industry (FICCI report 2021).The specific objective of the study is to explore the number of news portal and to find out the content uploaded in such news portal. The study also tries to analyse the space provided in digital media for political news. A researcher used qualitative research method using content analysis as a research tool. Interview was conducted among 5 Journalist in kodagu district to investigate the research problem.

Keywords: *Digital Platform, Political news, Public Sphere, Kodagu District.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

News is the primary source of information about world phenomenon and it is most consumed format of mass communication. The political news consumption has become a core element of democratic engagement. 2020 saw demand pattern shift with acceleration in digital media adoption aided by the growth of digital media infrastructure. There are various ways of gathering political news, the primary of them being the source of a journalist. The other modes include investigative reporting, press conferences and political events. Coverage of legislature and government are also a part of political news. As per the (bureau, 2020)report, Indians spent 4.6 hours a day on their phones as they came third in the world for the most amount of time spent on phones in 2020 where the contribution for M&E increased from 16% to 23%.nine out of 10 top online newspapers are in regional languages. Online news and magazines app downloads increased 12% in

2020. Kodagu District is an administrative district in Karnataka state of India. This includes Mysore District as a lok Sabha constituency and Karnataka legislative assembly as Madikeri and Virajpet Taluk which holds population of about 554519 as per 2011 census and 82.52% of literacy rate which occupies area about 4102 sq.km.

1.1 CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION

Digital Platform: It is an any electronic tool for communication includes desktop, mobile, social media, email and websites.

Public sphere: It is an area in social life where individuals can come together to freely discuss and identify societal problems and thoughts that discussion influenced political action.

Political News: It is coverage of all aspects of politics and specifically to coverage of civil governments and political power.

Kodagu District: It is administrative district in Karnataka state of India. This includes Mysore District as a lok Sabha constituency and Karnataka legislative assembly as Madikeri and Virajpet Taluk which holds population of about 554519 as per 2011 census and 82.52% of literacy rate which occupies area about 4102 sq.km

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

In recent days many tend to travel to earn their livelihood. To get relaxed satisfied or to gather information and gain knowledge during travelling they use digital media. By exploring the number of news portals for political news consumption in digital media and how such content is uploaded and what is the space provided for political news by newspaper in digital platform is being considered for the study.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

(Howard, 2005)in his article Deep democracy thin citizenship: the impact of digital media in political campaign strategy states that “political elite’s uses internet technology to raise money, organize volunteers, gather intelligence on voters and do opposition research. The voters build their own campaigns to earn opinion of public sphere”.

(Philip N Howard, 2012)in their article social media and political change states that social media produce and distribute content that has individual value but reflects shared values and takes digital media form of personal messages, news, ideas which becomes cultural products.

(Daniela V Dimitrova, 2014)in their article theorises that there is a positive relationship between digital media use and political participation knowledge.

(Bode, 2016)in their article political news in the news feed theorises that social media play a significant role in the learning of political information within the modern media environment.

(Panke, 2021)States that media has a substantial impact on peoples willingness to participate in political discourses.

3. OBJECTIVES:

The present paper tries to investigate the role of digital platform in creation of public sphere for local political news consumption.

1. To explore number of news portal in Kodagu District
2. To find the kind of content uploaded in news portal in Kodagu District
3. To know the space provided for political news in Digital Media.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The researcher used qualitative research method using content analysis as a research tool.

Objective 1: Content analysis is done to explore the number of news portal in Kodagu District.

Objective 2: Content analysis done to know what kind of content is uploaded in digital media related to political news. Interview is conducted among journalists from Kodagu District.

Objective 3: Content analysis is done to explore the space provided to publish political news in Digital Media.

4.1 Operational Definition:

Digital Platform: It refers to a device which allows the individuals to communicate or gain information which includes desktop, tablets, mobile phone, social media etc.

Public Sphere: It is the place where individuals can freely exchange their thoughts, ideas, beliefs and opinions which are directly or indirectly related to political parties, political development of the district.

Political News: It refers to covering of all development related to Kodagu District, political parties and politicians who are directly or indirectly related to Kodagu district where the news is covered in digital newspaper.

4.2 SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

Digital media has become the trend of creating and distributing news and it made easy to consume news in their finger tips anywhere, anytime and in using any device. No study have conducted on political news consumption in Kodagu District as this study focuses on how political news is gathered and how such content is uploaded in digital media.

5. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS:

Kodagu district digital news portal includes Poomale, Brahmagiri as weekly newspaper and Shakthi a daily newspaper. Television channels include Tv1 Kodagu, channel coorg, Channel 24 karnataka, Tv1 Media as local news channels. Paper considered for content analysis are Shakthi, Brahmagiri and Poomale all the three newspaper have covered the issue of political aspects including development of Kodagu District, political campaigns and political parties.

Frequency of news covered/ Space provided: Shakthi covered every political developments content in front page and continuation in following pages. Weekly newspaper Brahmagiri and Poomale covered the news as highlights.

Photos covered in stories: Shakthi have uploaded more images and weekly have uploaded less images compared to Shakthi.

Content covered: Shakthi have clearly explained each and every aspect of developmental activities related to Kodagu District including date, day and time. Weekly covered the content briefly in a small paragraph.

Interview Analysis: The news consumption in digital media is similar to traditional media Online news platforms have increased their reach in 2020 as circulation of physical newspapers is reduced. The news is gathered from the authentic sources and cross verified and then the content is published in news paper. Daily newspaper highlights the political news aspects in the front page and continuation news is published in the following pages. Weekly digital newspaper Brahmagiri and Poomale newspapers just summarizes the content of political news but not given much preference to publish political news in front page as the news is outdated. There are various ways of gathering political news, the primary of them being the source of a journalist. The other modes include investigative reporting, press conferences and political events. Coverage of legislature and government are also a part of political news. That political news is published as readers' news, editorial, public opinion in weekly rather giving much importance as daily newspaper.

6. CONCLUSION:

News is the primary source of information about world phenomenon when it comes to Kodagu District both newspaper daily and weekly covered news related to political aspects, wherein Shakthi daily have published greater news and provided more space for content on political development of Kodagu District compared to weekly Poomale and Brahmagiri. Each and every aspects related to political development, voters choice, political parties and so...on are verified and then published. When it comes to weekly newspaper the developmental content, voters choice, political parties content will not be highly focused as they are outdated and readers will already gather the news earlier from authentic sources so the readers do not prefer political news in weekly newspaper. Online news platforms have increased their reach in 2020 as circulation of physical newspapers is reduced.

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