

An analytical study on the significance of online newspapers in the life of ordinary cyber age Indian citizen

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Abstract

Information is a basic resource and knowledge for all human beings. Among the published sources of information, newspapers are the first to flash the news of any significant happening in every field including information technology. This paper is mainly intended to bring home how newspapers serve as a main source of information. This article discusses the historical background of newspapers and its evaluation since 1605. The online newspapers selected for the study are: The Times of India, The Economic Times and Hindustan Times. They play a vital role in the dissemination of current information about day-to-day activities in the social, political, economic, religious, and innovative, and scientific spheres that are taking place in and around the world.

Keywords: *Indian Citizen, Gazetteer, Metropolitan Network, Flagship, On- line Newspapers, Cyber Age*

1.0 Introduction

Information, for all human being is as important as food, air and water. Information is a basic resource and knowledge. To be knowledgeable with the latest information is still more beneficial. The online news paper is a main source of informing on Information Technology for both professionals as well as the general public, in their day-to-day practical life. Information technology has a great impact on infrastructure, human resources, telecommunications, research and development. In Indian context, IT is one of the fastest spreading technologies in the world. In this paper the researcher intends to do a study on this online source of information which has social relevance. By collecting relevant data through survey method the present study brings out the impact of the online newspapers on the public.

1.1 Background of the Study

At the beginning stage, the newspapers were written by hand and sent for circulation among the members. The first printed newspaper was published in Strasbourg in 1605. At present, news of the world is circulated in the digital form of newspapers and covers a wide readership.

James Augustus Hicky was the founder of India's first newspapers, the Calcutta Gazette, and the Calcutta General Advertiser which was also known as Hicky's Bengal Gazette in 1780. Soon after, other newspapers like the Calcutta Gazette, the Bengal Journal, the Oriental Magazine, the Madras Courier and the Indian Gazette evolved in Calcutta and Madras. The Bengal Gazette and the Indian Gazette were followed by the Calcutta Gazette, which subsequently became the government's medium for making its general orders." The Bombay Herald", the "Statesman in Calcutta and the Madras Mail" and "The Hindu" along with other rivals in Madras represented the metropolitan voices of India and its people.

The Times of India is the largest English newspaper with 2.14 million copies daily. The Times of India is published by India's largest media group, the Bennett, Coleman & Co Ltd. Times of India publishes daily some pages on "Times Business -News". The Economic Times is the daily business newspaper of the Times group. Its main content is based on the Indian economy, share prices, prices of commodities as well as other matters related to finance. 'Economic times' regularly publishes some selected pages on "Emerging Business and IT" which provide information on IT. On every Thursday, it publishes some pages under the title, "Networked: Insight into the World" which also provide information related to IT. Hindustan Times is the flagship publication of HT media Ltd. It has a nationwide reach. It provides separate papers, for business news called "H.T Business and World" HT and provides some pages every Thursday on IT known as -HT Business Exec Tech. Bring out the brief history of online newspapers.

With the advent of information technology, almost all the newspapers in print media have become available in internet to satisfy the cyber age readers. In this rapidly changing world few things get out of date so quickly as information explodes. Newspapers, though they deal with day-to-day events, are not a mere ephemeral record of local, national and international happenings as they unfold themselves every twenty-four hours. Much of what a daily newspaper reports and comments on constitutes the raw material of history and is of value to the historian. The newspaper is the only mass media that caters, through its wide coverage to the divergent interest of society. Newspaper is a publication either on

print or online prints, that is issued at regular and usually at close intervals, especially, daily, weekly, commonly containing news, comments, feature and advertisement.

1.2 Scope of the study

Newspapers provide a vast amount of information of all the significant happening in every field. It is not possible to study all the news items covered by these newspapers so, in this study news available in these three newspapers on IT are covered. Period: The study covers the data from January 2014 to December 2014 newspapers.

The study covers the daily online newspapers of two categories *viz*, the general and the commercial. The General online newspapers deal with current events that take place in daily life (e.g.) The Hindu, The Indian Express and regional language papers such as Dinamalar, Dinakaran, etc. The commercial newspapers deal with financial matters, share market affairs etc., (e.g.) Economic times, and Financial Express etc.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Among the published sources, newspapers are to flash information in every field including IT. The nature of online newspaper information is ephemeral and hence its value is also temporary. People hardly value it as a tool for retrospective information retrieval. But news is scattered and it is not available at one place. Hence, an attempt is made in this study to bring out all the information on IT available in online newspapers, especially in Hindustan Times (HT), Economic Times (ET), Times of India, (TOI).

1.4 Objectives of the study

The following are the major objectives of the present study:

- To find out the different categories of news that appears in the newspapers.
- To analyze and understand the proportion of space allotted for different categories of information in the newspapers.
- To inform the researchers, and information professionals about the coverage of information technology in different newspapers.
- To make a comparative study of the two type of newspapers such as the general newspaper and commercial newspaper.

1.5 Limitations of the study

The following are some of the limitations of the study:-

- i) Among the existing newspapers, only Hindustan Times, Economic Times, Times of India have been selected for study.
- ii) The number of newspapers selected for the study is also limited to two types viz. General and commercial newspapers.
- iii) It was not possible to study all the news items, hence news items were randomly selected.

Since the number of newspapers and the number of news items selected for study are very few, the findings of the study cannot be generalized and is applicable only to the papers and news selected for study.

2.0 Review of Literature

Indian newspapers Reports provide an overview on the contents of the Indian Newspapers from 1874 to 1900. This collection of reports from different newspapers include weekly précis, extracts and reports by local Bengali translators for the colonial government. This paper comprises of an excellent resource for research on social and political events, conditions of the people, public opinion and national sentiments. It is chronologically arranged and grouped into various subject headings such as (1) foreign politics, (2) home administration, (3) legislature (4) Native states and (5) Prospects of the crops and condition of the people.

Newspapers, they deal with day today events, are not a mere ephemeral record of local, national and international happenings. Newspaper is the only mass media that caters to its wide coverage, to the divergent interests of society. Newspapers index is an essential reference tool for research. Apart from providing an accuracy key to contemporary thought and events, it provides easy access to almost every field of human endeavor.

Joseph Rosamma in her article on "Information Network in Newspapers in India" in ILA Bulletin 27.2(1991) pages 58-62 has stated that newspapers are important sources of information in modern society. Users of Information in a

newspaper industry and their requirements of information are discussed. The newspaper projects the events in its correct perspective by linking it with its background. So that it can be easily understood by the reader.

The websites like [www. World newspapers.com](http://www.worldnewspapers.com), [Wikipedia. Org/wiki/](http://Wikipedia.Org/wiki/) provide various information on online newspapers available, its functions, readers social relevance.

2.1 News for Cyber age readers

The newspaper as a medium of communication publishes daily or weekly is intended to provide comprehensive information on all aspects of the country's social, economic, political and cultural life. Newspapers regularly provide techno readers with a constant and reliable flow of local, regional, national and international information related to Information Technology which covers news on e-prime, policies, telecom business and industry, hardware and software, education and web services.

2.2 Functions of newspaper

The functions of online newspapers are:

- To tell its public what people see, feel, think, do; to spread the truth about what has happened or may happen. It enlightens the public, services the political system and safeguards personal liberties. It provides for the environment, disclosing and opportunities affecting the valued position of the community and the component parts within it. To some extent it contributes to the "transmission of the social inheritance".
- To influence i.e., to counsel, guide, advice and persuade its readers. The complex modern world is hard to understand. It is only the function of the newspaper to spread the truth, but also to tell what the truth means.
- To entertain, and keep the readers mind off their own troubles, helps make life more endurable and thus has a beneficial therapeutic effect.
- To foster commerce and industry through widely circulated advertisements or in other words "servicing the economic system". The newspaper through its advertising turns the wheels of business and makes possible the economy we have today. 'To tell the public about the goods and services' the advertisers 'have to sell'. Newspaper advertising is a means of brining promotions and new items to the public. Without a newspaper to accomplish it, this is the type of business which has been lost.

3.0 Research Methodology

For the present study the survey method has been followed. The required information has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary source covers people and other regular readers of newspapers such as professionals like Lawyers, Doctors, Teachers, Students and Common Public. The secondary source form news and articles appearing in different newspapers and journals. To collect the first hand information a close ended questionnaire has been used in addition to informal talk with regular online newspaper. Secondary data has been collected from published records.

4.0 Results and Data Analysis

To analyze the data collected simple statistical tools such as tables, diagrams arithmetic averages, and percentages have been used. The data used in this report has also been collected from websites. All the news items collected from various sources are arranged according to the data; so that, it will be easier to find out the number of items appearing in different months. Each item of information contains headline of news ,date, month, year and a brief note about the news and the area to which the news belong to.

4.1 General Analysis

Different newspapers provide different amount of information on IT and General Information. The total number of articles which appeared during the period of study is displayed in Table 1

Table- 1: Number of Articles appeared

S.No	Name of the Newspaper	No. of articles	Percentage
1	Hindustan Times	301	24.69
2	Times of India	326	26.75
3	Economic Times	592	48.56
	Total	1219	100

Source: Primary data

It is evident from the table that among the three newspapers, only in the 'Economic Times' more articles 48.56% appear on emerging business and IT which is published daily in the newspaper and on Thursday, some selected pages on, "Networked insight into the world" which provides information related to IT is published.

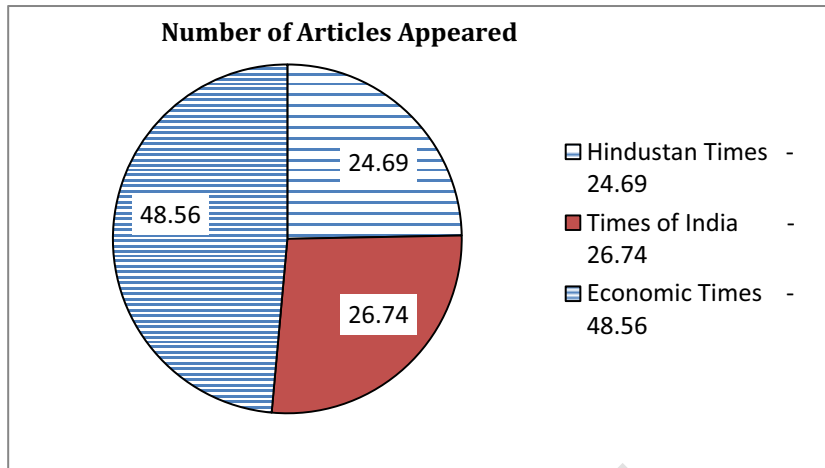


Figure- 1: Month-wise no. of articles published in Economic Times

Table 2 shows the details of the number of articles published in Economic Times.

Table- 2: Articles published in Month wise

S.No	Month and Year	No. of Articles	Percentage
1	January 2014	70	11.82
2	February 2014	52	8.79
3	March 2014	52	8.79
4	April 2014	51	8.62
5	May 2014	49	8.28
6	June 2014	45	7.60
7	July 2014	49	8.28
8	August 2014	34	5.74
9	September 2014	55	9.29
10	October 2014	40	6.75
11	November 2014	58	9.79
12	December 2014	37	6.25
	Total	592	100

Source: Calculated from Primary data

4.2 Subject analysis

Newspapers provide information on different aspects of IT. The details of different aspects on which articles are published in Hindustan Times, Times of India and Economic Times are displayed in Table 3.

Table- 3: Subject coverage in Newspapers (in Percentage)

S.No	Subject	H.T	TOI	T
1	Education	3.92	14.23	8.67
2	Telecom	1.96	2.58	5.32
3	HR	3.92	11.00	10.45
4	E-Crime	3.92	7.11	0.10
5	Personalities	5.30	4.20	1.97
6	Websites	15.29	3.88	2.56
7	Policies	5.09	9.38	3.76
8	Products	10.98	3.88	9.66
9	Future vision	9.74	8.73	6.24
10	Industry and Finance	27.84	13.26	32.74
11	National & International	12.04	21.11	17.55
12	Entertainment	-	0.64	0.98
	Total	100	100	100

Source: Computed from the primary data collected

5.0 Findings

The study reveals that almost all the majority of newspapers selected for the study publishes about 27.84% articles covering the subject of industry and commerce. It is evident from table 3 that all the newspapers selected for the study publish articles on different aspects of life. Hindustan Times has given first preference to Industry and published more articles covering the subject of Industry and Commerce (27.84%). On the other hand, Times of India has shown more interest in National and International affairs (21.11%) followed by Education (14.23%). As far as Economics Times is concerned, the first preference has been given for Industry and Finance (32.74%) which is followed by national and international affairs (17.55%). In fact, all the newspapers, in general, give first preference to industry and finance (25.95%) followed by national and international affairs (17.55%).

6.0 Suggestions

- a) The newspapers Times of India, Economic Times and Hindustan Times, give relevance news on IT. It should try –
- to cover factual and pertinent information.
 - to provide news or information that is actually required eg. new technological developments.

- to provide from time to time articles of innovative trends to keep the personnel abreast of the knowledge relevant –to IT.
 - to collect information from right type of source, and avoid gossip.
- b) Having observed the variety of news/information provided by online newspapers and thereby understanding the importance on newspapers, there is a need -
- to acquire both the commercial and non-commercial newspapers on IT, so that wide database can be provided to the users.
 - to arrange news on IT so that all information relevant to the industry and its personnel of various categories it preserves for use at any time.

7.0 Summary

Online newspapers play vital role for the dissemination of current information about every activity social, political, economic religious and scientific innovations taking place in and around the world. Online Newspapers play a vital role for the dissemination of current information on IT. It is obvious from the fact that timely and relevant information is obtained by the newspapers. The largest number of articles on IT is on companies in which the focus is on their financial status and on products in which they provide information about new products to be launched. Commercial types of papers provide various aspects of information than the non-commercial newspapers. The three online newspapers selected for the present study provide information in its specific websites for various aspects of life.

Comparing both the general and commercial types of newspapers, it would reveal that the commercial types of papers provide various aspects of information then the non-commercial newspaper. But in certain cases both newspapers contain the same information. Finally Among these three newspapers:

- Maximum numbers of news items were printed EE
- Minimum numbers of news items were printed in HT
- Maximum number of news items were printed on Industry and finance related to IT
- Minimum numbers of news items were printed on IT application in entertainment.

The only newspapers being of such a high relevance on IT should try:

- i) To cover factual and pertinent information;
- ii) To provide news or information that is actually required for example new technological developments;
- iii) To provide from time to time articles of certain aspects to keep the personnel abreast of the knowledge relevant on IT; and
- iv) To collect information from right type of source, and avoid gossip.

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