

COMPARATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE HINDU AND THE TIMES OF INDIA

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Abstract: Print media is still India's most powerful and popular form of media. Contrary to popular belief, despite the advent of internet, the sales of newspapers have increased in India. Newspapers are still the primary source of information for Indian citizens. These newspapers determine the kind of news the Indian readers consume. Determining the amount of space The Hindu and The Times of India, two of India's leading newspapers give to Political, National, Sports, City and International news helps discern what kind of news the readers are consuming. This can further help investigate which among the five new categories the readers are well-informed with. Thus, finding out the pattern of news distribution will be also useful in figuring out the news agenda of the respective newspapers.

Index Terms - The Hindu, The Times of India, print media, news distribution

I. INTRODUCTION

A **newspaper** is a periodical publication containing news, other informative articles, and usually advertising. (En.wikipedia.org, 2018). A newspaper is usually printed on relatively inexpensive, low-grade paper such as newsprint. Newspapers are typically published daily or weekly. Most newspapers now publish online as well as in print. The online versions are called online newspapers or e-newspapers. Usually, the publishers upload the print version of the daily newspaper, on the website and update it on a regular basis. All the articles that could not be included in the print version is included in the online version.

A wide variety of information is published in newspapers. Hard and soft news, entertainment news, sports news and it even has provision for opinions in its op-ed and editorial page. Newspapers include weather forecasts, reviews of films, plays and restaurants. It even has obituaries, crosswords, horoscopes, editorial cartoons, gag cartoons, and comic strips. Be it advice, food, and other columns; and radio and television listings, the average newspaper has it all. So, the newspaper caters to a wide audience, promulgating all kinds of information.

A newspaper typically meets four criteria:

- **Publicity:** Its contents are reasonably accessible to the public.
- **Periodicity:** It is published at regular intervals.
- **Currency:** Its information is as up to date as its publication schedule allows.
- **Universality:** It covers a range of topics.

There are two different types of newspapers: Broadsheets and tabloids. A broadsheet newspaper consists of nine columns, whilst a tabloid consists of only six. The best example for a newspaper is a daily newspaper, like The Deccan Herald, The Deccan Chronicle and The Hindustan Times etc. They tend to contain a lot of advertisements. Mumbai Mirror and Midday are the perfect examples of tabloids. They tend to contain little to zero number of advertisements.

Newspapers are also classified based on their target audience. While most newspapers are aimed at a large audience, certain newspapers have a specific target audience. Hence, their news often caters to the

specific interest of the target audience. The Wall Street Journal, The Economic Times and International Business Times cater to those who prefer to read business news.

In addition, newspapers are categorised based on their regularity. A **daily newspaper** is printed and distributed on a daily basis. The only exception being some national or religious holidays. These newspapers also have a Sunday edition.

There are newspapers that are printed on a weekly basis. They are called **weekly newspapers or weeklies**. They are printed and published once a week, and tend to be smaller in size than daily newspaper papers. Certain newspapers are published two or three times a week or on a fortnightly basis.

Newspapers made their advent in India during the rule of the British. The Bengal Gazette was the first newspaper to be published in India. It was first published on 29th January, 1780 in English. James Augustus Hickey was its owner, and it was published in Kolkata. (Saxena, 2018).

This led to publishing of several papers in Kolkata like the Calcutta Gazette in 1784, The Bengal journal in 1785 and Calcutta Chronicle in 1786. Subsequently, other cities followed suit and started their own local newspapers. Thus, this resulted in making the print media the most powerful media in the country. According to the report published on May 2017, by the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC), India has bucked the global trend of declining readership of print media. World renowned politician, Shashi Tharoor stated that: "Newspaper circulation in India has grown from 39.1 million copies in 2006 to 62.8 million in 2016. This is a 60 per cent increase." (The Quint, 2018)

Despite the rise of the internet and social media, the print media in our country is going strong. Media commentator Vinita Kohli outlines the reason for this. "Print media has always performed well in India. There are two main reasons for it – primacy of the written word and the home delivery of the newspaper. The reason newspapers in their physical form started declining in the West, is because volition was involved – you have to go to a newsstand and buy a copy. In India, we get it at our doorstep."

That's why this study is relevant to the Indian context. These newspapers have an important role to play in informing the masses. The kind of news they print, and the number of articles under each news category is decided by the individual newspapers' news agenda. This news agenda, a journalistic jargon though it maybe, is vital in informing the audience. The level of knowledge the Indian readers have about the current affairs around the world, determines their awareness of the society. A well-informed mass is the most powerful, as information like impending natural calamities, change in policies and wars can help prepare the citizens accordingly.

Hence, finding out what kind of news is published in Indian newspapers has become mandatory. For the purpose of this study, The Times of India and The Hindu two of India's leading newspapers have been chosen.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

The Times of India is the oldest English-language daily newspaper in the country still in circulation. The first edition of The Times of India was published in 1838 and currently has its markets in major cities of India. The daily circulated over 2.7 million copies within the first half of 2016 and is considered one of the most trusted brands in the country. The Times of India is credited for bringing democratization in the field of journalism in India enabling the people to associate with the news. (Misachi, 2018)

Originally called *The Bombay Times and Journal of Commerce*, the paper was founded in 1838 to serve the British residents of western India. At first published twice weekly, the paper became a daily in 1851 and changed its name to *The Times of India* in 1861.

After Indian independence *The Times's* insistence on accuracy, its avoidance of sensationalism, its serious tone, and its coverage of international news enhanced its prestige in India, where over the years it became known as an intellectual newspaper. Its coverage of international news, like that of the other great Indian dailies, is thorough, accounting for a quarter of its editorial space. It circulates nationally and covers a broad range of subject matter with attractive makeup and a readable style. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018)

It is the fourth-largest newspaper in India by circulation and largest selling English-language daily in the world according to Audit Bureau of Circulations (India). According to the Indian Readership Survey (IRS) 2012, the *Times of India* was the most widely read English newspaper in India with a readership of 7.643 million. This ranks the *Times of India* as the top English daily in India by readership. It is owned and published by Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd. which is owned by the Sahu Jain family.

THE HINDU

The Hindu, is English-language daily newspaper published in Chennai (Madras), generally regarded as one of India's most influential dailies. Established in 1878 as a weekly, *The Hindu* became a daily in 1889. While India was under British rule, the paper spoke out for independence—but in a moderate vein. After India achieved independence in 1947, *The Hindu* built a network of foreign bureaus while extending its coverage of India. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018)

The Hindu is distinguished for its comprehensive coverage of national and international political news and for its emphasis on accuracy and balanced coverage. Although it is published in a provincial capital, *The Hindu's* reportage and editorials are read carefully and taken seriously in the national capital. At the beginning of the 21st century, its daily circulation exceeded 900,000. The newspaper's parent company, Hindu Group Publications, also publishes *The Hindu Business Line*, a daily business paper, and popular magazines such as *Frontline* and *Sportstar*. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018)

The current publisher is its former editor N. Ram and its editor is Mukund Padmanabhan. The Hindu received reputation for its credibility after one of its reporters, Chitra Subramaniam reported the bofors scandal. This is considered one of India's largest political scandals till date. This scandal took place during the time when Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister. Once the news of the kickbacks the Congress government received from the Swedish government made news, it led to the loss of election of the ruling Congress party.

It brought The Hindu in the limelight, and it is considered one of the most credible source of information. The Hindu has registered a 20 per cent growth in circulation over a six month period in 2015. It has retained its position as the second-largest English daily, according the Audir Bureau of Circulation. The circulation rose from 1,261,658 from January – June 2015 to 1,518,082 from July – December 2015.

There has always been stiff competition between these two newspapers. They have openly feuded on several occasions. Each newspaper has released television ads questioning the credibility and the type of information covered in the opponents' newspaper in 2012. (YouTube, 2018)

Hence, it would be interesting to see the news distribution pattern in both The Hindi and The Times of India.

II. OBJECTIVES

This objective of this study was to empirically analyse the content of two English newspapers – The Hindu and Times of India, for a period of 15 days in the month of April, 2014.

The main objectives of this research are:

1. To content categorise both newspapers.
2. To analyse both newspapers, content category wise, through quantitative analysis.
3. To compare content category wise with quantitative analysis, the content in both papers.
4. To compare the difference between amount devoted by both papers to each content category.

III. METHODOLOGY

Quantitative analysis is used in this study to analyse the content of two selected newspapers, 'The Hindu' and 'The Times of India' for a period of 15 days. This was done by categorising the news content into Political news, City news, Sports news, National news, and International news. The supplements of both newspapers have not been examined, as they usually do not contain articles that fall under the listed categories. The total number of articles under each category is calculated. The depth of each article that falls under these five categories are measured in centimetres. The percentage of news each news category covers in the respective newspaper is calculated by multiplying the number of centimetres each news category has occupied by 100. It is then divided by the total number of articles that respective newspaper has.

IV. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Below are results of the comparison for both tables were obtained by considering the total numbers of articles in the respective newspapers for a period of 15 days in the month of April, 2014. The total number of articles in The Hindu and Times of India are 11,707 and 5,275, respectively.

By doing a close empirical study on the two English newspapers, The Hindu and The Times of India, quality observations have been made on their approaches towards the news content, and news selection. The interpretation of the research is carried out systematically by taking each category into consideration.

To begin with, the first category of news content is considered. The distinction of news has been drawn according to the kind of news rendered to the readers by the newspapers and the priorities set by the newspapers in prominence of news. The total number of articles published is taken into account to find the space dedicated to each of the categories. The reading of the articles of both newspapers lead to the understanding of their role as a medium of communication.

The news articles were segregated were done as shown below:

- 1) Political news: Any article that is concerned with the political issues, be it state, city or national level. The articles covering policies, events or significant changes were taken into consideration.
- 2) City news: Any article that is concerned with entertainment, crime and social issues, or events that occur in the city of Bangalore are considered.
- 3) Sports news: Any article that has interviews, features and news about sports and sportsmen are also taken into account.
- 4) National news: Any article that contains news at the political, social level and is of national level are also taken into account.
- 5) International news: All articles that have reports on international issues, entertainment, and celebrity news are also considered.

On the basis of the above understanding, the following interpretations are made:

PROMINENCE OF NEWS

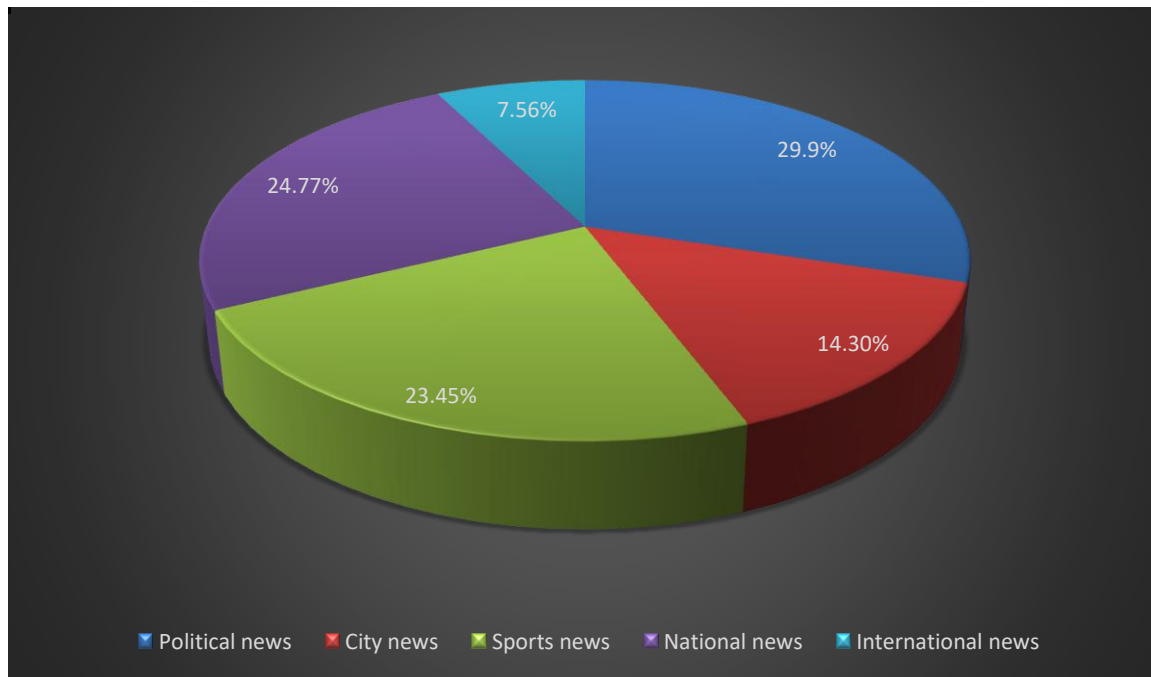


Table 1: The distribution of news content in ‘The Hindu’

The above pie chart is a clear representation of the news distribution in the newspaper, ‘The Hindu’. Accordingly, it is noted that the majority of the space, which is nearly 29.9 per cent is given to Political news. National news is given the second priority, covering 24.77 per cent of space. Sports news gets the third priority, with 23.45 per cent of space allotted to it. City news covers 14.30 per cent and International news covers 7.56 per cent of space in the newspaper.

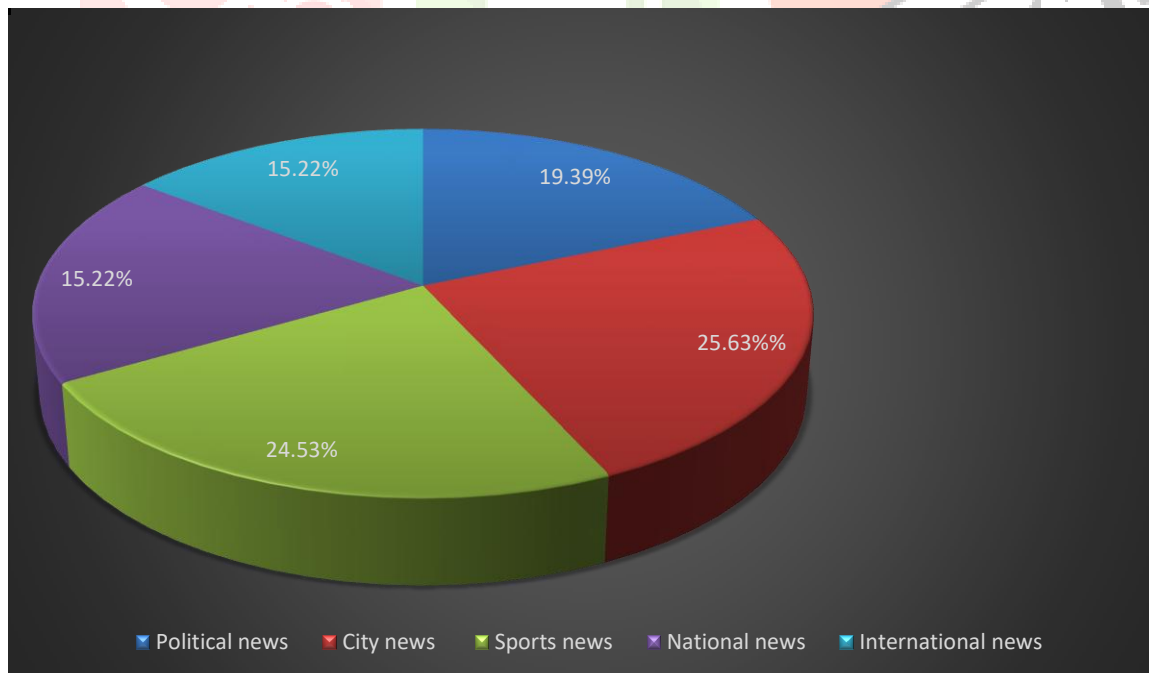


Table 2 – The distribution of content in ‘The Times of India’

According to the above pie chart, City news is given top priority. It covers 25.63 per cent of space. Sports news is given second priority and covers 24.53 per cent of the newspaper. National news is allotted 15.22 per cent and Political news is also allotted 19.39 per cent, both are given equal priority in this newspaper. Whereas, 15.22 per cent of space is given to International news, which has been given the least priority.

Statistically speaking, The Hindu has considerably more number of articles than The Times of India. The Hindu has an overall total of 11,707 articles, while The Times of India has an overall total of 5,275 articles.

Based on their categories, each category has been further sub –categorised, to obtain following analysis:

1st CONTENT CATEGORY – POLITICAL NEWS

Table 3: The distribution of political news in The Hindu

CITY POLITICAL NEWS	NATIONAL POLITICAL NEWS	STATE POLITICAL NEWS	TOTAL
1394 cms	1149 cms	957 cms	3500cms
39.82 per cent	32.82per cent	27.34per cent	100 per cent

Political news covers is further sub - categorised into City,State and National political news. The Hindu has devoted about 29.89 per cent of its space for Political news. This newspaper mainly concentrates on reporting articles of local importance. Secondly, it focuses on political news of national concern, and finally on State political news. This data is obtained by measuring the length of each article in centimetres, under each of the sub - categories. The amount of space allotted to State political news is 27.34 per cent, 32.82per cent for national political news and 39.82 per cent for city political news, and. The Hindu has three pages for state news, and majority of the articles in these pages are about City political news.

Table 4: The distribution of political news in The Times of India

NATIONAL POLITICAL NEWS	CITY POLITICAL NEWS	STATEPOLITICAL NEWS	TOTAL
546 cms	304 cms	173 cms	1023cms
53.37per cent	29.71per cent	16.91per cent	100 per cent

In contrast to The Hindu, The Times of India, allots only 19.39 per cent of its space for Political news. However, this newspaper gives its top priority to National political news, followed by City and State political news. The amount of space allotted to National political news is 53.37per cent, 29.71per cent for City political news and 16.91per cent for State political news. This newspaper has no special pages allotted for state news.

Results of the comparison:

- 1) The Times of India has 20.55 per cent more space allotted toNational political news in comparison to The Hindu.
- 2) The Hindu, has 10.11per cent more of City political news when compared to The Times of India.
- 3) Both The Hindu and The Times of India have given least priority to State political news.
- 4) However, The Hindu has more articles containing State political news, with a difference of 10.43per cent.

2nd CONTENT CATEGORY - CITY NEWS

Table 5: The distribution of City news in The Hindu

ENTERTAINMENT NEWS	CRIME NEWS	SOCIAL NEWS	TOTAL
396 cms	486 cms	793 cms	1675cms
23.64per cent	29.01per cent	47.34per cent	100 per cent

Nearly 14.30 per cent of space consists of City news. It is sub - categorised into Entertainment news, Crime news and Social news. The Hindu has two pages for City news (each side of the newspaper is considered a page). It has a regular column called 'nammabengaluru', which discusses the various social problems in the city. The newspaper has 47.34per cent of Social news, 29.01per cent of Crime news, and 23.64per cent of Entertainment news. The newspaper has comprehensive articles about the social problems in the city, along with all the incidents of theft, robbery, embezzlement and suicide cases. It also talks about local celebrities, any sort of Entertainment news about local celebrities that would interest the local citizens.

Table 6: The distribution of City news in The Times of India

CRIME NEWS	ENTERTAINMENT NEWS	SOCIAL NEWS	TOTAL
343 cms	367 cms	642 cms	1352cms
25.36per cent	27.14 per cent	47.48 per cent	100 per cent

The Times of India has three to four pages allotted to City news. Approximately, 25.63 per cent of space in this newspaper consists of Sports news. Its news distribution pattern is similar to The Hindu. The city page consists of 47.48per cent of Social news, 25.36per cent of Crime news, and 27.14per cent of Entertainment news.

Results of the comparison:

- 1) The Times of India has more Entertainment news in its city pages, when compared to The Hindu with a difference of 3.5per cent.
- 2) The Hindu has more articles under Crime news, with a difference of 3.65 per cent.
- 3) There is negligible difference between the number of articles in both newspapers with regard to Social news, which is 0.14per cent.
- 4) The contents of The Times of India in all three areas, covers the same topics as those in The Hindu.

3rd CONTENT CATEGORY- SPORTS NEWS

Table 7: The distribution of Sports news in The Hindu

INTERVIEW	FEATURES	NEWS	TOTAL
71 cms	201 cms	2474 cms	2746 cms
2.58per cent	7.31per cent	90.09per cent	100 per cent

The Hindu has five pages, (each side of the newspaper is considered a page) for the purpose of printing Sports news. The Hindu allots 23.45 per cent of space for this news category. The newspaper prints articles about all sports, including hockey, badminton and motorcycling. The sub - categories for sports news are interviews, features and general sports news. Only 2.58per cent of the page consisted of interviews. About 90.09 per cent of these pages contained news, followed by features which comprises of 7.31per cent of the space. Updates on the latest matches, and their outcomes in every sport is mentioned in the last sub-category. The second sub-category has detailed descriptions of specific sport clubs, and its players. In the first sub-category, profile interviews of only Indian sportsmen are printed.

Table 8: The distribution of sports news in The Times of India

INTERVIEW	FEATURES	NEWS	TOTAL
31 cms	327 cms	936 cms	1294 cms
2.39per cent	25.27per cent	72.33per cent	100 per cent

Sports news has four pages (each side of the newspaper is considered a page) in The Times of India. The newspaper has 24.53 per cent of space for this news category. Approximately, 72.33per cent of these pages consist of news. While there are features covering 25.27per cent of the pages, interviews contribute to only 2.39per cent of the space. The sports pages cover all the major, popular sports. There are very few interviews of sportsmen in this newspaper. There are features only on football teams and cricket teams. News contains details about all the sports and the outcome of recently played matches.

Results of the comparison:

- 1) The Hindu has considerably more number of articles in third sub-category, which is news, with the difference of 17.76per cent.
- 2) The Times of India has more number of features, with a difference of 17.96per cent, in comparison to The Hindu.
- 3) The Hindu has 0.19per cent more space than The Times of Indians for interviews.

4th CONTENT CATEGORY- NATIONAL NEWS

Table 9: The distribution of National news in The Hindu

POLITICAL NEWS	SOCIAL NEWS	ENTERTAINMENT NEWS	TOTAL
1898 cms	863 cms	139 cms	2900 cms
65.44 per cent	29.75 per cent	4.79per cent	100 per cent

The Hindu gives top priority to National news. Nearly, 24.77per cent of the space in the newspaper comprises of National news. Though the newspaper has one page for National news, front page news and other pages also contain news of national importance. Its sub-categories are Political, Social and Entertainment news of national importance. Almost 65.44 per cent of the National news is political. About 29.75 per cent is Social news, and 4.79 per cent is Entertainment news. The first sub-category contains articles about elections, various political parties, national policies, current administration, national crisis and popular political leaders. The second sub-category has news about religious conflicts, problems

regarding women's safety, human rights, natural disasters in the nation and lack of resources. Entertainment news talks about critically acclaimed Indian movies, veteran actors and musicians.

Table 10: The distribution of National news in The Times of India

POLITICAL NEWS	SOCIAL NEWS	ENTERTAINMENT NEWS	TOTAL
524 cms	172 cms	107 cms	803 cms
65.25per cent	21.41per cent	13.32per cent	100 per cent

The Times of India has the same pattern as The Hindu with regard to the distribution of National news. However, there are usually five pages for National news. This takes up 15.22 per cent of space. Approximately, 65.25per cent of National news is political. The space allotted for Social news is 21.41per cent, and 13.32per cent of space is given to Entertainment news. The articles which belong to the first sub-category talk about strong political parties, political alliances, elections, and flaws in the national administration. The articles on social news talk about the same topics as that of The Hindu.

Results of the comparison:

- 1) Nearly 0.19 per cent of more space is allotted to Political news in The Hindu, in comparison to The Times of India.
- 2) The percentage of Social news in this newspaper is much lesser when compared to The Hindu, with a difference of 8.34 per cent.
- 3) But the importance given to Entertainment news in The Times of India is higher, by a wide margin when compared to The Hindu. The amount of Entertainment news in The Times of India is 8.51per cent more.

5th CONTENT CATEGORY- INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Table 11: The distribution of International news in The Hindu

NEWS	ENTERTAINMENT NEWS	CELEBRITY NEWS	TOTAL
684 cms	157 cms	45 cms	886 cms
77.20per cent	17.72 per cent	5.07 per cent	100 per cent

The Hindu allots only one page for International news, which covers 7.56 per cent of space. This newspaper gives the least priority to International news, which has further been sub-categorised into News, Entertainment news, and Celebrity news. Majority of the space has been allotted to News, followed by Entertainment news and Celebrity news. Almost 77.20 per cent of the international page consists of News. News regarding international relations, war, natural disasters in foreign nations, are the kind of articles found in this sub-category. Whereas only 17.72 per cent of space consists of Entertainment news. In this sub-category, news on movies, music, new trends in the international entertainment industry and award ceremonies are found. But 5.07 per cent consists of Celebrity news, which contains articles on internationally known celebrities, their achievements and latest scandals.

Table 12: The distribution of International news in The Times of India

NEWS	ENTERTAINMENT NEWS	CELEBRITY NEWS	TOTAL
524 cms	172 cms	107 cms	803 cms
65.25per cent	21.41per cent	13.32per cent	100 per cent

Just like The Hindu, The Times of India has only one page devoted for International news. This newspaper has 15.22 per cent of designated space for this news category. The pattern of news distribution is the same for The Times of India, 65.25per cent of the page contains news. Entertainment news composes 21.41per cent of the page, whereas, 13.32per cent of the space comprises of Celebrity news. Many of the articles in this page focus on life of political leaders, their latest scandals, and their controversial statements. There are usually two articles about entertainment and celebrity news in this page.

Results of the comparison:

- 1) The Hindu has more number of space for News, than The Times of India. The difference between The Hindu and The Times of India, with regard to the first sub-category is 11.95 per cent.
- 2) However, The Times of India has 3.69 per cent more space allotted for Entertainment news in comparison to The Hindu.
- 3) But The Times of India has allotted 8.25 per cent more space for Celebrity news.

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this research study has been to find the amount of space devoted to each of the content categories, and the prominence given to each content category by both newspapers. After careful analysis, the following conclusions have been drawn:

1. The Hindu devotes majority of its space to Political news, whereas The Times of India devotes majority of its space to City news.
2. Both The Hindu and The Times of India give high priority to Sports news.
3. Overall, The Hindu has more number of articles than The Times of India.
4. The Times of India gives equal priority to National and International news.
5. The Hindu gives more prominence to National news, when compared to The Times of India.
6. The Times of India gives more amount of space to City news, in contrast to The Hindu, which allots very little space for City news.
7. The Times of India is more colourful and contains more number of pages, The Hindu is dull in its presentation and has less number of pages when compared to The Times of India.
8. The Hindu has less number of Interviews, and Entertainment news when compared to The Times of India.

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