



MEDIA CONVERGENCE & VERNACULAR PRESS: ONLINE VISIBILITY OF URDU NEWSPAPERS IN KASHMIR

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ABSTRACT

As the technological revolution is influencing almost every field, it also revolutionized media industry and led to media convergence. Now most of the mainstream media units, including the print media are working to improve their visibility in the cyber platform. With mobile phones becoming a necessity and launch of high-speed internet services, the online medium has become the main source of information to the people. In India too, this virtual medium is emerging as the main sources of news and entertainment. As this trend is compelling news media outlets to adopt the new media technologies, its impact is also visible in the newspapers industry of Kashmir. Newspapers have been the most important medium of information to the vale people, there are limited local broadcast media channels in the valley. Urdu, being one of the official languages of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, is also the most popular language connecting all the regions, dialects and communities.

This paper aims at exploring the online presence of Urdu news publications in Kashmir using the content analysis technique on five main parameters viz. Websites, Mobile Phone Applications, Social Media, Multimedia, Hypertextuality and Online News Updates. This study will be finding its significance in the context of anthro-technological understanding of media and also discern the change in Indian language press in the age of convergence.

Keywords: *Online Journalism, Kashmir, Urdu Journalism, Newspapers, Convergence, Multimedia.*

INTRODUCTION

Media convergence is a much-debated concept in present times. Convergence means the flow of content across multiple media platforms (Jenkins, 2008). Most of the mainstream media units are converging on Internet to show their presence. Newspaper industry, the most important element of mainstream media has also been trying to mark its presence on online sphere. In India, due to the coming of mobile phones and the launch of 3G and 4G mobile networks throughout country, the readers now have access to any information available in the virtual world. This trend has been compelling print and electronic media outlets to have their online outlets too to cater to the fragmented audience. According to official figures, Urdu newspapers in India are listed as sixth largest publication (1727 publications) in the country with