

CHANGING ETHICAL DIMENSIONS IN KANNADA NEWS CHANNELS

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ABSTRACT

Television is one of the most powerful media. It is more powerful that it can make or shake people. The rapid rise in the mass media, their ubiquity, and their potential influence has led many to wonder about the actual role they play in social life and behavior. The entry of the audio-visual medium into the homes of masses created a new muse in the Indian society. Television News with the usage of regional language such as 'Kannada' getting closer to the audience. Information and entertainment have become the primary function of news channels in Karnataka. The boom of Kannada 24x7 News channel have led to the more competition and proving the unethical journalism in a hurry.

Keywords: *Ethics, Dimensions, Kannada 24x7 News Channels*

1. INTRODUCTION

The television has become such an integral part of homes in the modern world that it is hard to imagine life without television. Television is the most powerful of all the media of mass communication. It is in fact, a revolution in communication process in a modern society. The Television news, through their audiovisual impact, intimacy, instantaneity and the ability to bridge the gap of literacy or language and of space can be an integrating factor through the exchange of experience in a very live manner.

The television as we see it and know it today was not always this way. Let's take a brief look at the history of television and how it came into being. The history of television in India started around later 1950's. In 1955 a Cabinet decision was taken disallowing any foreign investments in print media which has since been followed religiously for nearly 45 years. Under this circumstance, television in India was introduced on September 15, 1959 in Delhi When UNESCO gave the Indian Government \$20,000 and 180 Philips TV sets. Bombay was the second city in India to open a TV center on October 2, 1972.

Different experiments by various people, in the field of electricity and radio, led to the development of basic technologies and ideas that laid the foundation for the invention of television. In the late 1800s, Paul Gottlieb Nipkow, a student in Germany, developed the first ever mechanical module of television. He succeeded in sending images through wires with the help of a rotating metal disk. This technology was called the 'electric telescope' that had 18 lines of resolution. Around 1907, two separate inventors, A.A. Campbell-Swanton from England and Russian scientist Boris Rosing, used the cathode ray tube in addition to the mechanical scanner system, to create a new television system. From the experiments of Nipkow and Rosing, two types of television systems came into existence: Mechanical television and electronic television.

In 1926, a British inventor known as John Logie Baird was the first person to have succeeded in transmitting moving pictures through the mechanical disk system started by Nipkow. He also started the first ever TV studio. From 1926 till 1931, the mechanical television system saw many innovations. Although the discoveries of these men in the department of mechanical television were very innovative, by 1934, all television systems had converted into the electronic system, which is what is being used even today.

The first TV station started in Gulbarga and this Television entered in to Karnataka. Udaya TV was the first Kannada satellite channel to go on air in Karnataka in 1994. Udaya news is first kannada news channel was also known as Udayavarthegalu from Sun TV Network. The entry of TV 9 owned by Ravi Prakash of ABCL Broadcasting in 2006 opened a new chapter in the field of Kannada news channels. Suvarna News known as Suvarna News 24X7 till January 2016 owned by Rajeev Chandrashekar of Asianet News Network in 2008. Kasthuri news 24 owned by Anithakumaraswamy of Kasthuri Media in 2011. Public TV which went live on February 12, 2012 first channel from Whitemen Media. News 18 Kannada known as ETV News Kannada till September 27, 2017 owned by Reliance network 18 of ETV Network & Network 18 which went live on 19 March 2014. Raj News Kannada launched in 2014 by Chennai-based Raj Television Network, second venture from the company after Raj Music Kannada. Dighvijay TV 24X7 owned by Vijay Sankeshwar of VRL Media, VRL Media's first venture into TV media in 2017. TV5 another Kannada news channel launched in 2007 from Rana Broadcasting. News X Kannada First regional venture for south India by ITV Network in 2018.

The first attempts to articulate the rights and responsibilities of journalists which form the basis for modern notions of ethical journalism were made more than 150 years ago at a time of confrontation between The Times of London and the British government.

John Thaddeus Delane, the editor, responded to government criticism of the paper by articulating a complete philosophy and body of principle for the guidance of journalism. In two leading articles in February 1852, he underlined the cardinal principle of truth telling: The duty of the journalist is the same as that of the historian to seek out the truth, above all things, and to present to his readers the truth as he can attain it.

From these noble efforts, codes and standards were developed by journalists, editors, publishers and others to protect the notion of editorial independence and fourth estate journalism. Today, there more than 400 codes and statements of principle that have been developed around the world over the past 100 years. These are mostly voluntary codes and they provide an aspirational framework for the exercise of journalism.

At present, 24 hour television Kannada news channels creating news in their daily prime time talk shows and turning these into slug fests. Every night viewers tune in, almost as if drugged, to their choice of channel or flick through the dozens watching seemingly senior academics, politicians, officials, dissolve into hysterical, screaming, almost abusive personalities as they go on the roller coaster ride with opinionated anchors.

Objectives

- To highlight the unethical journalism in Kannada News Channels
- Aims to focus on competition between the News Channels for TRP
- To find out the negative impact of News Content on the society

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of literature provides guidelines in research work. For this research paper various studies are concerned. Some of them are below:

Currently TV news is a study in the poverty that comes with plenty. More channels means more frenzied competition, and the less sense the viewer gets of the reality behind the political spokesman's bluster, or the anchors chummy wrapping up of some nondiscussion. (Ninan, 2006). Similarly Andrew Marr has commented: "The idea of news has altered. It stopped being essentially information and became something designed to produce-at all costs, always -an emotional reaction, and the more extreme the better. (2004:381).

There is a concern that too much news is creating an information overload, contributing to a structural erosion of the public sphere, where the viewer, bombarded with visuals, is unable to differentiate between public information and corporate propaganda. However, news should be a stimulus to new thinking as Jean Seaton reminds us, 'not an anaesthetizing escape from it.(Hobsbawm,1968:321).A TAM study after two Telugu news channels were launched showed a marked increase in the time spent on the Telugu news at the cost of Hindi news whereas the time spent on English news was more or less same (Regional news channels living up to their promise in AP, 2004). The inference here is to the preference of local news channels to national (read Hindi) ones.

In a similar finding, regional news channels were able to increase their viewership base whereas that of English and Hindi declined (Sarkar, 2011). The proliferation of regional language news channels, especially in the south, means that many viewers now have a choice and the affinity to mother tongue seems to have worked in their favor. But the biggest concern is the clamor among the national English and Hindi news channels to win back viewers with sensational coverage. As news media is dependent on big news stories, the years 2009-2010 were dull; 2008 turned out to be good with the Mumbai Terror attacks and the drama around the passing of the Indo-US Civil Nuclear Bill.

It seemed to many that television news was taking on the worst aspects of the tabloid newspapers, which had always understood their entertainment remit. For Colin Sparks, the tabloidization of news showed in it giving relatively little attention to politics, economics and society and relatively much diversion like sports, scandals and popular entertainment, and relatively much attention to the personal and private lives of people, both celebrities and ordinary people and relatively little to political processes, economic development, and social changes(Sparks,2000:10)

The credibility and legitimacy of the media system is also preserved by the media's lack of complete agreement on all issues. Indeed, there is vigorous debate and dispute over many issues, as Herman and Chomsky readily acknowledge. They contend, however, that debate within the dominant media is limited to "responsible" opinions acceptable to some segment of the elite. On issues where the elite are in general consensus, the media will always toe the line. No dissent will then be countenanced, let alone acknowledged, except, when necessary for ridicule or derision.

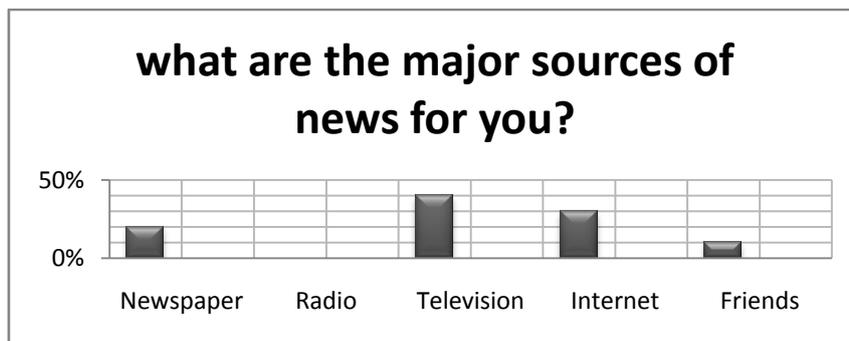
Bandwagon theory is cited as a possible explanation by researchers while understanding the perception of audience in news selection (Sundar & Nass, 2001). Chaiken (1987) argued that people use the heuristic that, if many think an opinion is valid, the opinion is probably correct. Accordingly, they could just follow the evaluations and choices made by others, thereby limiting their own cognitive selection efforts. Affiliation motives may be another reason for bandwagon effect, even when relating to strangers (Byrne, 1961).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The Present study is based on the Changing Ethical Dimensions in Kannada News Channels, for this study a survey conducted in which 100 respondents from the journalism students of various colleges in the Bangalore city. To meet the objectives of study primary data is collected from a survey by using a structured questionnaire to explore the perception of the audience regarding the Changing Ethical Dimensions in Kannada News Channels especially to find out whether there is any difference in the presenting the news content.

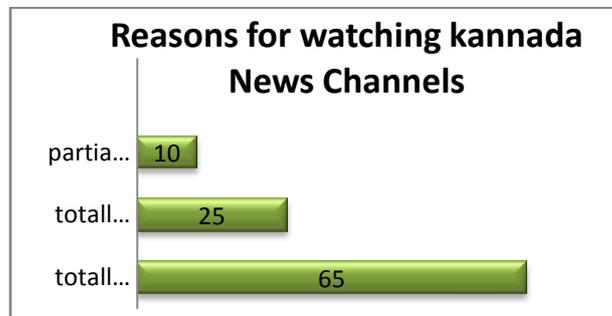
4. ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION:

1. what are the major sources of news for you ?



News is very important for the citizens. Newspapers are still the preferred mode of getting news for the older generations. But surprisingly the young get their daily dose of news from internet and specifically online news portals and social media sites. Television is seen as an entertainment medium rather than a source for serious news. Radio, unfortunately doesn't have any takes as far as news is concerned-purely for music.

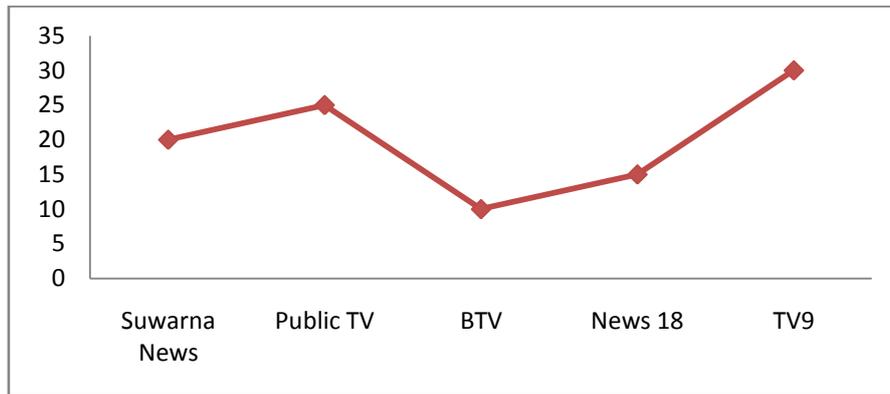
2. what are the reasons for watching kannada news channels ?



There are multiple reasons for people to prefer local channels. In addition to the language preference there seems to be the issue of coverage and relevance. Kannada news

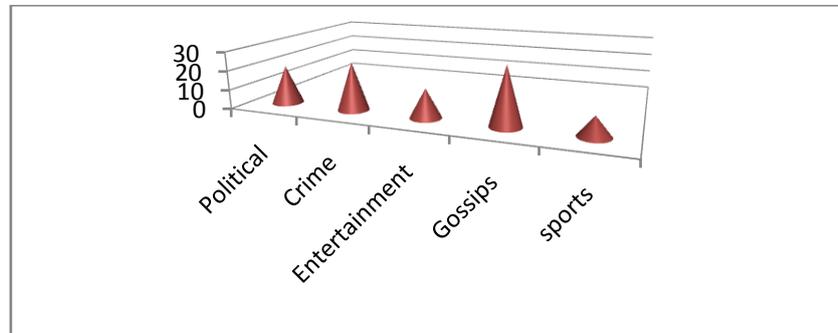
channels give extensive coverage to local and regional stories and issues that are close to them. Mother tongue matters in the choice of kannada channels as well.

3. which is your favorite Kannada News channel ?



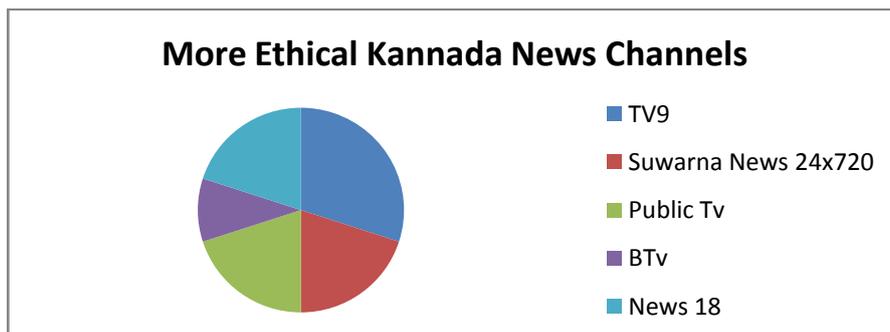
There are multiple reasons for the journalism students to prefer Tv9 as their favourite Kannada news channel. Public TV and Suvarna ,and News 18 also liked by the journalism students. But BTV is least liked by the students,though the presentation of BTV news is alomost similar to the TV9.

4.which is your priority content in News Chanel ?



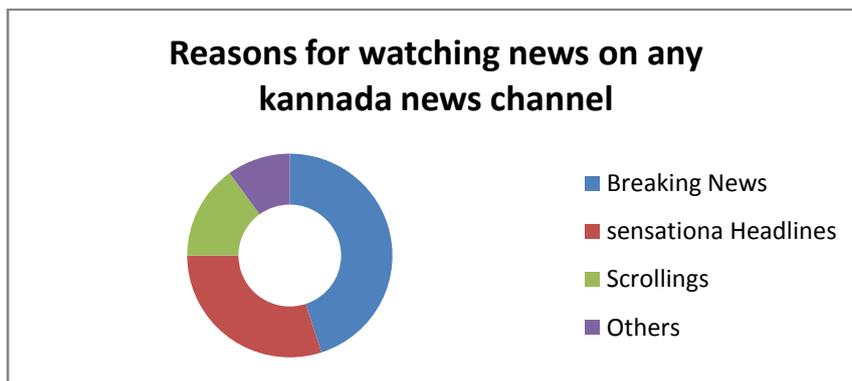
when Journalism Students are quized about the hot selling content in kannada News Channel ,Gossips are at the top and sports are the bottom level. Crime stand at the seond top followed by the political and other entertainment stories. The top selling topics will always have more space in the media.

5 which channel in your opine more ethical?



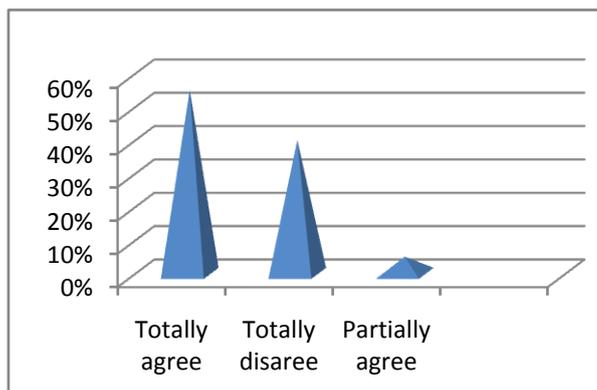
When they were quizzed about the ethical content in the Kannada news channels majority felt that Tv9 is high ethical in the story content. whereas public TV, News 18 and Suvarna News 24x7 are equally scored for their ethical news content. And BTV was scored least in following the ethics for delivering the news content to the intended audience.

6.What are the reasons for watching news on any Kannada news channel ?



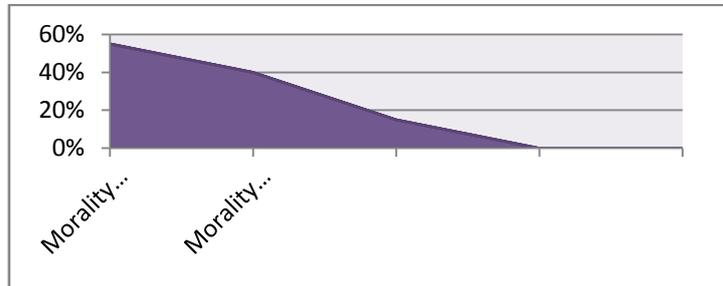
As is well known Tv9 kannada has the highest rating among the kannada news viewing audience. But public TV has caught up with tv9 and as things stand it may very well become the number one kannada news channel in days to come. Some of the news channels in kannada have fallen in popularity and are struggling to find viewers. This may be due to the staleness of their presentation and the strategies of the top two channels to go all out to woo the audience with sensational and loud content. As breaking news plays a major role in catching the attention of the viewers with exaggerating the news. Sensational headlines also capture the attention of people. Scrolling which keep displaying on screen creates curiosity to watch the news.

7) Do you opine kannada news channels sensitize the Newscontent because of competition



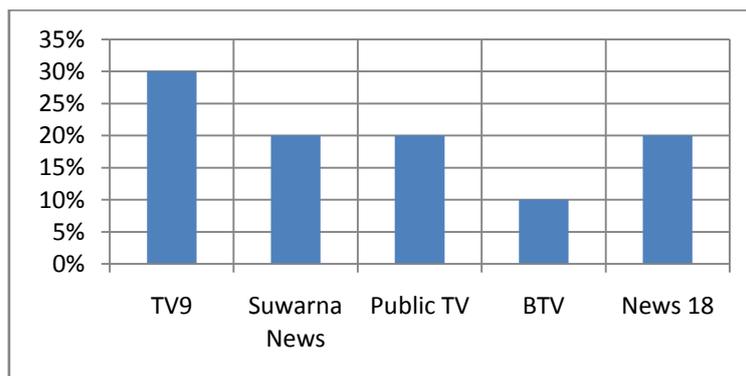
Majority felt that high percentage of Kannada news channels are struggling with high competition to get the viewers for their channels. Therefore news channels found the way to sensationalize the content more than the story required. And a less number of people don't agree with this as they opine may be it is only the truth. But whereas least number of people partially agree that due to the high competition between the different news channels the news are presented as hot cake.

8) Do you expect the morality in the Kannada news channels?



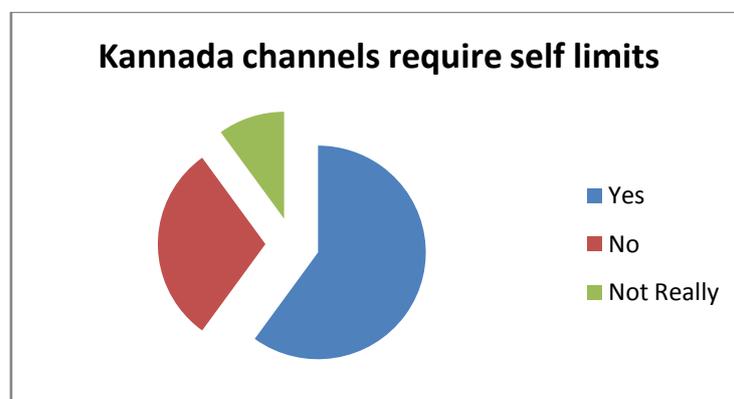
The above questioner about the morality in the Kannada News channels the highest number of respondents opined that ‘morality’ is expected from the kannada news channels . And less number of respondents accepted that morality is already existed ,where as the least number of respondents answered morality has disappeared from the Kannada News channels, which is again agreeing that though there was a morality ,the more number of news contents from kannada news channels are delivered without a morality .

9)Rate the channels as per the morality you see in their News Content



Though the Kannada News channel TV9 stands first for the morality in its news content, the standard is low with morality. Suvarna News, Public TV and News 18 have scored equally with low morality in their News Content. And BTV have scored the least for the lack of morality in the News Content.

10) Does Kannada news channels require self limits.



When respondents are questioned generally with closed-ended , many agree that kannada news channel journalist do require a self limitation while collection and dissemination of News. The same content of a

news story is covered in varied ways by the different kannada news channels . Therefore the news channels have forgotten that they have limits in covering the news for their channels.

1. FINDINGS

This research study is conducted to analyze the changing Ethical Dimension in Kannada News Channels .keeping in view the objectives of research ,the researchers selected sample of Five Kannada news channels to know the changing ethical dimension in disseminating their news content.

Though Kannada news channels provide the required information to the viewers, they are not following the ethics while coverage of the news and delivering the same to the intended audience. Though the news is same ,the presentation of the same news story is different and most of the time sensationalized. Which is again leave the audience with a question to trust the news content.

It is found that due to the high competition between the news channels , breaking news, catchy headlines are more visible on the screen. Most of the students feel that kannada news channels are in a hurry to collect the news and deliver it even before the other channel , keeping the morality aside.

2. CONCLUSION:

Many people are alarmed about the state of journalism. Audience is wondering how honest and fair journalists are. Accuracy, to the ethical journalist, has a special meaning and close doesn't count. Accuracy is the highest of the principles of the ethical journalist, and it means that every bit of information delivered has to be exact. Even the smallest mistake cuts into the journalist's credibility.

Another is objectivity. This is the state of mind that journalists acquire to make them fair, neutral observers of events and issues. They cannot express personal feelings, likes or dislikes to color news stories. Journalists should always seek to provide the audience with unbiased accounts of the news. The journalist who vows to do so has taken a long first step to the road to professionalism. Accuracy and objectivity are by no means the only ethics a journalist must live by. They also have to be sure to have good taste. They can't put sexually explicit material in TV News Channel and must seek understatement ,not overstatement . They must avoid profanity and they cannot invade the privacy of others or glorify bad behavior.

Journalists must be sure to show fairness to all. Everyone in the audience has an equal right to expect to be treated fairly, regardless of race, color, philosophy, religion, gender, age or economic status. They should never apply different standards to different people or groups. Everything is fine to get one more viewer to switch to the channel-ethics is confined to the text books to b taught in journalism and not practiced in news rooms. The more harsh, shrill and noisy the debates on primetime news the better for TRPs . But the more channels focus on TRPs, the ethics are also declining.Of course everyone has their own opinion of what is and is not acceptable in today's society. Is sex and violence appropriate in movies and on television ? How far can political candidates take their campaigns? None of these has a correct answer. Many people have their opinion when it comes to topics such as these, but it is practically impossible to come to a conclusion. In journalism it is nearly impossible to please everyone.

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