

## **Changing Media Landscape: A Study Of Urdu Newspapers In Kashmir**

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### **Abstract**

With The Fourth Industrial Revolution, The Technological Advancements Affected The News Media Across The Globe. The New Digital Age Brought With It Several Challenges Especially For The Conventional Forms Of News Dissemination In Terms Of Its Cost, Quality, Diversity, Language Proficiency And Accessibility. Now, The News Media Has Become More Interactive, Fast, Convergent And Inexpensive.

Owing To Several Reasons, The Newspaper Sector Contribute Majorly For The Media Industry In Kashmir As There Are Very Limited Number Of Local Television Channels, That Too Are Not Allowed To Carry News Or Current Affairs Programs. Urdu Being One Of The Official Languages And Widely Spoken Language In Kashmir, Urdu Newspapers Are The Pioneers Of Journalism In Kashmir And Urdu Newspapers Still Outnumber Other Language Newspapers Including English And The Most Widely Spoken Kashmiri. The New Technological Advancements Have Posed Several Challenges To The Urdu Press In Kashmir And Have Stressed This Media. The Current Paper Focuses On The Operations Of The Urdu Newspapers In Kashmir Among These Advancements And Whether These Newspapers Have Been Able To Combat These Challenges Of Digitalization Or Not. The Study Focuses On The Challenges, New Trends And The Transition In The Practice Of Urdu Journalism In Kashmir. It Focuses On Different Factors That Pose A Challenge To The Existence Of Urdu Journalism, The Hardships Urdu Press Is Going Through And What Can Be Done To Revive The Zeal Of Urdu Newspapers If At All Any Problems Persist.

**Keywords:** Multimedia, Digitalization, Urdu Newspapers, Media In Kashmir.

### **Introduction**

Though The Inception Of Journalism In Kashmir Was Much Later Than Other Parts Of The World But Within Less Than 50 Years Press In Kashmir Has Sprinted Its Way Towards New Heights Of Development. With A Galaxy Of Media Organizations Around, Press In Kashmir Has Accepted All The Challenges And Advanced Considerably. But Over The Years Mushroom Growth Of Newspapers In Many Languages Though Has Increased The Competition And Only Few Newspapers Have Been Able To Withstand This Competition And Are Known Among The Readers.

Since Their Inception Dating Back To 1924, Urdu Newspapers Have Been Part Of Kashmir's Cultural Framework Because Of Urdu Being The Official Language Of The Region And A Common Connecting

Link Between The People Of Different Dialects And Tribal Groups Of The State Of Jammu And Kashmir And Because These Newspapers Have Been The Representatives Of The Common Interests Of The People Of Kashmir Who For Ages Have Been Under The Occupation Of External Forces In One Way Or The Other.

According To Official Figures The Total Number Of Newspapers In The Union Territory Of Jammu And Kashmir Is 373 Out Of Which 193 Are In Urdu Language And 131 Are In English While As The Rest Are In Other Languages Like Kashmiri, Hindi, Dogri, Punjabi Etc. In Kashmir Province, 172 Newspapers Are Published Which Counts For 46% Of The Total Publication. Out Of 172 Newspapers, 119 Are In Urdu Language And 47 Are In English While As Five Are In Kashmir And One In Hindi (Department of Information & Public Relations, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, 2021). This Signifies That 69% Of The Total Newspapers Are In Urdu Language While As English Newspapers Count For 27% And The Rest 4% Are In Kashmiri.

Even Though The Number Of The Newspapers Is High, Only Few Newspapers Have Been Able To Make A Name With The Readers. According To The Registrar Of Newspapers For India (Rni) Figures, Most Of The Urdu Newspapers In Kashmir Are Small Newspapers (With A Circulation Of Up To 25000 Copies Per Publishing Day) While As Only A Few Are Medium (With A Circulation Between 25001 To 75000 Copies Per Publishing Day). The Daily Tameel Irshad (Urdu Daily) Is The Only Newspaper In Kashmir That Falls In The Category Of Big Newspapers Having A Circulation Of 86237 Copies Per Publishing Day (Registrar of Newspapers for India, 2020).

Some Of The Newspapers Even Have A Dismal Circulation Of Just A Few Hundred Copies. Even The Leading Urdu Dailies Like Aftab, Srinagar Times, Kashmir Uzma, Chattan, Roshni Etc. Have A Circulation Of Less Than 50000 Copies. The Rni Figures Though Cannot Be Relied Upon As Per Some Reports As These Are The Figures Provided By The Owners, Printers And Publishers Of The Newspapers For Financial Gains. Even The Publications With Very Dismal Circulation Show Higher Figures To Draw Regular Government Advertisements And More Newsprint (Jeffrey, 1997). Some Suggest That Many Of These Newspapers Are Operated By Single Individuals And Sell Less Than 500 Copies Printing With Obsolete Lithographic Printing Method Getting False Certificates Of Inflated Circulation From Chartered Accountants (Gulati, 2015). There Are 27 Urdu Dailies And Weeklies That Are Still Printed Through Traditional Litho Press Whereas None Of The English Publications Is Printed Through This Method (Department of Information & Public Relations, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, 2021). This Signifies That The Adoption Of New Technologies By Urdu Newspapers Is Lesser As Compared To The English Press.

Also, The Digital Advancements Like The Development Of Websites, Social Networking Platforms, Blogs, News Portals, Audio-Visual Multimedia Technologies And Digital Direct To Home Services In Terms Of Television And Radio Have Put Urdu Newspapers Under Immense Pressure To Deliver. The Challenge For These Newspapers Is To Withstand This Competition And Pressure To Ensure Better Quality And Services And To Safeguard Their Existence That Is Otherwise At Stake. But Unfortunately, Some Studies Reveal That The Urdu Newspapers Have Failed To Update Their Technology, Improve Their Quality In Terms Of Printing And Content, And Maintain Professional Standard (Qureshi, 2016).

## **Review Of Related Literature**

There Is Very Limited Information Documented With Regard To The Urdy Newspapers Of Kashmir. Not Much Has Been Written About Its Relevance, Impact, Adoption/Impact Of New Media Technologies And Its Growth Or Decline. Most Of The Literature Related To This Subject Talk About Its Evolution And Operations.

Iqbal (2013) Summarizing The Historical Perspective Writes That Urdu Journalism In The Indian Sub-Continent Started From Calcutta (Now Kolkata) With The Introduction Of Urdu Weekly “Jam-E-Jahan Numa” By Harihar Dutta On March 27, 1822. He States That Urdu Journalism In India Actually Started Before Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi And Tamil Journalism With “Udant Martand” (1826), “Bombay Samachar” (1882), “Bombay Darpan” (1832), And “Tamil Magazine” (1831) Being The First Newspapers In These Languages Respectively. So, After Bengali Newspapers “Sambad Kaumudi” (1821) And “Samachar Chandrika” (1822), Jam-E-Jahan Numa Was The Second Indian Language Newspaper That Was Published From Pre-Independence India. This Makes Urdu Journalism Second In The Vernacular Language Journalism Of India.

Farouqui (1994) After Questioning The Ethos And Subject Matter Of The Urdu Newspapers Of India Raises Concerns Over Their Failure To Adopt To The New Technologies. The Author Claims That The Urdu Media Have Failed To Withstand The New Circumstances And Technologies. Being Complainant About The Temperament And Attitude Of Urdu Journalists, He Writes That Present Day Journalists Haven’t Changes Since 1970s. Urdu Journalism Is Totally Unresponsive To The Changed Circumstances And New Technologies In The Mass Media Sphere. The Over-Simplified Explanations Given By The Urdu Journalists About The Miserable Condition Are The Reluctance Of Average Muslims To Buy Newspapers And The Inability Of Urdu Newspapers To Secure Advertisements As Readily As English, Hindi And Some Other Regional Newspapers Do.

Mohiuddin (1973) Provides A Detailed Account Of The History And Power Of Urdu Journalism In Kashmir. The Author Highlights The Legacy Of Urdu Newspapers In Kashmir. According To The Author The Publication Of First Ever Newspaper ‘Ranbir’ In 1924 By Mulk Raj Saraf Was A Historical Event In The Journalism Of The State Of Jammu And Kashmir Which Not Only Marked The Beginning Of Urdu Press But Also Started The Era Of Responsible Journalism. The Urdu Newspapers Have Been Motivational And Have Had A Great Impact On Minds Of People. Strong Editorials Of Newspapers Like Aftab, Srinagar Times, Aayina, Alsafa Etc. Had A Huge Impact On Minds Of People. These Newspapers Became A Platform For Common People To Give Vent To Their Feelings And Aspirations.

Yousuf & Ahmad (1982) Write In Brief The Advent Of Urdu Journalism In Kashmir And The Struggle It Had To Undergo In The Dogra Regime. The Authors Provide The Dark Side Of The Dogra Monarchy And The Courage Shown By The People Of Kashmir To Carry Out Continuous Efforts For The Publication Of Newspapers.

The Milli Gazette Online (2005) Referring To A Report By G. D. Chandan, Puts Forward A Comprehensive Account Of The Reasons For Decline Of Urdu Journalism In India Which Had A Considerable Contribution In The Country’s Independence Movement. The Write-Up Summarizes Quite Effectively The Factors Responsible For The Decline, The Importance Of Urdu Media In Shaping And Highlighting The Aspirations Of People, The Role It Can Play To Stabilize The Relations Of India With Neighbouring Countries And Also Suggests Some Ways For Revival Of Urdu Journalism In India. The Main Factors For Decline Of Urdu Journalism As Per The Report Are That New Generation Is Ignorant Of Urdu And The

State Governments Are Not Taking Suitable Steps For Providing And Promoting Urdu Education At Primary Level.

Showkat (2020) Writes That Urdu Is A Lingua Franca In The Multilingual Union Territory Of Jammu And Kashmir And Is Thus The Official Language Of The Region. It Is Urdu Journalism That Actually Flagged Off Journalism In Kashmir And Later Proved To Be A Fore-Runner Of The Much Sensible English Press. But After Being Unmatched And Doing Great Service In The Field Of Journalism For Around 80 Years, Urdu Newspapers Unfortunately Couldn't Cope Up To The Technological Advancements And Are Lagging Behind The English Press.

In Comparison To The English Newspapers, Urdu Newspapers Have Failed To Utilise The Social Media Tools. Gul & Islam (2013) Study Some Prominent English And Urdu Dailies Of Kashmir To Evaluate Occurrence Of Social Media Tools (Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, Digg And LinkedIn) In These Newspapers. 90% Of The English Dailies Have Adopted Social Media On Their Websites While As Only 2.27% Of The Urdu Newspapers Utilise Social Media Tools On Their Websites. The Vernacular Press Especially The Urdu Newspapers Ne To Embrace The Ever Growing New Media Technologies Like The Interactive Social Media Tools To Survive This Competition.

### **Objectives/ Methodology**

The Main Aim Of This Study Is To Understand The Relevance Of Urdu Newspapers In Kashmir And Identify The Main Challenges Experienced By This Medium Of Communication In Kashmir. The Use And Impact Of The New Technological Advancements Will Be Documented In The Paper. Also, On The Basis Of The Study, Relevant Recommendations Have Been Made To Revive This Influential Medium Of News Dissemination In Kashmir.

A Hybrid Of Methods Was Employed To Accomplish The Objectives Of The Study. It Included Interview And Survey. The Respondents For The Interview Method Were The Prominent Journalists, Scholars/Academicians And Other Experts Who Are Associated With The Urdu Journalism In Kashmir. The Purpose Of The Interviews Was To Get A Closer View Of The Situation That Urdu Newspapers Are In And To Get Some Ideas Regarding The Revival Of The Urdu Press If There Persists A Problem At All. The Interviews Were Conducted Through Informal Conversations With The Experts To Get More Detailed Views. Instead Of Using A Questionnaire Certain Variables Were Selected And The Conversations Revolved Around Those Variables Only. The Variables Which Were Touched By The Researcher Are:

- Readership And Circulation
- Quality Of Content
- Institutionalisation Of The Urdu Newspapers
- State Of The Urdu Language (Public And Political Treatment)
- Impact Of New Media Technologies
- Competition With English Media
- Role Of Academic Institutions

After Discussing All These Variables The Experts Were Asked About The Ways Out To Revive The Urdu Newspapers If At All Any Problems Persist.

Besides The Above Said Method, A Survey Was Conducted Among The Youth For The Purpose Of Which A Structured Questionnaire Comprising Both Open And Close-Ended Questions Was Formulated And Distributed Among A Randomly Selected Sample Of 200 Readers. The Respondents Were Divided Into Two Age Groups, 15-35 Years And Above 35 Years In Order To Get A Differentiated And Varied Viewpoint About The Research Problem. Some Of The Questionnaires Were Administered Directly To The Respondents By The Researcher And Some Were Distributed Through E-Mail Contacts And Facebook Profiles. The Researcher Got Varied Responses From The Respondents And Conclusions Were Drawn Based On Those Responses.

### **Theoretical Framework:**

Since One Of The Perspectives Of The Current Study Is To Analyse The Challenges Faced By Urdu Newspapers In Kashmir And New Media Technologies Undoubtedly Are The Most Predominant Among The Challenging Factors, The Theory Of Technological Determinism And Media Convergence Theory Are The Most Relevant For The Study.

**i. Technological Determinism:** It Is The Belief That Technology Is The Principal Initiator Of The Society's Transformation. The Emergence Of This Theory Is Usually Attributed To The American Sociologist Thorstein Veblen, Who Formulated The Causal Link Between The Technology And The Society (Hauer, 2017). As Per The Concept Of Technological Determinism, New Media Also Play An Important Role In Shaping The Individual As Well As Societal Frameworks. Thus, It Becomes Quite Necessary To Keep Abreast With The Technological Developments At Individual As Well As Organizational Levels. Some Of The Main Proponents Of This Theory Were Clarence Ayres, Karl Marx, Langdon Winner, William Ogburn, Robert Heilbroner Etc. Who Were Of The Opinion That Technology Either Directly Or Indirectly Influences The Way A Society Shapes Up.

There Are Varying Opinions On The Extent Of Impact Of New Technologies And Depending On That Determinism Has Been Divided Into Hard And Soft Determinism. Hard Determinism Argues That Technology Is The Main Or Only Significant Driving Force In Shaping A Society While As The Soft Determinism Argues That Society Is Not That Passive And Technology Is One Among Other Forces That Are Significant In A Society (Adler, 2006).

**ii. Media Convergence Theory:** Convergence Means Coming Together Of Different Media On A Single Platform. The Theory Of Convergence Suggests That New Technologies Bring Together Different Mediums And Consequently Redefine The Media. This Change In Communication Patterns And Technologies Reform The Everyday Life Changing The Patterns Of Creation And Consumption Of Information.

The Concept Of Convergence Was Propounded By Henry Jenkins In His Book "Convergence Culture". According To Jenkins, Convergence Is Both A "Top-Down" And "Bottom-Up" Phenomenon. In His Book, Jenkins Explains Convergence As,

"By Convergence, I Mean The Flow Of Content Across Multiple Media Platforms, The Cooperation Between Multiple Media Industries, And The Migratory Behaviour Of Media Audiences Who Will Go Almost Anywhere In Search Of The Kinds Of Entertainment Experiences They Want..... In The World Of Media Convergence, Every Important Story Gets Told, Every Brand Gets Sold, And Every Consumer Gets Courted Across Multiple Media Platforms" (Jenkins, 2006).

## Main Findings

Based On The Research Methods Employed During The Course Of The Study, The Main Findings Of The Study Were:

### i. Questionnaire:

- Majority Of The People In Kashmir Prefer To Read English Newspapers Than The Urdu Newspapers. More Than 76% Of The Readers Read English Newspapers In Kashmir. This Percentage Is Only 51% For The Urdu Newspapers.

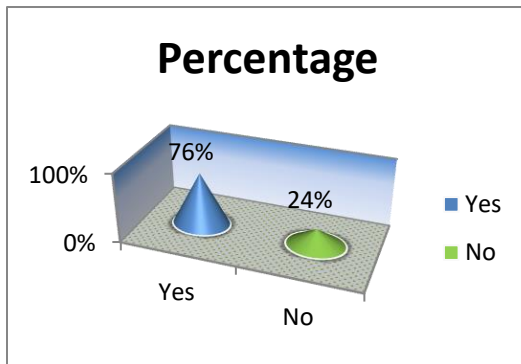


Figure: Percentage Of English Newspaper Readers

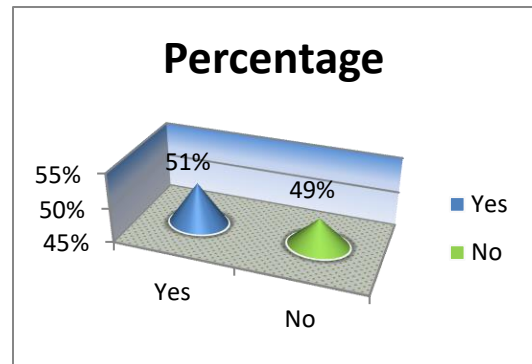


Figure: Percentage Of Urdu Newspaper Readers

- English Newspapers Readers Spend More Time In Reading Their Choice Of Newspapers Than The Readers Of Urdu Newspapers. This Gives A Connotation That English Newspapers Are Better In Quality And Variety And Keep The Readers Interested For More Time Than The Urdu Newspapers.

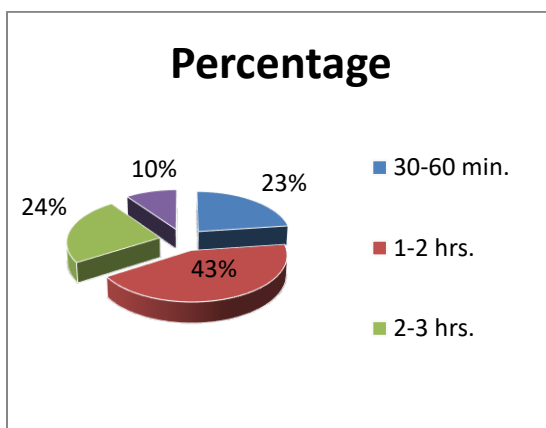


Figure: Duration Of Reading English Newspapers

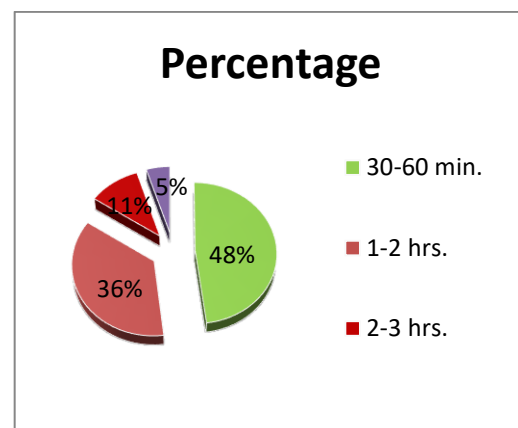
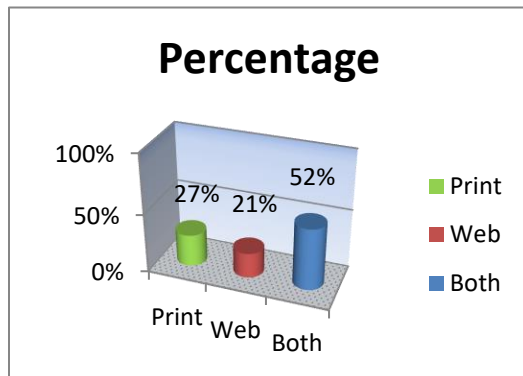
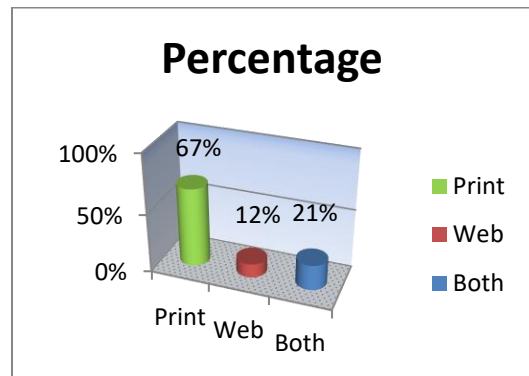


Figure: Duration Of Reading Urdu Newspapers

- Sixty-Six Percent Of The English Newspaper Readers And 46% Of The Urdu Newspaper Readers Are Regular Subscribers Of The Newspapers Of Their Choice. Majority Of The Urdu Newspaper Subscribers Are Above The Age Of 35 Which Gives An Indication That Younger Generation Is Not Interested Much In Urdu Newspapers.
- Majority Of The Urdu Newspaper Readers (67%) Read Their Choice Of Newspapers Through Regular Print Editions While As Majority Of The English Newspaper Readers (52%) Use Print As Well As The Web Forms To Read Their Choice Of Newspapers. This Is Because Of The Fact That The Online Editions Are Much More Advanced In English Newspapers Than In Urdu Newspapers.

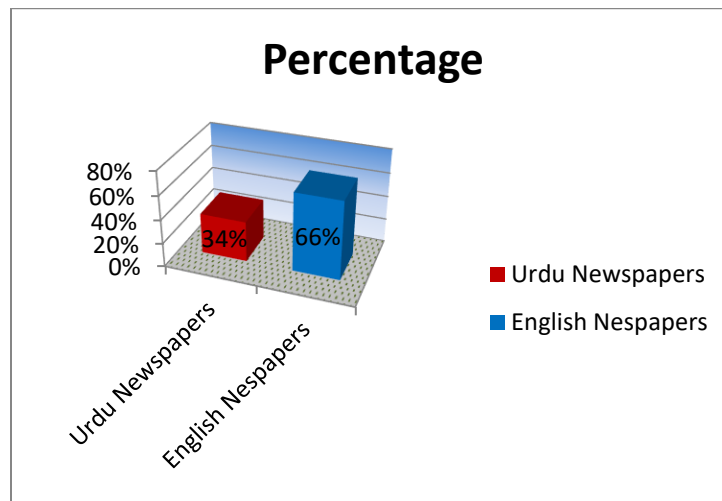


**Fig.: Form Of Reading English Newspapers**



**Fig.: Form Of Reading Urdu**

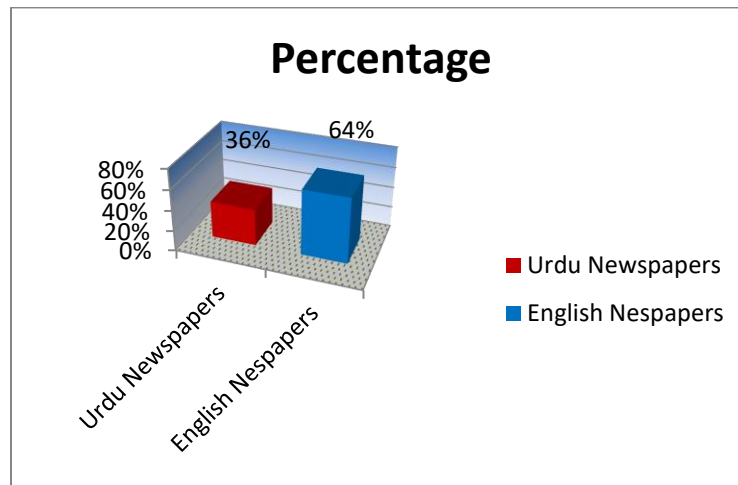
- Majority Of The Readers Who Read Newspapers Of Both Languages Prefer English Newspapers For Their Better Quality And Varied Stuff. 66% Of The Respondents Prefer To Read English Newspapers While As The Count Is Just 34% For The Urdu Newspapers.



**Figure: Percentage Of Preference Of Readers**

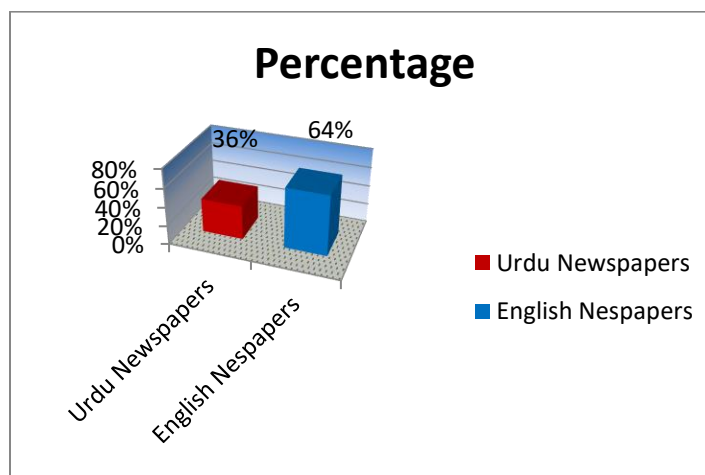
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- In Terms Of The Satisfaction Of Readers English Newspapers Again Lead With A Total Of 64% While As Urdu Newspapers Are Favoured By Just 36% Of The Readers. In The Credibility Factor And The Quality Of Opinions And Editorials The Ratio Is 62:38 For The English And Urdu Newspapers Respectively.



**Figure: Satisfaction Of Readers In Terms Of Their Preferences**

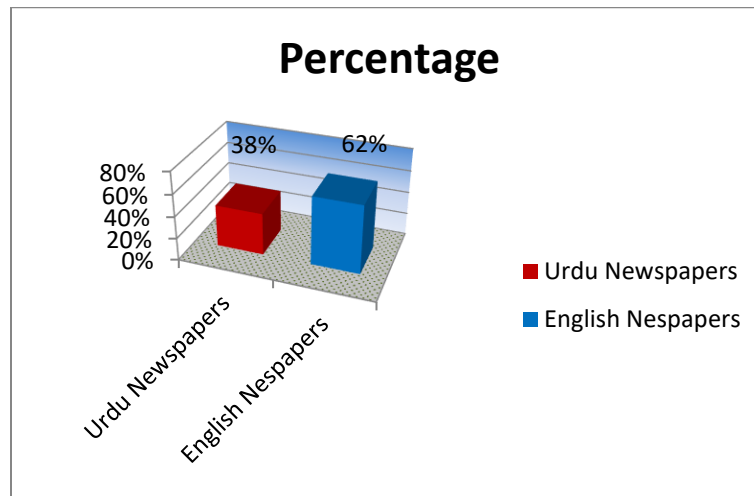
- English Newspapers Take A Lead With Quite A Big Margin In Terms Satisfying Readers For Their Preferences. 64% Of The Respondents Are Satisfied With The English Newspapers As Far As Their Interests Are Concerned While As Only 36% Of The Respondents Think That Urdu Newspapers Satisfy Them More. Here Again The Urdu Newspapers Are Lacking Behind And Clearly A Decline In Their Readership Is Indicated.



**Figure: Satisfaction Of Readers In Terms Of Their Preferences**

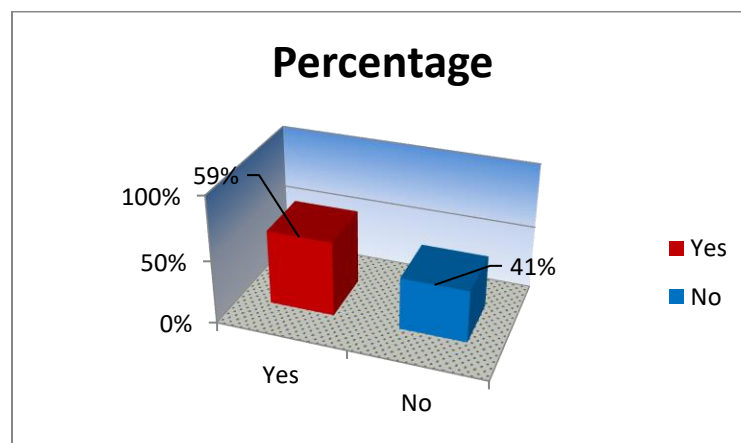


- In View Of The Readers The Urdu Newspapers Again Are At The Back Foot In Comparison With The English Newspapers When It Comes To The Credibility. 62% Of The Readers Think That English Newspapers Are More Credible While As Only 38% Believe That Urdu Newspapers Are More Credible. The Coverage Of Different Issues By The English Newspapers Gets More Appreciation By The Readers Than The Coverage Given By The Urdu Newspapers.



**Figure: Opinions About Credibility**

- 59% Of The Respondents Think That The English Newspapers Are Far Better Than The Urdu Newspapers And The Interest Towards Urdu Among The Readers Is Also Fading. 41% Of The Readers Think That Urdu Newspapers Are Still Relevant And Have An Important Place In The Media Circle Of The Valley.



**Figure: Whether Urdu Newspapers Are Losing Relevance Or Not**

#### Interviews:

The Experts Seem To Be Concerned About The Fate Of Urdu Newspapers In Kashmir. Most Of Them Believe That Urdu Newspapers Which Are The Pioneers Of Journalism In Kashmir And Continued To Be

The Lone Sources Of News For More Than Half A Century Are Quickly Losing The Credence Of The Readers Because Of Many Factors. Apart From Few Newspapers The Circulation Of Most Newspapers Is Dismal; Though This Holds True For Most English Newspapers As Well But The Number Of Urdu Newspapers Is Still Far More Than The English Ones. Though The Collective Circulation Of The Urdu Newspapers Is Still Better Than The English Newspapers, But Individually Urdu Newspapers Are Losing Out Readers Very Quickly. Lack Of Quality Staff, Failure To Withstand Technological Advancements And Competition With English Language Press, Gradual Decline Of The Urdu Language In Kashmir And The Same Old Traditional Ways Of Operation Are Main Reasons For A Disinterest Of The Readers In Urdu Newspapers. Some Main Observations Of The Experts Interviewed During The Study Regarding The Variables Discussed With Them Are:

- **Readership And Circulation:**

The Urdu Newspapers Are Quickly Losing Readers Because Of Poor Quality Of Content And Failure Of These Newspapers To Withstand Competition With English Newspapers And Adapt To New Technological Advancements. The Young Readers Are Powerhouses And Their Escapism From The Urdu Media Is Taking Toll On The Readership Of Urdu Newspapers And Decline In Readership Eventually Affects Their Circulation.

- **Quality Of Content:**

Unlike English Newspapers Like Greater Kashmir And Rising Kashmir These Newspapers Lack Organised And Professional Staffs Which Reflects In Their Quality. They Depend Mostly On Subscriptions With News Agencies And The Opinions And Columns They Publish Are Mostly Poor In Quality. Beat Reporting Is Altogether Absent In Urdu Newspapers Which Is The Main Strength Of English Newspapers.

- **Institutionalisation Of Urdu Newspapers:**

Institutionalisation Is One Of The Biggest Challenges Urdu Newspapers Are Facing. Controlled By The Owner And Editor, Most Of The Urdu Newspaper Organisations Lack Quality Reporters And Specialised People. Most Of The People Who Work With Urdu Newspapers Are Part-Timers Who Have Other Works To Do And Because Of This Reason Their Quality Suffers. Quality Reporters And New People Prefer English Media Because They Feel Exploited By These Urdu Newspapers. They Are Paid Meagre Amounts For Their Services And After All The Hard Work Even Do Not Get A Recognition.

- **State Of The Urdu Language (Public And Political Treatment):**

Urdu Language Is Facing Challenges In Kashmir. The Abandonment Of The Urdu Language In Private Schools Is Causing A Disinterest In Youth Regarding This Language. Plus The Language Irrespective Of Being The Official Language Of The State Of Jammu And Kashmir Is Being Treated Even Badly By The Government And Has Been Restricted To Revenue Records And Certain Limited Official Activities Only; All Other Official Affairs Are Now Done In English Language. This Is A Bigger Challenge In Terms Of The Future Of Urdu Language And Eventually The Urdu Press.

- **Impact Of New Media Technologies:**

Digital Platforms Are The Biggest Challenge To The Existence Of Urdu Newspapers. The Urdu Software And Font Are Poorly Developed And Most Of The Websites Due To This Reason Are Difficult To Read. The Urdu Newspapers Are Not Able To Adapt The New Media Technologies. Properly Developed Websites, Usage Of Social Media Tools, New Smart Phone Apps, Convergence Strategies And Others Aspects Are Missing In Most Of The Urdu Newspapers Thus Posing A Serious Challenge To Their Existence In These Competitive Times.

- **Competition With English Media:**

Urdu Newspapers Are Way Behind English Newspapers Which Are Developing At A Rapid Pace And Operating Neck To Neck With The Advancements In Technology And Modern Trends. From The Standards Of Writing To The Layouts And Development Of Websites To The Organisation And Maintenance Of Different Staffs, English Newspapers Are Taking A Lead. That's Why Readers Prefer To Read English Newspapers More Than The Urdu Newspapers.

- **Role Of Academic Institutions:**

Urdu Language's Poor Condition In Academic Institutions Is The Main Reason That The Younger Readers Now Focus More On English Newspapers Because They Find It Really Difficult To Read Urdu And It Takes Them Hours To Read A Single Page Of Urdu That Can Normally Be Read In Five To Ten Minutes. Plus At The Higher Level Urdu Journalism Is Being Focussed Less In Colleges And Universities Wherever Mass Communication Is Taught. All These Factors Eventually Have Affected The Existence Of Urdu Newspapers That Were The Pioneers Of Journalism In Kashmir

Overall The Urdu Newspapers Fail To Attract The Modern Day Readers Who Are Dynamic In Their Choice Of Content, Presentation, Distribution Of Different Items Of News In Terms Of Beats And Regions And Space For Feedback As Well The Readers' Write-Ups.

## **Conclusion**

Urdu Press In Kashmir Since Its Inception Has Witnessed Many Ups And Downs But With A Courageous Operation Always Withstood The Challenges. Once Again In The Past Decade Or So, Urdu Language Journalism Is Facing Severe Challenges In The Valley Of Kashmir And Its Existence Is At Stake. Over The Years Urdu Newspapers Have Faced Several Setbacks And English Newspapers All Of A Sudden Have Started Dominating The Proceedings. With A Setback To The Urdu Language At The Basic Level, Urdu Newspapers Are Struggling To Retain The Readers. The Mass Influx Of Private Schools, Apathy From Public And Government Sectors And The Influence Of Globalization Have Put The Urdu Language Under Severe Threat And English Has Come Upfront In The Scene.

The Urdu Newspaper Organizations Lack The Qualities Of A Standard Media Enterprise. After Maintaining Supremacy Over The Field Of Journalism For So Long, These Newspapers Have Failed To Develop Into Institutionalized Set-Ups Who Can Carry The Load Of Increasing Reader Demands And Market Competition. These Newspapers Right From The Beginning Lacked This Institutionalization And Usually These Newspapers Are A One Man Affair. Controlled By The Owner And Editor Of The Newspaper, These Newspapers Lack A Well-Structured And Well Trained Staff. Quality Reporters And New People Prefer English Media Because They Feel Exploited By These Urdu Newspapers. They Are

Paid Meager Amounts For Their Services And After All The Hard Work Even Do Not Get Recognition And Are Deprived Of Their By-Lines As Well.

The Urdu Newspapers Have Failed To Coup Up With The New Technological Advancements That Have Developed Gradually In Last Two Or Three Decades. The Websites Of The Urdu Media Are So Poorly Developed That A Reader At The Very First Sight Gives Up Reading The Online Stuff Of These Newspapers. The Font Is Unreadable And The Designs Are Not Pleasing Either. Though Certain Urdu Language Sites Are Now Developing Rapidly But Most Of The Newspaper Organizations Especially In Kashmir Are Still Very Premature. English Newspapers Are Taking Advantage Of This Situation And Doing Everything Possible To Gain Momentum. They Are Much Better In Shape Than The Urdu Newspapers, Better Organised With Better People And Quality And Therefore, Much Ahead In Terms Of Readers Satisfaction. The Urdu Newspapers Which Were Once The Symbols Of Quality And Representatives Of Journalism In Kashmir Are Sustaining Only Because Of Their Past Reputations Which Otherwise Have Nothing To Offer.

### **Suggestions**

1. The Need Of The Hour For These Urdu Newspapers Is That They Come Out Of This Shell Of Personalities And Transform Into Complex Organisations With A Motive To Give Quality To Readers And Motivate Them To Stick To These Newspapers. They Have To Consider Their Organisations More Of Public Services Institutions Than Mere Business.
2. Work Needs To Be Done For The Revival Of Urdu Language In The State. Promotion Of This Language At School Level, Spreading Mass Awareness Through Debates And Workshops For Both People And Journalists Can Be Helpful In Regaining The Lost Legacy Of The Language And Eventually Turn The Tables Around Again For Urdu Newspapers.
3. The Senior Journalists Need To Come Forward In Shaping These Organisations Into Much Complex Structures. They Have To Do Counseling Sessions With New Journalists And Media Students To Make Them More Attracted Towards Urdu Media.
4. The Media Institutes Like Merc And Others Need To Give Special Focus To Urdu Journalism In Order To Inculcate Interest In The Minds Of New Journalists.
5. Improvement In Quality, Adoption Of Changing Trends Like Convergence, Multimedia Tools, Social Media, Better Content And Layout, Provision Of Space To Common People And Hiring Quality People Can Only Help In Making Urdu Newspapers Once Again The Representatives Of Journalism In Kashmir.

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